THE RATIONALE FOR, CREATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE OPEN-INFORMAL CLASSROOM

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.
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This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

THE RATIONALE FOR, CREATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF SCHOOLING WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE OPEN-INFORMAL CLASSROOM

presented by

FRANCIS S. BLOM

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

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Major professor

Date November 9, 1973

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ABSTRACT

THE RATIONALE FOR, CREATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE OPEN-INFORMAL CLASSROOM

By

Francis Sander Blom

The American society often viewed as a melting pot of cultural differences is in reality more of a tossed salad. The American public school finds itself having to deal with a diversity of beliefs and life styles. These differing life styles greatly influence the how, what, and when a person learns.

The single monolithic K-12 structure of public schools is not responding to this diversity with curriculum revisions, modifications in teaching methods and materials, or revised operational plans. As the diversity, pluralism, and biculturalism increases, the schools continue to attempt to force all students to accept one life style, usually the one represented by tradition. But this approach leads to

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discontent, distrust, and lost community support as has been witnessed in many communities around the country.

Political pressure of special interest groups, millage defeats, destructive radicalism, avoidance behavior such as drug abuse, high in-school and out-of-school drop-out rates, absenteeism, and minimal compliance all give evidence of the dissatisfaction and growing meaninglessness of school.

Two strategies of reform are being attempted by a few schools and school systems in the country. One strategy is the open-informal classroom with its emphasis on personalized learning, and the other strategy is an organizational structure of optional learning environments all within the public schools. Each learning environment is an option and choice for the consumer.

This study deals with the rationale, development, implementation, and description of a school with optional learning environments with a special observational emphasis on the laissez-faire open-informal learning environment.

Three basic learning environments are described and identified on the basis of how decisions concerning classroom activity are made. They are: autocratic, the teacher

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makes most of the decisions, democratic, the students and teachers share the decisions, and autonomous, where the students make most of the decisions. While all the learning environments use many different teaching methods and strategies, all classrooms can be classified by the way decisions are made. Decision making processes used by people reflect their beliefs concerning others and how they relate to others. Decision making is a process that reflects most of a person's beliefs concerning how people should and can live together. In the classroom, it reflects people's beliefs concerning how people learn, why they learn what they do, what they learn, and when they learn. Since how a person makes or supports a decision making process reflects his beliefs concerning others, it is integrated into his life style or how he interacts and relates to other people.

No deliberate effort has been made to compare the environments to determine which is better than another, since what is best for one may be poor for another. Each environment has its own purposes. But several measuring instruments were used to gather descriptive information concerning the different learning environments. It is

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natural for the reader to develop some opinions as certain information supports his bias but it is the intent of this study to be descriptive rather than evaluative. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills, The Learning Environment Inventory, the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test, student and parent opinion surveys, and teacher observations have been used to gather information for gaining a better understanding of alternative learning environments in a public school.

In general, students enjoy the opportunity to explore and discover the learning environment most suitable to their needs. Teachers are more committed to what they are doing in their learning environment. The community is more involved in the school. Students and teachers are generally happier, and the school as a service institution is consistent with our democratic heritage and political philosophy and the pluralistic nature of the society. The greatest factors influencing student achievement in the academic areas seems to lie outside of the different learning environments. The differing learning environments are more accommodating to a student's life style, pace, and approach to life than to increasing or decreasing academic achievement.

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This study covers a time span of three years. During these years, the environments were developed, practiced, evaluated, and improved upon according to their own philosophical basis, goals, and objectives. This study does not have a real end at this point since the alternatives continue to exist and are constantly being renewed by the ever changing student body, staff, and members of the community.

This study only pertains to the programs as offered at this school and does not describe or defend similar programs in other public or private schools.

THE RATIONALE FOR, CREATION, DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE OPEN-INFORMAL CLASSROOM

By

Francis Sander Blom

A DISSERTATION

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1973

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I wish to acknowledge my thanks to all who over the years have helped me in some way to grow as a person and educator. This partial list of names has no order of importance. All have given something, some more than others; guidance, direction, support, criticism, stimulation, advice, time, and love, but all gave unselfishly something of themselves.

Barbara T., Karen L., Paul S., Josie F., Susan L., Peter S., Linda L., Mike W., Jim J., Gretchen S., Dale A., John V., Bill F., Ben H., Chuck B., John S., Verla C., Bob M., Glen G., Adie K., Ron R., John W., Ken O., Shelila S., Bob C., Ed B., Marilyn K., Jackie J., Susan F., Carol W., Phil C., Marv G., Bob D., Billy S., Lori K., Ed M., Ralph H., Miran K., Steve L., Joel A., Phil G., Leslie H., Jan R., Anne W., Steve P., Anne B., Jean B., Karen T., Sara W., Lisa H., Teri W., Tonja A., Joe B., Amy B., Frank W., Don T., Cindy E., Alison W., Sue S., Kirk W., Mark R., Clair D., Troy S., Jim B., Nancy B., John C., Adele C., Gary C., Walt V., Emily C., Erna H., Karen H., Libby L., Roland M., Dave M., Cindy P., Lee S., Don W., Ike W., Bev Y., Jane Y., Bob W., Ed K., Kathy A., Phil A., Greg J., Tom H., Beth H., Susan K., Lara S., Gee G., Jeff K., Ernest M., Tom S., Ellen F., John D., Peter S., Ray C., Peter M., Bill H., . . . my immediate family and my Father in Heaven.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

There is the old story of a man who came across another man looking for a coin under a lamp post at night. After helping hunt a while, he inquired as to the exact place where it had been dropped, and was told that this had happened out in the dark, beyond the light of the lamp. When he observed that it might be better to look out there instead, he was told that there was more light for looking under the lamp post.

The central and major thrust of research in education should deal with the facilitation of or arrangement of learning in its many forms, and this search can only be done in real classrooms with real students and teachers in everyday situations. Laboratory experiments with rats in cages may help to add data to our storehouses of theory but this isn't where the learner was lost.

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"If the bright young educational researcher today cherishes the notion that his work may someday be used to guide national policy, he'd better learn how to design research for the world of action instead of the world of academia," John Hopkins sociologist James Coleman told the recent American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Washington.

"There are important and sharp differences between methodology that has as its philosophical base the testing and development of theories and a methodology that has as its philosophical base a guide to action," Coleman said.

He termed research designed only to advance knowledge "disciplinary research" and research designed as a guide to social action "policy research." Policy research, he said, "is defined by two characteristics: the research problem originates outside the discipline in the world of action; and the research results are destined for the world of action, outside the discipline." Research questions in disciplinary research, on the other hand, arise from the search within the discipline for better theory. "Any impact on the world of action is a by-product and not of direct interest to researchers in the discipline."

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"Coming up with the right answer is what counts, not elegance of research design." As an illustration, Coleman noted two ways of aiming a cannon: one is to use Newtonian theory and calculate the expected trajectory based on the known velocity of the cannon ball, a calculation of the distance to the target, and the known gravitational constant. The second is to shoot the cannon, see where the ball lands, and adjust the aim to compensate for the deviation. The first is an elegant method but likely to be very wrong."[1]

The purpose of this dissertation is both to advance knowledge and to present some guidelines for action. It began over three years ago in the classroom and expands by means of continued participation, observation, and testing.

The format used in the writing of this dissertation is designed to allow the reader to follow the development of the researcher's thinking as he daily encounters the challenges of the classroom and the educational institution. The purpose and need for this study become evident

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[1]Research Notes, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 489, March 1973, Vol. LIV, No. 7.

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This is not an attempt to condemn all or in part what has happened in education to this point in time. What was right in the nineteen forties may have been right for that time. The question is what is right for the nineteen seventies and nineteen eighties? While some quick glances are made in the rear view mirror, the main concerns lie down the road, over the hill, and around the curve. Everythings doesn't have to be proven. Experience has a way of being self authenticating. Yet the experience of one person does not present strong evidence for reality. Therefore, this study includes the observations of students, a study team from Michigan State University, a student teacher, and my own.

Prologue

Several years ago several of my students and I were attending a Middle School Conference in a local community. We were there to discuss a different approach to the classroom, one which put most of the responsibility

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for learning and behavior on the student rather than the teacher. At one point of the discussion a gentleman addressed himself to one of my eighth grade students with the statement:

> I've travelled all over this world. I've read and studied many books written by many of the great minds of the centuries. I have several degrees from colleges and universities and a wealth of experiences that I can draw upon to teach you things you should know. Now you are telling me you don't want or need me as your teacher.

My eighth grader paused, and then replied,

> I'm not saying that I shouldn't interact with you and listen to things you have to say. To completely reject the experiences of the past would be foolish. But your experiences are yours, they are not mine. I cannot live and learn through you. I must experience life myself, make my own mistakes, enjoy my own successes, discover what is important and meaningful to me. I can use your help in doing some of this, but your experiences cannot be the bases for my future.

Wondering, Questioning, Searching

Many situations with students in the classroom, with teachers in the faculty lounge, and encounters with books based on research in the fields of psychology and

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education, helped me to question my beliefs and behavior as a teacher in a public school. This period of questioning became a period of growth as I wondered, examined, searched, tried, and discovered new answers to old problems. Some of these questions I still wrestle with and offer to others to help me understand. Some of these questions are: 1) What is learning? 2) What assumptions can we make concerning why people learn? 3) What assumptions can we make concerning how people learn? 4) What must all people learn in order to survive or cope with our culture and society now and in the distant future? 5) Why do schools exist? 6) What should happen to a child from the time he enters a school until the time he leaves a school? 7) How can we best organize to implement the purposes of the school? and 8) How can we best determine whether or not a child has learned during his experience at school and how can we best determine the efficacy of our role in this experience? This study does not attempt to answer systematically these questions but they are included to give the reader a cursory idea of the kinds of questions that have guided my searching for several years. Some of the situations, moments of questioning, and times of frustration are recorded in the following essays.

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Conflict and Frustration

In life, understanding on a feelings level often precedes understanding on an intellectual or rational level. There are times when we feel something is wrong but we can't identify a theoretical model to explain the situation. Several years ago as a two year veteran in education, my feelings preceded theory. I felt something was wrong with my classroom. There seemed to be a constant conflict between the institutionally defined roles and expectations for students and their individual personalities and needs as people. As a teacher I felt conflict between the institution's needs as defined by the administrators and my needs as an individual. I saw and daily felt conflict between the students and myself. As pressures were placed on me by the institution, I passed them on to the students. If students didn't score high enough on standardized achievement tests, I was in trouble with the school. To insure or try to insure an upswing on the chart, student behavior had to be manipulated and controlled to the extent of expecting predictable behavior or test results. So much of what the school was asking me to do seemed to be predicated on the belief that the schools are the molding

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agents for society and all students come to school ready to submit to some preconceived plan of what they should be to be acceptable in a few years to the society. If there were problems in the society, then the schools were looked upon as the change agents and problem solver for future generations. There seemed to be the belief that all future problems could be solved if the youngsters of today are programmed and engineered in ways that would eliminate inequities, but we were not allowed to deal with values or feelings.

The school community, parents, teachers, and administrators seemed to be obsessed with the religion of science, with unshakable faith in its ability to solve all problems with time, money, and controls. But there were many attendant evils in this process that, as I observed it in the classroom, denatured man's personal experience and took the mystery and sacredness out of life.

Letters from Students

In the first school I taught, every Friday my planbook was to be left on the principal's desk before I went

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home at three fifteen. The planbook had to contain the next week's goals and objectives. Each day I would faithfully enter the classroom with plans in hand and the methods to motivate. But while I brought the principles of good spelling to the arena of learning, many students brought their own agenda. They had other things on their minds. Here are some letters written to me by sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students that are representative of many of the important concerns many students have.

Dear Mr. Blom:

I went to my father's wedding reception. It was pretty bizzar. I've now got two stepbrothers, neat huh? One is two and the other is twelve. It was really weird to think that my father is married to a woman other than my mom. My mom doesn't say much about it.

I'm sure you know that I smoke dope. I just thought I'd tell ya. Although I'm not smoking for a couple months, I'm going to return next Fall, maybe. If I feel I want it.

My feelings about God are all mixed up. Maybe you could help. I think I believe in God, but I'm not sure. I'm terrified of dying. I say I believe in God, but can you help?

Mr. Blom:

Help! I am a forgotten person. No one wants to remember me at all. I am kind of tied between the unworking interesting

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people and the working dull people. Like if I walk into gym late, then I have to walk up to the teacher and tell him. This way I could skip and no one would ask about me till the end of the hour when they check the attendance list. I mean when a few people find out that Linda was my sister, they are real nice to me for about two hours. Later they treat me like a rat. I never did anything rotten to them. Most people hate me as soon as they find out I am completely different from Linda.

Dear Mr. Blom:

I look around this school and I see young people, I hate the words students and children and teachers, walking aimlessly around the halls. They have a pattern. Get up in the morning, go to school to get educated, gossip with their friends, practice their cheerleading, go home and go to the game. Their student government is encouraged but not given any real authority or power. I look around and I see puppet relationships. The feeling I get is that they don't even know each other past their name, age, address, phone number, and classes. But is that really knowing someone? Another feeling I get is that alot of people only care about themselves, their friends, school, and football team. They don't seem to care about the world, their world and what's happening to it. A few teachers I know just try to cram information down you and some people can't grasp it all at once. And then the teacher fails you and says you haven't been listening, without even looking at themselves. Worst of it is that they don't even try to know their students. They feel that all young people are the same and they should all be able to learn the way they teach. All the math and science and history in the world isn't going to do a bit of good if you can't get along with other people.

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Dear Mr. Blom:

Sometimes I think this year is going fast and then sometimes I think it's going very slow.

I went to Mr. Ellison's poetry seminar this week. I think he is really fun. He really changed my ideas about poetry. I used to think it was boring. I don't anymore.

The tests weren't hard, but the same things were repeated so much. I mean so many problems of the same kind. Glad it's over with.

My mother is in Minnisota. My dad and I take care of the meals. It depends on who's home first.

Reflections

Sometime during my undergraduate teacher preparation years I was told that everyone was different. Genetic and socio-economic inheritances caused everyone to be unique. People were not robots. Then the professor of Methods of Teaching 304 went on to teach us how to write lesson plans for the subject and class we were to teach as student-practicing teachers. These lesson plans included the objectives, a means or method of implementation, an evaluative procedure, anticipated student responses, and a list of materials needed for the educational

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experience. I was well trained. On my first job in teaching I was handed several texts, they were using a "multi-text approach," and the required curriculum, five classes of thirty students each, and went to work trying to insert the predetermined experiences and knowledge into the new generation.

Teaching was not an easy job. I had the responsibility of making all the decisions concerning student behavior both now and twenty years from now, what they must all know for future success in life also twenty years from now, and what each student was doing at all times. Each night I would spend a minimum of two hours of preparation for the next school day. As agent of the state, the board of education, and the community, I had the responsibility to mold these youngsters into a life style that was practical and useful economically to both the community and the future wage earner.

Using huge doses of external control, I taught everyone how to be passive, other-directed, and a conformist. Personality was suppressed with an ever thickening book of student rules and regulations. Individuality was overcome with departmental achievement expectations.

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The students did not feel oppressed. Oppression is a comparative state and these students had nothing to compare. A teaching colleague displayed his educational philosophy over his chalkboard: "A student's mind is an empty vessel to be filled." Some students learned under these conditions but many didn't. Many students were just serving their time, playing "school."

Occasionally there were attempts to "individualize instruction." This meant that each student was allowed to work at his own pace. No one ever discussed "individualized learning" or personalized learning. All students had to assimilate the same material. The time variable was all that was altered. Of course in the spring of each year, all students were required to take a timed standardized achievement test which tested how quickly one could work and which confirmed what we already knew from the student progress cumulative folders. I've yet to find a student that didn't live down to his cumulative folder.

There was never a time the community, administration, or staff discussed what a child was like, what his needs were, what motivated him, what experiences all children must have for survival in our society, and why do or should schools exist at all?

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If students, all people in general, were really all different, the school with its community of educators hadn't discovered it yet.

The Problem

After several years in the classroom, I was able to identify the problem and being to search for an answer. The ill feelings I was originally experiencing in the classroom could now be translated into intelligent understanding and thinking. I was different than other teachers in the building and they in turn were all different from each other. Yet, everyone was expected to make a big effort to be alike, to be consistent, to conform to some undefined code of conduct and teaching methods. The students were also all different. Each came to school every day with his own blueprint for growth tucked under his arm and I had to make them put it away and look at the school's blueprint. We had one for all the students in the seventh grade. We also had one for all the students in the eighth grade. We even had one for teachers.

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The problem can be described with three dimensions: 1) people are all different, having different genetic inheritances, cultural and religious orientations and differing life-learning styles; 2) society and organizations continue to demand conformity, and 3) most people are usually intolerant of people who do not believe, look, or behave like they do. In summary, our problem seems to be "E pluribus unum" (to make one out of many).

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CHAPTER II

THE RATIONALE FOR ALTERNATIVES

Pluralism as the American Way

"America the land of the free" has to many been an expression of an unrealized ideal. Freedom encourages diversity not conformity.

Perhaps the best way to get a feeling for the strategy American society has traditionally adopted for handling diversity is to listen to one of the victims of that strategy:

> Growing up in America has been an assault upon my sense of worthiness. It has also been a kind of liberation and delight.
>
> I am born of PIGS--those Poles, Italians, Greeks, and Slavs, non-English-speaking immigrants, numbered so heavily among working men of this nation. Not particularly liberal, nor radical, born into a history not white Anglo-Saxon and not Jewish--born outside what in America is considered the intellectual mainstream. And thus privy to neither power nor status nor intellectual voice.
>
> All my life, I have been made to feel a slight uneasiness when I must say my name. Under the challenge in grammar school concerning my nationality, I had been instructed by my father to announce proudly: "American."

> Nowhere in my schooling do I recall an attempt to put me in touch with my own history. The strategy was clearly to make an American of me. English literature, American literature, and even the history books, as I recall them, were peopled mainly by Anglo-Saxons from Boston (where most historians seemed to live). Not even my native Pennsylvania, let alone my Slovak forebears, counted for very many paragraphs. I don't remember feeling envy or regret: a feeling, perhaps, of unimportance, of remoteness, of not having heft enough to count.
>
> The fact that I was born a Catholic also complicated life. What is a Catholic but what everybody else is in reaction against? Protestants reformed "the whore of Babylon," others were "enlightened" from it, and Jews had reason to help Catholicism and the social structures it was rooted into fall apart (during crucial years I attended a public, not a parochial school). To be modern is decidedly not to be medieval; to be reasonable is not to be dogmatic; to be free is clearly not to live under ecclesiastical authority; to be scientific is not to attend ancient rituals, cherish irrational symbols, indulge in mythic practices. It is hard to grow up Catholic in America without becoming defensive, perhaps a little paranoid, feeling forced to divide the world between "us" and "them."

Those are the words of Michael Novak writing in Harper's (September 1971). Novak speaks of how America has handled her ethnic and religious diversity, the basis for all diversity in life-learning styles.

Who would enjoy going to an art museum only to find all the paintings the same. There is a certain

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desirability in diversity. Yet, American history records the massive efforts to amagamate human differences.

One must reflect on the efforts made, and continuing to be made for a sacred or sacral society. In subtle and not so subtle ways, the culture gives preference to theism over nontheism. And historically it has given preference to mainline Protestant Christianity over all other versions of theism. Persistent efforts continue to be made to re-establish theistic devotions at the beginning of the public school day. Legislative sessions are opened with official prayers and "In God We Trust" still appears on our money. These feeble and discriminatory attempts at establishing and maintaining a theocracy are indefensible. I'm sure God is not impressed with this forced pseudo devotion.

These efforts do not reflect a Christian perspective of justice and the absence of discrimination. No true theist would support inequity of opportunity in civil society.

But before we hastily support a neutral or secular society, one must also examine its purposes. Secularism as often practiced by the courts, government, and schools

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also becomes highly discriminatory. Parochial and private schools with religious orientated educational philosophies go begging for financial support because the parents must pay a double school assessment: one for the public schools and one for the private tuition. Is this the price one must pay for liberty of choice? Creationism, as a theory concerning the origin of the universe has been banned in the public school classroom. Yet, this is selective teaching, discriminating against a presentation of all theories concerning the origins of life. The secularists are committing the same errors as the theists in trying to impose their biases and life-styles on all people. Each group adopts the label of "American" and requires that all conform. Not to do so is to be "un-American" and thus an undesirable.

Is there another option? Is there a genuine alternative to a sacral or neutral society? Yes. The alternative is a pluralistic society--a society that treats its citizens in its public policies, legal structure and institutions, impartially with respect to their individual differences, life-learning styles, ethnic and religious heritages. Only such a society would eliminate

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the oppressiveness of our sacral or secular society. Only such a society would give equal rights to all citizens to express their philosophical convictions as they see fit. Only such a society would be fully just and equitable and nondiscriminatory.

This does not support the concept that says anything that can be thought of is legitimate. A group with objectives to destroy a pluralistic society would have to be suppressed. But forbidding this position does not give preference to some other group over this one. It does give preference to many groups with valid differences which need a pluralistic structure to exist.

America as a melting pot seems to be failing. It has tried this concept at the expense of justice, and freedom. It must now turn its attention to becoming a nation of nations. A nation of differences. A nation where a person is free to become what he wants to become. It would be better if the schools as service institutions would reflect the concept of pluralism, allowing for differing life and learning styles, allowing people to be different. This would become the "American Way."

Schools that are monolithic in their educational approach are by their very nature of operation teaching a

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life style that supports discrimination. It teaches there is only one way for all and those who cannot or will not conform are viewed as inferior, rebellious, or counter-culture. If the nature of the school is to promote discrimination, all efforts to integrate for whatever reason, will be useless and filled with frustration.

Differences and the Need for Alternatives

Children born of the same parents have many differences. Even identical twins differ in hundred of ways. There are physical differences, ability, talent, intelligence, motivational, socio-economic, experimental, and life style differences. We are all born unequal genetically. Inequality is not only natural and inborn, it grows with the complexity of civilization.

There are hereditary inequalities which breed social and artificial inequalities. Every time someone invents some new thing or discovers a new idea or solves a perplexing problem, he runs the risk of becoming more valuable to the society and his neighbor. He may become unequal in popularity or wealth. Economics specializes

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functions, differentiates abilities, and causes inequalities. Freedom and equality are natural enemies. Leave men free, and inequalities and differences will abound. Differences are human, and demand recognition. Because each person is unique with his own needs, abilities, and special contributions, all people do not learn best with exactly the same learning conditions. Learning is a function of the learner as he chooses to interact with his perceived environment. There is no one best way to to teach all people. Differences and inequalities demand diversity.

It would be better if schools, as institutions of learning for all children, would recognize these differences and develop programs that individualize learning and reflect this perspective. Schools can offer learning environment alternatives for all its clientele. With available learning alternatives a youngster can learn in a manner that is consistent with his learning needs and life style. With several alternatives in the same building, he can experience other alternatives during the mandatory years of school experience.

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Teachers also have many differences both as people and teachers. An administrator or school system that tries to force all teachers to teach with one specific approach does not show that individual dignity or respect. By not recognizing their characteristics as humans, the system is using them as trained servants. People who are required to play roles and exhibit behavior that is inconsistent with their beliefs never do it well. The best a person can do is be himself. This does not mean that he cannot interact and encounter others, learn and change. But often people will be asked and required to adopt a teaching method or style that is inconsistent with their beliefs and behavior. The required change is not done well and receives minimal or non-compliance. This has been experienced in schools where everyone is forced to write and use behavioral objectives or to individualize instruction regardless of their beliefs or understanding concerning the change. The human differences in the life styles, values, needs, and perceptions of teachers will lead to differing teaching styles and learning environments. Student learning and life styles and teachers' teaching styles can be matched by the joint efforts of the students,

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teachers, administrating and counseling staff, and the community. This does not require cognative mapping or other similar tests. A student must not be locked into any of the alternatives because of testing or an "expert's" opinion. The community, teachers, and students will have the opportunity to select the learning environment that helps them best. They will also have the opportunity to test themselves in other environments. If there is one best way to teach all students in all schools, it is the way of learning environment alternatives open to all.

The spectrum of learning environments and strategies can range from a dictatorial training approach to an autonomous organismic approach to the classroom.

From Uniformity to Diversity

There are many alternatives the public schools can offer the community and its students. These alternatives can take many forms. There are Schools without Walls, mini-schools or schools within schools, drop-in or drop-out centers, satellite schools, schools for racial or ethnic groups and vocational and career centered schools.

Within the structure of these schools, the educator and learner has many strategies available to create the optimum learning environment and conditions. There is teaming, flexible schedule, open classroom, core curriculum, multi-age grouping, independent study, programmed instruction, mini-courses, group counseling, crisis classrooms, elective courses, gaming-simulation, and community resources. This list is not exhaustive. All of the strategies, however, can only be used from three basic philosophical alternatives. This study deals with those three alternatives.

Alternatives in the Schools

Democracy, as a life style, implies the freedom of individual choices. The American public schools have tended to be monolithic in methods and approaches to learning. In a democratic society, options should be available in education so that parents and children can make choices concerning what they do, how they do it, when they are to do it, and why they are doing it. Not that diversity is automatically good, but that forced uniformity is extremely negative.

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Let parents have a choice from a variety of educational alternatives. The traditionalist can choose a content-centered classroom, those interested in a child-centered approach could choose an open-informal classroom, dancers, painters, and photographers can choose an alternative for the graphic and performing arts, and craft-orientated students can choose a vocational alternative. All can share common facilities and resource people.

It would be better for some school boards to stop being filters of what is good or bad for everybody and become facilitators in meeting the diverse learning needs of the community.

What seems to be most needed is an opportunity for each learner to personalize his own learning blueprints. There cannot be one blueprint for all people unless the schools are preparing youngsters for a totalitarian state. The schools have a responsibility to provide young people and all the people in the community with the resources for learning but not necessarily in a prescribed way. The doctor can provide the advice and counsel but the smoker must initiate and commit himself to a method for withdrawal. And there are many ways to quit smoking but each method

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must be initiated by a personal commitment and need. It must be meaningful or it won't work. We can have compulsory attendance but never compulsory learning.

Daniel Bovet, the Nobel Prize-winning biochemist once said,

> The greatest catastrophe of our society is that it does not welcome a great number of temperaments . . . . My father used to say that people think more of their children's feet than of their brains since they pick shoes according to the size of their feet but send them all to the same school.

Decision Making and Diversity

One important prerequisite to building alternative learning environments in schools is to develop an equitable decision making process for the administration and staff.

The decision making process used in a school reflects how the people in that school feel about each other. A vertical autocratic decision making model says that most people do not have valid contributions to the solving of problems and the development of school policy. It indicates a distrust of people's ability to identify problems,

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find solutions, and assume responsibilities. A horizontal democratic decision making process takes an opposite view of people. It says people do have differences and these differences are valid and contribute greatly to the solution of problems. It says that negotiation is a more equitable process than dictation.

Democratic decision making models do not attempt to eliminate conflict or differences, but rather to provide an effective and orderly way to cope with diversity. Diversity, be it in a society or an organization like a school, and vertical autocratic decision making processes are incompatible.

Each group that wants to recognize and support the concepts of differences and diversity must find a decision making approach that leaves room for differing ideologies yet enables support to emerge for common causes. People who trust each other can do this.

In a school, an administrator plays a key role in establishing a climate for trust and diversity. Administrators can recognize and allow people to be different. He can capitalize on this diversity of strengths to develop a shared responsibility for what happens in a school.

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Curriculum, budgets, and student learning environments can be generated by staff, with staff by the very nature of the process, committed to its own decisions and policies. The administrator becomes a facilitator.

In schools where teachers can be different, students can be different. Often, teachers are told to individualize their approaches to students, but the principal fails to individualize his approach to the staff.

Show me how an institution or organization makes decisions, and I will have a good idea of how the people in that organization feel or are made to feel about each other. A person's beliefs are tied up in the decisions he makes, and the way in which he makes them.

CHAPTER III

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ALTERNATIVES

Introduction

Anyone who has traveled in and out of this country has experienced the many diverse life styles of the people in different parts of the world. Even within a given community or city, one can find differing life styles. Some people choose to have highly manicured lawns, rock gardens, and heated swimming pools. Others choose to stock their back yards with rusting pieces of old cars, a weathered house exterior, and a never extinguished trash barrel. In the same way, people have differing approaches to other people. Some are trustful, others are distrustful. Some are polite and mannerly, others are obnoxious, loud, demeaning, and dictatorial. Others are anti-social, secluded, and in general keep to themselves. This is not an attempt to stereotype people but only to illustrate the differing approaches or life styles people exhibit in their behavior everyday. These differing life approaches are governed by

needs, beliefs, values, and rules people have established for themselves to maintain and protect their life styles.

Tradition, cultural heritages, and societal pressures influence people's life-learning styles. Many people who immigrated to the U.S.A. in past eras brought with them autocratic life styles that couldn't be changed when they passed the statue of liberty. Industry has greatly influenced how people approach life, each other, and the world in which they live.

Similarly, people have differing learning styles. Life and learning are inseparable. To live is to learn. Some live-learn under pressure and external demands. Others live-learn more informally under relaxed conditions, often generating continuing motivation and intensity from within.

Schools are people: students, teachers, custodians, administrators, and other service personnel. People treat others in one of three possible ways: autocratically, democratically, or non-directively, allowing for individual autonomy.

This chapter deals with the three alternative learning environments which are basic to all classrooms.

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It is probably the learning style that a child incorporates into his life style more than anything else that happens in a classroom. After all, it is what he lives which has a greater impact than what the teacher says.

Life-Learning Styles

A	B	C
The learner is viewed as a mind to be molded by the expert teacher. Mastery of factual information. Adult approval for all behavior. Systematic organization of teaching and learning. Standardized testing.	The teacher's task is one of engaging the student's interest through group planned experiences. The student is given encouragement, aid, direction in searching for solutions. Learning by doing, a recognition of student needs, interests, and experiences. Using knowledge rather than absorbing it.	All knowing and truth arrived at by knowing, is individual and subjective. Man determines by conscious choice to accept or reject knowledge perceived on the basis of his own experience. Self knowledge is a key to all knowledge.
Authoritarian, Dictatorial, Autocratic	Democratic, Consensus, Compromise	Autonomy
External, Other Controlled Expectations-Rules Regulations	Group Externally Controlled Laws, Expectations	Internal, Self Control Values, Needs, Conscience Self established goals
Learning Theory Stimulus-Response Training Mental Discipline Conditioning Drill Memorization	Learning Theory Stimulus-Response Training Mental Discipline Conditioning Discovery-Memorization	Learning Theory Organismic Natural Unfoldment Perceptual Field Stimulus-Perception-Response Discovery-Internalization

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A	B	C
Transmission of Knowledge Knowledge-Curriculum-Teacher-Learner	Transmission of Knowledge Knowledge Learner Group Teacher	Experience Inference Knowledge Learner Facilitator
External Motivation Threats, Rewards	External-Internal Motivation. Group Expectations. Rewards, Goals, Values, Needs	Internal Motivation Natural Growth, Needs, Values, Curiosity, Interest
Student Passive	Student Active	Student Active
Some Options	Selected Options	Many Options
Conformity Emphasis on Math, Science, History, Language, Competition	Group teacher Defined standards Emphasis on group decision making, agreement, basic skills	Individuality encouraged. Emphasis on knowledge of self, individual decision making, dependency on total environment, Values
Teacher makes the decisions Behavioral engineering Reality is as defined and perceived by the authority-power representative	Teacher and Students make the decisions Group Guided Consensus Reality is as defined and perceived by the group	Student makes most decisions Personal Meaning, Insight Reality is as perceived by the individual learner
Slow to Change	Recognizes and allows change if group agrees	Understands Change as a natural-ongoing process
People Meet the Needs of the institution	People meet the needs of the group and institution	Institutions and environments meet the needs of people
Product Orientation	Process-Product Orientation	Process Orientation Education is a process not an end product
Acceptance contingent upon ability of student to adhere to the institution's standards	Some acceptance of individual differences	Acceptance

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Alternatives and Strategies

Life-Learning Styles

"A"

Teacher Directed

The teacher makes nearly all the decisions concerning the why, what, how, and when of learning. Student evaluation is carried out by the teacher.

"B"

Shared Decisions

Students and teachers share the responsibility for the why, what, how, and when of learning. Student evaluation is a shared process between teacher and student.

Methods

Teaming
- Interdisciplinary
- Traditional Time
- Block of Time

Self Contained Classroom
Continuous Progress
Grouping (Hetero-Homo)
- Multi-age
- Ability
- Interest
- Achievement

Flexible Schedule
- Modular
- Rotating
- Variable Time
- Daily Demand

Group Counseling
Behavior Modification
School-Within-A-School
Open-Informal
- Team
- Self Contained
- Laissez Faire

Mini School
Independent Study
Programmed Instruction
- Unipacs
- Computer Assisted

Mini Courses
Satelite School
Store Front School
Crisis Classroom
Elective Courses
- 3,6,9 weeks

Distributive Education
Vocational Educational
School for the Arts
Ad Hock Student Government
Community Resources
Sensitivity Groups

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Life Learning Styles	Methods
"C" Student Directed The student makes most of the decisions concerning the why, what, how, and when of learning. Student evaluation is carried on by the student which is shared with his parents and friends.	Gaming-Simulation Differentiated Staffing Conceptual Approaches Core Curriculum Activity Programs during the day Assemblies Student Presentations Professional Entertainment Religious Oriented Schools

Environment Descriptions

To more clearly describe the three basic philosophical alternatives, as they might appear and operate in a school, this section will describe the environments in broad, perhaps exaggerated generalizations. Exaggeration and vivid language is used to accentuate the differences and more clearly show the contrast. The environment descriptions and many of the predictable behaviors are based on real situations experienced and observed by me as a teacher in several public schools.

The "A" Environment

By universal agreement, the ideal class size is twenty-five students to one teacher. At the elementary

level, the students generally stay with one teacher all day. On the junior and senior high school levels, students usually meet with several teachers starting the day with a "homeroom" and moving every fifty minutes to meet with a different teacher. Every course meets the same number of hours every week and yields one "credit point" in whatever the subject is called. These blocks of time are called "Carnegie units" named after the famous industrialist, Andrew Carnegie, who greatly influenced the organization of education around 1915. Usually on the high school level, a student is required to study English for three or four years, two or three years of social studies, and one or two years of mathematics and science.

The primary purpose of the "A" environment is to motivate students to acquire and retain information that will help ensure success at some future time in their life. Besides the transference of knowledge concerning history, mathematics, language, and science, cultural norms, customs, and traditions are transmitted to the new generation. The teacher having studied in college in some specific subject area is seen as a specialist in that subject area and is basically responsible for the student and what he learns.

A student is expected to assimilate and internalize specific concepts and bodies of knowledge before moving on to the next grade. At the next grade the curriculum sequence is continued starting where the previous teacher finished the year before.

Among the instructional tools available to the teacher is the "basic textbook." Usually each student is given one in each of the academic areas. In the secondary school and especially on the college level they tend to weigh upwards of three to four pounds each, contributing to the student's physical development as he carries them around. There are teacher's manuals with almost all these textbooks enabling the teacher to give a daily performance with minimal hesitation. In addition to the book, the teacher has a blackboard and chalk and the students are supplied with pencils, pens, and lined paper. Most teachers require the student to have loose leaf notebooks, not spiral bound, in which to record and file notes on what happens in class. Sometimes these notes are taken directly from the blackboard. Some teachers use several different colors of chalk but discourage student use of colored pencils or pens. Red ink and pencil is usually

reserved for teacher use. In some rooms, maps are positioned on the walls and most unfold and retract like window shades. Some can be pulled down easily by finger but others require a specially made pole. When a teacher really wants to put something across to the class, he tends to rely on the oldest of instructional devices: his own voice. Another instructional tool or method is homework. Homework consists of teacher made assignments which are to be worked on and completed at home. Ideally, this completes the day's work or prepares the student for a future class assignment. Sometimes it serves as a supplemental activity to the classroom.

Teachers, guided by board of education approved curriculum, control the how, what, when, where, and why of learning or what happens in the classroom. The students assume passive roles so that they do not interfere with the pace, sequence, or intentions of the teacher. Teachers pass judgment on everything from assessment of each student's ability potential to bladder and bowel evacuation.

In the "A" environment, teachers utilize stimulus-response and training approaches to learning. The teacher presents predetermined quantities of information and the

student is expected to respond in a manner that indicates it has changed his behavior in a teacher accepted way. When this learning or change has occurred, the student is rewarded in some way and the teacher proceeds on to the next lesson. At the end of this process, usually after thirteen years, the student receives a diploma certifying his attendance over the years and the successful completion of the required courses.

Some teachers initiate, at least to them and some students, exciting and interesting activities in the classroom with the intent that students, being exposed to this experience, will learn the required information and the style in which it was learned. Some students learn in this environment and are able to fulfill their needs for achievement, peer recognition, and social stratification. For some, the competitive climate encourages further striving and advancement. This environment is not for all students and all teachers. It seems to operate best when it is an optional environment chosen by student, parent, and teacher.

Predictable Student Behavior in the "A" Learning Environment

In the "A" environment there is a high dependency on the teacher to organize, direct, and maintain the motivation for an activity. Usually, if the teacher leaves the room, students stop doing the teacher's task and begin to socialize, compare notes, agitate others, relax, and in general, enjoy a reprieve until the teacher returns. At any given moment of the class period, many students are engaged in personal or group activities far removed from what the teacher is doing or directing the class to do. The students communicate by whispering, passing notes, or hand signals.

Some students bring little toys to class to play with during the fifty minute period. Some examples would be: rubberbands, paper clips, combs, small rubber balls, pocket knives, matches, washers, small tops, springs, etc. Boys will sometimes return to the class from the water fountain with a mouthful of water or at least making it appear so.

Students, when entering the room, are expected to find a seat, theirs if one is assigned, and wait passively until told to do something.

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Students who are all of one grade and age level tend to model behavior for each other. Sixth graders tend to act like sixth graders when they are around only other sixth graders. In classrooms with mixed ages and grade levels, students have different behavioral models to imitate and often emulate those who are older.

When a student first enters an "A" environment, he usually is quiet and passive as he takes the first few days to determine the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. After a short interim, some students will begin to test the teacher's stated parameters for purposes of clarification and possible modification. A determination is usually made concerning where to put one's name on the paper, how long papers must be, what books have to be read, how many cuts are allowed and in general what pleases the teacher and what disturbs the teacher. All instructions are repeated twice and often dittoed for future reference. Students at some point, some the first day, decide to mentally compete, maintain for a c grade, or drop out.

Most assignments given by the teacher are worked on and completed the day before they are due. If a paper is due on the tenth, it is usually written on the ninth.

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Quizzes, tests, and exams are prepared for on the night before since retention and recall are known to be as fleeting as the morning mist.

Many students are happy in the "A" environment because it provides them with security and the assurance they are doing the right activities that lead to a diploma. Others enjoy this environment because it offers them a competitive arena where they succeed and gain the recognition all humans need. Others like this environment because it does not require any moral judgments or require decision making which would run the risk of mistake or failure. As the college graduate, ex-marine officer, law school graduate, ex-F.B.I. agent and convicted burglar in the Watergate investigations said to the Senator, "I was only following orders."

It is fairly predictable that in the "A" environment, girls will achieve at a higher level and have more acceptable behavior than the boys throughout the elementary and junior high years.

It is also predictable that certain students will always erase the boards, adjust the windows, run errands for the teacher, and bring an Avon product to the teacher at Christmas time.

Most students in the "A" environment look forward to the end of the school year and the teachers do to. It symbolizes the completion or ending to learning for the year. "No more papers, no more books, no more teachers dirty looks."

The "B" Environment

The "B" environment is basically a democratic learning environment. It is based on a belief that it is better for people to have a process by which they can work for common and individual good and seek to protect the interests of all people, or members of a group, through joint responsibility and control. Advocates of this environment also believe it is impossible for an individual to experience personal freedom until he has gained an understanding of himself as he relates to a total unit. This unit is as large as the universe and as small as any group of people with which he is working. Until the parameters of that group are defined, the individual has no choice whether he will work within those parameters, will work to change those parameters, or will reject them entirely. Students in this environment are encouraged to

try to change procedures that they feel are not meaningful by means of the democratic process rather than by total rejection of the group.

To work effectively in any group, members must understand that each individual in the group is an important component of the total unit. This means that a large portion of time must be spent exploring the contributions that each member can make to a specific task.

Usually in the "B" environment, the group determines the curriculum to be experienced and the norms for behavior. The group must develop a "we-ness" or positive group feeling to function best. Consensus and compromise are important dimensions of this environment.

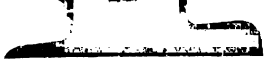
Once a process for establishing and renewing group parameters, goals, and expectations is developed and accepted by all, the "B" environment can be very much like the "A" or "C" environments. Teachers can be called upon to be dispensers of knowledge or learning facilitators. The group must continually evaluate what is happening and reprocess their goals and expectations.

There are problems with the democratic environment if a teacher has a "hidden" agenda for the group. (This

can also be a problem in the "A" and "C" environments.) This approach often breeds distrust between the group and the teacher. Using this environment, teachers will find that while they have influence, suggestions, voting and veto power, many decisions will be different than they anticipate. Because some schools see this as an erosion of control, they do not allow the "B" environment to exist. Another problem with this environment is that one hundred percent commitment on the part of everyone in the group is an unreality. There will always be a few who refuse to make suggestions, or commitments, or take the whole decision making process responsibly. It would be best if these students had another environment in which to live and learn, an environment more supportive of their life-learning style.

The "B" environment can be organized with a team of teachers, a block of time, and many students, or it can function with one teacher and the universally accepted optimum of twenty-five students.

The "B" or democratic environment is not for everybody. There are people who want and need more autonomy than is allowable by a group. There are others who are more comfortable with autocratic procedures.



A teacher and school staff can support democratic decision making in a learning environment only when they truly believe all people are capable of making valid contributions to the process. They must also believe that to explore, trust, and enjoy the infinite possibilities in relationships with other people is a learning experience that deserves a high priority in the schools.

Predictable Student Behavior in the "B" Learning Environment

The "B" learning environment may be very much like the "A" or "C" environment depending on how the students and teachers decide to organize for learning. However, some general behaviors are predictable.

Some students, even though they have selected this environment, refuse to take an active part in the decision making process established by the group, and prefer to follow the group's lead. These students find security in the decisions of the group yet remain guiltless when things go wrong. Some students, even though they participated in the decision making process, give all decisions minimal compliance or even undermine the decision by

ignoring it. They feel the decision applies to everyone but them. Other students take very active roles of leadership, identifying problems, initiating discussion, and building support for a specific issue. The greatest and perhaps most difficult task in the "B" environment is to develop a decision making process that institutes the will of the majority but still recognizes and acts upon the needs of the minority.

Because the students usually have greater opportunities for mobility and socialization in this environment, clique-like groups form. There are the "jocks" who are all on or trying out for the basketball team, carry Adidas labeled gym bags, and wear ties on game days. Since their successes and failures are usually experienced on the gym floor, they tend not to compete on the blackboard. Following the "jocks" are the "cheerleaders" or other girls who may make the cheerleading squad next year. They can often be seen practicing the locker room shuffle, jumping, clapping hands, slapping thighs, in some rhythmical pattern. This activity occurs in the halls, classrooms, lunch line, and girls' lavatory. Another predictable group is the "BR" group. This group spends most of

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their time in the girls' room. It's a place to sit, look in a mirror, gossip with privacy, comb hair, polish nails and lower hip hugging Levis. When out of the girls' room, then can be seen cornering some boy against a locker. The studious groups are usually reserved in dress and manner. They are cooperative, successful in most tasks, quiet, prompt, and play the viola or clarinet. They are often library assistants, seldom become involved in the problems of others, wear the latest in fashion, and have neat handwriting.

It is the "C" learning environment that is quite different and one that most educators have the least experience with.

The "C" Environment

The "C" environment could be labeled an Open-Informal learning environment utilizing a team of learning facilitators, and several rooms in the building as a home base of activity. This complex of rooms can be divided into social, activity, seminar, and study areas.

This environment is based on the assumption that people are more important, of higher priority, than

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knowledge. The students daily and weekly choose from all the resources of the school the ones they want to encounter. The learning facilitators act as counselors, resources, and guides to other resources for students who ask for this help. At times a resource person will help a student develop some short and long term goals and the ways and means of achieving those goals.

There are usually three important constraints placed upon the students by the institution: 1) the learning facilitators must know where all students are at all times because they care about the student and have liability requirements that must be met, 2) no one can infringe on the rights of another, and 3) there can be no destruction of property.

Activities outside of the school building are commonplace. While there are mobility limitations on very young students, older students can often link up with community resources and spend part of their week working and learning with a local merchant, tradesman, or professional. Field trips and camping trips are initiated by the students. They are responsible for all the planning and preparation of such activities. (Greater detail concerning this environment appears in Chapter IV.)

Predictable Student Behavior in the "C" Learning Environment

First entering the S.W.S. can be a trying experience for the student. He is emerging from a teacher-other directed world into an inner directed world. A newcomer's behavior is often as predictable as the various stages of the common cold. Most of these behaviors are results of strategies the students have developed to cope with teacher dominated classrooms. These institutional bad habits create a transitional period of some stress and frustration.

Most students upon entering go right to the books. They make every effort to "look" like a student. Before the end of the second week, the books are closed and the facade is safely jammed in the bottom of somebody's locker. October becomes card playing month, a symptom of the extent of the student's inner resources for direction and risk taking. But this phase is important for two purposes: 1) it brings students with common frustration together into small groups and 2) it leads to more frustration, boredom and self examination. Those who lose at cards are the biggest gainers because they tire of playing within

a week and must deal with other options. Those who are constant winners usually stay with the games for three to five weeks. Then they too must deal with their boredom. By the beginning of November, the cards are "dog eared" and missing. Many of the newcomers look to the seminars being offered to relieve inner anxiety and possible tension at home. Such an escape can be initially beneficial in that it feels good to be doing something which wins parent approval but it prolongs the inevitable crisis of switching dependency from a teacher to the environment. All students do not join seminars or find individual projects. Some find another toy to continue their play. These students are usually better off than the ones who run to a seminar for direction. Those working the yo-yos all day are really processing who they are, how they are using time, and why they are in this predicament. Most all of the students have generated the necessary artifacts that demonstrate learning to their parents by parent-teacher conference time. Students know their parents' needs and skillfully plan to meet them. If it means six pages of math, it can usually be found in their folder. Actually the students are very honest with their parents

and have discussed their activities long before our time for information sharing. By the end of November, a few students will want to get out of the environment. The decision making and responsibility are too much to contend with and they freely admit to a need for constant supervision and external structure. This has been a positive learning experience for these students as now they can make a personal commitment to a teacher centered classroom and know why they are there.

The learning facilitators are in personal contact with all the students most of the time. The team occasionally meets to share observations and determine who is being missed or needs special care and attention. Some students can be overlooked for a while and others may need more love and affection.

By January, the students have established their own unique individual learning routines. They have learned how to beat boredom and frustration. They know how to use time and their environment to meet their needs as growing human beings. For some students this means taking the year "off." Some students need to take a year off from school to process the past ten years of growth. Life is

just not all that sequential as schools pretend it is. A few students complete every reading and math book they can find around the school. They take the last three months of school off. Others read and write at home and come to school to socialize because that's where other young people are. Some students prepare themselves academically for an early entry into high school. As eighth graders, they take math or language courses at the high school and return to the S.W.S. for the rest of the day. Everyone is different and some other illustrations will help to clarify this observation.

Michael Make Me. Mike is new to the S.W.S. environment. He begins the year on the couch in the social room. By December he has moved to one of the overstuffed chairs. He is extremely bored, but he refuses to accept this as reality. He begins to approach the resource people for ideas and direction not because he wants to do a project, but just to have the activity of refusing and rejecting all that is suggested to him. This becomes his project. It is safe and successful. Asking is fun, rejecting is power. Mike feels some guilt about sitting in the social room all day but he fears the responsibility of making a

commitment and having it fail. Rather than risk failure, he chooses boredom and the make-me game. Sometimes Mike evolves into a Do-It-Forever-Don.

Do-It-Forever-Don has finally found a project he wants to do and feels safe doing. He is so proud of himself for making a commitment. It has relieved most of the feelings of anxiety and frustration he has harbored for the past two months. Don works the three day project for three months. He can't give it up. To finish may mean another period of anxious searching. Sometimes Don breaks his project so he can continue with it tomorrow. Someday Don may become a permanent graduate student at a major university. He's okay.

Harry Hostile enters the S.W.S. because he wants freedom. He is tired of being told what to do and of teacher domination. He never has a pencil, a book, or a kind look or word for any authority figure. Upon entering the S.W.S., Harry announces that he isn't going to read or compute. He retreats to the T.V. and "Gilligan's Island." The adult sitcoms of the early sixties, now ten o'clock reruns, are comfortable and safe. As his anxiety reduces and he receives support from the resource people and peers,

Harry makes small efforts at growth striving. He starts several projects, some of which fail. One such successful project is making movies about war and crime. A little out of focus and lacking in continuity of plot, his movies are well received by his peers. People holding the success of four aces never ask for a new deal. During his two years in the S.W.S., Harry doesn't open a math book, diagram a sentence, or write his name and date in the upper right hand of any paper. But Harry enjoys coming to school because that's where his friends meet every morning at 8:15. While his hair is long and his clothes faded and patched, he knows he is accepted for what he can do, not rejected for what he can't do. He feels this respect from others and respects their individuality. He begins to interact with the adults in the room because he is secure enough to take the risk. He can test his ideas against theirs without running the risk of rejection. His verbal skills become another strength and he gets recognition for it. Harry gains a part in the school play and is an instant success. He elects to be a librarian assistant and becomes involved in the use and care of the audio-visual equipment. As his two years in S.W.S. draw to a

close, Harry can sell refrigerators to Eskimos at the North Pole and guarantee service. He is confident and aggressive. He announces to the learning facilitators that he is going to go to high school next year and try his best. While excited about going, he is a little anxious because he doesn't know integers or inflectional morphemes. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills says he is below national norms in academic achievement. The problem is that Harry doesn't know it. He went to the high school full of determination and self confidence. He took beginning algebra his freshman year and was successful. He starred in a high school musical. In other classes he asks questions and tests the teachers. He thinks learning is an active rather than passive process.

Did the S.W.S. change Harry's behavior? We don't really know. We do know that the S.W.S. environment told Harry that he was acceptable as a person at a time school was saying he was unacceptable because he didn't fit the school's expectations. By allowing him to exercise his decision making potential and having his own experiences rather than those dictated by the seventh grade curriculum, Harry felt respected. Confronted with himself and his own

behavior he found he had to and could be something different to meet his needs as a human being. Harry changed himself. He wanted to.

Ira Isolate came to S.W.S. as an eighth grader. Ira had an insatiable appetite for astronomy. In September he quickly retreated to a corner of the room to dig into astronomy books and journals. As a project, he was writing a monthly newsletter compiled from all that he had read and studied about astronomy the previous four weeks.

In mid-November, Ira was looking around the room. He had discovered there were other people there. By December he was out of his corner trying to relate to others, trying to find a group he could call friends. Having few and poor social skills, his first contacts were crude and primative. At first he would hit, grab, and pull to let others know he was there. His peers rejected this behavior and he began to refine it. The astronomy books and journals were set aside now as Ira concentrated on developing social contact. By April, Ira was a contributing member of a group of six students. Some were his age, others were younger. He could now do verbally that which he was trying to do physically in December. He left us in June to go to

high school. As a Freshman, he worked with a small group of students to rewrite the school philosophy. Their efforts were successful and a presentation was made to the Board of Education.

Ira's second year in high school was spent at a private alternative school in the area. While there he took leadership roles in helping others to overcome their problems and difficulties in dealing with life. While he once thought he needed a telescope to look at the problems of the Universe, he had discovered he didn't have to look beyond his arm's reach.

Tiny Tim. Tiny started S.W.S. as a sixth grader. While being the smallest boy in the sixth grade, he was a mathematical giant for his age. During the first few months in school he had beaten all challengers in chess which included eighth graders, staff, and building principal. He had some difficulty with his physical size. He continually felt others were picking on him and taking advantage of him. He saw himself as physically small in a big boy's world. Often this led to some kind of physical conflict as he saw a need to defend his ego and existence. Of course he would always lose and sink into moods of depression.

Three years later, still in S.W.S. as an eighth grader, Tiny Tim is going steady with one of the most attractive, intelligent, mature, talented girls in the school. She is also a member of the S.W.S. Well, she is taller than he, but it doesn't seem to matter. He hasn't had a fight in over a year. He doesn't think about his size as a liability anymore. As a twelve year old he has learned that technique beats size any day. Yes, he is still a math wizz and also team assistant for the basketball team.

Sweet Sue entered the S.W.S. program as a sixth grader. She was personable, polite, cooperative, intelligent, talented, and aggressive. She immediately determined what she would have to study to prepare herself for high school. She balanced her time between books, boys, band, and baseball. As an eighth grader she could have gone on to the high school but chose to remain at the Middle School for most of the day. She does take a language arts class at the high school and elected to take an algebra class at the Middle School. The algebra class became frustrating to her because the teacher and the class moved too slowly. Unusual? No.

Two boys in the S.W.S. two years ago decided they wanted to skip eighth grade completely. They studied and worked to prepare themselves and at the end of their seventh grade, moved into the high school as freshmen. Today they continue to be successful as sophomores.

CHAPTER IV

THE OPEN-INFORMAL CLASSROOM

Introduction

The open-informal classroom or "C" environment discussed in this study was initiated as a school-within-a-school. A S.W.S. is an organizational pattern designed to allow a different approach to learning to exist within a prevailing school program with minimum interference to either program.

This program was started four years ago with three learning facilitators and eighty-five students who were sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. This group meets a minimum of four hours a day in the S.W.S. area, spending the remainder of their day at lunch or in elective areas. This program continues today as one of five learning environments, students, teachers, and parents can choose to best meet their needs and compliment their life styles.

In May of each year, the community, which includes students, are invited to several meetings held in the

school to learn more about the different learning environments and begin to make selections for the coming year. Students can switch environments during the school year.

The "C" environment over the past four years, has been selected by approximately ten percent of the middle school student population.

The School-Within-A-School

The S.W.S. is a learning environment based on the philosophy of open-informal education. The term open-informal education means many things to many people. The S.W.S. defines this term by saying every child is unique, learns at a rate peculiar to himself alone, and learns by a complex set of adaptations that cannot be duplicated in any other child. Accordingly, the S.W.S. is a learning environment that continually re-creates itself according to the uniqueness of children. It also assumes that children learn better through direct contact with the world than through the interpreting medium of a teacher. The teacher or learning facilitator helps the child actively experience the real world of self, others, time, and

materials. The operant verb is no longer teach. It is guide.

None of this is new. There is an old Chinese proverb that says: "I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand."
The work of the child psychologist Jean Piaget contributes to the psychological bases of the S.W.S.

First, children learn at differentiated rates that a teacher cannot alter. A child, ultimately controls his own education. Knowledge is idiosyncratic in that it means different things to different people. Reality is a perception of each person based on his past experiences, values, needs, social-emotional stability and physical health. A person's behavior is a reaction to one's own perceptions of reality rather than reality itself. A learner will tend to interact with that which is meaningful to him, and reject those things that are meaningless.

Another point that Piaget makes is that a child learns experimentally, not by verbal abstractions. This point is also made by the existentialist philosophers. They say that a person must experience himself and the surrounding environment to determine reality and truth.

Both of these points can be synthesized into one major psychological basis for open education and the S.W.S.: the child deserves respect. If a teacher makes most of the decisions affecting a learner's environment, he does not afford the learner the same respect he reserves for himself. To require another person to view life filtered only through my experiences is to deny him his. To demonstrate respect, trust, and belief in the dignity of the learner, is to allow the learner to develop and evolve his own educational experience.

The concept of the S.W.S. does not require any technological or architectural gimmick. It does not depend on a magical physical arrangement of rooms without walls. The concept could be worked in any building regardless of shape or age. In the Kinawa Middle School the S.W.S. uses a suite of rooms. One room is used for socializing, television, and record players. Another for work and quieter activities. A science lab is used as well as the reading and instructional material centers. Nice buildings and lots of equipment help but never take the place of enthusiastic, intelligent, creative educators.

Because of its ever changing moods and characteristics the open-informal classroom is difficult to describe in neat, specific terms. Yet we can list certain characteristics which will help our understanding of this learning environment and which are manifested in the S.W.S. program, and most other open-informal classrooms.

1. Grouping: In most open-informal programs, and the S.W.S., the students are heterogeneous in terms of age, grade level, sixth, seventh, eighth, and maturation. This grouping allows for individually differentiated rates of development. Cross associations can occur on intellectual and social levels. Associations can be real rather than forced because of organizational or institutional needs. Flexible age grouping allows the student to play a variety of maturational roles during the school day, a process that is often inhibited where the child is confined within age-segregated groups.

2. The Integrated Day: The day is integrated in the sense that many different activities are going on within a single learning environment at the same

time. One child may be learning in the reading center while others are attending a social studies seminar. Some students may be working in the Instructional Materials Center while a few others have chosen to practice their instruments in the music area. Others may be in the science lab while others are socializing in the social room. There is little homogeneity of activity. This is an indicator of healthy children making individual choices concerning needs, use of time and materials, and educators respecting their ability to choose. The day is also integrated for the individual child in that he may treat his day as a whole rather than a series of tight learning segments: hour one reading, hour two social studies, hour three math, etc. If a child's needs and intelligence direct him toward concentrating the entire day on a science project or socialization, he is free to do so. In life, if a task or interest is relatively successful, there is a tendency to stay with it until completion. In life there are also days when moods and concerns completely render completion of

job-related tasks a failure. Human beings demand "wasted" time, be they teachers, politicians, or machinists. Only in schools are students expected to be productive every hour of the day. At the sound of the tone, learning in math stops and learning in language arts is to begin. Learning in the S.W.S. is interest orientated rather than clock orientated.

3. Learner Control: Learner control is a primary tenent of the S.W.S. Learner control is a system in which the student, not the teacher, makes the majority of the school day activity decisions. The learner rather than the teacher determines the what, when, how, and why of learning.

   Learner control does not imply that the teacher or learning facilitator abdicates his role as adult, leader or guide. It does not suggest that the teacher becomes a child or buddy of the student. Such role playing by an adult is seen as phony and rejected by most young people.

4. Inner Direction: Part of the authority that directs the child's activity comes from within rather than from without. In David Reissman's scheme of social development, inner directed people, those who had incorporated within themselves standards of behavior and belief, preceded other-directed people, those who turn in time of stress to their fellows for direction. Inner direction is the stuff of active people, leaders. Other direction is the standard by which bystanders at an emergency or crisis fail to act because no one spells out for them the required behavior.

There are many people today who choose not to be involved in facing the decisions life requires of them. They require that others do this for them, thus absolving them or responsibility. When things go wrong they always have someone other than themselves to blame. These people are really running from real life. Each decision they escape from weakens their self confidence to face the brutal realities of living in a complex world. People who make decisions and take intelligent

risks develop the greatest security and positive assessment of the self. In all walks of life the most successful people are those who have ideas, will risk standing up for what they believe to be right, and risk being different when they believe in something. Even though there is occasional failure, those who avoid decision making and risk taking become fearful of reality and all its demands. Intelligent decision making with its innate risks builds strength in human character and is growth producing. The S.W.S. recognizes the need for an environment where growing young people can make important decisions that affect their lives and find failure a learning experience too.

Because of his decision making, the learner in the open-informal environment is very active in his education. He is planning, setting goals, asking questions, seeking answers from his total environment rather than just the teacher, and exploring unknown areas outside a predetermined curriculum.

5. The Learning Facilitator: In the S.W.S., learner control does not mean adult abdication. The learning facilitator is very involved in modeling behavior, helping students to look at their options, and making commitments. The facilitator is involved in handling equipment and selecting materials suitable for the learner's needs. Safety, the rights of others, and the protection of public property are the concerns of all. The environment must be relatively stable and safe for everyone. Guidance is an important function especially for those who are experiencing difficulty in seeing their own behavior, and the environmental opportunities for learning. But the facilitators do not set up fiats under which all students must pretend to be identical in taste, judgment, and ability.

   In the S.W.S. the student must confront experience directly, not filtered through a curriculum council or teacher. If difficulty is experienced, the learner can go to the facilitator for help and guidance. This natural, rather than forced, relationship develops positive interaction between

student and adult. The facilitator can give group or individual instruction. He canlecture to two, interact and discuss with twelve or one, and he can chaperone thirty or more in a large group activity.

6. Teaming: It is possible to have an open-informal classroom without a team. But the S.W.S. utilizes a team approach to differentiate content expertise and personality attractiveness. The teaming approach allows the constant availability of a resource person. It allows one resource person to go off with one or several students leaving another resource person to deal with the concerns of those on individual projects and those socializing.

Teaming also allows for the eccentricities of adult behavior. The uptight or distraught teacher can hide for a few minutes to reassemble his physical and psychological self without leaving the group unattended. It is worth noting here that all the resource people can often disappear for various reasons without disrupting the learning process,

or having the class degenerate into chaos. Students are involved in things they have committed themselves to and are not dependent on the resource people. The adults often leave purposely to build trust between themselves and the students. One doesn't build trust with another by standing over his shoulder or peeking through a window. Often, a facilitator's departure goes unnoticed by the students who are preoccupied with their own personal concerns. With a team there is less possibility of learning failure due to personality conflicts between students and teachers. In the S.W.S. a student can and does choose the resource person he most enjoys working with. As the student's needs change, he often changes his contacts with resource people.

Teaming is also valuable to the S.W.S. when one of the learning facilitators is absent. The substitute does not have to carry the total task of dealing with eighty students. The rest of the team is still there to carry on. The substitute becomes another visiting resource person.

7. Learner-Teacher: In the S.W.S., students teach and learn from each other. Common interests, physical size, or maturation levels bring together students into groups often with two or three years age differential. They often turn to each other because a friend is most available and often most understanding. When a child learns by means of his own efforts, it increases his confidence to help others.

   In the open classroom, everything in the room and total school is a resource for the inquiring mind. Books, materials in the art room, and shop, other teachers, custodians, administrators, the Board of Education, and the community all become possibilities for learning.

8. The Expanded Classroom: Learner control requires not only that the student exercises options concerning his learning efforts in the school, but that he be able to go outside of the school to pursue an interest. The S.W.S. has taken many field trips with those who expressed an interest to do so. All trips are learning excursions on a

voluntary basis. We have gone to the State Capitol several times, numerous camping trips at all times of the year, Greenfield Village, museums, "2001--A Space Odyssey," art shows, the electron microscope and planetarium at M.S.U., the Martha Dixon Show at WJIM, Salvation Army Used Furniture Store, Mr. Steak, and tours through the poor and wealthy sections of Lansing. Parents have often been enlisted to help with these activities and have always responded generously and ably.

There is always the option to go where one can study best, or talk best, or rest best. The social room, work room, group room, and other facilities in the building are in constant use. All space has a possible use for students in charge of their own learning.

9. Interest Centers: Interest centers are not the core of informal education. But they are essential tools for learners. Learners need resources they can turn to when they need them. The learning facilitator is one of these resources. In the S.W.S. the

resource people offer seminars on various topics ranging from algebra to glassblowing. These seminars are attended voluntarily by the students. They are held in labs, classrooms, outdoors, and in the community. The instructional materials center and reading center are very important learning resources for S.W.S. students. Open education will use any device that allows a child the dignity of growing in terms of his own blueprint. Know thyself is still the purpose of education.

S.W.S. Alumni

A question people frequently ask of us is, "What happens to the students who leave the S.W.S. environment and enter a more traditional, teacher-content centered classroom?"

We have spent many hours talking with students who have moved on to the high school where there are no alternative learning environments. The high school has a traditional curriculum with the usual narrow offering of

electives. From our discussions, several predictable experiences emerge.

1. The students have little or no difficulty meeting the academic standards imposed on them by the teachers. Because of the relative ease of meeting these requirements, there is little complaint about this. Many students do have difficulty with the work load. They are not accustomed to spending three or more hours after school in book orientated activities and non-activities. This does cause some anxiety and frustration in some of the students. Some find that they do too much on their own. They read and complete assignments too fast and soon learn how to adjust their working pace to that of the teacher. Before, they set their own schedules but in the high school, Parkinson's Law takes over.

2. Most of the former S.W.S. students find the high school a relatively easy experience to that of the S.W.S. The S.W.S. required them to deal with the real frustrations of procrastination, decision

making, personal failure, discovery, use of resources, materials, time, and self control. This is a difficult experience for most anyone, child or adult. When these students enter the teacher-content dictated high school, they quickly learn the minimal things they must do to earn their desired grade, an "A," "B," or "C." Being told what to study, how to study it, and when to study absolves them of personal responsibility and decision making. Obtaining an acceptable grade point average becomes important because the school equates high grade point averages with success. These students soon learn the "Game" of getting good grades. Little time is wasted searching avenues of learning that may prove to be dead ends or of little positive consequence on the grade point average. Now they know exactly what they should spend their time on and what should be avoided. They learn very rapidly how to play "school."

3. Some people ask, "If the S.W.S. students fit in so well, has their S.W.S. experience been wasted?" Initially, S.W.S. alumni attempted through the

student government to bring about some curricular change at the high school. But within the year their efforts were crushed by the teaching staff. Shortly thereafter the whole student government became ineffective and discarded. But one difference that seems to remain between the S.W.S. students and the other students who missed the experience is that the S.W.S. alumni know there are alternatives in learning and life. The other students are unaware of this. They think their experience is the one and only way. Occasionally an attempt is made to question this but to do so is to operate outside the norms for student behavior and one is labeled as incorrigible or a "freak."

4. S.W.S. alumni are more talkative in class than other students. Generally, they ask more questions, challenge both teachers and other students, are more apt to take an independent study and are more project orientated. If this kind of behavior, however, is not encouraged at the high school and can interfere with compiling a high grade point

> average, some students may have difficulty. The S.W.S. environment probably didn't initiate the active learning role but it did encourage it by the very nature of its operating strategies and techniques.

To allow the reader to draw some of his own conclusions concerning the frustrations and feelings of S.W.S. alumni, a few letters from these students have been included.

> Dear Mr. Blom:
>
> It is third hour and I am in my Language Arts class. Miss () gave us a list of exercises this week to keep us busy. But I finished them all. They weren't due till Friday and yesterday I was done. Of course I don't know what that proves. I think it is just a gesture of defiance. Like saying, "See, I finished everything. You can't keep me busy all week like that. I can learn without your help." Does that make any sense to you?
>
> You know Mr. Blom, I have become extremely dissatisfied with school here. The only reason I come is because I have to. Last year I know I had to come, but I also wanted to. That makes quite a lot of difference.
>
> I know a lot of people now who were in S.W.S. the first year, and they seem to take a totally different point of view of things. I wonder if just letting yourself out for a while does that or maybe proving what you can really do. I like both ideas.

Dear Mr. Blom:

Well, back to the old grind as the saying goes. I sure wish I could get out of here. I am in third hour, as usual, and get this, I am learning how to write sentences. Lord, I've been writing sentences for ten years! If I can't write sentences by now, then what's the use of even picking up a pen to put my thoughts down on paper?

This new teacher really disgusts me. What kind of an idiot does she think I am anyway? A pretty big one, I guess. I think sometimes she is right.

I wrote the most terrible composition I ever wrote in my life and she gave me a "B." By my standards, it should have gotten a "D" or "F."

Dear Mr. Blom:

I am writing about school in the best place--school. This school is so impersonal I can't stand it. But there isn't much I can do about it, is there? Of course not, if I have that attitude. But around here what the principal says, goes. Without question, whether he's right or wrong. I think this is the making of a little Russia.

I am glad, really, about getting good grades, but as I asked you once before, whose standards are they? If I graded myself, I would have gotten an "A" for effort in some classes and an "E" for not trying in some others. Because that's how I was this term. One of the classes I got an "A" in, I got without trying. And some of the kids that tried really hard got a "C." It doesn't seem fair. But then nothing really is when you think about it, is it?

I do alot of thinking, Mr. Blom, and a lot of writing too. But the two go together. I

suppose if I really wanted to be technical, I could say that this school is completely upside-down, dictated, and above all--boring. Oh well, I've seen worse things before.

A Student Teacher Reacts

Dear S.W.S. Staff:

When I first started in S.W.S. back in November, I had some really high expectations of the socko experience that student teaching was going to be. Whatever time I spent in S.W.S. was just going to be the finishing high of an already high experience. As it turned out though, I think S.W.S. has become a refuge for me; a place where alot of my personal needs have been met without too much output involved.

S.W.S. was a place for me to test my social skills with students. It was a place to engage in some personal relationships with young people. It was a place where demands made of me could be met while just being myself. At a time when I was asked to manipulate and control and discipline and meet kids intellectual needs part-time at the high school, at S.W.S. I could walk into an already set-up situation, act as an adult friend, as a sometimes tutor, an outside-talker-outer, a counselor, a chess player. I had all the fun and none of the responsibilities in some way. I had irregular hours because of the responsibilities of being part of the student teaching cluster. Some days I couldn't show up at all, because of something at the high school, because of an appointment cross town. When I did show, it could only be an hour, two hours . . . maybe if I were

to stay on in S.W.S. I would start to hold a couple seminars . . . . The Middle School kids, especially in S.W.S. are really good to be with, such an ability to make believe and think of unlikely things. So maybe I would start some seminars . . . but all in all, as it comes to a close, I'm glad I was able to experience S.W.S. without ulterior motives.

I'm glad I was able to experience kids in a play-like situation; casual, non-threatening. I'm glad I could deal with some of the kids on an emotional level.

It felt so good to have an experience that was not deferred gratification, to have time that generally felt good when everything else felt bad.

I've felt a lot of supportiveness from you. It wasn't really explained very much. It was more often non-verbal than verbal. It wasn't often fully expressed, but I felt it. A general feeling that I was trusted, that I was doing a good thing when I was around.

I felt best toward the end of the term when I started to diversify in S.W.S. At the last, I started to tutor in math or language arts as well as play chess and socialize. That felt good because maybe I was meeting someone else's needs besides my own.

Briefly then, although student teaching has been much more discouraging than I'd expected, though my own plans for work in S.W.S. changed and took different forms, I have felt good about being involved there. I has been an up. I have even felt needed and helpful there as: another adult body, a kid's friend, an extra facilitator. Thank you, Steve

"C" is Not a Crisis Classroom

The "Open-Informal" classroom is not a "Crisis Classroom." A "Crisis Classroom" is another option for educators and students and caters to emotionally and socially disturbed and unstable people. An open-informal learning environment demands that a student face himself and his environment. Someone unstable to the point of constantly escaping from the reality of self and environment has great difficulty sorting and organizing the many options offered in the open-informal setting. This student has too much difficulty living with himself without the added pressures of a highly stimulating environment.

There are people who feel a drug "high" is the better choice to a life "high" because it is easy, predictable, dependable, and instantly available on demand. Getting "high" on life is not a desirable choice for some people. These people should not be in an open-informal learning environment.

There are others who have achieved great recognition and success with negative behavior. The open-informal environment isn't always conducive to reversing this

process. The unsupervised, trusting environment can be too attractive for more success from more negative behavior.

Since we seldom know the origins of these unstable behaviors in students, a school with options and alternatives stands a better chance in finding a best placement for a child.

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Introduction

As previously stated, this is not research designed to prove or disprove a hypothesis or add more statistics to the stacks of the university library. My concern has not been to find new data but rather to put into practice some of the theory already developed many years ago and report on my experiences so others can benefit and perhaps make similar attempts. At least at this point in time, education may be best benefitted by more doing and less statistical data collecting.

This chapter deals with sharing rather than comparing. It is an attempt to share some of the information we have found concerning the learning environments. It is not an attempt to show which is best or better.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an important process. As a diagnostic mirror, it can improve behavior and efficacy of individuals, groups, and programs, if that is a desirable.

In education our mirrors are few and limited. Each day we receive a whole child but are at best only able to test a few of his parts. We can test his eyes, his hearing, and evaluate his reading skills compared with others his age in the rest of the country. But some evaluative mirrors distort when used to measure creativity, imagination, or the whole child. Scientific measurement often fails when it comes to determining a child's ability to initiate activities, be self directing, and take responsibility for one's own learning. To evaluate only those areas that we can measure, and make judgments about the whole person or program on the basis of that data is very inconclusive. Yet, educational programs supported by public monies soon find themselves being evaluated. If those working with the program don't do it, the community soon does.

In the spring of 1971, Dr. L. Shulman and a group of graduate students from the Educational Psychology

Department of MSU made a comprehensive study of the "A" (Traditional) and "C" (Open-Informal) learning environments. Since that time this writer has obtained more data concerning all three environments. This section is a presentation of this information. The purpose of this information is not to prove which learning environment is the best of the three. Its purpose is to share what I know concerning these environments after four years of observing and testing.

The Shulman study group matched, as best they could, students in the S.W.S. with students in the traditional classroom. In terms of background:

1. S.W.S. students are representative of the rest of the school in terms of age at all three grade levels.

2. Those students who chose the S.W.S. environment had spent the same number of years in the Okemos school system on the average as had their non-S.W.S. counterparts.

3. Parents of children in S.W.S. have attained a higher educational level overall than have their non-S.W.S. counterparts.

4. Measures of verbal and non-verbal I.Q. reveal no difference between students within and outside the program.

5. The number of absences for both the S.W.S. group and the group representing the traditional classroom were equivalent and were not different from the school average.

The background descriptions also included achievement test scores taken prior to the beginning of the S.W.S. environment, and these revealed no differences in prior achievement of the S.W.S. group and the rest of the school. In order to follow this up, the Stanford Achievement Test Battery was administered to both groups and it demonstrated that there were no differences in the rate of growth between the two groups. Subsequent achievement testing, the Michigan State Assessment and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, confirms the results of the Shulman study team.

Ten students who started the S.W.S. experience three years ago as sixth graders and now are eighth graders have maintained their own individual growth rates.

Comparative data taken from a 1964 normed I.T.B.S. taken as fifth graders in 1969 and a 1971 normed I.T.B.S. taken as eighth graders in 1973 show few significant differences in rates of growth. (See Appendix.) Perhaps the most significant fact that can be derived from the data is that the S.W.S. students even after three years of exposure to the "C" environment achieved at all. This S.W.S. environment has no objectives or curriculum related to vocabulary, reading comprehension, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, word usage, map reading, graphs, reference materials, arithmetic concepts, or arithmetic reasoning. The "A" or traditional environment does include these areas in its sixth, seventh, and eighth grade curriculum. The factors that most influence cognitive achievement must be personal and internal rather than environmental.

The Shulman evaluation team made two attempts to assess the learning environment of the S.W.S. as compared with the traditional classroom. One attempt was designed to measure the student's perceptions of their learning

environment and the other a more objective set of systematic classroom observations. Both attempts reveal differences between the "C" learning environment and the "A" learning environment. Students within the "C" (S.W.S.) compared with those outside saw their environment as less concerned with speed and generating less friction, less favoritism, and less cliqueness. Objective observations of classrooms demonstrated that S.W.S. spends less time on traditional classroom activities and more time in social activities. A student in the S.W.S. environment could be expected to spend as much as eighty percent of his time in social activities. In addition, the S.W.S. students seem to demonstrate more mobility within the building than those in the "A" or traditional environment. Further studies (see pages) of the learning environments "A," "B," and "C" concerning class cohesiveness, diversity, formality, speed or pace of activity, feelings toward the environment, interpersonal friction, favoritism, cliqueness, satisfaction, disorganization, democracy, and competition confirm the Shulman study. (See Appendix.)

Assessment of the social structures of the "A" and "C" environments via sociometry led to the conclusion that

the students seen as most attractive by their peers in the "C" or S.W.S. environment are best described as academically orientated and are active, creative leaders. Outside S.W.S., on the other hand, the most popular student is defined socially in terms of appearance and friendliness.

Attempts to measure curiosity, creativity, and self concept generally failed because of inadequate information about the students at the beginning of the year.

An interesting finding happened almost by accident. The S.W.S. students were observed in all settings many of which were without any adult supervision. At these times, such as in the Instructional Materials Center, the observers noted that the S.W.S. students generally came there on academic business and carried it out on their own, quite seriously, and undetectable in terms of behavior from students from other environments. (See Shulman report to the Board in the Appendix.)

In summary, there is a great deal of comparative data one may want to collect concerning the three basic environments, such as family background, and needs and values of both the students and their parents, their social involvements, religious orientation, etc., but

basically there is no evidence that achievement in cognitive areas is greatly affected. Changes may and do occur in feelings, attitudes, and living-learning styles. Each environment presents a valid option for learning and growing. By the very nature of offering choices to students, teachers, and the community, the school has supported the main tenents of Democracy.

Other Findings

Working specifically in the "C" or S.W.S. environment has, through observation and experience, enabled the writer to identify and describe an environment where the inner resources of self-control, responsibility for learning and use of time, use of environmental resources, self directiveness, commitment, and self criticism are very likely to develop. These characteristics would be encouraged in an environment that:

1. allows the student to make choices about what he does, when he does it, and how he does it. The student must see the consequences of his choices to aid him in future decision making.

2. allows the student to take an active role in relating to all the resources of the school.

3. the learning situation is based on individual need and desire rather than content sequence or organizational convenience.

4. sees failure as a positive learning process.

5. allows students to teach and learn from each other.

6. encourages risk taking in learning.

7. encourages a student to practice self control.

8. allows the child to find out who he is, how he relates to others and how others relate to him.

9. provides the student with information about himself by way of diagnostic instruments and personal feedback.

10. teaches a child to base his learning on internal motivation rather than external rewards or fear.

11. allows children to be mobile rather than inactive and passive.

12. enables the student to have moments alone with the adults in the room.

13. provides a rich assortment of materials.

14. recognizes play as an important learning activity.

15. helps the student to become dependent on the total environment for learning rather than just the teacher.

16. is trusting.

17. fosters a respect for each other as people and for the rights of others.

18. accentuates the positive.

19. is real, providing real experiences rather than simulated, contrived, or existing only in the mind of an educator.

20. is stable and relatively safe. The fear of possible injury from things or other people can impair positive growth.

21. exposes the student to experiences and opportunities he may be unaware of or overlook.

22. is not clock orientated, allowing natural involvement and closure on activities.

23. helps the child to find experiences that are meaningful to him as a unique person.

24. includes disappointment and sorrow, crisis and anxiety, sweat and tears.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Ten students out of eighteen in 1970 continued to be in the "C" environment in 1973. These students had started in the "C" environment as sixth graders and remained as seventh and eighth graders. Some of the original sixth graders of 1970 moved out of the school district and some left the "C" environment during their seventh grade. The ten students that remained in the S.W.S. did not attend any formal classes in math, science, language arts, or social studies. The "C" environment

does not include content assimilation as an objective. All ten of these students have been in the school system for more than four years and all took a Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the fifth grade in 1969 and again as eighth graders in 1973. The results of these tests are on the following pages. A random sample of ten other students who for the past three years went to classes in the "A" and "B" learning environments and who also took the I.T.B.S. as fifth graders and again as eighth graders is also included. This is not an effort to determine which environment is best or turns out the highest achievers, but only to verify the findings of the Shulman study of 1971. (See Iowa Test of Basic Skills Scores in the Appendix.)

After looking at the test results one can generally conclude that the ten three year veterans of the "C" environment continued to achieve in most areas even though they didn't receive any formal classes in the areas the test covers. Students in the other learning environments also continued to achieve at generally the same rates of achievement they had previously experienced in school. One must keep in mind that the purposes of the different environments do not al hold cognitive achievement as a high priority.

My conclusion, after looking at many more test scores than are represented in the Appendix, is that achievement is a very personal activity and is not greatly influenced by the school. People looking for the causes for high or low achievement will probably have to look outside of the school first and then look at how the school helps or hinders this process. It is interesting to note that a child in the formative years of birth to 18 years old, spends approximately 8% of his time in a school setting and 92% of his time elsewhere. The time he spends with any one teacher can vary from .1% to .01% of the time of these formative years.

Learning Environment Inventory

The Learning Environment Inventory is an instrument designed to gather students' perceptions and opinions concerning the classroom environments they attend each day. It attempts to get a measurement concerning the cohesiveness between students, the diversity of the group, the formality of the class, the speed or pace of the activities, feelings about the total environment, friction

between students, favoritism by the teacher, cliqueness within the group, satisfaction with the materials and appearance of the environment, the disorganization, the degree of democratic process used in making decisions, and the competitiveness between students.

A score of 2.00 is a median. A score above 2.00 would indicate that the characteristic is descriptive or applies to the environment. A score under 2.00 indicates that the characteristic tends not to be present or descriptive of the environment. Ten hundreds (.10) would be a significant difference between scores pertaining to different environments. Over sixty students from each environment were given the Learning Environment Inventory. The results are below.

	"A"	"B"	"C"
Cohesiveness	2.86	2.77	1.99
Diversity	2.90	3.05	3.21
Formality	2.31	2.39	1.61
Speed	2.41	2.60	1.35
Environment	2.83	2.74	3.05
Friction	2.67	2.86	1.88
Favoritism	2.12	2.52	1.57
Cliqueness	2.88	3.03	2.01
Satisfaction	2.33	2.52	2.58
Disorganization	2.19	2.46	1.90
Democracy	2.43	2.33	1.71
Competition	2.39	2.58	1.98

Several general conclusions can be made from this data:

1. The "A" environment has more cohesiveness between students than the "B" and "C" environments.

2. There is more diversity in the "B" and "C" environments than in the "A" environment.

3. The "C" environment is perceived as informal compared to the "A" and "B" environments.

4. All the students feel satisfaction with their classes and generally positive toward the environments they had chosen for themselves.

5. Favoritism and cliqueness is greater in the "B" environment than in the "A" or "C" environments.

6. Because of its encouragement for individuality and personal autonomy, the "C" environment was not perceived by the students as being democratic.

7. Competition is recognized and felt by the students in the "A" and "C" environments but not to any great extent in the "C" environment.

8. The Learning Environment Inventory data indicates that the environments are functioning according to their design and purposes.

(See Appendix for the Learning Environment Inventory.)

Gates MacGinitie Reading Test

The Gates MacGinities Reading Test was administered to all eighth graders in the school during the month of May. This is a timed test designed to measure a student's vocabulary, reading comprehension, reading speed, and accuracy.

The figures presented below were obtained by adding the sum of all standard scores and dividing by the number of students. The resulting average standard scores were then converted to grade scores.

The purpose of including these scores in this study is not to develop comparisons, but rather to be descriptive and give the reader more information concerning the reading achievement levels of the students in each environment after at least one and in some instances, three years in a

specific environment. Some, but few, students have experienced two and possibly three environments during their three years in the Middle School.

	"A"	"B"	"C"
Vocabulary	8.7	9.1	9.8
Comprehension	12.0	10.0	10.5
Accuracy	9.6	8.8	9.5
Speed	9.2	9.6	9.6

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The public schools today are coming under increased pressure to justify what they do and how they do it. But as monoliths in educational theory, methodology and in light of the differences and diversity in human beings, there are always groups of dissatisfied teachers, students, and parents. There are always groups who feel the schools do not represent their life-style. This becomes even more critical as the schools must deal with the influences of change as represented by the parents and students. Just when the educational institution changes, it immediately becomes unsatisfactory for another group in the community. There is always one group firmly committed to what is, another group attempting to be future oriented, and another group in transience.

By offering the community, students, and teachers choices in theory and operation, the schools can serve the diverse and changing perspectives of the people it serves.

What has always been can exist along side something different, innovative, new, or experimental. The alternatives are not competitive since differences in human beings are still acceptable. This means there is no one best way or life style for all students to internalize or to which all must conform.

Working with different learning environments or alternatives for the past few years, several observations and findings are worth noting:

1. Students are happier. School wide feedback surveys indicate that the students enjoy school. By having options they can engage in activities that are most meaningful to them, they can personalize their learning programs, and they can avoid certain teachers and spend greater time with others.

2. Teachers are happier. It is exciting and especially pleasing to be allowed to be oneself and to be recognized as having worth for what you are. It is good to come into a school and retain individuality and identity. When teachers are encouraged to develop learning environments that are expressions of

what they do best for and with children rather than attempt to construct a classroom that meets the needs of some vague administrative model, the teachers develop feelings of worth, validity, credibility, acceptance, and self confidence. All of these feelings manifested in the teacher's behavior bring positive benefits for students.

3. The "C" or autonomous learning environment is not experimental in theory or practice. It is a valid, healthy learning environment. Students do learn self control, self direction in learning and use of time, and how to learn and use the resources of the school and community. Students do continue to achieve on standardized achievement tests without attending formal classes of regulated size or time. This approach does not lead to anarchy or chaos. Anarchy and chaos are life styles bred in autocratic environments. Revolt and revolution result from oppression not freedom.

4. Offering learning environments to a community requires greater parental involvement with the

schools. They must be informed concerning programs and choices so they can make intelligent decisions. Greater parental involvement often means greater support as they see the school providing programs that reflect their interests and beliefs. This diminishes distrust and hostility. After three years of offering the community alternatives, the school has begun to receive a great deal of community support.

5. The adult community has the greatest difficulty, compared with their children, with the reality of making choices concerning what is the best learning environment for their child. Yet, most overrule the choices of their children if a conflict occurs. Most parents request the "A" learning environment for their children while most of the students select "B" or "C" learning environment options.

6. A reality of the "B" model is that it eventually looks very much like the "A" or "C" model, depending on the group choice. The "B" model is more of

a decision making process or life style than a learning style.

7. The alternatives approach may not be the ideal approach in 1990 but at this time of great change and future shock, it can be a most accommodating procedure educators have at the moment.

A Few Words of Advice

There are no rules for guaranteeing success in setting up a learning alternative in a public school. But there are some concerns that should be considered, if the program is to survive.

1. Be certain that the students in some way are acquiring or be sure they have acquired, the basic skills of reading and writing. These two areas are still critical for positive self concepts and future growth.

2. Keep faculty, students, and the community informed about what is being planned from the initial

development through periodic times of change and reassessment each year the program exists.

3. Make sure the program is an honest extension of the beliefs and behavior of those who staff it.

4. Make the program self-perpetuating. Alternative programs cannot run for long on the strength of one, two, or three individuals. People who create new programs are usually restless, relentless people who are always subject to changes in interest and taking better paying or growth inducing jobs. It is important that once a program is firmly established, others are brought in to share in the beliefs and operation of the program. A program's continuation should not be entirely dependent on its founders. The staff chosen or developing the alternative should be people who are able to meet many of their needs outside of the school. This will eliminate the possibility of staff using or becoming dependent on the program to meet their own needs and perhaps lose their effectiveness in helping students to meet their needs.

5. Almost anything new makes people nervous, suspicious, jealous, or hostile. Staff developing alternative programs should not wait for opposition to arise and attack. They should immediately attempt to cultivate goodwill with other staff members and the community. The alternative should never be presented as a threat to existing programs or other teachers' teaching styles. Never try to make the alternative look good by pointing out the weaknesses and flaws in the other programs. Present the new learning alternative as a choice in a democratic society.

6. Build a support system in the community be enlisting ideas, advice, and support from opinion makers in the community. This support system is necessary to help the Board of Education when they become indecisive concerning new programs, and in correcting inaccurate information that circulates throughout the community.

7. While all staff members need not be supportive or totally understanding of the philosophy and

methods of the alternative program, they must be neutral to positive. Opposition in a community is usually fed with information from within the organization. If this is occurring, find this person on the staff and attempt to identify their insecurity. The need is for respect of others and their differences, not philosophical agreement.

8. An alternative school in a public school must always remember it is public. It is not to be elitist or exclusive. It must never have to hide anything. Its doors should always be open to the staff and members of the community. Be suspicious of what you are doing if you feel it must be hidden.

9. Visitors should be given time and encouraged to visit other programs in the school even though they have come specifically to observe the alternative or new program. Visitors should be encouraged and given time to observe, question, and respond concerning their observations and impressions. This often requires that a staff person spend some time with the visitors before and after

the visit. This feedback is helpful to you and you have an opportunity to clear up any mis-conceptions or negative opinions.

10. Visual and audio presentations should be developed so that the staff can visit other schools and groups in the community to explain the alternative program. A booklet or pamphlet professionally printed, rather than a ditto sheet, is very helpful as a handout to visitors and inquiries by mail. A small booklet dealing with philosophy, operation of the program, and evaluative data can be read at someone's leisure and processed by the reader after a visit. It often answers questions that arise after the visit is over.

11. It is probably best to maintain a "low profile" the first year of operation. Visitors, the press, and other media can be a hinderance at a time a new program is working on its toughest problems.

12. Whether or not the program uses some form of evaluation, the community will use theirs. It must be kept in mind that no new program can be adequately

evaluated after one year of development. Instant analysis is often premature, unrevealing, showing only the obvious and overlooking the more subtle facets of the program. But there should be a plan for some kind of evaluation. Evaluative strategies and techniques must be developed that are meaningful and related to the philosophical basis for the program. Those the community devises will not meet these conditions. Commercially produced evaluations, student evaluations, and staff observations and evaluations are all important sources of information for improvement, establishing credibility, determining failure and weaknesses, and providing understanding for everyone. This process is necessary to identify those activities and programs that are harmful to child growth and development.

13. Students in an alternative learning environment should know why they are there and be able to articulate this information to others. No one can support, sell, and continue a learning alternative as well as those who are directly involved, the students. A conscious awareness of the purpose

of the learning environment also helps the student to look at his purposes in relation to the program's purposes. If they conflict, he should be the first to know and seek another alternative.

One Source of Public Hostility

From the time that Socrates was forced to drink hemlock because of his teaching methods and ideas, to last month's public board of education meeting, schools have been attacked and defended, teachers have been blessed and damned. At no time in history have we all agreed on what schools should be and what they should do. Today is no exception. Socrates was neither the first nor the last teacher to suffer because he persisted in teaching ideas that other people didn't understand or disliked. In most times and places, the teacher has been commanded to be a propagandist for approved values or a vested interest group rather than a searcher for truth. Schools have long been exposed to the pressures of private groups which want to exclude any but their own values and life style.

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Schools have public relations whether they want to or not. It is unavoidable for the public to hold highly personal convictions, impressions, and feelings concerning school. Since the time school attendance became compulsory, parents and their children have at least one common experience. Parents have memories and images of their experiences as students in schools of years past. This experience becomes the basis of their perceptions of school today.

If schools become places of joy, be prepared for some hostile parents. Historically schools have been places of sweat and toil, anxiety and discomfort. For many parents school was a negative experience. It was an experience of frustration, criticism, constant accountability, competitiveness, and pressure to succeed. Some parents feel this negative experience was responsible for their success today. They feel it conditions people for the negative environments they create today in their industrial, business, and professional vocations. They see too that the negative environment of school sorts out those who are great from those who are mediocre. Local boards of education who exercise a certain amount of control over schools, often consist of higher status groups: business

and professional men, seldom support educational programs that may result in changes in class structure or change the symbols of success. Similarly, parents who work in factories often expect the schools to look and operate like factories.

Children, in the minds of some parents, are not expected to enjoy school. If they come home happy, the parents feel the school is too permissive, inefficient, and not preparing their children for the "real" world. Schools that are trying to prepare children for tomorrow rather than yesterday and today are vulnerable to this source of criticism.

Conclusions

Everyone in education need not be an innovator or change agent. But education needs to allow and develop ways in which experimentation, exploration, searching, trying, and change can occur. It must allow for constructive radicalism. The school is a model for all who are in it. If fear of differences and trying are the climate, mood, and prevailing atmosphere of the school, the new

generation will be handicapped in dealing with the remaining decades of future shock. If the attitude that people can't be different is taught by the behavior of the educational institutions, they can expect conflict, and escalating confrontation experiences with students. If students do not learn the concept of choice in the schools, they will likely fall prey to institutions and groups that will attempt to eliminate choice in their adult lives. The opportunity of choices is in harmony with the nature of the human mind.

One reason change has occurred so slowly and inefficiently in the public schools is because of the autocratic nature of the usual change process used by institutional hierarchies. When someone in government, a state board of education, or a local administrator develops the financial and autocratic resources for a change in program and curriculum, it is often imposed on a school staff. A few hours of in-service training are scheduled and the change is expected to occur. But people don't change this easily. Change is both external and internal. If the beliefs that govern one's behavior do not change, even though a procedure has, change will not occur and

administrators must not be so barbaric as to try to force someone to change their beliefs. Beliefs and attitudes cannot be legislated by a court or a legislature.

The approach of options and learning alternatives in schools is an approach to change. Something different, or experimental, can exist with support without threat to what already exists. The new and the usual can function side-by-side. Isn't this the way change occurs in the field of technology? Don't the new cars use the same roads as last year's models? Do we automatically require everyone owning last year's television set to junk it when this year's new and improved model comes into the showrooms? Everything new on the market doesn't make everything old bad. But new things are encouraged and allowed to exist along with the old. The organizational structure of alternatives in the public schools is a realistic and equatable approach to today's societal diversity and a way of assimilating new ideas and practices in education. New approaches can be tried without threatening last year's programs and in the process, the philosophy of democracy will be served.

Choice is a natural national heritage which seems to have become suspect by many of our prominent educational and political leaders. The practice of choice in public education would be in harmony with our democratic heritage, the pluralistic nature of our society, and the need for community involvement in public education.

This study highly recommends adoption of the opportunity for alternatives in people's lives, starting with their first school experiences. With this as a model in early life, the idea of choice may not be so hard to accept in the future.

Some Final Questions

There are a few important questions this study does not answer and can be an impetus for further study.

1. How greatly does a school effect a person's life-learning style?

2. How do students, after spending three years in an "A," "B," or "C" environment on the middle school level, differ in life-learning styles as Juniors

and Seniors in high school and after high school graduation?

3. What would be the results of a K-12 school program that encouraged optional learning environments that had distinctive philosophical and operational differences?

4. Can the life-learning styles alternatives offered to the community by way of private and parochial schools be incorporated into the public school institution?

5. Does the practice of life-learning environments when all conducted within one institution promote segregation, peaceful co-existence, or integration?

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTERS TO PARENTS

KINAWA MIDDLE SCHOOL

OKEMOS, MICHIGAN 48862

OFFICE TELEPHONE 349-9220
GUIDANCE TELEPHONE 349-3500

April 27, 1973

Dear Parent and Student:

The goal of providing learning alternatives for children creates a need for additional information from you. The kind of information we need centers around the type of classroom environment in which you prefer your child to be placed.

There are 850 students who must be scheduled. We will try our best to give all children their preferences. In the past, we have been very successful in arranging student schedules to meet their choices.

Keeping in mind that this is an opportunity to indicate a preference of learning environments for your child, we would like you (parent and student) to complete the learning environment sheet and return it signed with the course elective sheet.

If parents and/or students have questions regarding Kinawa instructional offerings, please call or visit the Guidance Office. The number to call is 349-3500.

Remember that orientation for parents of present 6th and 7th graders will be held Wednesday, May 2 at 7:30 p.m. in the Kinawa Auditorium. Staff members will be available to talk with you. We look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Glen K. Gerard
Principal

DEAR FIFTH GRADE PARENT:

The middle school provides different types of classroom settings for children. The opportunity is provided for you and your child to select the "learning environment" which seems most appropriate.

Listed below are the three general learning environments which we provide. Please rank order the learning environments below according to your preference (1,2,3).

____ The student makes most of the decisions regarding what is learned, how, and when it is learned. Student self-evaluation is used to assess learning.

____ Student and teacher share the responsibility for making decisions about what is learned and how, when, and where it is learned. Student evaluation is also a shared process between teacher and student.

____ The teacher makes nearly all of the decisions about what is learned and also how, where, and when it is learned. Student evaluation is carried out predominantly by the teacher.

____ No preference.

These are different approaches used at Kinawa to cover the courses of Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, and Social Studies.

Please indicate your 1st and 2nd preferences of the four (4) approaches listed below.

____ Sixth, Seventh, Eighth Grade Interdisciplinary Block (Two Teacher Team)

____ School-Within-A-School (S-W-S)

____ Self-Contained by Subject (Regular Hourly Schedule)

____ Language Arts-Social Studies Team

_____ _____

Parent Signature Student's Name

Please return this sheet along with the course selection sheet to the Guidance Office by May 31, 1973.

(STUDENT NAME) (PRESENT GRADE)

Kinawa Middle School students and their parents have the opportunity to indicate preferences for learning environments and program.

Please rank order the learning environments below according to your preference (1,2,3).

____ The student makes most of the decisions regarding what is learned, how, and when it is learned. Student self-evaluation is used to assess learning.

____ Student and teacher share the responsibility for making decisions about what is learned and how, when, and where it is learned. Student evaluation is also a shared process between teacher and student.

____ The teacher makes nearly all of the decisions about what is learned and also how, where, and when it is learned. Student evaluation is carried out predominantly by the teacher.

____ No preference.

There are different teaching approaches used at Kinawa to cover the courses of Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, and Social Studies.

Please indicate your 1st and 2nd preferences of the five (5) approaches listed below.

____ Seventh Grade Interdisciplinary Block (Four Teacher Team)

____ Eighth Grade Block (Four Teacher Team)

____ Sixth, Seventh, Eighth Grade Interdisciplinary Block (Two Teacher Team)

____ School-Within-A-School (S-W-S)

____ Self-Contained by Subject (Regular Hourly Schedule)

PARENT SIGNATURE

Please return this sheet along with the course selection sheet to the Guidance Office by May 11, 1973.

APPENDIX B

PHILOSOPHY OF THE

OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

APPENDIX B

PHILOSOPHY OF THE OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The existence of a democratic society is dependent upon an educated, informed, and actively participating electorate. The democratic ideal assumes the inherent worth of every individual, his right to strive for the fullest possible achievement of his potential, and the necessity of cooperating with others for the achievement of society's potential. As we progress toward turning our idealism into reality, the Okemos Public Schools find themselves charged with meeting a wide diversity of educational needs and aptitudes in children and young people. Furthermore, we face greater challenges than ever before in preparing our youth to live in an increasingly pluralistic, complex, and rapidly changing society.

The unifying purpose of this educational task is the development of rational, creative and critical thinking within a meaningful body of knowledge. This is the central purpose to which the school must be oriented if it is to accomplish either its traditional tasks or those newly accentuated by recent changes in the world. To say that it is central is not to say that it is the sole purpose or in every circumstance the most important purpose, but that it must be a pervasive concern in the work of the school. Many agencies contribute to achieving educational objectives, but this particular objective will not be generally attained unless the school focuses on it.

The ultimate ends of education will be best served by providing, to the fullest extent possible, an understanding of man's most significant deeds and thoughts and the nature of the physical world in which he must exist. From such understanding, a student can develop a sense of where we came from so that he can better judge where he is, where he is going, and why.

We recognize that the school as part of the larger society, is itself a social system which provides intellectual, social, and physical stimulation. The environment of the school, the style and manner in which it operates, is one of the key elements in helping the child learn

about his society and how to participate in and contribute to that society.

It follows that, in fulfilling its responsibilities, the Okemos School System must recognize, respect, and respond to individual differences in children. It must establish a climate that enables the child to develop a positive and realistic self-image and which is conducive to his physical and emotional well-being, with particular recognition of the interdependence of a sense of self-worth with knowledge and skill acquisition. It must emphasize many kinds of talent and the varied ways in which individual potentialities may be realized. To this end our schools should provide planned options and alternatives in teaching styles, learning environments and curricula.

It is the particular challenge of the Okemos Public Schools to generate and maintain the essential inspiration, integrity and sense of direction so necessary to excellence in education. Our commitment is not to a narrow and exclusive intellectualism, but rather to a program of education which will stretch the mind and spirit of children. Through their school experiences we expect our children to acquire: 1) the basic skills, within a context that does not sacrifice awareness of higher capabilities; 2) the knowledge and qualities of independent thinking that will enable them to operate effectively within our complex democratic society; 3) a recognition of the personal responsibility that must be assumed in order to realize one's potential; 4) a confidence in mankind's ability and courage rationally to solve the problems it faces; and 5) perhaps most important of all, an understanding that one's education is a thing begun but never concluded.

ADOPTED
NOVEMBER 13, 1972

APPENDIX C

SHULMAN REPORT TO OKEMOS

BOARD OF EDUCATION

APPENDIX C

SHULMAN REPORT TO OKEMOS BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 13, 1971

Last year the "School Within a School" was instituted at the Kinawa Middle School to give a few students from the study body an opportunity to participate in this program. As the program progressed through the year it was necessary to make some close analysis, and Dr. Lee Shulman, a member of the Okemos Community, along with his students have spent a great deal of time in the evaluation of this program.

Dr. Shulman, Rick Steggins, and Celia Guro presented the following evaluation of the "School Within a School"

The following presentation, for the most part, is a verbatim report by Dr. Shulman and his two assistants.

About a month ago the staff met with the faculty of the school. We spent about three hours and presented statistical data, however, we will not go into that phase. Time was a detriment, so some qualifications will have to be made. Dr. Shulman indicated it was impossible for him to do this alone, so I called upon graduate students and some post graduate students to help. I have two of my assistants with me, tonight, they are Richard Steggins, as coordinator, and Celia Guro.

The Only area that I would judge was the most lacking was the parent questionnaire. However, as it turned out this proved helpful because Celia Guro was conducting systematic interviews on parents and students.

The conducting of an evaluation study like this is not a very simple matter. It is comparable to a drug study. The kind you might do in a pharmaceutical house, where you are trying to develop a new antibiotic in a field where other antibiotics already exist. We already had a middle school, doing reasonably well, with a few complaints, but you always have complaints about schools.

The question was could an alternative be created that would meet the needs of some individuals whose needs were not at least being optimally met by the existing program; and at the same time, without any substantial detriment in quality in respect to the kinds of goals that the regular program was achieving. The analogy would be trying to create a new kind of antibiotic, that would not only do what existing antibiotics would do, but let's say to be effective with people who are sensitive to antibiotics. Possibly who have some side effects, or who do not simply enjoy taking the other antibiotics, for whatever reason. So, we were not looking to demonstrate that one program was superior to the other, though if we could demonstrate that it would be quite interesting.

We were also looking to demonstrate that there were no deficiencies in one program with respect to another. That was the general strategy of our research; another important thing to remember is the matter of cost. It was not only a matter if this program could be conducted as well but at no additional expenditure of revenue.

Two problems that we had to deal with.

1) The objectives of this program. There was a list of 16 objectives to the program. We found, as we usually do, initially difficult to interpret, in general somewhat vague. Let me point out that this is not a unique difficulty of the "School Within a School" program, because if you went to a regular school program and asked for a specific detailed set of objectives you would probably find a very vague and non-detailed list there as well.

I think that this is a problem with the general school program, and one also with the "School Within a School" type program, that educators will have to do something about soon.

We spent our initial efforts working mainly with the "School Within a School" staff, getting clarification of what their major objectives were, coming to some agreement with them on what would be appropriate evidence for the achievement of these objectives, and then we proceeded to gather the data.

Now there were some methodological problems. The regular school program emphasizes the achievement of intellectual objectives of subject matter competence, and this happens to be an area where the field of educational measurement has made pretty good progress. The problem of measuring the attainment of intellectual skills is not a very tough one.

The "S.W.S." program in contract was a program emphasizing that social, emotional and attitudinal changes as objectives. And simply the field of educational and psychological measurement in this area is not as well advanced so we had to work in that field with less sensitive instruments and often with instruments that in retrospect that we were not pleased with.

Finally, it has to be remembered as Celia and Rick go over this program that this is an evaluation study. It is not a piece of general research. What that means is that it was a study of a particular program, at a particular point in time conducted by three teachers for a particular group of students. The results are relevant to that particular situation. You cannot generalize from these results that all such programs, under all possible conditions will have similar effects. It remains, and I will expand a little more on this after Celia and Rick are finished, a constant recurring problem of quality control, to see whether what worked once, or what failed once, will continue to have the same impact. To take another analogy, the fact that one lot of canned goods is free from botulism does not mean the next will be, and you have all had the experience of eating in a restaurant and find it marvelous eating once, and all they have to do is to change the chef when you go back and the same situation remains intolerable. Please keep that caveat in mind. This is a situation specific kind of evaluation.

What we are going to talk about first will be the data that Mrs. Celia Guro gathered in which she interviewed, as she will describe, samples of students, faculty, and parents. We will follow her description of data with a report of Mr. Steggins on the test evaluation, both in the cognitive area and the attitudinal area.

Celia I will ask you to begin, Rick will you pick up when she finishes.

I interviewed seven different types of groups that I felt would have some kind of impact as far as their attitudes on SWS. First of course were students in the S.W.S. Then I tried to get their corresponding parents of each of these students, and did for the most part. Then I interviewed students who had dropped out of S.W.S. and again tried to get the same consistency of their parents. Then I interviewed teachers at the Middle School that were not involved with S.W.S., and administrators and the three counselors working in the Middle School at that time. In addition to the interviews I felt that I should be observing S.W.S., so from March to June was in S.W.S. probably once or twice a week.

In general, talking about students first. All three samples of students felt that when they defined S.W.S. saw it as an independent learning situation, where the responsibility for the learning rested mostly on the child, and they saw the teacher as a guide. All three samples would mean "School Within a School" students, students who dropped out of S.W.S. and the third group which I forgot to mention, I also interviewed students who were in the regular school also. So all three felt that way. All three samples of students saw the freedom in S.W.S. as something positive. They defined this freedom as freedom from the teacher oriented classroom where the child does pretty much what the teacher wants him to do without very little choice and with very little choice as far as the activities and as far as time spent. One thing that was found specifically, now in School Within A School is that in School Within a School there are actually different schools within a school, because children act differently. For instance, one group of children if you looked at them and did not realize they were in the "School Within a School" might say okay, that is a traditional classroom what would they be doing in their math, going to a teacher to ask them for help. Some of the students might not even be there, they might be on field trips, somebody else might be having a discussion, so we did find there were different activities in the S.W.S.

Most of the students interviewed said that they enjoyed school more than they had at any other time previously, and they did attribute this to S.W.S. that means the atmosphere created there. All children said they enjoyed having three teachers because this gave them a choice that they could go to whichever one they wanted. It was interesting that students in the "School Within a School" seemed to define learning differently. Some defined it very traditionally, as far as book learning, or whatever the teacher said. Others encompassed the learning definition with an interpersonal relationship and self insight and the learning of more how to get along with people.

Most of the children that I interviewed that were in S.W.S. did say there was a period of adjustment for them; a week, two weeks, or three weeks. They said whatever happened though after that they became much happier, but it did take a while to feel more at ease in S.W.S. and most of them trributed this to the fact that before they had been accustomed to teachers telling them what to do and here now were told they were on their own and didn't quite know what to do.

Now interviewing students who left S.W.S. The main unhappiness with students who left S.W.S. seems to be they felt their inability to function without more direction from the teachers. The two reasons

they gave for leaving S.W.S. was first, that their parents were very concerned that they weren't achieving enough academically, and they said that a lot of this evidence that parents used as evidence you are not bringing enough homework so the parents asked them what is going on.

Second reason why they left was that they didn't know where they were in relationship to others, and were afraid that the longer they stayed in S.W.S. they might get behind. It is also interesting that a lot of the 6th graders who dropped out dropped out for the simple reason they wanted to know what the Middle School was like, it was their first contact with the Middle School, and their first contact therefore, was S.W.S.; if they were in S.W.S., and because they hadn't had a chance to see the regular school and change classes and they wondered what that was like, and others left because of friends.

There were 14 out of 86 who decided to leave the program at some time during the year.

When I asked them if they felt they were sorry for the time they spent in S.W.S. and most of them felt they had gained. The things they gained were got along better with people, and just the idea that may be they did need more supervision, that made them happy to be back in regular school. Now going to the students in the regular school that I interviewed. Most of these when asked if they would like to try S.W.S. said yes they would like to try it. When I asked them if they saw S.W.S. students as different in any way than they in the regular school, they said the only characteristic that they though was personality. These students might be more independent. They felt that students in S.W.S. probably did different types of activities than they did because they felt these students were more free than they. But they probably learned the same kinds of things, but did these things differently.

Now to talk about the parents I interviewed. I compressed both sets of parents of students who had dropped out, and those who had students in S.W.S. as far as their positive and negative feelings were concerned. Many times these feelings would overlap, but even if a parent was very excited about S.W.S. his negative comments often the same kind of negative comments and concerns that the other parents from the other sample did have. I did not interview parents from students of the regular school becaue as I went around the community and heard some of the rumors that had been going around I began to call some parents, and they said gee I haven't heard anything about it, some had heard from friends, so it became more of a telephone thing. As far as positive

comments from parents the most positive aspects seem to be in the socioemotional realm of the program. Those parents were the happiest when they saw that their children were relating. Some of the comments were that their children seem to like themselves better and because they seem to like themselves better they were more accepting of others. Parents commented that children had less headaches than before. Other parents commented on the kinds of relationships that they thought were forming in S.W.S. not as far as boy-girl relationships, but they saw it as friends. Parents liked the idea of their children learning how to make their own decisions. They liked the idea of having three teachers available to their children.

Negative comments, mostly in the field of academic achievement and feedback. Many parents were concerned that the children were not being prepared academically for high school. They felt the teachers were not guiding or directing their children enough in the academic field. As far as feedback was concerned they were concerned about some of the feedback that they were getting that Johnny was doing rather well, but wanted to know how he was doing in relationship with other people and as far as grades. They were concerned about the quality of the feedback. Other parents felt that the only way they could get feedback was to ask for it, and the only way the child could get feedback was to ask for this and they felt that some of the children were too shy to do this. As far as teachers and administrators were concerned, I grouped them together as far as their positive and negative feelings were concerned. Negatively they felt that not enough communication of activities were being circulated. They felt that at times a difference in how S.W.S. students were treated in comparison with students in the regular school. They questioned if students in S.W.S. were dealing with the idea of being open to people who were different than themselves. They felt that perhaps there was not enough material around to motivate children, but they also said that perhaps this was a factor of finance. Some people were concerned that if this was a program to teach and make decisions, and to help people do this they were concerned if children were dealing with the consequences of their behavior. They felt that at times these children were told if you do such and such you better watch out because this might happen, and if they did do such and such that this did not happen.

Positive points, they felt that it was really good that there was a chance at Kinawa to have this educational opportunity. They felt it helped them as teachers.

People who had observed said they noticed that some of the students they felt that the students they had observed in S.W.S. were gradually coming to more self-responsibility so they talked more about individual cases.

They also said that as they observed the students in S.W.S. that they seemed to be tied to the very traditional ways of learning. They would run to a typical sixth grade book, or a typical seventh grade book to get an answer, or ask the teacher; but as the year went on they began to rely more and more on individual students as resource people and to use university people as resource people. They also said that they saw some creative activities coming out of S.W.S. such as movies and some papers that were written. They felt that some people would only look at that and say that that is only from a movie, without realizing that socio-emotional and intellectual skills were involved.

Mr. Stebbins continued, in the interest of brevity I have tried to condense some of the comments from all the piles of data that we were able to collect about this program. I have summarized them in several areas. The first group having to do with the background of the students involved in the program, as compared with those who were not in the program. A few brief comments on the achievement test data. From there we will go to an assessment of the learning environment from two different directions that we tried to do. Following that we will go into the social structure of S.W.S. as compared to the rest of the school. Finally, a few comments on the measures of creativity and self concept and just a brief comment on the information that we tried to get, somewhat unsuccessfully from the questionnaires that we sent out.

A review of the background of the SWS students and a representative group of students not in SWS established the following point;

1. SWS students are representative of the rest of the school in terms of age at all three grade levels.

2. Those students who chose the SWS program had spent the same number of years in the Okemos school system on the average as had their non-SWS counterparts.

3. Parents of children in SWS have attained a higher educational level overall than have their non-SWS counterparts.

4. Measures of verbal and non-verbal IQ reveal no difference between students within and outside the program.

5. The number of absences for both the SWS group and the group representing the rest of the school were equivalent and were not different from the school average.

The background descriptions also were formulated to include achievement test scores for tests taken prior to the beginning of SWS, and these reveal no differences in prior achievement of the SWS group and the rest of the school. In order to follow this up the Stanford Achievement Test Battery was administered this past spring to both groups and it demonstrated that there were no differences in the rate of growth between the two groups.

In fact, patterns of scores across subjects of the SAT revealed in the early administration were reproduced in the later testing.

There were two attempts made to assess the learning environment of SWS as compared with the rest of the school, one measuring the student's perceptions of their learning environment and the other a more objective set of systematic classroom observations. Both reveal differences between the SWS setting and other classrooms in the building. Students within SWS compared with those outside saw their program as less concerned with speed and generating less friction, less favoritism and less cliqueness. When students outside SWS rated the SWS environment they saw it in much the same way as did the students in the program. However, SWS students perceived their program as vastly different than their perceptions of the other programs in the school. Objective observations of classrooms demonstrated that SWS spends less time on traditional classroom activities and more time in social activities. In addition SWS students seem to demonstrate more mobility within the building than those in other classrooms.

Assessment of the social structures of the two groups via sociometry led to the conclusion that the students seen as most attractive by their peers in SWS are best described as academically oriented and are active creative leaders. Outside SWS, on the other hand, the most popular student is defined socially in terms of appearance and friendliness.

Measures of curiosity, creativity and self concept in various dimensions were measured and revealed no differences between the groups. This phase of the evaluation suffered severely due to the lack of information about the students at the beginning of the program.

Finally, an attempt was made to assess the attitudes and feelings of parents, teachers, and administrators toward the SWS program in relation to the school. An oversight in the administration of the questionnaire tended to cloud the results and make any conclusions very tentative at best. It was clear however that outside the program there was very little knowledge of what was in fact occurring within the program.

Dr. Shulman, I would like to preface my concluding remarks and recommendations before we open it up to questions from the Board.

First of all, a couple of comments that were reported by Celia Guro and Rick.

We had anticipated in finding some striking differences between kids who were in the program and those were not. As all of us living in Okemos know that the rumor that spread about the composition of kids in SWS were incredible. I personally, in places like Meijers and other major community places heard everything from SWS is an elite program in which only the highest IQ kids in Okemos are allowed to participate, all the way to it is a dumping ground of kids that nobody else wants to teach.

Well, the psychology of rumor is I suppose, a subject matter all of its own, and won't worry about that for a moment. We found no evidence supporting either rumor as Rick summarized there were no differences in intelligence level as measured by the Stanford intelligence test in kids in the program and outside the program. There were no particular differences but there were patterns that meant one could interpret carefully between their previous achievement levels and the only place that there was any difference that was at all consistent was in the average educational attainment of the parents. Had we had earlier data, which we did not have, on styles, attitudes, values of the kids at the beginning of the year, we might have been able to identify some real differences in general styles of the kids, but it wasn't there. I am sorry we couldn't collect those data because we didn't begin until it was too late.

Another interesting thing that happened almost by accident, was the systematic classroom observations that were conducted. They were conducted not only in SWS classrooms, and non-SWS classrooms, but also in the I.M.C. where we are sitting now. One of the findings that interested me most, was the pattern of activity. Namely, with the distribution of effort with respect to traditional academic type activity as against social activity, as against thumb twiddling activity. Was

almost identical in the I.M.C. and in traditional classrooms, even though the setting was totally different and the degree of active teacher supervision and interaction was totally different. In other words, when kids came here to the I.M.C. they generally came on academic business and carried it out on their own quite seriously. I guess as a kind of parenthetical comment, Mrs. Kinsinger that from her intensive study of once a week, very carefully, and her impression generally, that there was a much higher proportion of SWS kids taking advantage of the I.M.C. than the average. It is quite possible, although the SWS kids are spending a lot more time socializing within SWS as observed by our observer, they were also absent from SWS a lot more, and in other places in the building and that very often was here in the I.M.C.

Conclusions and recommendations:

One thing that was no secret either to Ken or Joe Bechard when they asked me to direct this activity was that I hold no particular brief for free-schools, or open classrooms, and I am a skeptic about such things and frankly when I began working on this evaluation I was very skeptical. I am much less skeptical now, and although far from being prepared to deliver a universal endorsement of this type of education for all kids under all conditions I am surely prepared to attest to the following kinds of conclusions.

First, of all, there is no evidence that children learn any less in the traditional academic areas during one year in SWS than they would have in that same year in a regular school program. I am pretty sure about that. I am not prepared to guess what would happen if a child spent many years in such a program. It could work either way. It could make him a better student or a poorer student, but my hunch is if you followed up a group of kids like that you will find some going both ways. I think we all know from our own experiences that some of our kids are slowed down by a regular classroom and others wouldn't move at all unless they were prodded to do so. We did not find what we expected to find, many dramatic cases of kids who were doing very poorly before this year, and suddenly changed in achievement as kids who were doing marvellously and suddenly dropped in spite of antidotal communications to the contrary. In other words we looked as we identified our graphs to identify kids who were way off the diagonal who were very different this year than they were in previous years, and in terms of academic achievement they were almost non-existent. Now one thing you have to keep in mind is the ages represented by the Middle School are very volatile to change as the rule rather than the exception. So that if

you are going to get change you are likely to get it, whether it is in a special program like SWS, or within a regular school program as with the rest of the school. So find a traumatic change and attributing it to SWS. For many of them it was a more enjoyable experience and for many of them this was in contrast to their prior experience. As I said earlier given the criterion of no particular detriment some felt satisfaction and no increase in cost. I would judge that surely on the basis of those data the program had surely on the basis of those data the program had surely justified its existence. Now a couple of recommendations.

1. That I would suggest the Okemos System to continue the kind of experimental innovation attitude that has characterized this system for many years, especially in the recent years. At the same time I would hope that this experimental attitude be accompanied all the time, not just on this occasion by sense of accountability. It is in this marriage of innovativeness and accountability that truly excellent school programs can be maintained. Innovativeness without accountability, I think, is reckless. Accountability without experimentation is just thought. We can't afford either. We have to continue experimenting and innovating, because if there is anything that is very clear it is that nothing is remaining the same. We can't compare the problems of teaching these children in 1971 with the period before the flood, when most of us parents were educated, or even when their younger siblings were educated; may be just five or six years ago. Kids are changing, the knowledge we are communicating to these kids is changing, teachers are changing, society is changing; we have to remain loose and be prepared to modify programs all the time. I think that the precedent set by the request for an evaluation assistance in this instance is one that ought to be repeated with frequency.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Need to increase the feedback that the SWS staff gave, both the students and to parents. I have had occasion to watch the response to this recommendation, as it was made long before we had even begun to analyze the data; and I have reason to believe that things began to change even as early as mid-spring. They are continuing to change as I understand from the SWS staff this fall, as far as increasing the kind of feedback, like how as I doing? Where am I doing well? Where am I doing poorly? Kind of a diagnostic feedback both to the students and to their parents. It was clearly an area that needed improvement, and is one that we recommended be improved.

2. It was very clear that many kids though they knew, or their parents knew, how they would do in a less structured system, but as it turned out there were 14 out of 86 who had misjudged. My hunch is, there is also a number of kids who had judged prior to the experience that they wouldn't be able to flourish in that sort of system and so never even tried it. I would recommend that an opportunity be created for a kind of trial where all kids might get a chance in a less structured setting, maybe for just a week or two. Just to try themselves out and I would envision no particular loss of academic achievement, and possibly a great deal of personal growth for the kid to get some better feelings for how he worked under different kinds of structure.

3. That if you are going to do evaluations of this sort, and you are going to do them all the time, as I said before, you have got to, you can't depend on university faculty members doing it in spare time, with slave labor, however well motivated and unrewarded. It doesn't work as well. I think that if this school system takes experimentation and innovation seriously, as I think it does, then it had better take accountability seriously, and at somewhere along the line have got to carve out on our permanent staff of the Okemos schools, a position, an individual who is responsible for coordinating evaluation efforts. I think this is a high priority item. I don't think that we should depend on John Porter in the State Department of Education to evaluate our school district using criteria set downtown. We would not be pleased simply letting someone downtown decide what our criteria ought to be for the evaluating of our programs then doing it. The only way that we make sure that that does not happen by seeing to it that we take the responsibility for quality control of our programs first. Because if we don't, we are going to have some problems, I think. What this means is giving some very careful attention to budget and staff allocation, and trying to find a place for a permanent quality control decision, if you will.

4. Another recommendation that is really a kind of observation, I kept on saying if the program could be conducted at no additional cost. The program is being conducted at no additional cost. In fact that there were times when I was convinced it could be conducted at a lower cost. Let's remember that not all programs in schools cost the same amount. We take it for granted for example, that science programs cost a great deal more than social studies programs. The additional equipment that they need, science teachers have higher degrees, because of special setups in classrooms. It may turn out that programs like these to be super special, are in fact going to need a higher expenditure. An expenditure per pupil more like in teaching science and less like teaching English. I don't think that we have to slavishly have to hold on that every

program must cost the same. Different programs are sometimes going to cost more, and we as citizens of the community have to decide are they worth more to us, and if they are we will have to be prepared to pay it.

Finally, I thought Ken and his colleagues were absolutely brilliant in the way they approached my sense of responsibility as a citizen of the community. It was an example of a combination of seduction and working on guilt feelings as best; he also happened to pick the year when my oldest child entered first grade. I think we should do this more systematically, as I recommended to Ken, that if I am to be exploited let me be joined by fellow exploiters.

APPENDIX D

RESULTS OF IOWA TEST

OF BASIC SKILLS

APPENDIX D

RESULTS OF IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS

Name Kirk W. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	97	88	66	72	59	65
Reding Comprehen.	96	84	65	71	57	63
Spelling	72	82	53	59	56	62
Capitalization	87	53	58	64	48	54
Punctuation	62	62	49	57	49	57
Usage	79	78	55	61	54	62
Map Reading	99	81	68	78	55	63
Graphs	91	95	58	68	63	71
Reference Materials	90	94	59	67	63	69
Arith. Concepts	94	88	62	70	59	64
Arith. Reasoning	93	79	60	68	54	62

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Josie F. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	87	81	59	63	54	60
Reading Comprehen.	92	66	62	66	51	57
Spelling	85	77	58	62	54	60
Capitalization	67	72	52	56	53	59
Punctuation	67	85	52	56	56	64
Usage	84	98	58	62	67	75
Map Reading	26	1	42	46	23	31
Graphs	79	62	56	60	49	57
Reference Materials	75	58	55	59	49	55
Arith. Concepts	79	49	56	60	47	53
Arith. Reasoning	80	47	56	60	45	53

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Cindy E. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	25	34	41	45	43	49
Reading Comprehen.	16	38	38	42	44	50
Spelling	29	27	43	47	41	47
Capitalization	27	37	42	46	44	50
Punctuation	2	52	27	31	46	54
Usage	17	31	38	42	41	49
Map Reading	49	46	48	52	45	53
Graphs	47	56	47	51	47	55
Reference Materials	26	25	42	46	40	46
Arith. Concepts	4	49	30	34	47	53
Arith. Reasoning	35	92	44	48	60	68

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Paul S. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	97	88	66	72	59	65
Reading Comprehen.	96	84	65	71	57	63
Spelling	72	82	53	59	56	62
Capitalization	87	53	58	64	48	54
Punctuation	62	62	49	57	49	57
Usage	79	78	55	61	54	62
Map Reading	99	81	68	78	55	63
Graphs	91	95	58	68	63	71
Reference Materials	90	94	59	67	63	69
Arith. Concepts	94	88	62	70	59	64
Arith. Reasoning	93	79	60	68	54	62

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Beth H. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	3	7	28	34	32	38
Reading Comprehen.	8	14	33	39	36	42
Spelling	13	5	35	41	30	36
Capitalization	3	2	28	34	26	32
Punctuation	31	9	41	49	32	40
Usage	3	56	28	34	47	55
Map Reading	9	21	31	41	38	46
Graphs	7	1	30	40	23	31
Reference Materials	4	43	28	36	45	51
Arith. Concepts	10	1	33	41	24	30
Arith. Reasoning	19	36	37	45	43	51

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Alison W. "C"

	Percentage		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	87	71	59	63	52	58
Reading Comprehen.	81	77	57	61	54	60
Spelling	87	74	59	63	53	59
Capitalization	37	76	45	49	54	60
Punctuation	79	80	56	60	54	62
Usage	76	82	55	59	55	63
Map Reading	89	67	60	64	50	58
Graphs	63	56	51	55	47	55
Reference Materials	98	79	69	73	55	61
Arith. Concepts	72	53	54	58	48	54
Arith. Reasoning	56	62	50	54	49	57

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Sara W. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	87	65	59	63	51	57
Reading Comprehen.	45	36	47	51	44	50
Spelling	21	44	40	44	46	52
Capitalization	21	30	40	44	42	48
Punctuation	43	48	46	50	46	54
Usage	92	66	62	66	50	58
Map Reading	77	27	55	59	40	48
Graphs	79	95	56	60	63	71
Reference Materials	49	22	48	52	39	45
Arith. Concepts	44	16	47	51	37	43
Arith. Reasoning	28	47	42	46	45	53

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Susan L. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	90	--	61	65	--	--
Reading Comprehen.	77	77	55	59	54	60
Spelling	89	74	60	64	53	59
Capitalization	83	95	58	62	64	70
Punctuation	94	--	64	68	--	--
Usage	89	95	60	64	63	71
Map Reading	89	67	60	64	50	58
Graphs	95	95	65	69	63	71
Reference Materials	91	--	61	65	--	--
Arith. Concepts	87	88	59	63	59	65
Arith. Reasoning	91	96	61	65	64	72

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Tim C. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	94	94	64	68	63	69
Reading Comprehen.	96	81	66	70	56	62
Spelling	48	74	48	52	53	59
Capitalization	46	30	47	51	42	48
Punctuation	38	43	45	49	44	52
Usage	63	62	51	55	49	57
Map Reading	62	54	51	55	47	55
Graphs	55	78	49	53	54	62
Reference Materials	52	72	49	53	53	59
Arith. Concepts	39	19	43	47	38	44
Arith. Reasoning	44	36	47	51	43	51

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Lisa B. "C"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	99	91	70	76	60	66
Reading Comprehen.	97	85	66	72	57	63
Spelling	85	70	57	63	52	58
Capitalization	29	60	42	48	49	55
Punctuation	92	43	60	68	44	52
Usage	99	74	70	76	52	60
Map Reading	90	76	58	68	53	61
Graphs	98	88	66	76	58	66
Reference Materials	87	91	57	65	60	66
Arith. Concepts	75	56	53	61	48	54
Arith. Reasoning	79	62	54	62	49	57

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Blair W. "B"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	87	55	59	63	48	54
Reading Comprehen.	79	64	56	60	50	56
Spelling	53	77	49	53	54	60
Capitalization	37	37	45	49	44	50
Punctuation	13	34	37	41	42	50
Usage	92	56	62	66	47	55
Map Reading	97	59	67	71	48	56
Graphs	68	45	53	57	45	53
Reference Materials	5	62	32	36	50	56
Arith. Concepts	47	49	47	51	47	53
Arith. Reasoning	35	75	44	48	53	61

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Carol "A"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	58	65	50	54	51	57
Reading Comprehen.	66	53	52	56	48	54
Spelling	95	70	65	69	52	58
Capitalization	76	83	55	59	56	62
Punctuation	96	88	66	70	58	66
Usage	76	82	55	59	55	63
Map Reading	86	94	59	63	62	70
Graphs	75	97	55	59	65	73
Reference Materials	95	95	65	69	64	70
Arith. Concepts	64	72	52	56	53	59
Arith. Reasoning	44	42	47	51	44	52

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Jeffrey S. "A"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	58	38	50	54	44	50
Reading Comprehen.	47	16	47	51	37	43
Spelling	53	31	49	53	42	48
Capitalization	56	68	50	54	52	58
Punctuation	2	52	27	31	46	54
Usage	27	11	42	46	33	41
Map Reading	49	27	48	52	40	48
Graphs	55	32	49	53	41	49
Reference Materials	29	14	43	47	36	42
Arith. Concepts	17	4	38	42	29	35
Arith. Reasoning	28	58	42	46	48	56

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Pat L. R. "A"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	39	53	45	49	48	54
Reading Comprehen.	47	26	47	51	41	47
Spelling	21	24	40	44	40	46
Capitalization	50	25	48	52	40	46
Punctuation	56	28	50	54	40	44
Usage	47	17	47	51	36	44
Map Reading	49	46	48	52	45	53
Graphs	84	62	58	62	49	57
Reference Materials	58	33	50	54	43	49
Arith. Concepts	38	13	45	49	35	41
Arith. Reasoning	35	53	44	48	47	55

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Don R. "A"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	87	88	59	63	59	65
Reading Comprehen.	86	72	59	63	53	59
Spelling	99	79	71	75	55	61
Capitalization	99	95	71	75	64	70
Punctuation	98	91	69	73	59	67
Usage	95	74	65	69	52	60
Map Reading	97	71	67	71	51	59
Graphs	99	78	71	75	54	62
Reference Materilas	95	89	65	69	59	65
Arith. Concepts	94	80	64	68	55	61
Arith. Reasoning	88	75	60	64	53	61

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Karen Sue M. "A"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	84	71	58	62	52	58
Reading Comprehen.	75	82	55	59	56	62
Spelling	38	27	45	49	41	47
Capitalization	86	57	59	63	49	55
Punctuation	85	66	58	62	50	58
Usage	81	56	57	61	47	55
Map Reading	83	73	58	62	52	60
Graphs	79	68	56	60	51	59
Reference Mateirals	83	70	58	62	52	58
Arith. Concepts	55	66	49	53	51	57
Arith. Reasoning	19	83	39	43	55	63

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Roger N. "B"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	99	78	71	75	55	61
Reading Comprehen.	94	74	64	68	53	59
Spelling	55	52	49	53	47	53
Capitalization	83	49	58	62	47	53
Punctuation	77	48	55	59	46	54
Usage	98	66	69	73	50	58
Map Reading	95	63	65	69	49	57
Graphs	88	68	60	64	51	59
Reference Materials	97	54	67	71	48	54
Arith. Concepts	55	49	49	53	47	53
Arith. Reasoning	44	42	47	51	44	52

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1973

Name Tamra L. D. "B"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	85	61	57	63	50	56
Reading Comprehen.	89	49	59	65	47	53
Spelling	68	57	52	58	49	55
Capitalization	63	57	50	56	49	55
Punctuation	66	76	50	58	53	61
Usage	90	66	60	66	50	58
Map Reading	66	63	49	59	49	57
Graphs	78	56	53	63	47	55
Reference Materials	83	72	55	63	53	59
Arith. Concepts	69	56	51	59	48	54
Arith. Reasoning	75	58	53	61	48	56

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Linda J. F. "B"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	94	75	64	68	54	60
Reading Comprehen.	85	70	58	62	52	58
Spelling	87	82	59	63	56	62
Capitalization	67	93	52	56	61	67
Punctuation	79	94	56	60	62	70
Usage	89	91	60	64	59	67
Map Reading	93	59	63	67	48	56
Graphs	75	83	55	59	55	63
Reference Materials	83	81	58	62	56	62
Arith. Concepts	58	13	50	54	35	41
Arith. Reasoning	28	36	42	46	43	51

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

Name Kathy S. B. "B"

	Percentile		T Band			
	1969	1973	1969		1973	
Vocabulary	58	38	50	54	44	50
Reading Comprehen.	61	41	51	55	45	51
Spelling	55	44	49	53	46	52
Capitalization	32	25	43	47	40	46
Punctuation	43	34	46	50	42	50
Usage	63	51	51	55	46	54
Map Reading	17	27	38	42	40	48
Graphs	10	26	35	39	40	48
Reference Materials	49	40	48	52	45	51
Arith. Concepts	38	38	45	49	44	50
Arith. Reasoning	56	18	50	54	37	45

1969 test normed in 1964
1973 test normed in 1971

APPENDIX E

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY

AND SCORE SHEET

APPENDIX E

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY

Directions

The purpose of the questions in this booklet is to find out what your class is like. You are asked to give your honest, frank opinions about this class. This is not a "test"; there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in how you see your class. Your responses will not be shown to anyone without your permission.

1. Members of the class do favors for one another.
2. The books and equipment students need or want are easily available to them in the classroom.
3. There are long periods during which the class does nothing.
4. The class has students with many different interests.
5. Certain students work only with their close friends.
6. The students enjoy their class work.
7. STudents who break the rules are penalized.
8. There is constant bickering among class members.
9. The better students' questions are more sympathetically answered than those of the average students.
10. Interests vary greatly within the group.

11. A good collection of books and magazines is available in the classroom for students to use.

12. Every member of the class enjoys the same privileges.

13. Most students want their work to be better than their friends' work.

14. The class has rules to guide its activities.

15. Personal dissatisfaction with the class is too small to be a problem.

16. A student has the chance to get to know all other students in the class.

17. The work of the class is frequently interrupted when some students have nothing to do.

18. Students cooperate equally with all class members.

19. Many students are dissatisfied with much that the class does.

20. The better students are granted special privileges.

21. Only the good students are given special projects.

22. Class decisions tend to be made by all the students.

23. The students would be proud to show the classroom to a visitor.

24. The pace of the class is rushed.

25. Some students refuse to mix with the rest of the class.

26. Decisions affecting the class tend to be made democratically.

27. Certain students have no respect for other students.

28. Some groups of students work together regardless of what the rest of the class is doing.

29. Members of the class are personal friends.

30. The class is well organized.

31. Some students are interested in completely different things than other students.

32. Certain students have more influence on the class than others.

33. The room is bright and comfortable.

34. Class members tend to pursue different kinds of problems.

35. There is considerable dissatisfaction with the work of the class.

36. The class is disorganized.

37. Students compete to see who can do the best work.

38. Certain students impose their wishes on the whole class.

39. A few of the class members always try to do better than the others.

40. There are tensions among certain groups of students that tend to interfere with class activities.

41. The class is well organized and efficient.

42. Students feel left out unless they compete with their classmates.

43. Students are asked to follow strict rules.

44. The class is controlled by the actions of a few members who are favored.

45. Each member of the class has as much influence as any other member.

46. The members look forward to coming to class meetings.

47. There are displayes around the room.

48. All students know each other very well.

49. The classroom is too crowded.

50. Students are not in close enough contact to develop likes or dislikes for one another.

51. The class is rather informal and few rules are imposed.

52. There is a recognized right and wrong way of going about class activities.

53. What the class does is determined by all the students.

54. After the class, the students have a sense of satisfaction.

55. Most students cooperate rather than compete with one another.

56. All classroom procedures are well established.

57. Certain students in the class are responsible for petty quarrels.

58. Many class members are confused by what goes on in class.

59. The class is made up of individuals who do not know each other well.

60. The class divides its efforts among several purposes.

61. The class has plenty of time to cover the prescribed amount of work.

62. Students who have past histories of being discipline problems are discriminated against.

63. Students do not have to hurry to finish their work.

64. Certain groups of friends tend to sit together.

65. There is much competition in the class.

66. Students are well satisfied with the work of the class.

67. A few members of the class have much greater influence than the other members.

68. There is a set of rules for the students to follow.

69. Certain students don't like other students.

70. There is little time for day-dreaming.

71. The class is working toward many different goals.

72. The class members feel rushed to finish their work.

73. Certain students are considered uncooperative.

74. There is enough room for both individual and group work.

75. Each student knows the other members of the class by their first names.

76. The class has difficulty keeping up with its assigned work.

77. There is a great deal of confusion during class meetings.

78. Different students vary a great deal regarding which aspect of the class they are interested in.

79. Most students cooperate equally with other class members.

80. Certain students are favored more than the rest.

81. Certain students stick together in small groups.

82. The course material is covered quickly.

83. There is an undercurrent of feeling among students that tends to pull the class apart.

84. Students seldom compete with one another.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY SCORE SHEET

Directions: In answering each question go through the following steps:

1. Read the statement carefully.
2. Think about how well the statement describes the class you are rating.
3. Circle the number that you think best explains how you feel.

If you strongly disagree with the statement, circle space 1.
If you disagree with the statement, circle space 2.
If you agree with the statement, circle space 3.
If you strongly agree with the statement, circle space 4.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	1	2	3	4	29.	1	2	3	4	57.	1	2	3	4
2.	1	2	3	4	30.	1	2	3	4	58.	1	2	3	4
3.	1	2	3	4	31.	1	2	3	4	59.	1	2	3	4
4.	1	2	3	4	32.	1	2	3	4	60.	1	2	3	4
5.	1	2	3	4	33.	1	2	3	4	61.	1	2	3	4
6.	1	2	3	4	34.	1	2	3	4	62.	1	2	3	4
7.	1	2	3	4	35.	1	2	3	4	63.	1	2	3	4
8.	1	2	3	4	36.	1	2	3	4	64.	1	2	3	4
9.	1	2	3	4	37.	1	2	3	4	65.	1	2	3	4
10.	1	2	3	4	38.	1	2	3	4	66.	1	2	3	4
11.	1	2	3	4	39.	1	2	3	4	67.	1	2	3	4
12.	1	2	3	4	40.	1	2	3	4	68.	1	2	3	4
13.	1	2	3	4	41.	1	2	3	4	69.	1	2	3	4
14.	1	2	3	4	42.	1	2	3	4	70.	1	2	3	4
15.	1	2	3	4	43.	1	2	3	4	71.	1	2	3	4
16.	1	2	3	4	44.	1	2	3	4	72.	1	2	3	4
17.	1	2	3	4	45.	1	2	3	4	73.	1	2	3	4
18.	1	2	3	4	46.	1	2	3	4	74.	1	2	3	4
19.	1	2	3	4	47.	1	2	3	4	75.	1	2	3	4
20.	1	2	3	4	48.	1	2	3	4	76.	1	2	3	4
21.	1	2	3	4	49.	1	2	3	4	77.	1	2	3	4
22.	1	2	3	4	50.	1	2	3	4	78.	1	2	3	4
23.	1	2	3	4	51.	1	2	3	4	79.	1	2	3	4
24.	1	2	3	4	52.	1	2	3	4	80.	1	2	3	4
25.	1	2	3	4	53.	1	2	3	4	81.	1	2	3	4
26.	1	2	3	4	54.	1	2	3	4	82.	1	2	3	4
27.	1	2	3	4	55.	1	2	3	4	83.	1	2	3	4
28.	1	2	3	4	56.	1	2	3	4	84.	1	2	3	4