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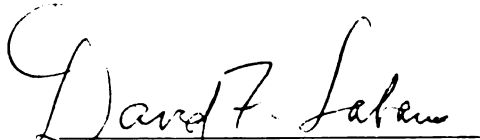
In The Company of Guiding and Sustaining Friends:
The Possibility of Educational Reform Originating In The
Complex and Uncertain Practice of Teaching

presented by

Klotylda M.L. Phillippi

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

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**IN THE COMPANY OF GUIDING AND SUSTAINING FRIENDS:
THE POSSIBILITY OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM ORIGINATING IN THE COMPLEX AND
UNCERTAIN PRACTICE OF TEACHING**

Volume I

By

Klotylda M.L. Phillippi

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

IN THE COMPANY OF GUIDING AND SUSTAINING FRIENDS: THE POSSIBILITY OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM ORIGINATING IN THE COMPLEX AND UNCERTAIN PRACTICE OF TEACHING

By

Klotylida M.L. Phillippi

This study investigates the possibility of educational reform originating "in the practice of teaching rather than in expert advice and external standards" (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988, p. 4). It is based on the experiences of educators implementing one suburban school district's policy to institute "developmentally appropriate practices" in kindergarten, first, and second grades.

The data collected for this field-based study included audio-taped and transcribed interviews with teachers, administrators, and School Board members; an audio-taped and transcribed personal journal in which the author documented her own involvement in the district's policy; fieldnotes taken at district and school meetings, including School Board meetings; public documents regarding the policy which were distributed to staff members and/or maintained by Central Office administrators; published minutes of School Board meetings; printed histories of the school district; and local newspaper articles concerning the policy.

Major findings include the contradictions inherent in an attempt to mandate child-centered teaching practices, the difficulty of establishing a common understanding of the meaning of the changes required by the policy, and the need to create the same kind of learning environment for adults which the policy asked educators to create for students. The study

found that on-going educational reform which emerges from the practice of teaching is possible when adults are in intellectually stimulating environments in which collaborative efforts of educators, parents, and students establish educational problems to investigate, in which they are provided with resources and time to do the mental and physical work required, and when they are willing to take responsibility for speaking out against and working toward the elimination of demeaning and unjust educational practices.

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1995

To Mom

for your unwavering love and respect and confidence

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the participation of the dedicated teachers, administrators, and School Board members of the Chadwick School district. I wish that I could use their real names so that readers could know these special educators who have dedicated their lives to nurturing the growth of our children. Each person who talked with me expressed her or his own sense of personal responsibility to learn from and with the children and their colleagues. They each hoped that their involvement in this study would lead to greater understanding of what they value in their teaching and of their visions for the future of public education. My colleagues at Kennedy School were especially instrumental in my own growth as a teacher. Our conversations, our collaborative work, and our celebrations and uncertainties formed the framework out of which much of this story grew. I thank them all again, not only for their willingness to give precious time to talk with me, but for their fidelity in teaching.

I thank David Labaree, who has directed this dissertation with patience and unfailing enthusiasm for my work. When I began to analyze the myriad of information I had collected, multiple issues and topics emerged at every turn. David managed to listen to my ramblings, read my attempts, and ask just the right questions to help me identify the stories which I needed to tell from among the many which were possible. His humor and honesty have sustained me through some challenging times in graduate school as well as during the research and writing of this study.

The other members of my committee have given me thoughtful and capable guidance with my writing. Susan Florio-Ruane, Lynn Paine, and Cheryl Rosaen each brought their own unique perspective and experiences to bear on my work. They allowed me to use "the defense" as a powerful writing conference during which they responded to my efforts, made suggestions for revisions, but most of all, encouraged me to develop my own voice. The revisions which resulted were, of course, my decision and my voice is still just a whisper, but I thank them for their trust and support.

I have been blessed with a family who have always encouraged me to do what I have felt I needed or wanted to do. My mother, Bess Moore, to whom this manuscript is dedicated, was been my cheerleader all my life. She found ways to support my efforts - financially, when she could, but always emotionally. Her unfailing trust in my abilities, her admiration of my accomplishments, and her respect for my ideas have been my life-force. It is an amazing comfort to be the recipient of such love.

My brother, Lewis Hartshorn, has been my mentor. Although I am older, I have admired his keen intellect, voracious appetite for information, and prodigious memory. I have spent more time in school, but he has spent more time in books. I thank him for our conversations, which occur much too infrequently, and for having the knack of selecting just the right books for me to read. One promise I have made to myself is to spend more time with him now that my dissertation is written.

My daughters, Kris and Karen, are my greatest joy. Their zest for learning encouraged me to go back to teaching and to work for the kinds of schools I wanted for them. They helped me understand that we need to ask not just how much information we want our students to gain, but what kinds of people we want them to become. They also sacrificed during their own

college years so that Mom could continue her education. These caring and competent adults are my most cherished accomplishment.

I thank Doug Campbell, my best friend, my teacher, my beloved husband, for bringing such contentment into my life. His personal integrity is unmatched; so as to avoid either the reality or appearance of his influence on his colleagues' guidance of my work, I was unable to benefit from his assistance during the major part of my work on this study. He stayed in the background, encouraging my efforts and taking on more than his share of domestic responsibilities. Knowing how helpful he is to other graduate students writing their dissertations, I felt disadvantaged at times. However, now that I am at the editing stage of my writing, Doug has been an incredible help. I have learned much more about grammar and expressive style from him than from all my teachers of "advanced" English classes. More importantly, he has read each word carefully, recognizing nuances of language which might not represent precisely what I was trying to say. He has given me many, many hours at the end of this journey when his own work load is tremendous. I am very fortunate to have his guidance as well as his love.

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Chapter One

THE ROOTS OF THE STUDY

This dissertation is a story about one school district's efforts to improve the teaching of young children by mandating child-centered, developmentally appropriate practices. It is the story of teachers and administrators who believed in the policy and wanted it to work, but who found it incredibly difficult to implement. It is a story about the irony of a reform designed to provide optimal learning for students yet which denied optimal learning for teachers. It is also the story of possibility - the possibility of changing the culture of the schools to create space for learning about learning and teaching, to create a culture in which on-going educational reform originates in the complex and uncertain practice of teaching.

BACK TO THE CLASSROOM

The first grade teachers met during lunch time to share some of the things we're trying out. We're going to try to do this at least once a week. Tuesday is our meeting time - Thursdays are not great because none of us has a special and it's a long day - if we met during lunch we'd take the only time we have to get ready for the afternoon.

All of us were saying how overwhelmed we are with everything - so tired. It's just taking so much time and energy. Norma, especially, was saying that in all the years she's taught first grade - this has been the most wavering kind of year for her - just getting ready and feeling so unsettled. I share that feeling in some ways although I haven't taught first grade for years and years, but there is a sense of urgency. I worry about not getting the kids going along - I'm concerned the parents are going to think that the kids aren't doing very much. Except, on the other hand, I can see that they are doing so much and they are learning so much. And kids are helping each other. Billy, for example, was helping Carl again. Carl has a difficult time remembering the letters of the alphabet and Billy is almost like a tutor for him. He tells him what the letters are and encourages him to figure out the sounds - he's so good about helping in that way.

Perhaps I'm sharing Norma's sense of things because we're not in as much control over what the children are doing. In the past, often at the beginning of the year, what we would do is check the kids to see

who knew the alphabet, see who knew the letter sounds, see who was reading - and start them into their groups. The teacher was much more in control. This way, we have to have a lot of trust in the kids - we're offering it to them and trusting that they are going to pick it up. While I do think I'll be working with them in groups at times, right now we're just accepting what they do as what they do and we create an environment to support them. Some kids take a lot from it and others don't seem to take as much, but when I think about it, I see the kids who don't seem to be as invested are also learning a lot. Probably more than I'm giving them credit for.

Probably for me, the thing I'm feeling the least secure about is the math. I'm reading the *Math Their Way* manual and trying to make sense out of the notes I photocopied from Elizabeth's notebook from when she attended the workshops. I'm still not - there isn't enough information in there to help me figure out exactly what to do - it's so general. I have to keep asking the other teachers and see how they've set things up. (Personal journal, 9/8/89)

It has been years since I audio-taped these notes about my venture back into classroom teaching, but I vividly recall the anticipation I felt getting ready for the year to begin and the many moments of uncertainty which would, at times, undermine my confidence in what I was trying to create in my classroom. The journal entry above was among the first of those I made over the two years during which time I was teaching a first grade and then a first and second grade combined class. I had been a learning specialist and then took a year's leave from teaching, which meant that I had not been a classroom teacher during the previous eleven years. I was also attempting to implement my school district's policy mandating the use of "developmentally appropriate practices" (DAP) in all lower elementary classrooms - an ambitious attempt to improve teaching by mandating the use of practices which had been recommended by national organizations concerned with the education of young children. I was pleased that the district had instituted such a policy because I felt it signaled a move toward more child-centered teaching and less emphasis upon standardized tests and textbooks.

I had just completed a year-long sabbatical leave during which time I finished the course work for my Ph.D., taught undergraduate courses at the

university, and worked as a language arts consultant to the state Department of Education. The courses I took for my degree in Educational Policy and Social Analysis provided me with opportunities to think about educational and societal issues which had been central in my teaching, but which had not previously been obvious to me. As I read theory and philosophy I was constantly drawn back to specific instances in my own teaching and learning experiences which had been unsettling. For example, when I read Paul Willis's *Learning to Labor* (1977), I was struck by the similarities between the behaviors of many of my male fifth- and sixth-grade remedial-reading students in a low socio-economic area and those of the "lads" in working class Hammertown in England. Were the boys in my school being prepared for their working class jobs? Were the school choices we provided or allowed the boys to make contributing to their future station in life? When I read Jean Anyon's (1983) chapter about stereotypical sex-role expectations for girls, I could picture some of my female students who were also trying to cope with understanding who they were and using femininity in ways I had, at the time, found confusing. When I read Ray McDermott's (1976) explanation of school failure, I thought about the many ways I had been encouraged to focus on students' weaknesses rather than on strengths.

As a graduate student, I found that I was particularly drawn to considerations of reform which were critical of many standard educational practices. I joined a group of graduate students and professors who read a variety of authors in an attempt to think seriously about our individual efforts to make our teaching more socially conscious. I sought out a professor known for his expertise in "critical pedagogy" to supervise a readings course for me during one summer because I was captured by the ideas of Michael F.D. Young, Nell Keddie, and Basil Bernstein; before reading their work, I had not

consciously thought about a relationship between knowledge and control. Could curriculum changes be seen as changing definitions of knowledge, as Young suggested (1971)? Do schools actively contribute to student failure by the ways we define classroom knowledge (Keddie, 1971)? Can policy attempt to protect the rights for equal and excellent educational opportunities for all - including the powerless? As a teacher I had experienced many district policy mandates which I either followed or ignored - or, in a few cases, protested against - but without much consideration as to how the policies originated or what policymakers understood about what their policies demanded from teachers.

When I taught the *School and Society* course to teacher education seniors, I gained a better personal understanding of how complex issues in society impact what we attempt to do in school. Our collaborative reading and discussion of Vivian Paley's *White Teacher* (1979) resurfaced questions about my relationships with African-American students and forced me to reflect on my own biases. The language arts courses I taught and my work with outstanding teachers across the state to develop classroom literacy assessment procedures for the Department of Education required that I think seriously about literacy theory and how theory gets translated into classroom practice. As I look back, I believe the reason I was drawn into graduate school was that I had so many concerns about teaching practices which did not seem to extend student learning.

THE DAP POLICY PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY

My graduate school experiences rekindled my enthusiasm to get back into the classroom so that the children could help me better understand how they go about their learning and so that I could consider how my teaching

facilitates or obstructs optimal learning. In the fall of 1988, while I was on leave, the Chadwick District¹ instituted a district-wide policy to implement "developmentally appropriate practices" (DAP) in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. The Superintendent and other central office administrators introduced this policy to staff members as one way the district was responding to the recommendations of national organizations concerned with the education of young children, several national reform reports, and new state curriculum guidelines. The district had recently disbanded the practice of placing entering kindergartners who were determined to be too developmentally young to successfully complete kindergarten in year-long "Beginndergarten" classes before entering kindergarten. The DAP policy was designed to help all kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the increased range of development among incoming kindergartners. First and second grade teachers were required to employ DAP as these students moved up to first and then second grade. The policy focused on the education of children from four to eight years of age and was based on "sound principles of child development" and reflected "knowledge of how young children best learn." The rationale for the policy presented to the district's School Board outlined many lines of research supporting a child-centered approach as foundational (Program Improvement Plan, 1988).

At the end of my leave, I requested to teach in a lower elementary classroom rather than return to my position as a learning specialist - a job I had held for the previous ten years. I did this because I felt the philosophy upon which the policy was based was an affirmation of the kind of classroom environment I wanted to create and because I saw an opportunity to examine

¹ The name of the school district, individual schools, names of people, and newspapers are pseudonyms.

district policy with a more educated eye to consider questions which, without my university involvement, I would not have thought to ask. I also requested that I be placed in a classroom at Kennedy School, the school at which I had been a learning specialist before my leave. I had worked closely with the first grade teachers there and felt that their support would be important to my success back in the classroom.

QUESTIONS ABOUT POLICY AND PRACTICE

My interest in this study was initiated when I read *Steady Work: Policy, Practice, and the Reform of American Education*, written by Richard Elmore and Milbrey McLaughlin (1988). In this report the authors analyzed the relationship between educational policy making and the practice of teaching with an attempt to "draw lessons from recent attempts to reform schools with policy" (p. iii):

As we write, the country is embarked on another period of ambitious reform, this time centered at the state and local level, emphasizing improvement of core academic content, higher student academic standards, and greater scrutiny of teacher performance. Whether these reforms, or succeeding ones, actually result in improved teaching and learning depends on whether policy makers, administrators, and practitioners are willing to address an array of questions that have not yet been put explicitly on the policy agenda - questions having to do with locus of authority, knowledge, and responsibility for teaching and learning in schools.

In brief, our argument is that reform of the basic conditions of teaching and learning in schools requires "steady work" of a different sort than has characterized educational reforms of the past. In some sense, these reforms **must originate in the practice of teaching** rather than in expert advice and external standards as have past reforms. (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988, p. 4, emphasis added)

The idea of reform originating in practice intrigued me. What might this be like? I had never paid much attention to educational policy. Did Elmore and McLaughlin believe that teachers should create policy? Would they have any interest in creating policy? Shulman (1983) points out

tensions evident between teaching and policy. He characterizes teaching as an "idiographic, individual, clinical enterprise," whereas policy "denotes the remote, nomothetic, and unresponsive." He says that while teaching is supposed to "promote excellence and repair difficulties," policy attempts to "ensure fairness and prevent selective oppression" (p. 488). Are differences between teaching and policy making too severe to overcome? Would an investigation of my district's policy, which was a top-down mandate, provide any insight about how reform policies might "originate in the practice of teaching"?

When Elmore and McLaughlin refer to the future of "these reforms" in the quote, they allude to the latest efforts emanating from national reports such as *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The first wave of reforms emerging from this report and the many others which followed it contained recommendations for increasing high school graduation requirements, expanding student testing, and toughening requirements for entering the teaching profession. Policy researchers investigating Wave I reforms found that they were implemented fairly quickly, largely because they were bureaucratic measures. The second wave of reforms, however, were attempts to alter teaching by changing the focus of learning from fact attainment to thinking skills and to transform teaching into a full profession (Odden, 1991). These reforms called for much bolder attempts to affect teaching and learning in classrooms - the kind of reform my district was attempting with the DAP policy and the very kind of reform about which Elmore and McLaughlin were the most pessimistic.

THE IDEA FOR THIS STUDY

The idea for this specific study became apparent to me during the 1989-90 academic year; however, as I reflect on my personal history in teaching, I realize that I have been thinking about the teaching of young children since my undergraduate years. The DAP policy was implemented to mandate teaching practices considered appropriate for a wide range of development among young students, particularly those in kindergarten, first, and second grades. Perhaps one reason I was so in favor of the policy and so interested in investigating the relationship between this particular policy and practice centers on the experiences I had when I started teaching. I was a twenty-two year old kindergarten teacher in September of 1964 with seventy students, all under five. The large elementary school in which I taught had nine classes of kindergartners grouped according to age. The principal decided that, because I was the youngest teacher, I should teach the youngest children. The students were full of energy and enthusiasm. I enjoyed teaching immensely. During this first year, I began a master's program at a nearby university to pursue my interest in psychology, with a particular focus on the learning of young children. I also became one of the first summer Head Start teachers in 1965.

Along about November of my second year I began to hear grumbling from first grade teachers about what my former students could not do. The same children I had viewed as so intelligent, and whose thirst for learning seemed so evident, were experiencing great difficulty with the first grade curriculum. I felt confident about what I had provided for the children, but the criticisms of the teachers were clearly directed at my teaching methods. I was the only one among the four kindergarten teachers who did not use the Reading Readiness and Math workbooks. The children and I took "letter

walks" around the school and grounds to find things which began with a specific letter of the alphabet, and then returned to our classroom to draw and record our finds. We counted snack crackers and measured the growth of our guinea pig. We took a trip to Hawaii on the back of a whale to visit the aunt and uncle of one of the students who had sent us coconuts, palm leaves, and a grass skirt. The other teachers told me that my students did not know how to work and that they did not have the attention span to sit at their desks during the day.

My undergraduate work at a small liberal arts college focused heavily on child development and psychology. My student teaching experience in a rural kindergarten classroom with many children of migrant workers who had settled in the area allowed me the privilege of working along side Mrs. Washington,² an amazing bilingual woman who created an environment which welcomed and respected all of the children and their families. I wanted to recreate that warm learning atmosphere in my own classroom and took my cues from Mrs. Washington about how to teach. The responses of my colleagues caused me to wonder about my philosophy and to ask myself if I was somehow hindering the children's progress.

As I continued to teach the very youngest kindergartners during the next two years, I became increasingly discouraged. I did not want to be drawn into a regimented teaching style which seemed to be what would be required if my young students were to be successful in first grade. In my view, the curriculum and teaching methods should have been adjusted to meet the needs of these young children, but my colleagues felt that the children needed to be pushed more or they should be failed if they could not handle

² A pseudonym.

first grade. This view was also supported by the principal and other administrators in that school district.

I took my concerns about the children to the district's language arts specialist. She and I met during a staff development workshop and we shared a view about the need to provide support for some students rather than simply fail them. We developed a plan for a "transition first grade" - a year added between kindergarten and first grade to provide a learning environment for the youngsters who seemed likely to have difficulty with the traditional first grade program. The plan was eventually approved by the district's administration and Board of Education. The students would spend a year in this transition first grade and then go to a "regular" first grade the following year. The plan also included the option of placing students who seemed ready to advance into second grade from the transition class. I taught the pilot for the program and continued to enjoy the children and the teaching, but I felt great pressure from other teachers to prepare my students to stay at their desks and do skillsheets. I felt trapped in a situation where I thought I was supporting the students' learning according to my philosophy, but I was supposed to prepare them for the next year's program of which I did not approve.

I left teaching at the end of the school year in 1968 when my first daughter was born. I withdrew the small teaching retirement I had accrued and vowed never to go back. I felt that I could not continue to be involved in teaching when I was asked to be someone I could not be. However, the arrival of a second daughter and six years of observing the delight in learning my children experienced reaffirmed my philosophy that schools could support and extend the nurturing found in families and that learning in school might reflect the best about learning outside of school.

With this hope in mind, I accepted a teaching position at Johnson School in the Chadwick district in the fall of 1974. I had talked openly to the people with whom I interviewed, knowing that my frankness about my philosophy about teaching and learning might ruin my chance for employment, but I also clearly remembered the pain I had felt when my views and those of my previous school district did not have common ground. The Johnson School principal was an advocate for what she termed "open education" and was comfortable with my ideas. I taught kindergarten the first year and kept half of my students when I taught first grade the next year. Chadwick opened three new elementary schools during my third year and because enrollment at Johnson would be declining, I was assigned to help open Franklin School. I taught first grade at Franklin for one year, but when Chadwick placed Franklin and three other elementary schools on a year-round schedule, I transferred to Coughlin, where I taught second grade.

My experiences at each of the schools was different. At both Johnson and Franklin, the philosophy was child-centered, there were many multi-age classrooms, and teachers were free to determine the curriculum and select from a variety of instructional materials. At Coughlin, the teachers were expected to base their teaching on and use the one set of text books offered for each grade. I had to gain permission from the principal to continue the approach I had been using. When I worked with other teachers to create the curriculum and select instructional materials for the opening of Franklin School, I was invigorated by the collegiality and the professional responsibilities with which we were entrusted. At Coughlin, I felt isolated in my classroom and shared my thoughts and hopes with no one - I was clearly an outsider in my approach to teaching. Upon completion of a master's degree with an emphasis in reading, I became a learning specialist at yet

another Chadwick school - Liberty. I taught at Liberty until it closed and I was assigned to be the learning specialist at Kennedy. It was my experiences at Kennedy, where I worked with teachers who shared a camaraderie and interest in teaching and learning, that I began to feel the most comfortable. As a learning specialist I worked closely with several teachers whose respect for children and thoughtful self-questioning rekindled my desire to be back in the classroom.

The DAP policy in Chadwick signaled a district-wide approval, if not mandate, for the kind of teaching I thought was important to provide for young children. It seemed to me that the policy asked educators to recognize and value differences among children and to understand that a range of development in any classroom is helpful to the learning of all. It harkened back to my early years of teaching the youngest kindergartners and to the many concerns I had as a learning specialist about teaching methods which seemed to limit student progress rather than enrich their learning.

WHAT WOULD I NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO IN SUCH A STUDY?

The seeds for this study may have been planted by my reading of *Steady Work*, but other educational policy analysts helped me think how I might approach such a study. William Boyd, who also expressed concern about the current policies designed for "reinvigorating public schools" (1987, p. 85), has written that the success of the new reforms is vital if education is to retain the support of the American public. Like Elmore and McLaughlin, he sees great danger in top-down reforms which aren't congruent with the realities of changing schools. Boyd sites "pocket veto" power as a resource carried out behind the classroom door, which suggested that I would have to examine how the DAP policy affects what happens inside the schools and how

the policy deals with organizational dynamics in the district. The DAP policy was an administrative mandate, but the practices were already being used by many teachers. I would have to look at how the use of the power to require the practices was interpreted by individual teachers and principals.

Boyd (1987) added another dimension to my work when he noted the increased trend toward state-level control over educational policy resulting from a perception that local school boards have failed to demand high standards. This is certainly true in our state, where high-stakes student testing has been increasing. Noting that "command and control" approaches seldom result in implementing innovative policies, Boyd favors the "beseech and facilitate" tact recommended by Richard Elmore and others (p. 89). He feels that the various Commission reports as well as most state plans which result from the reports ignore the important role of local educators; they take a "highly directive way to change the character of curriculum and instruction" (p. 89) and they are not aligned with Elmore and McLaughlin's recommendations for reforms, which "originate in the practice of teaching." Following Boyd, I thought I would need to examine how state policy affects the implementation of the local DAP policy.

Michael Fullan and Susan Stiegelbauer (1991) have also researched and analyzed educational reform in order to "explain why change processes work as they do and to identify what would have to be done to improve our success rate" (p. xi). Like Elmore and McLaughlin, they write that future educational reform must learn from past efforts and will require changes in educational institutions: "Reform is not putting into practice the latest policy. It means *changing the cultures* of the classrooms, the schools, the districts, the universities, and so on" (p. xiii, emphasis added). They say that policy analysts must learn about what change looks like from the point of view of

the teacher, student, parent, and administrator in order to understand their actions in terms of implementation. Agreeing with Boyd, Fullan and Stiegelbauer say that this insider information must be framed with an understanding of organizational and institutional factors that can influence the process of change:

While the theory and practice of successful educational change do make sense, and do point to clear guidelines for action, it is always the case that particular actions in particular situations require integrating the more general knowledge of change with detailed knowledge of the politics, personalities, and history peculiar to the setting in question. (p. xii)

As an insider with many years of history in the Chadwick district, I felt that I had the advantage of bringing this frame of organizational and institutional factors to the forefront in my investigation.

For Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), the key to understanding the work of reform concerns what they call "the problem of meaning." People do not have a "coherent sense of *meaning* about what educational change is for, what it is, and how it proceeds" (p. 4, emphasis in the text). They recommend that policy analysts must learn to "describe a more coherent picture that people who are involved in or affected by educational change can use to make sense of what they and others are doing" (p. 4).

David Cohen echoes Fullan and Stiegelbauer's call for situating policy historically and for the need to hear from educators about the nature of a policy's intervention in their practice. Cohen (1987a) reports that policy analysts, in drawing on their social science tradition, have tended to view policy in a rather ahistorical fashion, treating policies "as though each were contained in a tidy time of its own" (p. 167). He finds this tendency troublesome because it casts little information about how the innovations may be tied up with continuing struggles over the purposes and nature of schooling and of the perceived role of teaching.

Cohen also reports that most studies of a new initiative begin with the policy - considering practice only as a means of execution. The "inherited language of discourse about policy" has allowed analysts to miss some foundational features of practice "such as that teaching and learning are not purely or perhaps even primarily the property of formal scholastic agencies" (1987a, p. 169), which, according to Cohen, has obscured some vital issues:

One is that every instructional reform contains an implied program for practice, and makes some bets about the resources required to reform practice. Yet few analysts have premised studies of implementation on analyses of the **demands that reforms made on practice**. Few have carefully addressed the resources that are available in practice to support those reforms. Few have tried to figure out what teachers actually did with academic work as they "implemented" a reform of instruction. And fewer still have tried to understand what explains differences among teachers' management of instructional reform. (p. 169, emphasis added)

He believes studies of this kind are important, but doesn't feel that need alone will guarantee such research will take place, largely because "work of this sort would require that researchers cross the academic divides that separate the study of teaching from the study of governance, policy, and organization" (p. 169). While possible, according to Shulman and Sykes (1983), studies of this sort have been rare.

LOCATION OF THE STUDY

The Chadwick district and the DAP policy seemed like a good choice for my dissertation study. The district appeared to offer the opportunity for a "best-case" analysis of an effort to improve the quality of teaching through the use of local policy. I thought this because the policy had the support of the central office administrators and School Board members; many teachers were already engaged in the recommended practices, had helped to write the policy guidelines and later develop staff development materials, and were committed to the successful spread of the philosophy. When the policy was

initiated in the fall of 1988, the district set aside funding for materials and for time and resources for staff development. Parents and community members were also supportive in that they wanted instruction in all kindergarten classrooms to reflect the practices which had been central to the success of the Begindergarten program. It would seem, therefore, that there would be a good chance for the district's policy to have an impact on teaching practice and on learning in the early elementary school grades.

The second reason for selecting this district was that I was an insider there. I had lived in the community for over twenty years; my children had attended Chadwick Schools; I had taught in the district for sixteen years at the time and was currently a first grade teacher directly involved in the policy. As a classroom teacher who was committed to a child-centered and whole language philosophy, and as a university graduate student who had had the opportunity to study educational policy and theory, I believed that I could draw upon my own experiences as one frame for my study.

A FOCUS ON THE TEACHERS

I hoped that my own attempts to implement my district's policy, my conversations and day-to-day work with my colleagues, and my academic interest in educational policy would allow me not only to "cross the academic divides," but to provide an integration of my investigation into "general knowledge about change with detailed knowledge of the politics, personalities, and history" (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p xii) peculiar to our district. Wimpelberg and Boyd (1988) point out, "To date we have little research to draw from that inquires into the classroom teachers' perceptions of their teaching options as they are either amplified or constrained by

district-level policies" (p. 5); therefore, it was vital that my study focus on the teachers.

The original goal of my research project was to conjecture about how educational reform/policy might originate in the practice of teaching. Early on, in my deliberations about writing my dissertation proposal, I thought that I would concentrate on the group of teachers at Kennedy school who supported each other as we attempted to implement the policy. However, during that first year back in the classroom, as I attended district staff development sessions and curriculum meetings, I realized that there were wide variations among teachers and principals in the district about how the policy came to be implemented, what it was designed to do, and what specific practices were considered appropriate within DAP policy guidelines. Not all Chadwick personnel were as contented with DAP as were the first grade teachers at Kennedy. I decided to broaden my view to include as many other policy implementers in the district as I could.

The DAP policy (which will be outlined in the next chapter) is one which centers largely on child-centered teaching. Perhaps the most important reason to focus carefully on the teachers and the context within which they work is that the history of reforms which attempt to make teaching more child-centered does not hold many examples of long-term success, according to many researchers (Cuban, 1984, 1986, 1990; Shannon, 1989). When I left teaching in 1968 it was largely because I saw no future in public education for the child-centered approach I embraced. There have been many and varied explanations for this dismal history. They range from "structural arrangements," such as large, graded schools with self-contained classrooms (Cuban, 1984, 1986), and reliance on the practices of the business world and rise of the influence of "scientific instructional materials"

(Shannon, 1989), to complaints that teachers are "docile" (Broudy, 1972, p. 41), and to suggestions that teachers may actively resist intrusions into their work by "outsiders" (Apple, 1986) by employing more autonomy within their classrooms (Elmore and McLaughlin, 1988). Michael Huberman (1988) and Larry Cuban (1986) point out, however, that researchers have not spent much time gaining the teachers' perspectives - so I hoped that my colleagues and I could make a contribution.

I wanted to focus primarily on the people most closely involved with implementing the policy - the teachers - in order to understand what meaning we attached to the policy (e.g. why do we have this policy? what is it designed to do?), how we learned about what we were to do, and how our implementation of the policy affected our work. I collected the data with that goal in mind. However, as I transcribed the hours and hours of conversations and listened carefully to the voices of the teachers and administrators and to my own voice, often so weary, I realized that the stories we were telling were broader than the implementation of this one policy. The teachers and principals who talked with me wanted the policy to work and so did I. Then why was it so difficult to do? I was gaining a better understanding of why teacher-centered teaching has been so entrenched in our schools.

David Cohen (1987b) adds another dimension to this discussion about the difficulties involved in using child-centered practices. While he recognizes the constraints of organizational structures, the conditions within which teachers teach, and the flaws contained within many of the reforms themselves, Cohen feels these have not adequately explained the tenacity of teacher-centered practices. He points to examples of teacher-centered teaching even when the previously mentioned constraints are reduced or removed. Also, he suggests analysts have viewed the barriers to

student-centered teaching as occurring outside the act of teaching itself - as if these barriers are found in the circumstances surrounding the teaching. In his view, theorists have encouraged a view of teaching as a "simple reflex" of learning. In other words, if laws of learning are figured out, teachers just follow them and students will learn. This idea seemed to be the basis of the DAP policy. "We know more now about how children learn" became a mantra heard in the district. Cohen believes constraints for child-centered practices might be found within the act of teaching itself.

By defining teaching as a practice of human improvement, Cohen is able to point to the risks involved when teaching moves away from the mechanical methods using packaged knowledge. He describes a situation similar to what happened in the Chadwick district, where the DAP policy, which mandated child-centered practices and no workbooks or skill sheets, replaced a policy which mandated teaching with textbooks using formalized and teacher-dominated instruction. Cohen points out that ambitious and demanding improvements increase uncertainty, which, for the teacher, increases the difficulty and risk in her work. Teachers in public schools are especially open to risk when they involve their students more tenaciously in their own learning because they cannot select their students and the students often have no choice in the selection of the school they attend either. Additionally, the lack of consensus about the results of practice (should results be high achievement test scores, love of learning, both?) makes teachers even more vulnerable. Reducing risk is what educators have tended to do by adopting conservative instructional strategies, simplifying the work so that most of the students can manage it and be successful and by defining knowledge in rigid ways so that it can be taught and measured. Student-centered, or "adventurous" teaching, increases the difficulty of academic

work for students who have to be more deeply involved in their own learning, sharing ideas and exposing them to public scrutiny. The DAP policy did ask teachers to involve students more in the ways Cohen describes, but these same challenges faced teachers and principals in Chadwick as well - we were to be more deeply involved in our own learning ("Take the guidelines of the policy and implement them in your own ways."); however, we had limited opportunities to share ideas all the while we were more exposed to the critical eye of our local community.

Michael Huberman, who has written extensively about school reform, also points to the need to get the perspectives of the people most closely involved with a policy. More importantly, he notes that it is not only their perspectives about the policy which are important:

When one overlooks people's lives to focus on events - and large-scale school improvement efforts are mostly just that - or on the institutional theatres of those events, one is taking the actors out of the play and assuming that the scenery is animate enough to carry the plot and account for the denouement. (1988, p. 120)

Maxine Greene echoed Huberman's admonition to pay attention to the lives of the teachers when she wrote that

The teacher is frequently addressed as if he had no life of his own, no body, and no inwardness. Lecturers seem to presuppose a "man within man" when they describe a good teacher as infinitely controlled and accommodating, technically efficient, impervious to moods. They are likely to define him by the role he is expected to play in the classroom, with all his loose ends gathered up and **all his doubts resolved**. The numerous realities in which he exists as a living person are overlooked. His personal biography is overlooked; so are the many ways in which he expresses his private self in language, the horizons he perceives, the perspectives through which he looks on the world. (1973, pp. 269-270, emphasis added)

I found that each teacher and administrator brought her or his own history to bear on the implementation of the DAP policy. Our experiences with teaching and learning had great impact on how we were able to think about the

practices we were told to employ. Just as we expect a range of background with our students, we had a range amongst ourselves as well.

DEFINING GOOD TEACHING

The DAP policy not only advocates child-centered learning, but implies a view of what it takes to teach young children well. I emphasized the phrase "all his doubts resolved" above because one of the recurring themes in both my personal journal entries and my interviews with teachers is the theme of uncertainty. It was clear in my discussions with administrators that they believed there was a straight-forward connection between research on learning and the practice of teaching. Schön's (1983) writing was especially helpful to my thinking about how I might investigate the teachers' sense of "professional practice." Schön writes that questions about methods of instruction are often seen as resolved by "recourse to experiment." As researchers build up scientific understandings of cause and effect, it becomes possible to select the means for one's ends simply by applying the relevant theory. Therefore, the question - "How ought I to act?" - can become a scientific one (p. 37). The DAP policy was presented to us as research-based. As our Superintendent explained to me,

I think we tried to analyze the research and it all pointed in that direction. About what we should be doing and it made a lot of sense - we know a lot more about how children learn than we did before and I think that a combination of what research told us and essentially that process by which kids learn told us basically we'd better do something different than what we'd been doing...I have a tendency, now, to turn more to research and try to validate things that you hear. (10/9/90, pp. 3-4)³

Shulman (1983) identifies two assumptions in this model of school improvement based upon research. The first is that educators now have the

³ See the Appendix for an explanation of notations used for transcribed audio-taped interviews, personal journal, and field notes.

research base to know the best way to teach; the second is that there is a straightforward process of translating that research into practice. Schön (1983) points out that in professional practice there is high ground where practitioners can make use of research based theory and techniques, but most teaching work is done in the "swampy lowland," where situations are confusing and often incapable of technical solutions (p. 49). The journal entry with which I introduced this dissertation points to the uncertainty I felt and which was expressed by other teachers. Was our anxiety an indication that we wouldn't be capable of making policy decisions or was it an integral part of our teaching and could have important implications for policy making?

When my colleagues and I were told we must employ research-based developmentally appropriate practices, some of us were pleased and some of us were not, but none of us was provided the opportunity to reflect upon what those practices might mean to us and to others. Schön describes this situation:

Many practitioners, locked into a view of themselves as technical experts, find nothing in the world of practice to occasion reflection. They have become too skillful at techniques of selective inattention, junk categories, and situational control, techniques which they use to preserve the constancy of their knowledge-in-practice. For them, uncertainty is a threat; its admission is a sign of weakness. Others, more inclined toward and adept at reflection-in-action, nevertheless feel profoundly uneasy because they cannot say what they know how to do, cannot justify its quality or rigor. (1983, p. 69)

I was enthused about being back in the classroom and anxious to explore with my colleagues and with the children questions about learning and teaching. I was curious about the DAP policy and how my colleagues and I would experience the translation of this policy. I was also fascinated by the notion that reform policies could somehow originate in our day-to-day practice.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The research design was qualitative, based largely upon an ethnographic model and consisted of several kinds of data collection. The first type of data consisted of interviews with participants who volunteered to talk with me about their involvement in the DAP policy. The interview questions were fairly unstructured. I did have several questions which I asked all participants, but I tried to phrase those questions in a way which allowed the participant to interpret the meaning in his or her own way. The questions centered on these areas:

- How did we come to get the DAP policy in our district?
- What does "developmentally appropriate" mean?
- How does that fit with "whole language" and "hands-on" math and "literature based" reading and "process writing"?
- If the philosophy and theories undergirding the policy are not new, why are we able to institute them now?
- What has the policy meant in terms of your teaching (or work as a principal, superintendent, School Board member, etc.)?
- What have you had to learn or do as a result of this policy?
- What has changed in your work?
- What do teachers have to know in order to do this?
- Some have said that this policy increases our professionalism - what does professionalism mean to you?
- If you could pick your child's (grandchild's, etc.) teacher, what kind of teacher would you select?

These interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed. I sent letters⁴ outlining my research proposal and inviting participation to all first and second grade teachers in the district, a random selection of kindergarten teachers, all School Board members, all Central Office administrators, and all elementary principals and assistant elementary principals.

I also audio-taped a personal journal, which I transcribed. I attempted to write my journal at first, but my time was always taken up with preparing and teaching. Since I lived in a city twenty miles from Chadwick, I found it convenient to keep my tape recorder on the front seat of the car and tape my journal as I drove between home and school and the university. My intent was to document my ideas about my students and my teaching. I was delighted to be back in the classroom and I did not mind putting in long hours to prepare for each day; however, I was dismayed, in listening to and transcribing my tapes, by the many, many entries which began - "I am so tired tonight I am not sure how much I will be able to record." The dismay centered on my increasing understanding of what kind of effort it took to attempt to implement those child-centered practices of which I was so fond. I had had many years of what I considered child-centered teaching. I had been involved in university course work, teaching, and consulting, which provided me with insight and ideas which most of my colleagues had not experienced. If I worked so hard, what must this be like for them?

The second type of data which informed my study consisted of official and public documents about the policy available in the school district. These included curricular and support materials sent to the teachers and principals, School Board minutes, and newspaper accounts. I took extensive field notes

⁴ Copies of the letters and lists of dates and numbers of participants are included in the Appendix.

during School Board meetings which I attended, district curriculum meetings, staff development sessions, staff meetings at my school, and team meetings among the first grade teachers at my school. Other data consisted of historical accounts of the school district found in a history of the district written by a local historian, School Board Minutes from years before the DAP policy, and various documents from staff development opportunities.

DUAL ROLES - TEACHER AND RESEARCHER

My dual roles as a teacher in the Chadwick School district and as a university researcher created both possibilities and concerns in regard to my study. One concern was about personal bias. I did have biases in regard to this research project. I was an advocate of the basic philosophy upon which the district's policy was based; however, as a classroom teacher I had questions about what this policy would mean for my students and for me. I was very busy with my teaching and the research. I experienced the loneliness and self-doubt as would any teacher attempting to teach in new ways. My wish for the policy to succeed gave me blinders which obscured my view of what the policy was demanding of us. It also allowed me to proceed to implement the policy without giving sufficient thought to the social and cultural implications of DAP. As a university researcher, I had had some opportunity to explore issues related to educational policy and reform, but it wasn't until I began to read about and research developmentally appropriate practices that I could get a glimpse of how little I knew.

When the DAP policy recommended the discontinuation of reading workbooks and reliance on skillsheets and book tests, I was delighted. I was dismayed when many teachers went to great lengths to copy workbook pages secretly or to complain angrily that the graded basal readers were taken out

of their schools. Why could they not understand what new freedom they had? Why didn't they feel energized by the range of choices they could make? My own enthusiasm distorted my view of what the teachers and I had to do to replace those commercial support systems. My own involvement in the policy often served to hinder my understanding of what the policy was demanding.

I find myself aligning with "radical" feminists (Grumet, 1988; Greene, 1988) in my approach to educational reform. I view professional practice as an extension of the nurturing and supportive characteristics of the mother and the female teacher. I asked all of the teachers if they viewed gender as an aspect of the DAP policy. All of them rejected the notion. They all said that it did not matter that all of the lower elementary teachers were female. The policy did not concern gender issues for them. I took the opposite stance and felt that gender was the silent scream beneath most of our challenges and difficulties with implementing the policy. I thought the other teachers were wrong, that they were experiencing "false consciousness" - they simply couldn't see what I knew to be there. My efforts to view my own and the teachers' ideas "as an effort to make sense of a world of contradictory information" (Lather, 1991, p. 119) continue. I have had to ask myself, as I reread transcriptions and heard again the teachers' voices, what I want this study to do. Patti Lather's words have served to remind me of my biases, but have, at times, also served to paralyze my willingness to interpret and analyze:

How can we position ourselves less as masters of truth and justice and more as creators of space where those directly involved can act and speak on their own behalf? How do we do so without romanticizing the subject and experience-based knowledge? (1991, p. 137)

Identifying the sources of bias and subjectivity in my own history and experience was important (LeCompte, 1987; VanMaanen, 1988). There was no way I could dismiss the biases I brought to the project, but I tried to keep in

mind that my understanding of the reality of our situation, however rigorous and scholarly, was only one view of that reality and was, by definition, incomplete (LeCompte, 1987). As Lather (1986) points out, "scientific 'neutrality' and 'objectivity' serve to mystify the inherently ideological nature of research in the human sciences and to legitimate privilege based on class, race, and gender" (p. 64). The aim of my research was not to gather "pure data" that were free from potential bias - mine or my colleagues. The accounts given by all the participants (myself included) could not be dismissed as ideological distortions, nor could they be treated as valid in their own terms. All the data had to be "examined as social phenomena occurring in, and shaped by, particular contexts" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 126). The participants in this study were people who had experienced their teaching and their lives outside of school in as many different ways as there were of them. Some of us had always been a bit "cheeky" and we were quite willing to speak our minds. Others of us suffered in silence and carried our worries deep inside. I tried to keep in the forefront of my conversations, and of my analysis and writing, the question of whose interests are being served? (Simon & Dippo, 1986)

I realize now, after working with my colleagues, listening to their voices again on the tapes, reading the words they spoke in the transcriptions, and thinking about what I was hearing and reading that I had a very naive notion of how I might be true to these people for whom I have such respect and admiration. I wanted simply to offer their words, but a dissertation requires "analysis." I had to interpret for them and, in that way, I did take power from them. Of course, my own purposes were being served in this work. I wanted the policy to succeed; I wanted my agenda to prevail; but along the way, I became aware that my wishes could prevent others from

revealing their own hopes and expressing their concerns. Even though my intentions were to find ways to continue to press for teachers to be heard in the realm of educational reform and policy, and to work toward establishing places where we can learn from each other and from our children and their families, it is still my voice which is offering snippets of what these people have said. I have arranged and rearranged their voices, taken them out of context, and used them to thread together the themes I felt emerging. In retrospect, the burden of the responsibility I feel to them is overwhelming. There have been times while working on this writing that I have been unable to bring myself to make this patchwork out of their fabric. Each one of them has an important and fascinating story to tell. I wonder who I am that I think I can tell their stories in their place. However, by standing back and hiding my own voice, my biases must be interpreted by the reader. By not speaking out, I appear neutral - which I am not and can not be. By offering my interpretations of what we have experienced, I am more honest. I have to tell this as my story, but I can offer the views of others as well.

My position as an insider did have advantages, however. For example, VanMaanen (1988) describes fieldwork as the means by which a researcher learns about a "culture." He writes,

Culture refers to the knowledge members (natives) of a given group are thought to more or less share; knowledge of the sort that is said to inform, embed, shape, and account for all the routine and not-so-routine activities of members of the culture. (p. 3)

Fieldworkers are supposed to "share firsthand the environment, problems, background, language, rituals and social relations" with the group under study. Some fieldworkers are granted rapid access to these culturally "sacred" matters, while others may "remain outside the group and learn nothing worthwhile" (p. 3). As a teacher who experienced the definition and implementation of "developmentally appropriate practices" along with the

other participants in the study, I was already a member of the group - I, too, participated in the culture. I have a history in the Chadwick district which I hoped (and have been given reason to believe) gave the other participants feelings of connectedness and equality with me. There was and is a relationship between the other participants and me which I hoped would be an encouragement for collaboration within which all of our voices could be heard. I do believe that such a relationship was established. My sense was that those who talked with me felt able to share about the "complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict" which we found at the heart of our teaching (Schön, 1987, p. 14). As McDonald (1986) pointed out, most theories about teaching and the policies which result from those theories suppose that teaching is best when it is a rational application of particular means to a given end. This was true of the DAP policy. He found, as did my colleagues and I, that teaching is experienced differently. He questioned,

But what if teachers, **recognizing** the uncertainty of their work, raised their voices instead of growing silent? And what if theorists recognized that intimate knowledge of this uncertainty was exactly what was missing from both their theories and the policies these theories provoke? (p. 362, emphasis in original)

This idea loomed importantly as I read and reread the transcripts of the teachers' words. What if our uncertainty led us to clarify what we believe about our teaching? What kind of environment supports our efforts to clarify, to learn? What if, in our clarifying and learning, we began to speak out against the contradictions in our work? And what if we became much more outspoken about what we need, about what our work really is, and about what this work means to us?

A VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITIES

While Elmore and McLaughlin's title, *Steady Work* (1988), can be read as reflecting a sense of despair and pessimism, issues emerging from my research suggest to me that the title can be interpreted more positively. Perhaps if policy makers would assume that educational reform is a continuous process of creating optimal learning environments for all learners - children and adults - then the on-going work and dialogue among parents, students, and educators would be the necessary steady work of reform. I found that the ambitious reform effort of the DAP policy made almost impossible demands upon teachers. I wanted the policy to improve teaching and learning for Chadwick children and teachers. I had embraced a child-centered philosophy during the twenty-five years since I began teaching. I had had the opportunity to examine theory and think about practice in the quiet space of the university before returning to the hub-bub of the elementary school. However, to implement this policy, I had to put in very long hours every day and to give up time on the weekends to devote to preparation. I believed in the philosophy, but I was still plagued with self-doubt and I allowed my confidence to be undermined by critics at times.

I found that the teachers and I were much like our students in terms of our learning needs. We brought our individual personalities, experiences, and approaches to our learning. We needed time to learn with and from each other and to make mistakes as we attempted new approaches; we needed to experience trust in our ability to learn; we needed control over our learning - to decide for ourselves which aspects of our students' learning or of our teaching we would investigate, improve, or change; and we needed to spend time sharing what we had learned, celebrating our successes, and building upon our errors. Just as we attempted to create communities of learners in

our classrooms where students could help each other and sustain their mutual efforts and where they could get expert advice when they required it, teachers also needed to have such guidance and sustenance.

I found that simply mandating us to be professional educators was fraught with contradictions. These contradictions required discussion centering on questions which Elmore and McLaughlin remind us seldom appear on the policy agenda - "questions having to do with locus of authority, knowledge, and responsibility for teaching and learning" (1988, p. 4). If questions such as those can be raised and can become central in any aspect of reform and if educators can experience a different context for their own learning, then perhaps educational reform would not be viewed as something which policy makers and practitioners can't seem to get right, but would be seen as continuously evolving - thus steady work would be a positive attribute especially when such work takes place "in the company of guiding and sustaining friends" (Holdaway, 1979, p. 191). This dissertation is my effort to support such a view.

ORGANIZING THE PRESENTATION

I have organized my presentation of this study in the following way: In Chapter Two, following the advice of Michael Fullan and Susan Stiegelbauer (1991), I present a brief overview of the national, state, and local context within which this policy is set in an effort to frame the big picture. It is here that I also provide some insight about the local district's organizational and institutional factors. Chapter Three is a chronology of the policy itself - how the policy came to be instituted in this district, how it progressed from kindergarten through second grade, how the policy was explained to staff and the public, and how it was publicly received. Chapter

Four presents the viewpoints of the participants with particular emphasis on their sense of the meaning of the policy - what this educational change was designed to do and how they made sense of what they and others were doing. Chapter Five is an examination of the demands on practice and the available resources which the participants explained as being important in supporting their implementation of the policy and which highlight the irony between what the teachers were asked to do and what they experienced themselves. Chapter Six is my attempt to explain that the culture of schools must change to create space for learning about learning and teaching, and how, from this changed culture, educational policy and reform might originate in the complex and uncertain practice of teaching.

Chapter Two

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE DAP POLICY

A prominent university professor and long-time member of the Chadwick Community Schools Board of Education wrote in his introduction to a book by a local historian outlining the school district's history¹:

The quality of life in a community is heavily influenced, perhaps determined by, the quality of its schools. A major factor in the growth of both [local] communities has been their reputation for good schools. Home values are directly related to school quality, and the home is often the largest single investment a family holds. The long history of providing high quality education through long-range planning and careful financial management has been both the history and the hallmark of the Chadwick schools. (Hudson, 1986, p. v)

From the time the Chadwick Community School district began as a series of one-room schools in the late 1820s, it has prided itself as a state, and sometimes national, leader in the advancement of educational opportunities for students and in the professional qualities of its staff. The innovative programs which have been its hallmark have frequently resulted from the immense efforts of individuals or groups with a vision of what might be done to enhance the learning of Chadwick students. The DAP policy is one of those innovative programs. It was the vision of Hazel Brown, then Director of Elementary Education and long-time advocate for child-centered teaching practices. The policy had the support of many of the district's early elementary teachers who were concerned about the textbook focus and regimented teaching which had been slowing taking over in classrooms for young children. Many teachers were already using the recommended practices. In spite of these

¹ Information about the district's history was obtained from several primary sources: the history of the district written by a local historian, information provided to me during my participation in the district's "Administrative Intern" training sessions, and interviews with district participants in this study. Information from the Hudson book is indicated by the pages numbers in parenthesis.

advantages, the recommended practices were challenging for teachers to implement. A major challenge rose from the practices themselves, but other constraints arose from within the organization and history of the Chadwick district. Dr. Jordon, the current superintendent, had moved away from the building-level and local-input decision making approach which had characterized early superintendencies and had instituted a hierarchical chain of command to insure the flow of information and responsibilities within the district. The DAP policy was instituted during a time when text books and direct instruction marked effective teaching, yet DAP mandated a very different approach. In order to understand the context within which teachers and administrators were asked to implement this policy, it is important to have some sense of the history of the Chadwick district.

CHADWICK - A HISTORY OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

The first high school was established in Chadwick in 1877 and served localities which would eventually create their own secondary schools. The district was among the first in the state to offer regular kindergarten classes which were added to the elementary schools in 1898 after local parents investigated its feasibility and advantages for young children. Three of the district's superintendents, whose combined leadership totaled more than sixty-five years between 1918 and 1994, were instrumental in establishing and maintaining the outstanding reputation for quality schools in the Chadwick communities. Each man had his own vision of quality schooling. The superintendent hired in 1918 served until 1945 and was known for his organizational abilities. He brought "discipline, management, integration and order" to a disparate group of educators located in the many one-room schools which were consolidated into the three buildings. In 1950, there were

only three schools in Chadwick - a high school and two grade schools. The superintendent is credited with creating a true school district out a large number of small schools using a style identified as "paternal but democratic" (Hudson, 1986, p. 56). He allowed principals to select teachers and materials, which was unusual during the time between 1920 and 1950 because schools were increasingly under the influence of business people and others who felt that educational decisions should be made by experts (Tyack & Hansot, 1984). The first elementary school principal recalled that this superintendent's technique for persuading teachers to come to Chadwick was to find out how much they had been making and offering fifty dollars more.

Quality teaching and outstanding teachers have continued to be the backbone of the district. Early in its history, the district established a reputation for hiring only the best and most qualified teachers and administrators. For example, in 1948 the School Board established a policy which upgraded the professional preparation required of the staff who were hired. All teachers from then on had to have a bachelor's degree and all administrators and counselors had to have a master's degree. In contrast, when I started teaching in a nearby district in 1964, I was the only kindergarten teacher with a bachelor's degree. The other three teachers had two-year "Normal School" degrees. Also in 1948, in-service training began for the first time when a curriculum conference was held in the fall. This conference was led by an administrator hired in May, 1947, to supervise elementary curriculum. He issued a teachers' guide in the fall, 1948, which included his philosophy of education:

I believe that schools exist in our democracy primarily for the purpose of preserving and perpetuating our democratic form of society. I believe that a literate and enlightened mass is essential to the continued existence of our form of society and that to achieve this, free public-supported schools are necessary. (quoted in Hudson, 1986, p. 90)

RAPID GROWTH IN STUDENT POPULATION

In the years between 1950 and 1976 fifteen new schools were built to accommodate the rapidly increasing student population. During the ten years prior to 1960 the student population in Chadwick doubled from over two thousand to over four thousand. It was also during these years that Chadwick began to feel the effects of the nation's efforts to reform schools and to respond to criticisms. As one local historian recalled,

Sometime in the early 1950s, Russia launched "Sputnik." Much criticism was directed at the secondary schools in the nation because Russia beat us to the "punch." Former President John Kennedy's "Man on the Moon" program brought about rapid development in the nation's secondary curriculum in the areas of science, advanced mathematics and foreign languages. We required more of the students to take more of these subjects, thus to better prepare them to take their places in the rapidly developing technical fields. (Hudson, 1986, p. 93)

The Chadwick Superintendent of Schools during these first years of new school construction was a man known for his business and building expertise, but one local educator recalled that "academic matters may not have been his strong point" (p. 93). The School Board decided to create a position for him as business manager and, in 1951, they offered the superintendency to a man whose administration was eventually described as one stressing human relations (p. 94). This superintendent was well known for his progressive view of education based on the work of John Dewey. He stressed involvement of the students in decision making in elementary and secondary schools and supported experiential learning with field trips. His cooperative spirit carried over to this management style as well. He created a "School-Community Planning Group" of teachers, parents, community members, School Board members and principals to "discuss in regularly scheduled meetings, the problems facing the school and try to find a solution agreeable to all concerned" (p. 96). When he retired from office in 1967 it was noted

that he "followed the national trend toward more democratic and cooperative planning in the instructional program." His term was also

a period of decentralization of administration and supervisory control. Each school seemed almost autonomous in curricular content, administrative arrangements, textbook selection, teacher hiring, in-service practices and other matters. (p. 113)

While the superintendent appreciated decentralization, this view was not shared among all of the members of the School Board. In 1960, after much discussion, the superintendent was "instructed" to give priority to preparing a written policy on teacher evaluation, supervision, and in-service training of teachers. In 1964, the Board was actively creating many written policies which delineated specific duties for administrators. "The pendulum in Chadwick was swinging back," as one district historian described the era (p. 114).

The next superintendent to be hired was sought out by the Board of Education because, in contrast to the previous superintendent, he had a reputation for having a "firm hand" and it was hoped that he could deal with the teachers who had recently unionized. It was clear that the School Board was moving away from the openly democratic leadership of the previous superintendent. Public Law 379, which came into effect in 1965, gave public employees the right to collective bargaining. Prior to this time in Chadwick, teachers negotiated their starting salary and raises with the superintendent. One school official said there seemed to be "no rhyme nor reason, no equality" among the salary designations. Teachers could be fired if they made too much money, which allowed the district to hire other teachers at less pay. The establishment of the union provided a standard pay scale and rules for work conditions, but a School Board member in the 1970s felt that the law allowing unionization was the beginning of polarization between the administration and faculty. He said,

In the old days, teachers were part of the process. The school program got input from the best faculty brains. Everyone kept an eye on common goals. Then things changed. I am not opposed to unionization, but it is too bad we can't reach some type of agreement under which we all work together. (p. 124)

The new superintendent served only from 1967 to 1971, at which time he was asked to resign. The heavy-handedness and direct control approach for which he was hired became a detriment to the previously smooth running district and there was growing animosity between this superintendent and the staff. Charles Jordon, a Chadwick high school teacher and coach who had previously been appointed as Assistant Superintendent, was named to serve as Interim Superintendent until a replacement could be hired. The year 1971 brought many changes - in addition to the turmoil created by the dismissal of the superintendent, modular scheduling created chaos at the high schools when it was implemented to accommodate individualized instruction and the varying needs of teachers and students. The changing schedules allowed some students to spend their days at school without attending any class sessions opening the concept to bitter criticism. When I talked with Dr. Jordon, nearly twenty years later, he mentioned "the modular scheduling fiasco" as one reason why he relies on educational research to make decisions about school programs or procedures. He felt that he had inherited a program which was based simply on someone's "pet theory." Hazel Brown, a local university lab school director, was hired to be the principal of a new open school. Hunter Woods had no interior doors on the classrooms and the moveable walls allowed flexible arrangement of space and team teaching and was to stress child-centered, individualized instruction. Shortly after the opening of Hunter Woods, Johnson School also adopted the open-school concept and all classrooms contained students from at least two different grade designations. Hunter Woods eventually piloted a program for year-

round schools. It opened with the reputation for innovation and child-centered teaching and retained that image through the 1980s.

CREATING A DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Charles Jordon became the official superintendent in 1972 and earned his doctorate a few years later. A local historical described his strong points as his business sense and this ability to organize planning for the future. A mathematician, he has also been credited with piloting the district through some very difficult economic times. He was quoted during his first year as superintendent as saying, "If schools are to survive, we must have a planned program - and we've got to be accountable" (Hudson, 1986, p. 212). In 1977-78, he and some other district staff members put together a 209 page "Strategic Planning Document" which outlined the answers to these questions: Where are we? Where do we want to go? How do we get there? How much will it cost? Dr. Jordon felt that the copious data in the report would allow the district administrators, School Board members, and taxpayers "to get the most for their buck" (p. 213). Those questions continued to serve as the basis of Dr. Jordon's administration until his retirement.

Dr. Jordon maintained an organization of administrators using direct lines of responsibility. The Board of Education was at the top of the organizational structure, followed by the superintendent and his administrative assistants, the associate superintendents, the various department directors; executive directors of elementary, secondary, and special education; and finally principals. "Building staff" and "Subject matter teams/committees" were identified as "sources of input and information" for the "Division of instruction," but were otherwise unmentioned in the

organizational hierarchy (Chadwick Administrative Intern Program, 1985, n.p.).

In 1976, Hazel Brown encouraged the Chadwick administrators and Board of Education to approve funding for a special center for staff development. Based on the British Primary System and led by two men from England who coordinated the center with Mrs. Brown; its aim was to "make both teaching and learning a joyous experience" (Hudson, 1986, p. 149). Teachers were to go to the center to learn new teaching strategies, to create instructional materials, or just meet to talk. With the exception of a few teachers who used the facility frequently, the Chadwick teachers were cool to the idea. One of the English leaders reported that "in twenty-seven years in education he had never faced such low morale among a staff" (p. 149). Teachers said that they did not appreciate having to go to the center after school. There was no time provided for teachers to go during the school day. It should be noted, however, that the teachers taught for most of the 1976 school year without a contract with the Board of Education. The local Education Association membership advised all teachers to work only during contractual hours and not to volunteer for after school work or staff development.

Three new elementary schools opened in 1976, all requiring extensive additional duties for the teachers and administrators involved with those schools. In 1986, Hazel Brown was asked about the program by a local historian and she commented that, looking back, she could see that the teachers were just not ready for the program at that time. Now they are used to after school in-service, but it was not well accepted then. The Staff Development Center was Mrs. Brown's idea and when it did not work out, Dr. Jordon took the failure as a sign that Chadwick educators were not

particularly interested in staff development which was so open-ended and non-directive.

The Board of Education began moving toward more conservatism in 1976. One Board Member requested more "decorum" in classrooms and asked that no students call teachers by first names. The many schools which were built during the previous fifteen years had each developed and maintained a separate curriculum and approach to teaching. This had been the philosophy of the previous superintendent, but it did not fit well with Dr. Jordon's "Strategic Planning Document." In 1977, instructional leaders were hired at the Central Office to "develop, implement and evaluate instructional programs for all grade levels in the system" (p. 153). Three administrators were added to the Central Administration staff - an assistant superintendent for instruction and directors for elementary and secondary curriculum. The plan was to make the instructional methods and materials more aligned across the district. Hazel Brown eventually became the Director of Elementary Education and she brought her child-centered philosophy with her to her new position. In 1978, the district instituted a program for talented and gifted (TAG) students in elementary and middle school students. Following on the heels of Public Law 94-142 for Special Education, the TAG program served to identify special needs students and remove them from their regular classroom. It was designed to provide "identification, enrichment, special materials, projects, mini-courses, field trips, seminars, parent and teacher workshops, and advanced placement, independent study, and college preparatory classes" (Hudson, 1986, p. 155).

In spite of the lack of success with the Staff Development Center, the Chadwick School administrators remained committed to provide teachers with opportunities to learn about new developments in teaching. In the spring of 1979, the Chadwick Community Schools Newsletter outlined what the teachers

had been doing with their in-service time during the year. The long list of activities ranged from learning "techniques to improve students' memory and comprehension" to strategies for teaching science and handwriting and for evaluating reading in the elementary school. One school used their in-service time to look at "handwriting materials from four different publishers to decide which would be the most effective" (p. 155). The district's student population had increased by over 700 students for the eighth year in a row in 1979 which created strain on housing and further increased class sizes.

By 1981, the Chadwick district demonstrated its commitment to provide for the diversity of students with such programs as bi-lingual education, speech therapy, special education, TAG, a fully-operational school farm, a week-long outdoor camp experience for all sixth grade students, a career education center at the high schools, and a Native American Indian Education Center funded under Title IV. The high school complex also had close circuit TV, computerized instruction, language laboratories, honors classes, a school newspaper, a radio station, a debate program, driver training and a full range of sports teams. The district historian noted,

The continual increase in scientific discoveries; the desire of administrators, trustees and faculty to keep up with the latest in educational techniques and equipment; and the desire of parents to have the district provide their offspring with extra-curricular programs of a type they were never able to enjoy when they attended school, meant that the accumulative process might never end. Schools were being asked to provide services never envisioned by educators in the past. (Hudson, 1986, p. 163)

However, Chadwick programs for instruction and staff development depended upon local and state funding. Financial difficulties during the 1981-82 school year brought the necessity for two million dollars in budget cuts. The school farm was closed, sixth grade camp was eliminated, staff members were laid off, and class sizes were increased. There were reductions in athletic programs, transportation, and driver education. The cuts were

necessary due to a combination of factors, including declining state aid, millage failure, lower property assessments, and state or federally mandated programs which required district funds. Dr. Jordon noted that in his twenty-six year association with the Chadwick Schools, he could not remember a year which had produced as much change. Twelve district-wide committees were established to review programs and policies within the district. The committees were for curriculum at each level, discipline and attendance, maintenance, special services, extra-curricular events, and budget.

CENTRALIZING MATERIALS AND INSTRUCTION

During these years of budget cuts, district population growth and frequent student reassignment from one school to another, the Central Office administrators and School Board members received many complaints from parents about the variety of instructional materials and approaches used in the schools. Many parents felt that the children had a difficult time adjusting to the change in schools primarily because the schools used different texts and held different goals and expectations for the students. Chadwick committees of teachers and principals created district-wide content goals for each curricular area and selected basic text books for each subject. The general method of curriculum committee work, however, was to gather the latest editions of various publishers' texts, decide on one to be used district-wide, and then align district "goals" with the content of the text.

The reading series, which was adopted for use by every elementary school in the district, included student copies of readers arranged by grade levels from "readiness" to fifth grade and above, student workbooks, teacher guidebooks or manuals, supplemental materials such as skill practice sheets for phonics and comprehension, instructional charts with word lists, and

testing materials. "Readiness" workbooks, used in kindergarten, were to help students learn to identify letters of the alphabet, understand letter and sound associations, sequence visually from left to right, and memorize the "basic sight words" which would be needed for the pre-primer, or first reading book in the publisher's series. The text book mandate also included, in the case of reading, the administration of end-of-level and end-of-book tests supplied by the publisher. The answers were recorded on "scan-tron" cards and sent to the Board of Education office to be machine scored and recorded. Students who did not successfully pass the tests or any sections of the tests were to be retaught the skills they failed and were not to advance to the next book in the basal series without passing the book test. The publisher included "placement" tests with the reading testing materials so that new students who had read in other publishers' books could be "accurately placed" in the series.

There were a few elementary schools which maintained their individuality in terms of reading books. Hunter Woods and Franklin continued to use a multi-basal approach; the teachers there were free to select from among the several publishers' books available to them. Kennedy and Cleveland, two of the new schools, had chosen the same basal reading publisher when the schools opened as that selected by the district committee, so they did not have to change.

There were several different texts approved by the district for use in science at each elementary grade level, one text for math, one for social studies, one for spelling, and one for language/grammar.

The Board of Education was adamant that each student in the district have a text book to use for each content area and teachers were very strongly encouraged to use those texts as the foundation of her or his instruction. I became a learning specialist in 1978 and I was out of the classroom until 1989.

However, as a learning specialist, I was to support the teachers so that students could be successful in their basal readers. It was not without foundation that some teachers believed that the administration required that they follow the text books precisely. As one teacher said, "...you had a spelling book and it was mandated from the top and you do it and you feel as if you're not doing a good job if you don't get through the whole book" (6/18/91, p. 12).

The district also attempted to standardize instruction. In 1981, Chadwick implemented a program of Essential Elements of Effective Instruction, (EEEI, or often referred to as Instructional Skills), and by the mid-1980s all instructional personnel were required to participate in EEEI training. Based on the work of Madeline Hunter, EEEI was the district's effort to put research into practice in every classroom. Teachers were to plan lessons using the "seven-step lesson design" with careful attention to breaking concepts into component parts to be appropriately sequenced for teaching and learning. One entire day of the EEEI training focused specifically on the skills necessary to "select an objective at the correct level of difficulty." The reason for this component of EEEI was to "reduce chances students will be confused, frustrated or bored." The steps involved were: to identify the long-range objective; to diagnose the content, which included a task analysis to "eliminate the non-essential learnings," and to sequence learnings; to diagnose the learners; and finally, to select the sub-learnings that need to be taught (personal notes, EEEI training, 5/14/84). Principals were trained in "Clinical Supervision of Instruction" so that they could base teacher evaluations on EEEI when they observed in classrooms. The "appropriate practice" within the district at this time was direct instruction:

Direct instruction refers to academically focused, teacher-directed classrooms using sequenced and structured materials. It refers to teaching activities where goals are clear to students, time allocated for instruction is sufficient and continuous, coverage of content is

extensive, the performance of students is monitored, questions are at an appropriate cognitive level so that students can produce many correct responses, and feedback to students is immediate and academically oriented. In direct instruction, the teacher controls instructional goals, chooses materials appropriate for the student's ability....interaction is characterized as structured but not authoritarian. (Materials presented during Chadwick Instructional Skills Training, May, 1983, p. 4)

A grievance filled by the Chadwick Education Association in 1985 resulted in a EEEI training voluntary attendance policy for those staff members already in Chadwick's employment. The "Agreement" between the Chadwick School Board the Chadwick Education Association (Chadwick Community Board of Education, 1990-1993) contained the statement that, while "the Board of Education is desirous of having all staff trained in instructional skills...such training shall be voluntary for all teachers hired prior to the 1985-86 school year." Certified staff hired during or after the 1987-88 school year, however, "shall be required to participate in beginning instructional skills training prior to achieving tenure" (p. 23). (There was no mention of staff hired during the 1986-87 school year, but it could be that no new teachers were hired during this year of extensive lay-offs.) Another result of the grievance was that teachers could not be evaluated using Clinical Supervision.

THE INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL REPORTS

The National Commission on Excellence in Education published its report titled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, in 1983. The Commission had been established "to help define the problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions..." (p. iii). Proclaiming that our nation was at risk because "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people" (p. 5), the report further purported that the

"educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling, and the high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain them" (pp. 5-6). After reading the report, the Chadwick administrators compared the district with the five "new basics" the Commission saw as essential for a high school - English, mathematics, science, social studies, and computer science. They found that in all five areas the high schools compared quite favorably. In fact, the administrators noted for the School Board members that the Chadwick high schools went far beyond those basics. One example was that over forty-five percent of the high school students take a foreign language compared to the state's average of eleven percent. However, in spite of those glowing statements, in what has been indicated as a direct response to the *Nation at Risk* report, graduation requirements were changed to require students to pass achievement tests. According to the School Board minutes, "It was felt that the concept of time served, rather than the concept of achievement, was incorrect and that students should graduate when they can read, write, and communicate" (Hudson, 1986, p. 164).

In the fall of 1984, the district began a new elementary program called *Beginndergarten*, which was described as an addition to the traditional kindergarten and designed to serve five-year-olds "who may have superior intelligence but not be mature enough to cope with the stresses of the school day" (Hudson, 1986, p. 173). The elementary school curriculum had been becoming more and more "academic" with a push downward through the grades. In other words, what had been taught in second grade was now taught in first grade, and the first grade concepts were taught in kindergarten. The *Beginndergarten* program was designed to give students additional time and experiences before entering kindergarten and to insure their successful navigation of the curriculum. Enrollment was limited "because youngsters in

it needed more space and more adult interaction than is the case of those ready for the traditional class" (p. 173). In the spring, 1985, when I was involved in the Chadwick Administrative Intern training program, the district's "Strategic Planning" goals for 1984-85 included the problem of placing "all children in need of Beginndergarten program." This was identified as an important issue for administrative action because Beginndergarten was seen as a way to "decrease need for support services," and "not all students in need of the program were able to be placed this year." Responses to the need included recommending other preschool programs to parents of students who were identified for Beginndergarten, but who were not able to be accommodated; campaigning for the state to lower the entry date for kindergartners from December first to September first; and determining the amount of space and staff which would be needed to meet the needs of all students identified for Beginndergarten (Chadwick Administrative Intern Program, 1985, n.p.).

No textbooks or workbooks were used by Beginndergarten teachers. Manipulatives were used for mathematics instruction and literature books of all kinds were the basis of language arts. While there wasn't an attempt to have students memorize the names of the letters or learn letter/sound associations, the teachers immersed the children in reading and writing activities which enabled them to build those understandings. In place of "reading readiness workbooks" and texts designed to teach children to read, chants, rhymes, rhythms, and the child's own language formed the foundation of the literacy instruction. The teachers understood that the students bring with them to school a rich knowledge of how reading and writing work and generally attempted to build upon this knowledge.

A local millage finally passed (after three failed proposals in previous years) in October of 1984. The Superintendent reported in the district Newsletter that

We are encouraged to find that by all subjective measures, such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the College Board, and the state's Educational Assessment Program scores, our students are doing exceptionally well...The College Board scores are up and far exceed the national norms and the state norms. For example, in the math scores on the SAT, Chadwick scored 535, compared to 515 for the state and 471 for the nation. (Hudson, 1986, p. 175)

When *A Nation at Risk* was published in 1983, the Chadwick district responded with more stringent graduation requirements. This response fit typical Wave I response to these reforms (Odden, 1991), but seemed unnecessary given the Superintendent's glowing report about student achievement. The tightening down on academic emphasis continued, however, and in 1984 discussion was begun to do away with the "middle school concept" and replace it with a philosophy more centered on academics. Enrollment fluctuations also meant that ninth graders could be moved back to the middle schools and sixth grade moved to elementary, which would accommodate the greater numbers of students at the ninth through twelfth grade levels. Many people protested this plan, but middle school teachers had been asking for more planning time which their cross-grade groupings and team teaching in the middle schools demanded. Rather than provide the time, the response was to eliminate the various middle school cross-age and grade level teams.

The assistant superintendent for instruction was such a vocal adversary to the elimination of the middle school concept that he resigned. I was also opposed to the changes in concept. My own daughters had very positive experiences in their middle school with teams of teachers committed to their work. I took my protests to the Board of Education and submitted a

three-page letter outlining my concerns. I felt the recommendations were ill-advised and the answers did not fit the problems. Local reporters who attended the Board of Education meeting received a copy of the letter from one of the Board members and my letter was published in the local newspapers under my by-line. Dr. Jordon asked Mrs. Brown, Director of Elementary Education at the time, to speak to me about my "lack of support for district policy." I was a Chadwick learning specialist at the time, and as such I was expected to align myself, at least publicly, with administrative decisions. Mrs. Brown told me that she was embarrassed about having to speak with me about this issue, but she did as she was asked. I insisted that I speak directly with Dr. Jordon because he was the one with the concern about my "attitude." He agreed to meet with me, but maintained that I should at all times publicly support district policy. In spite of many protests, the junior high concept was reinstituted. Forty-minute classes and a strong "subject matter" focus replaced integrated subjects taught in large blocks of time; a twenty-minute lunch period replaced the fifty-minute time for lunch, intramural sports, chess and ping-pong; and the school which had pioneered the middle school concept was now forced to abandon its philosophy.

The district was clearly heeding the recommendations outlined in *A Nation at Risk* even though, by all accounts, the Chadwick students were already exceeding the academic goals suggested in the report. It seemed ludicrous to me that the district would dismantle excellent programs which had been developed specifically for pre-adolescent and adolescent students in favor of mind-dulling regimes. It was certainly true that many teachers wanted to do away with the middle school concept as well. The team teaching and multi-age groups required planning and thought. Instead of providing

teachers with the time and support they said they needed, the response was to eliminate the programs which might require them.

Between 1983 and 1985, across the U.S., according to Mary Hatwood Futrell (1989), more than seven hundred statutes were enacted by legislatures "stipulating what should be taught, when it should be taught, and by whom it should be taught." She said, "The clear purpose of this mass of legislation and bureaucratic mandates that followed was to control and to regulate teachers and local schools" (p. 11). The reports from the Carnegie Task Force (1986) and the Holmes Group (1986) called for the professionalization of teaching and for empowering teachers to make more decisions which directly affect them and their students, but as Futrell noted, "the legacy of the first wave endured - emphasis on education as a utilitarian rather than an intrinsic value" (p. 12). Chadwick was experiencing these same forces that were pulling it in seemingly opposite directions. On the one hand, the district was attempting to focus on strengthening the bounds between subject matter and increasing graduation requirements, and on the other hand, it was attempting to provide teachers with more opportunities for decision making via the state mandated school improvement plans which required teacher-input, and through district curriculum committees staffed entirely by volunteer teachers. There were also indications from the State that views about learning were changing.

CHANGES IN CURRICULUM FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

During the early 1980s the state began a process to create a "definition of reading." The previous definition was inferred from the curriculum and from the state mandated reading test which tested individual objectives. The

new definition began with a review of reading objectives by the Department of Education and the state Reading Association during 1982-83. The review determined that "the definition of reading implied by the objectives did not adequately reflect current theory and research"; therefore, the process began to create a definition of reading. The new definition focused on

how the reader builds meaning from print; what the reader brings to the situation in terms of experience, knowledge, skills, and motivation; how the information is presented in written text; and what effects context has on reading. (Wixson, Peters, Weber & Roeber, 1987, p. 750)

This definition was considered radically different from the former implied definition, which focused entirely on a sequence of skills with no mention of what the reader brings in terms of experience and attitude or what difficulties might be presented in the text itself. The assessment division of the State Department of Education planned that new state tests would be written to reflect the new definition, and a state-wide effort to inform school district personnel about the definition was launched by the state's Language Arts Curriculum Specialist. Chadwick sent a group of learning specialists, middle- and high-school reading coordinators, and principals to one of the county-wide informational meetings. As Kennedy's learning specialist by that time, I was one of the people selected to attend. As we sat in the large auditorium we continually got sidetracked from the assigned discussions to focus on our own district. It became clear to us that this was the first time in our memory that a discussion of reading was taking place in our district across the span of grade levels from kindergarten through high school.

As a result of that meeting, Hazel Brown decided that the district needed to continue the discussion and formed a district K-12 Reading Task Force, which I was asked to chair. In addition, she wanted to explore the possibility of providing the district's staff with inservice about the new definition of reading. Given the range of philosophies about literacy which were revealed

in early Reading Task Force meetings, it seemed clear to the staff development planners that we needed opportunities to discuss this new definition of reading from a variety of perspectives which might allow us to come to a consensus about our district philosophy. During this time, the state legislature made funds for staff development available through competitive grants. Since the new definition of reading centered on an individual's "construction of meaning," it seemed important to provide staff development which did more than impart a definition - we wanted participants to think about the "current theory and research" upon which the definition was based and to reflect on their own implicit beliefs.

The grant proposal we wrote was for a series of ten-week, two-university-credit (optional, but paid for by the project) seminars conducted by various literacy researchers. Dr. Karen Wixson, one of the driving forces behind the definition, supplied us with a list of possible contacts. We selected an acronym, S.O.A.R.R., for Strategic On-going Application of Reading Research, and with the funding provided by the state, we began our first series of seminars in September, 1986.

Each of the S.O.A.R.R. presenters submitted readings for the participants, which were placed in a notebook and which were to be read before the session. The presenters gave a talk during the first half of the seminar and after dinner participants had an opportunity to ask questions and hold small group discussions. The first session in each series was led by Dr. Wixson, who explained the history of the state's new definition and outlined the philosophical underpinnings from which the definition was taken. The next eight sessions were conducted by a variety of researchers, who, in general, held a philosophy aligned with the new definition, but who did not all interpret the applicational aspects of the philosophy in the same

ways. For example, Patrick Shannon and Peter Johnston were presenters who held critical perspectives on literacy instruction; they felt we must re-examine how we define literacy, how we instruct, and how we evaluate what students do. They both talked about literacy rather than reading and writing as separate areas. They called for teachers to be thinking professionals who based their teaching on observations of their children and they expressed more concern with teachers' understanding about learning than with a focus on instructional practices.

Other presenters, who also embraced the new definition, took a less critical perspective and focused their sessions on how to implement various strategies for writing and reading content area materials to enable higher student achievement on current measures. The final session in every series was designed to allow each participant to synthesize her or his understanding of the ideas and materials presented and continue to examine personal assumptions about literacy learning and teaching.

The Central Office administrators wanted each school to send two teachers to participate in each series of S.O.A.R.R. What happened was that some schools (Kennedy and Hunter Woods) had many more than two requests for participation in the first series and some schools had no requests. After much discussion, Central Office administrators agreed to allow as many participants from each school as there was space to accommodate. In a few cases, Hazel Brown put pressure on principals to have at least two teachers attend when registration for the third and then fourth series began without any requests from their schools.

There were many positive reactions to Project S.O.A.R.R. expressed in the session evaluations and in subsequent conversations with participants. All these years later, many teachers, learning specialists, and principals who

talked with me for this study commented that S.O.A.R.R. was a changing point for them in their thinking about literacy. One learning specialist shared a comment from a teacher in her school:

Incidentally, as a side note, Cathy Vilmont said to me today - I did that book talk for the staff last night for free because I believe I owe the Chadwick Schools a lot because a lot of what I know I learned for nothing - it was free. And S.O.A.R.R. was one of the very best things that ever happened to me. (10/11/90, p. 3)

Not every participant, however, was in favor of the approach used. The fact that presenters did not all align themselves was disconcerting to some. Others disliked the responsibility of having to construct their own definition of literacy and lamented the lack of sessions which might provide them with more concrete ideas about how to teach.

During the mid- to late-1980s, largely as a result of the state's new definition of reading and participation in Project S.O.A.R.R., many teachers were moving away from reliance on textbooks, including reliance on basal readers, with encouragement from their principals (in most cases). New Reading Guides for the district had been created by members of the Reading Task Force, and Hazel Brown consistently said that the district's curriculum "was in place" (referring to the curriculum objectives and topics for each grade level created by volunteer teams of teachers), which implied that as long as teachers taught "the curriculum" they could decide on the instructional method themselves.

The state Language Arts Curriculum Specialist gathered together a group of educators who volunteered to create presentations for state-wide conferences about the new definition of reading. Presentations were packaged into modules of scripts and overheads which were distributed at the state conferences and were to be used by school district personnel to teach local teachers about the definition and the strategies for teaching reading

which had been developed. The topics for sessions included "Where the Basics Fit," "Interactive Teaching to Support Interactive Reading," "Mapping Strategies for Narrative and Expository Text," "Instructional Techniques for Vocabulary," and "The Reading-Writing Connection" (State of Reading Conference Program, Chadwick Community Schools, 9/88). The Conferences were like the first stage of a large fan-out system to spread the word about the new reading definition and the teaching strategies which support it. Chadwick hosted one of the state reading conferences in September, 1988, and most of the presentations were done by Chadwick teachers.

DISTRICT COMMITMENT TO INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT CONTINUES

Instructional improvement has consistently been a primary concern of the Chadwick district. In 1985, Board of Education Policy Statement number 3710 read as follows:

Instructional Improvement

The Board of Education currently holds, through existing policy that:

The purpose of the [Chadwick] Community School District is to marshal all available resources toward the optimum development of each student.

And, While an educational institution should concern itself primarily with the intellectual development of its youth, a public school which opens its doors to all members of the community must also be attentive to their emotional, physical, and moral development, and continuing educational needs. A community's public schools have an obligation to help their students maximize whatever learning abilities they bring to the classroom. Toward this end, the organizational arrangement for instruction, curricular offerings, and teaching methodologies must be broad and varied.

Specific to this philosophical base,

Instructional improvement is sought through continuing the education of teachers and administrators; systematic planning of school programs which carries commitment to

the established goals and specific expectations at the classroom, building, and district levels; and provides a variety of alternatives for reading educational objectives, and the dissemination of improved strategies of instruction and supervision to enrich the learning process.

It shall further be the policy of the Board of Education to establish and support an ongoing, systematic program of instructional improvement. The program shall have as its foundation:

- the principles, concepts and content of the effective skills of instruction (e.g., lesson design, formulating and teaching to an objective, active participation, task analysis, diagnosis);
- the application of the principles of learning (e.g., motivation, reinforcement, retention, transfer, practice, extending student thinking);
- and the process of instructional supervision (e.g., observing, recording, analyzing, and conferencing).

The policy statement continued with these statements:

The process of instructional improvement must be continuous. It is envisioned as enhancing the leadership role of administrators, the effectiveness of teachers, the achievement and performance of students, and the confidence of the community in the job being done by the schools. As an ongoing process, instructional improvement involves the elements of strategy, action, and assessment. The information gathered as a result of these activities is cycled into the school systems' annual and long-range planning process thus providing a basis for continued improvement as well as for taking corrective action where necessary.

Instructional improvement, therefore, provides the opportunity for staff, students, and community to realize continuing excellence in education. (reprinted in the Chadwick Administrative Intern Program notebook, 1985, n.p.)

These statements may have been written with good intent; however, the onset of the DAP policy challenged the district to follow through on these commitments. Rather than "an ongoing process," instructional improvement became an overnight requirement for many teachers and principals.

In 1988-89, the Chadwick taxpayers failed to override a state amendment limiting the amount of tax a district could levy. Among the budget cuts was the Begindergarten program. In place of Begindergarten,

the district instituted a policy for all kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers to use "developmentally appropriate practices" designed to meet the needs of the wide range of students in their classrooms. Based on the recently released report of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1987), these practices required teachers to learn many strategies for teaching language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, as well as to use centers and integrate content areas through thematic instruction. In addition to responding to the NAEYC report, Chadwick administrators felt that the DAP policy also responded to criticisms outlined in *A Nation at Risk* concerning providing opportunities for students to achieve at more optimal levels and to criticisms outlined in the *Carnegie Task Force* and other reports which called for more teacher empowerment and professionalism.

DAP BEGINS WITHIN A CONTRADICTIONARY CONTEXT

The "Developmentally Appropriate Practices" policy, which will be outlined in the next chapter, occurred in the Chadwick district at a time when the policy regarding EEEI, or "Instructional Improvement" was still in place and when teachers had been strongly encouraged to use the district approved textbooks for all subjects. The DAP policy also occurred at a time in Chadwick's history when administrative management continued to be hierarchical and when teachers were viewed as "sources of input and information" rather than as professional decision makers. The DAP policy also occurred at a time when state achievement testing had reached "high stakes" status, causing increased pressure on local school districts for students to receive satisfactory scores.

The DAP policy called for an approach to learning and teaching so different from that previously embraced by district policies that staff members were asked to be involved in a "paradigm shift." As I hope to show, this shift was much more difficult than district policy makers anticipated. While some teachers had moved in the direction of increased child-centered teaching and some teachers had begun to respond to the State's changes in reading and writing curriculum, many teachers were faithfully following the district mandates for textbook-driven, direct instruction. The policy called for an approach to learning which was ironically denied to the teachers who were asked to implement it and to the local community members who were asked to support it. It required a learning environment which the district was unable to accommodate fully. It occurred during a time in Chadwick when it was not acceptable to question district policy publicly, although teachers were told to "be decision makers" and to implement the policy in their own ways.

In the next chapter, I present a chronology of the DAP policy - how it came to be instituted in the Chadwick district, how it was presented to the staff and to the public, how it progressed from kindergarten through second grade, and how it was received by the community.

Chapter Three

THE DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES (DAP) POLICY

BEGINDERGARTEN - FORERUNNER TO DAP

I was a learning specialist in the Chadwick district in 1984 when the Begindergarten program was created for children who were determined to be developmentally young when starting kindergarten. Begindergarten was instituted as a result of concern about large numbers of kindergartners and first graders who were being held back because they were considered "not ready" for the rigors of the next grade. The program was designed to reduce school failure and retention by identifying children who appeared 'at risk' and by placing them with specially certified early childhood teachers in classrooms designed to meet their needs. Identified students would complete Begindergarten before entering regular kindergarten the following year. All incoming kindergartners were initially screened by trained observers as the children visited prearranged sessions in the schools. Those children who got low ratings on a district-created checklist were recommended for an individual screening using the Gesell School Readiness Test (Ilg, 1965/1982) which all learning specialists were trained to administer. Children who scored between four years and four and a half years in developmental age were recommended for Begindergarten. Children who scored three years or below in developmental age were recommended for further evaluation with possible special education referral (Riley, 1984).

Parents of the identified youngsters were invited to evening meetings at which school personnel explained the benefits of the program. I was responsible for such meetings at Kennedy School and my personal views about Begindergarten caused me some distress about how to present the program and how to be honest, yet not express criticism of the program,

when answering questions. I thought that Beginnergarten was a better choice than retention, but I also felt that it was more important to have kindergarten classrooms which were not so structured that these young children could not experience success. I was caught up in the same dilemma I had experienced when I helped to develop the "transition first grade" for my former district. Some parents disapproved of the screening process, noting that it was an invalid way to determine school success and expressing concern that young students were being segregated into special classes. I tended to agree, but my response was to ask parents to visit the kindergarten in their child's school and the Beginnergarten classroom and decide which seemed a more favorable setting for the child.

During the months preceding January, 1988, the district's administrators became aware that nearly four million dollars of cuts would be required for the 1988-89 school year unless local taxpayers agreed to increase their tax levy. The elimination of Beginnergarten was listed among the cost-cutting measures if the vote failed. It was estimated that \$55,000 could be saved by increasing the class sizes (Beginnergarten classes had considerably fewer students than regular kindergarten classes) and returning the Beginnergarten teachers to teach in other grades ("Parents Upset," 1988). The state's Attorney General had also recently given an opinion to the State Board of Education that the state should terminate funding for all of the long-term or additional year kindergarten programs such as Beginnergarten (School Board Minutes, 4/25/88).¹ This loss of state funding would put an added burden on the local district to pay for this year extra of schooling.

¹ These documents are the published record of Chadwick Community Schools Board of Education meetings.

During the four years it was in place, Begindergarten had become a very popular choice with many parents. The classrooms were interesting and fun places to be and most children seemed to thrive as they moved up to kindergarten, then first and second grades. Kindergarten and first grade teachers liked Begindergarten because they felt they had more homogeneous groups of students in their classes with the very youngest removed. Many parents and teachers protested the elimination of Begindergarten; they presented a petition containing 575 signatures to the Chadwick School Board and extolled the virtues of the program. However, Begindergarten was formally disbanded by the Board (School Board Minutes, June 27, 1988). The parent who presented the petition was quoted in a local paper as saying that "axing the program could bring on academic problems and disadvantages for youngsters that may be lifelong." He warned the Board that "eliminating Begindergarten could mean increased enrollment in learning disabled programs, more dropouts, and more grade repeaters." He also noted that the seven neighboring districts which had extra-year kindergarten programs were not planning to eliminate them ("Parents Upset," 1988, p. 1).

Actually, the process of disbanding Begindergarten had already been put into motion by Superintendent Jordan as evidenced by his report to the Board of Education in April, 1988, two months before the tax levy vote. He asked the Board's permission to retain the services of a university professor specializing in Early Childhood Education to assist the staff in dealing with "developmental levels" in kindergarten and first grade. He said, "In light of the State's closure on Begindergarten, we feel it is necessary that our kindergarten teachers and first grade teachers use a developmental approach in teaching kids at this level" (School Board Minutes, April 25, 1988, p. 5). This professor had already held one inservice for kindergarten teachers, first

grade teachers, and learning specialists in January, 1988. During April, 1988, a volunteer Task Force of Beginndergarten teachers, regular kindergarten teachers, first grade teachers, and learning specialists was formed to begin work on developing a curriculum guide and to serve as a planning body for the staff inservices during the 1988-89 school. I was pleased that Beginndergarten would be eliminated. The kindergarten teachers at Kennedy were already very child-centered. In fact, one of the Kennedy teachers taught one session of Beginndergarten in the morning and "regular" kindergarten in the afternoon.

The Early Childhood Task Force presented a "Program Improvement Plan 1988/89" to the Board of Education in July of 1988. The "Statement of Need" said the "success of Beginndergarten's complete developmental philosophy has given rise to an interest in such a curriculum model by kindergarten teachers." The Task Force recommended the creation of a "common philosophy or goals" for young students which would serve as a foundation for the curriculum in the early grades. The "Rationale" section of the Plan referenced research by Froebel, Montessori, Piaget, Erikson, Elkind, and many others, representing "a continually growing body of research into child development [which] consistently supports" a view that "development in all domains... progresses through a series of sequential and hierarchical stages which are universal and predictable." A definition of learning was attributed to NAEYC and was quoted as "a complex process that results from the interaction of children's own thinking and their experiences in the external world." The "Rationale" also included recommendations for the instructional program, such as providing "opportunities for all children to have many and varied experiences" which should be of a "multi-sensory, 'hands-on' nature so that integrated learning can occur" and "emphasizing the child's active

participation in problem solving and discovery learning using concrete materials and real-life experiences." Workbooks and worksheets were described as "neither appropriate nor effective teaching materials" for most kindergarten children. The proposal recommended classroom activities to develop such social skills as cooperating, negotiating, and "talking to solve interpersonal problems." Communication between the school and the home and between grade levels was seen as critical to the education of the young child.

The "Program Improvement Plan" was approved by the Board of Education with the following five objectives for the work of the Early Childhood Task Force:

1. To write specific goals for students within ten learning domains previously identified by the Early Childhood Task Force.
2. To write specific activities to match the goals within the ten learning domains.
3. To provide elementary principals with current research on developmentally appropriate programming for young children.
4. To provide an opportunity for the district's kindergarten teachers to discuss and receive feedback on the implementation of the new Kindergarten Curriculum Guide.
5. To provide all teachers in grades K-1 with the most current research and methodologies in the area of developmental curriculum planning for children ages 4 - 6. (Program Improvement Plan, 1988)

By July, 1988, plans were finalized for a teacher workshop with the university professor for the first week in August. Additionally, the Superintendent reported to the School Board that it was the administrative intent to move "Developmental" kindergarten along to first and second grade developmental programs as well (School Board Minutes, July 25, 1988). A local newspaper, the *Chadwick News*, reported that although Begindergarten was gone, Chadwick Public Schools' "officials promise the needs of the young people it served won't be forgotten....The district is going to begin a developmental kindergarten program designed to meet the needs of all the

students who are beginning school....This fall regular kindergarten classes were to be phased out anyway in favor of the developmental program" ("Developmental," 1988, p. 1). The superintendent was quoted in that edition of the paper as saying that the new program would not cost the district money, but would mean larger kindergarten classes.

Dr. Jordon referred to funding problems as the basic reason for the elimination of Beginndergarten; however, given the chronology of events, it is clear that other factors influenced the decision as well. There was an increasing number of criticisms of programs like Beginndergarten and of the Gesell test used to identify the students. Large numbers of boys, lower socio-economic students, and minority children were consistently identified as being too young for regular kindergarten, which raised questions about what the test was actually testing. Educators also questioned the quality of training given to people who administered the test (Meisels, 1987). In Chadwick, for example, our training consisted of two half-days. During that time we were to learn not only how to administer the test, but also how to interpret what we observed and how the students performed. Research studies tracking students who had been given an extra year and those who had not revealed no difference in academic or social adjustment between the groups. The nearby school district, which was first in the state to start an extra-year of kindergarten program, had already dropped both the program and the Gesell testing because of many protests about the predominant number of African-American students being identified and placed in the program (Creager, 1990).

Hazel Brown noted identification difficulties within the Chadwick district:

And even in our own school district, when we instituted the Beginndergarten Program, I was really sold on that program for a small

percentage of young children - young boys, in particular. But the program grew and grew and grew and pretty soon we were ending up with 25 percent of our kindergarten children in that program. And it no longer looked like a program for just young children for an extra year, but a program that was taking in children for a whole host of other reasons. (10/30/90, p. 3)

FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

The guide for the district's examination of its teaching practices in the early grades became *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8* (Bredekamp, 1987), a publication of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This document recommended that all classrooms for young children should be designed to meet the wide range of needs of students. The Early Childhood Task Force of teachers and administrators, which had been created in April, 1988, also drew on this NAEYC publication when they created the following document, which outlines for the Chadwick community what those classrooms are to be like:

Chadwick Community Schools Philosophy for Early Childhood

The Chadwick Community School District believes that teachers and parents cooperatively provide the learning experiences and models which foster positive attitudes, promote children's potential, and enhance school success. This is reflected in multi-sensory classrooms that provide for developmentally appropriate learning experiences considered fundamental to each child's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic growth.

Underlying the program is a respect for individual learning styles and the theory that children construct their own knowledge through concrete, real-life experiences. The overall goal is to develop a disposition in children that encourages their seeking of challenges and effective persistence in search of learning.

In implementing this philosophy, we believe that children learn best when:

- individual development rates are valued and respected;

- the environment supports both directed teaching and child-initiated activities which develop higher levels of thinking;
- all areas of development are viewed as equally important and interrelated;
- purposeful play is valued as an important learning process, since it is the primary avenue through which children acquire cognitive, social, affective, and motor skills;
- they have opportunities to engage in all aspects of the learning process: exploration, acquisition, practice, and application;
- they are given the opportunity to be active learners - to manipulate and experiment with a variety of materials and situations;
- the learning environment is warm, stimulating, and multi-sensory, thereby enhancing learning through the development of positive self esteem and a positive attitude toward school;
- there is an effective match between our expectations of children and their developmental skills and abilities;
- the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of each child can be most effectively nurtured when class size is appropriate;
- there is a literate, print-rich environment that encourages and enables each child's acquisition of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989)

The "Rationale" statements included in the Program Improvement Plan proposal for the creation of the Early Childhood Task Force supported the stance of NAEYC against the pressures of inappropriate, overly structured curricula, which were often found in kindergarten programs. The Begindergarten program in Chadwick had been created to meet the educational needs of children who were assessed to be "not developmentally ready" for these traditional kindergarten experiences. The elimination of Begindergarten meant that all kindergarten classrooms must now provide experiences appropriate for all incoming kindergartners.

The DAP policy was designed not only to meet the needs of all of the students, but also to examine those teaching methods which led to the need for the Begindergarten classes. One of the reasons given for the increased

pressure for the more academic, structured kindergartens was that the accountability aspects of the most recent national reform efforts seemed to narrow the curriculum to make learning easier to test. The use of standardized tests had increased in Chadwick and it was often a student's poor performance on such tests which resulted in the recommendation for retention. Shepard and Smith (1988), for example, felt that the overemphasis on standardized testing led to a pushing down of the curriculum to the next lower grade. Hence, what had been taught in first grade was now routinely taught in kindergarten. The common response was to test children for kindergarten placement (which had been done in Chadwick) or raise the age of kindergarten entry or retain many children in kindergarten. According to NAEYC, these were all attempts to get an older cohort of children at each grade level and revealed that the curriculum expectations did not match the developmental level of the children in each grade. NAEYC suggested an evaluation of the processes used to teach, but did not address the issue of what to teach (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992).

Hazel Brown was quite insistent about the focus on teaching practices rather than on the curriculum:

I have to start first by saying that I don't think we have a developmental curriculum and I don't want to talk about this from that point of view. What I see us shifting toward is developmentally appropriate practices in our primary grades. OK? I'm trying very hard to distinguish those. Curriculum is content. You know - objectives and outcomes for kids - and concepts - all of that is curriculum. And that body of curriculum has pretty much been established for us by teachers who developed them in our district - from the state guidelines, the essential skills, and so on. That's pretty constant. I think that curriculum has been defined for us, so we're trying to shift toward implementing practices that acknowledge and recognize that children - ages 4 to 8 - are unique in their developmental growth. (10/30/90, p. 1)

Mrs. Brown viewed the Chadwick district's attention to the State curriculum and the curricular objectives developed within the district as vital to retain

the School Board's commitment to the new DAP policy and to retain the community's confidence in the school district's ability to maintain high standards for student achievement. Her emphasis on teaching practices, however, created some confusion about the meaning of the policy.

For example, the district curriculum focused on students learning letter names, letter/sound relationships and some "sight words" before these students were introduced to books to "read." Practices considered appropriate, however, included introducing repetitive pattern books and other easy books to children with the understanding that letter names and sounds could be introduced at the same time. We did not consider that some of the curriculum might also be inappropriate for our children, nor did we consider the influence the state and local curriculum might have on our ability to use developmentally appropriate practices. This omission led to increasing stress for teachers as DAP moved up through the grades, where curriculum emphasis took on greater importance as teachers attempted to prepare students for state and local achievement tests.

Mrs. Brown said that the DAP policy was based on the teaching practices of Beginnergarten teachers and that many teachers told her that changes in overly structured kindergarten classrooms would be needed with the elimination of Beginnergarten. This gave the policy the look of originating, at least in part, in a grass-roots way. I asked Dr. Jordan whether he thought this policy might be a combination of top-down and bottom-up processes; he responded,

I think so. I look for the expertise in our teachers. I see our job as trying to enable that to happen. To support the [teachers]. I have a tendency now, to turn more to research and try to validate things that you hear. So you aren't out in left field....Of late, I guess, say in the last ten or fifteen years, I lean more toward what research tells us and what some of our key teacher-leaders are doing. I think we took a leadership role in the new definition of reading and involved our staff in training

other staff and I think that's a compliment to the quality of teachers we have. (10/9/90, p. 4)

Hazel Brown also felt there was a combination of forces supporting the DAP policy but that the main impetus came from a group of teachers:

H.B.: Well, I think that we've had teachers in our district that have practiced this philosophy for a long time. And, in fact, it was many of these teachers who said we need to change the way we're doing things - especially if we're not going to have Begindergarten any more. And, you remember, the interesting thing was, we didn't end Begindergarten because we didn't think it was a good program. What I was questioning was the numbers [of students involved] and the State Department came out simultaneously with the idea that these alternative programs are going to need special application at the state level. There was some frowning being done. So, at the time that occurred, however, when we lost millage and we were going to have to cut some programs and that one was cut because the class sizes were so small as viewed by the Board and the Superintendent. The group of teachers said, along with some other kindergarten teachers, we've got to change the way we're doing business.

K.P.: Begindergarten teachers?

H.B.: And the kindergarten teachers. There were many who said we have to change the way we're doing things and we did. We formed a task force - so, I guess, one of the things, if I'm going to take credit for anything - it's for trying to be supportive and trying to lend - um - and develop the avenue, I guess, for things to happen. Creating, if you will, the support of the Superintendent, keeping the communication going with Dr. Smith [assistant superintendent], with members of the Board of Education so that - that's what I mean by avenues - so that, things can change, can happen. (10/30/90, p. 4)

Teachers and principals who talked with me felt uneasy about the way in which the practices of some teachers became mandated by the district. Many of my participants were teachers who volunteered for the Early Childhood Taskforce and they all said that they had campaigned against a mandate and preferred instead to have the philosophy and practices evolve more gradually. What may have been viewed by Central Administrators as a grass-roots effort became a top-down mandate in actuality. As we shall see, one irony which became more and more evident as I talked with teachers and principals was that the learning experiences of these grass-roots teachers was very different from that of the teachers who had to change their

practices. The grass-roots teachers had been slowly moving in the direction of child-centered teaching while many of the other teachers had been faithfully following district policies based on text books and teacher-centered, direct instruction.

THE NEW POLICY - SPREADING THE WORD TO THE COMMUNITY

Parents and other community members had an introduction to the new DAP policy when one local newspaper ran a series of articles, between August, 1988, and February, 1989, that dealt with the developmental approach to learning. Hazel Brown was quoted in the first article as saying that the previous Beginndergarten program was not the "ultimate answer for a child's highly individualized needs." She said that Beginndergarten was "wonderful for those who took advantage of it, but it's the school's responsibility to provide for children's individual needs...policies that restrict age entrance really don't provide all the answers" ("Kindergarten has," 1988a, p. 1). That initial article cited information from the "Synthesis of Research on School Readiness and Kindergarten Retention" by Lorrie A. Shepard and Mary Lee Smith (1986) in support of the move away from special classrooms for young children. Their research indicated that achievement differences which are measured in chronological age are not statistically large and the effects of being either an older or younger kindergartner tend to diminish by third grade. The university consultant to the Chadwick district was also quoted:

What we want to do is provide a better balance in the schools and switch from a teacher-directed classroom to one where the child initiates learning. The last 15 years have been very adult-directed. The number of kids dropping out and other factors caused us to take a better look at the early years of school and research related to children's development. We didn't understand how important those early years were. ("Kindergarten has," 1988a, p. 1)

Hazel Brown told the news reporter that workbooks would not be seen in developmental kindergartens in the Chadwick district. "The latest research shows that workbooks are not effective tools for any five-year-old and are not appropriate" (p. 1). Parents were advised that they could expect to see individualized instruction because the growth of young children is often uneven. The goals for the program were presented in the first *Devon Flier* article with direct quotes from the district's school philosophy that provided the community with the same information which the teachers and administrators had received.

The second article focused on the 98-page document which had been distributed to all kindergarten teachers throughout the Chadwick district, and on the teachers who had helped to create the curriculum. The "Kindergarten Curriculum" was identified as a guide for teachers who would be implementing the new approach. Much of the discussion in this article centered on the areas of language development and language arts. Mrs. Brown explained that educators had previously held a narrow view of reading readiness. "In most kindergartens, it consisted of teaching the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make through workbooks. Our new approach is that children come to school already possessing a rich oral language. Reading and writing are an extension of that" ("Students start," 1988b, p. 1).

Elizabeth Sulzby's (1985) research on emergent literacy was credited with helping the Chadwick teachers understand early readers and writers and to identify "various stages of writing as they occur naturally in young children." With the developmental approach, children are viewed as having well-developed oral language, which blossoms "in a natural and logical way into conventional reading and writing skills." Sulzby's work shows that children without a complete understanding of the alphabet are already

exploring reading and writing in their own ways. One of the teachers who helped develop the curriculum was quoted as saying, "It doesn't matter what you come with you're successful. That's what it's all about - making these kids feel comfortable coming to school." Another teacher said that children are given opportunities "to explore in a structured environment" and are given "lots of choices," which she views as a "basis for success in school." Both of these teachers identified themselves as "motivators for the children, building on what students bring to the classroom to make learning a positive experience." Development in literacy is encouraged in a "print rich environment" in which students read daily, express themselves in writing, and experience many examples of oral and written language to develop connections between print and oral language and attach meaning to it. According to Mrs. Brown, "fundamentals come later." Phonetic skills are taught when children begin to read more fluently and "ask the teacher what a particular word is, then the teacher can show the child how to unlock words. If the child has no interest, no vocabulary, it makes no sense to teach those sounds" ("Students start," 1988b, p. 1). Other articles in the series focused on mathematics, play, and science ("Math," 1988c, "Play," 1988d, "Program," 1988e).

INFORMING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

During a special Board Workshop meeting on October 3, 1988, ten teachers and Mrs. Brown presented an overview of the new developmental practices. The Board members commended them for presenting the "significant change in the kindergarten curriculum" in a way that "provided an understanding of the philosophy and reasoning behind the developmental approach." The minutes of the workshop read, "The program will be slowly

and systematically implemented over a three to five year period" (Board of Education Workshop Minutes, 10/3/88).

The Board of Education was asked to approve the "Developmental Primary Curriculum" at its meeting on October 10, 1988, at which time the Superintendent cited an article titled, "Who's Pushing Whom? Stress in Kindergarten" in the *Phi Delta Kappan*. He included a copy in the Board packet of materials and read the last paragraph aloud:

Like other professionals, early childhood educators should be given a measure of trust as the people who best understand the developmental needs of children, and they should be empowered to design and implement programs to meet those needs. To ignore the stress that early academic programs can place on young children or the stress that conflict between philosophy and reality can place on the professionals who work with these young children is to risk education that does damage in the years when the foundations for future learning are laid. (Hatch & Freeman, 1988, p. 14)

Dr. Jordon used this quote to stress to the Board that the early elementary teachers in Chadwick had designed the DAP policy and would be allowed to implement the practices into their classrooms in their own ways. It was clear, however, that only some of the teachers helped to plan the policy; other teachers were informed that their practices would have to be changed. Although Begindergarten and kindergarten teachers were asked to volunteer for the Early Childhood Task Force, some kindergarten teachers and learning specialists weren't aware that the policy had been put into place until they arrived at school late in August. As one principal described it, "They got the program on August 26 and they were expected to be teaching it on August 27" (12/5/90, p. 4). All the kindergarten teachers were given copies of the new DAP curriculum guide which had been created by the Task Force and within the year there were six half-day inservice training sessions held during school hours in order for the teachers to create developmentally appropriate activities to match the curriculum. There were also voluntary monthly

meetings scheduled for kindergarten and first grade teachers to share ideas, review the new guide, plan for parent education and to share activities for individual and specific domains.

As requested by the School Board, an assessment of the first year of the Kindergarten Developmental Curriculum was presented by Mrs. Brown at the July 24, 1989, Board meeting. Kindergarten teachers and parents had responded to a questionnaire asking for both responses and suggestions for improvement. There were five pages of favorable comments from survey participants. There were also suggestions for the future. These included maintaining small class sizes and increasing per pupil allocation for adequate funding for consumable materials, resources books for teachers to use for ideas, and additional equipment for science, math and art. Teachers also requested more time to meet together (at least once a month) to share ideas, to observe each other, and to develop strategies for their teaching. They wanted more on-going communication among the schools and time to hold spring conferences with parents. The last suggestion was for "consistent district and interschool communication for interpreting, defining, and answering questions regarding the revised program" (First Year Assessment of Kindergarten Developmental Curriculum, 1989, p. 7).

Mrs. Brown presented to the School Board an adaptation of the Kindergarten Curriculum as the First Grade Developmental Curriculum on August 14, 1989. She said the curriculum had been created by a committee of twenty-two first grade teachers, two learning specialists, and four administrators with additional input from herself, the Language Arts curriculum coordinator, and outside consultants. At this time, she also announced the summer workshop which would be held for first grade teachers who volunteered to attend. Several Board members expressed

concern about the process by which the new curriculum would be evaluated as it moved up through second grade. A charge was given to the administration to determine a way to measure success of student achievement at each grade (School Board Minutes, 8/14/89).

Efforts were made to keep the School Board informed about the learning theories which supported the DAP policy. For example, Mrs. Brown asked the Superintendent to distribute copies of *The Wingspread Journal* at the January 22, 1990, Board meeting. This journal contained material published to help educators better understand developmental learning (School Board Minutes, 1/22/90). Dr. Carolyn Humphrey-Cummings, a national consultant on early childhood education, presented a workshop for the Board on February 19, 1990. The meeting was open to parents and teachers as well as to Board members; it was held in an auditorium in one of the high schools. Dr. Humphrey-Cummings contrasted methods of teaching in early childhood from previous years to those currently recommended. She provided an overview of the central criticisms of programs such as the district's previous Begindergarten, but said that those programs did have a positive effect in that they focused thinking on the education of young children and in meeting their unique needs. She cautioned the district not to oversimplify the developmental approach, and she suggested that the district look at three main areas of change. Those areas were (1) understanding the theory of learning which says that children learn at different rates, that they construct their own knowledge and use skills in real-life situations; (2) involving parents in the schooling of their children by helping in classrooms, serving on committees, and sharing opinions; and (3) collaborating more with the community - realizing that children come from

all types of families and our schools must meet the changing needs of society (School Board Workshop Minutes, 2/19/90).

The DAP policy was implemented in the district's first grade classrooms during the 1989-90 school year. This was also the year that I returned to the district. I was delighted to hear about the district's DAP policy. The last time I was a classroom teacher in the Chadwick district was during 1978, when I taught second grade in a school where textbooks were the core of instruction and I had to get permission to teach without a basal reader or math textbooks. I spent several hours convincing my principal to allow me to do what the teachers were now being encouraged to do.

A one-week summer workshop was held, but I was not able to attend because of my university teaching schedule. When the school year started in August, my principal provided me with the 181 page notebook of materials created by the First Grade Task Force for the workshop and to be used as a resource for first grade teachers. It contained an introductory letter by the Superintendent, the district's Early Childhood Philosophy, information about how to set up and manage the classroom environment, a section on the curriculum, a list of resource materials, seven articles on early childhood education, and an overview of literacy and mathematics assessment. It also included the following notation:

The committee developed curriculum areas, ultimate goals, and many curricular objectives from the District's Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies, and Science Curriculums and from previous work by the Traverse City Area Public Schools. The N.A.E.Y.C. Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum served as a framework. (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989)

The Superintendent's introduction to the notebook included two paragraphs which seemed to make it clear that we teachers would be given time to adjust to this new policy:

Along with every significant opportunity comes a corresponding responsibility. The responsibility facing teachers who will use this new program is significant. First they must understand the philosophy and reasoning which form the foundation of this approach to teaching and learning. And secondly to adopt it, slowly and systematically use it as their own. For some teachers this transition will require much time and effort.

Everyone involved in this implementation process recognizes that it will take time to make the necessary adaptations and modifications on the part of many teachers. For this reason, a timeline is being proposed with the understanding that a slow, gradual change which lasts is better than a sudden transition which cannot be maintained. To be comfortable with the new curriculum each teacher must take a piece at a time and work diligently until it is in place. (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989)

The clear intent was to give teachers and principals time to adjust and to implement the policy. However, the hoped for time was not available. As I discovered, when you have no math text books, you must do something to create materials to provide for student learning. For many teachers, the issue of time to make the changes was vital.

The First Grade Curriculum Guide included the following in the section on "Curricular Outcomes": Aesthetics, Affective Development, Cognition, Physical, and Social Development. The Cognition section, for what might be considered language arts, was titled "Whole Language." It included "Definition of whole language," "Basic tenets of whole language," "What makes language very easy or very hard to learn," "Language curricular outcomes," "Guidelines for indirect and direct instruction in whole language and conventional classrooms" (a comparison of indirect/whole language and direct/conventional), "Literacy levels" (attributes of the range of pre-print learners to independence), "Whole language approach" (an overview of 4 phases in a "literate environment"), "Whole language balanced reading program," and "Prediction as a reading strategy."

Six of the seven articles in the notebook provided information about various aspects of teaching young children - physical development,

encouraging children to write, grouping by ability, developing math concepts and using objects or manipulatives. The seventh, "Leading Primary Education Toward Excellence," by Constance Kamii (1985), discussed an overarching philosophy or approach to education and the teacher's role in deciding what and how to teach. Kamii reported that teachers often are "forced to do things against their conscience" (p. 3), in part because people who have the power to make decisions in education are often ignorant of child development and are often motivated politically to increase students' test scores. Another influence, however, is that provided by "common sense notions of instruction and development" (p. 3). Kamii believes that because child development as a field consists of a variety of theories about the child, there are no resulting unified links to a theory of instruction. Proponents of child development often speak of such things as "unfolding from the inside, or maturation," which are at odds with what she calls "common sense notions" in which teaching is "*telling* or *presenting* knowledge, and learning takes place by the *internalization* of what is taught" (p. 4, emphasis in the original). To people who think in either-or terms, employing a developmental approach means giving up instruction. Developmentalists must find a way to show that some of the "common sense" approaches are inappropriate - "But we need to go beyond saying that worksheets are developmentally inappropriate and explain precisely and scientifically why these are inappropriate" (p. 4).

This particular article was especially thought-provoking for me because its inclusion in the first grade notebook signaled a break from the Gesell (maturationist) philosophy upon which the Begindergarten program had been based - build in an extra year and the children will do well in school - and the behaviorist thinking - the tests will show our progress - which had

dominated Chadwick's educational policies in the past. Both the Superintendent and Director of Elementary Education said that the DAP policy was an outgrowth of the Begindergarten philosophy, but if this article and the rest of the notebook are representative of the theories undergirding the DAP policy, then there are at least some philosophical differences between the two. It signaled for me one part of the "paradigm shift" that we never discussed.

The First Grade Curriculum Guide was not the only source of information about the DAP policy, however. There were six half-day inservice meetings for all first grade teachers held throughout the year. There were also many after-school offerings for staff development in reading, writing, math, science and computers. Additionally, the three other first grade teachers at Kennedy and I met voluntarily each week to talk about issues related to our collaborative work.

During the 1989-90 school year School Board members continued to support the policy publicly, but they were also becoming increasingly wary. At their Workshop meeting in July, 1990, members asked for "empirical evidence that this program is more successful than before, and that affective and standardized course evidence be included, as well as possible results and how we got the conclusions [we have] about the program" (School Board Workshop Minutes, 7/21/90). The section of the First Grade Curriculum Guide notebook which dealt with assessment, however, centered on teacher observation, student portfolios of writing, lists of books read, taped readings, and self-assessments. There was no mention that these assessments would not be acceptable as "empirical evidence" of the success of the program - an issue which emerged as significant during the following year.

Plans were also underway to implement the policy in the second grade classrooms during the 1990-91 school year. A summer workshop was organized for second grade teachers and elementary principals for June 18 through 21, 1990. All principals were required to attend; all second grade teachers were invited, but the workshop was voluntary for them and no stipends were provided. I was asked to participate in planning and leading the workshop along with Carol Windsor, Kennedy's media specialist, and two second grade teachers from two other elementary schools. Our planning began in February, 1990, and included, at our insistence, three general meetings to which all district second grade teachers were invited. During those general meetings the teachers brainstormed suggestions for the content of the workshop and discussed what information would be helpful to them as they began to put the policy in place (Field notes, 2/5/90). The first of those general meetings with the teachers included a discussion of four questions: What is developmentally appropriate curriculum and why does it work? How do I get started? What is the primary role of the teacher when using whole language? How do I communicate with parents? The teachers suggested additional questions and topics for the summer session. The second grade teachers who attended this meeting felt that first grade teachers could be a great resource to them, so provision was made for any second grade teacher who requested to do so to visit the classroom of a first grade teacher already implementing DAP (Field notes, 4/4/90).

Thirty second grade teachers and all of the elementary school principals attended the June workshop. The sessions were meant to be an introduction to what was hoped to be a year of discussion and collaboration. Unfortunately, the local Education Association and the administration decided not to include the six half-days for staff development in the school calendar

for 1990-91. This was a devastating blow to DAP at a time when the policy was to be implemented by teachers who had more consistently relied on text books and direct instruction in the past and for whom the DAP changes were greatest. Central Office administrators did organize a network of four groups of second grade teachers from three schools in each group so that they could meet after school to discuss ideas and concerns. These meetings were voluntary, but the administration made available two hundred dollars to each team to use as the team members wished. The district teacher contract demands that teachers complete six hours of after school staff development, but there were no other requirements nor compensation for participation in opportunities for further learning. The curriculum coordinators for math/science and language arts/social studies did plan many after school sessions for teachers. Since school open-houses and other activities could be counted, it was possible for teachers to satisfy their six-hour requirement without attending any of the staff development sessions planned in the district.

In late August, just before the 1990-91 school year began, Jennifer Beckson, the Kennedy principal, asked me if I was interested in teaching a first/second combined class. She had received approval from central office to hire another teacher because of increased enrollment. She preferred to place a new teacher in a straight first grade, so she offered me the combined class. I was very happy to take the first/second class, especially when Jennifer told me that I could keep half of my previous first graders as second graders as long as parents gave their permission. I moved up to second grade with the DAP policy, an experience which provided me with much more insight about the pressures of the curriculum as students move up through the grades.

PARENT CRITICISMS OF DAP

The implementation of the DAP policy seemed to go very smoothly during its introductory year in kindergarten classrooms. There were some hints of difficulty among the first grade teachers during the 1989-90 school year; however, the DAP policy became a heated and open issue for the first time at the regular meeting of the School Board on Monday, October 8, 1990, Parents from Granger Elementary raised their concerns about the program as implemented in their children's school. They said that they felt that the teachers were not fully prepared for the new approach. They said that some of the teachers were also unhappy with the methods and agreed that they had not been trained to do what they were asked to do. These parents advised that the teachers did not feel free to express their own concerns within the schools, but had spoken privately about their fears. Some parents expressed dismay that first and second grade students were no longer assigned homework, that there were few, if any, written testing methods, and that evaluation efforts in general were limited. They said the program was implemented too quickly with too much change all at once. One parent described the issue as "a serious problem that should be looked into right now" ("Schools learning program," 1990a, p. 4). Another parent said that she had contacted educators at a nearby college for their reactions to the teaching going on in the district. She said those educators expressed concern about how our students would do on the MEAP tests and that many children would "fall through the cracks" without extra support (School Board Minutes, 10/8/90).

Parents who supported the program were also in attendance. Several spoke about their initial hesitation and concern but found that their children had progressed so well and enjoyed school so much that they had learned to

recognize the advantages of the changes. The School Board President promised that the district administrators would take a "closer look at the learning plan...and bring to the board a set of goals and objectives for the program in the near future" (p. 4).

Parents protested again at the October 22 Board meeting. This time the parents from Granger School were joined by parents from a second school. The main request by the parents was for an open meeting at which the DAP could be explained in more detail and the parents could ask questions. One parent, a local businessman, offered to arrange and pay for a mailing to all parents ("[Chadwick] parents," 1990b). One primary objection to DAP expressed by several parents was the lack of uniformity across the district - not all teachers and students were doing the same things. The parents requested that the classes should be monitored closely and then evaluated on student achievement (School Board Minutes, 10/22/90). Mrs. Brown distributed to the Board members, in their packet of information for the meeting, copies of "Transforming the Test" by Scott Willis (1990). The article examined some limitations of standardized tests and encouraged the use of more types of alternative assessments such as portfolios and performance assessment.

Shortly after that Board meeting, School Board members and one local newspaper received an anonymous letter signed "teachers who care about kids." The letter indicated that there was widespread dissent over the DAP program among district teachers. Highlights from the letter were printed by the local paper and included these quotes:

The majority, we believe 90 per cent, of [Chadwick] elementary teachers are opposed to most of the developmental approach to educating children. ...Teachers are not being given a choice about using these methods, it is being forced on us. ... Teacher morale is low partly because we feel that what we are doing is wrong for children. We do not dare talk openly against it as a number of teachers have been given verbal reprimands for

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doing so....This approach will fail and something new will be instituted. In the meantime, the children educated developmentally will be the losers. ("Letter charges," 1990c, p. 1)

The district administrators found it difficult to reply. Dr. Franklin Smith, the assistant superintendent, said that he couldn't believe that so many teachers would not be "professional and ethical enough to come forward" ("Letter charges," 1990c, p. 1). Mrs. Brown told the reporter that "much of the change [brought on by DAP] was initiated by classroom teachers." Other changes "coming through the state and nationally has probably been overwhelming a lot of elementary teachers," Mrs. Brown said. "Unfortunately it looks like developmental learning has produced all that change. In fact, it hasn't" (p. 1).

Mrs. Brown tried to point to the practices of the Beginndergarten teachers and to the need expressed by many of them for the district to provide less structured kindergartens as a grass-roots origin of the policy. As she had done previously, she again stressed the difference between changes in teaching practices, which were attributable to the DAP policy, and curriculum or content changes, which were part of other policies from the State. In her view, it was those other policies which teachers found overwhelming.

An Open Forum

The School Board held an open forum meeting on the DAP policy on November 12, 1990, at Granger School. The gymnasium was filled with parents, teachers, and administrators. The principal of each elementary school had been asked by Mrs. Brown to invite parents and teachers who were supportive of the program and to encourage them to make a short pronouncement of their support. Ms. Beckson asked each of the Kennedy

kindergarten, first and second grade teachers to invite several parents who were advocates for DAP to attend the Board Meeting. We were also expected to attend. Each School Board member had been given a notebook of information about the DAP policy and about portfolio assessment. In opening the section of the Board meeting devoted to the forum, the Superintendent announced that Chadwick Schools had recently been recognized as one of fourteen outstanding developmental programs in the nation. The visit by Dr. Humphrey-Cummings during the previous February had also served as on-site documentation for the National Association for the Education of Young Children who had awarded the recognition.

Hazel Brown was the first to talk about the DAP policy. She said that the "district has been trying to develop the highest quality program for youngsters so that they can feel successful and be motivated to learn." One difficulty, however, was that, "in trying to clarify what we have been doing, we put a label on our teaching - it's simply good teaching which has been labeled developmentally appropriate practice." She noted again that the curriculum "is in place." She said that while we have always tried to meet the needs of a range of abilities in our classrooms, "what is different is that research says that a multi-sensory program is best for young children whereas many of us were used to text-driven instruction." She tried to reassure parents about assessment by providing an overview of portfolios and showing how teachers collect students' writing samples. She continued,

We have also developed a checklist for the portfolio which is also on the report card. By using taped readings and independent reading logs and teacher's observational assessments, we're trying to look at growth in literacy. We are actually keeping more data than we ever did before which is more work for teachers both in organizing the instruction and in monitoring student progress.

As for an overall program evaluation, the district is working on a design for that. What we want is a design which includes attitudes,

involves parents as well as looking at "formal" reading achievement. Wrestling with change is a slow process. (Field notes, 11/12/90)

When asked why classrooms look different from each other, Mrs. Brown said that teachers in classrooms have never looked the same - the children are different and the local attendance areas are different. In addition, she said, "We've said to teachers it takes time to change. Pick an area and begin there. Continue to work in other curriculum areas as you've done in the past. It is expected, then, that classrooms won't be alike." She asked that folks be patient with the teachers who are being asked to change many things. There are changes in the reading definition, in science, in the writing process, and in the math curriculum. "There are frustrations, but we're seeing wonderful things with our children," she continued.

When asked about class size, Mrs. Brown responded,

I don't want to avoid the issue of class size. Dr. Cummings did give us guidelines for class sizes. There is no question that the smaller classes have better interaction with the teacher and the students. But we're running out of space and money is an issue. We encourage teachers to involve parents in a voluntary way.

One parent wanted to know how she could be assured that her child is making progress. Mrs. Brown suggested that she talk to the teacher and to listen to her child read. She added,

We're working on new parent communication models. Many teachers have developed newsletters to let parents know what they've been doing. We do listen to parents and we know that we need better measures of letting parents know how their children are doing compared to a standard. Communication is the problem; the program isn't a bad program. (Field notes, 11/12/90)

One School Board member asked about materials, saying that one consistent concern he had heard expressed was that when friends compared what has happened across the district, they found differences in availability of materials. Before the district was assured of having one textbook for each child, but now teachers also have to generate a lot of materials and some

teachers just don't have as much time or some schools don't have the books and manipulatives. He also expressed concern about teachers who were not coming to grips with the program and as a result children in their classrooms could suffer. Mrs. Brown responded by saying that she had never seen classrooms better equipped in all her years in the district. Some schools did have more books and materials than others because they got involved in the developmental practices at an earlier time. They gave up workbooks and textbooks long ago in favor of purchasing quality literature and math manipulatives. In schools where the math book was the program and the spelling book was the program, it is more difficult for those teachers, but it is preferred that they do use the old texts rather than put new ideas into place poorly. She repeated, "We do have a common thread of curriculum. How each teacher gets there with each child varies and always has."

Mrs. Brown said that teachers support each other through peer observations and peer coaching and with networking groups so that they can come together to talk. "We don't have release time this year and frankly, it's a problem for us. We're having to do things more slowly."

One School Board member said that she appreciated hearing the positive things, but also wanted to hear more of the parent concerns. She said that she didn't want to undermine the program, "yet, don't some kids need to be pushed? Wouldn't some kids need to be pushed more to learn? I've had parents tell me that they are introducing the old methods at home to their children and now they are learning."

Mrs. Brown said, "We aren't waiting for children to initiate their own learning. Teachers know their children best. The teacher is still calling the shots, not letting Johnny decide when he wants to learn to read."

One School Board member who is a teacher in another district wondered if the district is providing enough support for the teachers:

Because the community asked us to do away with the half-day inservices, we can't help the teachers do what we're asking them to do. As a teacher myself, I would have a difficult time doing this. It is a significant problem. I hear complaints that we're not giving the teachers enough support. (Field notes, 11/12/90)

Mrs. Brown agreed, but added that sometimes the teachers themselves push themselves too hard.

A parent thanked the Board for arranging the open meeting and then read her prepared statement. She read that she was skeptical of the program at first because it was so different from what her son had experienced and she had worried about the absence of flash cards and phonics worksheets. She continued:

I see my child as an empowered student. She has responsibilities. She's not considered an object; she's considered a person. My other child brought home boring reading stories. She brings home wonderful books and she's reading them so well. There are no reading groups and less and less competition. The children are so willing to share what they know. As a parent, I like taking an active part in my child's learning. (Field notes, 11/12/90)

Another parent said that she was thrilled upon moving to the Chadwick district to find that her child would be involved in the developmental approach. While the parent had survived school, she said, "I want more than survival for my child." One parent who was a frequent volunteer in her daughter's class said, "I'm amazed at the learning I see when I'm in the classroom. Everyone is learning so much." This parent did express a concern that the Board relies too much on the volunteers who help out. "If you're going to do a program, you can't justify the outcome without all the ingredients. You can't leave out any ingredient - you need the whole thing. The classes need consistency - a trained person, not just volunteers."

Two parents expressed concern about the reliance on whole language methods for teaching reading. They felt the grapho-phonetic instruction comes too late sometimes to help those who could benefit. They did not like the absence of reading groups because they have

seen children held back when the teacher couldn't move ahead with the whole group. Children need to know where they fall. They need to know who can read and who can't. To never allow a child to experience failure is to not equip them for the future. (Field notes, 11/12/90)

They were also concerned about the lack of "clear exit requirements" for each grade and about those children who don't have parents who can or will get involved. They agree that

our children are distinct, unique individuals. We haven't met a teacher who doesn't take this into account. None of us want less for our kids, but we need to have children prepared for the future. They need good, standard English using the best of developmental and traditional approaches - phonics, grammar, spelling - these all have a place in our schools. (Field notes, 11/12/90)

One third grade teacher gave an especially impassioned speech. She described herself as previously very traditional, being textbook oriented and relying on ability grouping for reading. She was feeling burned out and was intrigued by the developmentally appropriate practices she was hearing about from teachers of younger students. After attending a seminar on using literature for reading and after talking with her colleagues in the earlier grades, she decided to try some of the practices herself. She spoke about her own renewed enthusiasm for teaching as well as specific changes in her students. She turned to the pair of parents and said, "We do allow children to make mistakes; they learn through them - they are not failures."

Many other parents and teachers spoke in favor of the DAP policy giving testimony to what they felt were the successes of the children. The Board members in turn thanked the people for coming. Each said that the meeting had been informative. One Board Member said that she wished there

had been more folks willing to speak to the negative or weak points. She asked that they not write anonymous letters or go to the newspapers, but to come directly to the Board.

The plan to fill the gymnasium with pro-DAP people had served to reassure the Board of Education members that the policy was a positive step. However, I noted that some people sitting near me did not nod approvingly when glowing anecdotes were reported, nor did they speak during the meeting. My sense was that they were not DAP supporters, but hesitated to put forth negative comments among such a crowded room of advocates. (Field notes, 11/12/90).

The issue of the opportunity to question the DAP policy openly was one which caused much distress in the district. Parents, who did seem more free to question, were provided with answers, but were not engaged in conversation about their concerns - at least not at these public meetings. I had many one-to-one talks with parents and although many of them were reassured about what was going on in my classroom, not all of them were convinced that this policy was a good idea. As I share in Chapter Five, many teachers, principals, and learning specialists were fearful about speaking against the policy or even about asking questions for fear their questions could "classify them as resistors" (10/11/90, p. 5). Over time, it seemed as though two camps developed - those who were in favor of the DAP policy and those opposed to it. The teachers who had been credited with being part of the grass-roots origin began to keep a low profile when animosity against the policy became more visible.

REPORTING AND ASSESSMENTS

During each of the years following implementation of the DAP policy, committees of teachers and learning specialists worked on the development of portfolio assessment and on rewriting the report cards at each grade level to align reporting with the DAP policy better. Portfolio assessment became part of the kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers' responsibilities; however, the School Board was feeling pressure from parents to document achievement using some sort of standardized measure so that they could feel assured that students were learning using the DAP teaching.

In January, 1991, Mrs. Brown drafted a letter to selected second grade teachers requesting participation in the assessment of the developmental program. She wanted a representative sample of students and staff from each of the elementary schools to participate in a study of second graders who had been in the DAP program for three years. The study would result in a district-wide report for the Board and administration regarding the following:

- students' reading and writing progress/development
- parent feedback on the program
- teacher opinion and feedback regarding student progress/development
- student attitudes and interest toward reading. (Brown, personal communication, 1/17/91)

I was among the second grade teachers invited to a meeting on February 4, 1991. When the meeting began, Stephanie Hall, the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator, said that Mrs. Brown had been directed by the Board to find an instrument to assess our students' development in reading and writing. A committee of administrators had selected a test which they felt was appropriate to district needs. At this point the test would not be given to all second graders, but only to those whose teachers participated in this pilot.

Teachers agreeing to participate would be given a half-day training session on using a newly developed test from Riverside Publishing Company (Raju, 1991). The test would be administered to selected second graders in the spring of 1991 and to all third graders across the district in the fall of 1991.

There was an outcry of protest from many of the teachers who attended the informational meeting. One teacher said, "I came to this meeting thinking we'd decide whether to test and what to give. You've decided on this test and here it is." Another teacher commented angrily, "This is asking us to do things we don't do to kids anymore." A third teacher said, "We want to show how far our children have come - not just to show where they are. Some of our kids won't do well and this won't show their progress." Others asked about the use of portfolios and other classroom assessments teachers had been working on to support student learning. Did the Board of Education decide that these were not legitimate documentation? Mrs. Brown said that the Board of Education demanded that testing to be done and while she didn't want to give a test, she did support the Board's need for documentation of learning. The Board was worried about waiting for the results of the Fourth Grade state achievement tests for these children. She said that the test results would become part of a report to the Board in June. This report would include many other forms of documentation, such as parent and teacher surveys and results of individual school meeting held by herself and John Ryan, the local Education Association president (Field notes, 2/4/91). In spite of the protests by some of the teachers, Mrs. Brown said that the test would be administered to satisfy the Board of Education's documentation requirement.

A second meeting was held on February 27 to train second grade teachers in the administration and scoring of the Riverside test. The selected second graders took the test during the week of April 20. Tests were sent to

Riverside for scoring and results returned in approximately five weeks. The results were provided for teachers just before the end of the school year and were shared with the Board of Education in June, 1991.

STAFF DISCUSSIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

Beginning on November 28 and extending to December 13, 1990, Hazel Brown and John Ryan, the president of our local Education Association, a chapter of the state Education Association, visited elementary schools and met with one hundred eighty-six teachers to "gather teacher input and feelings regarding the Developmental Program" (Brown and Ryan, 1991, p. 1). They found that teachers were generally enthused about the policy and that "all K-2 teachers are working hard at trying to implement a developmental approach to their teaching of primary students" (p. 1).

Areas which were discussed consistently among the participants and the recommendations which resulted were published in a report by Brown and Ryan (1991, pp. 2-3):

- Time and energy:* Teaching a developmental approach takes much more time for planning both individually and with grade level teams. Teachers worry about burn-out.
- Class size:* Number of students should not exceed twenty-five. Developmentally appropriate education has as one of its main purposes the provision for meeting the needs of individual students.
- Aides:* Parent helpers are being used and appreciated, but they cannot always be reliable nor are they always experienced at the tasks required. Variety of parent helpers means more input and direction from the teacher. It would enhance the program and assist teachers if each primary classroom had some aide time.
- Consumables:* Teachers use more consumable materials with DAP and many teachers have assumed much of the cost themselves. It is important that each school's petty cash budget have a designation for consumable supplies making funds available for teachers.

Inservice: Teachers in each building requested more inservice time. Grade level teachers would like time to discuss implementation of the program. They recommend restoration of the half-day inservices in addition to after school and summer programs. Teachers are very tired after teaching all day which makes it difficult to concentrate on new strategies and ideas.

Conferences/ Record Keeping: Spring conferences have been suggested time and again for elementary parents. The parents are also requesting it. This would provide more time to discuss portfolios with parents. There are also concerns about the amount of record keeping and the length of time at the end of each semester to adequately fill out the information required for each student.

Parent Communication: Teachers expressed concern that parents need to be communicated with on a regular basis in the form of a classroom newsletter.

Lead Teacher: There seems to be a need for a lead teacher in the area of DAP. This person could pull ideas together for others, help plan for the team of teachers, and model lessons.

Feedback: Teachers need to have consistent positive feedback on how they are progressing in the program. It is crucial that the building principal play a role in this communication to teachers.

Retention: The retention criteria need to be reviewed and explained in writing for all to clearly understand and be able to use when necessary.

Curriculum: Curriculum objectives need to be assembled by grade level in one book and be made available to all staff.

Pull-out Programs: The pull-out programs for children at risk need to be reviewed, explained, and put into writing.

Technology: Technology and computers are insufficient in some schools.

The report was shared with the Assistant Superintendent on January 25, 1991, so that the administration could consider the teacher recommendations.

Although the Board policy for staff development included statements that programs (such as DAP) would be evaluated and information which resulted would be "recycled" to improve opportunities for teacher learning and to make adjustments necessary for the successful continuation of the practices,

none of the recommendations which required district changes came about during my study (nor during the years following). For example, there has been no reduction in class sizes in kindergarten, first, or second grades. There has been no increase in funding for classroom aides or materials, no time provided for teachers to work on portfolio assessments or writing up evaluations. The six half-days of inservice which had been provided for teachers were eliminated. Teachers were asked to send home a weekly newsletter, however. Teachers became quite cynical about the "talks" with Mrs. Brown and Mr. Ryan when the only results which seemed to appear were in print.

K-2 DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES REPORT

On June 24, 1991, Hazel Brown presented the K-2 DAP Report to the Board of Education. The report stressed second grade because these students had been in DAP classrooms since starting school in Chadwick. It began with the district Philosophy for Early Childhood, the State of Michigan Outcomes, the Chadwick Developmental Curriculum Goals, and the NAEYC's "three basic tenets of child development and research and practice that apply in developing appropriate learning environments and curriculum for primary children" (Brown, 1991, p. 3). This report included information gathered from parents, teachers, students, and administrators in all district elementary schools. All second grade teachers were invited to participate in the assessment procedure, which included giving the Riverside test as well as responding to surveys. Out of 50 second grade teachers in the district, 27 volunteered. The report noted, "The teachers who volunteered to participate were implementing developmentally appropriate practices to a high degree" (p. 4). Six hundred and twenty-six of the district's 1224 second graders were

evaluated using the *Integrated Literature and Language Arts Portfolio Assessment*, published by Riverside Publishing Company (Raju, 1991). The test was chosen "because of its compatibility with the [state] Reading Test" (p. 4). Interestingly, the test results were not shared as part of this report, but were later distributed to teachers and principals in schools where the test was piloted. It was difficult to compare scores, because some schools opted to not give the whole test. Seven hundred surveys were mailed to homes of parents of the students who were tested. One hundred and ninety-three (27%) were returned. All elementary principals responded to a three question survey.

In the first part of their survey teachers were asked about the "Early Childhood Practices" (p. 7) they were currently using and "working toward." The practices and the percentage of teachers who responded that they are "doing now" included Math Their Way (84.6%), the writing process (96.1%) , whole language/literature based reading (92.3%), cooperative learning strategies (61.5%), whole class instruction (100%), hands-on science (65.3%), incorporating "play" in the curriculum (76.9%), providing choices for children (88.4%), and daily opportunities for creative expression (96.1%) (Brown, 1991, p. 7).

The second part of the teacher survey dealt with professional development. The report informed the Board that

Research addressing adult learning and change supports the implementation of new instructional methods using a three to five year window. The window provides time for staff awareness, staff development and the gradual application of the new processes. The Department of Instruction has been structuring activities for staff awareness and staff development in the area of Early Childhood Education for nearly ten years. In addition, professional accountability and responsibility has been assumed by teachers who keep abreast of current educational research. (p. 7)

Teachers were asked to identify their participation in district-sponsored staff development, out-of-district inservice, university course work, and

professional reading they have done. The report didn't identify the numbers of teachers participating in each of the activities listed, but the lists are extensive in each category. The report summarized teacher involvement:

The impressive amount of professional development activity of the part of the 26 participants in the study reflects on both their enthusiasm and commitment to the success of the program. The diversity and scope of topic areas underlies the complexity of developing quality early childhood programs and the flexibility given to teachers implementing developmentally appropriate practices. (p. 8)

Further, the report summarized the teacher survey results as characterizing

a group of teachers highly committed to implementation of effective strategies and to appropriate early childhood practices. They are supporting change through extensive reading and participation in professional development opportunities. They encourage one another through informal support and planning meetings as well as collegial coaching and conferencing sessions. Their enthusiasm as professionals is transmitted to students who they perceive as being successful and excited learners. These positive attitudes will promote life-long readers, writers and learners. (p. 12)

Parents were surveyed about the number of years their children had attended Chadwick Schools. Approximately 60% of the second graders had been in Chadwick schools since kindergarten. Parents were also asked about their desire for additional information about their child's progress or if they felt a need for additional parent-teacher communication at another time in addition to the scheduled November conferences. About 50% said they would like more communication; 42% felt they currently received sufficient information (Brown, 1991, p. 29). Parents were also asked about their child's attitude toward school. 88.1% responded that their child often looked forward to coming to school; 82.4% said their child often talked positively about school; 71.5% said their child often viewed herself/himself as a successful learner; and 70.5% reported that their child often exhibited confidence in his/her own reading and writing.

Parents were given the opportunity to make additional comments and suggestions to improve the program or express concerns they might have.

Positive comments included expressions of being very pleased with the program and with a child's progress and/or enthusiasm for school and learning. Compliments were extended to teachers for their dedication, ability to build classroom cohesiveness, and provision of extra effort and communication. Suggestions included reducing class sizes and providing classroom aides, more support services, more training for teachers, and more classroom resources. Concerns were expressed about lack of time spent on reading, writing, and math; noisy classrooms; combined grades; and making the curriculum challenging enough (pp. 30-31).

Principals were surveyed about what they saw as strengths of the DAP in primary classrooms, recommendations they would make about the next steps of implementation, and any other suggestions they would make to the Board. The principals identified positive aspects of DAP as meeting individual needs of all children, the encouragement of each child's positive self-image, encouraging student creativity, life experiences as a basis for learning, children developing a love of learning, improved school behavior, children pursuing their own interests, children taking more responsibility for their own learning, and teachers being more accepting of individual differences.

The principals recommended the next steps in implementation should include continued emphasis in grades K - 2, absolutely limit class size to 25 and provide aides, train staff in observation and assessment skills and how to conference from a portfolio, provide more help for at-risk students, provide social workers and counselors for a proactive approach to problems, provide release time for staff development and peer coaching, identify master teachers for DAP to serve as consultants within the district, provide parent training classes, and give teachers time - time to work on portfolios, plan, gather materials and support each other. Principals expressed concerns

about the district's commitment to the DAP policy in terms of money for class size reduction, staff development, materials, and aides. One comment seemed to summarize the rest: "The Board of Education has made a strong commitment to this philosophy of learning. They need to continue their commitment by providing time and money to meet the goals listed above" (p. 37).

In concluding the report, Mrs. Brown summarized the issues from all respondents as class size, time and commitment for continued staff development, and time for increased communication with parents (i.e., spring conferences). Mrs. Brown clearly felt the information provided in the report shed favorable light on the DAP policy's implementation:

This data clearly substantiates why our district was identified as a National Exemplary Program by the National Association of School Boards. Our program has been selected for presentation at the National Association for the Education of Young Children in Denver, Colorado. (p. 38)

When Mrs. Brown completed her part of the presentation, teachers who were present were invited to speak about the DAP policy. Many teachers did speak - all giving favorable anecdotes about their students and classrooms. I spoke about my enthusiasm for my teaching and learning and I also asked the Board to reconsider the use of standardized testing. I offered to meet with them to compare and contrast the information provided about student learning with my efforts using the portfolios and the test results from Riverside. Board members did agree to hold a special workshop meeting on July 1. I showed photocopies of the contents of several students' portfolios, played audio-tapes of students' reading at various times for two school years, and pointed out the problems of relying only on the standardized tests. One Board member commented that I was able to document student learning in such a way because I was a "gifted" teacher with many years of post-graduate education, and he expressed doubts that all teachers would be able to have

such insight. I protested this opinion and explained that even my student teachers were able to do such documentation and that we simply needed to provide more time and opportunity for teachers to learn. The Board members thanked me for my time, but continued to require the standardized tests and in later meetings failed to support giving time for teachers to do the kinds of documentation I had presented to them.

Just as with the report provided by Mrs. Brown and Mr. Ryan as a result of staff discussions, the K-2 DAP Report resulted in virtually no district changes for teachers. Time for spring parent conferences has not been provided, class sizes have not been reduced, teachers have not been trained in observational and assessment techniques, classroom aides have not been provided. The many, many hours of staff development, university course work, and training for such programs as Math Their Way were teachers' after-school hours. The district asked teachers to be trained, but in very few instances was the training or inservice time provided during the teachers contractual hours. The K-2 DAP Report clearly identifies the vast range of learning and preparation which the policy required of teachers. Some teachers had already been trained in many of the practices, but some teachers had no training in any of them before the policy was introduced.

DAP CONTROVERSIES DO NOT GO AWAY

I taught a second/third combined class at Kennedy School during 1991-92 the school year. I was again able to keep some of my first graders on as second graders and some of the second graders on as third graders. Two of the children and I spent our third year together. The opportunity to work with children over several years taught me a lot about their learning and about the classroom environment I was trying to create; however, I had to spend a

lot of time talking with parents who expressed concern about how I would teach the combined classes. I was unprepared for the curriculum pressures I felt as I moved up the grade levels with the children. It was my responsibility to "prepare" the third graders for the state achievement tests. I had been able to work with each child according to his or her proficiency in first and second grades, but in third, the students must now be "caught up" with the state's achievement expectations.

I took a leave from classroom teaching at the end of the 1991-92 school year to focus my teaching at the university level, but I did keep in close contact with my colleagues in Chadwick, who kept me informed about the progress of DAP. My former principal told me about what might be a heated School Board meeting, so I arranged to attend. Parents who had been individually bringing protests about DAP to the School Board meetings gathered as a group for the Board meeting on December 14, 1992. When the agenda progressed to "Citizen's Comments and Non-agenda Items," the first person to speak was a tall man dressed in a business suit, white shirt, and tie. He gave his name and address and announced that he was a parent of two students at Brown Elementary School. He said that he and his wife had moved to Chadwick thirteen years ago largely because of the schools and the excellent reputation they had. His reason for addressing the Board was because of his concern about the developmental approach. "Our fourth grader has demonstrated the inadequacy of this approach," he said. He continued, "I know that you all think of me as a rebel, but I must come here again to address the rumors." He turned to face those of us seated and standing behind him and asked us to raise our hands if we were also concerned about the developmental approach. A few hands were raised. He turned again to face the Board members and proceeded:

This is the eighth School Board meeting I've attended. I had to learn for myself how the system works and I've heard our School Board members say that our district is 'customer driven.' Well, I'm the customer - not my child - me. By attending this meeting and speaking now, it allows my view to become part of the record. You know that open lines of communication are vital. Parents, such as myself, have tried to deal with the process. I've gone to administrators with my concerns - the principals, the teachers, and so on - I've talked to those folks trying to gain an understanding. The administration steadfastly insists that I alone have the problem. For eight weeks I've been told to have my kids tested. My kids aren't l.d. The social and emotional growth - that's my job - I send my kids to school to learn to read, write, do math - think.

I want to relate to you the culmination of a meeting I had with Dr. Jordan. I asked him why the developmental approach is stressed over academic excellence. Dr. Jordan answered by handing me this memo. [The parent handed the memo to the Secretary of the Board.] The memo is not an answer. It defines the problem. The memo says: 'Our goal is the cognitive, social, emotional development of each child.' This curriculum has chosen NOT to emphasize basic reading and writing goals.

I talked to the Dean of the College of Education at a local university who told me that parents need evidence of the support of the developmental curriculum. I want the School Board to investigate the effects. I want you to hold a workshop for this purpose. The School Council should facilitate and moderate this meeting which should be held very soon in the new year. You need to gather data. In fact, a one question survey would do - "How do you feel about the developmental curriculum installed four years ago?" You know the curriculum was written in vague fashion. Teachers didn't receive a lot of training. Some teachers were forced to abandon proven techniques.

I don't want a knee-jerk reaction. I want to work with you to help you train our teachers to implement a new curriculum for next year. (Field notes, 12/14/92)

Six people spoke to the Board in favor of the DAP policy, providing a series of anecdotes about the successes of their children. One teacher in another district whose children attend school at Brown said that as she had attended conferences all over the United States, she had begun to realize just how forward thinking the teachers are in the Chadwick district. A final card was taken from the table and a name was read. A male dressed in jeans and a flannel shirt stood. His voice shook as he identified himself and gave his address. He said,

I have two boys at Valley School - they're in the first grade and fourth grade. I haven't heard from anyone in this group [pointing to the man who had spoken against the developmental program and the people sitting with him] like we've heard from those folks who are in favor. I'm not prepared to give a speech. You can tell by the way I'm dressed, I'm a working man. I'm not dressed fancy, but what worries me is that when my kid was in third grade he would spell 'does' - d o e s and then the next time he'd spell it d o s e. The teachers told me that they aren't allowed to teach spelling. I went to the principal and got spelling lists and tests, but they were first grade words.

Now my first grader doesn't want to go to school because he's not learning anything. I'm going to college. I work two jobs and I have to come home and teach my kids also. I can't do this. We need to challenge the kids - they need to try to outdo the other person - the competition is supposed to be there - America is based on competition.

All we're asking is for us to take a deep, close look at what is NOT working. I got a fourth grader who can't spell. How can they get a job when they can't fill out an application? With my two boys, I can prove to you it's not working - they're smart - but they're not learning either. (Field notes, 12/14/92)

The Board president thanked those who had made comments and continued to the next agenda item. This is standard procedure at School Board meetings; however, as a spectator, I was impressed with the notion that the impassioned speeches were simply left to hang in the air. People were emotional about their real concerns, yet they were politely dismissed and the Board meeting continued as if nothing significant had just occurred. The people who spoke represented a range of community members who obviously felt the Chadwick Board and administrators were not responsive to the difficulties their children were experiencing with the DAP policy.

The district's administrators did respond to the request for a meeting however. I joined the stream of people entering the huge high school auditorium on May 17, 1993. As I walked in I overheard bits of conversations which all seemed to be thankful that they were finally getting the "open forum" they had requested to air concerns about DAP. When I found out about the meeting I contacted Dr. Jordon and he supplied me with a notebook which contained the information which would be presented. I carried along the

two-inch binder with its 237 pages of documentation. The meeting began at 7 p.m. with a video tape created about DAP especially for this gathering, followed by an hour-and-a-half presentation by Dr. Smith using overheads to illustrate each point. School personnel spoke about the advantages of DAP for the next half hour. The meeting had been advertised as an opportunity to hear concerns from parents and talk about issues; however, the meeting was so dominated by the administration that the first opportunity for a question or comment from the audience was 10:05. One parent received applause when he said,

I'm very disappointed in this process. I'm disappointed because I thought you have said that we have a "customer-driven" school board. We parents aren't giving up. We've been here eight months and we're not going away. This meeting was upside down. You're not listening to parents. We've wasted a whole year of our child's education trying to get answers.

Folks, you have to address the criticisms. Make a forum for our participation. (Field notes, 5/17/93)

This was the last meeting I attended about the DAP policy and it illustrated one of the ironies in trying to implement the content of a child-centered reform without fully understanding the processes inherent in such a reform. In other words, the DAP policy asked teachers to engage their children in conversations so that the students could display their personal understandings of the content; however, these kinds of conversations were denied both the parents and the teachers. The philosophy and practices were delivered from NAEYC to the teachers and to the community without benefit of allowing people to debate about the meanings they might attach to such practices. People were spoken to, but were not engaged in back and forth dialogue.

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the origins, implementation, and reactions to the DAP policy in order to add further detail to the context within which the teachers, principals, and community members attempted to understand the meaning of the DAP policy. The Chadwick district's history of innovation set within a hierarchical chain of command added to the contradictions and difficulties involved in implementing a very challenging reform. As we shall see in the next chapter, in spite of efforts to inform people about reasons for the policy and about the particular practices, the policy was interpreted many different ways and, as a result, implemented in a variety of forms. The vagueness of meaning encouraged personal responses, but it also left people wondering about how they would know how they were doing and wondering about whether students were learning optimally.

This policy could, on the surface, be characterized, according to Wimpelberg and Boyd (1988), as "hard policy" - a mandate or directive from central office administrators. However, the DAP policy also had attributes of "soft policy" - communicating a desired outcome while leaving it up to others to work out the details. With this combination of orientations, the district was able to respond to the preferences of the parents (who wanted *Beginnergarten* to continue) and to the problems with financing *Beginnergarten* (the voters' failure to tax themselves more heavily and the State's refusal to continue to fund such programs), yet provide a measure of professional autonomy among the teachers. Wimpelberg and Boyd might then characterize the DAP policy as "firm policy" which they pattern after Waterman's idea of "directed autonomy."

Cuban (1990) reminds us that schools are unique organizations because they are tax supported and governed by lay people. For this reason, one way

to retain support from constituencies who provide "the children and dollars" is to "display multiple and conflicting goals, many of which are stated ambiguously, making them difficult to measure" (p. 10). The DAP policy signals to the community constituencies that the district is responsive to their desire to have educational programs which meet the needs of young children, especially with the removal of *Beginnergarten*, which had previously served that purpose. The district could also gain public support by appealing to the need to create a stronger workforce which would ensure economic independence for the country. The vagueness allowed parents, teachers, and administrators to assign personal meaning to the policy. The vagueness also allowed parents to wonder if the child-centered practices deemed appropriate within the policy would also limit their children's achievement. Would academic proficiency be sacrificed in favor of a "feel good" attitude?

Building in discretion for teachers and administrators to make decisions about how the policy would be put into practice would seem to increase the probability that we would be able to respond to the needs of our "clients" in our individual classrooms and schools (Lipsky, 1970). Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) also point out that in some situations it may be most important simply to get the policy "on the books," leaving the particulars of implementation until later (p. 111). With the funding eliminated for *Beginnergarten*, Chadwick policymakers may have perceived a need to mandate the DAP policy for kindergarten during that first year and to worry about implementation and meaning later. One difficulty with this plan was that *Beginnergarten* was premised on the idea that young children simply needed time to grow and then they could better handle the rigors of school. The DAP policy was based on a different idea - that by providing more

hands-on and child-centered learning these same young students could achieve comfortably with older classmates.

The plan to mandate autonomy was also fraught with contradictions. The idea was to give teachers choice, but teachers were not given the option of deciding what to teach, and the practices which were approved were limited to those recommended by the NAEYC. Teachers had autonomy to implement those practices, but did not have the sanctioned right to question them. For some teachers, the DAP policy was validation for what they believed and did; for others, it was a signal that what they had done previously was wrong. This previous teaching was also a response to district policy for a textbook focus and direct instruction. The mandate for child-centered teaching could easily be seen as just another in a long list of mandates emanating from the whims of people with the power to make policy. The Central Office administrators said the policy would be "slowly implemented" so that teachers could have time to learn, but in fact, when workbooks and textbooks were taken away, teachers had to learn new strategies immediately. The result was that what had been a slow walk for the grass-roots teachers became a marathon race for others.

The administrators and School Board members said that they wanted to hear concerns from teachers and parents, but as evidenced in the School Board meetings, some parents felt that their questions and concerns were not answered. They were patronized with more information, but were not engaged in conversation. Teachers also felt that, although they were asked to provide their suggestions about what they needed to implement DAP, nothing was ever done as a result.

The Board felt that in order to keep or gain the support of the community, standardized testing would have to be implemented to demonstrate

that the developmentally appropriate practices worked; yet many teachers felt their efforts with classroom assessment were not valued or trusted and that such testing was contradictory to the philosophy of the policy.

Many administrators and teachers wanted this policy to be successful and to improve the learning opportunities for young children; however, the vagueness of the policy allowed a wide range of interpretations of the meaning of the policy. This range of meanings among teachers and principals contributed to the Herculean task of implementing this reform in their schools and classrooms.

Chapter Four

THE PROBLEM OF MEANING

The problem of meaning is one of how those involved in change can come to understand what it is that should change and how it can best be accomplished, while realizing that the what and how constantly interact and reshape each other...Solutions must come through the development of shared meaning. The interface between individual and collective meaning and action in everyday situations is where change stands or fails. (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 5, emphasis in original)

When I returned to Chadwick Schools from my sabbatical leave in the fall of 1989, I received the First Grade Curriculum notebook which outlined the DAP policy. I perused the contents, particularly noting the pages upon which were listed "appropriate" practices and "inappropriate" practices, and did not see any conflict between what the materials were recommending and the kind of classroom environment I wanted to create. It seemed to me that the intent of the policy was straightforward and the practices considered to be developmentally appropriate were clearly stated. In fact, the policy seemed to be an affirmation of what I had already been trying to do with my students as a learning specialist and what I was so anxious to use in my classroom. I was happy to be returning to a district which now openly supported what I valued.

Child-centered teaching, which was central to the DAP policy, does not have a positive history as a reform effort in the United States (Cuban, 1984, 1986, 1990). Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) report that, in order to understand how people attempt to implement a reform, we must also understand how these people have come to understand the meaning of the reform - what is to change and how to go about that change. They say that the point at which all the individual meanings come together and are expressed in the collective meaning as action is where a reform succeeds or fails. I read Fullan and Stiegelbauer's book after I had completed my teaching and the interviews, so

the focus on meaning was not something I had consciously planned when I began thinking about what I wanted to learn from participants. However, I did ask everyone in the study why they thought we had this policy and what was supposed to change in our work. After reading Fullan and Stiegelbauer, I came to realize that one of my own difficulties with implementing the policy had to do with the mismatch between what I believed the policy to be about and what I was experiencing. I thought that the mandated practices would change the classroom learning environment in ways which would allow students like the ones I worked with as a learning specialist to learn better. I hoped those students would be able to approach their learning and to demonstrate what they had learned in a variety of ways - ways which were less rigidly defined than those structured by the texts and end-of-book tests. The DAP policy's meaning and intent appeared clear to me at first, but as I worked to implement its guidelines and as I continued to talk with my colleagues and attend meetings, I began to understand that the goals were abstract enough to create tensions among the individual ways the participants interpreted the policy. Fullan and Stiegelbauer expressed my initial view of the policy well:

We have become so accustomed to the presence of change that we rarely stop to think what change really means as we are experiencing it at the personal level. More important, we almost never stop to think what it means for others around us who might be in change situations. The crux of change is how individuals come to grips with this reality. (1991, p. 30)

They believe that working on the meaning of change is especially important when reforms are complex and vague - as was the DAP policy. The meaning of the educational change called for in the policy was interpreted in disparate ways by the participants in my study, a situation which caused difficulty in establishing the district's collective meaning of the policy and difficulty in the ways the policy was put into practice and publicly presented.

The lack of consensus of the meaning of the policy added complications to an already complex and difficult reform effort. The meaning Hazel Brown attached to the policy reflected years of her advocacy for child-centered practices; however, her desire for the policy to succeed may have inadvertently undermined her wish. When she and other administrators limited debate about crucial issues, they sabotaged dialogue which might have resulted in a collective meaning of DAP and they contributed to an on-going district power struggle over who gets to decide how a teacher is to teach. When other central office administrators were not clear about the meaning of the policy, they instituted district policies which were in direct conflict to DAP and they misjudged the intensity of work which the policy required of the people who were to implement it. Principals also interpreted the policy in a variety of ways, which tended to be expressed in the amount of freedom they gave their teachers to comfortably try out practices.

Hazel Brown and her Early Childhood Task Force convinced district policy makers that there was rich research on the learning of young children which supported the mandate for the DAP policy. Implicit in these references was the notion that instructional practices could be based directly upon this research and that the meaning of the practices should be clear. However, some teachers interpreted the DAP policy to mean an opportunity to examine beliefs about teaching and learning while others thought the policy was primarily about instructional activities - the best way to teach. Some thought, "I must interpret this for myself"; others believed, "Someone is telling me what is best to do." These ideas about interpreting what "research says" had great impact on how we assigned meaning to the policy.

For some Chadwick educators, the DAP policy required significant changes in their thinking and in their work; for others, changes were less

severe. Real change, according to Fullan and Stiegelbauer, "represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty." Success in change can result in a sense of mastery and growth; however, both "the anxieties of uncertainty and the joys of mastery are central to the subjective meaning of educational change, and to success or failure" (p. 32) - issues, Fullan and Stiegelbauer contend, that are seldom considered in most reform efforts. Rather than understand and build upon this uncertainty, we were told that certainty was necessary to maintain public support and confidence in our teaching. Teachers who did experience "the joy of mastery" were often silenced by the emergence of divisiveness between camps of supporters and skeptics. Both responses served to undermine our ability to develop collective meaning for the DAP policy.

ADMINISTRATORS

Central office administrators talked to me about their sense that the DAP policy arose from a need to create a district philosophy about the education of young children. Administrators also believed that this policy reflected the recommendations of national organizations concerned with the education of young children and that it was a response to such reports as *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) which criticized schools for losing educational and economical competition with other countries. They also referred to the State's new definition of reading and the Chadwick district's staff development project, S.O.A.R.R., which was designed to help local educators understand the new definition, as support for the ideas about teaching and learning reflected in the DAP policy. The research mentioned in the rationale for the "Program Improvement Proposal" to the School Board for establishment of the Early Childhood Task

Force was extensive. However, when I talked with administrators, the research they referred to was vague and focused on "what we know about learning," yet it generally pointed toward the suggested "appropriate" practices provided in the Kindergarten and First Grade Curriculum notebooks.

Hazel Brown, credited with initiating the policy, had a personal history of advocacy for child-centered practices. One of the principals commented to me, "Well, I think that Hazel has always been a person who has had a lot of vision and feelings toward developmental philosophy" (10/18/90, p. 1). As I pointed out in the second chapter, Mrs. Brown was teaching about "open education" at a lab school for a local university when she was hired by Chadwick to develop and open a new school based on child-centered practices. She was a principal and then became Director of Elementary Education. She was responsible for many innovative programs in Chadwick in addition to her work at Hunter Woods School. She instituted the concept of "learning specialists" - specially trained support personnel for remedial reading and mathematics. She developed the district's "Young Authors" program stressing creative writing in the elementary schools. She tried to provide assistance for teachers by offering a center for staff development at which teachers were free to select their own learning needs and responses to those needs. When Mrs. Brown became a central office administrator, she did not have as much autonomy as she had had as a principal, and as a result one principal suggested, "She has been forced into implementing other procedures that she didn't particularly agree with but they were there and she was directed to and she did..." She continued,

I think that when she realized that the research was supporting her own feelings about how kids should be taught that she vigorously pursued it and had around her, as she usually does, a cadre of people who felt similarly and she just made the move. And I think it came together at a time when there were resources available and there were opportunities for staff development and maybe at a point where our

district had finally gotten to realize what was needed to implement new programs and new directions and help teachers come about with change so that's how I perceive it originating. (10/18/90, p. 1)

When I asked her why Mrs. Brown was able to get others to go along with her vision at this time, the principal referred to the current research and implied that Chadwick would want to be part of current reform:

I see it more as able to point to research, because it seems to be a time when there are a lot of national trends toward that and it's always easier to be a part of that movement when you can say - look at what's happening in other places in the country and certainly the state had made great movement in that area. I think looking at how the state had embraced a redefinition of reading helped - there were all of these other pieces that helped move it along and helped give it a focus and a shape. (pp. 1-2)

Mrs. Brown had tried to serve as a tempering force in the Central Office, but she also publicly supported district policy. She had pushed for the Beginnergarten program which she felt would protect young children from experiencing failure in schools, but when funding problems and criticisms of the Gesell testing and the extra-year programs surfaced, she was ready with another option - one that fit her own life-long philosophy. As a principal pointed out, when Beginnergarten was eliminated, "Hazel was right there saying - 'well, have I got the program for you'"(12/5/90, p. 3). Mrs. Brown felt that the nation had been recently sensitized to recognize the special learning needs of young children by such national groups as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). She said that although we have always said that we believe we need to meet the individual needs of children, we have not always "practiced what we preached" and the time had come for a change. The national climate was ripe to influence other district administrators and to gain their support for what she believed to be best for the education of young students. When I asked her why, if we have believed in this for so long, we are just now getting around to implementing a policy like DAP, she responded,

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I think that we can really thank the National Association for the Education of Young Children - they've done a great job of sensitizing the nation. ASCD and their early childhood network is another organization nationally that has worked very hard at sensitizing public education to the fact that we need to take a look at what we're doing to young children. (10/30/90, p. 2)

She added that Chadwick had dealt with pressures from higher grades for "doing more sooner" and then either retaining children or adding an extra year, which we had done with Begindergarten. DAP is an affirmation of the learning needs of the young child over the needs of the curriculum, although she did say that the curriculum was also very important. My feeling was that this was her way of staying within the acceptable bounds of district and state curriculum, but yet bringing about changes which would allow for more child-centered practices.

Mrs. Brown was able to convince Chadwick's superintendent, Dr. Charles Jordon, by appealing to the research base supplied by NAEYC and other national organizations. When we talked together, Dr. Jordon reflected this appeal:

I think we tried to analyze research and it all pointed in that direction. About what we should be doing and it made a lot of sense - we know a lot more about how children learn than we did before and I think a combination of what research told us and essentially that process by which kids learn told us basically that we'd better do something different than what we'd been doing. (10/9/90, p. 3)

While Mrs. Brown focused primarily on meeting the needs of young children, Dr. Jordon's comments reflected a broader base - competition and the economic needs of the country:

I think we're going to see a major upheaval in the American schooling system. We're getting beaten out rotten - particularly by the European system right now. They're producing. You know, we do a good job with our top 15% and probably with our lower 15%; it's the 70% in the middle that is suffering. That is what the workforce is going to have to come from. In industry right now they're very much concerned about what they're going to have in the year 2000. (p. 8)

Dr. Jordon often used this indirect reference to *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and its criticisms of American education in his public statements of support for DAP. He was willing to align himself with the implementation of DAP because Kindergarden was to be eliminated and something needed to be put in its place in order to calm public outrage, but he did not understand what the research base was all about. He was more interested in the fact that the Early Childhood Task Force members were able to cite many different researchers in their proposal to the Board of Education.

Dr. Franklin Smith, the assistant Superintendent for Instruction, also supported the DAP policy as the district's attempt to pay more attention to research. He, like most other participants, did not mention any specific research, but made a general statement that research forms the foundation of DAP and that he felt we know more now about how children learn:

I think more attentiveness to research has been one of the driving forces [behind the policy]. The criticisms that we've heard from outside of education - business and industry, for example, say that we don't pay attention to the research - to what's going on in our field. We just wait by the tracks for a train to come along with an answer to our problem and then we jump on and ride that for awhile and then ride something else. The implication is that the research gives us some systematic way - some foundation for looking at things. I think we're becoming more attentive to that - medicine has done it, business and industry - their research and development programs have done it, science has done it. (10/25/90, p. 8)

Like Dr. Jordon, he saw education as a way to stabilize the economic difficulties in the country rather than as a more appropriate way to teach young children. He recognized that "our society is looking for a giant security blanket" (p. 9):

In the last several years there has been heightened emphasis on schools. We have an economic deficit in this country, we have a social deficit in this country and we have an educational deficit in this country. We're not going to be able to deal with the first two until we deal with the educational deficit. I think educators are working really hard to find out what works and put it into place. I think that's why

we're seeing here what appear to be some real dramatic changes - things like cooperative learning and developmental cultures and age appropriate practices and all that kind of stuff ...these are good things they have been doing for a long time, but now we're hanging all these labels on it and it becomes confusing and creates uncertainty. (p. 10)

By using such words as "once it looks like there is a common element there, it's easier to put into place" (p. 8) and "educators are working really hard to find out what works and put it into place" (p. 10), Dr. Smith reflected the view that the research base currently available can be directly translated into teaching practices.

In terms of the origination of the actual policy, Dr. Smith pointed to the lead provided by Mrs. Brown and the State's new definition of reading, but he shared the view that there was grass-roots support from other staff members. He also noted that the Chadwick district has taken great pride in the leadership role it has played in implementing new programs in the state:

I think it was [Mrs. Brown] and others - including some of the building principals and classroom teachers as well who played a real important role in beginning to ask some questions. What do you know about this? Have you heard about this? Is this something we ought to be looking at? Are there some ways we could at least start some dialogue with one another?

And I think the change in the reading definition in this state had an awful lot to do with it. It's what motivated our state to take a look at something different.

And I think that our district, by and large, began to look at our early elementary program and I agreed with a lot of the teachers who said that things were going on in classrooms and based on their own experiences and things they've read - and I think we have a pretty knowledgeable staff; they do spend a lot of time looking at the literature - and I do think they spend a lot of time talking with each other.

We just somehow began to pull these things together. Plus, this district, I think, has had the reputation of being a leadership district - one that wants to - has committed itself to excellence and one that wants to increase the quality of the experiences for its kids and has been willing to be a risk taker in that respect. (pp. 10-11)

Dr. Smith's reference to Chadwick as a leadership district was important because the district has a reputation with both insiders and outsiders as being

quick to jump on (or off of) bandwagons. Teachers frequently mentioned that the DAP policy might simply be one of the those faddish innovations that Chadwick so quickly implemented and then abandoned.

Stephanie Hall, the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator, was more explicit about the connection between the DAP policy and a perceived "problem" in the district:

The other way is looking at the ways we were meeting the needs of our students and I really don't think we were meeting the needs of our students - especially our at-risk student. And the developmental fit so well with the changes in the reading curriculum and the changes in the science curriculum and then the integration of all content areas - math, science, social studies and language arts. So I think there was a natural flow from what we were already doing in our school district that led us to the developmental program and the developmentally appropriate practices. (12/19/90, pp. 1-2)

Jennifer Beckson, principal at Kennedy, agreed and felt that the district had actually started moving in the direction of the DAP policy between five and seven years earlier when Chadwick became actively involved in the State's new definition of reading. She was also the only person out of the 39 participants in my study whose account of the initiation of the policy reflected what School Board minutes documented. She saw the policy arising out of a pragmatic need due to funding problems for Kindergartens.

Additionally, Ms. Beckson felt that the district was actually following along the path which had already been cleared by Kennedy teachers. She felt that her involvement with the staff at Kennedy was quite different from what principals experience in other schools. When she was an assistant principal in several other schools, she had had the opportunity to work within a variety of school cultures which she contrasted to Kennedy's whose staff she described as extremely "professional in that they keep up with research in their field" (12/5/90, p. 2), and she felt the instruction there had been

consistently learner-centered and developmentally appropriate long before the policy was put into place:

I see the district as supporting us in what we wanted to do because it kind of happened naturally here. I was always encouraging the teachers to take the risks. Encouraging the ones who wanted to do it and encouraging the others to think about when they could do it - in terms of getting rid of their workbooks and then when the district was saying this is really appropriate - oh, yes - okay! (p. 3)

Most principals told me that research formed the base for the policy.

For example, one principal said, "Well, it came from a lot of research - nationally and globally. How kids learn. How four- to eight-year-olds learn." He preferred to call DAP "an attitude instead of an approach or a philosophy - because that's clearly what it is - it's an attitude among educators." He said that much of the research came from New Zealand in terms of whole language "techniques." Because New Zealand had success, we are trying it because "We're losing some of the kids and we're trying not to do that" (10/25/90, p. 2). He mentioned that the research had been around a long time, so I asked him why are we now embracing this policy and the learning implied by it. He said the timing is right for what he identified as a "paradigm shift":

Well, I think because the movement of the - I hate to say it - *The Nation at Risk* - all of those kinds of reports. Also, businesses want problem solvers, creative problem solvers, cooperative workers and so we're changing and that developmental attitude speaks to creative problem solving and higher level thinking skills. Research is also showing us that kids learn better - adults learn better - when you teach it to somebody else. So all of that - we know that - but it's hard sometimes for people to shift and it's hard for some parents to go from one paradigm to another paradigm. (pp. 2-4)

Another principal said that subject matter research provided new pivotal information about how people learn, which formed an additional base for the policy. She said that we had found that "nothing's working" so we tried "the good old fashioned way" and we found that didn't work either:

We've found that our people in the academic areas have been among our greater supporters in helping us understand how their subject matter was structured - how people learn it - we got to know what their

subject matter really was. So I think that was one thing which influenced us. (12/13/90, p. 1)

In addition to the subject matter research, this principal found that "industry was telling us and just common sense was telling us we're getting more and more people in the world and we have to learn to work together" (p. 2). The DAP policy, in her view, was a response to new knowledge and the view that "some of their ways just didn't work" (p. 2).

While the principals appeared to present a range of interpretations of the DAP policy, most agreed that it was designed to improve the teaching of young children and was a move away from the text book orientation which had previously prevailed. They understood DAP to have a research base which had implications for teaching, but as one principal said, some things were put into place without the clear understanding of all teachers. He said DAP was representative of cycles in education, and of a pendulum swinging from the left to the right. He said that the district had gone from "ultra-textbook" to the "opposite end" and he thought it was too far opposite. He recognized the difficulties in trying to make drastic changes which many people do not fully understand:

But what troubles me is that some teachers are doing things without a clear understanding of what they are doing. Some of the six half-days which we lost would have been beneficial for staff to get together and talk about things and I'm afraid that we've put some things in place that some people are going to be very comfortable with and others are like the blind leading the blind. (1/31/91, p. 1)

The appeal to the research base and national trends in the education of young children were important to Dr. Jordon and Dr. Smith; however, they also supported other district policies that eliminated staff development time during the school day, refused to entertain notions of reducing class size or provide time for teachers to do the assessments called for within the policy, and refused to investigate the feasibility of additional parent-teacher

conferences in the spring. The meaning they attached to the policy centered on a perceived need to translate research into practice, but they did not understand the intensity of the work for teachers and principals which such a translation required. Consequently, the meaning they attached to the policy allowed them to institute other district policies which conflicted with DAP, and to refuse to consider seriously additional policies which would support DAP implementation.

Mrs. Hall understood the DAP policy to be another step in the direction many people in the district and state had been moving. Within the district hierarchy, she was the Central Office administrator in charge of overseeing the learning specialists and it was her responsibility to see that the learning specialists served to help teachers understand and implement the policy. When the learning specialists were invited with the principals to a series of workshops explaining the various appropriate practices, the plan was to assist some of them to move away from their more traditional remedial teaching methods involving drill of specific skills to a more whole language approach. According to the learning specialists who talked with me, Mrs. Hall refused to allow any discussion about the changing role of the learning specialists or entertain any concerns and questions about DAP.

Mrs. Brown said on many occasions that she wanted open communication and wanted teachers individually to interpret the meaning of the practices for their own classroom contexts; however, many principals and teachers felt that the doors of real communication were shut tight. They said that Mrs. Brown wanted the policy to work so badly that she would not permit talk which might question the policy or the research which was cited as its base. Some principals also put pressure on teachers to put the practices into place immediately rather than provide the three-to-five-year window which

was specified in the original plan. By mandating DAP and by allowing only superficial talk about the practices, administrators wielded their power to decide how teachers were to teach. Since the previous policy about teaching centered on direct instruction and this one on child-centered instruction, it was easy for many teachers and principals to view DAP as simply another directive based on the whim of an administrator. The meaning of the policy could then be focused on who had the power to decide what methods were appropriate in the classroom. A similar struggle over power to decide practices had occurred over EEEI. The teachers prevailed by gaining language in the contract between the Education Association and the Board of Education which excused teachers already in the employment of Chadwick from the requirement to attend EEEI training sessions. Although Central Office administrators and the Early Childhood Task Force members said that they wanted the teachers to decide how to infuse the practices into their own teaching, not all teachers interpreted the meaning of the policy in that way.

TEACHERS

It was the kindergarten and first grade teachers, and eventually, second grade teachers, who were responsible for teaching in ways which reflected the recommended practices outlined in the policy. Our understanding of **what** this policy was designed to change was vital if we were to decide **how** to accomplish that change in our classrooms. The goals of the policy were vague, leaving it up to us to operationalize them in our individual ways. We did have many sources of information about the policy, however. The district's Philosophy for Early Childhood, which was provided to all teachers and principals, printed in newspaper articles, and shared with the Board of Education, provided the general recommendations that teachers

should work with parents and provide multi-sensory classrooms that "provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences considered fundamental to each child's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic growth."

"Active learning in a warm, supportive environment" is also stressed in the Philosophy.

The grade level curriculum notebooks contained an array of materials describing classroom schedules; ideas for thematic instruction and assessment; and teaching techniques for language arts, math, science, social studies as well as physical and emotional development. Another source of printed information about what the policy expected from teachers was the list of practices found on the second grade teachers' survey for the 1991 report to the Board. It consisted of a wide range of methods which teachers were either to have in place or were to be working toward implementing. It could be assumed from that list that the DAP policy included *Math Their Way* (an approach stressing the use of manipulatives for conceptual understanding), the writing process, whole language/literature based reading, cooperative learning strategies, whole class instruction, hands-on science, incorporating "play" in the curriculum, providing choices for children, and providing daily opportunities for creative expression. Characteristics of "what children are like" at each developmental age were provided for teachers at each of the grade level summer workshops and in printed form.

There were staff development sessions on whole language, the writing process, literature-based reading instruction, and thematic instruction by a variety of presenters for all principals and learning specialists during the 1989-90 school year. It was expected that principals and learning specialists would bring back their understandings to share with teachers in their schools. There were also inservices provided for district kindergarten, first,

and second grade teachers arranged by the curriculum coordinators for language arts/social studies and math/science - all of which were characterized as staff development for the implementation of developmentally appropriate practices.

With the abundance of information, one would think that the teachers would have a fairly clear idea about what this policy meant in terms of their teaching. That was not the case. Unfortunately, wide variations in meaning increased the challenges involved in implementing an already challenging reform. Some of the teachers I talked with felt the meaning of the DAP policy centered first on their personal understanding of a developmental philosophy and of learning theories and then on a variety of practices which fit those understandings. Most of these educators described themselves as always having had the philosophy and they expressed a sense of empowerment afforded to them by this mandate - "a rekindling of intellectual curiosity" as one school media specialist put it (7/16/91, p. 7). Others felt the policy was primarily about the practices - knowing what to do. For them, the policy meant changing what they were doing and implementing more "appropriate" practices. The policy was forcing them to do without the texts and procedures they had used previously because something new was now in vogue.

Hazel Brown said that her role was primarily to be supportive to the teachers who had felt that change was needed. While she encouraged the superintendent and then the School Board to adopt the policy, she said the impetus came from many early childhood teachers. Although Mrs. Brown stressed teaching practices and strategies, it was clear that she felt these practices were a result of a teacher's understanding of child growth and

development and learning theory, which she attributed to a teacher's training in Early Childhood courses.

I wondered about the emphasis on practices, though, and I shared with Hazel my experience with a first grade teacher in the district who was at my school in the early evening to pick up her son from his karate lesson. She arrived before his class was over so she walked around the school and found me in my classroom. We chatted awhile and she noticed that I had a large chart tablet on an easel which contained lists of words which started with the letter b. She said - "Wow! You teach phonics? I didn't think we were supposed to teach phonics":

K.P.: The thought came to mind, though, was how it is that this teacher and others pick up on these...

H.B.: ...notions that we've thrown out everything valuable that we've ever done before and replaced it with developmental whatever? And, I've said, you know, I just wish that we didn't have to label things in education, it's the labels that get us into so much trouble. It's just good teaching. Just good teaching of young children. Let's just talk about good teaching.

K.P.: Is there - other than to just continually reassure people - do you think that's how we overcome some of these misconceptions and things or...

H.B.: I think just good communication. We have to continually communicate to the public and to one another. It's amazing how many of our own district teachers think that they can't teach spelling or phonics. And all we've done is take away the spelling workbook and the - and there is a place for books, but we've taken away the workbooks because of the fact that they are viewed as a program and they are not a program. They were really time fillers and ways that teachers organized and controlled their classes in a way, you know, and I'm concerned about time on task and they're not the reading program and they're not the math program. It's the interaction with the teacher and with materials that matter - helping kids learn. That's the teaching tool - the teacher. And some have viewed that as saying they no longer could teach spelling and phonics because they didn't have the workbooks. And why not use the chalkboard or the chart paper to do what that workbook did - that's the difference and it's done in a relevant way with a good story that you're teaching or a good piece of poetry - whatever that's really relevant. I think that we took teacher's ability to think away with those things - to think about what they were doing. And all they were doing was assigning work and going through one example or two examples on the page and saying - Do the page -

and that was considered teaching and learning and it's far afield from what teaching is all about. (10/30/90, p. 7)

Hazel Brown wanted the district teachers to think seriously about their teaching and about how their students were going about their learning. In her view, one way to empower the teachers to do that thinking was to mandate the removal of workbooks for all subjects in kindergarten, first, and second grades. For some teachers, this was a wonderful and refreshing change - permission to do what they had wanted to do all along. For others, this was an indication that they weren't really empowered to make the important decisions about their teaching. They saw this policy as simply the newest addition in a long list of practices mandated by the central administrators' view of what constituted "good teaching." For all involved, including Hazel Brown, there were contradictions in this directed autonomy or attempt to empower from above because we did not have a collective understanding about the meaning of the policy.

The Meaning of DAP Lies in Defining Your Own Philosophy

Teachers who felt the meaning of the policy centered on philosophy or beliefs about teaching and learning were most frequently part of the grass-roots group referred to by Central Office administrators. However, they all anticipated problems with trying to mandate a change in beliefs. Margaret White was a first grade teacher at Hunter Woods, an elementary school known for its innovative teaching, which had opened with Hazel Brown as its first principal. Margaret, who has a degree in Early Childhood education from a local state university, had been teaching for nearly 20 years. She was on the committee to investigate and start up the Begindergarten program, was a Begindergarten teacher during its tenure in Chadwick Schools, and served on both the Kindergarten and First Grade Task Forces to develop curricula and

staff development for those grades. In our two interviews, she expressed great support for the DAP policy and had high regard for the possibility that the empowerment aspects of the policy could increase teachers' professionalism - especially if teachers would take it upon themselves to "study it and learn for themselves" (4/16/91, p. 3). Even though she identified herself as one of the Kindergartens teachers who wanted to see some changes in teaching in the early elementary grades, she worried about the top-down mandate. One major concern she expressed was that teachers would not engage in thinking about their teaching as Mrs. Brown hoped, but would simply follow orders and implement the directive of the policy without reflection:

I think it's a real critical time in how we handle all this and how we communicate it and how we study it and learn it ourselves. There's a challenge there for us. It's a time to either try the best you can to figure it out or take some time off and however you have to handle it. (4/16/91, p. 3)

Margaret recognized the difficulties involved in what she wanted teachers to do. She hoped, though, that by working through the meaning of the policy themselves, teachers could help convince the public that teaching is, and always has been, challenging:

You know, sometimes I think teaching is perceived as an easy job and it's just not at all. This is a way - in explaining it, being responsible for communicating with parents that we can help them see that - hey, there's a lot to this - you have to know what you're doing in there to make these decisions - to see what you're looking for - to observe - and we need people in there who can do those things. (pp. 3-4)

Margaret went on to talk about what she viewed as the differences between being a manager of materials and a professional who makes decisions, keeps current, and "presents themselves to the parents and to the community as a person that takes their job seriously" (p. 4). She did not want teachers to implement the DAP policy without understanding what it means.

She would rather have real arguments over meaning than have people simply do what they were told:

Like the teacher who would say, "I don't agree with this at all, but if you say I have to do it, I'll do it, but I don't agree and it's wrong." Boy, I think they shouldn't do it or figure out a way to discuss it or come up with - "I'm choosing to do it this way and these are my reasons" - you know - and have a discussion about it. Yeah - that's a professional. I don't think everybody has to agree, but I think you have to be able to say why you're doing it, not just because someone told me to or because the book says. (p. 4)

Margaret thought that getting teachers to talk with each other would be an important way to begin to introduce the concepts in the DAP policy. When I asked her what teachers should talk about, she said,

Well, I don't know. People say - "Oh, ya, ya, ya" - because I think it's philosophy. We have to talk about philosophy and we have to talk about beliefs and those big issues. Because until we can talk about that, the how to implement it, if you're working from a different philosophical base, it's just different. Until we can debate it and talk about it and agree to disagree about things - somehow be able to talk about it and say I think this about how kids learn and this is why and that's why I choose to do it this way because it matches with how I think about how kids learn. If someone can tell me I think kids learn best by writing in a workbook and da-ta-da-ta-da and these are my reasons, I'll listen and it may change my point of view a little bit. But I don't think you can say "I think kids should do it this way because they've always done it this way. I did it this way and it worked for me." That's not an educational philosophy. It may be an observation, but let's talk about it really. So many times folks think that's just a waste of time - "I don't want to hear any more theory; I don't want any more philosophy. Just tell me how to do it my room - how am I going to do it tomorrow?" And, ya, that's a big issue, but once the philosophy is in place, you can figure out how on your own and evaluate it on your own and say, "Nope, this didn't work," but it's doesn't have to shake your being - just try it once and throw it out. (pp. 5-6)

Margaret saw discussions about beliefs and philosophy as paramount; an emphasis on specific teaching strategies might actually lead people away from the important issues about learning. I asked her about all the changes in curricula - the new science and new math as well as in language arts. Teachers were telling me that they simply had too much to learn and did not have all the things they need to teach in the new ways. She responded,

But if there was a shift in how they think about how kids learn, that shift shifts it for the day. It's not like learning how to do everything. Maybe it's just a subtle shift, you know. If kids learn best by messing around with it a little first and posing questions that have them think about things and being able to talk a little bit about it with somebody else and not having to come up with a product the first time they do it - if that's how they learn best then you can apply that to math and science and everything, you know - and it's not like relearning how you do everything because it's the same. I think we get hung up on - we have to do it all different - I don't think that's true. And it's not the **stuff**, anyway. I don't think it's the amount of things you have to do it with. You can have every perfect material and still not be able to feel comfortable unless you believe it and believe that kids need to choose once in awhile and they have something to say and they have a way to say it. I believe they can do it - you know. (p. 6)

Margaret believed in the DAP policy, but had many concerns about both the top-down mandate and the speed at which the district asked teachers to respond. She thought the district went too fast and that some people got "short-circuited." She also recognized the dilemma of not mandating the policy and understood why it might have been necessary to say, "We can't wait forever. We have to do it. We have to do this and those who can do it will and those who can't - we can't worry about them anymore." She thought that maybe she would wait too long and take too much time if she was in charge and nothing would get done. But on the other hand, she felt the district went too fast. Even at the Grade Level Task Force meetings, she would be uneasy that people did not know what they were deciding about. She said, "I mean, at some of those curriculum meetings I'd ask - 'Is this inservice or are we writing curriculum?' How can the same group of people be inserviced and be writing the new thing? Simultaneously!" She felt the task was too much for the time they had to get it accomplished. "It seemed Herculean - you couldn't do it. I don't know why the time crunch. Whose time frame were we responding to?" She was not convinced of any reason that the policy had to be implemented that fast, "except that we just decided that we were doing it" (pp. 6-7).

So, for Margaret the DAP policy was encouraging - teachers could define the meaning for themselves:

I think the individual teacher should still be able to define it because the key words here are **to be able to define it** and I think you should be able to tell and to talk about why you are doing what you're doing. (p. 10)

She knew that this would be difficult for teachers, but said, "And even if it's hard - so what? You should be able to do that. You are responsible for these kids, you know, and I think the individual teacher has to own it..." She had no patience for teachers who would say, "Well, they tell me to do this, I don't think it's right, but I'll do it." She said,

I don't know what kind of teaching can go on like that. You know, it can't be good - no matter how many things you have to teach with - the materials. The kids know the difference between whether you believe it or not so I think the teacher needs to be part of it.... (p. 10)

Carol Windsor knew Margaret well from years of participating with her on the Chadwick district Writing Committee. I talked with Carol several months after my conversation with Margaret and I was struck by the similarity in their views. Carol was not a classroom teacher. She was a media specialist at Kennedy School, but she felt that she could "see changes in the children" from a different perspective from the teachers because she had the advantage of seeing "change over time" (7/16/91, p. 1). As the media specialist, she worked very closely with the teachers and their students. Like Margaret, she felt that the district would not get people "to change by ordering them to" (p. 7).

Also like Margaret, Carol wanted people to invest themselves in understanding the policy. She thought that it was important to keep up with professional reading, such as in journals and books like Regie Routman's *Transitions* (1988), but she also felt that because "there are so many people

telling us so much," she recommended that people should "just listen to yourself and somehow sort it out" (p. 9).

Carolyn Parker taught first grade in the classroom adjoining Margaret's at Hunter Woods. She previously taught both kindergarten and Begindergarten and described herself as always having been developmental. She did her student teaching in England in a school she identified as "very developmental" (3/26/91, p. 1). She was also concerned about the top-down aspects of the policy. She said that it was great that Hazel Brown supported the policy, but she saw the conflicts of the mandate. "well, it's totally fortunate to have someone in that position in favor of what's happening; however, I think that sometimes it's perceived as - well, Big Brother. It's a top-down kind of thing." She thought it would have been better to let the teachers gradually join the reform:

Here in Chadwick, that could all be so wonderful, because the higher ups are saying, 'Ya, do this. We want you to do this' and so some teachers are, I think, skeptical of it, for that reason I think that that's unfortunate. It's so unfortunate. (3/26/91, p. 6)

I asked Carolyn if she thought there was any grass-roots effort involved in the development of the DAP policy. She said that "there's a pocket of it, but I don't think we're loud enough; we're not the squeaky wheel enough so it doesn't feel like that at all" (p. 6). She mentioned the negative response from many teachers at grade level curriculum meetings in the district which caused some of the teachers who were in favor of the policy to remain quiet. While she appreciated Mrs. Brown's support, she felt that it was "unfortunate" that

We didn't have the time for it to grow among the teachers first and have it handled that way. Hazel is just wonderful to say, "How can we do this? Let's do this." But it becomes - "You will do this in five years." It's like when I was still at home and I might think - I'll help my mom do the dishes and my mom would yell, "Carolyn, do the dishes!" and I would think - I don't want to anymore [laugh]. (p. 6)

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When I asked Carolyn what the DAP policy meant, she said,

I think it would be acceptance of the children where they are and not viewing it as there is something wrong with where they are - or right - or accelerated - or decelerated - and helping them unlock the key so that they can move forward in everything - in reading, writing and math - showing them that - "Hey, this is what you know and that's great and now I'll show you how to know more. This is how you can do it, but **you** need to do it." I think that isn't so much delivering instruction as it is helping children taking responsibility for learning and becoming a learner instead of just a passive participant in all this. They have to be very active. They have to invest in it. I think that's the key. (p. 8)

The instructional aspects of the DAP policy were important to Carolyn, but not in the sense of developing particular methods. She viewed instruction as finding ways to help the learners become independent. Like her colleague Margaret, Carolyn saw herself as the decision maker about her teaching:

I think my philosophy has always been the same. I haven't really changed. I - well - I have changed in my delivery of the way I do things. I think I'm more - I hope - I feel like I'm more in tune to the kids - to be able to individualize a little better - a little better able to read the group - what they need - so I can make good educational decisions for the class - you know...now I feel I've grown and feel confident and professional, I guess, you know - to make those decisions - the best decisions for my group of kids. (p. 4)

Francine Brown also believed that philosophy was at the heart of the DAP policy. During our first interview, she was teaching a second and third combined class. It was her first year as a Chadwick teacher; she had recently completed a master's degree at Bank Street College. She felt that developmental philosophy "really got into my blood. Everything is pretty natural for me" (4/25/91, p. 1). Her view of the what the policy was about included the following:

Well, I let my children guide me pretty much in how I teach. I'm flexible with my teaching....I want them [students] to be creative and do their own thinking instead of me telling them what to do...[It's] integrating the curriculum...there's a unity there in the classroom instead of separating things. Having kids work with each other. (p. 2)

Francine did understand the difficulties involved for teachers who did not have the advantage she had of experiencing this kind of teaching from the

beginning. She felt lucky to have the year at Bank Street, where she was involved without being totally responsible for the teaching:

I think it can be a real hard thing and if I was expected to change everything without having enough training or enough experience with it - I would be scared to do it. But I didn't have to change anything. I started out that way. So I understand why some people would have a lot of problems with it. (p. 5)

For these teachers, the DAP policy represented an opportunity for educators to examine and clarify their beliefs and to establish meaning for what they do. They felt that while there might not be agreement across the district about the meaning of the policy, this could be seen in a positive light. People could explain themselves, talk together, and work toward collective meaning. They recognized the difficulties involved in teaching, but seemed to believe that being a learner oneself, weighing alternatives, and dealing with ambiguity were simply normal aspects of the teaching profession.

Dolores Smith was another teacher who embraced the DAP policy as a healthy sign for Chadwick Schools, but like many of the other teachers, she worried that the top-down mandate would be troublesome. She had taught grades kindergarten through fourth for almost thirty years. She said that teaching is "not really a profession with me, it's a way of life" (6/6/91, p. 3). She's been teaching long enough, she said, to see "things come full circle, like they do in other professions" (p. 4). Dolores also had discomfort about the policy being "imposed on us from on high" because there weren't "allowances for proper training and proper easement into it." She didn't feel that had happened in her own school where her principal had advised the kindergarten and first grade teachers to "ease themselves into it," but she had heard from peers in other buildings that principals said, "This is the way it will be done." She said, "I know for a fact - and I go to committee meetings

where there is all kinds of griping and fear and you know, change is always hard" (p. 5).

When I asked her if the DAP policy should have been mandated, she said that she thought it "was a mistake" and that instead of a mandate, teachers should be "strategically located in buildings, and let their work kind of speak for itself," which could encourage a kind of team approach rather than saying, "This is what you're going to do. This is how it's going to be done" (p.6). On the other hand, Dolores did believe in the basis of the policy and thought that because some teachers had become so comfortable with the basals and the confidence the basal tests provided about student learning, they might not consider another approach without such a policy. She wanted people to change on their own, but worried that they might not if left alone. It was not a problem to Dolores that the DAP policy was one of the things in education "which comes full circle." It meant to her that those things which she had always done were now acceptable - and even encouraged - again. For some teachers, however, coming full circle was an indication that other people were once again deciding the meaning of good teaching.

Most of these philosophy-oriented teachers were involved in creating the curriculum and designing staff development opportunities, but they were a fraction of the total staff. The role of participation in the early stages of change is another area of concern with the problem of meaning. Huberman and Miles (1984) found evidence that involving too many people can create confusion, especially when action is slow in coming. On the other hand, as was the case in Chadwick, when small groups of people are involved, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) report "it is the *members of the committee* who have developed the subjective meaning of the change, not anyone else" (p. 63,

emphasis in original). Darling-Hammond found, in reviewing case studies of teachers implementing mathematics reform in California, that

Teachers then receive the message through a filter, with much of the information and most of the contextual clues screened out. They are not expected to interpret the policy by constructing meaning for themselves, but only to implement the simplified version of it that reaches them. (1990, p. 236)

Much like researchers found in the California studies, I found that participants in my study filled in the gaps in their understanding of the DAP policy with what was familiar to them, creating a wide range of interpretations of meaning and of how to put the policy into practice. Here, as in California, "the teachers were expected to change their beliefs, knowledge, and actions based on a change process that consists primarily to the issuance of a statement and the adoption of new texts" (p. 237), or, in the Chadwick situation, the removal of texts. A major difference between the vast California initiative and the Chadwick DAP policy was that the teachers and administrators in Chadwick were viewed as actors rather than simply as conduits for the policy, which may point to an even greater need for clarity of meaning. None of the teachers who shared a view of the meaning of the DAP policy as centering on practices were members of the Early Childhood Task Forces and all received their understanding of the policy through other district " filters."

The Meaning of DAP Lies in Someone Telling You How to Teach

One of the elementary school principals shed light on the differences between teachers who felt discussions about philosophy were central to the policy and those who felt that practices were of most importance. Debra House had worked with Margaret White for many years and considered her an outstanding teacher. Debra also felt the teachers in her present school were

excellent, but their views of teaching differed from Margaret's and Carolyn's and her other colleagues at Hunter Woods. Debra saw teachers falling into one of two different groups, according to the ways they approach their teaching, and, as a result, she felt they understand the meaning of change in different ways as well. One group includes people like Margaret, whom she describes as "a thoughtful individual," and "an intellectual" who "talks about philosophy." "She's a philosophy kind of person and then works at it and refines it and thinks about it and then acts and continually evaluates." The other group includes people like the first grade teachers at her school "who don't really want to hear theory. That bores them. They're not interested in that. They want to know the strategies and activities and what to do with kids." Her teachers work very hard and know that their students are successful. As a result, she said, "it's harder for them to understand it and put it all together because they don't see the reason." She added that her teachers believe that they are "giving up control to something that they don't trust" (10/18/90, p. 2).

Debra knew that the first grade teachers in her school had changed a lot, but it had been "in a gradual way with a lot of support." Even with the change, their classrooms "still look very different from Margaret's classroom":

And I can tell what they have needed and what they continue to need is someone who can say to them- it's okay that you're still doing this because I know that you're making growth and I know that you're continually looking at it and we're not going to change everything at once. (p. 3)

Debra believes that, when given time and support, these teachers will also come to understand and even embrace the discussions about philosophy; they just come at it in a different way.

Debra's teachers saw their children learning to read and to do math; they saw them making progress using the textbooks and workbooks which the DAP policy now banned. They felt that the ability groups they maintained facilitated their work with children of various levels. The DAP policy recommended flexible grouping and much large-group instruction, which seemed to some teachers to hinder their ability to meet the wide range of needs among their students. As I interacted with teachers at district meetings, it was clear that many felt the DAP policy mandated how they were to teach and they greatly resented this, seeing it as an infringement on their rights to choose the best method for their own classrooms. I recall one incident at an autumn science workshop which included teachers from all elementary grade levels from several Chadwick Schools. Some of the teachers knew that I had been on leave and asked me what school I had been assigned to as a learning specialist. When I told them that I was back in the classroom and had first grade, they groaned and said, "Poor you! You have to put up with that developmental crap." I was so surprised at their reaction, that I didn't know what to say. This was my first indication of the severity of the differences among teachers and how they viewed the policy. I did tell them that I was enjoying first grade and liked the DAP policy. I asked why they thought it was so bad. Their response was that teachers in their buildings hated it because all their materials were taken away and the kids behaved just awful when they tried to do math or science or writing workshop.

Many teachers who agreed to talk with me for my study also expressed resentment - especially at first. Dorothy Marks, one of the first grade teachers at Maplewood, Debra's school, was one of those teachers. She said that she also enjoyed teaching first grade because of the "enthusiasm of the kids" and the joy when "they discover they can read." She also said that she

liked many of the things about DAP because it added "a new dimension to teaching." She felt that she had been getting into a rut doing the same things every year (3/18/91, pp. 1-2). Dorothy saw the policy as primarily about the practice of teaching, about what constitutes "good teaching," and about other people suggesting that these new ways are better than old ways. She didn't talk about her understanding of her students' learning; she focused on various aspects of the teaching methods and taking from those methods the parts which "work best" for her. We were talking about *Math Their Way*:

At first, I have to admit, I was quite confused about it - it seemed like the "new math" when my children were in school and when *Math Their Way* came up - I thought - here we go with another one - five years from now we'll never hear anything about it again. Sometimes I think the longer a person is in education you see these things come around - this year's new thing and this is going to be our salvation and then - five years from now - you never hear anything about it. Like whole language - in ten years, we may not hear about it either and something else will come in. (3/18/91, p. 2)

Dorothy felt that the main thing about the DAP policy and the new materials and teaching approaches was "to take whatever you think works best and what you'd like to learn" and to discard those things which take too much time. For example, she felt that the activities involved with *Math Their Way* take too much time and "the kids learn better another way." She appreciated that her principal had given her the time she needed and had recommended that she do what she felt comfortable doing. She hadn't found the inservices helpful because "they wouldn't really tell us what to do with developmental. No one has ever really sat down and said - this is how you set up a developmental classroom" (p. 3).

She described difficulties in trying to set up centers and having everything fit together, lamenting, "I've heard of people who have spent their lives setting up these whole language, literature-based classrooms and a week or two later, they're doing it all over again with a different theme" (p.

3). When I asked her if that was what the DAP policy was all about, she said, "I don't know. Sometimes I wonder" (p. 3).

For Dorothy, the policy was "just a rehash of the old things - like open education" (p. 3). Clearly, the practices were decided by people other than herself. Her job, as she saw it, was to employ those recommended practices even though she didn't always see the sense in them. Her interpretation of what teachers should or shouldn't do provides an example of the kind of miscommunication Hazel was concerned about. She said,

I guess the whole idea of the developmental program is kind of a mushy thing because - on the one hand we're told that the developmental program takes kids where they are and moves them along and then we're told kids are not supposed to learn their letters; they're not supposed to learn their sounds; we're not supposed to use lined paper - which presumes they can't do it. (pp. 4-5)

She somehow interpreted the policy to mean that she should not teach letters or letter sounds even if she thought the children were capable of learning them. She said that she could see "why this was instituted because some of the kindergarten teachers went crazy with structure," but that should not mean that all the worksheets and desks should be taken away. She wondered, "Who knows how long any of it is going to last?" (p. 5)

Dorothy thought that people in Central Office were the ones empowered to tell her what her teaching should look like. In fact, Hazel Brown talked during inservice meetings and in her conversations with me about the DAP policy being simply "good teaching." The implication for some teachers, however, was that if they were to change what they were doing, what they had been doing must **not** be good teaching. Debra House shed light on how the first grade teachers in her school responded when the policy was introduced. I had just asked her why she thought the policy was introduced at this time. Were the principals informed of a district problem for which the DAP policy was an answer? Debra said that her staff had asked her the same

thing, "What aren't we doing right? What can't our kids do so that we have to do something different?" She said that she had a difficult time trying to answer that for them. She continued,

If you're looking at - Do our students consider themselves readers? Do they choose to read? Are they proficient in math? Do they enjoy math? Those are all there. So it wasn't as if we were looking at a school that wasn't effective. I mean our state achievement test scores - I don't know if you consider that a judgment or not - the state certainly did - and you looked at the bottom quartile - there was nobody there and we could always look at the kids who were in the next quartile and give reasons why they scored there and feel that they were being supported and those were small numbers so that we felt we were in fact an effective school. (p. 14)

Debra also mentioned the paradigm video shown to all teachers:

The whole thing about change - when you are in one mode and you are doing well and all of a sudden things change and all of a sudden you're not doing well anymore - that's a big shift and it's a big personal affront - like telling me that I'm not doing it right. (p. 15)

Another elementary principal also shared this concern about the feeling "out there" that the policy was a response to some poor teaching by many teachers:

Any time you use the word "improve," the connotation is that what we were doing before was not good enough. There could be something to that. Any time people say that this is the way it will be done now - I mean that makes people bristle and their immediate response might be - why? What was wrong with what I was doing before? And if you can't - I mean - people are going to have to be shown - what it was they were doing that was wrong and if they can't - but it's a simple matter of one person's belief system imposed on another person's. Well, that's not good enough for me. To tell me, Klo, "I don't want you doing it that way anymore because my way is better." Now, I don't buy that. And so, I think, maybe, in our district, that feeling is out there and that maybe they are being told they have to do it this way because it's now the best way to do it and now everything else you've done previous to that has been wrong. I've heard that. I don't agree with it, but that's what I've heard. I think it's wrong. (10/29/90, p. 6)

That certainly was Dorothy Marks' response:

We were all madder than heck here with all this stuff - "You're going to do this or else" and "You're going to be in trouble if you don't" and I was real resistant to it and I know the reason I was resistant was because it was being crammed down our throats. But when I started doing it - it was - "Oh, there are some beneficial things here" and then I started having a different attitude. But it took a long time to get over

that initial anger - that "This is what you are going to do and you're going to do it like this or else." (p. 12)

Even though her principal said that Dorothy and her colleagues should take their time and implement what they could, Dorothy felt that Hazel Brown and Stephanie Hall were sending the message that change had to be immediate. The kindergarten and first grade teachers at Maplewood requested a meeting with Mrs. Brown to discuss their concerns about the restrictions they felt with the DAP policy. Dorothy said that Mrs. Brown had led the Maplewood staff to believe that "we were the only school - that the other schools didn't have a problem." However, when they attended a district-wide first grade social studies meeting, they learned that was not the case. The teacher who was chairing the meeting began by saying, "We're supposed to be talking about social studies, but I know what we all have on our minds right now - the Big D word!" Dorothy said that she realized that there was a lot of anger in the room over the same reason - "it was being crammed down our throats" (pp. 12-13):

We can get resentful when people tell us how to do things and how we have to do it. ...The first seven years I taught in the Chadwick district I never had that feeling that people were pushing things down my throat, but the last three years - we could go on and on about all the new stuff. Some of the old stuff - like Madeline Hunter - is just a blur in my mind. ...All these things keep coming up all the time and they are all supposed to be innovative and revolutionize teaching - [laugh] - like instructional skills - and here a few years later - those worksheets we did - no! no! But, it was okay a few years ago, but not now. (p.13)

Dorothy didn't see the policy as empowering her to design a program; she saw it as a mandate to adopt "one approach" to teaching which was not debatable. She did not agree with it, but she did implement the aspects of DAP with which she did agree, and she determined to just wait it out. In Dorothy's mind, the DAP did not allow the eclectic approach which she felt was most appropriate:

It just has to be - I mean, we've talked all these years about the eclectic approach. And I think that's one of the things we're not allowing. But I think it's softening now - I see some cracks in that solid wall. I think what's been pushed in the last three years is not an eclectic approach - it's a uni-approach - and I just don't see that as everything. (p. 15)

Trudy Wilson was a second grade teacher at Eisenhower School who described her introduction to the DAP policy as first hearing "something about it" at a staff meeting and then she was "prodded into putting it into use - to be doing it" (6/24/91, p. 1). She had understood Hazel Brown to say that teachers would be given from three to five years to implement the mandates of the policy, but Trudy said that "in our building, from our principal, it was like - do it now" (p. 2). Trudy said that she was a "developmentally oriented" preschool and kindergarten teacher, but her "pattern was changed because academics was in." For the previous twelve years or so in the Chadwick district, Trudy felt there was an emphasis on covering material - "It was cut and dry - you will cover this much material....So you just had to not do a lot of things you would have previously done." Time was short and she felt she didn't have time for a developmental program - "They had to get down and get to work" (p. 3).

Trudy was concerned because she didn't think that the administration made it "specific about what was going to be 'all right'" and she wasn't sure as a first grade teacher at the time that the second grade teachers were going to buy into this. She did go to workshops and the six half-day inservices. Her learning specialist provided strategy lessons (such as how to teach using Question-Answer-Relationships) in the morning once a week or so before school and she said that she attended most of those. She said that she "didn't change to much of a degree" because she wanted to know why it was suggested she change "something that is working" (p. 4). She saw the DAP

policy as Hazel Brown's idea and because Hazel was in a position to do so, she "got it in place" (p. 7).

Trudy definitely did not feel empowered to make judgments about designing the DAP policy or even about putting the policy into practice. She felt pressure from her principal for all the lower elementary teachers "to do what other schools were doing" and for Trudy to put "the materials" into place. She felt that she had tried to keep up with current practices and do whatever the district was asking of her, but she felt that "no matter what you're doing - even if it was something suggested last year, this year you're asked to do something different..." (p. 15). Learning these practices required some personal risk for her and, unlike Dorothy, she didn't feel that her risk taking was appreciated: "We are repeatedly told to take the risk and then you take the risk and then you get told that things are not up to par. So - okay, it will take me awhile" (p. 17).

Joan Moore was another teacher who articulated the issue of power struggles involved when trying to mandate changes like those found in DAP. She had been teaching over twenty years, always in the Chadwick district, and she considered herself a traditional teacher - one who did what she was told to do. She taught at one school for nineteen years and had just finished her third year at Washington. Like Dorothy Marks, she had seen many changes come through the district, but she felt the DAP policy was a good change. "This is one change which I really think is wonderful" (6/18/91, p. 10). But like Dorothy and Trudy, Joan was upset at first by the mandate:

I felt hurt at first. I really did....But see, you know, it depends - some people do make you feel like what you did before was - you know, the teachers did a lot of good things before....You know, there's been a lot of changes all down through the years and you work your hiney off to do it - at least that's been my experience; it isn't that way with everybody. You try to change and yet it's generally just more of the same - always trying to reinvent the wheel or changing the curriculum. (p. 10)

The curriculum had been changing over the last few years and as Joan said, "learning the curriculum is no easy thing - it takes time - knowing all the topics and everything that you need to teach." The DAP policy was "a different kind of change" and Joan likes it now that she has gotten into it. "But, it is very scary at the beginning because of some of the reasons I said. And change always really costs something" (p. 10).

When I asked her what she thought were the most important aspects of the DAP policy, Joan responded that "it might be something different to another person depending on where they were in their teaching," but for her, it allowed her to try some things which she wouldn't have previously done. An example she provided was spelling. In the past, she would have done the whole book, a lesson a week. "But this year, I relaxed about it and if it was going to take two weeks for a particular list - that was okay. I thought more about what I was teaching than just covering the material." She said that she had never felt she had the freedom to make those kinds of decisions. "So I thought more this year about what I was going to teach and I didn't just teach 36 spelling lessons." When I asked if the book was more like a resource now, she said, "It's empowerment. Yeah. It was always the book - it's like you're a prisoner of this book. But some people - even way back when - there were some people who could see over that. And yet a lot of us stuck by the book." She had noticed that some other teachers didn't ever feel bound by the book, but she had felt the administration demanded it:

If you weren't doing it they let you know. So, I did it the way I was taught to do it. Well, really, in the first place, they never gave you the freedom - nobody ever said - like [her principal] did last year - "Do your spelling with how you're comfortable." No one ever said that before - for 21 years before that. It was always - and especially third grade and up and I've only been in second for three years - you had a spelling book and it was mandated from the top and you do it and you feel as if you're not doing a good job if you don't get through the whole book. And the administration does it because they're under pressure,

too, and they have all these state tests where the results are published in the paper. (6/19/91, pp. 10-12)

Joan felt that the DAP policy gave her more freedom and flexibility with the ways she uses materials, but she also recognized that it was administrative power which decided that she could have the right to make those text book decisions now. The meaning of the policy centered around her freedom to adapt materials.

Margie Nathan was a kindergarten teacher who had taught in the district since the late 1970s and felt that she'd "always been a developmental teacher" (3/22/91, p. 2), yet she also felt she needed some time after the policy began to feel comfortable with what she was doing. Even with her view that she had always embraced the philosophy of developmental learning, she saw the policy much in the same way Dorothy and Joan did - as a mandate about specific methods - what teachers should or shouldn't do. I asked her about the reception of kindergarten teachers to the DAP policy, she said,

I think some of them were very anxious for it and liked it and others didn't. It's been three years since they introduced it and I think that now people are kind of settling in and doing more of what they feel they should and I think that's true of me. The first year, it was like "We shouldn't do this and we shouldn't do that" - you know, letters and things. The first year we started the developmental, I still had some of the little "letter people" and I'd just introduce them and play the song and have them around in the play house. I felt comfortable with that. But there were other people who would say to me - "You're not supposed to be doing anything with the letters." (p. 2)

Margie's discussion about centers in classrooms and about the policy's recommendation that students have choices illustrates some of the confusion about what the policy was asking of teachers. She, too, recognized misinterpretation as one of the dangers involved in the DAP policy. During one Kindergarten Task Force meeting at her school several teachers chastised her for having the children's names on the tables. They told her she shouldn't do that "in developmental." She responded,

Anne Soderman said that it doesn't really have anything to do with developmental.... What has to do with developmental is whether or not they have to sit in that spot all day long and do papers. But, see - it's the same way with dittoes - people say you can't use dittoes. I don't believe that. When a ditto serves a purpose and the kids like it - fine. Or like using a pattern. People say - "You know, that's not developmental." Well, I don't believe that. Sometimes you need a pattern. (pp. 6-7)

She said that she now saw more and more teachers deciding what materials and approaches they were going to use and not worrying so much about whether or not they are "developmental." However, Margie took a rather rigid view of DAP herself when she expressed a concern about what she saw as the elimination of structure. She said,

There is a need there in many children for structure and if you say that it has to be the other way then you're taking another segment for which you're not meeting their needs just like you were when you said that everybody has to finish this workbook or stay in their own seat all day and that they have to accomplish the same thing - you're going the other way. So, I think - keep the structure - keep the things which seem to work for you and your situation and classes vary. There are some years when I have classes who can handle very little structure and just work along and other years you have groups that really need structure. We have to change how we teach and I think we teachers do that all the time. Some years you do things one way, some years you do them another - you have to kind of suit how you teach to the needs of the group. (p. 7)

Margie also expressed her concern that teachers would see this as just another mandate in a cycle of changes. She said, "I think our district tends to move all one way, though., We emphasize something for a few years and we don't stay in there to support what's going on. Like Madeline Hunter, and now it's developmental, and people drop the ball." She worried that many teachers would not even try to implement the practices because they "feel that in a couple of years - they'll drop this, too" (p. 15).

Helen Corrigan also expressed concern that the district might "drop the ball." She had taught second grade for many years in a school which had used text books exclusively. She viewed her last few years of teaching as "a real journey - a learning experience" and said that "now that I'm here, if they ask

me to go back to anything else - I'll retire first" (6/11/91, p. 14). When I asked about what it was she might be asked to go back to, she said,

I mean back to basics. Back to structured reading group process and I guess that's why sometimes I get upset or edgy when I hear things that sound like we have reservations about this and hear - "maybe we should be doing more grouping, maybe we need to identify those "at risk" kids and get them isolated" and they are going to know they are different. And I think - "Look, you asked me to jump in and I did and don't tell me that I have to go back." (p. 14)

For Debra House, then, and for many other principals who talked with me, part of her job was convincing her teachers that the DAP policy would stay around for awhile:

[Part of my job has been] helping people trust that, yes, this new idea is right and it will be around. Our staff is really - the Begindergarten Program was sold so well in this community - staff was sold, parents were sold and all of a sudden, it wasn't right anymore and that slowed the confidence and trust of a lot of people that there was any longevity in what they viewed as new programs or new approaches. It was sort of like - we'll just wait it out - like we waited out computerized testing that went on for the reading program with the Houghton Mifflin objectives and we'll just wait out all these things that just came down that everybody jumped on and this is just one more phase. It's just like we did in the early '50s and the early '60s or whatever. It'll just go on and there'll be a reaction to it and the concern is there that if we don't do this well, then we're the one who're going to be blamed. They're not going to come back to the superintendent; they're going to come back to me, the teacher, and say, "You didn't teach my kid." So there has been a lot of responding to that. (10/18/90, p. 8)

Debra's teachers worried, as did Trudy Wilson, that they would get the brunt of the criticism if the practices mandated with DAP did not work as hoped. The problems involved with establishing collective meaning for the policy left many teachers feeling vulnerable about methods they were not even convinced would work themselves.

THE PROBLEM OF MEANING AND DIRECTED AUTONOMY

It was clear that teachers held very different views about the meaning of the DAP policy. It might be easy to say that the teachers' views reflected their own beliefs about teaching and learning, which is probably accurate, but there were other influences on their views which should be considered. In every case, the teachers who said the meaning DAP policy centered on defining one's own philosophy were teaching in a school which had not traditionally used one textbook and which was perceived as having a child-centered orientation. Most of these teachers did have masters degrees in Early Childhood Education and had previously taught preschool, kindergarten, or Begindergarten. For them, the policy was a reaffirmation of what they had already been doing. The teachers at Kennedy provide one example of how the mandated practices were merely extensions of a process of change which had been occurring for them over quite some time. Other teachers, however, had faithfully followed previous district policies. They had used the text books in each subject area and had learned to implement lessons based on direct instruction with the Madeline Hunter model or EEEI. For them the changes were abrupt and appeared to be the result of another administrator gaining the power to influence what teachers would do. EEEI had been promoted as the epitome of putting research into practice. Now DAP, based upon a different model of teaching, was said to be the ideal way to teach.

When I reflect on my own interpretation of the meaning of the policy, I find that I aligned with the teachers who were oriented toward philosophy. I wanted this policy to work because I felt the instruction would allow teachers to see the children in a new light. Without the constraint of workbooks and basal reader sequenced stories, teachers might be able to get to know the students and see their strengths rather than simply judge by how

each child did on the skillsheet. I had worked with many children during my years as a learning specialist who were not able to read well because they were too busy trying to do what teachers had told them they needed to do. I believed that if we could move away from the programmed learning, we could give children time and opportunity to demonstrate what it was they were trying to do and we could either assist them or redirect their thinking. My work at the university had also given me the chance to get to know myself as a learner again. I began to understand the real risks involved in learning and I developed a healthy respect for what the children do every day. I wanted the advocated practices to help change the culture of the classroom so that all learners could be comfortable and give and receive help as needed. The meaning of the policy did center on philosophy for me, but this was something I have come to understand only in retrospect.

When I talked with teachers who felt the policy was about the specific practices, I was impressed with how many of them, once they began to try out the practices, did begin to get to know their students better and did come to see many advantages for themselves as decision makers. According to their own accounts, the culture of their classrooms did change as a result of DAP. However, the power struggle over who gets to decide greatly undermined the willingness of many teachers to give the practices a serious try. Rather than engage in dialogue, and even debate, in order to reach some convergence on a collective district meaning for DAP, we created either/or camps.

Teachers had good reason to believe that the meaning of the policy centered on practices and that those practices were determined by people who had the power to make those decisions. The Chadwick district had a history of implementing innovations and being on the cutting edge of educational reform. Sometimes the district responded to criticisms which did not apply to

the students or teachers, such as when the middle school concept was eliminated in order to stress academics when our students already outscored most other state schools and did extremely well on national measures too. Many teachers and principals had learned the instructional design components and could create seven-step lesson plans as a result of the district's policy to employ EEEI. This very teacher-dominant approach was clearly in opposition to the ideas of DAP in the eyes of many teachers.

According to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), any implementation of educational change involves change in practice which can involve at least three components - change in materials, the teachers' approaches, and beliefs. Failure to consider any of the components can explain why some people accept an innovation they do not understand and why some aspects of the reform get implemented while others do not. Materials, approaches, and beliefs were all central in the DAP policy and required drastic changes in all areas for some teachers and far fewer changes for other teachers. One example of variation among people is provided by Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel (1976) in their study of open education teachers who differed in fundamental ways. Some teachers in their study operated at the level of surface curriculum, focusing on materials and on seeing that the students were active in the learning. They wanted the students to share and to take turns. Much like Dorothy Marks and some others in my study, they dealt with ambiguity by wanting to know what specific content had to be covered and what specific processes were to be used. Other teachers, much like Margaret White and Carol Windsor, focused on understanding the rationale for the change and were able to move back and forth between concrete teaching activities and the underlying rationale and philosophy.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer believe that change in materials and resources is both the most visible and the easiest change to make. Changes in teaching approach or style, using new materials, increase in difficulty if new skills must be acquired and new instructional approaches used. Changes in beliefs are even more difficult because they challenge values held by individuals concerning the purposes of education. It is especially challenging when beliefs are not explicit, discussed, or understood, but are hidden within unstated assumptions. They write that

... the development of a clear belief system is essential because it provides a set of criteria for overall planning and a screen for sifting valuable from not-so-valuable learning opportunities that inevitably arise during instruction. (1991, p. 42)

Change, then, consists of a "sophisticated and none-too-clear *dynamic interrelationship*" of the three dimensions (p. 40, emphasis in original). In Chadwick, philosophy and beliefs were not discussed; instructional materials and approaches were stressed; therefore, it was possible for many to change some visible teaching practices, yet continue making decisions based on old beliefs.

To complicate the implementation further, many teachers had their support systems (textbooks, workbooks, tests) taken away and had to create replacements. There were tensions between Central Office control over curriculum and materials and teachers' autonomy in teaching. Wimpelberg and Boyd (1988) point out that there is a strong relationship between school district policy making and the contest between control and autonomy. One way negotiations take place in this contest is within what Weick (1976) describes as organizational "loose coupling." Weick says that members of loosely coupled organizations, such as school systems, have to "construct or negotiate some kind of social reality they can live with" (p. 13). Meyer and Rowan (1978) suggest that this "social reality" is based on the "logic of

confidence" (p. 80), which assumes that what is going on in classrooms and schools makes sense and conforms to rules, but there are no inspections to confirm good performance or to uncover ineffectiveness. The school does have formal structure, as seen in the certification requirements for teachers and categories for assigning students; however, this is decoupled from the work and outcomes.

When policies entail "directed autonomy," there are instances where control and autonomy are at odds. This was certainly the case in Chadwick. For example, Wimpelberg and Boyd (1988) admonish, "The question of who controls decision making in schools should depend upon the levels of skill and expertise of the potential decision makers and the learning needs of the children" (p. 18). The Superintendent presented the DAP policy to the Board of Education as a policy written in such a way that teachers were to be "given a measure of trust as the people who best understand the developmental needs of children, and they should be empowered to design and implement programs to meet those needs" (Hatch & Freeman, 1988, p. 4). However, a question posed by Lee Shulman (1983) looms large: "If the responsible and effective teacher must be both free and obligated, how shall we define the proper mix of those typically incompatible virtues?" (p. 486).

Evidence of the conflict between control and autonomy was presented by the superintendent when he apparently felt that some district educators could not be as trusted with empowerment as others. He described getting people to implement the policy as getting them to get on a train, which was perhaps his metaphor for getting people to change their beliefs:

We have one particular school that's dragged their heels; they haven't gotten involved. Now they say they need all kinds of inservices and that sort of thing, but where were they three years ago when we started this and we had people involved? Inservice isn't the total answer - it's an attitudinal change on the part of the teacher that has got to take place...I think that here we're talking about a district-wide

adoption that the Board has approved and it's time to put back on the shelf those old theories and start getting with the train that's going down the track. (10/9/90, p. 6)

Hazel Brown also expressed some concern about what she perceived as differences among the teachers which she felt could lead to difficulties with implementation. She saw traditional teachers as focused too heavily on the delivery of content and not enough on the learning by children. When I asked her if the DAP policy focused more on philosophy or on teaching strategies she responded that it was "more than a philosophy and an attitude." She saw the "practices" as "a delivery system of teaching strategies" and wanted people to "look at the balance between teaching and learning":

Traditional teachers have been so focused on - the delivery of the content, that they have not really seen the children. We've got to shift to looking at children and how children learn. Our focus has to be on the learning. (10/30/90, p. 4)

The way the teacher facilitates the learning for children, according to Mrs. Brown, is "based on their knowledge of child growth and development." Mrs. Brown implied that many teachers currently teaching kindergarten, first, and second grades do not have this knowledge. She said,

Until we have teachers trained to understand young children and how they learn - really understand learning theory - we're going to be a long time getting there. I'm concerned about it, frankly. Because, we - part of it is all tied up in how we assign teachers to classrooms and I think we need specially trained teachers for young children. I really do. (p. 5)

In addition to an understanding of child development, Mrs. Brown also specified the need on the part of teachers to know and understand

that learning is a natural process and that you can't force it. You can't pour it into the kid's head until they're ready. You can stimulate, you can motivate, you can facilitate, you can enrich - you can just have all kinds of opportunities there, but - and you have to trust that children will learn, they do learn. (p. 5)

Unfortunately, her efforts to see that the mandated practices would be used in classrooms may have blinded her to the application of her view of

learning for the teachers as well. She and some principals, who felt they were to get their teachers "on board," did force learning and had much difficulty trusting that the teachers would learn if they were simply provided with opportunities to learn in an enriched environment.

Several teachers also shared their concern that they were not convinced that all of their colleagues could make the changes teachers like Helen had made. Arlene McKinley, for example, was a first grade teacher who felt so strongly about the influence of the basal that she said, "I think we're going to continue to have a problem until we retire some teachers that have been in the basals" (6/3/91, p. 3). She had been a preschool teacher before she became a Kindergarten teacher and was a member of the Kindergarten Task Force. She asked to teach first grade three years ago because she "wanted to see what happened with beginning reading" (p. 1). She was a vocal advocate for the DAP policy and supported the decision to mandate it: "Then sometimes, I guess the administration has to say - 'This is the best way to do it and you will do it.' And it had to come down to bottom line dictating" (p. 6). She felt that some teachers simply would not be able to adjust to what she viewed as one of the important attributes of the policy, giving up some control:

One other teacher and I discussed the fact that we think there are certain personalities that almost would never be able to accept this because, you know - adults who need to control - who need to be in charge. There are the authoritarian people and there are authoritarian teachers and you cannot do this if you are going to do it in that way - you have to run a democracy. The classroom has to be a democracy and you have to empower the children. You cannot be a controlling, autocratic person and have this be successful. (p. 6)

This idea also held for the schools. Each school had to be a democracy in order to empower the teachers. Trying to control learning to a limited range of procedures using an autocratic style caused some teachers to back away from the policy rather than embrace it. Determining who would decide

how a teacher is to teach became one of power and control rather than a matter of allowing each teacher to come to a personal meaning for the policy. Mrs. Brown and other administrators certainly illustrated what Wimpelberg and Boyd described as "the horns of a dilemma":

External conditions do not ensure that teachers are prepared, certified, and selected with the kind of rigor that would allow us to take the second (i.e., internal) policy position of delegating to them broad discretionary authority over decisions about curriculum and instruction. Further, if a school district is philosophically ready to take the second policy position, it is generally incapable of influencing the antecedent policy conditions. That is to say, any individual district that wants to empower and fully professionalize its teachers on the job has little control over the quality of their preparation and standards of their certification. (1988, p. 21)

This lack of control over certification pulls policies away from teacher empowerment and back toward central controls. This was evident in instances where principals or other administrators became very directive about what teachers could or could not do to implement the DAP policy. It was also evident in interview comments made about concerns that not all teachers were ready to make the kinds of decisions the policy called for.

"Directed autonomy," if truly present, would provide a way of managing that keeps central office administrators and principals in the position of directing the policy, but would also recognize that, in the classroom and in the school, the teacher and principal do know what is best. However, people have to know what the boundaries are; they have to know the rules of behavior; they have to have worked out the "social reality" within which they operate. It was clear that the DAP policy violated at least some rules when teachers at a social studies meeting "...knew what everyone else knew - there was an awful lot of anger in the room and it was for the same reason - it was being crammed down your throat" (3/18/91, p. 13). One dilemma with "directed autonomy" was that, for some staff members, the policy itself violated the "logic of confidence" which had become central to

the unstated operational rules of the district. The policy mandated an approach to teaching which teachers felt was their personal decision to make. The opportunity to be empowered to put this policy into practice did not feel empowering at all to many of them.

Although Mrs. Brown and some others worried about the ability of their colleagues to change teaching practices, many of the teachers, like Margaret White, Carol Windsor, and Carolyn Parker, who were the most dedicated to the policy, were also the most worried about the success of attempting to mandate what they viewed as fundamental philosophical changes. It was not so much that they worried that their colleagues could not make the changes, but rather that, by mandating a philosophy, the administrators would inadvertently undermine the efforts for change. Reforms such as the DAP policy are seen on a larger scale in California's Mathematics Framework, which Linda Darling-Hammond (1990) described as an effort "to revive progressive education from the top down - an idea that may seem vaguely paradoxical or even heretical to those who have seen similar educational ideas associated with bottom-up reform" (p. 233). Hazel Brown was totally committed to the policy and by several accounts may have been waiting her whole career in Chadwick to see such a district-wide policy created, but her commitment may have been part of the problem. According to Fullan and Stiegelbauer's (1991) review of research on policy implementation, "Ironically, in many ways the more committed an individual is to the specific reform of change, the less effective he or she will be in getting others to implement it" (p. 9), especially if that vision results in "impatience and failure to listen" (p. 95). While Mrs. Brown and the other central office administrators talked openly about "change as a process" and

"providing people with time," because "true change takes three to five years," in actuality most staff members had to make drastic changes overnight.

THE INABILITY TO DEVELOP SHARED MEANING

I noted earlier in this chapter that I assumed upon reading the Philosophy and related information provided in the First Grade Curriculum Guide that the DAP policy was based upon a philosophy which I embraced. As I experienced my year of first grade teaching and participated in district-wide meetings and especially when I had the opportunity to talk with my district colleagues, I realized that it was easy for me to assume this alignment because the critical issues of beliefs and philosophy were never presented for discussion. One principal said that people were asked to "go from one paradigm to another" (10/25/90, p.4), but we never talked about the paradigms we were switching from or to. The Superintendent also said that people had to "get on the train" and "put back on the shelf those old theories" (10/9/90, p. 6); however, when he saw no contradiction between his view of mastery learning and the learning model I thought was central to the DAP policy, I was taken aback. We had been discussing my work with the educational assessment office at State Department of Education when he commented,

C.J.: Of course, I subscribe very strongly to the outcomes approach to the whole area of curriculum and the mastery learning concept that's embedded in that. That's essentially to align the curriculum, teach to the curriculum, test what they teach and quit trying to fool kids and reteach for extensions or corrections.

K.P.: How do you see that meshing with the developmental program in earlier grades?

C.J.: I think it meshes very well. We're looking for mastery, I guess, somewhere along the line....and I think as a district, it's one we're going to have to be prepared for, because we're getting the barbs thrown at us right now. We're going to need a rebuttal. (10/9/90, p. 4)

I attended inservice sessions at which pre-packaged thematic units and "whole language basal programs" were presented. The Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator admonished that we must still teach reading skills in "the proper sequence." These were among the indications that what I had assumed about what "research says" and what others assumed were not always aligned. General references to "research" allowed us to draw upon our own interpretations and create our own meanings. The policy also seemed to tell us that there were some clear lines between that "research" and what we were supposed to do in our classrooms.

Lee Shulman (1983) points out that trends in research follow the "ebb and flow of ideas in the marketplaces of public opinion" (p. 496), which has both positive and negative consequences. While public influence might assure that research maintains relevance to current concerns, it also undermines continuity as slow, cumulative growth is replaced with the upheaval of political or social tides. Also, Shulman reminds us that direct relationships between research and educational policy are a myth anyway. There are no objective bodies of research which can be readily translated into policy and then into practice. We have a lot of knowledge, but not in "applicable sets of propositions" (p. 496).

More in line with the DAP policy's "research base" is the work of Bussis, Chittenden, Amarel, and Klausner (1985). Their lengthy study of children learning to read included an investigation of learning theory. The DAP policymakers kept reassuring us that "we now know so much more about how children learn"; however, Bussis and her colleagues came to a different conclusion: "Despite the roots of promising theory that exist in related disciplines, a coherent theory of learning which proves its mettle in the classroom has thus far eluded educational research" (p. 3). In fact, they see

the perception of research which can be taken from the laboratory into the classroom as very troublesome - a legacy of positivism and behaviorism. They say the idea that educational problems can be solved with technological knowledge encourages educators to fall into the trap of viewing children as machines and teachers as technicians. According to Bussis et al., this "reductionist view" has two tenets - First, if it exists, it can be measured, and if we measure it we will understand it better. Second, if it can be learned or taught, it can be analyzed into component parts, and if we break it up into those component parts, it can be learned or taught more efficiently. The fallacy comes about when the analysis is assumed to be the blueprint of how the learning occurred in the first place. Human acts, they point out, are different from physical events because they are characterized by the meaning and intention of the persons who perform them. Social science must understand two different things: first, what behaviors mean from the standpoint of the people involved; and second, what those significations imply from the standpoint of a conceptual framework. Thus, they say, we must look to the kinds of research which push personal meanings to the foreground. The Superintendent viewed learning as appropriately segmented into teachable pieces which could be learned and assessed. He saw no conflict between that view and DAP.

Denny Taylor's (1989) contribution to a *Phi Delta Kappan* debate between Marie Carbo (1988) and Jeanne Chall (1989) helped me clarify the uneasiness I was experiencing trying to work within the DAP policy guidelines. Carbo and Chall had written long articles calling on research to support their individual views about literacy learning. Taylor disagreed with both of them, writing that "the complex subject of children's early literacy development has been reduced to a debate over 'methods'" (p. 184). She

admonished educators to ignore these "reductionist disagreements about current dominant methodologies" so that "we will be able to concentrate on building theoretically grounded explanations of reading and writing that will eventually enable us to develop a unified theory of literacy learning and instructional practices" (p. 184). She pointed to James Gleick's discussion of economics in *Chaos: Making a New Science* (1988), in which he stated that patterns of behavior are nonlinear - they are stable on a global level, but unpredictable locally. Taylor said that if that is true about science, then the idea that "the essence of scholarship is the creation of theories that best fit the research breaks down" - especially when the research studies are based on the assumption that human behavior can best be described by linear, hierarchical models. "Instead, scholarship should be an attempt to create theories or explanations that tell us something about the phenomena we are studying" (p. 186).

According to Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984), notions such as "developmental stages," "readiness," "emergent reading," and others rest on a model of literacy learning they call behavioral. The behavioral model assumes that the environment shapes the learner. They contrast this to a cognitive model, which assumes the learner determines what is learned from the environment, and a transactional model, which assumes "that the coming together of learner and environment affects what is learned" (p. 90). They understand that educators do not always explicitly advocate one model or another, but that a specific model can be inferred from "the recommendations being made and from the assumptions upon which those recommendations rest" (p. 90).

During the course of my university work and my own personal reading, I had come to embrace what I considered a transactional model of

learning - not only for literacy, but for all learning. I had assumed, without much reflection, that the DAP policy was also based upon that model. It wasn't until I began to work with the framework of the policy, talk with colleagues, and participate in district staff development that I began to question the assumptions underlying both the policy and the NAEYC's position on early childhood education. Administrators who agreed to talk with me frequently mentioned Piaget's research as foundational to the DAP policy, which seemed accepted without reservation. The concept of 'developmental levels' and 'emergent literacy' were also put forth as uncontested and research-based ideas. Harste et al. (1984), however, contest these notions by stating that all are based on the belief that "language is a perfectible absolute" (p. 104). They say,

No concept has been more difficult for the profession to abandon than this notion of language as a perfectible absolute. The notion persists despite tomes of research showing that language variation, including variation in comprehension and comprehending, is the norm rather than the exception. Implicit in the notion of 'readiness' is a concern with outcome. If one expects everyone to be the same - arrive at the same meaning, take the same careful path to reconstruct that meaning - then and only then is readiness a language learning issue. (p. 104)

Harste and his colleagues found that their work emerged from and was built upon the contributions of researchers who went before them. They also found that as they proceeded to examine real language situations, the roles of researcher and teacher converged. "We believe that researchers and teachers must proceed from theory, and further, that this theory must constantly be subject to reflection and change" (1984, p. 86). Taylor (1989) also saw the work of social scientists and educators melding:

Our task as social scientists is to try to understand the complexity of the literacy behaviors of young children. And our task as educators is to use these understandings to support and enhance children's learning opportunities, guiding them in both direct and indirect ways as they develop *personal* understandings of literacy that are both socially constructed and individually situated in the practical accomplishments of their everyday lives....We must give up the security of prepackaged

programs built upon stage theories and stop trying to 'fit' children's early reading and writing experiences into some model or other. This is the only way that we will ever be able to 'see' how language is both constructed and used by children when adults are not blatantly distorting the process. (p. 186)

It seems to me that Taylor and Harste et al. are calling for the need to reflect on and build upon research, not use research as a directive about teaching and learning. They helped me understand the need for teachers to view ourselves as learners. They also helped me understand the need to work collaboratively to share and clarify views and to reflect upon the observations we make in our efforts to support our own learning and especially that of our students. In those ways we can truly meld theory and practice with research.

In this chapter, I have attempted to show how participants in my study expressed their understandings of the meaning of the DAP policy. The failure to establish a collective district meaning complicated the attempts of teachers and principals to implement an already challenging and complex reform. The elimination of Begindergarten and increasing national attention on the education of young children created an opportunity for Hazel Brown, a life-long advocate for child-centered teaching, to campaign for such practices to become district policy. Efforts to support the policy with an appeal to research brought the blessings of the other Central Office administrators, who focused on the perceived need to compete with other countries and the prospect that the use of developmentally appropriate practices would increase Chadwick students' academic performance. Their lack of understanding of the requirements the policy placed on teaching and learning allowed them to institute some policies which were in conflict with DAP and to fail to institute others which could have supported staff efforts with implementation.

Although Mrs. Brown truly wanted this policy to succeed, her desire may have encouraged her to cut off the essential debates needed to establish the district's collective meaning for the policy and caused her to force teachers to change so quickly they had no time to reflect on the meaning of what they were trying to do. Vague and general references to a research base allowed some teachers to interpret the meaning of the policy as an opportunity to examine beliefs about teaching and learning while others thought the policy was about the best way to teach. The contradictions involved in trying to mandate a policy which was supposed to empower teachers to design their own ways to employ the practices continued a district struggle over the power to decide appropriate teaching methods and served to further impede or complicate implementation. Many teachers were concerned about being held accountable for practices which they could not explain or defend and in which they did not have total confidence. The history of reform efforts in the Chadwick district enabled many teachers and principals to view DAP as simply another change based upon the way the national reform winds were blowing.

In the next chapter, I focus on the teachers who embraced the DAP policy and attempted to put it into practice in their classrooms. There was variation among them in their initial views about the meaning of DAP, but all eventually saw important benefits for their students and for themselves. They share what they saw as the knowledge, the intention, and the skill required to put their belief in this policy into practice - often in the face of incompatibility between the demands of the policy with the demands of other district and state policies - one result of "the problem of meaning."

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Chapter Five

IMPLEMENTING THE DAP POLICY: WHERE TWO IS FIVE

The teachers who agreed to take part in the study were asked about all making our personal attempts to implement the policy in the classroom in the last chapter, when teachers were asked to reflect on their own beliefs about teaching and learning, what they considered to be the best way to teach. In spite of the fact that many teachers initially or eventually saw the policy as a way to address the issues and contradictions created by the DAP guidelines, the policy was generally not already in use by many districts and was not a part of the research. The "grass-roots" teachers who were asked to participate had described their philosophies about teaching and learning, and they felt they had been continually well matched to their own needs, and (or learning-centered, as some would call it) their students. They had chosen to make changes in their teaching and learning, who was expected to have held a child-centered philosophy, and they were expected to want this policy to be implemented in their classrooms. The new laws to take the DAP guidelines, think seriously about the requirements, then implement them in their own ways. Many of the teachers who were asked to participate in the study were also wanted the teachers to be reflective and work it out for themselves. However, based upon my own experience in the classroom and on my conversations with teachers and other Chadwick educators, it was evident that we had very little opportunity to be reflective. For those teachers who were considered part of the "grass-roots" of the policy, DAP changed very little, especially in terms of their philosophy about teaching and learning.

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Chapter Five

IMPLEMENTING THE DAP POLICY - WHAT DID IT TAKE?

The teachers who agreed to talk with me for this study and I were all making our personal attempts to implement the DAP policy. As I pointed out in the last chapter, when teachers were asked about the meaning of the policy, some viewed the policy as an opportunity to examine philosophy and beliefs about teaching and learning, while others said that it was about the best way to teach. In spite of differences in perspective, all said that they initially or eventually saw the policy as a positive step in spite of challenges and contradictions created whenever there is a district mandate.

The policy was generally described as an outgrowth of practices already in use by many district teachers and as having a foundation in research. The "grass-roots" teachers had been teaching for many years and described their philosophies about teaching and learning as evolving; they felt they had been continually and gradually becoming more child-centered (or learning-centered, as some wished to describe their teaching). They had chosen to make changes in their practice. Hazel Brown, who was reported to have held a child-centered philosophy all her educational career, desperately wanted this policy to be successful. Her wish was for the teachers to take the DAP guidelines, think seriously about them, and then implement them in their own ways. Many of the teachers who worked on the Early Childhood Task Forces also wanted the teachers to be reflective and work it out for themselves. However, based upon my own experience in the classroom and on my conversations with teachers and other Chadwick educators, it was evident that we had very little opportunity to be reflective. For those teachers who were considered part of the "grass-roots" of the policy, DAP changed very little, especially in terms of their philosophy about teaching and learning;

however, they worked very hard and put in many long hours in preparation to teach, and in documenting student learning, communicating with parents and attending district meetings. For many other teachers, however, the policy mandated significant and immediate changes. They had many new practices to learn in addition to preparation, documentation, and communication responsibilities. In either case, our jobs were intensified to such a degree that just keeping up with the day-to-day teaching was a challenge. Along with the educators who talked with me, I maintained a hope that the DAP policy would encourage and enable improved learning for all of our young students, but most of us also had much to learn ourselves. My own experiences and those of my colleagues led me to realize that, while the district wanted us to improve learning for our children, it declined to, or was unable to, provide those same opportunities for teachers' learning.

In this chapter, I present my own and the other teacher-participants' views about the demands on our teaching practice made by the policy. The DAP policy concerned instructional reform for all curricular areas. We were to teach the district-mandated curriculum, but we were also to change our practices toward more student engagement and personal involvement and away from passive textbook learning. We experienced changes in each subject area in varying ways depending on our previous opportunities and inclinations to learn new methods. Everyone, however, talked about the intensity and suddenness of the changes in mathematics and language arts instruction, so I have chosen to focus the in-depth discussions on those two areas.

I have organized this chapter into five sections. The first section provides an overview of general changes brought on by DAP. The next two sections focus on mathematics and language arts instruction respectively,

giving first an in-depth look at the contrasts between formerly required and new practices, and then hearing from the teachers and myself about what it took for us to put those practices into place. The fourth section presents constraints and contradictions to the policy which we found frustrated our efforts for implementation. Section five centers on what we felt most supported our learning to employ developmentally appropriate practices.

to be based upon the use of manipulatives rather than on a blackboard. During the summer before

GENERAL CHANGES BROUGHT ON BY DAP

Approximately fifteen years before the DAP policy mandate, each elementary school in the Chadwick district selected its own textbooks and decided its own curriculum - a practice which reflected the democratic philosophy of the man who was Superintendent at that time. As populations continued to increase in the communities served by Chadwick Schools, students were frequently moved from one school to another in order to accommodate the growth. Parents began to complain at Board of Education meetings that the variety of texts and approaches were detrimental to student achievement. Many felt students had a difficult time adjusting to the various texts and methods when they were reassigned from one school to another. Furthermore, there had been changes in what the Board of Education desired from the schools; they wanted a district-wide curriculum and more centralization of administrative power. Dr. Jordon, now superintendent in Chadwick, instituted a plan for a chain of administrative command which also included a recommendation to hire special administrators who could help create a district-wide curriculum. In the years just prior to DAP, the district had mandated textbooks for each subject and teachers were trained in, and expected to use, the lesson design and instructional methods outlined in EEEL. Those methods were described as direct instruction.

The DAP policy, however, mandated the removal of workbooks of any kind from kindergarten and first grade. As the policy moved up to second grade, there were various interpretations about whether workbooks could be used or not, but most schools did not allow workbooks to be used through second grade. The use of the "old" basal readers was discouraged in favor of using trade books (library books) and literature. Mathematics instruction was to be based upon the use of manipulatives rather than on a math text. During the summer before DAP started in first grade, one elementary principal removed all the basal readers and math textbooks for kindergarten, first, and second grades from the school. This was the most severe situation in the district and it occurred in a school long considered traditional. The principal, a former Beginndergarten teacher in her first year at that school, felt that if the texts were not removed, the teachers would continue to use them.

With the onset of the DAP policy, most teachers had to create their own materials for students to record responses to reading and had to develop their own plan for teaching the skills which had previously been part of the basal series. Rather than rely on the publishers' tests, teachers were required to become "kid watchers," a term popularized by Yetta Goodman (Goodman, Goodman & Hood, 1989). Kid watchers observe their students and provide instruction appropriate for the strengths and needs of the children. The district formed committees of volunteer teachers to create portfolio guidelines, to create an overview of "literacy levels" for teachers to use as guides, and to rewrite report cards for kindergarten, first, and second grades to reflect the new practices.

Writing, which had been taught using the grammar/language book, was now to reflect "process writing" such as that advocated by Donald Graves (1983) and Lucy Calkins (1983, 1986). Students were to select their own topics

for writing and skills would be taught using mini-lessons created by teachers when it seemed appropriate to do so. Students were to be encouraged to use "invented" spelling so that they could focus on meaning and not the conventional spelling of every word. Formalized spelling programs were not to be used, but teachers were free to create any other kind of informal spelling program they wished to use.

Mathematics texts and workbooks and skill practice sheets were replaced by teacher-created or found manipulatives and materials. Schools ordered pattern blocks, unifix cubes, base-ten blocks, geoboards, and other math materials, but most things for *Mathematics Their Way* (MTW) (Baratta-Lorton, 1975) or "Box-it and Bag-it" had to be assembled or made. No sequence of lessons or concepts were provided and there were no commercial tests.

Science and Social Studies textbooks were not to be used in favor of a more "hands-on" and integrated approach. Teachers were encouraged to create opportunities for students to experiment, explore, and problem solve in those areas. Thematic units were to be used as much as possible to integrate all areas of the curriculum.

In place of the workbooks and skill sheets and "seat work" (work which was assigned for students to do while teachers met with reading groups), students were to have access to centers and make choices about how they would spend their day. Teachers had to plan ways to have students move about the room and make their choices about what they would do so that the teacher could meet with small groups for individualized or small group instruction.

As I outlined in previous chapters, there were many opportunities for staff development provided by the district. Curriculum notebooks for each grade level were created and provided for every teacher. Inservice meetings were designed for language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, writing,

and teaching with themes. During 1988-89 and 1989-90, the district held six half-day meetings during the school day to be used for staff development and in most instances, those meetings centered on an aspect of DAP. In addition, teachers were contractually obligated to attend a total of six hours of after-school inservice. During the 1990-91 school year, as DAP moved up to second grade, the six half-days for staff development were eliminated from the school calendar. The Superintendent said that he had received many parent complaints about the amount of time teachers were away from their classrooms and the children were at home. The Chadwick Education Association agreed to eliminate the six half-days as part of negotiations. Elementary teachers protested loudly at the Education Association meeting for the contract ratification, but were outnumbered and overruled by the secondary teachers who saw no reason for the staff development days. Elementary teachers had also listed as high priority items for the new contract a discussion of elementary class size limits and district-provided time for parent-teacher conferences in the spring. The negotiating team for the Education Association said that they had little support from the total membership to pursue those topics and the Superintendent was not in favor of them; therefore, they concentrated on finance issues which they felt were important to everyone (Personal notes, Chadwick Education Association meeting, 3/28/90).

Hazel Brown and other administrators referred to the Kindergarten teachers and others, like my colleagues at Kennedy and the teachers at Hunter Woods, as the "grass roots" of the DAP policy. These were teachers who had moved away from the basals and texts or had never relied on them and who were already investigating the writing process and math manipulatives. For those teachers, however, changes in philosophy and practice evolved

gradually, were made by personal choice, and frequently occurred in opposition to existing district policy. Mandating such changes for all teachers, by contrast, virtually eliminated personal choice and gradual evolution in thinking. Instead, power struggles were frequently the result. While the teachers who talked with me eventually realized positive aspects of the policy in spite of their resentment about this policy's intrusion into their classrooms, many other teachers simply refused to be told what to do. The mandate created a power struggle which handicapped a sincere effort to create a policy which did have a foundation in practice.

IMPLEMENTING THE DAP CHANGES IN MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION

Mathematics - What Changed?

While district policy had previously mandated the use of the approved textbook, the DAP policy said that no math workbooks or textbooks were to be used in kindergarten, first, or second grades. This aspect of the policy was relaxed a bit for first and second grades, following the settlement of a grievance filed by one of the district's first grade teachers who contended that the removal of the math textbooks violated a teacher's right of academic freedom as protected in the contract between the Chadwick Board of Education and the Chadwick Education Association. After the DAP policy began in 1988, no workbooks were used in kindergarten and the use of math texts varied among the first and second grades, but in most instances, the math workbooks were simply not ordered for teachers. In some schools, teachers were told they could use the math texts and workbooks for one year, but that the following year they would have to use a strictly "hands-on" approach based upon the use of manipulatives..

In order for teachers to know what was expected of them in terms of mathematics instruction, the DAP curriculum notebooks created by the grade level Early Childhood Task Forces provided to each kindergarten and first grade teacher contained several pages devoted to math. A page on "math processes" outlined the kinds of opportunities children must have in order to progress "toward the goals of math literacy."

MATH PROCESSES

In order to promote math literacy, it is necessary to introduce, review, and relate mathematics to real life situations by the use of mental arithmetic, computation, problem solving, and with the use of calculators and computers to help lay the necessary conceptual foundations.

To progress towards the goals of math literacy, children must have opportunities to:

1. learn conceptualizations, rather than focus solely on rote learning.
2. use real objects in activities and experiences to enhance their mathematical concepts.
3. use a wide variety of manipulatives (real objects) for sorting, classifying, comparing, estimating, prediction, patterning, graphing, measuring, counting, adding and subtracting, parts and wholes, concept of numbers, conservation of number, concepts of quantity, shapes, mass and volume.
4. explore a given material prior to being asked to use it in a prescribed way.
5. be presented with the same mathematical concepts and skills on many occasions and in many different ways.
6. practice the same mathematical concepts and skills on many occasions and in many different ways.
7. incorporate mathematical tools into daily classroom routines (calendars, clocks, rulers, coins, scales, measuring cups, graphs, calculators, computers).
8. integrate mathematical concepts and skills throughout all areas of their curriculum; within social studies, science, language arts, as well as through pretend play, social, affective, aesthetic, physical, and construction activities.
9. use mental math and estimation daily in real life situations to solve problems.

(First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 55)

The only other math materials in the notebook were three pages of "Mathematics Curricular Outcomes," which included such statements as "Children should explore the properties of a given number (0 to 100)," "Children should create combinations of objects to equal a given number up to 9," and "Children should identify the parts and whole of objects" (pp. 56-57).

Teachers were also provided with the *NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Primary Grades, Serving 5- through 8-Year Olds* (Bredekamp, 1988). The following statements concerned "Appropriate Practice" for mathematics:

The goal of the math program is to enable children to use math through exploration, discovery, and solving meaningful problems. Math activities are integrated with other relevant projects, such as science and social studies. Math skills are acquired through spontaneous play, projects, and situations of daily living. Teachers use the teacher's edition of the math textbook as a guide to structure learning situations and to stimulate ideas about interesting math projects. Many, many manipulatives are provided and used. Interesting board and card, paper-and-pencil, and other kinds of games are used daily. Noncompetitive, impromptu oral "math stumper" and number games are played for practice. (p. 73)

The same Position Statement identified "Inappropriate Practice" as follows:

Math is taught as a separate subject at a scheduled time each day. A math textbook with accompanying workbooks, practice sheets, and board work is the focus of the math program. Teachers move sequentially through the lessons as outlined in the teacher's edition of the text. Seldom is time available for recommended "hands-on" activities. Only children who finish their math seatwork are permitted to use the few math manipulatives and games in the classroom. Timed tests on number facts are given and graded daily. Competition between children or groups of children (boys vs. girls, Row 1 vs. Row 2) is used to motivate children to learn math facts. (p. 73)

Curriculum notebooks for math for each grade level were being created by volunteer teachers on the Mathematics Task Force, but those were not completed until late 1990. Those notebooks would contain the list of math objectives (which aligned with the recommendations of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) and materials which might be used to instruct for each objective.

teaching **Mathematics Their Way and Creating Manipulatives** teaching

math **Math Their Way** (Baratta-Lorton, 1975) became the recommended program and schools were provided with funds to order the materials; however, almost all of the items purchased required a range of some to a great deal of assembly, lamination to protect and prolong their use, and a way to store and manage them. The "Regular Materials Kit" for MTW included 37 items, 29 of which required assembly. Some materials needed only to be cut apart and laminated, but others required quite extensive preparation.

"Mirrors" is one example of a material which required a moderate amount of assembly. The directions provided with the order form state,

order Eighteen 4" x 5" sheets of chrome mylar and eighteen 4" x 5" pieces of cardboard for backing. Teachers tape the chrome mylar to the cardboard with transparent tape to make a mirror. The set makes 6 "doubles" hinged together - see the second and third picture down on page 10 of *Math Their Way* - and 6 "singles" - see the top picture on page 10. (Center for Innovation in Education, 1992, p. 2)

When I asked when the materials had been brought about, I was told that the storage boxes arrived "cut and scored and ready for you to fold and tape with filament tape" (p. 3). In addition to the time to make the materials, teachers also had to learn about how to use the materials and how to organize the class for whole group and small group instruction. Having students move among math centers using a variety of materials was very different from having students sit at their desks doing the same work sheets.

The district paid the tuition for the MTW training I took during late fall of the year I taught first grade, but I had to go to classes four evenings from five to nine and two Saturdays from eight to four. I was not paid for my time to go to the classes. The sessions were held in a community twenty miles from my school and forty miles from my home, which meant that on MTW training weekdays, I would leave my home at 6:45 in the morning and return at 10:15 in the evening. During the last week of November, I had two evening MTW classes and all day that Saturday. With everything else I had to do for

teaching, I found it exhausting. The training was helpful, but I had to teach math starting in August and really could not wait until I had had the training before I began. I had used manipulatives before and was very familiar with MTW and had used the forerunner, *Workjobs* (Baratta-Lorton, 1972), when I previously taught kindergarten. Also, it was fortunate that the other first grade teachers at Kennedy had all been trained and they helped me with the particulars. I inherited a kit of basic materials from the first grade teacher who had just retired, but she had not assembled anything. Many of the participants in my study were also in this predicament of having to teach what they had not yet learned to do, and to create or assemble materials in order to have equipment to use.

Positive Responses to the Math Changes

When I asked teachers what changes in their mathematics teaching had been brought about by the DAP policy, all talked about many positive changes, especially for their students. Judy Jones, a second grade teacher at Hunter Woods who had taught many years in Chadwick, did not think that the DAP policy had required changes in her teaching philosophy, but what did change for her was her instructional approach with math. She had always used the math textbook and had recently been trained in MTW and was using many more manipulatives and involving her students in problem solving, which she thought she "probably should have been doing a lot more of a long time ago." While unsure about whether the district "should have been telling [her] to do that," she was glad that she had been "forced" to think about math instruction differently, because she said that she could see how the new approach was more of "a benefit to kids." She felt that the policy caused an

awareness, or "level of consciousness," which had not been there before (6/10/91, p. 2).

Like Judy, Theresa Hart found the math changes very beneficial to student learning. Theresa had taught in Catholic Schools for five years before coming to Chadwick. She felt her parochial students had been "hand-picked" and were "above average"; when she started teaching first grade at Harrison School, she felt that the students "were not getting it." She said it did not occur to her that "the curriculum could be wrong for them," but she needed to find a better way to teach these lower achieving kids. She heard about *Math Their Way* and found a copy in a book store, but because the manual was so difficult to understand, she put it away. During the year before the onset of the DAP policy, the district agreed to pay her tuition for MTW, but she had to travel with two other teachers in the summer to a town sixty miles from home. She found that she was not disappointed about the assistance MTW provided:

And it was like - yes, yes - this makes sense and so I was feeling relieved about finding an end to my frustration about teaching math. And you know, from that point on, I would implement as much as I felt comfortable with, but I always had an interest that way and would always latch on to anything I could that would support that underlying philosophy. (7/15/91c, p. 4)

Francine Brown, one of the first year teachers, saw the changes as positive because her own teaching differed from what she had experienced as a student. When she was a graduate student at Bank Street College, she was introduced to learning mathematics in a way which she contrasted to her own schooling:

I found that I was really interested and I said, "Why couldn't school have been like this for me?" and I got really angry. It's not fair that I had to learn math in such a boring way that I hated it and I never understood what I was doing. So - for me - just changing things because it was never exciting for me. I want to get everyone excited and get them to want to know things and connect things. (4/25/91, p. 11)

These teachers are but a few of the many who felt the changes in mathematics instruction were positive. They enjoyed having more tools with which to help students who had not been successful using only the textbook and observed that many students had a better understanding of the mathematical concepts when they were more engaged in the learning.

The Time it All Takes - Our Own Time

We started out doing the opening and calendar activities. The calendar was one of the things I had forgotten to do yesterday. It was so busy. So we did do that, but I still didn't remember to do all of it. I didn't graph the weather and I didn't put the numbers at the top of the chart where it says 'yesterday, today, tomorrow.' It all seems pretty hectic trying to get all the calendar stuff figured out. I haven't started doing the odd and even cubes yet. I'll wait until September to do that. Tomorrow I'll have to get the September calendar ready since the next day is the first (8/31/89, p. 1). Probably the most intense thing for me is Math Their Way. I'm trying to get all the routines down and learning about it myself. I'm taking the manual home at night and reading it chapter by chapter so that I can be prepared for the next day (9/7/89, p. 2). Probably for me, the thing I feel the least secure about is the math. I'm reading the manual and trying to make sense out of the notes I xeroxed from Ann's notebook when she attended the workshops. I'm still not getting it. There isn't enough information in there to help me figure out exactly what to do - it's so general. I had to go into the other classrooms to see how they set up their tubs. (Personal journal, 9/8/89, p. 4)

The work required to implement the changes in mathematics was monumental - especially for those of us who had not already begun the transition away from the text books. If we had not already done so, teachers were asked to attend *Math Their Way* training as well as such other supplemental training as "*Box-it, Bag-it*" and to create the required materials. The calendar, which I was describing above, was an integral part of MTW and had many different lessons associated with it each day. It took me quite a while to get comfortable enough to do the calendar easily and then to begin to extend concepts on my own. The calendar was just one of many different components of MTW which took a great deal of time to learn in addition to

creating all of the materials and getting them organized for student use. Although we appreciated the positive changes our instruction brought for the children, we all talked about personal hardships the policy created for us. The ease of planning for instruction and confidence in our judgment about student progress when students used a textbook was replaced by work overload and insecurity about assessing achievement. All the teachers mentioned the tremendous amounts of time it took to learn *Math Their Way* and to create or gather the math materials they needed. Judy Jones was one of many who resented having to put in so much of her own time:

I think it's absolutely ludicrous - this business of *Math Their Way*. The time it takes to assemble all that stuff. You know, I've assembled things and I've got a wonderful parent...who's helped assemble a lot of stuff for me. I don't think that it's fair to expect me to do all that. It's ridiculous. It's crazy. I can't even imagine it. You know, as abruptly as they did take our math books away and our spelling books and then expect us to - really - I've been to *Math Their Way* and I'm taking "Box-It and Bag-It" this summer, but there again - it's all on my own time. It's just overwhelming - it's too much. They keep adding and adding to our curriculum. (6/10/91, p. 8)

Ann Taylor had taken the MTW course, but, like Theresa, found the manual "hard to follow" so she suggested that a teacher needs to "take a summer and read through the whole thing and then write in [the manual] - 'now I'd like to do this and then I'd like to do that.'" She said that a few Harrison teachers from various grade levels got together over several days the previous summer on her back porch and "wrote down an overview curriculum at our grade level. All of us trying to help each other." Ann felt that the need to work during the summer was an indication that the district did not truly support the efforts she and her colleagues made to implement the policy:

And that's another thing. Why, Kilo, should it be expected from our school district that this be done during the summer on our own time? Why can't it be done sometime on school time? And also, when you do it during the summer...you can't reevaluate after you've been through a month of it. You can't say - "Well, my kids are not doing that well in

this area. What have you been doing that could help me?" There's no time to do that and we're just in a royal rat race by then. (7/20/92, p. 14)

Connie North was a first year teacher at Kennedy who realized that she would have to put in a lot of time, but she also saw many teachers with years of experience and who "knew what they were doing" putting in long hours after school. She said,

It was actually pretty depressing to me that it wasn't just me that was there late every night. When I saw you and Terry working hour after hour, I thought - these people have been doing this for a long time, why are they still here? (7/15/91b, p. 6)

She said the time she had to devote to learning everything was the most difficult aspect of her teaching. What really concerned her, though, was that work for assessment would be much easier for her than for experienced teachers working late. She said that she "kept hearing that the school district is going to offer us more time...but they aren't offering us anything - it's out of our hides as I see it." She didn't mind working so hard, but she felt the district should provide "some relief and some recognition" for the teachers (p. 7).

Math assessments also took a lot of time. MTW includes observation guides to be used as the students worked, but often teachers were so busy during the day when we taught math and did not integrate math into every interacting with the students as they worked in groups that the recording was difficult to manage. Individual assessments were just about impossible to do for all the students in a timely fashion. MTW was used at Kennedy, beginning with kindergarten, and the second grade teachers felt that the routines were subtraction problems on cut-out figures of bears to go along with them. Then, as one teacher said, "I work two hours a day and I'm all over again" (3/18/91, p. 3). Some teachers chose not to use all the time; many developed or found practices that were duplicated for students. Even though these practices are stated

we would mark. Our conversation led us to finding time for the math assessments:

We are having difficulty getting used to all the different math materials and because of this and instructing to the whole group most of the time, it's hard to do the assessments of individual students. We tossed around ideas for how to go about doing that. Jennifer said that we could use aide time for assessments. The counter to that, as Sarah explained, is that it's fine for the aide to do it and tell you what the students know, but that's a very different kind of information from what you get if you are doing the assessment yourself. (Personal journal, 10/16/90, p. 2)

We brainstormed other ideas during that meeting, but it was clear to all of us that while we appreciated the opportunities to see our students in terms of their strengths and what they could do with the open-ended activities, our work for assessment would be much easier if we could just give a paper and pencil test.

"Appropriate" Versus "Inappropriate" Math Practices

Teachers who took the Central Office administrators at their word and tried to gradually move toward DAP expressed uneasiness about how they taught math when their practices seemed in conflict with the list of "inappropriate practices" from NAEYC. Many of us did have separate times during the day when we taught math and did not integrate math into every other content area. (Both were listed as "inappropriate practices.") Some teachers "drove themselves crazy" trying to integrate all subjects, and their efforts frequently resulted in such things as creating addition and subtraction problems on cut-out figures of bears to go along with their "bear" theme. Then, as one teacher said, "a week or two later, they're going to do it all over again" (3/18/91, p. 3). Some teachers chose not to use manipulatives "all the time"; many developed or found practice problem pages which they duplicated for students. Even though these practices are listed as

"inappropriate" only if used to excess, the teachers felt that some administrators would frown upon them if they knew about them. The listing of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" practices created a polemic with teachers feeling the need to defend themselves for doing what they felt was important for the learning of their students and for their own sanity in maintaining order in the classroom.

While most participants liked the active involvement of the students in learning math, not everyone was sure that this way of teaching would result in higher achievement or even better understanding of math concepts. In their efforts to supplement the MTW approach, some expressed discomfort about using what they saw as necessary but perhaps anti-DAP activities. One first grade teacher said, "I know this wouldn't be accepted by the powers that be up there. We do the hands-on stuff, but we also do the worksheets and flashcards." One of her colleagues had shared her concern that "my kids have been doing all the stuff with their hands, but they can't add and subtract."

She said, "Kids can benefit from both" (3/18/91, p. 4). Later in our conversation, she added,

I know Hazel mentioned at one of our meetings we should focus this on the process and not on the product, but I think we need the process and the product. You can't have one without the other. What good does it do if the kid can manipulate all the unifix cubes? What is he going to do when he goes to the bank - carry 4,000 unifix cubes with him? At some point, he had to know that 4 plus 3 is seven and if it's a worksheet, flashcards, or whatever it is - there has to be both sides - you have to have the process and the product. (p. 8)

Ann Taylor had frequently taught first and second combined classes. She had been at Hunter Woods for about fifteen years and was hired there when Hazel Brown was the principal. She was currently teaching first grade at Harrison School, where she had transferred three years earlier. She felt that she was "developmental through and through," having always believed in "teaching to the individual child and letting the child go at their [sic] own

pace" (6/19/91, p. 2). She thought there were some positive aspects of using the math textbook as one choice, which the DAP policy denied to her. She said,

"I've taught a long time, but when you try to teach everything with manipulatives and then you add some other things, and especially if I was teaching two levels, I really think it would be difficult. And I never really separated first from second - I just let everybody go at their own pace. But I think now, with the stipulations and also the fact that there isn't a basic text - and as I said, I've always used manipulatives - but you need something to kind of direct you. (p. 3)

Ann also saw a math textbook as providing some organization so that "I've got those skills in some sort of an order," and as providing some commercial materials to "run off occasionally," especially to send home to parents to enable them to see what their children were doing. She felt the district's policy was to "throw away all the good things that were in those math books and then let the teachers scrounge for it" (7/20/92, p. 7).

Joan Moore, a second grade teacher, liked the changes the DAP policy brought for math because when she had taught third grade she had felt sorry for children who could not memorize "and I wasn't as familiar with a lot of the different methods that we have - so I was happy to learn them to help those kinds of kids" (6/18/91, p. 3). However, she agreed with Ann that, for her, math instruction could not involve "all hands-on," that she hasn't "gotten that far with it":

"That's a problem - when you only have two hands and you have all these children at different levels - 5 kids who need a lot of help with their addition facts, 5 more who need help with subtraction and some that already know multiplication facts. And I generally teach as a whole group and we divide off later, but - I do the best I can with it - but I don't have them totally hands-on all the time. I'm just not able to be there - they do need some supervision. Sometimes it seems that you don't even have the few minutes it takes to say - 'okay, go over in that corner, get that out and do that' - it just doesn't always happen. (6/18/91, p. 3)

Ann expressed a view of many that the DAP policy mandate undermined trust in teacher judgment. "I feel that there ought to be the trust that if I say - I

want this - I ought to be able to make that decision. It's not like I just got out of college and I don't have anything to base my opinions on" (7/20/92, p. 12). She said that she totally agreed with the developmental philosophy about "taking them from wherever they are and moving them ahead at their own pace," but the district should not "be taking resources away." If anything, they "ought to be giving teachers every possible thing they can do to help this child move ahead" (p. 15).

Are We Meeting the Needs of the Students?

Teachers shared many concerns about what they and other teachers should expect in terms of student progress and how they should decide if they were providing the right kinds of instruction and materials for their students. When the text books and workbooks were used, teachers could feel confident that students were progressing by the accuracy of their answers on the worksheets and unit texts. However, with the open-ended activities involved with MTW and the other approaches, students were encouraged to come at their problem solving in personal ways and teachers had to determine progress by methods other than looking for accurate answers. Another concern was whether teachers in upper grades would understand what the lower elementary teachers were trying to do. Joan Moore, for example, expressed concern about students learning their math facts. She said that during the past year, which was her first year of working with the guidelines of DAP, she hadn't "pushed as hard on math facts" and worried that the third grade teachers might not understand. She had previously taught third grade and understood the expectations she had had about what the students would know when they came into her classroom. She said, "I don't like to look at it as lowering our standards, but when will

there be a time when we say to the students - you have to know the subtraction facts now?" (6/18/91, p. 2).

First year teachers, like Debbie Lake, might be expected to feel uneasy, but her concerns were also expressed by teachers who had been teaching twenty years. Debbie said that she found that "when you're doing this approach, you wonder if you are meeting the needs of all your children." She had what she described as a "broad spectrum of kids" in her class and she found "the most difficult" was "to provide experiences for them - especially in math - that would challenge them." She had done her student teaching with a highly respected fourth grade teacher in Chadwick - one who totally embraced hands-on math. Debbie knew that she had learned a lot during her student teaching and felt "this approach" was the best way, but remained insecure. "I guess I still - now - I'm still looking to find - how can I do it?" (7/15/91a, p. 4).

Debbie and her colleague in second grade, another first year teacher, would work after school until five or so, go home and then come back to school for a few hours after dinner. They both lived very near the school which helped. It also helped that Debbie was single and lived at home with her parents, and her colleague had children who were high schoolers and college-age rather than young children. Debbie said their long hours may have been due to their "insecurities or feeling that we weren't doing enough," or that they had "difficulties which meant [they] needed to work harder" (p. 6). She also blamed the DAP policy for their hard work:

But, you know, with this program, there is so much preparation - the math manipulatives or things that go along with the math program or whatever...we found that very time consuming and just - having been so tired - it can really get frustrating - we would get the point were - I cannot think anymore. We knew we were creative people, but sometimes it felt like we just couldn't get anything. Do you know what I mean? But, like I said, toward the second part of the year, we got a little more relaxed and things were going a lot better. (p. 6)

Part of the anxiety for them was that there was "not a sequence that you can see." Debbie and her colleague wondered "are they getting what they need? How do you know? How do you feel secure with what you're doing?" (p. 6). Debbie knew that she wasn't the only one to express those feelings. Other teachers, "excellent teachers doing a great job," according to Debbie, also worried. She said, "When you hear them saying that, too, it makes you think - wow! - if they feel that way, then I guess it's okay that I feel that way" (p. 7).

Some parents asked the Chadwick School Board to provide some sort of proof that their children were achieving well in the lower elementary grades and not wait until the state test to determine that there were problems. Perhaps their concern about documentation of their children's progress came from having to trust the teacher's judgment. They wondered if teachers had adequate training and experience to make the kinds of decisions for each child which the policy seemed to require. As Debbie Lake said,

I think it's hard and a lot of what I've heard from parents is that they feel you're letting random people decide what's correct and what's not. What comes along with this is - what happens when you do have a bad teacher - one who doesn't know? Or a new teacher - and I'll be the first to admit there probably were things that I maybe did not provide for these kids that they needed just because they didn't have something like those books to go along with and say - okay - they have finished with this one - they've got that. (7/15/91a, p. 7)

Carol Windsor felt that many teachers were feeling anxiety because teachers feel that they are going to be accountable to the parents and the principal and unless they're experienced - and sometimes you'd think the more experienced ones would have the least trouble with that somehow, but it doesn't seem that way." (7/16/91, p. 9)

She continued by saying that experience may, in fact, be part of the problem because "they feel that they've been successful" and a change in their teaching could result in less success for the students. Ann Taylor's description of having to gain the trust of the parents when she transferred from one school to another in this district provides one example. She had

taught many years at Hunter Woods and had more parents requesting to have their children in her classroom than the principal could accommodate. When she transferred to Harrison, which was considered a traditional school rather than child-centered, she had to build parents' trust again. She said, "I really feel that it's taken me a long time to regain what I lost." She said that parents at Harrison "didn't understand developmental" in the ways parents had at Hunter Woods. For Ann teaching was "not the same," but it wasn't that she was teaching "differently" than she had previously. It was not that she had to change her ideas about teaching, but that she had to convince parents who didn't know her and were accustomed to "paper and pencil proof" of what their children could do (7/20/92, p. 11).

For me and for most of the teachers who talked with me for this study, the changes in mathematics instruction brought much more work in terms of having to learn the procedures, create and organize materials, and to manage the students as they worked with manipulatives as a whole class or in small groups. For many, the confidence they felt using the sequence of concepts, student practice materials, and tests provided by the publisher of formerly used textbooks and workbooks was replaced with uneasiness about their own abilities to choose the right materials, sequence activities, and make judgments about students' achievement. Many felt that the district was asking them to be math experts and was holding them responsible for student achievement without adequate training and without providing materials which were fully assembled and ready to use. Some felt that the policy severely limited their ability to select appropriate materials for their students.

In spite of those difficulties, all of the teachers who talked with me expressed their support for the student engagement which resulted from the math instruction required by the DAP policy. Carol Windsor, a media specialist who was an advocate for the policy, felt that teachers found it easier to support the new mathematics practices than those changes I share next - language arts:

Another interesting issue to me is that math is so much easier to change than anything to do with literacy. It's so much easier to get hold of and grasp and people can understand that kids need manipulatives. ...But it's so much more nebulous when you're dealing with language arts...Somehow teaching kids to read is something very, very - I don't know - with parents and everybody, it's this real basic thing that you're not supposed to mess around with - you're really supposed to do this right. (7/16/91, p. 10)

IMPLEMENTING DAP CHANGES IN LANGUAGE ARTS INSTRUCTION

Language Arts - What Changed?

The DAP policy mandated that emphasis was to be taken away from the basal reading series in favor of using literature found in classroom and school libraries, tradebooks, and anthologies. Lists of recommended books were provided in the grade level curriculum guides created by the kindergarten and first grade Early Childhood Task Forces. The First Grade Curriculum Guide (1989) also contained a forty-three page section on "The Library Corner" (obviously reprinted from other materials, but with no credit given). The Library Corner was described in the following way:

Although books are the foundation of the library corner, they are not its only component. As envisioned in the *Creative Curriculum*, the library corner also includes a writing center (complete with writing implements, a typewriter, and even a personal computer) and a listening center with tapes, flannel boards, and puppetry. All these media, along with storytelling by teachers and children, can be used by teachers to promote literacy skills (reading, writing, and communication). At the same time, the library corner can be used to facilitate children's progress in other areas of growth and development. (p. 281)

For the most part, the selection of books for reading was left up to individual schools. Teachers and learning specialists met to decide on which books to order from a variety of catalogues and publishers' warehouses. There were some restrictions about book selection imposed by the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator during the 1990-91 school year when she said that only "hard cover" books could be purchased. She had put together a committee of volunteer kindergarten, first-, and second-grade teachers to review the latest "whole language" basals from various publishing companies; schools were to select books from the recommended companies or purchase hard cover literature anthologies from any source. We were told that we could not use the money to purchase multiple copies of paper-back books, collections of paper-back books by one author, or any trade books if they were not hard bound.

Kennedy teachers were among those who protested this mandate. We had been gathering class-sized collections of paper-back books for some time previous to the DAP policy and wanted to use the funds to add other titles. The first grade teachers, in particular, wanted more Wright Group books, which are paper-backs, in addition to expanding sets of books written by particular authors for "author studies." Schools where teachers protested the hard-back book mandate were eventually allowed to continue to select paper-back books.

In place of following the teacher's manual for the basal series, which have a sequence of stories for each grade level with accompanying information about how to teach the skills necessary for those stories, teachers were to use a "whole language" approach described in the First Grade Curriculum Guide (1989), in which there are seventeen pages labeled as "Cognition - Whole Language." The section on "Cognition" begins with the following definition: "The ultimate goal of the cognition component is for

children to acquire, adapt and apply knowledge as they construct new or expanded concepts" (p. 37). This definition is followed by a page of "Guidelines for Promoting Children's Cognitive Development" which includes statements like the following: "5. encourage children to attempt multiple approaches to an individual task." "8. emphasize the process of children's thinking, rather than focus solely on the products of their thinking" (p. 38). "Whole Language" is defined as follows:

Language development is a natural process that occurs when children are immersed in a literate environment. Whole Language programs are based on the belief that children learn to write and read in the same natural way they learned to speak. Central to Whole Language is the belief that learning should go from whole to part. In a whole language classroom, children are engaged in meaningful holistic experiences which enable them to be listeners, speakers, writers, reading, thinkers and doers. (p. 39)

The basic tenets of "whole language" listed in the First Grade Curriculum Guide are "Children are empowered as language users"; "Oral language assumes greater prominence"; "Reading is considered a thinking process"; "The use of whole text is emphasized"; "Classic literature experiences a revival"; "Writing is taught as a process"; "Skills are taught within the context of reading and writing"; "Connections between reading and writing are fostered"; "Curriculum becomes integrated"; and "The teacher's role is of great importance" (p. 39-40). The teacher's role is explained as follows:

Teachers actively model literate behavior, interact with students and organize classroom environments that invite students to use oral and written language. The key ingredient in a whole language classroom is the teacher who is fully aware of the course of child development, the skills of both reading and writing, children's literature, content fields, and models of integrating the curriculum. (p. 40)

This view is very different from the direct instruction view of the teacher's role. One of the most difficult aspects of the changes brought on by DAP for many teachers was this particular change. Rather than having "teacher-directed classrooms using sequenced and structured materials"

(Instructional Skills Training Manual, 5/1983, p. 4), teachers were to "organize classroom environments that invite students" to use language.

The district's goals for the language component were "for children to develop the ability to share their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and perceptions with others as well as to accurately interpret the communications they receive" (p. 42). In order for teachers to provide opportunities for student to progress toward those goals, the following list was provided:

Children must have opportunities to:

1. be read to daily.
2. express themselves in writing on a daily basis.
3. experience many examples of oral and written language and to interact with them in a variety of ways.
4. develop the connection between print and oral language and attach meaning to it.
5. learn how to attend to communications directed toward them.
6. increase their oral vocabulary and auditory comprehension skills.
7. increase their ability to interpret and communicate nonverbal messages accurately.
8. experiment with language sounds, rhythm, volume, pitch, and words.
9. develop memory skills related to oral and written language (fingerplays, songs, retelling a story sequence).
10. expand their ability to use words to represent feelings, knowledge, events, ideas, imaginings, and perceptions.
11. extend their range of expressive language strategies.
12. experiment with the functions and forms of written language.

(p. 42)

This list is followed by three pages of "Language Curriculum Outcomes" for "Listening," "Speaking," "Writing," and "Reading." Teachers were advised to look for "detailed outcomes" which would be found "in the K-2 Reading Curriculum Guide" (p. 44). During the year I taught first grade, the district learning specialists created, and then provided us with, a three page "Correlation of the *Guidelines for Reading* with the First Grade Curriculum Guide." This correlation matched the ten goals listed for reading with the page numbers in the *Guidelines for Reading* so that we could see how the curriculum which was already in place was aligned with the DAP goals. It was

expected that teachers could use those curricular goals and guidelines as a basis for designing instruction for language arts.

Previously in Chadwick, elementary teachers followed the guidelines from EEEI as a basis for appropriate instruction. In addition, the tradition of providing reading instruction to groups of students according to ability meant that teachers planned "seat work" so that students not occupied in their reading group meeting with the teacher had something to do. "Seat work" activities generally included workbook pages, photocopied practice sheets and copying words or sentences from the chalkboard. Those practices were to be discontinued with the onset of the DAP policy at each grade level. In order to eliminate or reduce confusion about instruction, several sections of the First Grade Curriculum Guide (1989) highlighted differences between practices which were and were not "developmentally appropriate." For example, the page titled "What makes language very easy or very hard to learn?" provides such contrasts as "It's easy when it's real and natural"; and "It's hard when it's artificial"; "It's easy which it's whole"; and "It's hard when it's broken into bits and pieces" (p. 41). "Whole language classrooms" are contrasted with

"Conventional classrooms" (p. 45):

expand their ability to communicate orally and through reading and writing. Teachers provide generous amounts of time and a variety of interesting activities for children to develop language: writing, spelling, and reading ability, such as looking through, reading, or being read high quality children's literature and nonfiction for pleasure and information; drawing, dictating, and writing about their activities or fantasies; planning and implementing projects that involve research at suitable levels of difficulty; creating teacher-made or child-written lists of steps to follow to accomplish a project; discussing what was read; preparing a weekly class newspaper; interviewing various people to obtain information for projects; making books of various books (table books, what if books, books about pets); listening to recordings or viewing high quality films of children's books; being read at least one high quality book or part of a book each day by adults or other children; using the school library and the library area of the classroom regularly. Some children read aloud daily to the teacher, another child, or a small group of children, while others do so weekly. Subskills such as learning letters, phonics, and word recognition are taught as needed to individual children and small groups through

GUIDELINES FOR INDIRECT AND DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN WHOLE LANGUAGE AND CONVENTIONAL CLASSROOMS

WHOLE LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

- Emphasis on indirect instruction
- Child's zone of proximal development; child centered.
- Dialogue and teacher scaffolding.
- Informal stance.
- Language whole, used in context.
- Intact literacy events; learning by doing.
- Child's own writing used.
- Authentic oral language.
- Meaning/transactional interactive discourse.
- Peer collaboration stressed.

CONVENTIONAL CLASSROOMS

- Emphasis on direct instruction.
- Scope and sequence; basal readers.
- Teacher script dominated.
- Formal stance.
- Language fragmented, used out of context.
- Isolated skills teaching; rules.
- Worksheet, workbook dominated; copy writing.
- Preformulated, limited oral language.
- Text bound/correctness driven.
- Independent work stressed.

The "NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Primary Grades, Serving 5- Through 8-Year Olds" (Bredekamp, 1988), provided with the first grade curriculum materials, lists the following as "Appropriate practice" for language and literacy:

The goals of the language and literacy program are for children to expand their ability to communicate orally and through reading and writing, and to enjoy these activities. Technical skills or subskills are taught as needed to accomplish the larger goals, not as the goal itself. Teachers provide generous amounts of time and a variety of interesting activities for children to develop language, writing, spelling, and reading ability, such as: looking through, reading, or being read high quality children's literature and nonfiction for pleasure and information; drawing, dictating, and writing about their activities or fantasies; planning and implementing projects that involve research at suitable levels of difficulty; creating teacher-made or child-written lists of steps to follow to accomplish a project; discussing what was read; preparing a weekly class newspaper; interviewing various people to obtain information for projects; making books of various kinds (riddle books, *what if* books, books about pets); listening to recordings or viewing high quality films of children's books; being read at least one high quality book or part of a book each day by adults or older children; using the school library and the library area of the classroom regularly. Some children read aloud daily to the teacher, another child, or a small group of children, while others do so weekly. Subskills such as learning letters, phonics, and word recognition are taught as needed to individual children and small groups through

enjoyable games and activities. Teachers use the teacher's edition of the basal reader series as a guide to plan projects and hands-on activities relevant to what is read and to structure learning situations. Teachers accept children's invented spelling with minimal reliance on teacher-prescribed spelling lists. Teachers also teach literacy as the need arises when working on science, social studies, and other content areas. (p. 72)

"Inappropriate Practice" was identified as follows:

The goal of the reading program is for each child to pass the standardized tests given throughout the year at or near grade level. Reading is taught as the acquisition of skills and subskills. Teachers teach reading only as a discrete subject. When teaching other subjects, they do not feel they are teaching reading. A sign of excellent teaching is considered to be silence in the classroom and so conversation is allowed infrequently during select times. Language, writing, and spelling instruction are focused on workbooks. Writing is taught as grammar and penmanship. The focus of the reading program is the basal reader, used only in reading groups, and accompanying workbooks and worksheets. The teacher's role is to prepare and implement the reading lesson in the teacher's guidebook for each group each day and to see that other children have enough seatwork to keep them busy throughout the reading group time. Phonics instruction stresses learning rules rather than developing understanding of systematic relationships between letters and sounds. Children are required to complete worksheets or to complete the basal reader although they are capable of reading at a higher level. Everyone knows which children are in the slowest reading group. Children's writing efforts are rejected if correct spelling and standard English are not used. (p. 72)

The Curriculum Guide also included samples of several first grade teachers' daily schedules so that teachers could see what the day might be like without the former period of time devoted to reading groups and seatwork. Diagrams of room arrangements were provided to show how centers could be established and to show how to facilitate a "move from individual ownership of desks to learning areas" (p. 13). The articles "What do we know now about ability grouping?" by Bill Harp (reprinted from February, 1989, *The Reading Teacher*); and "What do we put in the place of ability grouping?" by Bill Harp (reprinted from March, 1989, *The Reading Teacher*) were included to provide support for the move away from the practice of grouping students by ability.

The First Grade Curriculum guide did not provide additional information about the writing process (except for the writing sections of the "Library Corner") nor about what instruction might replace the formerly used spelling texts or language/grammar texts, but it was "understood" that teachers were to involve the students in process writing and were to develop some sort of informal spelling program.

In place of the basal reading sequence of books - reading readiness, preprimer, primer, first reader, second reader, etc. teachers were provided with a sequence of "Literacy levels" identified as "Pre-print literacy," "Emergent literacy," "Early literacy," and "Independent literacy." Each of these categories was followed by a list of behaviors a teacher would expect to see if a student was functioning within that level (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 46). Using the basal sequence, teachers could ascertain student achievement by his or her progress through the books identified by grade levels. For example, it was considered good progress for a student in first grade to complete the preprimers, the primer, and the first reader. The DAP policy suggested that these sequenced books should not be used, but that student achievement should be noted as increased proficiency in "strategies" for recognizing unfamiliar words and the other behaviors outlined for each "literacy level."

The DAP policy mandated the removal of reading workbooks and a reduced emphasis on skill sheets. In place of the workbooks and worksheets provided with the basal reading series, the "Whole Language" section of the First Grade Curriculum Guide suggested specific activities teachers should provide for students at each of four "Phases" of the "Whole language approach." Phase I was identified as the "get acquainted with literature period" during which teachers are to "instill an 'I can do it' attitude in the

students." Phase II provides for "connecting printed word to meaning" during which teachers "introduce strategies for first attempting reading - using clues." Phase III is to "introduce thinking," for which teachers provide "reader strategies, skills, comprehension strategies, purposes for reading." Phase IV concerns "refinement of writing, reading," during which time students "formally apply skills to writing" (p. 47). Activities for each phase were listed under headings of "printed," "written," and "oral" (pp. 48-51).

Articles provided as resources for the instruction of language arts were "Authorship: A key facet of Whole Language," by Linda Lamme (reprinted from *The Reading Teacher*, May, 1989) and "Leading Primary Education Toward Excellence - Beyond Worksheets and Drill" by Constance Kamii (reprinted from *Young Children*, September, 1985).

In place of the basal series "end of level" and "end of book tests," teachers were expected to make their own judgments about student progress based on observations and interactions with students and samples of student work. To assist teachers with this, the First Grade Curriculum Guide included a section on "Student Assessment." Five pages of the section were blank except for the headings "Student Assessment," "Literature log," "Reading is...," "Brainstorming is...," and "Predicting is..." (pp. 144-148). No explanation for these pages was provided, but I assumed they were to be used as models for record keeping by the teacher and/or the student. There were seven pages devoted to Elizabeth Sulzby's (1985) "Classification Scheme for Children's Emergent Reading of Favorite Storybooks," three pages of checklists for observing students as they read and write, two forms for recording a student's oral reading and two identical forms which had been already filled out, and one page titled "The Orthographic System," which provided directions for nine tasks to be given to a child while a book was read to him or her. While

not identified as such, the tasks were identical to many of the ones included with Marie Clay's "Concepts about Print" test (Clay, 1985). The section also included a "Writing Assessment" which was attributed to Marie Clay. The technique for this assessment required taking three samples of a child's stories on consecutive days for three successive weeks and rating them for language level, message quality, and directional features. Sequences were provided for each level, with forms to be used for recording findings. There was also a "Checklist for Developmental Stages in Early Writing" (p. 179) with a note that it was adapted from J. Richard Gentry (1982). No in-depth explanations of procedures or techniques were provided with the assessment materials. As district committees of teachers developing guidelines for Portfolios and report cards completed their work, they would share via school representatives what teachers should include for those recording devices; however, no training in classroom literacy assessment was provided even to members of those committees.

The language arts instruction which based on the tenets of "whole language" was very different from language arts instruction which was based on following the scope and sequence of a basal reading series. Although publishers often reported that their newer editions reflected the most recent reading research, in general, workbook pages and skills sheets provided with the basal series required students to recall specific information from the stories read, fill in blanks in sentences with vocabulary words, or practice a phonetic rule introduced in a lesson. The curriculum materials provided with the grade level notebooks delineated general practices, but with special attention given to the necessity for teachers to allow children to "reach their own conclusions," "to construct their own meanings" from print, and to be actively engaged in their own learning. The general practices and guidelines

were meant to acknowledge that teachers would interpret them in ways which seemed appropriate for their own classrooms and would also "reach their own conclusions," "construct their own meanings," and be actively engaged in their own learning. The administrators in the district believed they were empowering the teachers to be professional, to move away from reliance on the predetermined knowledge found in the texts toward their own judgment based on knowledge of "child development, the skills of both reading and writing, children's literature, content field, and models of integrating the curriculum" (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 40).

Carolyn Parker, a Hunter Woods first grade teacher, provided her view of what the DAP policy changed:

It's kind of going back to what it was when I started thirteen years ago. It's definitely changed in the meantime. We went from all multi-aged classes - all combination grades - everybody in favor of that and seeing the benefits for that, to the curriculum becoming very departmentalized and we had all straight grades because the combination of grades was seen as a hindrance. We went from being very open, multi-basal, using all kinds of materials to picking one and sticking with that in your room, the pendulum kind of swings back and forth in what I've seen. Although, my philosophy - the philosophy has been there - underlying it all along. The methods that we've been delivering have kind of swung back and forth. (3/26/91, p. 3)

Positive Responses to the Changes in Language Arts

As they had done for mathematics, teachers shared with me many positive reactions to the changes in language arts brought about by the DAP policy. For some teachers the policy allowed them to return more comfortably to practices they were once discouraged to do. These teachers had been unhappy with the textbook focus but felt they had no choice but to use the books. Other teachers had never taught without the basal, but found that they had learned more about their students and enjoyed more professional freedom when they took steps away from the basal approach. One of these teachers

described her first year of not using text books as "real teaching and not paper shuffling like it was before" (6/11/91, p. 1). She said that she realized it was the "textbook that set those arbitrary standards and imposed them on the children"; whereas, now you "can catch that spark of creativity" in children (p. 2). Other teachers felt that they had always had the freedom to select from a variety of available materials in their schools, but they enjoyed the district's move away from such practices as ability grouping and having students fill out many pages of "seat work."

I asked Margaret White, a first grade teacher at Hunter Woods, to explain what she viewed as the difference between what we have been encouraged to do with DAP and what we did before in language arts. She said,

Well, I think it was pretty much if you fell above or below the check list, you passed, or didn't pass, the book test. You asked, 'What reading book are they in?' Then you asked, 'What's the next book?' "We'll just learn the next book then." The answers were more cut and dry and I don't know if any more learning went on. But this is more on-going. It's not like we stop. We read to be a reader, not just learning to read. (4/16/91, p. 4)

Margaret taught at Hunter Woods, the school in which a multi-basal approach had been in place since the school started. Teachers at Hunter Woods felt the DAP policy didn't change their own language arts instruction much, but were glad to see the district as a whole moving away from ability grouping. For example, Carolyn Parker said,

Self-selecting materials and those things has been here, but before, when we used trade books, we were still ability grouping and just choosing our own materials instead of letting the basal choose, but we were still ability grouping. I see that as a big change in the last three or four years - trying to eliminate ability grouping - and it makes it very difficult. But you can see the benefits because there are no kids in here saying, "I can't read. I can't read that book." You know? That I think is real neat. It makes the job hard. It's real challenging. (3/26/91, p. 3)

Judy Jones, another Hunter Woods teacher, agreed that the elimination of ability groups in her classroom brought dramatic changes in her students.

She said, "This year, all the kids view themselves as readers. Much more so than that they did in the past. There used to be feelings of 'I can't do it' and I feel that self esteem has been improved. It's really improved" (6/10/91, p. 11).

Dolores Smith had been in the Chadwick district for twenty-seven years and had experienced the district's focus on text books. Like Carolyn, she felt that her philosophy had always remained as developmental or "child-centered," but she had allowed herself to be "intimidated" by the administration to use workbooks and she felt that she was told "this is the basal and we're going to use it and that's it" (6/6/91, p. 4). She had always taught at Johnson School, which had been one of the schools with multi-age classes in the mid-1970s with no set curriculum. She said she had "taught long enough that I've seen things come full circle." She loved the freedom the policy allowed her again, and she felt that "even when I used workbooks and I used basals I never felt like it was okay. I thought some of the stuff was stupid" (p. 7).

Teachers who felt they previously had no choice about which materials to use and who considered themselves traditional teachers also commented about positive aspects of the policy. For example, Theresa Hart, who had been teaching first grade in Chadwick for four years, liked the changes in language arts because she felt that "now I could just - you know - jump in the deep end because I'm so excited about what I could do without workbooks and how I could prove that they could grow as much as anything - without the workbooks" (7/15/91c, p. 4). Joan Moore, a second grade teacher with twenty years experience with basal teaching in Chadwick, found that the policy released her from being "a prisoner of this book" (6/18/91, p. 11); she felt the policy gave her permission to decide for herself how much time her students need to learn and what materials might be appropriate to help them learn.

Louise Pinar, a first grade teacher at Franklin, who, although she had been a preschool teacher before starting her career in Chadwick ten years earlier, felt that she was rather "traditional" and had previously followed the basal readers as the district had asked. She did not like to "jump in" to new ideas; she said, "I go a toe at a time - not both feet." She liked the changes brought on with the policy because she felt "much more relaxed at school. It seems like such a better feeling - a better atmosphere and I don't feel the pressure where I used to where you had to do this and this and this" (6/21/91, p. 1). She added that she liked the whole feeling of getting away from the basal readers, "where the kids know that I do this book and then I do this book." She felt that children put pressure on themselves and would "feel dumb because this kid is three books ahead of me" (p. 1).

Helen Corrigan, on the other hand, did jump right in, even though she had consistently followed the basal before. She said that she felt like "this is what teaching should be - sharing myself and my ideas" (6/11/91, p. 3) She really liked the fact that

you can do something thoroughly and not be bound up into reading groups and so much material. The phonics books - they were such a pain to get through. I hated those things. You don't need to do pages and pages of sp and st. We had it exactly backwards before - teaching the skills before we would let them read. (p. 3)

Joan Moore also said that she "enjoyed teaching more" with the DAP policy and felt that she got "to know the kids better" (6/18/91, p. 6). She wasn't exactly sure what caused that difference, but at the end of the year, she could just think of all of them and feel that she knew them and their families very well. She thought her ability to interact with the students more might account for it. Instead of having worksheets and all the assigned work, the students were sharing about themselves and their opinions in their responses to reading and in Writing Workshop. She said,

Well, you know, you always want to get to know the kids, but you're like in a trap. You've got all this paper work - and now we've got less paperwork. The kids are writing, but instead of a zillion worksheets...they are doing their own writing. (p. 6)

Joan said that she used to be "a maniac" about "running stuff off all the time." She was "always so uptight about getting this stuff out that they need to have." She now feels so much more freed up from feeling, "Oh, gosh, I've got to run this off." She knew that she had previously done a good job and was a good teacher, but this approach provided her with more freedom and was more relaxed (p. 6).

The three first year teachers who talked with me also liked the DAP policy, but because they had never experienced any other approach, they did not have a comparison. Debbie Lake, who had done her student teaching with a teacher who did only literature-based reading, she felt that she had had a comfortable introduction to the philosophy of DAP. For her, the best part of the DAP policy was that she "saw a lot of kids who really felt like they were succeeding that before had felt that they weren't." In the past, she thought that when kids "had a general assignment to do," some would always feel that they "could get it and some didn't." While she thought that it took a while for the students to realize they would be successful with more open-ended work, no one felt "like they couldn't get it or that they were the less intelligent kids in the class" which made her feel very good. She added, "I think it did a lot for the kids, too - they were successful" (7/15/91a, p. 3). Francine Brown, who felt her master's program at Bank Street College had prepared her well for the DAP policy, said that she "was lucky" because she "saw it work before I had to do it" and "didn't have to change anything" (4/25/91, p. 5). The most positive aspects of the policy for her were "seeing the writing process; seeing the kids love of literature and what they do when they finish a book; seeing them decide what they're going to do is real exciting" (p. 10).

The other new teacher was Connie North, who taught first grade with me and my colleagues at Kennedy school. When she interviewed with Jennifer Beckson, Kennedy's principal, Jennifer explained to her that no basals were used in first grade. She said that "didn't frighten" her. "In fact, that sounded pretty good, but I wasn't really sure how I was going to go about it all" (7/15/91b, p. 3). The changes for Connie were not so much having to learn to give up basals, but to learn to use a literature approach. Connie thought "it probably would have been easier to teach with basals," but she didn't think "that it would have been better." She felt that as a first year teacher she might "want to cling to that little textbook, but that doesn't mean that you would have been doing a very good job of teaching." She felt that anybody "can come in off the street and read page 25" and figure out something to do, but that developmental, while "it takes a lot of time and work," it is also "good teaching." She said, "I really felt like the kids were learning a lot and they were directing that learning - it wasn't always coming from me" (p. 4).

Teachers liked the students' enthusiasm for reading and their interest in books and authors. Many liked the freedom from feeling they had to have the students read the assigned stories in the order of the basal text. All said that even very young readers who memorized simple repetitive pattern books felt successful and thought of themselves as readers. However, Connie North, who had a lot of support from the other first grade teachers at Kennedy, expressed a sentiment often repeated by other new teachers. She said that with hindsight, knowing how much effort she put into her teaching and how much she had to learn, "I think had I known everything I was getting into, it might have been too much. I didn't know everything, and I just kind of kept

doing it" (p. 5). There were teachers who did understand what the policy required of them and did not put forth the effort shown by Connie.

What Were the Changes in Practice?

For some teachers, the DAP policy did not appear to create many changes, either in their philosophy or in their practice. All the Hunter Woods teachers who talked with me said that, for them, very little changed. Judy Jones had taught several years in another local school district before coming to Chadwick five years ago. Currently a second grade teacher at Hunter Woods, she felt that the philosophy behind DAP had always been in place there and was a contrast to her strictly basal experiences in her former district. The teachers at Hunter Woods had never relied on one basal series, and Judy thought the teachers always had a great deal of freedom to choose how they would teach. During her four years there, Judy felt that her transition away from the basal was greatly supported by the other teachers. When asked about what had changed for her, she said,

Well, see, this is where I have a hard time. I think that most of us have been doing this - pretty much. I don't think there has been a huge, huge transition. I think that we've always tried to meet the kids where they are and go from there. So for me, it's not a huge, huge difference. (6/10/91, p. 1)

Another Hunter Woods teacher, Carolyn Parker, felt that although her "philosophy has always stayed the same," in the last few years (even before the mandates of DAP) she had "changed the delivery of the way I do things." She said that she was "more in tune with the kids - to be able to individualize a little better" and "read the group" better so that she "can make some good educational decisions for the class" (3/26/91, p. 4). She had selected from the many basal books available at Hunter Woods and had "followed the manual" because she "figured that was the way to do it." Lately, however, she felt as if

she had "grown" and felt "confident and professional" in making "the best decisions for my groups of kids" (p. 4). For Carolyn, her work in using the writing process had facilitated her change over time. She said that Hunter Woods had the writing program going "for years and years." But she found that each year the class responds differently. Writing cannot be packaged, she said, "because it has to change with every group of kids you have" (p. 4). Understanding this aspect of writing had helped her to think about her teaching of reading as well and the use of the basal series just didn't make sense to her. Carolyn did experience changes in her teaching, but she had been making those changes gradually. The onset of the DAP policy simply supported what she was trying to do in her classroom. She saw the basic change mandated by the policy as not so much about "delivering instruction" as it is about "helping children taking responsibility for learning and really becoming a learner instead of being just a passive participant in all of this" (p. 8).

My first grade colleagues at Kennedy had been moving away from basals for about three years by the time the DAP policy was mandated. The staff had also been involving their students in process writing for six years. We had opportunities to read professional journals such as *The New Advocate*, *Language Arts*, and *The Reading Teacher*, which were circulated among us, and the first grade teachers chose to meet as a team every week to talk about what we were doing in our classrooms. When I was a learning specialist at Kennedy, it was two of the first grade teachers who agreed to allow me to work with their students in their classrooms and, as a result, we all learned a lot about how we attempted to support learning. These teachers stopped the mandatory "end of book" testing and turned in unused workbooks to get money to buy books for early readers. When I returned from leave and joined

these teachers in the classroom, we met weekly to talk about our efforts and to support each other. For us, the changes were also welcomed and were made gradually. The second grade teachers at Kennedy, however, typified another place on a continuum of change. They had all continued to use the basal series; although they had experienced the same year of involvement in writing with the university graduate student as had the first grade teachers, they felt more comfortable assigning writing topics and having students copy printed material for seat work. When Jennifer Beckson became principal at Kennedy, she required all the teachers to set personal goals for their own learning. She did not require any particular goals, but she did push all teachers to stretch themselves and to continue their growth. The year DAP moved to second grade was also the year the six half-days of staff development were eliminated from the district calendar. The time when our second grade teachers had the most to change was when they had the least opportunity to learn to do so.

Many other district teachers were in schools which had not been making the gradual changes evident at Kennedy and Hunter Woods. For example, Theresa Hart, a first grade teacher at Harrison, felt that the DAP policy brought about great changes for her. Theresa said that she wanted to "jump in" because she felt that she was learning so much herself as a result of the policy's encouragement to move away from the basal, but it was still a scary idea for her because she was concerned that she "wouldn't get the same results that I'd had the previous years keeping children at the same levels." Although she was an experienced teacher, she agreed with Connie North that she did not know what the policy would really require. She said,

It was like jumping in water - you didn't know how deep. I just had no idea what I was doing or where I was going to go with that and the reason, I think, that I forced myself to try it was just because - you

know how - I didn't want the world to pass me by. I wanted to be in there with everybody else. (7/15/91c, p. 5)

She wanted to proceed slowly because "I didn't really know what I was doing. I really had no training and I didn't even know where to go to get it" (p. 5). She did not have the same kind of colleague support at her school which she had observed at Kennedy. She tried reading some things to see if that would help but it just wasn't enough. Somehow, she said she felt confident enough to try some things anyway.

Carolyn Parker felt that, whether teachers had to change a little or lot, the change was worth it. She thought that the most positive changes she observed were in the responses of her students to reading:

If people could somehow see the attitudes of the kids as compared to the attitudes of before when the only time you read was when your reading group came up. Kids now clamor to read - or write. They ask, you know, "Can we have some extra time at the end of the day to write?" and they ask, "Can you read this book with me?" or "Can we go out in the hall and read?" (3/26/91, p. 7)

What Carolyn found, however, was that the hard work might discourage some teachers from being able to see those changes in their children. She said, "Somehow, if we could convince teachers and convince everyone that the work is worth it - it's definitely hard work, but, boy, the benefits are tremendous" (p. 7).

The Time It All Takes - Our Own Time

One of the difficulties of taking away texts and workbooks and teachers' manuals which contained ideas and student practice pages was that teachers had to find books to use and had to create activities to support her or his language arts program. One teacher's response to my question about what took so much time for her centered on the materials - "the set up, the preparation of the materials in order to teach this way is horrendous - simply

horrendous" (7/15/91c, p. 11). Dorothy Marks described her investment of time as "incredible" and added that in order to teach "this way," putting in the time was "absolutely" necessary, "you have no choice about it" (3/18/91, p. 2). She said that she was "so worn out from spending so much time trying to develop all this new stuff," that she worried she wasn't doing her best job in the classroom with the students. Dorothy felt that the district simply wasn't supportive in providing time for all that she had to do:

We need more time. We have to have some set-up time. We can't be expected to spend all of those hours here and then go home and put in more time - we have to have time to do it. They give us planning time and when is it? Before school. (p. 3)

Some teachers found that even this before school planning time was taken away with all the meetings and extra work the DAP policy seemed to require. Joan Moore said that she was working so much during the summer to get ready for the school year because she had learned not to count on her planning time. She hoped that "when meetings are called without much warning" during next school year, she'll "be a little more prepared." She said that it was "devastating to have all of your extra planning time ripped away" - especially when "they don't always tell you ahead of time" (6/18/91, p. 1).

Ann Taylor had transferred to the school where the principal had removed all the basal readers in the summer. Because the teachers had relied on the basal, they did not have classroom collections of books. Ann said that collecting books took a lot of time and money:

In our situation, the books were just sort of gotten rid of and I did not have that much literature in my room. Running to the library and trying to find enough for all those children and all those different levels I felt was an impossibility. I cleaned out my entire home library and took most of it in there. (6/19/91, p. 3)

Ann was angry that the materials were not provided for her. She felt that "if someone wanted me to teach this way" they could have at least allowed her a "slower transition" and could have provided more literature from the school

district. She felt that she could "have done a better job" if she had been able to ease into it more and not spend so much time hunting for books (p. 3).

I found myself in many situations where there just did not seem to be the time to even find out which materials to order when money did become available:

I really need to talk to the other teachers. We have, right now, four pages in our mailbox from our learning specialist asking us to suggest reading materials that we want. Of course, I want to do that - I don't want the money to go away, but at the same time I am so swamped right now that I can't begin to think about what materials I want to order. I have some ideas - a lot, actually - but I just need time to get them together and write them down - that's all I need to do and I can't seem to do that. (Personal journal, 12/20/90, p. 2)

Once you had books in hand, you still had to create materials, logs, or whatever to use with them. In addition, many teachers created centers for the students to use while smaller groups of students met to work with their books. Margie Nathan, a kindergarten teacher who always considered herself developmental, thought developmental ideas had been around a long time, that they were "older than old" and had just come around again. She was glad for it, but agreed that it "is a lot more work." She said that when teachers relied on work sheets or workbooks, "you can lay out all of your work for a week in a few hours" and you can plan that it will probably take the students "ten minutes to do this workbook page and then do this ditto." But, if you are "doing centers," some of them might be "one day centers and some of them are two day centers and some you might keep all week." She said that "it's constant preparation for the centers" even for a teacher like herself who had made things and kept them organized - "you know, you have a box of this theme and your box of that theme." She still had a lot to remake and prepare (3/22/91, p. 3). Margie said that she often spent two hours after school "just straightening things out" and then she could spend another two hours at

home "cutting things out and getting ready or just going and getting supplies." She had many parent helpers who worked at home cutting out and assembling materials for her. She also had parents who worked in the classroom, but she wanted them helping with the children rather than preparing things (p. 9). Margie didn't see the time issue getting any easier:

I think there gets to be more and more [work] all the time. There's more curriculum and we have to select books and all of that. Theoretically, all of that sounds really good, but day to day, it gets harder and harder to keep up with. I thought it was just me because I haven't felt well, but when I talk to other kindergarten teachers, they are feeling it too and first grade teachers too. For the second grade teachers this year is awfully hard because they haven't been developmental so to speak and they have so much to learn and they're knocking themselves out. You think, well, next year we'll have some of it in place, but a lot of it is consumable. (p. 10)

All of the teachers agreed that there was just "so much to do." Many echoed Margie's observation that with the basal things were clear cut and easily laid out for the week. Dolores Smith described what took time for her, "It's not something that is cut and dried. It's not like we're going to cover these pages today and this tomorrow." She said that she might go in a different direction from what she had originally planned because "I try to be flexible. I think you get going in one direction and realize that you're going to take off in another because of what the kids are learning or what they're interested in" (6/6/91, p. 12).

It was always a challenge to get materials for reading prepared. Francine Brown described what she and her colleagues did at the end of the school year. They worked with their learning specialist making lists of "what we thought a second grader should know at the end of second grade" and "what a third grader should know coming out of third grade." After listing the things they wanted the students to know, they went back through the list and brainstormed, "How can we teach them this?" She said,

It was something that we should have done through the year rather than in one session. We actually wrote out some questions and activities so that we would have some things to use. There just isn't enough time in the school year to do these things. (7/31/92, p. 6)

Francine was a DAP advocate and worried that the "basal" teachers would reject the whole language approach because of all the work with no time provided to create all the materials.

These people who have been working with the basal have all their stuff ready and then they have to switch over and it is a lot of work to make up all of your own ideas for every single book you use. So I think time is a big issue. (p. 6)

I experienced this same work overload, especially when I tried to learn about each child and what he or she was attempting to do:

I am a little frustrated and maybe I'm trying to do too much - trying to figure out what the kids know and what they are able to do. I'm continually looking through their writing during Writing Workshop and trying to see them individually to do some early reading assessments. The range among the first graders continues to surprise me although I know it shouldn't. (Personal journal, 9/3/89, p. 1)

Many teachers also talked about the time it took to monitor student progress and to use the information they learned about students to create the environment to support and extend that learning. I asked Connie North if the time she put in at school and at home got less during her second year of teaching. She thought that some aspects of her teaching were easier because she had a better idea of how to teach reading and writing and she "could look ahead," but she still found that she "didn't have a minute to spare." She would arrive at school between seven and seven-thirty and would stay until five in the evening at which time she would have to get her child from day care. She stayed until seven every Tuesday evening. When I asked her what she did during that time, she said that in addition to getting materials prepared, she tried to "organize things in a different way to help the time go better" when the children were there. She also spent a lot of time "looking through children's work" to inform her teaching (7/27/92, p. 3).

The teachers talked about many other things which took their time in addition to making and gathering materials. For example, several teachers talked about having parent aides or school-provided aides who helped in their classrooms. While they appreciated the help, most teachers said that it took extra time to plan lessons for these aides and it took time to meet with them to explain what to do. During our second conversation, Ann Taylor said that her principal had been able to provide some "aide" time to help first and second grade teachers in their classrooms because their numbers of students had been so high. Ann preferred to have the aide work directly with students, but she needed to plan with her what she would do. Since the aides were paid by the hour, there was no time to plan on a daily or weekly basis. She was very frustrated by it. "It is back to the same old thing again - okay - you can have the aide for three hours and that's it and I don't want to hear about how you're going to plan" (7/20/92, p. 18). Another teacher explained her problem with having a parent help in the classroom: "Sometimes I felt it was more work giving it to a parent because I had to explain it just that much further to them" (7/27/92, p. 9).

Teachers also spent a lot of time helping parents understand the DAP policy. Many planned and held parent meetings, met with parents before and after school for individual conferences, and kept parents informed with frequent class newsletters. As Margaret White said, "We need to teach parents about what we're doing and keep them invited and have them on the inside," otherwise, parents put a lot of pressure on teachers to do things we may not be comfortable doing (4/16/91, p. 11).

When I told Margaret that some teachers felt this effort to inform parents added to the already overloaded work the policy required, she agreed that this kind of teaching was time consuming and hard. But she also said,

If teaching was ever easy, I have to ask them how it was ever easy. If all of a sudden now it's hard, then I don't get it, because it - if it was easy, then maybe they weren't doing it. That's pretty judgmental on my part, but I think I might say that. I don't mean that it has to be hard and icky, but it has always been pretty challenging and time consuming and you never got finished and you just arbitrarily had to say - well, that's all I can do today. (4/16/91, p. 7)

Joan Moore supported Margaret's contention that teaching has always been hard and has always taken time. She said, "It takes an incredible amount of time. But, I feel that it always did. Whether it was developmental or not. I don't think enough respect is given to the elementary teacher for their planning time" (6/18/91, p. 8).

The issue of time was greatly affected by each teacher's personal life. I was a single woman with grown children. I could devote as much time as I wanted to school without feeling that I was infringing on my family. Of the seventeen teachers who talked with me, only three had young children. All of the others either had grown children, were recently married with no children, or were single. Whatever the circumstances, each teacher volunteered information about the ways she managed to keep up with the work and about the effect the intensity of the work had on her personal and family life. The three teachers with young children had to find ways to balance their obligations. One teacher had two young sons so she did "a lot of stuff at home" and had worked out a plan with her husband so that she could stay at school one night every couple of weeks until "8:30 or 9:00." She said that it had taken a couple of years of struggling and prioritizing because she used to stay at school "until 8 o'clock every night" - and this was before the DAP policy. She said,

My family has struggled through when I would be here until 8 o'clock every night and it doesn't make for a good marriage or good family life and you have to make a choice sometimes. So I had to make my choice and I don't think my kids suffer. When I'm here, I'm their teacher and I'm thinking about school and I've learned to use my time wisely when I'm here, but when it's time to go home, I have to realize my obligation

as a parent and I'm their first teacher, so that has been a big issue - a tough one for me. So as far as putting in the time here, we use that old phrase - "quality time" but I don't spend hours after school here. (3/26/91, p. 10)

Connie North had a pre-school son. She had graduated from college several years ago and was unable to find a full time teaching job at the time. The job she left in order to teach in Chadwick demanded many long hours in the evening so she thought that teaching would provide her with more time with her husband and son. She was taking classes for her master's degree in addition to all the work she had as a teacher. She said she put in "hour after hour preparing" and still didn't feel that she was "on top of it." She would take work home and after she got her son to bed she would work until she retired. Connie had found a way to spend as much time as possible with her son, but she did not get much rest and consequently got very ill in the spring (7/15/91b, p. 9).

Theresa Hart also had a pre-school son. She said that it was "very difficult to have children and be a teacher in Chadwick" (7/15/91c, p. 11):

There is the constant stress about getting outside training and going to all these workshops and staying at after-school seminars and stuff like that and it's just not possible for me, because I have my role in raising my son. Just the custodial care of him and to do all those extra things is very difficult and it's stressful in the sense that you feel torn - you've got to be here, but you feel like you should be there. (p. 11)

Theresa knew that the Education Association's contract with the School Board did not obligate her to go to all the workshops and seminars after school, but she felt pressure "that if you really are a good teacher - you would be." She sensed that there was a "little clique" in the district which included "the real good teachers" and she wanted "to be a part of that" (p. 11).

Teachers who didn't have young families also felt that their personal time was infringed upon by their school work. As Joan Moore said, teachers began to resent having to put in so much overtime. She felt that her own

interests "just kind of went out the window" because she didn't have time or the energy for them (6/18/91, p. 8). Carol Windsor was not a classroom teacher, but had many concerns about seeing her friends and colleagues putting in so much time. She said, "I just don't think that's a healthy way to live" (7/16/91, p. 5). In addition, she didn't want the work "to be an excuse for people to say, 'Well, I can't teach that way because - look, these people are burning out, they are having to work every minute'" (p. 5). She worried that if the district didn't find an answer to the question of work intensity, "the whole thing would drop" (p. 7).

This was a concern expressed by many of the teachers considered part of the "grass roots" for the policy. They worried that all of the work brought on by the sudden and drastic changes would undermine teachers' willingness and ability to do all that was required. Many of these teachers could not understand why the changes had to be made so quickly. They knew that their own ideas about teaching and learning continued to evolve. The practices they used and the philosophies they embraced were not a result of someone telling them they must change; they were the outgrowth of their own choices and of their own developing understanding of what might be appropriate for the optimal learning of their children.

"Appropriate" Versus "Inappropriate" Language Arts Practices

As it was with math, the dichotomy between language arts instructional practices identified as "appropriate" and "inappropriate" by the DAP policy was a source of conflict for many teachers. One described the policy as "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" (7/22/92, p. 1) because it seemed that all formerly used practices were considered taboo. Even teachers like Ann Taylor, who considered herself very developmental, felt that "some

people who are running things say throw all of this out - I don't care if you used it or not - get rid of it and we'll try something new" (7/20/92, p. 3).

Louise Pinar agreed and felt that some of the "old practices" gave her the confidence that the new things she was attempting were working. She said that every once in awhile she would "go back and give them the tests from the basals." For Louise, it was her way to check because she didn't feel comfortable" herself to give it all up yet. "I like the new way, but I just don't feel comfortable enough to give it all up yet" (6/21/91, p. 4). She felt very fortunate that at her school the teachers are "allowed to deal with what we feel comfortable with." Last year, she used the basal and workbooks exclusively and this year she has "gotten away from it a lot." She said, "I don't know if I'll be teaching long enough to get myself completely on the other side, but I'm inching in - toe by toe" (p. 4). Louise realized that "being the kind of person I am" she could not just give up everything and "leave the old." "Besides," she said, "I still think that there are good points to doing things the old way too; it's not that everyone of the old way is completely bad or wrong" (p. 5).

Theresa Hart agreed with Louise that it was important to go "slowly and not let go of things" that she knew worked (7/15/91, p. 6). She had used the old basal during the first year DAP went to kindergarten because she "didn't want to give up everything" (p. 6), but then her principal had all the basals removed during the summer. Theresa had been changing over to a more literature-based approach during the last two years, but when the district had money available early in 1991, her school selected the "whole language" basal as the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator mandated. Because her school had not gotten enough literature books, she used the new basal finding that "the repeated vocabulary" was "really beneficial" (p. 6). She would like to

give up the new basal, too, because "the kids have seen them as a sequential thing" and they talk about the books saying, "I'm in this book and you're in that book." She reminded them that they were all in different places and that was okay, but the basal books seemed to perpetuate something she did not want (p. 7).

Sometimes teachers "resorted" to practices they felt would not be approved of by the administration. At other times, they deliberately chose to employ a practice the policy identified as "inappropriate," but this choice put them on the defensive about their teaching. For example, Dorothy Marks described her dilemma in leaving plans for a substitute teacher. Previously, she could have simply listed the pages in the teacher's manuals for the various subject areas, listed the workbook pages the students were to do, and run off copies of practice pages for "seat work." Dorothy found it difficult to explain all the different things she was doing with DAP in a way which would be understood by the substitute, so she "finally left a work sheet" for her to do. She said, "Yet work sheets are supposed to do all these bad things for kids, so I actually felt guilty making up a work sheet for the substitute." She added,

I feel all the time like I'm on a guilt trip - we all feel guilty doing some of the things - like most of us still have reading groups - most of us still do spelling and yet, I know, the kids get a lot of benefit from these. I don't use them exclusively; the reading groups change all the time. It's not like a kid is going to be stuck in it, but one of the things which has really bothered me - and if you look at the First Grade Curriculum Guide, there is a page with a column on the left side that says - the old way - and it really says - this is the bad way and over here is the new way and all this is good. I think I've been made to feel too guilty about trying to do the things we've been taught to do. I know that some people have said that they could be driven crazy with feeling guilty and I think there are a lot of benefits to some of the old things.
(3/18/91, p. 4)

Dorothy had learned how to use the basal reading materials very effectively and had seen her students learn using the "old" methods. She had worked hard to plan lessons according to "Madeline Hunter," which, with all the new

methods, was "just a blur in [her] mind" (p. 13). While she was willing to put in many, many hours of her time, she wasn't truly convinced this way was any better than the old way. She said that the teacher across the hall from her, "who is really gung-ho developmental and whole language," tells her that two thirds of her kids "are weak." Dorothy said that "we think we're teaching kids to read, but I'm not sure that we really are." In her classroom, she would find that three or four of her students might have problems, but "the rest of them sail right along" (p. 8). She wondered if all the DAP activities really had a goal which led the students toward reading. She said, "You can do things that are fun, but when it comes to academic things, you don't just do them because they are neat to do" (p. 9).

Dorothy's comment about "Madeline Hunter is just a blur in my mind" reminded me about my own thinking about direct instruction. The materials in the First Grade Curriculum Guide made many references to the need for teachers to move away from direct instruction and I had tried to sort that out for myself - "Where does direct instruction fit with what I try to do in my classroom?" Is direct instruction really no longer appropriate? I noted,

Everyday is a new adventure for me as far as how the kids are progressing. I'm just seeing so many different ways in which they are acquiring the skills for reading and writing - building on what they've done already. Without really - without direct instruction. But when I think about it, I guess that the kind of instruction that the 'direct instruction model' would say that I need to teach - to model - to give them guided practice and all of that - well, if I examine what I'm doing on a broader scope then that is exactly what I'm doing. The modeling comes in all the time with how I'm reading and writing with the kids and talking with them and pointing out things with them - thinking out loud about what I'm doing - mistakes that I make when I'm reading - 'Oh, that didn't sound right' and going back to talk about what I did - there's just a ton of modeling going on all the time. In fact, the whole classroom environment is a model of the kind of literacy I want the kids to come away with this year. So, in that sense, there really is direct instruction. And guided practice - they have lots and lots of practice in that they have time for reading and writing, but, I guess as far as placing strict standards on their products during this time - well, that differs from the 'direct instruction model.' But I can look at some

of that research - like time on task - it just depends on how we view what that is. The kids spend all their time on task, but I haven't defined it all for them. (Personal journal, 10/31/89, p. 3)

Many teachers mentioned other teachers in their schools who "think they are using appropriate practices," but who are not. While some teachers worried that what they did would be considered wrong, others did not seem to be bothered. One teacher described how another teacher simply photocopied "the whole spelling book" and most pages from various old reading workbooks. In her view, "That's not really where it's at" (6/11/91, p. 13). Some teachers had the kind of centers Margie Nathan described, which were simply worksheets and the teacher would set a timer requiring the children to move to a new "center" every twenty minutes or so (7/20/92, p. 14). Another teacher said that "the real bottom line is that most of our primary teachers in the district still don't have a conceptual grasp of what this is" (7/10/91, p. 4).

The divisions between those who thought they used developmentally appropriate practices and those who felt the practices could fit easily with what they had always done before created an additional challenge to the successful implementation of the policy. Some teachers were made to feel that the methods they had previously used, those formerly required by district policy, were now unacceptable; because they had used these "old" practices well, they had been doing bad things to children. One concern I had was that our focus on specific practices led us away from talking about issues related to the reasons the grass roots teachers had come to embrace those practices. I, too, was critical of some teachers, but in my mind, my criticisms were of a different nature:

Just like with the kids who form some letters incorrectly - if we constantly call it to their attention, they begin to feel that they aren't capable of doing it. I wonder if some of these first grade teachers are not feeling the very same way - that they are getting messages from

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administration, from their principals or wherever, that they don't know how to teach, that what they've done in the past is unacceptable. From my experience in other schools, that would be my contention for some of them. I would find what they do unacceptable, but not because of their methods, but because of their treatment of the kids - a lack of caring is what I found to be the most detrimental. I don't think it matters if we use a basal reader or whole language or what method we use as long as we respect the children as learners and give them some input. We need to give them time to think creatively and to problem solve and to truly need their involvement. (Personal journal, 10/3/90, p. 10)

The dichotomy between what was considered appropriate or inappropriate created some difficult choices and put teachers in a position of having to defend what they were doing or feeling guilty about it or simply not telling anyone. One of the principals described just such a situation at her school. She said that her teachers had been slowly moving toward DAP and they did like some of the things they were asked to do, but since no one had been able to identify the places where their students had been previously unsuccessful using the "traditional" methods, they continued to use many of them. She said, "We consider ourselves an effective school. Our students are reading." Her teachers felt as if the policy said to them, "Well, if they're all reading, then you must be doing something wrong!" Earlier in the day of our conversation, the principal had had an "evaluation conference" with one of her first grade teachers. The school district's form used for these evaluations lists many attributes and behaviors which both the teacher and the principal check as "adequate," "inadequate," or "we need to discuss." The teacher had checked the "we need to discuss" box for the item, "adheres to district policies and procedures"; she explained to her principal that she "didn't know what to say about that one" (10/18/90, p. 3). The principal said that they are all in "a bad situation," because "I feel as if we have to hide what we're doing and not talk about what we're doing because somebody is going to slap our hands" (p. 4).

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Even advocates for the policy felt silenced many times. As the anger grew among teachers who felt compromised by the mandated practices, teachers who believed in them spoke up less and less often. One teacher felt the negative reactions to the policy were a result of "the nature of how it came about" (p. 6). She thought that many teachers who might otherwise be favor of the practices resisted them because they were mandated. The result was that whether you tried to use appropriate practices or not, you were often silenced.

The stress of "appropriate" over "inappropriate" set up divisiveness among teachers, causing those who favored the policy to retreat back into their classrooms as they had done in the years prior to DAP. The policy they welcomed as an affirmation of their work created a power struggle with the administration about who would decide which practices were in favor at the moment. Those teachers who embraced the policy were viewed as "in power" and became the force to struggle against.

Questions about Our Self-confidence

My approach has always been - rather than coerce or force or control the kids - to interest them - to provide interesting, stimulating activities in the classroom to show the beauty and humor and the learning that is available in books when you know how to read. To convince them that they are readers already and to extend and build upon the knowledge that they have. And yet there are still some children that I have concerns about - whether or not it works. It's very difficult to trust in either myself or the kids that it will eventually come around. (Personal journal, 12/16/89, p. 5).

All of the teachers I talked with shared my sense of responsibility for student progress. As Margaret White said, "People are feeling less confident and they're feeling nervous about - 'Am I doing it right?' (4/16/91, p. 7). One teacher with more than twenty years of experience said that one of the hardest things for her about implementing the DAP policy was "making

judgments. I worry about that - have I made the right judgments?" (6/6/91, p.

12). Another teacher expressed it this way:

I feel much more responsible and that responsibility weighs on me more. It's not just a matter of looking in the book to see what I might do next, it's not a matter of that. It's reading the kids and am I reading them correctly? And am I providing for what they need? I'm constantly re-evaluating, constantly assessing what I'm doing and the way I'm doing it. It's much more introspective and that is harder emotionally because it doesn't leave you. (3/26/91, p. 9)

Dolores Smith understood this kind of concern and felt that because the district had put such confidence in the basal reading tests, the teachers were unsure of themselves without them. She said,

A lot of people are very frustrated and very upset - scared of the changes and worried about the accountability. How am I going to really tell if these children are achieving something? ...Some people are just more comfortable with the end of book tests and all these kinds of things because then they can say - "I have proof" and with this way they don't have it. (6/6/91, p. 6)

Another teacher said, "When you use the basals all the time, you just give the test after each book and that was a clear indication of where the kids are" (6/21/91, p. 5). Writing was easier for her because "you have a finished product," but in reading she said, "I find it very difficult to know - really - where the kids are" (p. 6).

One first year teacher expressed many self-doubts even though she strongly supported the policy. She had seen the success of students during her student teaching and with her own students over the last school year, but she thought that teachers who were used to the basal approach would be especially insecure:

In the past, they had these books and you did this one and then, okay, let's go on to the next one and they knew they were doing what they needed to do and at the end of the year, they felt comfortable that they'd done everything they could for this child - we went through this material or that material. And I think now the problem is - probably - it's a lot of work and they're uncertain maybe of what they are doing and when you are uncertain about something, you can become defensive about it. When people say to them - "Why aren't you doing this?" Well, the defense mechanism kicks in. (7/15/91a, p. 9)

She did, however, feel that some questioning was a sign of a healthy approach. She said, "You wouldn't be a good teacher if you didn't take a look at yourself and ask - 'Is this really helping them?' 'Is this the right thing to do?'" (p. 9).

Connie North also expressed many self-doubts even though she had the support of the other first grade teachers. She worried that because she did not understand the reading and writing processes well enough, she did not help some of her students "move along" as well as they might have with another, more experienced teacher. She said,

And I thought that if I understood the process of going through shared reading and guided reading and these different things that maybe these children would have - it would have made sense to them - and that lightbulb would have gone on. I don't know. I'll know more this year, at least more than I did last year. (7/15/91b, p. 9)

Connie said that she never questioned that whole language would work, she questioned whether she "could do it or not" (p. 12). She saw successes with her students which were reassuring, but she still felt that without any guidelines upon which to base her judgment about progress, she was left to feel insecure:

When you're teaching kids this way - it's - well, in March I saw some kids turning that corner and I'd say - thank you, it's working; they're getting it. But before that I thought - are they going to get around that corner? Are they going to be all right? How much should they know by this time? And I had nothing to base it on, so you know - I didn't know what they should be able to do when going into second grade. (p. 13)

After her second year of teaching first grade, Connie was much more confident about her own teaching and her ability to guide each child's learning. She still felt insecure about what a teacher in another district might think about her teaching based upon their own experience with a student she had had in class. For example, she had several children move to other districts during the school year; she said that "when I find out that I

have a child who is going to move I get concerned." She is not concerned about the child, whom she knows will be fine, but "about how I'm going to look." She wondered if "parents are going to suddenly say that I was a terrible teacher because this child is going to be in a different learning situation." She thought that if a child went to a district which used basal readers, the teacher might not see the many strengths in a child which had resulted from the literature approach. The form which went to a student's new school was also a source of her anxiety:

You have to fill out the forms and say whether they are "at, below, or above" and I think - you know - I never looked at them that way and now I have to decide - are they at, below, or above. So what's "at"? I'm thinking - what are they supposed to know to be "at"? I don't have a clue what they're supposed to know for "at" and so you try to guess and write all these notes about how they were in a whole language school. And what text? Even though we didn't use any, we're supposed to identify a text.... (7/27/92, p. 12)

What Connie was describing was an example of Margaret White's feeling that the DAP policy caused teachers to become anxious as they "struggled with trying to be more specific" about what they were doing as they taught language arts and which, in turn, caused parents to be "frustrated by the lack of specifics." For Margaret White, the specifics about what we do was "going to take some figuring out" by all of us (4/16/91, p. 4). Linda Olson, who had taught over twenty years and was considered an outstanding teacher, provided a different example of what Margaret was talking about. Linda told me about a group of young teachers from another school district who had come to her school to observe. When they were in her classroom, they kept asking her, "How do you know what to teach in a meeting? How do you know what to say when you meet with those kids? How do you know that?" Linda's response was, "I thought to myself, I don't know how I know. I've just done it for so long. You just make decisions" (7/10/91, p. 13).

However, when you had to mark report cards and fill out portfolio forms, you did need to be able to be specific and explain what you thought you were seeing. Our judgment was challenged because the children did not always fit the literacy levels indicated on the various reporting forms and we questioned ourselves even about our determination of "level":

As the first grade teachers found last year and several of the second grade teachers are finding - children don't neatly fall into one category or another. We often find that children are doing some things in one area and other things in another and also there are times when they are functioning in one area and then other times when they are moving to or falling back to a different area. I have found that, especially when children are attempting to read more difficult text or attempting to write in a way that is more challenging or in a way they are not used to - like if they have been putting labels on pictures "This is a ---" and then they attempt a story which has a lot more ideas, they might revert back to a writing system that they had discarded already. Like just using the first letter of a word and a line for the rest of it - just so they can get their thoughts down. With reading, they can read very fluently from familiar text that they have practiced, or that has a repetitive rhythm to it and if they are trying something which is a challenge for them, they might revert back to some of their unbalanced strategies like trying to sound out everything and forget to use the strategies they had in place in a more balanced way. (Personal journal, 10/16/90, p. 3)

If we closely followed the behaviors listed for each "literacy level," we were often led astray about our students. Because those "levels" came from early childhood research, when our observations about students did not place students neatly into one category, it was easy for us to decide that we must not be assessing very accurately. If we could not trust our own judgment and we had nothing else upon which to make judgments, our concerns about noting student progress were increased.

CONSTRAINTS ON PRACTICE AND CONTRADICTIONS IN THEORY

Implementing the DAP policy in mathematics and language arts was a complex and labor-intensive endeavor. The support system of textbooks and teachers' manuals had been removed, which required teachers to learn new

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procedures, create and assemble materials, organize and manage the classroom differently, and find new ways to determine student achievement. Teachers who had felt confident about explaining to parents that a child was reading in the second reader in the series and had successfully passed all the tests indicating mastery of the skills taught now had to learn new ways to teach reading. The learning tasks were monumental for some teachers, but they still had to appear confident in what they were doing and had to attempt to explain these unfamiliar practices and assessments to parents. Further complicating the possibility of learning how the grass roots teachers had come to learn what they had learned was the divisiveness created by the policy's emphasis on differences between practices identified as appropriate and those seen as inappropriate. Rather than learn from each other and debate issues, pro and anti camps separated teachers and silenced them.

The teachers who talked with me were willing to put in many long hours of their own time to learn the practices, to create their classroom environments, and to think about their teaching and their students' learning. They struggled with feelings of insecurity and guilt about "doing it right," "not doing enough," and "feeling much more responsible." Each had her own time limitations and her own expertise with various subjects which made the changes more or less difficult. In addition to these personal constraints, however, there were constraints and contradictory policies in the district which made the DAP policy implementation even more challenging and confusing.

Getting Help for Students

One concern that many teachers expressed was that in the midst of all of the changes, they did not feel there was much support for their students

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about whom they had concerns. In 1991, just when the policy began to include second grade, the funding was cut for the mathematics support teachers. These teachers had provided assistance to the classroom teacher in her efforts to learn *Math Their Way* and, at times, worked with small groups of students.

The year before, when the DAP policy moved up to first grade, the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator issued a written statement that learning specialists were not to "establish a caseload" nor work with any students outside of the classroom. Previously, learning specialists had been free to establish their own methods of working with the teachers and principal of the school. The ultimatum was hotly contested, but it was supported by Central Office Administrators and principals were charged to see that it was followed. The Curriculum Coordinator required the learning specialists to sign a written statement agreeing to follow its mandates. Some elementary learning specialists were already providing support for students and teachers both inside the classroom and in small groups outside the room, but other learning specialists maintained a strictly "pull out" schedule. The mandate caused problems at Kennedy, for example, because the classroom spaces were so small that it was a big help to be able to work with a small group in the large media center. Having the learning specialist work in the media center with students was not the same as a "pull out" remedial lesson because we worked closely together to provide support for students, but we were bound by the rules. Marilyn Tucker, the Kennedy learning specialist, asked the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator about her situation. "I kept posing the question about the pull-outs and I finally said, 'You're saying pull-outs, but what is it? It doesn't matter where you take the children. Is it not that you don't want us to always have the same group?' (12/6/90, p. 6).

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Marilyn was told that she could not work with students outside the classroom. She said, "I think we are going overboard too much. Maybe they had to do that to start with, but we aren't even allowed to talk about it" (p. 6).

Connie North worried about her own ability to identify children with problems. She did not know if a child's slower learning was "developmental" or a "learning problem." She felt that the mandate to work within the classroom and with many children weakened the Kennedy learning specialist's ability to help her identify children who had "real problems." Connie worried that delaying help for a student until second or third grade would put that child even further behind and mean "lost time." It also concerned her that "you almost have to get these kids certified to get them enough help" (7/15/91 b, p. 14).

Dorothy Marks taught in a school which had maintained a pull-out, remedial caseload approach for language arts support. She also saw the policy as undermining her ability to get help for students. While she felt the DAP policy was a good idea because there were so many children "who were being retained or labeled as learning disabled," she said that there had to be some point at which it was not okay anymore for a student to be struggling. It concerned her that "it could be several years for kids where they could be getting extra help" and they were not getting that help. As an experienced first grade teacher, she felt that she knew which children were having trouble:

I can look around here right now and I know which kids are going to read and which need the extra help. There is no stigma against getting extra help in our school and there is the point that the kids who have trouble reading are also the kids who are more distractible and the idea that the learning specialist who is going to work with these kids must come into the room for the extra help - I'm just not so sure about that. Supposedly it's a stigma to be taken out. But in first grade, the kids don't see it that way. Kids that you know who are at risk and can go through first grade and maybe second grade without getting help - that seems to be a disservice to the kids. (3/19/91, p. 6)

Dolores Smith agreed with Dorothy that the learning specialists' restrictions caused difficulty. In her school, the learning specialist's approach was "to float in and out of classrooms" and she didn't provide any one-to-one help for children. She wondered how the district would help to keep these children "from falling through the cracks" (7/22/92, p. 1).

Teachers did not feel that they were getting the same amount of help for students as they had before the policy. This occurred at a time when they were supposed to know more about how to teach language arts and mathematics and yet the district had not provided them with enough opportunities to learn how to do this without the textbook teachers' guides. Margaret White worried that part of the problem with children who weren't progressing well was that some teachers only knew one way to teach reading to young children and that by giving up the basal series, they were floundering. It certainly was true that many teachers were having to learn new assessment techniques to replace the book tests. It was also true that many teachers had to learn how to teach young children to read without following the scripted teacher's manual. She was talking about reading, but the same problems were present for mathematics as well. Margaret said, "What fouls things up sometimes is that you need to know where you want to get to" in teaching the children and "how you get there needs to be based on what you know and if you don't know enough to get there except one way, then read, figure out by talking to somebody, watch somebody or whatever." The point is, she said, we still have to get there - children have to learn to read:

I think some folks are looking at this as if we don't have expectations any more - whenever they get there, they get there. I don't see this as a lowering of expectations, you know. I think we're asking kids to do far more than they ever were expected to do and in that way, I see that as exhausting. But it frustrates me and worries me when I've heard that - "Well, they can't do what they used to be able to do." "If you can't

read, then you can't read. I guess they'll read when they're ready." Well, there is an element of that, but they still need to read and we still need to be doing everything we can to make that happen and as soon as it can happen. (4/16/91, p. 12)

Helen Corrigan, a first grade teacher at Eisenhower, had been a preschool teacher for many years before teaching Beginndergarten. She had served on both the Kindergarten and First Grade Early Childhood Task Forces. She thought that many students were considered behind when they really weren't. For example, she said the second grade teachers at her school were having a difficult time because they had relied so heavily on the basal. She felt they particularly needed to know "the early stages of reading," because in the past, younger children were either retained or placed in Beginndergarten, so by the time the students reached second grade, they were on their way with reading. There was one second grade teacher in her school who did embrace the DAP philosophy and Helen tried to send most of her first graders on to her. When she was able to do so, the children who were very young and might be considered "behind" did very well. Her young students who went to the basal-oriented second grade teachers did not make good progress because, in Helen's opinion, those teachers could not "see where the child is." She said, "I think many who were referred to the learning specialist were not really having problems. It's just that they were not accepted and recognized for where they were" (6/3/91, p. 5).

Funding cuts resulted in the removal of support teachers for mathematics, and the attempt to change the support in language arts from a remedial pull-out program to one which provided help to both teachers and students within the classroom resulted in increasing the complexity of teaching for many teachers. The DAP policy required teachers to learn about teaching differently. They had to know how to teach mathematics, reading, and writing to very young students; they could not rely on a series of lessons

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provided in textbooks and they could not rely on commercial tests to tell them whether or not students were making progress. For many teachers, they were learning how to teach while they were teaching. Judgments about student progress and getting help for themselves and their students were just part of the difficulties.

What Is Our Theory of Learning Here?

Many teachers felt confident that students were getting instruction and skills determined appropriate by "experts" in the field of mathematics or language arts when they used the text books. These experts had laid out a sequence of concepts to teach and provided pages of problems for practice and tests to determine if the students were progressing with those concepts. The approach to teaching mandated by the DAP policy left teachers to determine how to sequence the concepts, to determine which students should be provided with more or less challenging work, and to determine through their observations whether or not students were progressing satisfactorily. Because we never talked about the DAP policy in terms of a shift in philosophy or as a shift in our understanding about learning, teachers were able to continue to feel the need for a hierarchical arrangement of skills to be segmented, taught and tested. Many teachers had talked to me about "developmental" as a philosophy which they contrasted to "traditional"; they said that teachers needed to "change their philosophy" in order to do what the DAP policy asked of us. As one teacher said, "They can't be always buying into the traditional way of learning - I mean their attitude has to change. If their attitude changes, then they don't mind putting in the time and energy" (7/15/91b, p. 8).

It was easy for us to be confused, though, about the district's implied or assumed model of learning because there were so many contradictory forces at work. On the one hand, the DAP policy wanted us to accept what students were able to do and to provide for their individual strengths (although this was usually addressed as individual needs) and interests. We were not to group students by ability nor separate them from the class for additional instruction or support; however, the district continued to have separate classrooms for "Talented and Gifted" (TAG) students who were initially screened using standardized tests. Several teachers expressed dismay at the continuation of this program. As one said, "I still have real, real funny feelings about the TAG program." She said that no one had ever explained to her "how this fits into developmental theories":

If we're talking about meeting kids needs and taking kids where they are at their level - why are we taking those kids off the top? We keep including and including at the bottom. You know, these inclusion kids from the special ed. department - so why doesn't it work both ways? I don't understand it at all. ...A lot of my students go off to TAG and I think - why? - Why, when they are content here? That's a bother to me, because I just don't know why. I can't understand how that program just keeps going when it's an opposing view from developmental. Isn't it? (6/10/91, pp. 12-13)

Teachers pointed out the same kind of contradiction when they requested assistance with children about whom they had concerns. It was difficult for many of us to decide if a child's learning difficulties are a result of "being developmentally young" or a learning disability or some other problem. The Chadwick district developed a procedure for teachers and parents to talk about their concerns with support staff - the learning specialist, school psychologist, principal, social worker, and/or speech and language teacher. The process by which children were determined to be eligible for special education services seemed a contradiction to the philosophy undergirding DAP. As Ann Taylor said, "our school psychologist

calls all the shots - she decides if it's worth having a meeting about a child" (7/20/92, p. 17). The psychologist's determination is based entirely upon standardized tests for the initial screening and then upon an individually administered battery of intelligence and achievement tests. This teacher said that the special education people "are really out of touch." They only want to know "levels and grade equivalents. They don't really know what developmental means." She decided that it was not "worth it to recommend that a child to be tested for any reason because she [the psychologist] is just going to screw everything up by the time she gets through with it" (p. 17). Teachers often attempted to talk about what they had observed and documented in the classroom, but this information was dismissed as irrelevant to the special education identification procedure. Ann added that she knew of learning specialists who often gave the old basal placement tests "to establish if a child was below grade level in reading." She objected to that because "some of it is word calling and word identification and everything separated." She said, "I highly object to the fact that those tests are used for any reason" (7/20/92, p. 20). She felt the kinds of instruction provided by most learning specialists and especially by the special education teachers were in opposition to what she was trying to do in the classroom anyway. They employed a skill and drill kind of practice of isolated skills, which, to her, undermined what she wanted students to learn about reading and writing.

The District Seems to Want Both - DAP and an Academic Focus

Marge Nathan felt pressure about the academic performance of her students even though she taught kindergarten. When she had first started teaching kindergarten in the district in the late 1970s, she felt that "we didn't worry about the fact that they played a lot. If you got interested in something

as a class, you did it and didn't worry." Now she feels pressure to have a lot "stuff going"; whereas, before, "if you didn't accomplish a whole lot it was okay" (3/22/91, p. 4):

I feel much more pressure among teachers now - you have to cover this and you have to cover that. It's like they want the best of both worlds. It seems that, in a way, they expect to produce the academic results they got with the academic program, but they still want it to be developmental....I hear this from other teachers too. It think, as a district, they want the results of the academic push, yet they want it to be choice and the kids to be taught at the level they're at. (p. 4)

Ann Taylor agreed with Margie and felt that upper grade teachers "need a lot more education" about DAP than they had had (6/19/91, p. 5). She felt that the upper grade teachers use DAP "as an excuse" to say "you don't have the same academics we have. We have to do this and we have to follow this curriculum and we have to follow that, and don't forget the state tests" (p. 11). She believed that the curriculum comes first at the upper grades rather than the needs of the children. "If the child doesn't fit, then it's the child's fault" is the belief that many upper grade teachers hold, according to Ann (p. 11).

But, as Margie explained, it was not only the upper grade teachers who felt the pressure of the curriculum. Linda Olson told of her class's involvement with a song which turned into interest in a book of the same title and then the class did a play based on the song and the book. She said the children were extremely creative, adding, "I never could have thought of such things as they did." But, she said that she had to "trust that it was okay to take the time for that kind of stuff." One of her colleagues questioned her about taking two weeks for something which was not really on the curriculum. She said, "You're supposed to be teaching amphibians":

But what we did was just an outgrowth of that. And I don't feel guilty about doing that, but I think there are a lot of teachers in our district who are made to feel guilty to give kids time - to give kids opportunities to explore these wonderful things....I just don't think that the teachers

all realize the value in giving kids time to pursue what they bring to that. (7/10/91, p. 18)

Louise Pinar also shared about the opposition the lower grade teachers in her school were getting from the upper grades - especially "with this invented spelling." She said, "They think it's terrible what we're doing. They're blaming us for all their kids who can't spell." Louise and her lower elementary colleagues told the fifth grade teachers that the poor spelling could not be a result of lower elementary teaching because the fifth graders they have "didn't go through the DAP program." She said they tried to show the fifth grade teachers the students' creativity that they had not demonstrated before:

We don't get the "I like _____ and I like _____." Now they tend to write more complex sentences and get into story writing and I don't ever remember stories from first graders when they dictated the sentence and they copied it. (6/21/91, p. 13)

Lower elementary teachers felt pressure from upper grade teachers about the state tests as well. Ann Taylor reported that teachers in her school would remind her that she needed to use the math vocabulary for the state test consistently and she felt they blamed her when they received one of her students who happened to be a "little lower than someone thinks they should be." She said that, in her experience, when that happens, "you pick them up from there and move ahead," you don't "blame the previous teacher." She wondered "Why is it that you feel the pressure that you have to apologize for where the kids are?" (7/20/92, p. 4). When I asked if she thought it would help to have discussions across the grade levels about the learning model implied in the DAP policy, Ann did not think it would help at all:

I think they are going to say - "What do we need this for?" We can have the developmental philosophy, but still the kids have to pass the tests and have to do da-ta-da in order to get them there and what are we going to do about all of these low kids that can't do that? (p. 5)

As with math, teachers felt pressure to "prepare the students" for the state reading tests. Francine Brown said that when her school's state test scores came back a little lower than expected, fourth grade teachers blamed the second and third grade teachers (7/31/92, p. 5). Some time had been allocated for teachers for work on grade level concerns, but in her school the time was taken away so that teachers could plan what they were going to do to bring up scores the next year. Francine said, "I was furious." She said the fourth grade teachers want her to give the students "passages to read and give them questions to answer for them." She said, "I won't do it. The kids hate it." Francine felt that the state tests were poorly written and did not have interesting passages, especially for the nonfiction or expository part. She had recently taught a unit on photosynthesis and her students had done "great on that," but on the state test they had to read and answer questions about Ancient Rome. She said that asking students to read whole text book chapters and answering questions about them was not the approach she used with science and social studies. Francine did not use text books and the students generate their own questions about what they want to learn as they read (p. 9).

Dolores Smith expressed the same reaction when the funds for staff development for her school were redirected for improving the state test scores. She said that she felt "let down" by Hazel Brown, because she saw the change in funding as another example of pulling out what little support there had been for helping teachers learn to teach with DAP (7/22/92, p. 2).

District Tests

By late 1990, the School Board was demanding some form of standardized testing to monitor student achievement. The "Integrated

Literature and Language Arts Portfolio Program" (ILLAPP), published by The Riverside Publishing Company (Raju, 1991), was selected by Hazel Brown and the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator. The test consisted of three full length passages. One was read to the students, the other two were read by the students. Each passage was followed by questions and opportunities to respond in writing. In the discussion about some of the teachers' reactions in Chapter Three, I said that Francine Brown was particularly vocal at the meeting during which the plans for testing were introduced. She was still angry about the test when I talked with her several months after the meeting. She was "really frustrated" by the decision to use a standardized test, even one which did include reading full passages and student writing. She felt that the decision was made without fully understanding a developmental philosophy:

Here they promote this new way of thinking and then they go and do something that's totally against it. And the thing is, they're obviously not educated in it, because if they knew about our program, they wouldn't be giving a test. That's what makes me so frustrated. These people have all this power and we're the ones doing all the work and they know nothing - I mean, they do not know what they're talking about. (4/25/91, p. 8)

During our second interview Francine said that she felt that much of the pressure for testing was coming from parents who were "not really being educated to this new way of thinking." She thought that many principals could not "handle the pressure of the parents always saying - 'I need a test score or I need to compare my child to other kids so I know where he's at.'" She thought parent nervousness was just because they did not know and that teachers should invite them into their classrooms and talk with them so that they could learn about DAP and take the pressure off the principals and School Board members (7/31/92, p. 2).

Ann Taylor also expressed concern about the increased pressure for testing. She asked if the pressure was coming from the School Board, parents,

or "somebody's research" (6/19/91, p. 8). She thought the tests were not helpful because "the child who develops slowly is not going to have the same ability as the child who has been zinging along through all this, yet everybody takes the same test" (p. 8). The testing didn't make sense to her and she wondered if it could be an indication that the district was moving away from DAP and entering another phase in a continuing swing between open to "basics":

It is so much like we went through a few years ago. We had the open situation when Kennedy was built - that whole thing - we had several schools like that and then, all of a sudden, back to basics. That's what we heard. And there was all this testing and then all of a sudden everybody had a book for everything. (p. 9)

Not all the pressure for testing was coming from parents, however. Helen Corrigan served on the district's Reading Task Force and also worried about what she felt might be "some movement away from this" as evidenced by the push for testing coming from some of the Task Force members. She related the testing pressure to some people's worry about helping "at risk" students:

You know there has been more talk about the "at risk" kids. Are we going back again to find these kids too soon and are we going to move in this direction to do some massive kind of intervention too soon? I feel the tension. I feel it here with our learning specialists, although it may be because she's a very ordered, organized person and I'm much more of a "let it fly." But on the Reading Task Force, too, I feel the tension. Some are quite vocal and just seem to dominate and it's been difficult to speak my piece these days. (p. 5)

Helen felt that the vocal members of the Reading Task Force were going to get their wish for more testing and to erode the progress the DAP policy had made to give children more space and time and learn.

I wrote a three page letter to Hazel Brown in March, 1991, expressing my concerns about the district tests. I did not want her to take my comments as "criticisms of our district's need for systematic documentation of the progress of our children"; in fact, I believed that such documentation was

vital to the success of DAP. She had previously shared with all first and second grade teachers an edition of *English Education*, a journal of the National Council of Teachers of English, which led me to believe that she shared the views expressed in the article. This edition was a "Special issue on assessment in whole language teaching," by Denny Taylor. In it, Taylor describes the "Biographic Literacy Profiles Project" which involved teachers and administrators in examining collections of student's work gathered over a school year. I hoped that, by reminding Mrs. Brown of this work, she would try to influence the School Board to retreat from their testing mandate. I wrote,

My major concern is the message given to our teachers, our parents, and the community. That message is that our teachers cannot provide accurate information about the progress of the students in their classes. The message is: We need "proof." In order to have classrooms which really reflect developmentally appropriate practices, we have to have teachers who are knowledgeable. I believe that we do have knowledgeable teachers, but many of them have long doubted their own abilities and instincts because we've encouraged (demanded in some cases) them to rely on "outside" judgment - the basal, primarily. The educational community and especially the academic community have continually told teachers - here, let the experts tell you and show you. Teachers have allowed the teachers' guides, student performance on workbook pages, and the end of unit and end of book tests to be their "judgment" of progress. Yet, what we really want to do is something which Denny Taylor described so well in that marvelous report on her research which you shared with us:

Our task is to try to describe children's personal understandings of the forms and functions of written language that they develop as they participate in the problem-solving environment that we create for them. To achieve this aim, it is essential that teachers are supported in their explorations of the many functions, uses, and forms of written language, for we cannot observe what we have not learned to see (Taylor, 1990, p. 11).

Mrs. Brown told me later that she agreed with my statements in the letter, but that the School Board was steadfast in their wish for standardized documentation of progress.

Class Size

The one constraint that everyone mentioned was having such large numbers of students in the lower elementary grades. It was not unusual for teachers to have twenty-five students and more. In fact, a class of twenty-five was considered small. The first and second grade classes at Kennedy in 1991-92 were at thirty-four and thirty-five. Such comments as "we need fewer numbers of kids" (6/6/91, p. 10) were repeated again and again.

Teachers felt the large classes severely limited their ability to implement DAP fully. Margie Nathan said, "You know, we say developmental is going to meet their individual needs, but I can't do it and meet all of their individual needs." She had one student who could read "on a fourth grade level" and others all along a full spectrum of proficiency. With large classes, she just can't get to help each of them (3/22/91, p. 5). A first grade teacher defined "developmental" as exposing children "to materials they are ready for when are ready for them," but said, "That's a hard thing with the large classes, because I have three who are just now ready for the beginning of first grade things and that's hard when they are three out of twenty-seven" (6/3/91, p. 1).

Teachers found it difficult to do the assessments with large classes. We were expected to tape record each student reading three times during the school year, collect and photocopy examples of their work in reading and writing, include lists of books the students had read, and document our observations on a recording form. As one teacher said, "As ideal as it sounds, I don't think it will happen - especially with the class sizes like we have" (6/19/91, p. 4). Math assessments were to be done during the times when students were working, and some were done one-to-one. Teachers were challenged to get to all the students for these assessments as often as they

wished they could. Trying to have a parent or an aide to the assessments did not work, because the point of the work was to inform teaching, not just to get a score or check something off of a list.

One of the principals told me about the State Board of Education's position paper on Early Childhood Education, which was distributed to the principals in October, 1990. She said that she understood the intent of Hazel Brown was for the document to be shared with each school, but this principal thought, "There's no way I'm going to give it to my staff." The paper recommended class sizes of twenty or less for kindergarten, first, and second grades and then outlined things which would be in place in those classrooms. She said, "If we can't guarantee just twenty students in the classroom, I'm not going to suggest that all these other things listed will occur" (10/18/90, p. 11).

Implementation of DAP was a challenging learning experience for many teachers. We did not debate issues or come to an understanding of what the policy meant. In addition to our personal or individual reactions to the policy, we received contradictory messages from other district and state policies, which further complicated our efforts to implement the practices. District policies which limited our ability to provide special assistance to struggling students and which failed to recognize the additional difficulties imposed by large numbers of students in each class, as well as those policies which segregated students into special "Talented and Gifted" programs or outlined the procedures involved in identifying students for special education, were all in opposition to what many thought the DAP policy was about. These messages meant to many teachers that the district policy makers did not understand what this policy meant for teachers or for students. The state's policy for achievement testing of all students added pressure on

teachers to stress the test's content, which many felt was not appropriate for their students. In spite of the constraints and contradictions, however, teachers who talked with me tried to understand and implement the policy.

WHAT SUPPORTED OUR LEARNING?

Teachers continued to work diligently when they felt that their learning was supported and when they felt appreciated. Many teachers told me that they got personal rewards from seeing the children make progress and knowing that they had been a positive influence in a child's life. However important those inner feelings were, knowing that there was help and encouragement available was the best support to their own learning. We discovered that practices which supported student learning were appropriate for our learning as well.

The Trust and Support of the Principal

Many teachers talked with me about the importance of feeling that their principal understood and appreciated what they were doing. One of the principals responded to my question about what teachers needed to implement the DAP policy with the following comments:

They need to feel like they're in a place of trust and support and security where they can risk - just like kids. It's the same situation. If we're saying this is what the classroom needs, this is what kids need, the same holds true for teachers. The school, then, becomes my classroom as an administrator. I have to provide my staff with those same things I'm asking those teachers to provide for kids. And that allows the risk of experimentation. It allows them to voice their concerns. It allows them to work toward continuous improvement and not expect them to change everything overnight....They need to be told that things are going well. I mean teachers are the most guilt ridden people I know. They take it all on. They are asked to be everything to everybody. (10/18/90, p. 5)

Teachers who had worked for more than one principal during the time after the DAP mandate seemed especially able to identify specific behaviors which

encouraged their learning. One teacher described the principal in her school during her first year of teaching first grade:

I constantly felt like -"You're doing a great job; I think you're wonderful." I always felt that way from her - no matter how much I felt I was drowning - she was there. I was a nervous wreck when she came in to observe, but she quickly let me know - "You're doing fine and sure - you may want to do some things differently." There was an openness at staff meetings where we interacted and she allowed those people who didn't want to do it that way to keep doing their thing. But she also provided support for them to learn how to do things differently. (7/27/92, p. 20)

The key, for her, was that she felt valued. During her second year, the first principal was transferred and a principal new to the district was hired. The change was dramatic for this teacher. She found the new principal "controlling," with an attitude that "this is what you are going to do and you are to do it" (p. 21). Also, this teacher did not feel the same sense of worth; she felt like the principal "devalued" her opinions because she was such a new teacher. "What could you know?" was how she described the feeling her principal gave her. "I just didn't feel like we were people" (p. 22).

Carol Windsor also saw the principal playing a vital role in the success of the DAP policy. She said that the teachers "need encouragement to keep growing" (7/16/91, p. 5), a comment echoed many times from the teachers. She felt that the "best administrators" appreciate what you have already done, but also say, "Where are you headed? What's your next step? What are your goals?" This was important, Carol said, because, in her "belief system, you're either moving and changing and growing or you're just stagnating" and the principal can encourage that (p. 5). Dorothy Marks also felt fortunate to have the support and encouragement of her principal:

She believes in the new philosophy and tells us that she wants us to work toward this goal, but that we make the changes as we feel comfortable with them. She says that if we're not going to like it, we're not going to do it with enthusiasm and I know that her goal is for us to be able to adapt to whole language and the developmental philosophy.

But, I feel that we're real fortunate that she's giving us the time we feel that we need to do what we feel that we can. (3/18/91, p. 2)

Joan Moore never had had a principal who gave her permission to do what she had been currently learning to do with the DAP policy. Her principal told her, "Try a little experimenting." Joan appreciated being given "a little leeway" and being allowed to try out some things without feeling pressured. This support allowed Joan to learn some things about herself and her "real" approach to teaching. It was difficult for her to take the risks involved because she had always relied on the textbook; but because she felt supported she tried things and found "I do like it and I hope it doesn't go away" (6/18/91, p. 12).

Many teachers recognized a dilemma of trying to mandate a policy like DAP. On the one hand, they were not sure it should have been mandated at all, but on the other hand, they thought some teachers wouldn't change unless they were ordered to. As Louise Pinar said, "To mandate it is probably the only way to get it in place" (6/21/91, p.15). However, when it became a mandate and when teachers were not monitored by principals, how could people be sure that everyone was following the policy? This was a challenge because not all of the principals really understood DAP either. Louise, for example, thought her principal was supportive of her, but added, "I don't think she's aware of what we are or are not doing." She said,

As a teacher, I think my administrator should know what I'm doing. There is a fine line between controlling too much or maybe she feels we're all experienced teachers and she has confidence in what we're doing, but still.... (p. 16)

All of the principals who talked with me echoed Debra House's comments. One said his job was to "simply encourage." He said, "I operate under the idea that if people don't feel good about themselves, they don't have a good chance of performing better." He said that he tried to "create an

atmosphere for learning" which was "nonthreatening." He realized the challenge the DAP changes brought to many of his teachers who had been very successful and had gotten "good results," with the text books. He encouraged them to "mess around with it awhile," but he didn't "have any strings attached to that." He said that he provided a gentle push, but didn't demand changes be made all at once (10/29/90, p. 4). He said that he saw himself as a "cheerleader" for the teachers and a "listener" to their concerns (p. 8,9). Another principal said that he saw his job as "doing much more in terms of trying to support changes." His teachers were at "different stages in making changes," and he has learned along with them (2/26/91, p. 5). He said that he is not an expert so he tried to "hook teachers up" with others who could provide the help to facilitate change (p. 8).

We Need Time to Learn from Each Other

For some of the kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers, their instruction was much the same as it had been in the year or years previous to DAP. Louise Pinar, for example, had been teaching with MTW since 1979. The first grade teachers at Kennedy had been moving away from the basal texts for several years. Some teachers said that they had embraced the DAP philosophy for most, if not all, of their teaching careers. For other teachers, though, the changes were drastic. They had used text books, workbooks, practice skill sheets, and Madeline Hunter's EEEI one year, and the next year they had to have "whole language" language arts and totally hands-on mathematics in place. In either case, without exception, the teachers said that the primary support they needed to implement the DAP policy was time to get together with colleagues. All of the principals, too, without exception, said that what teachers needed was time to get together - to learn from each other.

Carolyn Parker provided a typical response to my question about what helped her personal learning. She said, "Talking with colleagues. The support around here [Hunter Woods] is wonderful and the more you talk about it, it clarifies" (3/26/91, p. 5). Or as Louise Pinar suggested, the opportunity to talk gives teachers a chance to "share some concerns and know how people solve their problems" (6/21/91, p. 9).

For teachers in the situation of having to learn something new, for example, Judy Jones and I with math instruction, it was a great help to have supportive people you could call on for help. In Judy's case, it was her school's Article III teacher, who she considered a real math expert. Because of budget cuts, the Article III teacher was reassigned for the coming year and would no longer be at Judy's school. Judy said, "She's been tremendous in helping me with math - tremendous. To me, having a resource around like that has been wonderful." This teacher was not only able to "model lessons" in Judy's classroom, but Judy felt that she could go to her for advice when she had concerns or difficulty:

She's had some excellent training, but not only that, she comes into my room a couple of times a week. She can get me started and I can continue. If I hadn't had her for Math Their Way, I know my program would not have been as successful and effective. (6/10/91, p. 9)

Debbie Lake said the teachers in her school did not meet "and share ideas and ask for help like you all do here at Kennedy," so she often came over to Kennedy at the end of the school day to talk with us about teaching. When she met with me for this study, she said that because she and her second grade colleague were first year teachers, it would have been so much more beneficial to have more contact with other teachers. She said, "I don't see nearly the amount of working together as I do over here and that's something I feel strongly about - that's important. I hope that this coming year and in the future, that that will begin to change" (7/15/91a, p. 5).

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In the spring, 1991, the Math Curriculum Coordinator got some staff development funds and arranged for all of the first and second grade teachers in the district to meet by grade level during the school day. Substitutes were provided for our classes. Ann Taylor described her response to the meeting:

I came back so vitalized from that morning workshop. One. We all recommended that we do that over and over. It was so nice to hear that other people were frustrated in the same way. It was great to hear who had tried this and who had tried that and we had a whole week's worth of really high interest, fun things. All the teachers knew it was great and that was the end of the workshop because there wasn't any money and because the school district - somebody - believes that inservice is not important for teachers unless it's after school when we're exhausted or during the summer. (6/19/91, p. 13)

When teachers had an opportunity to support one another, they always responded that these were the most important learning experiences they had.

Margie Nathan said, "I think we all still need time to get together and share what we're doing" (3/22/91, p. 11). Even when the district did provide staff development time during the first years of the policy, sessions would be so tightly scheduled that teachers still had no time to talk with each other.

Margie said,

And when they did have some of those that first year of developmental and they would have a meeting or have a half-day or whatever. They'd have a speaker and there was no time for us. It was like they were afraid we were going to waste our time if they said - "We're going to have you all get together and hash over what you need to hash over." They think we'd waste our time. So much of it was planned that people talked on the way in and on the way out. I would hope that they don't continue to do that - they need to progress past that. (pp. 11-12)

Margie wanted the time during the school day because "when we meet at the end of the day, we're tired and we've had to rush to get out of our rooms to get there on time" and when it would get close to five o'clock they were "thinking about getting home and getting supper" (p. 12).

Margaret White said that opportunities to meet and talk together would allow people to present their views on teaching and learning. She was concerned about teachers who might just employ "developmentally

appropriate practices" or any practices without thinking about what they were doing. Margaret felt that much of the talk had to be about philosophy and "beliefs and those big issues." Because until we talk about those issues, the implementation will just be different. She wanted to have teachers "debate it and talk about it and agree to disagree about things," to say "I think this about how kids learn and this is why and that's why I choose to do it this way because it matches with how I think about how kids learn." She wanted to hear teachers talk about why they think children learn best by writing in workbooks and provide their reasons; however, she said,

I don't think you can say, "I think kids should do it this way because they've always done it this way. I did it this way and it worked for me." That's not an educational philosophy. It may be an observation, but let's talk about it. (p. 6)

Connie North agreed with Margaret that teachers with differing views needed to talk about what they believe. She said,

Sometimes, if you aren't comfortable in what you're doing, you feel that people are devaluing you because you aren't. So if you were comfortable teaching lots of skills or basals or whatever and you spoke up - some people, even at Kennedy - "You're teaching with basals? That's terrible!" And yes, it is, but you know - like give the person a chance to share their thoughts and concerns before you go jumping down their throat. (7/27/92, p. 14)

Connie felt that it helps to talk; otherwise, people do feel that they are not being listened to. Without discussion, the idea comes across as "this is what you should do - period":

Then I'm feeling like the person isn't really listening to what I'm saying and they are just trying to convince me. Then sometimes, I am turned off. I feel like - I understand that this is what you think I should do, but you really aren't listening to me. (pp. 14-15)

Margaret White felt so strongly about the need for talking among teachers that she worried that the district may have "short-circuited" some people by going into the DAP policy so fast and not spending more time talking (p. 7). What Margaret proposed was a "predictable time" for talking,

just like we provide for our students, preferably one afternoon a week, but at least once a month. If teachers could count on having this time, they would be more likely to jot down things they want to bring up, using the time as "a tool for learning." She said, "If we think that kids need to do that, how come we don't allow ourselves to do that? We can learn so much by interacting and cooperating" (p. 9). She wondered if we tended not to have these debates "maybe because our egos and our persons are so involved that we take it all so personally." She did not feel that such debates would have to be personal. She thought that if the debates concerned educational philosophy, "if it was out there a little bit as something to discuss" it might help people feel more confident and comfortable to talk about (p. 11).

Debbie Lake agreed. Her student teaching experiences with a "whole language" teacher had allowed her to venture comfortably into DAP. She heard other teachers in her school complain about the policy and tell her that the district had made mandates before which did not stay long. Debbie wanted the DAP philosophy to continue in the district and recommended that other districts attempting to encourage DAP should "take it slow" and not "demand that this has to be done right away." She said that the district should provide "time for teachers to meet and discuss their fears and successes":

You need that reinforcement that you're not the only one struggling with that. You need to be able to say - 'Oh, this is a wonderful breakthrough for me and share it with other people, too. I think that would be the most important that that they do - provide that time - whether it's peer coaching or just grade level meetings where we could meet once a month and discuss what was going on. (7/15/91a, p. 16)

Debbie worried that mandating that "this is how it will be done" and then "letting everyone go off on their own" was a recipe for disaster (p. 16). Open discussions, where people felt safe to question, inquire, talk, and listen, are vital. She said that sometimes she and others felt "dumb for asking these

questions," showing that they did not understand. Her explanation for this feeling was that

I guess you could look at it in a few different ways. You have a person who's been teaching for fifteen or twenty years and look at all the years of experience they've had - they should know this. Or the person is new and feeling like - I'm supposed to know this - they hired me and I'm supposed to know. You don't want people to think that you're - do you know what I mean? You have to make it safe for people to feel that it's okay to ask questions and it's okay to question what's going on and try to understand it better. There are probably people who don't feel safe and it's probably the people who are resisting. (p. 18)

Debbie's statement was quite accurate in terms of feeling that some people did not feel it was safe to ask questions. However, the people who talked with me did not consider themselves resisters, but they did feel that others in the district thought of them in that way. Charlene Hoover, one of the learning specialists, talked to me about the difficulty she and other learning specialists had in trying to talk about their role with the DAP policy. It seemed to her (several other learning specialists' comments supported her contention) that the learning specialist role had changed dramatically, but it was all done with mandates from Central Office and especially from the Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator, who supervised the learning specialists. Charlene said that if a learning specialist asked a question - "and they're only asking for more information - not shooting it down, she draws a conclusion that you, somehow, don't agree" (10/11/90, p. 5):

And then, what happens next, is that the world is divided into two camps. These people who are asking questions are called resisters and it's a very awful position to be in because you're viewed as a "stick-in-the-mud," an old foogey. Even my principal tells that's the one thing he fears - being put in that category. And then you spend all your time saying, "I'm not in that group." When what you really want to do is just dialogue about your thoughts. (p. 5)

Charlene felt that everyone who was not a vocal, enthusiastic supporter got "labeled" and perceived as a "resistor." She always thought of herself as an "innovator," but lately, she had found that she was "busy fighting an image

that isn't even true." Charlene saw this as a tactic by Central Office to get people so busy defending themselves that "they can't express their point of view" (p. 5). On the contrary, Charlene said that it was "absolutely critical" that the district support DAP, but that some administrators have "power needs" which circumvent the dialogue process. Charlene felt that they needed to "tell us what we'll do and what we won't do" and even go so far "as to put it in writing" (p. 6).

Teachers had been admonished to turn some control over to the students, but Charlene felt that the Central Office administrators were not ready to do that for the teachers. During our second conversation Charlene said that she would like to see the school district enable people to meet in a kind of "quality circle," in which educators work cooperatively to share or network and "to feel like they have some say about what's happening." The people in the circle would be committed to each other and try to solve problems as a group (1/14/91, p. 1). Other learning specialists made very similar comments about their need to talk, but how those opportunities were simply never provided for them. One said, "It was just never offered for us to talk and when you did ask to have it put on the agenda, it would never show up" (12/6/90, p. 7). This learning specialist said that her colleagues were "afraid to say anything." She thought that talking would allow everyone "to grow," "to hash it out," and "come to consensus." Instead, she felt they "got their hands slapped" because "people" couldn't place their trust in them" (p. 7).

Several principals also talked about the difficulty they had in trying to ask questions or have a discussion concerning the DAP policy in spite of the fact that Hazel Brown, who chaired meetings of the principals, had consistently said that in order to clear up misconceptions about the policy, the

district needed "good communication." She said that "we have to continually communicate to the public and to one another" (10/30/90, p. 4), but many, many teachers and principals felt that communication, at least two-way communication, was not allowed. Using almost the same words Charlene used, this principal described "in groups" in the district and how questions or concerns expressed somehow get relayed to Central Office administrators and "hands get slapped" (10/18/90, p. 19). She recalled hearing one of the presenters during the weeks of DAP training provided for principals and learning specialists who said, "Honor the skeptic":

Appreciate the skeptic because the skeptic makes you evaluate what you're changing and if you don't allow people in and allow them the freedom to voice differences of opinion, then you don't ever step back and say - 'Wait a minute. Am I really on the right track?' (p. 19)

She said that at principals' meetings, she was very quiet adding, "I just don't care to make my feelings known about some issues because I don't feel supported anymore" (p. 19).

Connie North was an example of someone who did feel well supported. She was hired to teach first grade at Kennedy just before my second year back in the classroom. She said that she did not know what she would have done if she had not had the help and encouragement she got from her colleagues at Kennedy. She had not taken Math Their Way nor did she have familiarity with a literature-based approach to reading and the writing process. Terry Francis taught on one side of her and Ann Taylor was on the other side. They basically taught Connie how to get going to teach first grade and then supported her at every step along the way:

I was thinking about the help the other teachers have given Connie, our new first grade teacher, and how valuable everyone's time is. Connie constantly says how much she appreciates it - the amount of time and interest Terry has given to her so willingly - not being asked, but offering. (Personal journal, 9/1/90, p. 1)

The weekly first grade teachers' meetings at Kennedy were another way in which Connie was supported. She said, "I was surrounded by all of you who had been doing it for so long and that really helped me." She still did not feel totally sure of herself, but our being there was a "big help." She said that we encouraged her to keep trying (7/27/92, p. 7). Like me, Connie had had no MTW training when she started. I took the MTW training in the late fall, but Connie did not get to take MTW classes until the summer after her first year. She felt she was able to follow the DAP guidelines for math instruction because of the support she received from the other first grade teachers at Kennedy. She said, "I don't know how I could have done it if I hadn't had all of you." She described taking the *Math Their Way* training after she had completed her first year and just a week before our conversation:

I just went to the *Math Their Way* workshop last week and people were saying to me - "You really know what you're talking about; you know how to do this." And I said, not really - I did it for a year and I had people around me who told me what to do all the time. I thought to myself - last year I didn't know what I was doing and you all would say - "Well, this is how it works" and I would try it. (7/15/91, p. 3)

Connie had a supportive principal during her first year and many materials to use, and she had consistent help from other teachers, but still she had to work very hard. Her situation helped her understand how some teachers might resist implementing the DAP policy. Debbie Lake thought resistance might result when people did not feel that they could ask questions, but Connie thought another situation fostering resistance was created when they did not have people around them who could answer their questions and provide support:

I mean, I picture myself in a different building with people who weren't doing the types of things that you guys were - with no materials and I wonder if my attitude would be like this. I wonder if I would have had a very good attitude if I would have said - "You know, there is no one helping me here. There is no one giving me materials here. There is no one showing me how to do this. They are just telling me that I have to do it. Well, why? Why should I put all this extra time

into it when no one is helping me?" I mean, I put a lot of extra time, but I have people who help me and I have lots of materials. I wasn't just doing it by myself. (7/15/91b, p. 16)

Connie did not see the district providing time for teachers to meet, but said that she "would like to see it heading in that direction" (p. 16).

Joan Moore agreed with Margaret White that a predictable time for discussion was very important and with Connie North that the district should provide at least some of that time. She thought that if the principal could give up some of the weekly staff meetings, teachers at each grade level could get together. The second grade teachers at her school had tried to meet regularly, but some of them had family obligations in the morning and could not arrive at school early, and some had to leave soon after school. She said,

If we had a certain time that the administration slotted in for you - if they would give up a little something. It seems like they never give up anything - they just want to ask you to do this. If they would give up a staff meeting a month that would make me feel like - you know, I would feel good about that. (6/18/91, p. 13)

Francine Brown agreed with Margaret White's view that teachers need to be able to discuss openly how they felt about DAP and what they believed about learning. Teacher resistance was somewhat difficult for her to understand "because this is how I started - this is how it's always been for me," but she did have empathy for teachers who had much to change with the advent of the policy. She said she would not like it "if someone came and said to me, 'You're going to change.' At least that helps me kind of feel for them" (7/31/92, p. 10). She heard "teachers who have been in the district" making fun of DAP saying that "we've done this before...Next year or in two years, they are going to throw something else at us and it's all going to change anyway." Francine did not agree because "there are so many strong personality people who feel this way and they won't let it die in their own classrooms and they might rub off on other people." She saw teachers in her

building who had been very traditional during the first year who "broke through a little bit and this year a little more." She said, "You can't expect someone who has been doing things one way to make a big change in one year," so as teachers talk with other and let it happen gradually, she felt that "it's going to keep growing" (p. 10).

Dolores Smith also expressed concern that the district was pushing people to change too fast. She thought that placing teachers "strategically" in some schools would allow "their work to speak for itself" and other teachers might want to learn more about it. A "team approach" was better, she thought, than the district saying, "this is what you're going to do" (6/6/91, p. 5). She wanted to see more time for teachers to share with each other because we have "all learned very valuable things" in our classrooms (p. 7). She said that she knew that there were "some people who are doing whole language externally and yet they don't believe in it." By providing them with the time and interaction with teachers who believe in whole language "internally," they could begin to understand what this is all about (p. 8). During our second conversation, Dolores said, "If it works to let kids go at their own pace, why can't we let that happen for teachers?" (7/22/92, p. 3).

Helen Corrigan was an excellent example of how that could happen. She considered herself a traditional second grade teacher, following the basal and using Instructional Skills. Helen said that one of her colleagues, Arlene McKinley, was responsible for many of the gains she made. "Before I even jumped into it, she needled me. She spent years needling me to try this or that or the other thing." She saw people like Arlene as important for the district "to be encouragers and kind of set the pace." She felt that we needed people to help us, not materials (6/11/91, p. 12).

Carol Windsor also saw other teachers as the best kind of support for each other - especially when the supportive teacher "just did it the year before you did" because teachers could identify with them (7/16/91, p. 18). The model of change Carol wanted to see involved "exposing" teachers to the ideas by "bringing in people to talk to them," and by having the teachers read and think about various topics and try out some things. She believed that everyone would look very different in what they did, but that if each teacher was allowed the time and the support of others, change would happen (p. 18). Carol felt that the principals were important to provide support and to believe in the DAP philosophy, but that it was not necessary for the principal to know everything about DAP. They could be "co-learners" - learning together with the teachers and talking with them (p. 22).

Most teachers were not very hopeful of getting more time from the district. Dorothy Marks said that elementary teachers "don't have the same rights as the other groups" because we are asked to do so much when the secondary teachers are provided with work days to mark report cards. Their reports were all computerized, so teachers simply turned in grades, while elementary teachers had to write out cards "on our own time" and fill out portfolios. She did not feel that the district felt any need to give us more time, because "we just do it anyway on our own." She believed elementary teachers "get involved with the kids" treating "these little kids like our own kids." She said, "And I think that we just give, give, give of our time because we wouldn't do it any other way" (3/18/91, p.10). Ann Taylor's husband was an administrator in another school district and was in charge of contract negotiations with teachers. According to Ann, as much as she has tried to explain to him that teachers need to have district supplied time for planning, he did not understand. She said that he has a great deal of respect for them,

but he knows that "elementary people won't demand the time like secondary people do" (7/20/92, p. 8).

Time was always the big issue. We needed and wanted to meet together, but we were not provided with the time to do that. Many found ways to talk at lunch or before school and any other few minutes they could find. Debra House responded in the following way to my question about what she thought worked best to facilitate the teachers' learning:

First, I have to go back and add something to what a teacher needs to know. I think a teacher needs to be a risk taker, because, I think some of the people, no matter how hard they may try to be good guys and go along with this - if they aren't willing to try, to be a risk-taker, then they're never going to make it - it's like they can't let go of the ledge. You have to be a risk taker in the first place or you're never going to make the changes. Then I think it becomes a matter of trying - and of being analytical. (12/13/90, p. 7)

Analogies like "let go of the ledge" and "jumping into the deep end" were descriptive of the situation in which many teachers found themselves. The teaching which had become comfortable and predictable was made risky and uncertain. Debra did not feel sorry that the district had decided to "throw everything in all at once," because she said that was the way "it goes most of the time." She said, "You don't chop off a dog's tail one piece at a time - you've got to chop it all off." She went on to say that there were ways to help people feel comfortable to take risks, to let go of the ledge now that life has pushed you out the window:

But here it all is - now let's sort it out and get it working. But it takes time to get it all working and I don't think there is a sequence that you present this in that is logical to the whole world. You get into one way and I get into it another. You get to the next step this way and I go another. You learn in a different way - that's developmental, too. But I think people need time. They need time to talk to other people. They need to see models and see that there is no such thing as an ideal classroom. But I also think they need to be urged and encouraged - pushed out the door to go in and visit other people and talk about what is going on. (pp. 7-8)

Debra would like to see teachers "have every opportunity to read" and to "believe that it will work in the long run - although it may not look like it today. "But, I think we're missing time" (p. 8).

Are Developmentally Appropriate Practices Appropriate for Teachers Too?

It was quite telling that a number of teachers and principals who talked with me about the DAP policy drew parallels between what they believed the policy recommended that teachers provide for student learning and what they thought the district should provide for teacher learning. Not surprisingly, our experiences echoed those in the Boston Women's Teachers' Group (1983) who asked, "Can we expect schools to educate, encourage, and expand the horizons of our children if these same institutions serve to restrict and retard the growth of teachers?" (p. 3). Many of the teachers in Chadwick connected the learning needs of teachers and students directly. For example one appropriate practice mentioned several times in the First Grade Curriculum guide (1989) was the need for teachers to create ways for students to support each other in their learning. Margaret White said, "If we think that kids need to do that, how come we don't allow ourselves to do that? We can learn so much by interacting and cooperating" (4/16/91, p 9).

Another appropriate practice was for teachers to accept children's differences in rate of learning and to give them time to learn, to take children where they are and move them forward. The Chadwick "Philosophy for Early Childhood" stated the belief "that children learn best when individual development rates are valued and respected" (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 1). Lamenting the fact that the district asked her to change everything so fast and expected everyone to have all the practices in place immediately, Dolores Smith said, "If it works to let kids go at their own

pace, why can't we let that happen for teachers?" (7/22/92, p. 3). Teachers were asked to be at the same place in their learning even though we were told we would have "three to five" years to implement the changes. Some teachers had taken or been provided with many more opportunities to learn about and try out the "appropriate" practices before the policy was mandated, while teachers who had been "good teachers" and followed previous district policies were suddenly behind in their learning with the onset of DAP.

The First Grade Curriculum Guide (1989) listed the goal of the affective component of DAP as "for children to feel accepted, valued, and competent" (p. 34). Debra House connected risk taking for children and for teachers when she said, "They need to feel like they're in a place of trust and support and security where they can risk - just like the kids" (10/18/90, p. 4). As one teacher said about her students, "If you make them feel like they can do it and you make them feel good about themselves - they'll try anything and they'll stay at it" (7/31/92, p. 7). Other teachers used almost those same words when they described their principals.

At other times, the parallels were not explicitly stated, but seemed obvious to me in many conversations. The First Grade Curriculum Guide delineated the role of the teacher employing developmentally appropriate practices as one in which the teacher gives up some control and realizes that the child is in charge of her or his learning. As one teacher said about one of her colleagues who was having difficulty giving up some control in the classroom, "You can't be an autocratic, controlling person and have this be successful" (6/3/91, p. 6). The teachers and principals felt that trust in their decisions was diminished by many mandates which grew out of the DAP policy. In fact, the policy itself could be viewed as an infringement on our right to choose and to be in control of our learning. While Central Office

Administrators said they wanted to give people time, the time simply wasn't there and, as a result, directives were issued. It was difficult to trust that teachers would change on their own and difficult to maintain the optimism expressed by one teacher about her students, "I believe they can do it, you know?" (4/16/91, p. 6). Instead, debate was not allowed and decision making was limited to a narrow band of alternatives considered appropriate, and time for learning was constricted. We were asked to provide our students with opportunities to make choices, but many teachers felt that their own opportunities for choice had been severely limited by the policy.

The Chadwick "Philosophy for Early Childhood" affirmed a belief that "children learn best when they have opportunities to engage in all aspects of the learning process: exploration, acquisition, practice, and application" (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 1). Most teachers, however, were asked to function in the application aspect of their own learning. Before the onset of DAP, the "grass roots" teachers had been exploring their own teaching; they had gradually acquired ideas and theories which they tried out or practiced and applied in their classrooms. They talked informally with their colleagues to share their observations and support each other. After the DAP policy was mandated, however, many teachers were required to apply practices other people had decided were appropriate. They were essentially denied the same learning opportunities which they were to provide for their students and which some of their colleagues had had.

Another parallel is one which occurred to me as I reread Don Holdaway's book, *The Foundations of Literacy* (1979). The book had been recommended to me by Patrick Shannon during one of his visits to Chadwick for Project S.O.A.R.R. and I decided to use it for a university literacy course I was to teach in the fall of 1991. At the time I reviewed Holdaway's book, I was

also transcribing audio-taped interviews with participants in this study. I was struck by one paragraph in the chapter titled, "A New Conservatism":

We have seen that the search for THE way in which children should be taught is a falsifying exercise. Children approach literacy by many different paths in the same way as they approach learning to talk by many different paths. All the paths they do follow successfully are purposeful and meaning-oriented, winding through the terrain and around the obstacles in intelligent and personal ways. The terrain is different for each learner. Whether or not your temperament, your dialect, your cultural background, your inherited difficulties, your mother, your father, your teacher, or your intelligence forms the largest obstacle you must pass - always the learning is a personal thing. Any approach to literacy must allow the individual learners to pick their own way - always in the company of guiding and sustaining friends. (p. 191)

The developmentally appropriate practices mandated by the policy created a sense (if not implying a fact) that "THE WAY" to teach young children had been discovered, based on research, and that teachers simply needed to put those practices into place and students would learn to a higher degree and in a more motivated manner than they had before. The policy was a sincere effort on the part of the Chadwick administration and School Board to improve the educational opportunities for all the children in the district. The Early Childhood Task Forces researched "the literature" and presented a well-documented case which they used to convince the district's policy-makers that the DAP policy would reflect the most recent expert thinking about how to teach young children. There were many teachers in the district who already used these practices and there were many others who saw benefits for student learning and were anxious to become involved. Some who were not anxious to become involved in the policy became advocates once they began to see positive results with their children.

Unfortunately, in spite of these good intentions, the district overlooked, or simply could not provide for, learning opportunities for all the adults who attempted to educate those children. If we could have seen the teachers as

learners with the same understanding that Holdaway had for the children, we might have created more optimal learning opportunities for all the learners in Chadwick. If learning was "understood as a personal thing" which teachers approach from many "different paths," and if teachers were allowed to wind through "the terrain and around the obstacles in intelligent and personal ways," then the learning for us could also have been "purposeful and meaning-oriented." Teachers must be allowed "to pick their own way" and receive support, encouragement, modeling and feedback from colleagues, parents, and other educators - "guiding and sustaining friends" (Holdaway, 1979, p. 191).

Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) said that educational reform needs to become a different type of "steady work" with reforms which "originate in the practice of teaching rather than in expert advice and external standards" (p. 4). The DAP policy was a top-down mandate originating in expert advice and external standards but also in the existing practices of some district teachers. In spite of grass-roots support, there were constraints on successful implementation which emanated from several sources. Many teachers had to learn how to teach subjects such as math and reading in very different ways. Technical supports such as textbooks and tests, which had previously signaled that education was occurring in an effective and scientific way, were removed resulting in the loss of those supports for teachers as well as making the schools look less like the schools the community remembered and trusted from their own experiences (Meyer & Rowan, 1978). Teachers, who had been "deskilled" of their own judgment of what and how to teach and of determination of student progress by the use of those technical supports, were now asked to be reskilled in a different set of approved procedures over which many felt they had little autonomy. Our work became so intensified

that we had no time to keep up with everything let alone relax or attempt to have conversations about our work (Apple, 1986). Other district policies served to contradict the philosophy of DAP, which caused confusion and further complicated implementation. The Chadwick district's need to comply with state mandates for student achievement testing and its need to promote public confidence by demonstrating that students could learn well using the mandated practices produced pressures for teaching to the tests, which was antithetical to the goals of the policy. Policies which might have supported DAP, such as those to reduce class size, to provide staff development opportunities within the school day, and to sanction spring parent/teacher conferences, were never instituted.

I said in Chapter One, however, that this dissertation is also a story of possibility. I believe that our experiences in implementing the DAP policy point to the need to change the culture of schools to create space for learning about learning and teaching, so that, as a result, the "steady work" of real educational reform can originate in the complex and uncertain practice of teaching. The next chapter is my effort to explain why this "steady work" is necessary and how it might possibly occur.

Chapter Six

IN THE COMPANY OF GUIDING AND SUSTAINING FRIENDS

When I began this study, I was curious about whether it might be possible for educational reform to originate in the practice of teaching as Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) suggested. I also wondered if our efforts to implement reform in the Chadwick Community School district might contribute to the discussion about that possibility. There was wide-spread support for DAP and many teachers had already begun to use the practices that the policy recommended, so there were some aspects of the policy that did arise from existing teaching practices. These were practices I felt that I wanted to use, and, to a great extent, they were practices I felt that I had always used in my teaching. However, the policy was also based upon "expert advice and external standards" (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988, p. 4) - recommendations of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Early Childhood Committee of the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), who advised that young children are unique in their approach to learning and therefore need particular practices that are appropriate for their development. The Chadwick district mandated DAP as an effort to infuse our teaching with child-centered practices in the hope that we would be able to provide optimal learning for our students.

As we worked to implement the recommended practices, however, we became more and more aware of the contradictions between the kinds of learning opportunities the policy recommended for students and the process by which the teachers were able to learn about the policy and to implement it. Some of the contradictions were to be found within the district's "Philosophy for Early Childhood," which espoused

a respect for individual learning styles and the theory that children construct their own knowledge through concrete, real-life experiences. The overall goal is to develop a disposition in children that encourages their seeking of challenges and effective persistence in search of learning. (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 1)

The policy's official view was that "knowledge is constructed through concrete, real-life experiences"; however, the ways in which teachers were to come to know the theory behind the policy and were to understand how to use the practices which were considered appropriate reflected a different district view. The teachers were to create environments in their classrooms which enabled children to "acquire, adapt and apply knowledge as they construct new or expanded concepts" (First Grade Curriculum Guide, 1989, p. 37). This involved encouraging children to "develop their own criteria for classifying," "to reach their own conclusions," "to attempt multiple approaches"; teachers were to "emphasize the process of children's thinking" (p. 38). The teachers, however, were provided with a list of practices that were not open to dispute because of their solid base in research and in "the literature" on early childhood education. Even though we were told to implement the practices in our own ways and to work slowly toward full implementation within three to five years, many felt pressured to get the practices in use almost immediately because previously used materials were, in many cases, no longer available. Also, many teachers felt obliged to use the practices as soon as possible because they trusted that their use would improve student learning and that previous practices had somehow impeded learning. By employing those practices, they also would be considered professional - members of the group of Chadwick teachers now seen as "very good teachers."

The policy itself and staff development sessions to learn about the policy stressed specific practices and much emphasis was placed on drawing

lines between what was appropriate to do and what was inappropriate.

Whereas the teachers were to support the children in their attempts and encourage their approximations in their learning, teachers felt they had little time and little support from administrators or parents for their own attempts and approximations; the primary concerns the teachers expressed for themselves were "Am I doing it right?" and "Just tell me what to do and I'll do it." Rather than reflect on the meaning of DAP and possible implications for learning, teachers scurried to learn how to do the practices or resisted learning them because "powers that be" were telling them how to teach.

Another contradiction had to do with the understanding of risk taking. The policy asked teachers to involve the children in open-ended, problem-solving situations, and to guide them in their development of personal ways to evaluate their efforts. We were to support children in the risks involved with adventurous learning by helping them feel confident in their abilities and secure in knowing that help and feedback were available. In a similar approach, the philosophy and list of practices were distributed to teachers with the recommendation that each of us put the practices in place in our own ways in our classrooms - to problem solve and support our responses. However, the policy seemed so clear about the direct connections between research and theory and classroom practice that the uncertainties we experienced as we made our attempts seemed like failures or as some inadequacy on our part. Some of us had extremely supportive principals, but the implementation of the policy still put us at great risk because we were doing things we had not done before, and we often did not fully understand why we were doing what we were doing, which caused us to have a difficult time explaining what we did to parents. Furthermore, our classrooms did not always look like the traditional classrooms which parents remembered and

expected, and our teaching methods were reminiscent of "open education" which was often translated as "the teachers don't teach." In other words, while we understood the risks involved in "real" learning for the children, we greatly underestimated the risks involved for the teachers and principals.

Another contradiction concerned resistance. The policy itself did not address the idea of student resistance, but many teachers experienced resistance by their students to some of the learning opportunities they were offered. We tried to provide children with choices and to design fun and engaging activities. However, we were often dismayed when children did not choose to participate or seemed oblivious to the value we found in what we provided or when our older students balked at writing about their learning in student logs or at providing personal, written responses to their reading. As teachers we failed to recognize the mental work which the kinds of activities we were providing required of the students. It was much easier for students to fill in worksheets than to compose a written response of one's own ideas. Another aspect of student resistance centered around the issue of choice. There were many times when we thought we were providing a range of choices for the children, but we overlooked the nature of those choices. Frequently, all of the choices were of our design and the children were apt to recognize that they really had a very limited range of choice. The choices might make sense in our adult way of thinking, but might be meaningless for the children.

As learners of the policy, there were times when teachers also resisted the overwhelming workload of both mental and physical labor the implementation of the practices required. It became clear that while the Policymakers and some of the teachers saw meaning in the practices and in the range of choices they thought they were providing, other teachers

recognized the limitations of the choices we were offered and were not always clear about the usefulness or meaning of the practices. Children often resist the unequal power relations between themselves and the teacher by acting out or by refusing to do their best work. If asked why they resist, children are unlikely to respond explicitly that their actions are due to this difference in power. The same was true with the teachers. However, teacher comments about difficulties with the policy often had much to do with "being told what to do" by the "powers that be" - an indication that power relations were at work with us as well.

The DAP policy might be viewed as a second wave reform growing out of the national reports. Such efforts have been identified as attempts to change the focus of learning from fact attainment to thinking skills and to transform teaching into a full profession (Odden, 1991) - a bold attempt to change teaching and learning in classrooms. Policy analysts have written that the success of reforms such as these are vital if education is to retain the support of the American public (Boyd, 1987; Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The policy was also an attempt to create more child-centered teaching in classrooms in the early elementary grades, a reform whose history does not hold many examples of long-term success (Cuban, 1984, 1986, 1990; Shannon, 1989). Elmore and McLaughlin admonish that if educational reform is to be successful, it must "originate in the practice of teaching." The DAP policy had some aspects of that, but basically it was based on the "expert advice and external standards" (Elmore and McLaughlin, 1988, p. 4) of the NAEYC and other national organizations.

In this chapter, I draw upon the experiences of both the "grass-roots" teachers and those who were swept up in the policy's mandates to describe possibilities for changing the culture of schools which could create space for

learning about learning and teaching - the kind of culture with which ongoing educational reform could originate in the complex and uncertain practice of teaching. First I offer my reasons for the need to create such learning environments.

WHY ARE OPTIMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS NECESSARY?

The difficulties my colleagues and I experienced and the contradictions we encountered, even in our best efforts and even with our most enthusiastic support, highlighted a need to think about educational reform differently. In the following section of this chapter, I explore the contradictions between what the policy recommended for student learning and the opportunities for teacher learning. I am attempting to demonstrate that we need to pay closer attention to what a policy requires of the practitioners and then provide the kind of environment which will support their opportunities to learn and, as a result, create the conditions for the possibility of educational reform to emerge from practice.

Difficulties with a Paradigm Shift

I started Chapter Five with a brief history of the Chadwick district's policies for materials and instruction leading up the implementation of the DAP policy. One of the difficulties we encountered as we moved from teaching with textbooks and direct instruction to such practices as using literature and real-life, problem-solving situations and a child-centered approach rested on our assumptions about what constitutes knowledge. The DAP policy presented a publicly stated view that "knowledge is constructed." All teachers and administrators were shown a video on "paradigm shifts," in which "visionaries" were identified as people in the business world who could see

beyond the present situation and shift their thinking to break out of old molds. I believed at the time that the intent with this video was to convince us that our old ways of thinking were no longer appropriate and that we had to join the movement led by the visionaries. I expressed my concern about this video when it was shown at our Kennedy staff meeting because it seemed that dichotomies were established. The apparent message of the video was to throw out all old ideas in favor of new. I said that I thought teaching was a lot like parenting and that while I always had more to learn, I would rather build upon current practices and understandings rather than move in a totally different direction. In the discussion which followed my comments, other teachers disagreed with me and felt that the time had come for this shift. Many of the teachers at Kennedy had been moving away from textbook instruction for quite some time. They said that the benefits they saw for their students should be available for all district students and that perhaps mandating change was the only way to get real change accomplished. Our changes had been made slowly, however, and we did not fully appreciate the difficulties involved in moving from one paradigm about knowledge to another. Even those teachers and administrators who felt they understood that "knowledge is constructed" were faced with contradictions between what the policy stated and ways in which the practices themselves were determined by the administration and the experts of NAEYC and the ASCD Early Childhood Committee and ways in which these were to be transferred to the teachers.

The Kennedy teachers who had begun to use trade books and math manipulatives and the writing process had been learning a lot about our teaching from each other, from resources published by such companies as the Wright Group, Richard Owens Publications, and Math Their Way support groups. We were also learning a lot from our students about what was of

interest to them, which choices we offered were seen as sincere, and how to manage a more democratic classroom environment. We had been thinking about practices, materials, and resources much differently than we had before. Hazel Brown admired the changes in our practice and she admired the child-centered teaching of the Beginnergarten teachers. She also wanted that kind of teaching for all Chadwick children.

A shift in thinking is not always accomplished simply because someone says you must change. Many teachers and administrators in Chadwick had come to view textbook materials and the people who created them in certain ways. One case in point is that of literacy. We had been told that basal reading materials are created scientifically by reading experts and that by using these materials our students would learn to read well. Professors who taught the courses we took at local universities, college textbooks, and national research journals had supported basal reading instruction so exclusively that it appeared that no other approach made sense. According to Patrick Shannon, who has researched relationships between textbook instruction and literacy learning, most school districts tend to rely on commercial reading materials to maintain public confidence in the reading programs because these materials appear to assure the public that district standards are high and that the methods used are efficient and effective. Maintaining public support is so important, he writes, that to protect against teachers' attempts to use materials subjectively, teachers often have to be "controlled by some external technology in order to render it sufficiently predictable in the production of verifiably literate students" (1989, p. 75). This was the case in Chadwick previous to DAP, when emphasis on the use of reading texts required teachers to submit students' end-of-book test answer sheets to Central Office for scoring and recording.

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Shannon maintains that a particular view of knowledge is evident when teachers are the support system for the textbook and when standardized, commercial materials form the driving force of reading lessons:

Left unexamined and untouched...is the assumption that knowledge is a thing separate from the process of knowing - that knowledge can be produced outside the context of classrooms and then simply implanted in students' minds in some way. Despite basal publishers' and reading experts' rhetoric to the contrary, this separation of knowledge from knowing is central to the rationalization of reading programs wherein the basal publishers...determine what knowledge is worth knowing, and then, teachers around the U.S. transfer this knowledge from basals to their students. (Shannon, 1989, p. 123)

Shannon contrasts this view of knowledge with one which understands that "knowledge and knowing are dialectically related and inseparable - that knowledge is nothing more than the product of individuals involved in the social process of coming to know something" (p. 123). He says, "Knowledge is not a gift from others, but a gift to oneself - the result of curiosity, action, uncertainty, judgment, and **conversation**" (p. 123, emphasis added). This latter view of knowledge is the one which the DAP policy wanted teachers to shift toward, but coming so close on the heels of knowledge as something delivered within a text to be taught and tested, the shift was very challenging for many people to make.

Shannon is one of many researchers, including Apple (1986) and Cuban (1984, 1986, 1990), who have reported about the persistence of teacher-centered practices in the face of recent and age-old understandings about the importance of student-centered classrooms. Contributing more recent observations to their reports is Judith Langer (1991), who looked at literacy and schooling and found that it was not until the 1980s, in response to "the incorporation of sociolinguistic and anthropological conceptions of literacy events and literacy environments into studies of literacy that research into literacy processes and instruction united" (p. 10). The necessary assumption

undergirding this work is that "use shapes thinking and learning, and that the contribution of context and culture cannot be overstated in what is learned and how" (p. 10). Langer cited instructional advances which grew out of this work as "whole language, writing process, and writing across the curriculum" - all practices mandated by the DAP policy. She went on to say, however, "Yet, to date these movements remain nascent, having no widespread effect on achievement" (pp. 10-11), because "for changes to occur, new notions of what literacy means and how it can be learned are in order" (p. 11). She found that part of the difficulty, even for teachers who are committed to learn new approaches such as writing process, is that

Their attempts to focus on more thoughtful writing activities were undercut by their deeply rooted views of their role as "transmitter" of knowledge - and with it their overarching concern with diagnosing what students needed to learn, teaching the missing information, and testing to evaluate the success of that teaching. This pattern of test-teach-test left even the best intentioned teachers with little room to encourage students to think, muse, and grow as writers and readers. (p. 14)

The sociocognitive view that Langer describes grew out of theories on language and literacy learning, psychology, anthropology, and sociolinguistics; it is rooted in the belief that learners do not learn rule-governed systems such as language by having the rules presented to them by others and then practicing the rules:

On the contrary, they learn such rules in the process of interacting with others to complete tasks in meaningful and functional situations. Routines develop as learners internalize the principles of approaches to that work - and they revise and refine their skills with repeated practice in functional settings. (pp. 17-18)

According to Langer, this view leads to "substantive change in the ways in which literacy learning and issues of schooling are addressed." Educators need to pay attention to "ways in which literacy is used, what is valued as knowing, how it is demonstrated and communicated, and the kinds of thinking as well as content knowledge that result" (p. 18). The environments

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which are more likely to encourage students to think and behave in these ways are "social contexts in which there are shared problems to solve or issues to discuss." There will also be situations where there is "more than one right answer" and where any answer "will need to be shared with and justified to other people who may disagree or misunderstand" (Langer, 1991, p. 18).

To some extent, this is the view presented by the DAP policy about literacy as well; however, we had no discussions about social contexts, diversity in what counts as literacy, or the role of culture¹ - nor were such issues evident in either the NAEYC documents or the DAP policy itself. Also, the ways in which the teachers were treated was a counter indication to any consensus within the district about the kind of learning Langer described. Grass-roots teachers learned to do what they did through a "process of interacting with others to complete tasks in meaningful and functional situations" - they had recognized problems or difficulties in their teaching and had sought personal ways to address those problems. In doing so, they developed or refined teaching skills, but they also created a different kind of learning environment in their classrooms. The teachers who had followed previous textbook, direct-instruction mandates were provided with the practices as "rule-governed systems" by which to learn. Teachers had little room to "think, muse, and grow."

The contradictions in what the DAP policy espoused as a definition of knowing or learning serve to show how difficult it is to move from the transmission model to an understanding of the personal construction of

¹ The DAP policy presented the NAEYC view of appropriate practices which has been criticized for its exclusion of the roles of culture and social context in a child's "development." Excellent sources for a review of the criticisms include David Engleby (1986), Jean La Fontaine (1986), and Bruce Mallory and Rebecca New (1994).

knowledge. As David Cohen and Carol Barnes (1993a) found in their investigations into the possibilities of policies to provide learning opportunities for those who implement them, it is difficult for policymakers to break away from the transmission model themselves. The ambitious DAP policy came on the heels of the transmission model, textbook-based, Madeline Hunter approach. While district policymakers meant to move away from that to demand a more thoughtful and intellectual approach to teaching and to empower teachers to create their own interpretations of practice, it became more expedient simply to tell the teachers what it was they were to do. They wanted teachers to understand that students would approach their learning in individual ways affected by their previous experiences and their self-confidence; however, the time for such learning for teachers was not available. We did not have the time to work together to construct shared belief or understanding. Cohen and Barnes also found few instances "in which policymakers or program managers engaged educators in extended instructional conversations that were designed to encourage the desired learning" (p. 210). The policymakers in their studies, much like those in Chadwick, had been in the habit of telling learners what they should learn, without much attention to what teachers thought, already knew, or understood the policy to mean.

The grass-roots teachers had taken it upon themselves to learn in ways Langer and Shannon describe. Their own curiosity, uncertainty, searching for answers to problems which they had personally recognized, and continuing conversations with other teachers led them to move slowly and deliberately toward a greater infusion of student-centered practices. If the district had been able to provide all the teachers with the same kinds of learning environments which Langer envisioned, rather than receiving the

district's solution to a problem, we would have set our own problems as well as attempted to find solutions, and we would have had to defend our stances and our beliefs to all - even to those who disagreed with us. Rather than have particular practices mandated, a more optimal learning environment would have provided us with an on-going process of "interacting with others to complete tasks" in our classrooms and schools - "meaningful and functional situations" (Langer, 1991 pp. 17-18). Our knowledge would develop as we worked together to make sense of what we observed and did, and we would be more likely to "internalize the principles of approaches to that work." We would help each other move from the transmission model of learning which had been the basis of our teaching to a clearer and more cohesive understanding of what it means to "construct meaning." District policymakers did want all of those things for us; however, circumstances such as the perceived necessity to get the practices quickly into place and the reduced time available for staff development, coupled with the inability to realize the amount of teacher learning required for such a paradigm change, undermined even the best of intentions.

From Textbook Experts to Early Childhood Experts

The DAP policymakers wanted to empower teachers to decide on materials and methods by officially permitting us to move away from reliance on the textbook experts; however, new experts were identified in their stead which in many ways served to contradict the intent of the empowerment. For example, the "Rationale" Hazel Brown presented to the Chadwick School Board in spring, 1988, to garner support for the DAP policy cited ninety-four research reports. Administrators and, later, teachers told me that the DAP

policy was based on research. The following excerpt is typical of the statements made in the Rationale document:

Development in all domains - cognitive, physical, social and emotional- progresses through a series of sequential and hierarchical stages which are universal and predictable (Piaget, 1950; Hunt, 1961; Bloom, 1964; Erikson, 1950). Stages cannot be skipped (Hymes, 1964). Bypassing or trying to push children through developmental stages contributes to children's early school failure, their dislike of learning, and will likely affect their future learning because of the development of poor self-concept (Werner, 1984; Federlein, 1984; Hymes, 1964; Gillespie, 1984, Elkind, 1982). (Program Improvement Plan, 1988)

I take exception with some of the interpretations of the research cited here, but those difficulties aside, the view expressed is that "the literature" on educating young children is in agreement about the need for the DAP policy. Barritt and Marshall (1992) point out that "educators often cite 'what we know' on the basis of what is known via 'the literature.'" As researchers and educators themselves, they add, "We have witnessed the ways in which such references close down discussions rather than open them up" (p. 4). The version of research found most consistently in research journals is "one that sees research as the search for facts and truths about classrooms, teaching, children, learning, and the conditions necessary to ensure success" (p. 10). They know few researchers who continue to accept as either possible or desirable the separation of the knower from the known and even fewer who see themselves "as searching for Truth" (p. 11, emphasis in original). However, among their colleagues there are still arguments about multi-cultural education or the number of hours needed for methods courses necessary to ensure that new teachers are prepared to teach subject matter knowledge. They say, "We are no longer surprised that such seemingly incompatible contradictions exist within the same world, system, institution or individual" (p. 12). While they do not think it is possible to escape "our collective history or our own inconsistencies," they

do believe that educators as well as others (citizens, students, policy makers) can be helped to recognize the shifting epistemological ground that underlies such discourse.... [and] to examine and reflect upon the practices and discourses in which they participate. (p. 12)

Barritt and Marshall would like to view research as a rhetorical process, as texts created by authors who make choices about how to present what they have learned and what parts to share of all that was learned. This is difficult for many to do or accept, because it is the research form which identifies the profession and is controlled by a "very narrow view of science." Those who know how the form works and can cite "the literature" belong to "the hierarchies of expertise and can call themselves professionals" (p. 15). They point out that relying on "the literature," however, ignores the relationship between educational researchers and the people who cite it. They contrast the statement "to know" in the natural sciences, where it makes sense to say we know about genes based on the "the literature," and in education, where researchers study human lives so "it seems at least an overstatement to suggest that those who speak with the authority of research are the only ones with the authority 'to know':"

Saying that "the literature" represents what "we know" suggests that other knowledge is part of the unknown. It suggests that "the literature" is the background of certainty against which the uncertainties of ordinary, daily life are seen. (p. 15)

Donald Schön (1983) supports this contention when he says that the university, and thus researchers, are committed to a "*particular* epistemology, a view of knowledge that fosters selective inattention to practical competence and professional artistry" (p. vii, emphasis in original). Thus the profession elevates its forms of knowing and separates itself from other educators - teachers and parents.

Magda Lewis and Roger Simon (1986) point out, however, that it is not the theories or the literature itself which serve to oppress voices, it is people:

In that people are differentially placed socially, politically, and economically, there can be no text that one can claim as displaying a rational, neutral, androgynous form. To the extent that academic discourse appears objective and distances (and is understood and privileged in this way) it becomes a vehicle for domination. It devalues alternative perspectives, understanding, and articulation of experience. It denies the lived reality of difference as the ground on which to pose questions of theory and practice. It favors one set of values over others as they are generated by the multiplicity of human experiences. (p. 469)

Lewis and Simon agree with Barritt and Marshall in that one way to remove part of the separation is to include students, teachers, parents, and others who are concerned about education to "be part of the profession's discussions" (p. 16).

Seymour Sarason (1990) submits that inattention to power relationships such as that between "the literature" and practitioners, and between researcher knowledge and teacher knowledge, is one major reason why educational systems have been "intractable" to reform:

There is, I have come to conclude, a ubiquitous feature of complex human systems that should inform thinking and action in regard to educational reform. It is a feature that, if not taken seriously, invites failure. This is the fact that any social system can be described in terms of power relationships. Power is distributed unequally among the members of the system, and there is always a rationale for this unequal distribution of power. (p. 27)

The designation of those who have the power to "know" from those who must take that knowledge is but one kind of power relationship Sarason recognizes; however, he says that "any effort to deal with or prevent a significant problem in a school system that is not based on a reallocation of power - a discernible change in power relationships - is doomed" (p. 28).

The reliance on "the literature" and research as an end-point in discussion served to quiet most voices of dissent or question. Some teachers felt free to dismiss the research as being done by those who do not know our classrooms and do not know what teachers experience every day. Other teachers felt that if the research says that this is what we must do to provide

better learning opportunities for young children, then we must try to do what is asked without question - "Who are we in the face of such experts?" Our expressions of doubt and anxiety were generally directed inwardly - "What am I doing wrong?" - rather than at questions related to the advisability of the philosophy or the appropriateness of the practices. Relying on expert knowledge encouraged us to dismiss various aspects of the policy, to embrace them without reflection, or to attempt to show that the experts were wrong.

Uncertainties and the Issue of Voice

The role of "the literature" in presenting certainty amidst our day-to-day teaching - and the many anxieties and uncertainties expressed by me and many of the educators who talked with me - is highlighted by Joseph McDonald (1992). He says that "chief among the conspirators of certainty are the entrepreneurs of school improvement" who proclaim to have good ideas, but the ideas are fixed. "Just teach *what we say* and *as we say*, argue these entrepreneurs, and all the ambiguities of your worklife will disappear like so many vapors clouding the real thing" (p. 2, emphasis in original). Research-to-practice initiatives give teachers an inappropriate sense of certainty about their work. He says, "Whenever they teach, teachers must to some extent swallow the uncertainty they feel, believe wholeheartedly in their goals and efforts, even though riddled by doubt" (pp. 5-6).

Donald Schön (1983) adds to the discussion about uncertainty when he writes that competent practitioners usually know more than they can say, and as a result, they inflate the dichotomy between the "hard" knowledge of university science and scholarship and the "soft" knowledge of "artistry and unvarnished opinion" (p. viii). When we rely on "hard" knowledge or expert advice as the primary basis for our teaching, our insecurities are magnified.

However, Schön and others have come to realize that "the situations of practice are not problems to be solved but problematic situations characterized by uncertainty, disorder and indeterminacy" (pp. 15-16).

Instead of relying on expert advice, which seems so clear and clean and which leads teachers to believe they must be doing something wrong when things do not work out so well, McDonald believes that

an honest accounting of the uncertainties in the craft of teaching can help open those doors, encourage collegiality and experimentation, and **promote an ethos of continuous rather than periodic or sporadic improvement.** (1992, p. 8, emphasis added)

The DAP policy attempted a difficult kind of reform - one designed to change teaching practices and classroom routines, but it did not, in McDonald's words, fully "acknowledge the uncertainty of teaching" (p. 7). We felt that we had to present a confident picture to our administrators and parents and yet we worried that what we were doing might not help students learn. We worried that we might not be up to the tasks or that we would not recognize students who needed more support, and, therefore, they might not make optimal growth in learning. One way to acknowledge this uncertainty, McDonald says, is to listen carefully to the voices of teachers.

The implementation process of the DAP policy, however, limited the ability of policymakers to attend to the voices of the teachers. The press of time to get the practices into use worked against offering the teachers a dialogic way of thinking and learning either about the theories and philosophy upon which the policy was based or about the practices which were viewed as "appropriate." The ways in which the policy was implemented silenced voices of uncertainty rather than allowing them to be heard. As opposed to "honoring the skeptic," as one principal requested, we allowed only those who felt confident and agreed with the philosophy to voice their views in sanctioned ways. Teachers and principals felt silenced when they

attempted to ask questions or express concerns. Parents were allowed to vent their anger at School Board meetings, but instead of being provided with a forum for discussion as they requested, they were patronized with lectures about the values of the practices - whole language, in particular. Teachers who supported the policy and who might have shared their own initial and continuing uncertainties were also silenced when their colleagues expressed outrage about the external control over their teaching - again. The questions which were allowed to be raised always centered on the "what" and the "how" of the policy. Questions such as "Why?" and "What if it is otherwise?" (Church, 1992, p. 242) were not entertained. We provided no role for and could find no value in our dissenters.

In his study of teacher responses to reform efforts to restructure schools, Andy Hargreaves (1994) was especially concerned with the issue of voice. He suggests

that teachers' voices and experiences should be understood not in terms of romantic and gratuitous celebrations of the teachers' craft or of missionary commitments to building and justifying teachers' professionalism, but in terms of the real contexts of how teachers' voice and experiences are actually developed and used. (p. 2)

The teachers and principals who talked with me did not speak with one voice. Some voices expressed a history of resistance in a variety of forms. Other voices were passive and others were resistant to change. The viewpoints expressed by my colleagues reflected the range evidenced in Joyce Antler and Sari Knopp Biklen's collected stories of women attempting *Change in Education* (1990). Some of the women were active agents of change, some were conservators actively resisting change, and others saw themselves as victims of change.

When we do not recognize that there are multiple voices, we expect that everyone understands the efforts for change and the process of change in

the same way. Marjorie Roemer (1991) found in her work with English teachers trying to reform the teaching of writing, which, like the DAP policy, had "teacher discovery and negotiation at the heart of it," that it took her and her colleagues "a long time to realize that not all of us had understood the project in this way" (p. 441). This was because, also like our Chadwick experience, they "never spoke about our individual values as teachers, what we wanted to preserve, protect, or foster, or what we hoped to improve" (p. 441).

Inattention to the role of dialogue was evident in the district's view of empowerment. The Chadwick Central Office administrators felt that they were empowering the kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers to decide for themselves how to implement the "appropriate practices." However, many of the teachers did not feel empowered. Roger Simon (1992) wrote that when the term empowerment is used in education, it is a response to unjust relations which have previously constrained people from equal participation in a group or community. "To empower in this perspective is to counter the power of some people or groups to make others 'mute.' To empower is to enable those who have been silenced to speak" (p. 143). Many of the participants in my study, however, felt as if they had been made mute by a new group of people designated as "the privileged"/"the competent" (p. 143). Simon's ideas are enhanced when we consider how dialogue plays a major role in his view of empowerment, to which I will return shortly. First, however, I provide an example from DAP implementation as a frame for that discussion.

Many teachers did not feel empowered because, at some level, they recognized the contradictions between what the district was telling them to do for their students and what the district was doing to them as they worked within the organization. This recognition was not always consciously

expressed, but it manifested itself in the ways in which some of the teachers resisted the policy and ways in which teachers who supported the policy felt silenced and betrayed. My own sense of this betrayal may concretize one contradiction in the issue of empowerment.

One aspect of the betrayal that I felt resulted from the limited opportunities the district provided for me to do the work both inside and outside of the classroom which the policy demanded. But my greater sense of betrayal had to do with the differences between what I understood the policy to mean and what I came to learn about the meaning attributed to the policy by the district's policy makers and how powerless I felt to do anything about those differences. This was especially true in regard to whole language. The district defined whole language in terms of a method of instructing young children to read based upon the way young children learn to talk and understand language. I agree, and perhaps areas of agreement such as this were what allowed me to feel aligned with the policy in general. The appropriate practices designated for whole language centered on "strategies for first attempting reading," "using literature to teach skills," "helping students set purposes for reading," and so on. To me, and to many of the teachers who were viewed as the "grass-roots" support, whole language also has a political nature. The whole language philosophy that I embrace and that I had assumed was part of DAP is a direct challenge not only to the ways we had traditionally taught language arts, but also to the ways in which children and adults are treated in schools. The district had jumped on the "whole language bandwagon" and many teachers claimed that they had become whole language teachers because they now use "big books," "teach skills in context," or have a "literature-based approach."

In an attempt to describe what makes whole language different as a view of teaching and learning, Carole Edelsky, Bess Altwerger, and Barbara Flores (1991) wrote that some school districts have done much the same thing with whole language as they did in the mid-1970s, when open education was distorted so that "open space was substituted for openness of ideas, learning centers for learning-centeredness" (p. 2). These districts tend to adopt the whole language label without understanding that it is "*profoundly* different from pre-dominant views about education" - something that creates backlash and confusions (p. 3, emphasis in original):

The best defense against being distorted as a trendy new method, being misrepresented by opponents, and being co-opted by publishers wanting to cash in on a market is knowledgeable teachers. Knowledgeable teachers are also the center of a strong movement. By knowledgeable teachers we mean teachers who know about the language and learning theory behind their holistic preferences, who develop an articulate, coherent framework, who measure their practice against that underlying theoretical framework, and who, as a result, claim full status as professionals... (p. 3)

According to Edelsky et al., whole language teaching does not mean checking off a list of supposedly whole language activities (which Chadwick teachers were asked to do for the grade level evaluations of DAP); rather it is "the teacher's stated beliefs, the character of classroom interaction, and the teachers' and students' underlying intentions." It is "the *deliberately* theory-driven practice - not simply the behaviors - that make a classroom whole language" (p. 7, emphasis in original).

This view is supported by John Willinsky (1990), who attempted to find common ground within an educational phenomenon which he called "New Literacy." He said that classroom programs, such as those calling themselves "whole language," share "a common core of radical assumptions about teacher and student, and about language and literacy" (p. 3). The programs are not innovative in the use of classroom strategies, but rather in the concept of

literacy which underlies these "explorations in the teaching of students to read and write" (pp. 3-4). He said,

I am contending that beneath these teaching strategies is a desire on the part of the educator to restructure the life of the classroom through an approach to literacy which challenges conventions of classroom organization and the typical roles of teacher and student. (p. 4)

In contrast to the "whole language" tenets espoused by the DAP policy, "New Literacy" classrooms aim "not to create 'functional literacy,' but 'powerful literacy,' 'political literacy'" (p. xii). He admonishes that educators must "look at educational activity, even that which seems to be aimed at genuinely reforming everyday practices, as inherently *contradictory*" (p. xi, emphasis in original).

One key whole language belief is that reading and writing are learned by really reading and writing, not through drills and exercises; and therefore, reading and writing should be what goes on in schools. When basing teaching on whole language, teachers do not rely on texts designed for "instructional purposes," but use genuine texts - children's literature, songs, poems, recipes, directions. The difference between really reading and writing and doing exercises centers on purpose and meaning. In contrast, the staff development opportunities for DAP focused on making learning fun and providing more engaging activities and being sure to tell children the purposes for the reading and writing they did. But questions about "Which purposes?" and "Whose purposes are served?" and "Which meanings are emphasized?" were not addressed. Exercises, as such, have no intrinsic meaning or purpose for the student (Edelsky et al., 1991, pp. 8-9).² When we did not discuss why workbooks and skill practice sheets were not appropriate

² There are many resources available for a more thorough understanding of whole language. Some of the most helpful to me have been the following: Brian Cambourne (1988), Courtney Cazden (1992), Carole Edelsky (1991), Donald Graves (1991), Judith Newman (1985), and Constance Weaver (1990).

for young children, we were able to create our own artificial exercises which we thought were appropriate because they were based on the literature we provided.

The implementation plan for the DAP policy was based on the premise that teachers were to take the principles and learn to implement them in their own ways, but in actuality, teachers were expected to do certain practices and not consider the "Why?" and "What if?" For example, when Yetta Goodman was invited to speak to the kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers in March, 1990, Hazel Brown and several district principals were critical of her sessions. They said that Dr. Goodman talked in generalities and about "political issues," but did not offer the teachers any concrete suggestions about how to implement whole language. The complaint was that the district had spent a lot of money on Dr. Goodman, thinking that she was "so knowledgeable" about whole language, but yet she did not tell teachers anything they didn't already know (Personal journal, 3/14/90).

The district truly wanted teachers to change their practices, but the dialogue was limited to "doing it right" which silenced many of those the policy was meant to empower. As whole language became co-opted by the DAP policy, the political aspects were removed and it became simply a more appropriate way to teach strategies. However, even those "non-political" whole language tenets which teachers were to institute in their classrooms were not modeled in the learning opportunities the district provided for the teachers. We became so concerned with classroom strategies that we did not come to understand fully the concept of literacy which was foundational.

For example, some teachers worried that many of the DAP practices would not "work" for all of their students. These were often teachers in schools that had large populations of low socioeconomic families and their

concerns (when heard at all) were much like those expressed by Lisa Delpit (1988), who feels that minority children are being ill-served by liberal white teachers employing whole language and process writing. Delpit said that educators are ignoring the opinions and questions of minority teachers who wonder about the adequacy of the process approach. When I first read her opinions, I wanted to dismiss them as misinterpretations of what classrooms like mine were attempting to accomplish. However, as I continued to read and when I had opportunities to work in urban, predominantly African-American contexts, I was able to understand her concerns better. The assumption that people who questioned simply did not know enough or had misunderstood was also evident in Chadwick. Delpit's recommendation to those in our situation may have eased some of our learning difficulties: "Both sides do need to be able to listen, and I contend that it is those with the most power, those in the majority, who must take the greater responsibility for initiating the process" (p. 297).

My ideas about the political aspects of whole language were not included in the concept of whole language made explicit by the policy, nor were they what most people talked to me about in our conversations, but as teachers talked about what they liked about the new approaches for their children and for themselves, it was clear that whole language did center on the character of classroom interaction and did mean changing the environment for learning. Many teachers found that when they changed some practices, they were able to see their children differently and had more opportunity to learn from the children about what was appropriate for them. We just never got beyond surface issues in the district to find out what we really did mean.

I return now to Roger Simon (1992) to show how his views on empowerment and the critical element of dialogue might have helped the Chadwick educators raise individual concerns yet also come to some common understandings of the meaning of the DAP policy. Simon began his address to a U.S. conference of language arts educators by saying that he thought he shared the assumption of the conference,

that education is fundamentally about our hopes for the future given an understanding of current realities, that particular forms of educational practice offer both a particular version and vision of a future civic prospect and morality. (p. 139)

In order to explore the possibilities and open the question of how classroom practice might be related to the local and national future, Simon said,

We must find a way of talking about practice that *simultaneously* references on the one hand what as educators we might actually do with students *and* on the other the political/cultural/economic visions such practices support. (p. 139, emphasis in original)

Simon appreciated the word "pedagogy" used in the title provided for his conference session because he saw a distinction between "teaching," which he associated with "specific strategies and techniques to meet predefined, given objectives" (DAP?), and "pedagogy," which is a "more complex and extensive term" in which all aspects of educational practice come together. "In other words, to talk about pedagogy is simultaneously talk about the details of what students and others might do together *and* the cultural politics such practices support" (p. 140, emphasis in original). He views curriculum and its supporting pedagogy as a "version of our own dreams for ourselves, our children, and our communities." Because these dreams are never neutral, but are someone's dreams, and because they are implicated in a way of organizing a future for others, "they always have a political and moral dimension." Therefore, a discussion of pedagogy has to begin with a discussion of "educational practice as a form of cultural politics, as a particular way in

which a sense of identity, place, worth, and above all value is in-formed by practices which organize knowledge and meaning" (p. 140). He proposes that our "current problem and our future project" should be practice with the purpose to "expand what it is to be human and contribute to the establishment of a just and compassionate community within which a project of possibility becomes the guiding principle of social order" (p. 140). He sees this project beginning with a "critique of current realities." The critique suggests that "a contradiction exists between the openness of human capacities that we encourage in a free society and the social forms that are provided and within which we must live our lives," and that this contradiction is the starting point for "a project of possibility":

Such a project would reject the resolution of this contradiction between capacities and forms through narrowing of capacities to fit existing forms or through the narrowing of forms to fit preconceived, fixed, 'naturalized' notions of capacities. (p.140)

We would have to ask, "Who controls and defines what forms of education are available and who states what capacities are possible and acceptable?" In terms of the DAP policy, forms of education for the students were the "developmentally appropriate practices," including "whole language," and capacities were defined by developmental levels according to the "ages and stages" guidelines and "literacy levels" presented to each grade level summer workshop and distributed to the staff. For the teacher-learners, forms of education were staff development sessions consisting of "how-tos," and capacities were defined by the correctness with which practices viewed as appropriate were employed. Simon rejects these definitions and controls; he admonishes,

a project of possibility rejects a moral neutrality in relation to regulation which normalizes, renders natural, takes for granted and as simply 'obvious' what are in fact ontological and epistemological premises for a particular and historical form of social order. We need

to hold those who seek to narrow human possibility morally accountable! (p. 142)

A pedagogy which supports such a "project of possibility" includes an expanded definition of empowerment. In Simon's view, empowerment has to provide "a curricular and instructional agenda that enables students to draw upon their own cultural resources as a basis for engaging in the development of new skills and interrogating existing knowledge claims" (p. 143). If teachers can be viewed as learners, this would mean finding ways that "enable the full expression of multiple 'voices' engaged in dialogic encounter" (p. 143). Neither students nor teachers can continue to be silenced, because "an education that creates silence is not an education" (p. 143). In Simon's view empowerment would include all voices and would include the question, "Empowerment for what?" Without a vision for the future, pedagogy for empowerment can be simply reduced to a method for participation which "takes democracy as an end and not a means." According to Simon, "There is no moral vision other than the insistence on people having an equal claim to a place in the public arena" (pp. 143-144). But even then, something more is needed:

Teaching and learning must be linked to the goal of educating students to take risks, to struggle with ongoing relations of power, to critically appropriate forms of knowledge that exist outside their immediate experience, and to envisage versions of a world which is "not yet" - in order to be able to alter the ground upon which life is lived. (p. 144)

The DAP policy was an attempt to improve learning for children; however, the view of "improve" was based on the national reports, which want the children to achieve in competition with students in other countries and to maintain the U.S. superiority in the international marketplace. It was not a "pedagogy of possibility" either for the children or for the adults who were to teach them. None of us were invited to question "relations of power," "forms of knowledge," nor "to envisage versions of a world which is 'not yet.'"

And rather than demand to place these issues on the table for discussion, we became angry with our work overload and complained about being told how to teach, or we simply kept quietly doing our own thing in our classrooms - perhaps not fully realizing the source of our irritation. If we could have been empowered in the ways Simon outlines; if we could have had dialogues in which all voices could have been heard; if we could have had forums for our uncertainties, our concerns, and questions about our teaching and about the ways we felt powerless in the district's bureaucratic hierarchy, then perhaps we would have uncovered some of the roots of our resistance and continued the grass-roots efforts, helping each other learn "to teach against the grain" (Cochran-Smith, 1991)³ and move toward what might have been a pedagogy for empowerment. Instead, we floundered among misconceptions about meaning and about how to implement the mandates of the policy or we dug in our heels and decided to wait until this latest reform moved on with its predecessors.

It must be noted that the Central Office administrators were aware of the rhetoric on the need for teachers to talk with each other and to have time to learn new teaching practices. Networks were set up by Hazel Brown which combined grade level teachers from three schools. However, these networks were assigned pairings, had voluntary attendance, and were held after school hours without funds available to help teachers pay for the additional child-care required for their own children; the first few meetings of such networks

³ Marilyn Cochran-Smith (1991) used this phrase to talk about a way to reform teaching. It is based on Antonio Gramsci's (1916/1977) argument that "action is everyone's responsibility and that each individual, no matter how apparently powerless, was accountable for the role he played or failed to play in the larger political struggle" (p. 279). Cochran-Smith contends the most powerful way for new teachers to learn to "teach against the grain" is to work with experienced teachers who are struggling reformers in their own classrooms.

had lengthy district agenda items which virtually eliminated any possibility for teachers to discuss their own concerns or interests. Subsequent meetings were not restricted to assigned topics, but by that time many teachers were choosing not to participate. The well-intentioned networks had all the attributes of what Andy Hargreaves (1991) describes as "contrived collegiality." The purpose of this kind of collaboration is "less of evolutionary teacher development, than of implementing system initiatives..." (p. 24). What he would recommend to support teacher learning are "collaborative cultures." These relatively rare occurrences comprise "more spontaneous, informal and pervasive collaborative working relationships among teachers which are both social and task-oriented in nature" (p. 24).

Some individual schools did arrange ways for teachers to meet using funds from their "School Improvement Plans" to pay for substitutes while teachers participated in "peer coaching" or held discussions on "approved topics."⁴ Principals often tried to structure the schedule of special classes such as art, music, and physical education so that teachers at a grade level could meet. However, teachers then traded their forty-five minutes of time to prepare materials and deal with a few of the many things they needed to do in order to meet together. The press of the work sabotaged even the best efforts of principals to provide time for the teachers to talk together.

More in line with Hargreave's "collaborative culture" were the self-chosen weekly meetings of the first grade teachers at Kennedy. Such voluntary meetings were nonexistent in all other Chadwick elementary

⁴ When teachers wanted to arrange for substitute teachers for their classrooms in order to talk with each other, the topics for discussion had to be submitted in advance to Central Office for approval. Approved topics were those listed on the individual school's "Improvement Plan." Therefore, if teachers wanted to talk about literacy assessment and their school did not specify this topic on the School Improvement Plan (determined in the previous school year), they could not get approval for substitutes.

schools. When we first began these meetings in 1989, we met during our lunch time, but the learning specialist and principal knew we met then and would often come to our meetings to tell us a bit of news or whatever. We found that if we met after school, other people wanted to get home and would leave us alone. It is important to note that during 1989-90, none of the four of us teaching first grade had any young children at home. In fact, other than our responsibilities for dinner arrangements, the major family influence on our lives was concern about the health and care of aging parents. During 1990-91, when Connie North joined us and I taught a first and second combined class, we tried to begin our meetings immediately after school because Connie had a young son at home. The second grade teachers at Kennedy would meet informally, but because all of the other second grade teachers had young children, none could stay long after school. I should note, however, that our first grade meeting topics focused almost exclusively on practice. Those discussions frequently led us to our expressions of concern about individual students or practices which did or did not go well and what we observed with our students, but most of the time we dealt with very practical matters. We did not spend much of our time intellectualizing about the policy's philosophy.

No Provisions for Our Intellectual Labor

One reason for the absence of real dialogue among educators in the Chadwick district may be reflected in what Henry Giroux (1986) pointed out as a paradox in discourse about the crisis in public education outlined in the national reports. He said that while the crisis is attributed to a failure of the schools to prepare students for the demands of the "sophisticated

technological economy" or to think critically and solve problems, at the same time reformers have offered solutions

that either ignore the role of teachers in preparing learners to be active and critical citizens, or they suggest reforms that ignore the intelligence, judgment, and experience that teachers might bring to bear on such issues. (p. 33)

The result is that teachers are reduced "to the status of low-level employees"; and pedagogy is "reduced to the implementation of taxonomies"; "theories of teaching are increasingly technicized and standardized in the interest of efficiency..." (p. 33).

The Chadwick administrators would not believe that this paradox was representative of their views. They thought that by providing a framework with the DAP policy, teachers would be empowered to work it out for themselves, to reflect on how to implement the practices in their own classrooms. They wanted teachers to apply their "intelligence, judgment, and experience" to the ways in which they implemented the appropriate practices. However, the form of "intellectual labor" required was unavailable to teachers because the problem for which DAP was the answer was decided by the policymakers, and the intensity of the work required to put this answer into place in a short amount of time short-circuited such intellectualizing. This situation resulted in the perception that policymakers, in fact, devalued the necessity "of critical intellectual work" and placed most value on "the primacy of practical considerations" (Giroux, 1986, p. 34). The administrators thought they were giving teachers the power to decide, but the important decisions were made by "experts removed from the context of [our] classrooms" (p. 33). Teachers who had felt controlled and confined with the textbook mandate and the Madeline Hunter instruction model of the previous policies were pleased at first with the freedom the DAP policy seemed to provide for them. It did not take long, however, for people to realize that the

bureaucratic controls were still in place, even though the technical aspects had changed. In place of textbooks and EEEI, our teaching was to become the application of research-based "appropriate" methods to teach a curriculum which "was in place." According to Giroux (1986), the consequence of policy such as Chadwick's based on NAEYC guidelines and the mandated curriculum, was that "decisions over what counts as knowledge, as well as the form that knowledge takes within specific academic disciplines, is removed from the collective influence of teachers themselves" (p. 35).

A counter to such disempowering practices, according to Giroux (1986), would begin with the broader issue of "how to view educational theory in general" (p. 36). He feels that if educational theory is seen as a form of social theory, then "discourse on educational theory can be understood and interrogated as representing forms of knowledge and social practice that legitimate and reproduce particular forms of social life" (p. 36). In this view, educational theory is not seen as the application of objective scientific principles, but as "eminently political discourse having to do with questions of power" (p. 36). There is a need to "take seriously educational theory as a form of discourse that works to foster unity and critique in the interests of an emancipatory politics" (p. 37).

Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984) wrote of a related view of theory when they examined theoretical and methodological issues surrounding literacy research and instruction and reflecting on their changes in thinking on the way to "knowing." They understood the need to base their work upon existing beliefs and theories about language, but learned the importance of "methodological stances where reflexivity and self-correction is possible" (p. 84). They recognized "discernible psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic universals in the processes involved in language use and

language learning" (p. 105); however, their work with children opened new understandings and new questions about the notion of differences between strategies employed by children and adults. Teachers in Chadwick also raised such questions about their observations of students. For example, teachers found discrepancies between what the Curriculum Guide listed as attributes for various "literacy levels" and what the children actually did. During our conversations, however, the teachers attributed those mismatches to their own inadequacies with identification, rather than raised questions about the literacy level designations themselves.

Ann Berthoff (1987) also asks teachers to work out their own theory in dialogue with each other for reasons related to, but somewhat different from those expressed by Giroux. She dismisses the direct application in classrooms of such research as that supported by the National Institute for Education (NIE), saying that teachers must formulate their own questions in ways which unite theory and practice together. She said, "I want to claim that what we need is not what is called 'research,' but the kind of theory that is generated in dialogue among teachers" (p. 29). Teacher dialogue is the way, in Berthoff's view, to begin with theory and practice together, and to allow us to judge if what we meant to do is matched by what we did. "How can we know what we're doing; how can we find out where we're going, if we don't have a conception of what we think we're doing?" (p. 30) She does not dismiss theory, but seems to follow the notions presented by Harste et al. that "theory gives us perspective" (p. 32) and allows us a place to start from as we learn.

Giroux (1986) would like to see each teacher take on the role of the "resisting intellectual," who employs the "discourse of self criticism" as well as forms of critical analysis, questioning "ideological and material practices of domination," while being especially attentive to problems in everyday life

- particularly those related to classroom practices. Sounding much like Roger Simon, Giroux said,

The language of critique unites with the language of possibility when it points to the conditions for new forms of culture, alternative social practices, new modes of communication and a practical vision for the future. (p. 39)

Discourse plays a vital role in Giroux's view of the "resisting intellectual." He recommends that teachers form alliances among themselves to work both inside and outside of schools, to engage in projects designed to understand the "critical role that educators play at all levels of schooling in producing and legitimating existing social relations," and to begin to "communicate to each other about their common concerns" (p. 40). He said,

The discourse of the resisting intellectual takes the issues of community and liberation seriously and in doing so gives new meaning to the pedagogical and political necessity of creating the conditions for emancipatory forms of self and social empowerment among both educators and students. It is a struggle worth waging. (p. 41)

Resisting the Policy or the Power?

Another reason why creating an optimal learning environment for teachers is important has to do with the resistance often displayed in both overt and subtle ways to the DAP policy by teachers in the Chadwick district. Teachers found ways to do the practices on their own terms, often to the dismay of other teachers who thought of themselves as "truly whole language" or "really developmental." What seemed to be resistance as a result of a lack of understanding or disagreement with the intent of the policy may have been a product of the intensity of our work or the result of uneven relations of power. There were times, as I was talking with teachers in our interviews or when I encountered them in district meetings, when I felt that some chose to not teach certain things so that DAP would fail and they could say, "See, I told you those so-called experts don't know what they are talking

about." I had a difficult time understanding why a teacher would think it was acceptable not to teach letter/sound associations, for example. I cannot know if such decisions were based upon misunderstanding about the meaning of the policy or upon the power struggle over who decides what a teacher does in her own classroom.

Michael Apple (1986) has spent a lot of time learning about teachers and our work; he provides some important insights about how this resistance might come about. He submits that a process of "proletarianization" has had the consistent effect of providing teachers with little control over their work. This process has increasingly restructured teachers' jobs whereby teachers are "deskilled" by the encroachment of technological control procedures, such as management systems and pre-specified teaching competencies and procedures, in much the same way Shannon (1989) described in regard to the basal reading materials. Deskilling, according to Apple and Teitelbaum (1986), happens when skills which teachers have developed over years atrophy and are replaced with those needed for managing the new procedures. The opposite of proletarianized work is professional work - that which requires individual judgment and independence in making job decisions (Tabakin and Densmore, 1986). Many teachers had learned the skills of textbook management very well, and they saw that their students successfully learned the concepts and could pass the tests. They had been reskilled in learning those management techniques. DAP was removing the use of those skills as a basis for instruction and many teachers resisted such an intrusion.

It might seem that the DAP policy was attempting to move toward professionalism for the teachers and away from the technological controls of basal publishers, but it became obvious that other prescribed competencies and procedures simply took the place of teachers' manuals, texts, and

end-of-book tests. Also, the bureaucratic controls embodied in the "hierarchical social relations of the workplace" (Apple, 1983, p. 147) were still very much in place; even though they were less visible, they exhibited their presence in teacher frustration and resistance. Tabakin and Densmore found that for teachers, the organization of work activities is often essentially coercive in that they are presented with "what appear to be real choices," but these are "actually insignificant in substance and narrowly confined" (1986, p. 261). In order for the school system to run well, as with many social institutions, "critical reflection is actively discouraged" (p. 261).

Furthermore, as the teachers who had used basals and relied on the tests were forced to use other methods to teach and assess, they were at a loss about how to do that. The type of deskilling and reskilling which had occurred as they used the commercial materials made their implementation of the DAP policy much more challenging. The skills they now needed had either never been developed or were forgotten.

Apple maintains that women are more likely to be proletarianized than are men. Teaching is seen as women's work (Apple, 1985). (Over eighty-seven percent of the elementary teachers are women according to Apple. I have not seen statistics, but I would be surprised if the percentage of women who are kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers is not much higher than that.) Apple says sexist practices in recruitment and promotion and a general tendency to care less about the working conditions of women feed the proletarianization process. This is certainly supported by the anecdotal information provided by my participants and the difficulties elementary teachers have had in getting our own union members to support better working conditions for us. Although schools are organized around male leadership, Apple reports that teachers have carved out small places of power

and control to gain autonomy in our own classrooms. An example of attempts to make inroads into the control of classrooms is seen in the many science and math materials and programs created in the aftermath of Sputnik in the 1950s and 1960s, when there was increased pressure to standardize and legitimate content based upon professional materials developed by experts. Apple said, "It is the history of the state, in concert with capital and a largely male academic body of consultants and developers, intervening at the level of practice into the work of a largely female workforce" (pp. 36-37). It was not unusual, however, for such improvements as "new math" and "new science" to be taught in much the same way as the old. They became altered to fit into the existing practices which teachers had found successful. While many policy analysts blamed slow-to-change bureaucracies or conservatism by teachers and administrators, Apple looked at the minimal changes in structural terms and in labor process and gender terms:

The supposed immobility of the institution, its lack of significant change in the face of initial onslaught of such materials, is at least partly tied to the resistance of a female workforce against external incursions into the practices they had evolved over years of labor. (p. 38)

Apple admonished that while schools are state apparatuses and suffer the pressure to act in certain ways, especially in times of crisis, we should not expect the people within the schools to be passive followers of policies laid down from above.

Reformers have tried to legitimate educational intervention by appealing to a research base and to rationalize teaching with standardized, based-on-theory practices; this has not always had the results anticipated. One reason, according to Apple (1986), is the intensification of teachers' work which often accompanies such intervention. The symptoms of intensification include no time to relax or to go to the bathroom, having total absence of time

to keep up with one's field. Apple contends intensification is mental labor in the chronic sense of work overload that has escalated over time. He says that it destroys sociability. "Community tends to be redefined around the needs of the labor process. And, since both time and interaction are at a premium, the risk of isolation grows" (p. 42). The intellectual deskilling also involves being cut off from one's field, which leads to relying more and more heavily on ideas and processes provided by experts. The DAP policy carried a heavy load of new work for most teachers. We were so busy learning to do *Math Their Way*, teach reading using literature, create hands-on science activities, and plan centers and thematic instruction that we truly had little time to go to the bathroom.

It is important to understand, however, that not all of the intensification came from the district policymakers. Andy Hargreaves (1991) found in his study of a group of Canadian teachers' use of preparation time that

Many of the pressing demands and expectations of teaching often seemed to come from within the teachers themselves. So many teachers appeared to drive themselves with almost merciless enthusiasm and commitment in an attempt to meet the virtually unattainable standards of pedagogical perfection they set themselves. (p. 11)

Hargreaves' view is that much intensification in teachers' work comes from within themselves. Many of the teachers, and I think I would fall into this category myself, certainly put pressure on themselves. However, the pressure would have been much less if we had not been asked to see ourselves in a mirror of such perfection as the DAP policy seemed to hold.

I do not want to romanticize the roles that resistance and intellectualization play in the everyday lives of elementary school teachers. Most of my colleagues did not see themselves as resisters; although they wanted time to meet and talk with each other, they would not identify this

need as one to clarify beliefs or plan political action. In my tenure at Chadwick, I have spoken out against many district policies I felt were misguided or unjust; however, I had never thought of myself as a resister either. I always thought of myself as providing information which policymakers might not have considered because they are not as close to the children as I, nor do they spend the time in my classroom that might help them understand the conditions within which I teach. Apple (1986) understands that resistance is not necessarily an indication of a progressive stance on the part of teachers. He did say, however, that only as we "uncover the contradictions within and between the dynamics of the labor process and gender can we begin to see what effect such resistances may actually have" (p. 50). He explained,

It is by showing the sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory interconnections between class and gender, between paid and unpaid work, between home and school, that the real positions of teachers can be found. And it is by showing how these are embodied not in structures, but in agents, in real teachers with real hopes, dreams, fears and material circumstances...that possibilities for democratic action can be known. Only there can we truly identify what is progressive or not about any particular stance. (p. 188)

As teachers begin to recognize that the anger they feel has something to do with "the degenerating conditions of their labor" (p. 193), they may also begin to realize that, through dialogue with their colleagues and working together, they can bring about changes for themselves and for the children they teach.

In his book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization* (1990), Peter Senge based his definition of "dialogue" on the Greek origin *dia•logos*, "flow of meaning through a group," (p. 10) as a "process by which meaning comes through" (p. xiv). He looked to the Chinese for their understanding of "learning," which, translated into English means "study and practice constantly" (p. xv). Senge and his colleagues at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology used these definitions as two of the building blocks for their efforts to construct "learning organizations." In widely differing areas of study - from organizational theory to literacy development - there is an appreciation for the need to start somewhere and to act even "before all the data are in" (Harste et al., 1984, p. 84), but to also realize that we must be ready to change or alter our understandings as we learn more.

The DAP policy was an attempt to infuse child-centered practices into the teaching provided for the Chadwick district's youngest students. Formerly used (often identified as "traditional") practices based upon direct instruction using textbooks were to be discarded in favor of specific practices identified as having a research-base and as more appropriate for the learning needs of children. Educators were expected to make a "paradigm shift" from a transmission model of instruction to a model based upon learning as constructed by individual learners. However, the kind of learning environment that the policy asked teachers to create in their classrooms for children was not provided for the adult learners - the teachers and principals. The policy was delivered to teachers using a transmission model, research was presented as the only professional basis for the practices, and uncertainty was considered a sign of resistance. As a result, the uneven relations of power between those who created and endorsed the policy and those required to implement it served to undermine and contradict the policy's intentions.

We did not have the luxury of time to be in charge of our own learning and to develop "personal knowledge" in ways which would allow each of us to reflect upon and build upon (or discard) our beliefs and understandings and "walk toward" a collaborative meaning of the policy. Such learning implies a

need to understand the history of our beliefs and understandings, but it also implies a need to view knowledge as continually evolving. Engaging in dialogue, as a "flow of meaning through a group" (Senge, 1990, p. 10) might have allowed us to learn, or to "study and practice constantly" (p. xv) and would have contrasted with simply following "expert advice and external standards" (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988, p. 4). As a result, there might have been "an ethos of continuous rather than periodic or sporadic improvement" (McDonald, 1992, p. 8).

**HOW CAN WE CREATE ENVIRONMENTS WHICH SUPPORT OPTIMAL
LEARNING FOR TEACHERS AND INCREASE THE POSSIBILITY FOR
EDUCATIONAL REFORM TO ARISE FROM THE PRACTICE OF TEACHING?**

The teachers and I believed that we needed the same kinds of learning opportunities for ourselves that the DAP policy mandated for the children. We wanted time to learn the new practices, time to talk with each other, and time to find, order, or make all of the materials we needed. We wanted to feel safe in taking the risks involved in our learning; we wanted to feel supported, encouraged, and respected for our attempts and we did not want to be held accountable for perfection as we learned. Just as Deborah Meier (1992) found with her work with teachers in her schools in New York, we found that "there is far more in common between a five-year-old...and a fifty-year old than there are differences" (p. 605). If DAP was considered good kindergarten practice, then it was "probably on target at any age, including the age of the teachers" (p. 605). In addition, we wanted to work within a setting which understood that learning is personal, that knowledge and the knower cannot be artificially severed in attempts to hand out the knowledge someone else has acquired. We needed an environment which provided classes small enough to allow us to know our students and base our instruction on what we learned

about their interests and their strengths. We needed an environment which encouraged all voices - not just those who said what we wanted to hear.

My hope for the possibility of educational reform emerging from the practice of teaching, however, is not based upon the idea that teachers and other educators need better conditions to learn to implement top-down mandates or to have more efficient ways to study "the literature" to put theory into practice. Although I agree that it is vital to know the history of our work and to collaborate intellectually with educators, both past and current, who have had time to think about various issues, educators must work to free ourselves from the current power relations that limit learning and inhibit on-going reform. I want to think about an optimal learning environment as one in which learners are in charge of their own learning in a setting which encourages educators to have visions of the future with their students and their families and which enables them to devise ways to work toward those visions.

The kind of learning environment we need is one that encourages intellectual curiosity as opposed to simply telling teachers they must employ particular practices. As one Chadwick teacher said, "We can't hand people books and expect them to change - if the ground isn't fertile, nothing is going to grow. You don't get them to change by ordering them do" (7/16/91, p. 7). Her alternative to ordering change was to provide the "fertile ground" in order for change to take place:

You need the intellectual curiosity. And that's exactly been drundered - dulled out of us - so many of us - from education and from the whole society and from television and everything else - that it's difficult and you have to rekindle that in teachers and it doesn't really matter if it's studying the moon or if you have come to writing workshops or whatever you use, it doesn't matter. What you have to do is engage them so that their minds start to think freshly again instead of just answering in stereotypes and answering in what they think they have been told. (p. 7)

Her words are echoed by Deborah Meier (1992), who wrote that, in order to create such learning environments, we will need to "reinvent teaching." She said,

The schools we need require different habits of work and habits of mind on the part of teachers - a kind of professionalism within the classroom few teachers were expected to exhibit before. In addition, to get from where we are now to where we need to be will require teachers to play a substantially different role within their schools as well as in public discourse. Teachers need to relearn what it means to be good in-school practitioners, while also becoming more articulate and self-confident spokespeople for the difficult and often anxiety-producing changes schools are expected to undertake. (p. 594)

Meier says that changes in schooling will take place whether or not teachers take a lead in making the changes, but, agreeing with Elmore and McLaughlin (1988), she also says that mandated changes will not make a difference for students or for the working conditions of teachers without the input, understanding, and support of teachers. Reforms instituted by policymakers and politicians will be only "rhetorical and cosmetic" and, like "new math" and "open education" will simply "whither away" (p. 594). This can be seen in Chadwick, where some teachers decided simply to wait out the DAP policy, knowing that something new would be coming along in the near future and where the teachers who had been part of the "grass-roots" effort began to close their classroom doors and teach as they had done during the years before DAP, talking together when they could, but generally silenced.

Obviously, the first essential element in such change is the teacher, who must "have strong reasons to want to change and an environment conducive to it" (Meier, 1992, p. 601). The grass-roots teachers in Chadwick had personal reasons for the changes they were making and they were working in school contexts which supported their explorations in ways which allowed them to feel confident. My colleagues and I at Kennedy School, for example, were involved in learning about learning as we gradually made

changes from grammar books to the writing process and from the basal reader to more authentic texts. We made those changes because we did not think what we had been doing was productive for student learning, not because someone was telling us that we had to change. Our principal supported us by verbally encouraging our work, by helping us find funds to purchase materials, by arranging teaching schedules and lunch schedules to provide us with a little additional time to together, and by securing human and printed resources for our learning. She was limited by district funding and by her own role in the district chain of command, but we always knew that she respected our efforts. She was not free to hire as many teachers for our school as she would have liked, but she could and did reallocate funds for aides which left the office aide time reduced and classroom aide time increased.

Our school learning environment invited us to question; staff meeting discussions stimulated interest and curiosity, and we knew that our questions and concerns would be welcomed. The first grade teachers voluntarily met to talk together about issues related to our teaching and the learning of our children. While our discussions usually began around such practical topics as "what should we do for Columbus Day?" or "how should we mark the first grade report form?" they frequently developed into investigations into how we might help our children understand some of the complex ideas about exploration and "discovery" of other lands and how we might observe and document what our children are attempting to do in their learning to read and write.

During our weekly meetings, my colleagues and I talked about what was "working" and what concerned us about our teaching or our students' learning. We celebrated successes, but we also admitted that what we were

attempting was difficult, unsettling, and fraught with uncertainty. Our discussions were not attempts to hide our concerns or anxiety, but to open them up to our joint reflection and support. What were our concerns revealing about our attempts and our students' responses? How might these concerns lead us to further understanding of students' learning?

Understanding and Building on Uncertainty in Our Work

Deborah Meier said that we need "a kind of professionalism⁵ within the classroom few teachers were expected to exhibit before" (1992, p. 594) which raises several issues about how to create a learning environment in which teachers can exhibit this professionalism. One of the difficulties in trying to address this issue is that there are competing views of professional practice. In Chadwick, professionalism in the ten years prior to DAP meant learning to use the required texts, organizing and conducting lessons with the direct instruction format, and managing a quiet classroom. Administrators and parents expected students to work independently at desks, to bring home carefully corrected worksheets, and to perform accurately on tests. The onset of DAP asked for a different kind of professionalism. We were to engage the students in cooperative learning groups, provide open-ended problem solving activities in place of skillsheets and workbook pages, and allow "invented" spelling. Classrooms were often noisy places, with students seated in groups on the floor or at tables.

⁵ The issue of professionalism in teaching has been the center of many recent discussions. I am assuming that teaching is a professional endeavor, but that the professional role is interpreted in many ways. Particularly helpful to my thinking about teaching as a profession have been the writing in this area by David Labaree (1990, 1991). Also useful was Nicholas Burbules and Kathleen Densmore (1991a, 1991b) and Gary Sykes (1991).

DAP was based on "technical rationality," which says that "professional activity consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique" (Schön, 1983, p. 20). The essential properties of the knowledge base are that it is specialized, firmly bounded, scientific, and standardized. Professional knowledge is also arranged in a hierarchy, ranging from general principles at the highest level to applied science, and finally to concrete problem solving. The Chadwick teachers experienced a mismatch between what we were presented with as professional knowledge and the uncertainties we encountered in trying to put that knowledge into practice. The grass-roots teachers had been moving toward more child-centered practice for a long time. They had learned that opening up the classroom environment to more democratic decision-making and choice increases the complexity of a teacher's interactions with students. Teachers who had been accustomed to thinking they had much control over student learning were increasingly dismayed by the uncertainties. These uncertainties were magnified by an inability to do as Meier (1992) says teachers must learn to do - to be articulate about how we managed to deal with the uncertainties. As a result, the teachers were disturbed to find that they could not account for the processes they had been told to view as professional competence. It is difficult to describe and help others learn about what might be meant by "making sense of uncertainty" - especially when these processes seem "mysterious in the light of the prevailing model of professional knowledge" (Schön, 1983, p. 20). The old habits and routines and ways of judging one's teaching did not always work with the changes brought on by DAP; therefore, the "professional knowledge" that many teachers had was out of sync with the new policy.

The problem which needed to be solved for Chadwick policymakers was that Beginnergarten was dismantled and, in order to maintain public confidence, another program or idea had to be put in its place. Since Beginnergarten had been the district's effort to predict which children might have difficulty succeeding in the textbook-oriented kindergartens - in other words to make the children better able to deal with the classroom programs, the response to the elimination of Beginnergarten would be to make all kindergarten classrooms better able to deal with a range of students. While many teachers agreed with the need for the change and with the changes which were mandated, they neither set the problem nor designed the solution. They were stuck with solving problems of their own in putting the policy into practice. Schön said,

From the perspective of Technical Rationality, professional practice is a process of problem *solving*. Problems of choice or decision are solved through the selection, from available means, of the one best suited to established ends. But with this emphasis on problem solving, we ignore problem *setting*, the process by which we define the decision to be made, the ends to be achieved, the means which may be chosen. (1983, pp. 39-40, emphasis in original)

In our classrooms, however, problems do not present themselves as givens. Problems are constructed "from the materials of problematic situations which are puzzling, troubling, and uncertain" (p. 40); in order to turn this problematic situation into a problem, teachers have to do certain kinds of work. We have to make sense of the uncertain situation which initially makes no sense, and we have to decide for ourselves what paths to take or build. We are uncertain as we select techniques for our journey because they may not work, and the path itself may create other problematic situations. In problem setting, "we *name* the things to which we will attend and *frame* the context in which we will attend to them" (p. 40, emphasis in original).

Schön also says that "Technical Rationality" depends upon agreement about ends. When ends are clear and fixed, then the decision to act can present itself as an instrumental problem, but when ends are not clear - are confused or conflicting - the "problem" is not yet determined. There was confusion and conflict about the desired "ends" of the DAP policy. My sense of betrayal about the definition of whole language teaching - the goals we held for the children - provide just one example of this confusion. We could all be in agreement about wishing for the best possible learning for all of the children, but even this wish meant different things to different people in Chadwick. According to Schön,

A conflict of ends cannot be resolved by the use of techniques derived from applied research. It is rather through the nontechnical process of framing the problematic situation that we may organize and clarify both the ends to be achieved and the possible means of achieving them. (1983, p. 41)

He adds that when there are conflicting views of professional practice, then there is "no clearly established context for the use of technique" (p. 41). Each of the many ways to frame professional role would have a distinctive way to set problems and to solve them. As a result, according to Schön, it is easy to understand "not only why uncertainty, uniqueness, instability, and value conflict are troublesome to the Positivist epistemology of practice," but also why teachers bound by this epistemology - as were many of the teachers in Chadwick - are "caught in a dilemma" (p. 42). The definition of "rigorous professional knowledge" does not include the uncertainties and instability found in everyday teaching.

Schön's view of this conflict was evident in my conversations with the teachers in Chadwick. I asked each of them what it meant to them to be a professional because professionalism, as a concept, seemed so central to the DAP policy. Teachers who were knowledgeable about the appropriate

practices for young children and who used these practices in their classrooms were identified by one teacher as characteristics of a "little clique" of "the real good teachers" - a group to which she wanted to belong; however, teachers talked about being a professional in a range of ways. One said it is "getting it figured out for myself," "feeling confident about making decisions for kids," "watching the kids and reflecting on what they do," and "it's colleagues talking and reading professional journals and experiencing things like S.O.A.R.R." (3/26/91, pp. 4-5). Another said, "It's learning a lot from the kids and from other teachers and how they demonstrate their respect for kids," "It's learning with the kids," "It's working closer with parents...which helps them see that there is a lot to this and that we make so many decisions," "It's struggling to be more specific and taking the time to figure it out," "It's being responsible for our decisions and not waiting to be told what to do - it means taking our job seriously, not just as a manager," "It's knowing the reasons for what you do" (4/16/91, pp. 3-4). Another described being a professional as recognizing that teaching is "not a job, it's a way of life - you're always reflecting, gaining, and learning." She also equated one kind of professionalism with being a principal, which she did not want because "principals lose their knowledge of children too soon" (6/6/91, p. 3). A first year teacher said that the word professional "has a negative feeling around it - doing what you're supposed to do." She said, "For me - I think of it more in terms of a responsibility to your kids, to care about them" (7/31/91, p. 9).

Caring about kids, learning from them, but also keeping current in your profession were the themes which ran through all the teachers' definitions of professionalism. While none mentioned uncertainty or problem setting during this part of our conversation, it is clear from their comments that both would be central. No one mentioned following the

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prescriptions of theorists or allegiance to district mandates as part of professionalism. No one mentioned seeing themselves as agents of the institution; they saw their responsibilities focused on the children.

Schön would say that the teachers who talked with me centered their definitions of professionalism on artistic and intuitive processes which makes precise explanations more challenging. For these teachers, their knowing about what they do is bound up in what they do. He believes they would say, "It seems right to say that our knowing is in our action" (1983, p. 49, emphasis in original). Central to this art with which teachers cope is "reflection-in-action":

When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and techniques, but constructs a new theory of the unique case. His inquiry is not limited to a deliberation about means which depends on a prior agreement about ends. (p. 68)

Reflection-in-action does not separate thinking from doing, which is what happens when teachers simply follow the teachers' guides for commercial materials, for example. When teachers become locked into a view of themselves as technical experts, they do not have reason to be reflective. They are skillful at the "techniques of selective inattention" and "situational control techniques" which serve to preserve the "constancy of their knowledge-in-practice." For these teachers, uncertainty is a threat, a sign of weakness or being out of control. But even others, "more inclined toward and adept at reflection-in-action, nevertheless feel profoundly uneasy because they cannot say what they know how to do, cannot justify its quality or rigor" (p. 69). This is precisely what my colleagues and I experienced at Kennedy. Our weekly meetings allowed us to present our uncertainties, but they also were a forum for discussions about reflection-in-action.

Schön described this as like a reflective conversation with a unique and uncertain situation, a spiral process of appreciation of a problem, action, and then reappreciation, which involves evaluation and is grounded in the teacher's "appreciation system" (p. 135). One way a teacher decides whether or not she has results which satisfy her is by comparing those results to an exemplar she has encountered before - seeing this situation as one like that one, so she might also do as she did in that one. Schön believes, "It is our capacity to see-as and do-as that allows us to have a feel for problems that do not fit existing rules" (p. 140).

When our new exemplars contrast strikingly with those we relied on previously, it is very challenging to rely on reflection-in-action to provide for our continued learning about learning. Our artistry in teaching is altered without the opportunity to practice "the construction, maintenance, and use of virtual worlds" (p. 162). One way virtual worlds are created is by each teacher's vision of what she wishes and hopes for her students. They are the "possibilities" which Roger Simon (1992) and Henry Giroux (1986) talk about and what Deborah Meier (1992) called "guiding ideas and abundant examples" (p. 608).

Schön's thoughts about reflection-in-action have implications for how we might provide a learning environment from which educational reform might emerge. He says that reflection-in-action demands a kind of relationship with "clients" which takes on a form of conversation; however, educators first must decide who their clients are. The few comments about professionalism which I shared from the teachers indicate they believe the children and their parents are the clients - it is to them that their professional accountability is directed. In the reflective conversation, the teacher must "attribute to the clients the ability/capacity to mean, know, and

plan" (Schön, 1983, p. 295), but also recognize that her actions may have a different meaning for the client than she had intended - so it is important to discover what these meanings are. She recognizes her obligation to be clear about her understandings, which means reflecting on what she knows. This was a point which Margaret White emphasized as well when she said, "I think teachers are struggling to be more specific and parents are frustrated by the lack of specifics. And I think it's just going to take some figuring out" (4/16/91, p. 4).

The teacher's "reflective contract" with the parents and students does not mean an acceptance of the teacher's authority, but rather opens up her special knowledge to inquiry. For teachers, Schön says, the "difficulty in establishing a reflective contract with their clients is to acquire enough voice in the situation to be able to do so" (p. 298). In other words, the competencies required for a reflective contract may be strange to her. Teachers are expected to be expert, but with the reflective contract, they are now expected to reveal uncertainties they feel. "Whereas he is ordinarily expected to keep his expertise private and mysterious, he is now expected to reflect publicly on his knowledge-in-practice, to make himself confrontable by his clients" (p. 299). We are more used to defensiveness, which makes it difficult to make known our uncertainties and the dilemmas inherent in the shift toward reflection.

Teachers need to feel well supported by their administrators and school board members because parents and the community will have to learn to have these "reflective conversations" as well. The role they have come to expect teachers to play is that of the classroom expert. They have not traditionally liked the idea of teachers "experimenting" in the classroom. In fact, many parents used those very words in criticizing the DAP policy at Chadwick

School Board meetings. Learning to trust in a new professional-client relationship will take time and understanding.

The role of the principal becomes especially important when we acknowledge the uncertainty of teaching and learning. Jennifer Beckson created an atmosphere at Kennedy School in which it was expected that all teachers would set personal learning goals, and then she would support our learning in any way she could. She found funds for extended staff development for individual teachers, circulated professional journals among the staff, and encouraged teachers to work and plan and teach together. Staff meetings were opportunities for discussion about such issues as "creating a caring atmosphere" in the school, which extended into several years of study about Glasser's (1986, 1990, 1993) work with "Quality Schools" and other projects which informed our efforts to encourage students' independence. She supported teachers affectively by her trust in our learning and by her respect for our individuality. Debra House, who explained her role as trying to create for the teachers in her school what she asked her teachers to create in their classrooms, demonstrates the importance of context and culture for learning. Teachers in settings where principals enabled their learning were much more likely to be part of the grass-roots support for DAP, or to learn to support many of the practices.

The kind of guidance which Jennifer Beckson and Debra House provided, however, was not what the district's Central Office administrators wanted. The principals were expected to see that all the kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers began to employ practices as outlined in the policy. These principals saw their role as one to establish a "community of learners" by not only stating expectations of collegiality, but by modeling collegiality and supporting it as well. As Roland Barth (1990) found in his experience in

trying to create such a community for his schools, they also tried to rearrange "the conditions under which teacher work" (p. 59). However, neither Jennifer Beckson nor Debra House were forceful about insisting that all teachers change practices quickly. They were caught up in the bureaucratic organization of the district; because both chose to allow their teachers to establish their personal modes of learning, both were seen as detrimental to the chain of command. Interestingly, both principals were assigned to other schools during the summer of 1990. Teachers at Kennedy were outraged and considered Jennifer Beckson's reassignment to a much smaller school a demotion - a punishment for her past failures to follow district policies to the letter.

So it is not only the teachers who will have to change. The school as an institution will also have to change. The bureaucratic school organization reinforces a model of professional knowledge based on technical expertise. Encouraging teachers to reflect on the uncertainties of their practice does not fit with this traditional model and can be dangerous for organizational stability. Schön warns,

Significant organizational learning - learning which involves significant change in underlying values and knowledge structure - is always the subject of an *organizational predicament*. It is necessary to effective organizational adaptation, but it disrupts the constancies on which manageable organizational life depends. (1983, p. 328)

Ordinary bureaucracies tend to resist a professional's move from certainty of technical expertise to the messiness of reflective practice; therefore, an organization which would support reflective practice would have to make some changes as well. The administrative hierarchy in Chadwick was built upon a chain of command in which each link was to reinforce the vision of the district. People who questioned the vision or any part of it were generally reprimanded in either subtle or obvious ways. As a result people were

silenced and district policy appeared to proceed smoothly, but those appearances were often superficial. The public rhetoric was that Central Office administrators wanted open discussion; but in order for the district to present a united stance on DAP, real discussion about important issues of concern could not be allowed. These issues related to power and control must be addressed if any real learning and real reform is to take place. According to Schön, the "reflective institution" would have to "make a place for attention to conflicting values and purposes" (1983, p. 338).

The work of teaching is always complex; child-centered teaching increases complexity and uncertainty because we understand that learners must have control over their own learning and we do not have specifically defined procedures and outcomes. As we work to identify the problems we encounter and to devise ways to address those problems, we are likely to have a great deal to say about what learners need to support their achievement of personal goals. Uncertainty increases because we cannot always predict what those goals are going to be.

On a related, but different note, Nel Noddings adds to the discussion on uncertainty by pointing out that "it may be that much of what is most valuable in the teaching-learning relationship cannot be specified and certainly not prespecified" (1984, p. 20), but revolves around a pedagogy of caring in which variation and uncertainty is expected. Rather than continue to ask how to get teachers to accept or adopt new methods or practices, Noddings would make a different suggestion:

Perhaps we should try more seriously to find out what they are doing, and to work cooperatively with them toward perfecting the methods to which they are devoted and in which they reveal their talent. As in every other area of our discussion, this does not mean that we should accept and approve shoddy practices, and we should never allow practices obviously motivated by meanness - what might be termed anti-caring. But, surely, we should cease coercing teachers to adopt particular philosophical, psychological, or pedagogical positions and

should, instead, talk with each other about the methods we have chosen, the ends we seek, and the pleasure we experience in knowing each other. (p. 197)

Actually, Hazel Brown thought that she was following just such an approach. She admired the child-centered methods and practices worked out by the teachers she saw as the grass-roots for the DAP policy, and she was attempting to support them by locating their practices in a frame of "the literature" and by making their work mandatory. What happened, though, was that other teachers were then coerced to adopt those particular methods instead of being supported to perfect their own as the grass-roots teachers had done. To do as Noddings suggests and endeavor to have our work revolve around a pedagogy of caring, means that we must be more attentive to the voices of the practitioners and to the fact that people who are doing this work are predominantly women.

Taking Seriously That We Are Women Here

When I left teaching in 1968 and withdrew my retirement funds, I was totally disenchanted with public education. What I valued as a teacher was not valued by "the system," and I felt that continuing to teach in such an environment compromised the very aspects of teaching which were important to me. However, becoming a parent and seeing learning outside of school increased my resolve to return to teaching and work toward infusing this kind of natural learning in my classroom. Although I have chosen to speak out about many school practices with which I have not agreed, I have also continued to work amidst other practices which I have found barely tolerable. Madeline Grumet once suggested that "perhaps it is time for women who call themselves educators to question their participation and practice in schools" (1981, p. 182). Grumet says that this question is really not

new to us, but is implicit in our generally silent resistance to administrators and experts who "pontificate on topics in education but spend no time in our classrooms" (p. 183). She attempted to investigate the sources of teachers' silence in the face of "permitting the ethos of American schooling to violate their own experience of nurturance" (p. 167), by tracing the history of women's involvement in schools. She found that, beginning during the time of the Common School, women teachers were to "exert moral pressure on a society in whose operations she had little part" (p. 173). Grumet said,

The contradictions implicit in this image of the ideal woman and the ideal mother were extended into the training and work of the ideal teacher. The intimacy, spirituality, and innocence that teachers and students were to inherit from the mother-child bond - the prototype of their relationship - collapsed into strategies for control. The ideal teacher was one who could control the children and be controlled by her supervisors. (p. 173)

Times have changed, but the contradictions for women teachers have remained. According to Grumet (1981), the contradictions include the doctrine of maternal love countered in the practice of regimented authority, the dominance in the numbers of women in teaching and their exclusion from leadership, and the overwhelming presence of women in classrooms serving in an ideology of men as the only persons with the capacity to act. Grumet says that women teachers are not only oppressed, but also do society's "dirty work." Rather than emulate "the continuous and extended relation of mother and her maturing child" (p. 181), we have acquiesced to the graded schools and to working with one age group for one year. We object to testing the children and we object to subjecting them to the demeaning processes of evaluation for "special education." We object to arranging the children by ability. However, we continue to do these things. We have accepted the curriculum as bestowed and any deviations have remained behind our closed

classroom doors. Grumet contends that all of these gender contradictions have served to estrange teachers from the mothers of our students:

Their estrangement leaves a gap in school governance that the professional administrators, the state, the textbook publishers rush in to fill. Until teachers and mothers acknowledge the ways in which schools perpetuate asymmetry in class privilege and gender that is present in both the home and the workplace, they will not interrupt the patterns of their own complicity. (p. 181)

These contradictions have been so central to Grumet's understanding of what teaching means to women, that she refers to them as "Bitter milk," a phrase used to describe a ritual tonic given to girls during times of distress in Sri Lanka. For Grumet, "Bitter milk" is the "fluid of contradictions" (1988, p. xi) between what we know about nurturing from our parents and from our own children and what we do as teachers in schools. She says, "We need to acknowledge what we and our sisters know about nurturance and to bring that knowledge into the deliberations that shape the form and purpose of public education" (p. xviii). She adds, "I suggest that our revolutionary female consciousness is lodged not in the recesses of time, but in the work that women do daily teaching children in classrooms" (p. 19).

Grumet believes that one of the failures of the child-centered philosophy of the open school, "the curriculum movement which might have extended the vigor and specificity of maternal nurturance from home to classroom," was that it did not "penetrate programs of evaluation and credentialing"; therefore, "teachers who had transformed their classrooms into places of active exploration and group processes failed to create the political and ideological structures required to sustain and enlarge the movement" (p. 24). The movement failed to address what Grumet called the perpetual public education dilemma: "the tension between addressing the needs of each individual student and developing the cohesion and identity of the group that contains that student" (p. 27). It was translated into a

"laissez-faire individualism that surrenders a vision of the world we might share to a project of individual development that repudiates intersubjectivity and interdependence" (p. 27). I see her views very aligned with those of Roger Simon (1992) as she calls for a vision about the possibilities for schooling. She also helped me understand a bit about my discomfort about some of the aspects of DAP - especially whole language. When the political aspects of whole language were bleached out when presented as part of the policy, the district view centered on individualism - a better way of increasing achievement test scores. Grumet says that when we do not speak out against the problems we face, we do our children and their parents a serious disservice:

We, the women who teach, must claim our reproductive labor as a process of civilization as well as procreation. We can continue to escort the children from home to the marketplace as did the *paidagogos*, the Greek slave whose title and function survive in pedagogy, or we can refuse the oppositions and limits that define each place and our love and work with them. The task is daunting. (p. 29)

Nel Noddings (1984) supports Grumet's argument that the mother's voice has been silenced in favor of the father's voice. Where the feminine mother's voice echoes receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness, and begins with a moral attitude of longing for goodness and not with moral reasoning, the masculine father's voice reflects the governance of principles and justice.

In order to organize schools to reflect the mother's voice as well as nurturance and caring, Noddings believes there may have to be a move away from current ideas to professionalize teaching, which appeal to a teacher's duty and move, instead, toward what she calls "fidelity in teaching" (1986). "Fidelity is a quality of the relation, not merely an attribute of an individual moral agent's behavior or character" (p. 497); it involves a "way of thinking and speaking which has almost disappeared from formal educational

discourse" (p. 499). It is a "striving for the best in ourselves and in those with whom we interact that marks self-actualization, and a community that embraces this view of fidelity has a strong rationale for socialization" (p. 501). According to Noddings, the central method of ethical caring is a "faithful search for understanding of the subjective aspects of experience" (pp. 501-502). The efforts of current reform say that teachers must be brighter, know more, and be more willing to change. However, Noddings says, "We rarely ask how things might be changed so that teachers can accomplish work they see as teaching, nor do we ask what this work is..." (p. 502).

Noddings (1984) would reduce the narrow specializations which restrict personal contact with children and increase the spirit of caring throughout the school. An effort to deprofessionalize would also eliminate the special language which separates teachers from other educators - especially parents. She also opposes the recommendation of the Holmes Group (1986) for three levels of teachers, the effects of which she identifies as creating dissension among teachers and undermining efforts to establish a caring community (Noddings, 1986). Noddings identifies a conflict between what most national reforms call professionalism and what many teachers view as their professional role:

On the one hand, women teachers want to be recognized as committed, effective teachers, but on the other hand, they recognize that someone must do care giving in this society, and they feel considerable anger when they are pressed to give up what they regard as central to their work. Their fear is that, in the new move to professionalism, teachers who move farther from actual contact with children will be regarded and rewarded as "more professional" than those who work directly with children. (1990, p. 415)

Sara Freedman (1990) echoes Noddings's concern that the Holmes Group proposal illustrates the disregard reformers have for the work of teachers within classrooms. She says that a recommendation to remove teachers from classrooms to place them in positions of authority over other teachers

"merely reflects the belief that nurturing and anything associated with motherhood, is inherently mindless, unskilled, and inconsequential" (p. 246).

Catharine MacKinnon frames this same argument in a different way. She says that women want "not just to be taken seriously, but to ask why the definition of merit is membership in an elite" (1987, p. 28). Noddings understands full well, however, that recommendations for caring are often dismissed as "affectionate musing of people who don't understand realities" (1986, p. 506). Not so, she counters,

On the contrary, while an ethic of caring cannot provide specific answers to ethical or educational questions, it can provide steady, rational guidance in the form of questions to be asked and directions to be taken. (p. 506)

Joining the discussion on teacher professionalism are Tabakin and Densmore (1986) who also argue that the history and current practice of teaching require "an awareness that teaching has been dominated by a gendered definition of appropriate roles" (p. 257). Women struggled for and won the right to participate in teaching "on the premise of the appropriateness of expanding women's sphere into the schools"; the present distribution of work roles shows a persistence of women as classroom teachers rather than in administrative positions - a situation calling for the "need to appreciate the material conditions that form the basis of this distribution today" (p. 257). They attempt to understand this gendered distribution of work through analysis of teacher professionalism that is integrated with an analysis of gender. As have others who have entered the professionalism debate, Tabakin and Densmore outline some commonly acknowledged, but not universally agreed upon, characteristics which distinguish professions from other occupations. These include "a claim to a broad theoretical knowledge base and related technical-intellectual expertise; a service or altruistic

motivation; a long period of formal preparation; and control over one's work and work situation" (p. 258).

The sociology of the professions has also paid attention to the relationships between professional roles and organizational requirements - especially the ability to maintain professional status within bureaucratic organizations. Schools are bureaucratic institutions, a rationalization made on the basis of the need to coordinate activities for the task of socializing students and maintaining uniform outcomes for students. There seems to be agreement, among those interested in the professionalism discussion, that teachers aspire to be professionals in the sense of employing that set of traits, a type of reasoning that "reflects the conventional belief that professionalism directly refers to the objective nature of the work itself" (p. 258). Sounding much like Grumet and Noddings, Tabakin and Densmore say, "A radical feminist perspective on teaching would recognize the extension of the domestic sphere into teaching as an extension of the patriarchal relationships of sexual domination" (1986, p. 276). Low pay and status of the work are in keeping with the arrangements of domesticity and the patriarchal rules of interaction. The low pay recreates dependency on a system of maintenance that is not always monetary - such rewards as dedication and the intrinsic kinds of satisfaction - or self-selected - such as having summers free. Tabakin and Densmore say these are analogous to the gifts a husband gives a wife which are perhaps not what the wife wants or needs. Thus, a radical feminist perspective on teaching calls for an analysis that is based on the experience of women in the family. "It is in the belief of the need for reevaluation of theoretical perspective and the insistence of the validity of women's particular point of view that radical feminist gender analysis is distinguished" (Tabakin & Densmore, 1986, p. 276).

These views are very different from that expressed by Brian Rowan (1994) when he examined "the professional status of teaching." Other than for a statement noting that in most cases prestige and earnings are a function of the complexity of work performed ("many analysts have argued that the prestige and income of teachers deviate in important ways from this general pattern, in part because teaching is 'women's work'" p. 5), he makes no other mention of women. Rowan draws his delineation of what counts in teaching from "the Fourth Edition of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles." He concludes that, indeed, teaching qualifies for professional status through "its quest to attract and retain able recruits through increases in prestige and earnings," because it is grounded in the following reality: "Teaching children and adolescents is complex work, and successful performance of this work requires high levels of general educational development and specific vocational preparation" (p. 13). He does not display an understanding that teaching is more than a set of technically learnable skills. He does not take a radical feminist conception of teaching seriously and he certainly leaves no space for caring in his discussion. While Rowan's ideas about the professional status of teaching may not be shared across the educational community, they do center on "the objective nature of the work itself" (Tabakin & Densmore, 1986, p. 257), and they suggest the difficulties involved as women try to make the subjectivity of their collective and individual voices heard.

As Maxine Greene (1988) has so eloquently pointed out, "we are beginning to learn that, at least for women, freedom cannot be treated as an endowment....The road to freedom for her can be opened only when she becomes aware of alternative possibilities for herself" (p. 72):

It must be clear enough that the mere assertion of freedom as a natural right or "independence" guarantees little when it comes to finding a space for personal becoming. This is so even though the rejection or ignoring of human rights (whether of women or slaves or oppressed

people generally) can often destroy any possibility of choice. To overthrow tyranny or authoritarian controls, in other words, is not to bring freedom into being, it is only to allow for the search. (pp. 79-80)

Greene reminds us that the search for freedom does not occur in a vacuum, it "cannot be conceived apart from a matrix of social, economic, cultural, and psychological conditions" (p. 80). Much like the fictional characters Greene used as a focus for her discussion of freedom, teachers can make a difference "if they came to realize that what they took for granted as 'natural' and inexorable was a human construction, susceptible to reinterpretation and change," and if they understand that "freedom can be achieved only in an ongoing transaction, one that is visible and legible to those involved" (p. 83).

Greene reminds us of Hannah Arendt's retelling of René Char's Resistance story, in which he and his comrades always invite freedom to join them at their table - "The chair remains vacant, but the place is set":

Perhaps we can relate the conceptions of caring and concern to the setting of such a table, the creating of that space. It remains a matter, for men and women both, to establish a place for freedom in the world of the given - and to do so in concern with care, so that what is indecent can be transformed and what is unendurable may be overcome. (p. 86)

If we take seriously what the women teachers who talked to me said about what professionalism means to them, then we have to create space for what they value - their responsibility to and caring for the children. If we are to understand the admonitions of Madeline Grumet, Nel Noddings, and Maxine Greene, we will have to be much more vocal about what we wish for and what we demand in terms of working and learning conditions than we have in the past. We will have to define our work rather than allow outsiders, even though well-intentioned, to define what we do. We will have to question the practices which serve to demean the children and separate us from our collaboration with their mothers and fathers. We will have to fight for our right for the time and space to learn - to permit ourselves to break from

authoritarian controls to be free to begin the search for possibilities to create the kind of democracies we want in our classrooms and to fight for the future we envision for the children and for ourselves.

What Would the Learning Environment Include?

The kind of learning environment we would require is not complicated. The design is simple - as Deborah Meier (1992) said, easily recognized by kindergarten teachers. However, the creation of such an environment for teachers is more complex than creating such an environment for five-year olds, because it means changing much of what both the educational community and the public have come to expect from schools and from teachers. It is a very different view to think of teachers as policymakers, or to think of educational reform emerging from the practice of teaching. We have become very accustomed to seeing teachers, as Ralph Tyler suggests, simply as "the most significant factor in implementing a school reform" (1987, p. 280, emphasis added) - not creating it. Nor do we expect reform to grow out of everyday classroom practices.

In order to do the kind of intellectual work Schön's (1983) ideas about "reflection-in-action," which researchers-in-practice would require, we need an environment which enables us to be involved in continuous learning and problem-setting as opposed to implementing individual innovations. Susan Rosenholtz (1989) also found that the "opportunity to confront new challenges and to test and expand their professional repertoires is the primary reason teachers involve themselves in innovative instructional programs" (p. 425). One of the major difficulties we experienced in Chadwick was that involved in our focus on innovation. Staff development opportunities were provided by thoughtful and interested people both inside

and outside the district. However, these were one-time sessions designed to teach the practices, to support the innovations. We needed to have work conditions which supported on-going learning. We needed to have the kind of environment Philip Jackson (1971) calls a "growth approach." This approach begins with the assumption that

teaching is a complex and multifaceted activity about which there is more to know than can ever be known by one person. From this point of view the motive for learning more about teaching is not to repair a personal inadequacy as a teacher but to seek greater fulfillment as a practitioner of the art. (p. 26)

The approach requires us to think about schools and teacher development a little differently. First, Jackson says, we would have to give teachers more time to think about what they are doing and we would also have to "alter the power structure in education" so that teachers have more control over their own learning and their own work (p. 29). He found that those teachers who did have opportunities for continuous learning changed because

They changed as people, because they see their world and themselves and their students and their subject matter differently than they did at other points in their career...because they have grown, not necessarily up, or out, or sideways, but in all directions. (p. 34)

In our learning environment, problem setting would be just as variable across schools as would staff development and learning. That is because problem setting would be done from within each school, with educators naming the things we will pay attention to as well as framing the context in which we will attend to them (Schön, 1983). Michael Fullan and Suzanne Stiegelbauer (1991), who have studied educational change extensively, report alternative solutions are necessary even in reforms which emanate from outside the school. They say that any solution must allow for and foster variation across schools and place a priority on building individual and school capacities. The need for some balance in variation can be satisfied by a kind of checks-and-balances system among all with interests

in education. This idea reflects the concerns previously expressed about the contradictions we experienced in Chadwick in defining knowledge and relying on external experts. We must acknowledge that we will each develop our personal understandings, but that through genuinely open discussion and even through heated debate, we can find common ground in our hopes and wishes for our children and ourselves. We will need to set our own problems, however, and select those aspects of the situation to which we will attend. Our solutions and even our problem-setting will vary amongst us. The ability to set and solve our own problems would also help turn attention from negative to positive politics. Fullan and Stiegelbauer remind us that educators at all levels have power. Some use power to try to make people do things and others use their power to refuse. They say, "Resistance, cajoling, blaming others, self-protection, avoidance, and caution all become habitual strategies for coping" (p. 347). Instead, we need to use what power we have to bring about improvements in our own environment.

When we talk about creating an intellectually transformative environment, we are not talking about an easier way to teach. As many of the teachers who talked with me pointed out, if teaching was ever easy, maybe we were not doing it right. But to be in charge of one's own learning as well as that of our students, is a challenge. As David Cohen and Carol Barnes have learned, reformers today envision an "active, constructivist sort of learning and an intellectually adventurous approach to teaching" (1993b, p. 241), ideas that have been around since the 1840s when Horace Mann advocated more thoughtful and humane teaching, and that have resurfaced periodically. However, Cohen and Barnes point out that the reformers seldom consider "the great difficulty of teaching" in this way (p. 241). "Teachers would have to revise their conception of learning" and would have "to rediscover

knowledge as something that is constructed and contested rather than handed down by authorities" - "an extraordinary agenda for teachers' learning" (p. 246).

Cohen and Barnes write as if teachers created these views, but teachers have many influences on their thinking. In Chadwick, our experiences before DAP centered around "teaching as telling and learning as remembering" - not because we teachers invented this concept, but because it was the prevailing view in academic circles. According to Deborah Meier (1992) these views are challenging to overcome and may involve

changing how teachers view teaching and learning, developing new habits to go with that new cognitive understanding, and simultaneously developing new habits of work - habits that are collegial and public in nature, not solo and private as has been the custom in teaching. (p. 598)

Meier acknowledges that such changes cannot be taught in a staff development program, but are encouraged by "changing the daily experiences of teachers" and "substituting experiences that will require them to engage in new practices and support them in doing so" (p. 598). As if she had looked over the shoulders of the teachers and principals in Chadwick, Meier said,

It is illogical to imagine that we can produce thoughtful and critical thinkers by rote imposition or that we can build strong intellectual understanding through required amnesia. If the logic of it fails to impress, years and years of failed efforts to do so ought to. It is, at the very least, a great waste of time, a diversion of energy and resources that we can ill afford. We cannot pass on to a new generation that which we do not ourselves possess. This is the conundrum, the seemingly impossible paradox. (p. 599)

Cohen and Barnes also believe teachers can best learn to work toward this revision in thinking while they are teaching if they are provided with "extended opportunities to practice in ways that enable them to gradually contrive a very different pedagogy." In addition, "thoughtful colleagues would observe teachers' work, report on it, and make the observations part of

a sustained conversation about teaching and learning to teach," providing teachers with opportunities to see themselves from the perspectives of others and to "become more reflective about their work." Further, "teachers would have opportunities to reflect on the content of the conversations, to try out revisions of their work, and to weigh the results" (pp. 246-247). To be involved in this kind of learning, teachers would need to be in "protected situations" because they would become novices again after many years of thinking of themselves as "accomplished professionals." "They would have to cast aside much that they had known and done confidently, yet they would still have to carry on as professionals in their classrooms" (p. 247). The protection would be necessary because "they would be learning to work in ways that were much more uncertain," which makes teachers more vulnerable. We were fortunate at Kennedy School because the open architecture contributed to the public nature of our teaching and permitted many informal occasions for discussion; however, the weekly first grade teacher meetings provided the predictable opportunity for serious reflection about our teaching and learning.

Cohen and Barnes point out that "thoughtful observers argue that schools would become places for teachers to learn only if there were major changes in the institutional culture, in teacher's conceptions of their work, and perhaps in their jobs as well" (1993b, p. 250). In other words, **"opportunities would have to be designed so that they embodied the sorts of teaching and learning that reformers wish to promote for classrooms"** (p. 251, emphasis added) - which is exactly what my colleagues and I wanted. According to Cohen and Barnes, because there are few models for this, there are not many ideas about what might be entailed. However, they believe it might be done by tying the re-education of teachers

to "certain crucial practical tasks," such as devising new academic standards, designing new assessments, writing new instructional frameworks, and developing new curricula. They also think that "since framework and assessment revision would be continuing tasks in any vital educational system, **teachers would be able to contribute to reform and learn from it on a continuing basis**" (p. 254, emphasis added). It would entail, according to Cohen and Barnes, policymakers creating opportunities for teachers to learn new practices by engaging in them, conversing about them, articulating ideas, and testing them against evidence. "Rather than acting as though teachers were empty vessels to be filled, policymakers would act as though teachers were active and interesting thinkers and central in policymaking" (p. 257).

Cohen and Barnes (1993b) see educative policymaking as highly advantageous to the possibilities of real reform because "the discourse of policymaking would open up...and **new voices would be drawn into policymaking and other voices long silent or ignored would be raised**" in ways which could be conceived as "reinventing policy" (p. 258, emphasis added). The teachers' role in policymaking would be recognized. They also point to the many difficulties involved in such a reinvention of policymaking. While they write here about state and national reform efforts, their comments apply to local district efforts as well:

The reforms that we have been discussing would require a paradoxical mixture of political activism and restraint....These would include a great expansion of government action and associated outlays of energy, time, money, and effort, but they also would include much less government action in many areas of education, and an entirely different way of relating to those who enact policy, and much longer political and education time horizons. Those who made and managed policy would work harder, face much greater uncertainty, and take many more risks, in return for many fewer short-term political rewards. (p. 262)

David Cohen and Deborah Ball (1990) studied the California math framework - an effort for this kind of ambitious reform - and found that conversations among teachers and mathematics educators around mathematical understanding did create the kinds of learning opportunities Cohen and Barnes described. However, they are also pessimistic about policymakers' willingness to change their approach:

Real pedagogical change would thrive on the creation of a rich conversation, in and around classrooms, about mathematics, teaching, and learning. Yet creating such a conversation would be costly, time-consuming, and difficult for many teachers and policymakers. Teaching would thrive on such a rich and slow enterprise. But policymaking seems to thrive on schemes for swift change in instruction, swiftly adopted and often just as swiftly forgotten. (p. 255)

Establishing a Culture of Collective Co-ownership

We need to have time set aside during our workweek which allows us to talk with other educators about our practice, our shared problems, and issues related student and adult learning. We need access to people who have had time to think about issues we want to know more about and difficulties we experience, but we need to be free to question and we need to be free to see ourselves as experts as well. We need to develop theory as it emerges from our work while being knowledgeable about the work other educators (researchers) have done. This may be challenging for us because teachers are not used to having real discussions about research. We have learned to dismiss researchers as outsiders who do not know us or our children.

According to Michael Huberman (1990), most teachers do not hold the same view about researchers as Margaret White does. She said researchers are

folks that are representing us out there - doing their work - and when they come up with new ideas and findings, I think we have to notice them and they should impact how we teach. Anyone of us could be out there doing it and those that are representing us and they're coming back to tell us - 'Look what we found out.' And I think that's important. (4/16/91, p. 10)

Instead of views like Margaret's, Huberman's study of the link between researchers and practitioners found that

The amount of research knowledge actually circulating in conventional school settings and being used to inform ongoing practice is apparently thin, both in the European and North American contexts. For some, in fact, the basic assumptions of conceptually-informed discussions among practitioners are simply not met in the conventional culture of the school building. (p. 366)

We will need to think differently than we have in the past about the relationship between research and practice and between researchers and teachers. We will have to do as Noddings suggests, and break down the hierarchies among educators located in schools, homes, communities, and universities in order to work together as equals. One example of how this might look is provided by Eleanor Duckworth (1986), who describes "teaching as research," an approach she feels is especially necessary for those who believe that "people must construct their own knowledge and must assimilate new experiences in ways which make sense to them" (p. 481). She has worked with teachers over the course of many years and says that her involvement with teachers teaches her so much because she sees "the endless variations on how they use what they learn in their own teaching" (p. 481). The role of teaching if knowledge is constructed has two aspects, according to Duckworth:

The first is to put students into contact with phenomena related to the area to be studied - the real thing, not books or lectures about it - and to help them notice what is interesting; to engage them so they will continue to think and wonder about it. The second is to have the students try to explain the sense they are making, and, instead of explaining things to students, to try to understand their sense. (pp. 481-482)

While not suggesting that teachers need to become published researchers, she does believe that teaching, when practiced as she described above, might be the essence of research:

This kind of researcher would be a teacher in the sense of caring about some part of the world and how it works enough to want to make it accessible to others; she would be fascinated by the questions of how to

engage people in it and how people make sense of it; she would have time and resources to pursue these questions to the depth of her interest, to write what she learned, and to contribute to theoretical and pedagogical discussions on the nature and development of human learning. (p. 494)

By breaking down barriers between research and practice, between those identified as researchers and those labeled teachers, and perhaps by rearranging the resources available in the educational community, such a "romance" is possible (p. 495).

One of the major difficulties lies in how teachers might go about sharing what they have learned. We do not have time to write journal articles and often do not recognize what we do as research, nor do we feel that what we do is unusual enough to be of interest to other teachers. Informal networks of teachers sharing ideas and concerns have increased in some parts of the country to become Whole Language support groups; many of these have joined together in "umbrella" groups which serve as conduits for sharing. Without some public presentation of the results of classroom research, it is almost impossible to gain recognition for this kind of work.

Gordon Wells (1994) says that "practitioners' self-chosen inquiries" can bring about "educational renewal and change" (p. 1), but like Duckworth, he recognizes that such research has not gained wide-spread acceptance in spite of the powerful nature of the learning for all involved. Wells believes that there are two main reasons for this. The first is that "valuing the practice-based knowledge and understanding of individual teachers" challenges "the established ways of bringing about educational change." The hierarchical structure in which educational decisions are usually made means that expertise is associated with power and status - those furthest from "actual sites of learning and teaching" (p. 1):

Not surprisingly, therefore, the proposal to democratize the decision-making involved in bringing about educational change by recognizing

and drawing upon the very different expertise of inquiring teachers has met with opposition or very limited enthusiasm by many of those who have vested interest in maintaining the status quo. (pp. 1-2)

The second reason for lack of general acceptance of teacher research, according to Wells, is that teachers employ methods which are not widely accepted among traditional researchers. Teacher research cannot be easily "reduced to a set procedure or method that can be packaged in a text-book and taught out of the context in which it is to be applied" (p. 2). It is best understood by participation in a "community of practice" and working with others who have acquired some expertise. Wells admits that such communities are rare.

Teacher research is important, Wells says, because it involves teachers in developing exactly the kinds of dispositions and learning which they need to provide for their students. Wells questions the emphasis in schools on competitive individual achievement and the artificial separation of academic subjects. He believes students must develop the knowledge and skills to question inequalities of power and economic well-being, and develop the disposition to work toward changes in the world. He says this calls for "radical rethinking" (p. 5) not only about the content of the curriculum, but the ways the students engage in it. We hear again the call for teachers and students to have the same kinds of learning opportunities:

For we can hardly expect teachers to create the conditions in their classrooms for students to develop these dispositions if the teachers themselves have not had similar formative experiences. Nor can students be expected to develop confidence in their own knowledge and judgment, while recognizing the benefits that are to be gained from collaborating with others, if those who teach them continue to be trained unquestioningly to implement the decisions of others and are given no encouragement to take initiative in collaboration with their colleagues. (p. 6)

Wells would like to see schools become "communities of action and inquiry" (p. 9) and have links to other communities of peers. While the idea seems

very new, it was suggested by R.J. Schaefer in 1967. Wells quotes from Schaefer's book, *The School as a Center of Inquiry*:

Fundamentally such a school requires that teachers be freed to inquire into the nature of what and how they are teaching. Discovering new knowledge about the instructional process is the distinctive contribution which lower schools might be expected to provide. As every teacher knows, however, pedagogical strategies cannot be meaningfully separated from content, and there must also be continuing opportunity for the teacher to inquire into the substance of what is being taught. Finally, no school can be reflective about its work or serious in its commitment to learning if students are not similarly encouraged to seek rational purposes in their own studies. (pp. 3-4, cited in Wells, 1994, p. 10)

Within these learning communities, there is more likelihood of collective co-ownership of the curriculum and of the pedagogy. When the bounds between research and teaching and between teaching and learning are broken down, there is a better chance that understanding will grow out of "purposeful action" and will be "cumulatively constructed" as all learners bring "his or her current knowledge to bear on new situations and information in an effort to 'make sense' of them" (p. 29).

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) found that some of the most powerful learning opportunities were found in inter-institutional partnerships between school districts and universities. Such alliances do occur today as evidenced by reports by Huberman (1990) and by collaborative research projects such as the one between teachers, principals and university researchers (Berkey et al., 1989) in our state. The latter project was designed "to bridge the gap between research and practice by promoting reflection as a way for teachers to direct their own professional development" (p. 1). These collaborative endeavors take time and are frequently like the description these participants provide:

Those interested in becoming involved in similar projects can expect conflict as a natural consequence of bringing together people with different backgrounds and outlooks. Questioning old assumptions and making changes in the status quo is not a comfortable process, but for

us the rewards have far outweighed the discomforts. Growth, knowledge, insight, confidence, power, and friendship have emerged as we have worked together on issues deeply important to all of us. (p. 39)

These relationships between schools and universities can also help overcome the difficulties involved in writing about what such projects have uncovered about learning. When teaching and writing responsibilities are shared among the participants, each could have increased time both to learn and to share.

Such collaborations also mean that we must address power relationships in the schools. All participants must be respected for their contributions and must have power to influence policy. Seymour Sarason (1990) believes that there can be no real reform unless educators more seriously address power relationships in schools; he says that the current reform proposals are examples of "missing the point and ignoring the obvious" (1990, p. 6):

The point they miss is that the classroom, and the school and the school system generally, are not comprehensible unless you flush out the power relationships that inform and control the behavior of everyone in these settings. Ignore these relationships, leave unexamined their rationale, and the existing "system" will defeat efforts at reform. (p. 7)

Sarason acknowledges that changing power relationships is "among the most complex tasks human beings can undertake" (p. 7); however,

If the process became more open and inclusive, the substance and direction of policies would take on more boldness, experimentation, and vision, which would engender a degree of commitment that the participants are now unable or unwilling to give. New participants, new ideas, a greater willingness to depart from stifling traditions would be the fruits of new power alignments. (p. 51)

Sarason does not justify opening up the decision making process on the basis of improving educational outcomes, but rather on a moral-political basis. The question is 'Who should participate in educational decision-making?' which he answers by saying "any individual or group who directly or indirectly

would be affected by a decision should stand in some relationship to the decision-making process" (p. 53). Sarason sees difficulty in giving power to teachers because we are unaccustomed to having it; however, he also says that "the biggest risk in education is not taking one" (p. 176).

Collective co-ownership must include parents and students as well. Space in terms of time and in terms of power relationships must be made to hear the voices of all who might be affected by educational decision making. Meier believes that the only way important changes can be made is by "creating a very different school culture, a new set of relationships and ideas" and by understanding that the changes affect not only teachers, but the students and their parents as well (Meier, 1992, p. 599). "It is through collective co-ownership of new designs for schooling, in an atmosphere that allows for reflective examination and reshaping based on experience, that something new will emerge" (pp. 599-600). The importance of parent and community involvement and understanding is vital, not just for support, but for real participation. The mismatch between what the children and parents expect and what they experience in the schools will cause dissonance without understanding and respect for what teachers are trying to do. This mismatch among expectations was very evident in Chadwick, but in most cases, policymakers saw their role as one of counselor to parents, providing them with enough facts and anecdotes about DAP to convince them of its superiority. When parents are active participants and true collaborators in creating a vision for the education of their children, reform efforts will have a stronger base, and those who are trying to improve learning opportunities will not be viewed as experimenting with the lives of the children.

Intellectually Transformative Teacher Learning

Cohen and Barnes (1993b) suggested that there are not many examples of teachers' involvement in environments which allow them to "contribute to reform and learn from it on a continuing basis" (p. 257). However, the following are two examples of the kinds of intellectually transformative teacher learning which can take place around educational topics. They are provided by Shirley Brice Heath's work with teachers in the Piedmont Carolinas in trying to learn how to deal with the desegregation of the schools there in the 1970s (1983), and by Denny Taylor and her work with New Hampshire teachers and administrators involved in the "Biographic Literacy Profiles Project" (1990). In both instances the teachers spent several years studying and learning from the perspective of the learners in their communities, schools, and classrooms. They established the problem for which they wanted to investigate responses and they conducted the research and the observations which formed the foundation of their responses. Both examples provide hope for the powerful learning which can result when teachers have time to work, access to information they need, and a supportive learning environment. Both are examples of how educational policy which makes real changes for children and teachers can emerge from the complex practice of teaching. Both are also examples of what happens when the material supports for such learning are removed and the outside constraints become overwhelming.

For Taylor and her colleagues this learning was driven by questions related to the literacy development of children in their schools. Teachers and principals collected examples of students' literacy work and recorded their own observations, feelings, and interpretations. They hoped that their work

together would inform them about how to support learning and learn how to teach without testing. In a memo to members of the project, Taylor wrote,

In the last couple of years I think that we have begun to understand that the Biographic Literacy Profiles Project (affectionately known as "BLIPP") is as much about ourselves as it is about children. It is about teachers developing personal theories, about teachers using their practical knowledge and theoretical expertise, and about teachers recognizing themselves, and being recognized by others, as professionals in their classrooms, schools, and communities. (1993, p. 129)

She added,

When we observe children and write descriptions of their observable literacy behaviors we are creating critical sites of inquiry in our classrooms and in our schools. This is what BLIPP is all about. Learning to observe children and then learning to construct descriptions of their observable literacy behaviors encourages us to look at ourselves and our personal and shared ways of knowing. It's amazing stuff when you stop to think about it! (p. 130)

Taylor described the work they did as "disciplined and systematic," as they "learned in authentic problem-solving situations" by employing "a democratic ideal, theoretically grounded and practically situated" developing practices which were "both excellent and equitable." Above all, they

honored diversity, knowing that it was [their] combined interests, skills, and abilities that would enable children to work collaboratively in ways that would prepare them for the rapidly changing world of the twenty-first century. (p. 130)

The school calendar had been adjusted to allow teachers and administrators time to work on this project; when a request was made to the State Board of Education to continue this four-day week arrangement for students, evidence was provided to support the request. Parents, teachers, and administrators offered data and reflections. Teachers found there was more time for collaboration with colleagues and with parents, parents overwhelmingly supported the arrangements and the results, and the community was also in favor of the work being done. High school graduation rates increased dramatically. Helen Featherstone wrote an article about the

school which was published in *Principal* magazine in 1990. She asked, while gathering information for her writing - "Is the fruitful use of free time an essential precondition - or a product - of change?" Taylor's response was that "free" time is both a precondition and a product of change. "Change takes place in schools when teachers work in environments in which they can identify problems and explore solutions. This takes time" (p. 132).

The work had been greatly informative for both teachers and students and was embraced by parents as well. However, without visiting the school or consulting with the teachers, the Board "arbitrarily reorganized the school week" because the results of mandatory achievement tests were not as high as the Board thought they should be. No consideration was given to the lack of emphasis placed on those tests by the school; they had simply given the tests as the state required. Since the test offered nothing to improve instruction, the teachers and parents placed no relevance on the results. The resulting effect on the teachers was "devastating" (p. 132). The Board's decision served to challenge "the teachers' professional identity" when decisions were made that "critically affect the ways they teach, and yet they themselves are not part of the decision-making process" (p. 132). In fact, as one Board member explained as reasoning for discounting the teachers' views as part of a special interest group, "They are special interest because they get paid by the system. They are people who have something to gain or lose by this proposal" (p. 137). Teachers began to talk about "uncertainty" and of "feeling threatened" and of "emotional exhaustion" (p. 132).

Taylor added the following comments in a postscript to her initial writing about the project because she had lost her optimism that there is enough flexibility in the system to allow teachers to "work as researchers in their own classrooms" (p. 130). The teachers tried "to see the world from the

child's perspective," which was profoundly democratic. They were not, however, bureaucratic:

I no longer believe that it is possible to be both, because when it becomes bureaucratic the struggle is not about pedagogy, it's about power. About who controls the activities that occur in schools. About who participates in American society. About who controls the power base of the twenty-first century. (p. 136)

As one of the teachers in the project said, "It's easy for policy makers to talk about innovation, but it would be difficult for them to let it occur" (pp. 136-137).

Taylor is not optimistic because in order to allow innovation to occur, policy makers would have to give up much of their control and "share with the teachers the responsibility for what happens to children in school" (p. 137):

They would have to live with the uncertainty of knowing that it is teachers and children who are the agents of change, who will be working together to create an educational system that is both excellent and equitable. (p. 137)

Shirley Brice Heath (1983) worked with teachers in the Carolina Piedmont area in the 1970s who wanted to create classrooms which would respect the language which newly integrated African-American students and white rural children brought to school. The former students were not experiencing success in the recently desegregated schools and the prevailing tendency of local educators was to view the children and their families as deficient; the latter students also were having difficulty adjusting to new norms of communication. These teachers believed that they could create an environment which did not demean the children and could enable proficient literacy learning. Heath wrote of the teachers in her project as "learning researchers, who used knowledge from ethnographies of communication to build a two-way channel between communities and their classrooms" (p. 354). Their work exemplified the kind of conversation which Schön advocated and

which involved teachers seeing themselves as the novices they truly were in the area of local modes of communication. A critical component in their process of relearning to teach was "allowing children to articulate how what they knew related to what the school wanted them to know" (p. 355). The teachers and Heath worked together, using field notes and analyses of life in the communities, "to compare their data on their ways of believing, behaving, and valuing in the classroom." This data was "solid and specific and reflective of common patterns across individuals and groups" and served as "the evidence from which they could work toward innovations" (p. 358). Thus, from their collaborative work, classroom practices changed and new policies were instituted to allow teachers more flexibility to use what they had learned as they taught in their classrooms.

When Heath returned to the Carolina Piedmont to meet with the teachers several years after their work together ended, she found that "the methods used by these teachers [had] all but disappeared" (p. 356). Some of the teachers had left public school teaching, but those who remained looked back on their work with her as "a creative high point in their careers" (p. 356). During the intervening time, the teachers explained there had been a crisis of "a lack of faith in schools," which meant teachers experienced a decrease in autonomy and an increase in "the bureaucratization of teaching and testing" (p. 356). Mandatory testing and record keeping allowed little time for the creative projects the teachers had previously initiated.

The experiences of Taylor and the members of the BLIPP project and of Heath and her colleagues reinforce the difficulties ahead and the need to convince the public that teachers can be trusted to make judgments about student progress and achievement. Teachers themselves often see relying on standardized tests as an indication of diminished professionalism; however,

the influence of standardized tests remains. As George Madaus (1988) has reminded us, "policymakers will not readily abandon the use of high-stakes tests to drive instruction and learning" (p. 115). The kinds of assessments we would need to implement the reforms called for today do not have the "administrative simplicity and low cost" (p. 116) which most states and school districts feel are necessary. We will have to fight against what Madaus calls the "psychometric imperialism" (p. 84) of the tests, which in both subtle and obvious ways control our teaching.

The material conditions of time and space for study and reflection enabled Taylor and the BLIPP members as well as Heath and the teachers with whom she worked to empower both their students and themselves and to work as "intellectuals." Henry Giroux (1992) believes the category of "intellectual" provides "the theoretical and political basis for teachers to engage in a critical dialogue among themselves and others to fight for the conditions they need to reflect, read, share their work with others..." (p. 19). However, he joins Taylor in noting that "organizational constraints and ideological conditions" leave teachers little room for "collective work and critical pursuits" (p. 19):

The issue is, of course, that intellectual work that operates in the interest of critical pedagogies needs to be supported by practical conditions, and that by fighting for conditions that support joint teaching, collective writing and research, and democratic planning, teachers will make inroads into opening new spaces for creative and reflective discourse and action. The importance of such a discourse cannot be overemphasized. For within such a discourse teachers can develop an emancipatory pedagogy that relates language and power.... (p. 20)

I believe that the work of the first grade teachers at Kennedy School serves as an another example of intellectually transformative work. The teachers decided the problems we were moved to think about. We worked out ways to investigate our concerns and share our learning. While we did not

join in collective writing, we did produce gradual changes in our teaching, and our theories about learning continued to emerge from our work. We read about what other teachers had done with similar problems and built our understandings and initial investigations upon those resources, tempered with our own observations of students. The environment at Kennedy School was conducive to our learning because we had a supportive principal and some resources. However, we lacked the material resources of time, smaller classes, and opportunities to work with parents and community members. We were able to sustain our learning when it was self-chosen and gradual, but the DAP policy changed the time frame and increased the momentum. Teachers who had not been making gradual changes were denied the opportunity to self-select problems to which they would attend. All teachers were not provided with the same kinds of support which we had enjoyed at Kennedy. Like the teachers working with Denny Taylor and Shirley Brice Heath, we suffered within the constraints of achievement testing and the continual removal of supports, such as time provided during the school day for our reflective work. Additionally, we did not gain the support from our other colleagues so that our conditions for learning could be improved through union contract negotiations, nor did we experience any changes in the district's hierarchical power structure.

We Need to Be More Aggressive in Our Demands for Opportunities to Learn

There are many examples of teachers resisting the power arrangements of schools, but our usual response is silence. We will need to be much more aggressive in our efforts to work toward obtaining the kinds of material arrangements of time and space which allow the kind of work we want to do. We also have to be much more vocal about how the kind of work

we want to do provides for optimal learning for all children. As Gordon Wells wrote (1994), action research must not concern itself only with what 'is' in a particular classroom, it must also imagine what 'might be' and then try to achieve it (p. 30). However, the troubled times in which we live seem to be moving in the opposite direction. Our state continues to move toward increased achievement testing, with high stakes consequences for students and school districts. Maxine Greene (1993) summarizes our difficulty when she says we are more about uniformity and exclusion than "diversity and inclusion;" we are eager to "thrust children's observed behavior into measurable molds" (p. 213); we invent "gradations of social difference as we identify certain kinds of norms such as 'stages' of development" (p. 216); and we allow people like Allan Bloom to determine "official truth" about what is worth knowing (p. 216). This is not a time in our history where policymakers or politicians want to think of the disciplines as open to revision. Greene cautions us to consider that

There is some agreement today on the need to reject single dominating visions or interpretations, whether they come from textbook publishers, school superintendents, local religious bodies, teachers, or even students. But we are only beginning to realize the importance of including, whenever possible, alternative visions on what is offered as historical truth or literary renderings or even certain empirical discoveries. (p. 218)

We will have a long battle ahead in our attempts to have people understand that educational policymaking can be much like Dewey described democracy - "a community always in the making" (Greene, 1993, p. 218). The following statements are meant to apply to students, but if we think of teacher/learners, Greene's views apply to us as well:

Coming together in their pluralities and their differences, they may finally articulate how they are choosing themselves and what the projects are by means by which they can identify themselves. We all need to recognize each other in our striving, our becoming, our inventing of the possible. And, yet, it is a question of acting in the light of a vision of what might be - a vision that enables people to

perceive the voids, take heed of the violations, and move (if they can) to repair. Such a vision, we have found, can be enlarged and enriched by those on the margins, whoever they are. (p. 220)

Kathleen Casey and Michael Apple (1989) would add that one way to get this started is to listen to teachers:

...Finding ways for women teachers to have a voice can be part of the struggle to alter the conditions of gendered labor in American. Rather than attempting to control teachers' work from the outside, either to proletarianize them or to 'professionalize' them, rather than blaming teachers for all our social ills, we may want first to listen to them. Who knows. Our society may learn how important women's work is in the process. (pp. 183-184)

The teachers in my study knew what they needed in order to learn and they knew what they viewed as professionalism. They were learners and wanted to continue their learning, but they were weary of public rhetoric which criticizes our efforts, fails to understand the complexity of teaching, and preaches to us about the newest practice on the market. Our experiences should speak loudly to reformers: when we are in intellectually stimulating environments, have time and resources to investigate the problems we have identified, and can collaborate with colleagues, students, and parents, we can provide you with the direction and results which could truly improve educational opportunities for all children. We would not have put it in these terms, but I believe that Catharine MacKinnon (1987) captures our feelings:

Feminism seeks to empower women on our own terms. To value what women have always done as well as to allow us to do everything else. We seek not only to be valued for who we are, but to have access to the process of the definition of value itself. In this way, our demand for access becomes also a demand for change. (p. 22)

Our experiences and our conversations have helped me see the importance of providing learning opportunities for all teachers. It helped me realize the importance of not allowing ourselves to continue to be silenced, but to speak out about the unjust and demeaning practices we find in our schools. Our talks have helped me understand that educational reform can emerge from

our collaborative learning, as the "steady work" of on-going conversations among teachers and parents and other educators, as we continue to learn together what we need to do to create the kinds of schools to enable the visions we have for our future. This kind of reform will not be glitzy, nor will it be static, but will continually evolve as the children and their families help us to learn how to support them.

An environment which supports learning for everyone might allow the women who have been silenced and those whose lone voices were not loud enough to be heard to speak against thinking of our children as "'human resources' for the expansion of productivity, as means to the end of maintaining our nation's economic competitiveness and military primacy in the world" (Greene, 1986, p. 427) and, instead, to form intentionally organized responses to begin to repair what we have known to be missing or known to be wrong. Maxine Greene suggests that

Perhaps we can at last devise reflective communities in the interstices of colleges and schools. Perhaps we can invent ways of freeing people to feel and express indignation, to break through the opaqueness, to refuse the silences. We need to teach in such a way as to arouse passion now and then; we need a new camaraderie, a new *en masse*. These are dark and shadowed times, and we need to live them, standing before one another, open to the world. (1986, p. 441)

The conversations and the struggle must be continuous if we are to find the space for all our voices. It is the struggle over "assigned meaning" in schools which, according to Magda Lewis and Roger Simon (1986), forms the "basis of a pedagogy that liberates knowledge and practice" (p. 469). They add,

The struggle is itself a condition basic to the realization of a process of pedagogy: it is a struggle that can never be won - or pedagogy stops. It is the struggle through which new knowledge, identities, and possibilities are introduced that may lead to the alteration simultaneously of circumstances and selves. (p. 469)

As I listened to the tape-recorded voices of my colleagues, I realized that Holdaway's words about how children approach literacy describe in a direct way what we understood about ourselves:

We have seen that the search for THE way in which children should be taught is a falsifying exercise. Children approach literacy by many different paths in the same way as they approach learning to talk by many different paths. All the paths they do follow successfully are purposeful and meaning-oriented, winding through the terrain and around the obstacles in intelligent and personal ways. The terrain is different for each learner....Any approach to literacy must allow the individual learners to pick their own way - always in the company of guiding and sustaining friends. (1979, p. 191)

There will never be one way to learn - for the children or for ourselves.

Teachers who are engaged in continuous reflection about teaching and learning can provide important insights about those various paths children take as they approach their learning. As a result, educational reform can emerge, not occurring in huge waves, but as a well spring of ongoing contributions. To create the possibility for true reform, we need an intellectually stimulating environment that is centered around collective co-ownership and in which parents, students, teachers and all those interested in education proceed together toward their vision, "always in the company of guiding and sustaining friends."

APPENDIX

Appendix

REPORT ON METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The research design for this study was qualitative, based largely upon an ethnographic model. When I proposed this research, I was intrigued by Elmore and McLaughlin's (1988) caution that any educational reform, if it is to have the result of "improved teaching and learning," must "originate in the practice of teaching" (p. 4). These policy analysts also wrote that successful reform depends upon educators' willingness to confront issues centering on the "locus of authority, knowledge, and responsibility for teaching and learning in schools" (p. 4). When the school district in which I taught instituted a policy to mandate "developmentally appropriate practices" in kindergarten, first, and second grades, I recognized an opportunity to investigate, in this context, Elmore and McLaughlin's ideas. The policy was enthusiastically supported by many early elementary teachers who had served on grade-level Task Forces to create the plan for implementing the policy and to write guidelines for the teaching practices. I was also a supporter of the DAP concept and hoped that its implementation would greatly enliven classrooms and improve learning.

I taught first grade during the year the policy moved from kindergarten to first grade, so I thought that my own involvement with and reaction to the policy would provide an additional frame for my questions; therefore, I audio-taped a personal journal. I attempted to write my journal at first, but I was so tired when I got home from school that I could not get much writing accomplished. I found it more convenient to keep my tape recorder on the front seat of the car and tape my journal as I drove between home and

school and the university. My intent was simply to document my ideas about my students' learning and my teaching. [Transcriptions from my personal journal are indicated in the manuscript by (Personal journal, 8/31/89).]

Another type of data which informed my study consisted of official and public documents about the policy. These included curricular and support materials sent to the teachers and principals, School Board minutes, and newspaper accounts. I took extensive field notes during School Board meetings, district curriculum meetings, staff development sessions, staff meetings, and team meetings among the first grade teachers at my school. Other data consisted of historical accounts of the school district found in a history of the district written by a local historian, School Board minutes from years before the DAP policy, and various documents from staff development opportunities. [Quotations and general information from my field notes are indicated in the manuscript by (Field notes, 10/28/91).]

The major contributors to this study were the teachers, principals, Central Office administrators, and School Board members who agreed to talk with me about their experiences with the DAP policy. I sent three groups of letters outlining my research and requesting an interview. (Copies of the letter of invitation and consent form are found at the end of this Appendix.) The first group of letters was sent on September 17, 1990, to all elementary principals, assistant principals, administrative interns, central office administrators involved with the policy, elementary learning specialists, and School Board members. These people were selected for the first group because they had all been involved with the policy since its inception. Some teachers (second grade teachers and teachers new to the district) were experiencing their first year of implementing the policy, so I wanted to give them time to work within the policy guidelines before talking with them. The second set of

letters was sent in February, 1991, to all first and second grade teachers in five of the twelve elementary schools. The third set was sent to all the first and second grade teachers in the remaining seven schools in May, 1991. I sent letters to the kindergarten teachers in three of the elementary schools - two schools in February and one in May. Invitations were sent to kindergarten teachers in three schools which were located in three different geographic areas of the Chadwick district.

As a result of the letters sent on September 17, 1990, I interviewed and audio-taped four central office administrators, two School Board members, eight elementary principals (which included one principal-intern), and six learning specialists. These interviews were conducted between October 9, 1990, and March 27, 1991. As a result of letters sent on February 25, 1991, I interviewed six teachers between March 18, 1991 and May 25, 1991. As a result of letters sent on May 22, 1991, I interviewed twelve teachers between June 3, 1991, and July 16, 1991.

Letters sent to:	Number of letters sent:	Positive responses:
(September 17, 1990)		
Central office administrators	4	4
School Board members	7	2
Elementary principals,		
assis. principals, intern	14	8
Learning specialists	12	6
(February 25, 1991)		
School A - K, 1, 2 teachers	10	0
School B - 1, 2 teachers	10	2*
School C - 1, 2 teachers	6	1
School D - K, 1, 2 teachers	12	2
School E - 1, 2 teachers	9	3
(May 22, 1991)		
School F - 1, 2 teachers	8	0
School G - 1, 2 teachers	7	2
School H - 1, 2 teachers	9	1
School I - K, 1, 2 teachers	7	2
School J - 1, 2 teachers	8	1
School K - 1, 2 teachers	6	3

*These two teachers were unable to schedule interviews, however.

I focused primarily on first and second grade teachers because I felt that the policy had the most impact on their work. For example, kindergarten teachers in the district had not traditionally used workbooks for math or reading, but first and second grade teachers did traditionally use them. The DAP policy recommended that such workbooks were not to be used. Other policy recommendations, such as integrating science and social studies into thematic units with language arts and mathematics, were also changes for the first and second grade teachers, while many kindergarten teachers had already been using thematic units. [Direct quotations and references to these interview transcripts are indicated in the manuscript by (9/18/90, pp. 6-7).]

There were many possible reasons why a limited number of teachers and learning specialists responded to my invitation. First was the constraint of time. As I mentioned previously in this manuscript, few of the people who agreed to talk with me had young children and all except one of them spoke with me during the summer. Teachers were extremely busy trying to implement the DAP policy and even one more thing to do was difficult. Secondly, I assume that, for many teachers, talking with me was risky. Some who declined did tell me that they trusted me and respected what I was attempting to do, but simply felt that if they revealed how they truly felt about the policy, they could somehow get into trouble.

Although I would not share with anyone the names of those who spoke with me or those who did not, there was some history in the district which would support concerns about risk. Some principals were known to make life difficult for certain teachers. Teachers wanted to stay "in favor" with administrators in the district so that they could transfer between schools if they so chose. Trouble-makers were unwelcome. The teacher who spoke most

adamantly against the policy in our interview was retiring and felt protected against any retribution.

Some teachers did not know me well, but did know that I had a reputation as a "whole language" teacher and, therefore, they could assume that I was an advocate for the policy. This presumption increased their risk in talking with me. There were several times during conversations with teachers when they asked that I turn off the tape recorder so that we could talk "off the record." I did not include any of those comments nor did I make references to our discussions during those unrecorded times in the body of this dissertation. It was clear that some people were afraid.

Learning specialists, in particular, felt vulnerable. Six did agree to talk with me, but the six who did not were considered by the Language Arts Coordinator (their supervisor) to be "resistors." As several of the learning specialists who did speak with me said, being labeled as a "resistor" was a difficult burden to bear and the label was given simply for asking questions. Comments from several principals also revealed their concerns about retribution from Central Office administrators if they dared to question the policy.

I conducted interviews throughout the 1990-91 school year. All interviews were held after school and lasted from forty-five minutes to an hour-and-a-half. Some interviews were held in the summer of 1991 and six second interviews with teachers took place in the summer of 1992.

In late July, 1991, I wrote to the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) to get permission to extend my research for another year. I wanted to talk to teachers a second time, continue to attend and document School Board meetings, and continue my own personal journal and field notes. I was assigned to teach a second and third grade

combined class during the 1991-92 school year and I was interested to see how the policy changed as I moved up in grades. I received permission to extend my work for a second year on July 31, 1991. I wanted to get feedback from the teachers about the themes I saw emerging from the first conversations with teachers and to invite any further insights about their efforts to implement the policy.

I transcribed all the audio-tapes, including my own journal tapes, which resulted in three large notebooks of transcriptions totaling more than one thousand single spaced, typed pages. I read transcriptions many times and created lists and lists of issues and themes which emerged. I was able to complete the transcribing during the 1992-93 academic year when I took a leave from teaching in Chadwick and taught at a local university where my teaching and consulting schedule allowed me some time for my research. I also continued to read widely in fields related to early childhood education, feminist theories in education, early literacy, organizational theory, and educational policy. During the 1993-94 academic year I taught full time at a different state university and my consultant work was in a town fifty miles from home. My teaching and consulting schedule was extremely hectic and I found myself with little energy for the extended writing I needed to do. I returned to the elementary classroom in 1994-95 and carved out time here and there to get a start on the writing to which I was able to devote full time during the summer of 1995.

EVOLUTION OF MY THINKING

As I read and reread the interview transcriptions and my journal, themes seemed to bubble up at every turn. I knew that I was working very hard with my teaching, but I had always put in long hours. I remember when

my own children were young I would frequently take them back to school with me in the evening or on the weekend. However, I was amazed at how much work it took to do what I wanted to do for my students. My first grade colleagues at Kennedy also worked long hours, both at school and at home. I do not think that we were working only to implement a mandated policy, but to be the kind of teachers we wanted to be for our students. We all enjoyed teaching and did not mind devoting so much time to our work, but it was clear that all teachers were not as keen about spending this kind of time at school. Also, I began to question why teachers should have to work so hard, especially when we had so little support from the school district.

I wonder why the connections between learning for the children and for ourselves did not seem obvious to me right from the beginning. It was not until I read and reread transcriptions that I began to see the irony of a reform which was attempting to revitalize the learning environment for children occurring in an environment which made learning very challenging for the adults. I was so busy trying to do what I thought was important that I failed to see what was being demanded. Also, I came to realize that what I chose to do was not what all teachers would choose to do, but they were being forced by the policy at least to look like they were trying to implement the practices. The issue of power over who gets to decide who is in control of teaching and learning did become paramount, but was not addressed in the district.

WHAT I DID NOT WRITE ABOUT

I did not write about many, many important issues which emerged from this work. For example, each group of participants had their own concerns about the policy and new learnings and responsibilities which emerged from

their work to implement DAP. School Board members felt torn between truly wanting to trust the teachers and the many complaints about teachers they heard from parents. They read articles in local papers which severely criticized whole language as a liberal, "do-nothing" approach, and yet they stuck by us and the policy. They heard talk about "constructing meaning" and "engaging students," but they had only their own school memories upon which to judge teaching and learning.

The policy required principals to be early childhood instructional leaders - a position unfamiliar to most of them. They served as intermediaries, trying to give their teachers space to learn and to try out the recommended practices and trying to placate parents who worried about whether or not their children would learn to read and spell and compute. They felt they had to explain DAP to parents when they were not sure they understood what it meant.

Parents were confounded by a barrage of conflicting reports in the media and from educators in the district about the positive and negative aspects of "whole language," "invented spelling," and a perceived return to "open education." I wrote about how parents attempted to present their concerns at School Board meetings, but I did not provide the detail about parent meetings which teachers held with individual parents or at whole class gatherings. The parents' perspective was not presented here. I made the choice to tell this story as one about creating a learning environment for adults, but such an environment includes parents as well.

The children are central to this work, but you have not benefited from their perspective either. You have heard from their teachers about what they observed, but the students could have had a voice here as well. The policy was ultimately about improving instruction for the benefit of the

children; this study focuses our attention on the teachers and what it took for them to attempt to enable that benefit.

THE ISSUE OF WOMEN'S WORK

Between the time I started my Ph.D. program in the fall of 1986 and this summer of 1995, my two daughters have started and completed university undergraduate degrees. My family and I experienced the heartbreak of the death of a parent and the dissolution of a nearly twenty-five year marriage. We planned and enjoyed two lovely weddings - one for my older daughter and her husband and one for my husband and me. Among my daughters, my husband, and myself, we have moved someone on nine different occasions during those nine years. I have continued to teach throughout the nine years. During the first two years, I was a learning specialist and I commuted to the university two evenings a week for classes, which met from seven to ten, and then drove the sixty-five miles back home. I took a sabbatical leave during the 1988-89 school year, but I worked twenty hours a week as a consultant to the State Department of Education, taught courses for M.S.U., maintained three of us in college by that time, and took my comprehensive exams. I was back in the classroom from 1989 through 1992, but never had the same configuration of grade levels any two years in a row. I also made the drive to and from the university each week to teach undergraduate literacy courses.

The point to all of this is not to show how hard I have worked, but to show that I am like most working women I know. We cannot separate our personal lives from our work. As I talked with teachers, most of whom did not have young children at home, it was still very clear that they carried the major responsibilities for maintaining their homes, for preparing the meals,

for making arrangements for elderly parents (both their own and those of their spouse), for purchasing the gifts at holidays, for keeping in touch with the family with cards and letters, and for all the thousand other things we do. And yet these women worked long hours at school, gave so much of themselves to their children, and then felt guilty that they did not do more. We blame them for not putting into practice the latest reform idea, when everyday they nurture and care for children. The teachers I interviewed generally denied that gender plays a role in the structure of schools, but I feel that it is an issue of dominant importance. I believe that gender has much to do with "questions having to do with locus of authority, knowledge, and responsibility for teaching and learning in schools," and I strongly agree with Elmore and McLaughlin (1988, p. 4) that such questions are seldom put on the policy agenda. If this study has done little else, it has reaffirmed my resolve to keep such questions in the forefront as I go about my efforts to work toward the kinds of schools I want for my own children and grandchildren.

Letter of Invitation to Participate in the Study

240 Lyn Anne Court
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

February 25, 1991

Dear Colleague:

I teach a combined first and second grade class in our school district and I am also a doctoral student in the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University. I am currently conducting the research for my dissertation in the area of Educational Policy and it is in this regard that I am writing to you.

As you are aware, the [Chadwick] Schools have instituted a policy which mandates developmentally appropriate practices in our kindergarten, first, and second grade classrooms. My dissertation committee at M.S.U. and the administration of our school district have approved my request to do a case study of this policy.

Educational policy is traditionally studied by university or corporate researchers who attempt to measure changes in student achievement as a result of the policy's implementation. Using statistical achievement data, a policy is said to "work" when student achievement gains are recorded. Recently, there has been an increase in the use of research methods which include observing classrooms where policy implementations (reforms) are taking place and interviewing the teachers. The researchers then draw conclusions about "what is going on." Even in this kind of research, the students and teachers are the "subjects" of the study.

My study is quite different from these more traditional forms of educational research. I believe that our involvement as educators in the implementation of our district's policy affords us an opportunity to have our own voices heard in educational research. We can be involved, not as "subjects" of the research, but as colleagues who have a great deal of value to offer each other and to other educators as well. I believe that the "academic" educational communities (university folks, policy makers, state and federal agencies, etc.) need to hear from real educators - teachers, administrators, and School Board members - about what we believe about teaching and learning and how our classroom, office and Boardroom experiences can be the "stuff" from which educational policies can grow. I think that we can take a hard look at where knowledge about teaching and learning come from and how we interpret that "knowledge" in our own ways.

My research is not a critique of our policy, nor of its implementation. It is basically a case study of how the policy came to be and how the people involved - teachers, administrators, and School Board members are working through its implications for their teaching, for their work and decision making, and certainly for students' learning. Any attempts at educational reform are always challenging endeavors and I hope to find a way to tell our story which illuminates the complex nature of our district's effort. I would like to have you add your voice by agreeing to have a conversation with me about your work and your feelings.

I am very sympathetic to the need for confidentiality in regard to participation in this project. I will provide procedures which I hope will substantially reduce any risk to you. First, the identity of the local communities served by our district, the school district itself and individual schools will be disguised in any reporting of my research. No real names of

places or people will be used in transcribed audio-tapes, field notes, or in any reports of the study. Identifying characteristics of individuals will be altered in the reporting as well. I will request to audio-tape our interview, but I will keep those tapes and my notes in a confidential location. They will not be shared with anyone except members of my dissertation committee at their request and then no real names will be used. I will not discuss with any school personnel information gained in interviews, observations, meetings, or casual encounters. I will not reveal to anyone the names of people who have agreed (or declined) to meet with me. I would be happy to meet with you at a location you select which provides you with the most privacy. I am willing to come to your home or have you come to mine. My preference is to talk with you individually, but I would meet you and others you identify if all of you feel more comfortable with a group discussion.

I believe that our collaboration on this project can benefit ourselves and other educational communities as well. The first benefit, I believe, will be to ourselves as we provide support and encouragement to each other. In addition, I think it is important that all of us, no matter what educational philosophy we embrace, have a change to tell our own story. You can help increase our understanding of the relationship between policy or reform and its impact on practice. You can help provide a close-up look at how the people involved work through the successes and frustrations of trying to change, modify, or encourage particular teaching practices. This project can provide the media through which teachers' actual voices can make a viable contribution to reform efforts through policy implementation.

Of course I am hoping that you will agree to talk with me about your work; however, this project is entirely voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate. I cannot offer any remuneration for your time give for an interview (which would probably take one to two hours). I know how busy the school year is, so I certainly understand any hesitation on your part to spend more time away from your family and personal life.

I have enclosed a response form. Please indicate your intentions and return the form to me at [Kennedy] School or to my home address if you prefer. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for considering your collaboration in my research.

Sincerely,

Klo Phillippi

Enc.: Consent form

Consent Form for Interview Participants

- The research project, "A Case Study of the implementation of a school district-wide policy for developmentally appropriate practices in kindergarten, first, and second grades" to be conducted by Klotylda Phillippi, doctoral student at Michigan State University, has been explained to me.
- I understand that participation at this time will involve an audio-recorded interview with Ms Phillippi regarding my involvement in the school district's policy implementation. This interview may require one to two hours of my time. Any additional forms of participation in this project will require my consent.
- I know that my participation is entirely voluntary and I realize there is no penalty for refusal to participate. Further, I realize that I have the right to withdraw my participation at any time.
- I understand that confidentiality will be maintained by Ms Phillippi whose responsibility it will be to keep information secure from others.

_____ Yes, I give permission to Ms Phillippi to contact me to set up a time for an interview regarding her research project.

_____ No. I do not wish to participate in this research project.

_____ I need more information before I can agree to an interview. Ms Phillippi should contact me to provide this information.

(name)

(date)

(home phone number)

(school/work phone number)

Please return this form before Friday, March 8, 1991 to:

Klo Phillippi
[Kennedy] Elementary school
or
240 Lyn Anne Court
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

LIST OF REFERENCES

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