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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Faye E. Patterson entitled "Educational Values and Accountability in Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Education.

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EDUCATIONAL VALUES AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN TENNESSEE: ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND MORAL IMPERATIVES

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Education
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Faye E. Patterson
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful husband, Arthur, who supported me throughout my doctoral program and especially during this study. He believed in me and encouraged me even when I doubted myself.

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ABSTRACT

This case study focused on selected stakeholders' perceptions of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the accountability policy system in Tennessee and how they perceive that accountability has affected them as differential groups. Standpoint Theory and policy literature provided the conceptual framework for the study. Sixty participants from six schools in three school districts, state level educators, and state level politicians were interviewed for this study.

The Findings revealed that the state level educators and politicians perceive that the current accountability policy system is an appropriate and effective way to measure student achievement. However, the majority of educators perceive that they have been marginalized by the current accountability policy system. They do not perceive that relying solely on one standardized test is an appropriate and effective way of measuring student achievement. Teachers perceive that students do not take the tests seriously, and tensions exist among educators over the perceived inequities of not testing all students and not requiring value added gain scores for all teachers. Except on the high school Gateway and End of Course Exams, educators perceive that the tests are not closely aligned with the curriculum. Teachers and district level educators acknowledge unethical behaviors such as cheating to inflate scores and teaching to the tests.

The results obtained from the diverse perceptions of the study offered recommendations for alternative approaches to accountability, which stakeholders perceive to be more effective and appropriate. The recommendations may eventually help to influence future educational accountability policies in Tennessee.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Accountability is one of the most highly debated policy topics in contemporary education. Over the past 35 years, it has grown into a movement of tremendous proportions. Accountability policy systems have been written into state statutes, regulations from state departments of education, and state/local school board policies governing the standards for school achievement. These policies have been labeled as 'high-stakes' accountability. Although models vary throughout the states, a complete high-stakes accountability model generally consists of connections to school goals, processes for assessing achievement of local and state standards, multiple indicators that measure the annual achievement of schools and districts toward goals, as well as rewards and sanctions (Norris, 1990; Mathers, 1999; Kogan, 1986). Researchers have also recommended that targeted resources, in the form of additional funding, early intervention, and technical assistance, should be added as a part of all accountability program components to support school improvement efforts in specific low achievement areas, which might be identified by accountability data ("Keys to School Success," 2001; Creech, 2000).

Accountability systems hold educators responsible not only for student performance, but also for staff performance and for compliance with many general operating procedures. Accountability is not just a hot topic in education; in many states, it is the law. The fact that approximately 95% of the states currently have statutes or state regulations governing the monitoring and reporting of academic performance highlights

the importance that has been attached to accountability. Only Wyoming, North Dakota, and Montana have no accountability statutes (Mathers, 1999).

In addition to being accountable to policy-makers, schools are accountable to other stakeholders including their students, parents, fellow educators, school boards, state boards of education, and the general public. These stakeholders may have different beliefs or perceptions about the purposes and missions of schools. Another term for describing stakeholders' beliefs or perceptions about schools is their 'educational values'. Whether they are implicit or explicit, educational values influence how, to whom, and for what stakeholders perceive that schools should be held accountable (Kogan, 1986; Lessinger & Tyler, 1971; Campbell, 1999).

The examination of nation-wide accountability movements of the past five decades provide a context for understanding the current Tennessee accountability policy system, which emerged in the early 1990s. Specifically, there were several key historical events that had an impact on education (such as the Supreme Court decision, Brown v. Board of Education 347 U. S. 483 (1954), the 1957 launching of the Russian satellite, Sputnik; and the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 that produced billions of federal dollars). The expansion of federal compensatory programs demonstrated a need for program evaluations to identify effective programs for replication and target ineffective ones for elimination. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provided an acceptable model for evaluating the federal compensatory and remedial programs, which was widely replicated and became foundational to the establishment of current accountability policy systems (Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990).

The Tennessee accountability policy system was patterned after the NAEP model and carried in two pieces of legislation, The Education Improvement Act of 1991 and the Education Bill of 1992. Most states, including Tennessee, attached the expenditure of additional funds for education to high-stakes accountability (Kogan, 1986; Miller, 1999; Education Bill, 1992; Education Improvement Act, 1991).

Some researchers associated the failures of past accountability and reform efforts to improve education with the lack of scholarly debate and dialogue among stakeholders, and many scholars have argued that such mistakes should be avoided in the future (Kogan, 1986; Johnson, 1975; Bracey, Fall, 2000; Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995). The importance of discourse was also stressed by researchers in the original NAEP studies as well as by The National Council for Educational Standards in 1991, which proposed such discourse in the same year that the Tennessee Education Improvement Act (1991) was passed (Johnson, 1975; U. S. DOE, 2000).

Accountability in Tennessee continues to be a high-stakes venture despite the lack of discourse about the model. Many educational stakeholders have been marginalized and deprived of a voice in the accountability process despite scholarly advice to the contrary ("State Releases New User Friendly," 2000; Locker, 1998; Reed, 1997). Scholars have criticized the Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS). They argued that not enough information is known about the formula by statisticians outside of TVAAS, to enable them to debate, verify, and possibly replicate the TVAAS system (Bracey, 2000, Fall; Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995). The standards have been criticized for being vague and for relying on only multiple choice tests (Olson, 2001; Keim, 2001, January 11; "Making Standards Matter," 1999).

Tennessee students have made progress; however, NAEP scores continue to be below national averages at grades four and eight, except for writing (Orlofsky & Olson, 2001). Research supports teachers' concerns that more resources, staff development, and parental support are needed to enable teachers to be more effective ("Keys to School Success," 2001; Creech, 1996). Funding for the Basic Education Program (BEP), which was intended to equalize spending for education and salaries, has not been fully realized ("TEA Researcher Explains," 2000; Education Bill, 1992; Miller, 1999), and financial reforms are needed to properly fund education (Ferrar, 2001; Creech, 1996; "Tennessee Citizens Bask," 2001). All of the above reasons point to the need for discourse in order for stakeholders to explore the appropriateness of the current model for assessing educational accountability in Tennessee and are directly related to the purpose of this study.

Problem Statement

State mandated value-added accountability in Tennessee has created tensions among the various educational stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians), who may hold different views about the missions and purposes of education and appropriate forms of accountability. Politicians, who were not necessarily knowledgeable about schools, have historically implemented reform initiatives, which were often launched without substantial input from professional educators (Avis, 1996; Sarason, 1990; Purpel & Shapiro; 1995; Oakes, 1999). There is little hope of assessing the effectiveness of accountability without consensus on the purposes and expectations of education. Nor is it likely that the potentially harmful

effects of accountability policy systems will be assessed without discourse among stakeholders (McNeil, 2000; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of selected stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local politicians, and state politicians) in Tennessee concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of educational accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations these stakeholders might offer for improving the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current accountability policy system. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What differences are perceived, if any, by different stakeholders concerning the meaning, the purposes, the evidences, the appropriateness, and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee?
2. What suggestions, if any, do different stakeholders offer to improve the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system?
3. What are some of the positive benefits and negative consequences of the current accountability model as perceived by stakeholders?

Significance Of The Study

Much has been learned in the past quarter century about teaching and learning theory. Scholars have stressed the importance of actively engaging students in learning, teaching in ways that allow students to use various forms of intelligence, and the importance of aligning assessment and instruction, rather than relying upon academic achievement, as measured by standardized test results, as the primary form of accountability (Ubben, Hughes, and Norris, 2000; Oakes, 1999; Gardner, 1999; McNeil,

1997; 2000; Sparks & Louckes-Horsley, 1999; Ornstein, 1999; Purpel & Shapiro, 1995; Bracey, 2000; Gibboney, 1994; Sizer, 1992; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Greene, 1999; Giroux, 1999). Most accountability systems have relied on the use of measurable outcomes, which were based primarily on standardized test results, to assess achievement; however, few accountability studies have focused on the appropriateness of those accountability systems or the perceived harmful effects of relying primarily on objectives-based accountability as the sole evidences of student achievement. Discourse is needed in order to ascertain stakeholders' perceptions of the appropriateness or effectiveness of current accountability models (Kogan, 1986; Keller & Longino, 1996; Leithwood, 1999). This study created opportunities for selected stakeholders to engage in much needed discourse. The data obtained from the study might provide insights about the use of alternative approaches to accountability, which stakeholders perceive to be more effective and appropriate and eventually help to influence future educational accountability policies in Tennessee.

Delimitations

Educational accountability is a subject of significance to educational institutions at all levels, elementary, secondary, and college. The focus of this study was limited to six schools (two schools each in three different public school districts) in Tennessee, which generally serve students in grades kindergarten through high school (K/12) inclusive of students enrolled in special education and alternative school programs. Local/state level stakeholders and state/local politicians were also selected for the study.

Current accountability efforts in Tennessee have been in place since the passage of the Education Improvement Act of 1991. Ideally, it seemed beneficial to interview

only stakeholders who were involved in education during that time and who were knowledgeable about the accountability movement. However, the turnover rate for educators and other stakeholders in Tennessee has brought many new and experienced educators, as well as other stakeholders, into the educational community at various times during this 10-11 year cycle. The diversity of opinions among stakeholders from various regions of the state could add important insights into the perceptions held by this group of selected Tennessee stakeholders. The decision was made to concentrate on the careful selection of the six sites in three districts, which represented a suburban district, a small rural district, and a large urban district, to provide a cross-section of diverse communities within Tennessee. The trade-off was to focus on interviewing stakeholders who were willing to share their perceptions/educational values and their knowledge of the educational accountability process within those sites, regardless of the amount of time they may have been involved with accountability. It was felt that limiting this study to include only those stakeholders with long-term experience in the accountability movement for the full 10 - 11 years might have the negative effect of limiting the range of cultural diversity and the variety of perceptions/educational values possessed by a less heterogeneous group of stakeholders, risking the potential for obtaining less rich data in the process. In order to minimize travel time to the sites, spend as much time as possible with stakeholders at the identified sites, and to facilitate scheduling multiple follow-up sessions as needed, a decision was made to limit the number of schools involved in the study to six, and to limit travel distance to only sites that are within a 150 mile approximate radius of the University of Tennessee.

Limitations

The early literature on educational accountability was an outgrowth of studies that were centered on program evaluations, and many states modeled their accountability programs after the large-scale program evaluations (Kogan, 1986; Johnstone, 1981). In order to obtain a thorough understanding of accountability, this study relied upon the knowledge gained from program evaluations as well as educational accountability literature.

Stakeholders were not given incentives to participate in the study. All participation in individual interviews and small group interview sessions was voluntary. Networking was used to identify some of the potential study participants. Access to stakeholders, especially policymakers, was somewhat constrained because of time commitments, work schedules, and inclement weather that occasionally made travel unsafe. The documents that were reviewed for the study included local and state curriculum frameworks, assessment data, school improvement plans, state and school web sites, state and district strategic plans, and individual school report cards.

Definitions

Accountability – The process by which schools are held responsible for the academic achievement of students and the job performance of educators, a process that includes standardized testing, reporting of results to the public, the use of rewards, and often the imposition of sanctions.

Conceptual framework – the body of theory that serves as a lens through which the research problems may be viewed and analyzed.

Contradictions – discrepancies between the beliefs and perceptions espoused by participants and those exhibited in daily practices.

Dilemma - any difficult situation or problem; a situation requiring a choice between equally undesirable alternatives (Random House collegiate dictionary, 1988).

Education – the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge and of developing the powers of reasoning and judgment (Random House collegiate dictionary, 1988).

Large school district – for the purposes of this study, a district with more than 25, 000 students.

Medium-size school district – for the purposes of this study, a district with more than 5, 000 and less than 25, 000 students.

Rewards- money that may be given to individuals or schools for achievement gains made on state assessments (Mathers, 1999).

Sanctions – penalties that may be imposed on schools or districts by the state for failure to make appropriate gains on assessments. They may range from warnings to state takeover (Mathers, 1999).

Small school district – for the purposes of this study, a district with less than 5,000 students.

Standards- goals that are to be achieved in subject areas and in specific grades (Mathers, 1999).

Teacher Effect – the difference above or below the district mean score based on students' gain scores in each subject area as measured by TVAAS (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996).

Organization Of The Study

The Literature Review and the Conceptual Framework used in the study are found in Chapter II. Chapter III contains the Methodology, and the Findings are included in Chapter IV. Chapter V contains the Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Further Study.

Chapter II

Literature Review

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of selected stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local politicians, and state politicians) in Tennessee concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of educational accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations these stakeholders might offer for improving the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current accountability policy system. Accountability in Tennessee did not happen in isolation but in concert with similar reform initiatives, which were developing in other states throughout the nation. A brief overview of the evolution of accountability in the United States, the various methods and models used in accountability policy systems, the criticisms, and the perceived benefits of accountability, both positive and negative, helps to understand the high-stakes accountability era in the United States and specifically in Tennessee. In an effort to pursue the perceptions of the selected stakeholders toward accountability, the following literature review is offered.

The Evolution of Educational Accountability

In order to understand the accountability movement from a historical perspective, it is helpful to review the context within which it occurred. Following is a summary of some of the major events in the evolutionary cycle.

Brown v. Board of Education. There were several key events, starting with the 1950s and continuing through the 1990s, which influenced and shaped current accountability policies. The Supreme Court decision, Brown v. Board of Education 347 U. S. 483 (1954), which outlawed racially separate educational institutions and mandated

equal access to all government funded institutions, ushered in a period in which the federal government began making huge dollar investments in education. Money was invested in compensatory education programs in an attempt to eliminate discrimination based on race, gender, and handicapping conditions. The federal government began monitoring all forms of school achievement such as promotion and graduation policies, and equal access to programs (Tyack & Hasnot, 1982).

The Sputnik Era. The launching of the Russian satellite, Sputnik, in 1957, greatly embarrassed the United States government and created heightened criticism of schools. Because America had not been successful in first launching its satellites, the schools were blamed for not properly instructing students in science, mathematics, and technology. Improving education, in order to compete with the Russians, was perceived as a matter of national defense (Tyack & Hasnot, 1982). The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was passed in 1958 to promote reforms in mathematics and the sciences as a part of the national defense strategy (Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990; Thompson, 1976; Lessinger, 1970). Recently scholars have asked, "Should schools now be praised in light of the Soviet Union's demise" (Bogue, 2001)?

Federal Compensatory Programs. The passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965 (Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990) brought dollars for many more compensatory education programs, such as Head Start and Title I, which were intended to promote social justice by providing for disadvantaged students the skills necessary to compete on equal levels and to obtain quality educations. With billions of federal dollars being added to expanding educational programs, there was no way to evaluate the effectiveness of such large-scale programs, nor were there suitable methods

for determining which programs should be continued or abandoned. The existing program evaluations used various methods, which did not enable researchers to share data and compare evaluation results. Vast amounts of data were available, but they often provided conflicting and confusing information for educators and government officials (Tyack & Hasnot, 1983; Barber, 1992; Lessinger & Tyler, 1971).

Approximately 36 states, including Tennessee, were participating in the new federal compensatory programs. Under the ESEA funding mechanism, Congress mandated program evaluations in order for the states to continue participating in the government-funded programs. States were asked to develop plans in which they were to specify their goals, identify ways of collecting assessment data, explain how the data would be analyzed, and describe the dissemination of information to the government and to the public (Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990). The guidelines encouraged the involvement of parents to increase their participation in the programs in which their children were involved and to foster shared, local decision-making in the expenditure of federal dollars.

Objectives-based Program Evaluation Models. An objectives-based model was developed by Ralph Tyler, Director Emeritus of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. Objectives-based models, which are also referred to as systems management or systems analysis models, are nomological. Nomological studies are quantitative and rely upon the statistical analysis of data from which predictions and generalizations concerning other populations may be made. It was a way to help teachers improve their curriculum and teaching (Lessinger & Tyler, 1971; Norris, 1990). Tyler believed in identifying specific behavioral objectives, which students were required to master, in order to measure the effectiveness of educational programs. Objectives-based

management was centered on the belief that program resources could be developed, managed, and distributed in a rational manner, which would enable schools to know if their programs were effective. Tyler's model was later mixed with a social survey method to assess a number of areas of learning, and the Planned Program Budgeting System (PPBS) was also added to enable researchers to make program cost analyses (Lessinger, 1970; Browder, Alkins, & Kaya, 1973; Norris, 1990).

The National Assessment of Educational Progress Model. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) was funded from the U. S. Office of Education under the leadership of the Education Commission of the States. It was intended as a 10-year, longitudinal study, which started in 1963. It assessed achievement of students at ages nine years old, 13 years old, 17 years old, and 26 years old (roughly at the end of their junior high school years, high school years, and college years). NAEP data enabled states and districts to obtain remediation dollars for curriculum development, textbooks, and helped them establish local and state objectives (Johnson, 1975). In 1969, NAEP pioneered the use of Tyler's objectives-based program evaluation model. The technology of conducting large-scale assessments was shared through training sessions with many governors and state legislators. NAEP also developed materials that could be used by states to develop their own assessments. Twenty-eight of the 36 states, which were participating in federal programs, adopted the model for reporting their state outcome data. By 1978, at least 33 states had some form of mandated minimum competency testing in place (Tyack & Hasnot, 1986; Lessinger & Tyler, 1971; Norris, 1990).

NAEP selected certain objectives from 10 areas, which were "... art, career and occupational development, citizenship, literature, math, music, reading, science, social studies, and writing" (Johnson, 1975, p. 26). The objectives were perceived to be important for all students to know. They were not intended to be used as standards but as guidelines, which were to help determine the essential knowledge that should be assessed in schools, and to provide data on the estimated numbers of students who possessed the particular kinds of knowledge assessed (Tanner, 2000). The intent was also to help schools identify curriculum areas that might be in need of improvement, and to enable them to make inferences about the inequities in education and the progress of large groups of students (Johnson, 1975).

The NAEP assessment plan highlighted the magnitude of disparities in achievement by student groups, which followed patterns according to race, socio-economic background, parent educational levels, and whether they lived in rural versus urban areas. Affluent suburban families, which were perceived to have the best schools, had the highest scores. A wide variety of assessment practices were used in the original NAEP studies, which included multiple-choice items, pictures, tapes, films, and other performance-based tasks using items that were familiar to students. The advantage of the NAEP model was the rich, contextual data about students, their families, and their schools. The disadvantages were that the mixed methods were labor intensive, costly, and very time consuming (Johnson, 1975).

In 1983, the leadership of NAEP was transferred from the Education Commission of the States (ECS) to The Education Testing Service (ETS). ETS had both a profit and a nonprofit section in their company. The federal government substantially funded the

nonprofit section. NAEP was redesigned by ETS and used for state-by-state comparisons despite promises to the contrary (Tanner, 2000). The NAEP goals and the redesigned evaluation models, in effect, served as the precursors for contemporary state accountability models (Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Johnson, 1975). Leon Lessinger (1970; 1973) first applied the term 'accountability' to education.

Public Law 94-142. Another significant piece of legislation was Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, which mandated equal access, free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, and other services and procedures as needed by special education students. It also significantly increased school budgetary requirements for special education programs, and to a lesser degree, increased funding for special programs (Alexander & Alexander, 1998, p. 403).

The Goals, Standards, and Accountability Movements. Many reform efforts during the 1980s were centered on reports about the perceived crisis in education such as the information in A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Berliner & Biddle, 1995, p.3). Other significant events included a series of educational goals from National Governors' Conferences starting in 1985 (National Goals Report 2000, 1993). The 1989 conference resulted in the 'Goals 2000' reform movement, which continues to influence testing in specific grades. They were intended to promote academic competency, citizenship, life-long learning, and productive employment (U. S. Department of Education, 2000).

The National Council for Educational Standards (NCES) was formed in 1991, the same year as the passage of the landmark accountability legislation, the Tennessee Education Improvement Act (1991), which will be discussed later under the Tennessee

Accountability Model. The NCES proposed a framework for voluntary national standards and how they should be measured. As recommended by NAEP, it also advocated the widespread collaboration of practitioners, policy-makers, and other stakeholders in order to achieve educational reform and accountability goals. NCES argued that the past failures of reforms should have taught us that a single process and the exclusion of stakeholders would not work. NCES also proposed that states model their curriculum and instruction after the NCES standards, which had goals in Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Language Arts, Foreign Language, and the Arts (U. S. Department of Education, 2000). Many states revised their objectives-based standards along the NCES model as they had done previously with NAEP model.

Current Federal Accountability Legislation. The ESEA of 2001 was reauthorized in January 2002. It is now referred to as the "Leave No Child Behind Act" (LNCBA), and has as a major component a national testing program proposed by President George W. Bush. States will be required to develop their own tests for reading and math in grades three – eight; the NAEP will be used to monitor progress on state tests ("Bush Proposes", 2001; Inside the LNCBA, 2002; Morgan, Cour, & Detch, 2002). Students in low achieving schools are allowed to use federal money for tutoring or to transfer to other schools (Toppo, 2001, September 2). Is this not the same principle as a voucher system? Under the LNCBA policy, states with charter school legislation will be eligible for additional federal dollars to support charter schools. As was characteristic of past federal compensatory programs that required specific legislation as a form of accountability to compete for federal dollars (Johnson, 1975; Tyack & Hasnot, 1986; Lessinger & Tyler, 1971; Norris, 1990), the states without charter school legislation will

be ineligible to compete for certain funds. While states that are in need of additional funding for education, such as Tennessee, will not be required to pass charter school legislation, they must have charter school legislation in order to receive LNCBA dollars earmarked for charter schools. In March 2002, the legislature held hearings on charter schools, and the Tennessee Education Association, fearing that it would be passed, proposed a 16-point plan for implementing such legislation on a trial basis in non-profit schools if it is passed ("TEA Board Adopts Position," 2002, March).

The ESEA will invest approximately 18 billion dollars in education during the 2001-2002 school year. Estimates for proposed increases in federal spending ranged from $24 billion, which was proposed by the House of Representatives to $ 33 billion, which was proposed by the Senate (Toppo, 2001, September 2). President Bush stated, "Our educators need to get ready for a new accountability era that's coming to our schools" Toppo, 2001, September 2, "p." A13).

Accountability Methods and Models

State Models. Data from early NAEP reports highlighted the need for specific achievement standards, and the public also urged their adoption. The primary methods used for accountability studies and the models for educational accountability policy systems were patterned after the NAEP. Accountability models have included state-mandated assessments and operating processes along with specific achievement standards. Although models vary throughout the states, it is generally considered that a complete accountability model consists of school goals, which are connected to state standards, processes for assessing the achievement of local and state standards, multiple

indicators that measure the achievement of schools and districts toward goals, as well as rewards and sanctions (Norris, 1990; Mathers, 1999).

Objectives-based Evaluation/Accountability Models. The methods commonly used in early NAEP program evaluation models and accountability studies were patterned after social science research methods, and they were commonly referred to as systems management, systems analysis, or the objectives-based models. Schools primarily used the term 'objectives-based model' to describe their accountability systems because they were tied to state educational goals and objectives (Kogan, 1986; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Purpel & Shapiro, 1995; Johnson; 1975; Norris, 1990; Johnstone, 1981; Thompson, 1976).

Such accountability models were built on several assumptions. The first was that they contained the knowledge, which policymakers considered to be important. By knowing the processes or products for which schools are responsible, one might evaluate progress and determine the extent to which school personnel should be held accountable (Kogan, 1986; Lessinger, 1970).

Second, the models were built on the assumptions that curriculum objectives could be developed through political consensus, that they would be implemented as mandated, and that the data could then be used in evaluations (Kogan, 1986). Knowledge, which could be easily categorized into specific measurable objectives and analyzed efficiently, was likely to be included in accountability models (Lessinger, 1970). The analyses of input/output data, which were based primarily on standardized tests, also enabled policymakers, the media, and critics to make assumptions about the perceived pathologies and crisis in education (Kogan, 1986; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Berliner &

Biddle, 1995; McNeil, 2000). Third, the quantitative studies, which were based on standardized tests, were perceived to be objective or free of values (Kogan, 1986).

Typically in objectives-based, systems management, or systems analysis models, educators have been required to respond to the accountability processes and were evaluated according to compliance with these processes; however, they were absent from the discourse which took place when the policies were being formed (Kogan, 1986; Norris, 1990). The goals of accountability were to provide for the continual improvement of education and the equalization of access to opportunities for students. Responsibilities were identified and defined for all educational processes, in state statutes or department of education guidelines, and schools were assessed on the outcomes. The plans connected the formation of goals, objectives, needs assessments, evaluation and recommendations in a continuous evaluation system.

"To explain was to predict and to predict accurately was to confirm a generalization" (Norris, 1990, p. 44). Regardless of the name given to the particular methods (nomological or experimental, systems management, systems analysis, or objectives-based) the quantitative evaluation of results and the capability to make predictions based on the results, set new standards for curriculum and instruction. The efficiency of quantitative evaluation methods effectively declared other curriculum and instructional practices and assessments instruments, which relied less on such quantitative measurements to explain and interpret their results, subordinate to its design (Norris, 1990).

Overview of Accountability Models. Not all accountability models are based on hierarchical, systems management, system analysis, or objectives-based approaches.

Opportunities to examine other accountability models and share differential points of view promote discourse and challenge positivist statements about the objectivity in objectives-based program evaluations and accountability models (Kogan, 1986; Norris, 1990).

Several accountability models were described in the literature. They are the professional model, consumerist model, the public control model, and the participatory or partnership model. Several less known models are also briefly mentioned. Following is a brief discussion of each model.

The Professional Accountability Model. The professional accountability model is generally considered to be collegial (Kogan, 1986). In this model, educators are held mutually accountable to each other, as well as to their students and other stakeholders, for adhering to certain methods, standards, and principles within which they have agreed to operate (Browder, Alkins, & Kaya, 1973).

Educational results are not strictly tied to students' academic performance on standardized tests, and multiple forms of assessment may be used to evaluate progress. Medicine, law, and higher education generally operate under the professional accountability model. Systems, such as codes of ethics or faculty senates, are in place to address issues of non-compliance. The belief is that bureaucratic assessment systems diminish the professionalism of practitioners and that self-evaluation is possible only under a professional model (Kogan, 1986).

It is believed that as collegial professionals gain greater input into decision-making and accountability the more responsive they will become to constituents. Some

researchers believe that the quality of instruction is hampered unless the judgment of educators is used (Kogan, 1986).

Accreditation is perhaps one of the oldest forms of non-governmental, professional accountability (Olson, 1987; Federal Register, 1997). Scholars often criticized past accreditation processes because of the focus on quantitative inputs versus educational outcomes, which did little to improve educational quality (Goodlad, 1984; Olson, 1987). Accountability policies of the last two decades are credited with causing schools to focus on educational outcomes (Lessinger, 1973). By 1987, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) began using a school improvement model recommended by Goodlad (1984), which focused on educational outcomes as well as collaboration with teachers and parents (Olson, 1987). School reform movements of the past two decades began including accreditation standards with state achievement standards (Archer, 1997). Accreditation has also been associated with improving achievement by teacher preparation programs (Rodman, 1985).

Tennessee belongs to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It is one of six regional accrediting agencies, which is approved by the United States Department of Education and dates back to 1895 (Olson, 1987; Federal Register, 1997). Unlike Tennessee, some states belong to SACS and also have their own state accreditation processes. The Tennessee BEP components contain many elements that have traditionally been included in state and SACS accreditation (Performance Model, 2000). Over 65% of Tennessee elementary and secondary schools are SACS accredited (Park, 2000).

SACS has no power to impose sanctions; however, schools districts have sanctioned schools over the threat of losing their accreditation (Archer, 1997). Schools

and communities perceive accreditation as a source of pride and accomplishment (Cummins, 1995; Park, 2000).

The Consumerist Control Model. The consumerist control model is based upon the market principle of choice (Browder, Alkins, & Kaya, 1973). It may appear in the public or private sectors. Consumers have the opportunity to decide where their education dollars will be spent, or where they will receive services based on the perceived quality or the results of accountability studies. Proponents of this model believe that economic pressures can be exerted to improve quality through a market driven concepts of customer satisfaction and supply and demand for services. The values associated with the role of the family in decision-making are central to this model. Parents make decisions about curriculum goals without substantial discourse or input from educators, although partnerships are possible under the model. In the consumerist model, communal values may also be evident (Kogan, 1986; Norris, 1990).

The Public Control Model. The public control model is built on a hierarchical, managerial style of governance. It is the model that is used by 95 % of the legislatures and state boards of education for school accountability purposes (Kogan, 1986; Mathers, 1999). Power is vested in positions of authority. Efficiency is highly valued as well as the control of students and professionals within the schools.

Standardization of curriculum and instructional practices, along with role specializations are integral to the public control model (EB, 1992). Accountability is heavily focused on the attainment of goals, uses rewards and/or sanctions for educators, promotes a narrow view of curriculum, and often uses differentiated curriculum designs

and students control policies, which may not always be applied fairly and justly in terms of democratic principles (Kogan, 1986; McNeil, 2000).

The Partnership or Participatory Model. The partnership or participatory model is centered on consensus building and the shared decision-making among professional and non-professional stakeholders over broad issues; however, educators are responsible for making specific educational and programmatic decisions. When conflicts arise between stakeholders, they are accountable to each other and are expected to resolve them to their mutual satisfaction. This form of accountability respects individual and community values and promotes open dialogue among all stakeholders (Browder, Alkins, & Kaya, 1973). Leadership is dynamic since participation involves the alternation of tasks within the group. Participation and partnerships build a sense of commitment to the organization, and reduce the attraction of the consumerist model since communications and conflicts may be maintained in a professional manner. School-based management, professional accountability, choice, and market concepts each have components that are related to this model (Kogan, 1986). Some contemporary scholars have advocated this model as the ideal model for educational leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992; 1999; Goodlad, 1984; Heifetz, 1994; McNeil, 1917; 2000; Behar-Horenstein & Ornstein, 1999).

Other Proposed Accountability Models. Lessinger (1970; 1973) identified several additional proposals for building accountability through a seven-step education engineering and planning process. The educational engineering was based on data-driven problem identification, goal setting, clearly defined performance criteria, testing, and public disclosure regarding the results.

It has been argued that schools, alone, could not initiate reforms because of workload, a lack of funding, defensiveness when questioned about their practices, and a lack of expertise in some areas (Lessinger, 1970; 1973; Sarason, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992; 1999; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Sarason, 1990). Lessinger (1970; 1973) proposed setting aside a small percentage of school, state, and federal budgets as venture capital and incentives for development grants through which innovations could be introduced in schools and successful programs could be replicated at other sites. He advocated performance contracting for services where specialists would assist school personnel with achievement in difficult curriculum areas, and they would later turn the programs over to the local schools as techniques were learned. Performance Auditing Review Teams would conduct performance auditing of contracted services to yield specific reports about the cost effectiveness of programs as measured by their achievement toward goals (Lessinger, 1970). Tennessee and other state accountability models contain many of the elements that Lessinger proposed (EB, 1992).

The Tennessee Accountability Model

The Tennessee accountability model is called the Tennessee Performance Model (2000). In terms of management practices, it falls into the category of a hierarchical, managerial, public control model. Such models are also called systems management, systems analysis, and objectives-based models. As stated previously, this model is the predominant state model, and it is reflected in 95% of state accountability statutes (Mathers, 1999).

The appearance of systems management, systems analysis, or objectives-based accountability systems usually followed school finance reforms, which linked the idea of

giving more money to schools in exchange for higher achievement gains (Kogan, 1986) and the market-driven concepts of choice and customer satisfaction ("Key To School Success," 2001). The Tennessee accountability system also used school finance reforms in exchange for high stakes accountability (Miller, 1999; Education Bill, 1992; Education Improvement Act, 1991).

Tennessee Finance Reform. The high-stakes accountability policy system in Tennessee can be traced back to two important pieces of legislation, the passing of the Education Improvement Act (1991) and the Education Bill (1992). Like most state accountability models, it was built upon the concept that the professionals are accountable to others in authority (Lessinger, 1973). The Education Act of 1991 (EIA) and the Education Bill of 1992 (EB) formed the legal basis for the Tennessee accountability system as well as financial reforms. The Basic Education Program (BEP) was passed, as a part of the EIA and EB, to fund the state's share of state mandates. It contained the costs of 42 various components, which all schools needed in order to function.

In an effort to equalize funding for education, 17 small and rural schools filed a lawsuit in 1988 (The Tennessee Small School Systems et al. v. Ned McWherter et al.). They were joined by 66 school districts. The State Supreme Court settled the lawsuit in favor of the plaintiffs. The BEP was passed while the lawsuit was pending, and the state passed a half-cent sales tax increase to support the BEP. Accountability was promised as a result of the increased funding (Miller, 1999). Prior to the BEP and the lawsuit, huge disparities existed between the per pupil expenditures of wealthy and rural districts. For

example, Oak Ridge's per pupil expenditure was four times as much as that of rural Hancock County (Miller, 1999).

The BEP funded approximately 50% of teachers' salaries in the beginning, and approximately 52% in 2000-2001 (TEA Researcher Explains, 2000, p. 9). At full funding in 1998, the BEP provided for 75% of classroom costs and 50% of nonclassroom costs for education. The BEP equalized about 95% of the schools' costs. Approximately 5% of the costs were left unfunded. This amount was then divided among all districts, based on their fiscal capacity to pay, to make up for the unfunded 5 % for each locality. It required the richer districts to pay proportionately more of their share for education. The General Assembly, based on recommendations of the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, has revised the fiscal capacity of the formula annually since 1991 (Education Bill, 1991; Miller, 1999). Unfortunately, the BEP funding formula has not changed significantly since its inception and has not kept up with inflation except to include the addition of funds for students learning English as a Second Language (ESL).

The passing of the BEP was significant, in terms of accountability, in that it codified the funding formula and permanently removed from the State Board of Education the authority to recommend future changes in state funding for education, authority that had previously been granted by the General assembly. All recommendations for changes in the funding for education have subsequently been decided by the General Assembly (Baker & Detch, 1994). The money for education and teachers salaries' was in exchange for more accountability. The General Assembly marginalized certain stakeholders such as educators, parents, citizens, State Department of Education administrators, and local/state school board members by depriving them of

'voices' in the educational discourse surrounding accountability, much of their authority, and the autonomy to determine how students' progress would be measured (Flax &Gold, 1989; Hicks, 1997, August, "BEP Putting;" Hicks, 1997, August, "Teachers' Salaries;" Miller, 1999).

In 1995, the Small Schools filed another lawsuit appealing the phased-in equalization of salaries and demanded immediate equalization. It is pending as of this writing. The plaintiffs continued to argue that the Education Bill (1992) did not contain provisions to equalize teachers' salaries or to supply catch-up funds for purchasing capital equipment. They also argued that the BEP should not, by law, exclude teachers' salaries and that it should bear the total local costs of education. Teachers are the only employee groups not specifically included in the BEP. The state argued that student performance was not related to teachers' salaries (Tennessee Small School Systems, et al. Plaintiffs-Appellants v. McWherter, et al. Defendants-Appellants, Charles O. Frazier, Director of Metropolitan Nashville, Davidson County Public Schools, et al. 1995). Teacher salaries in Tennessee increased by 20% from 1990 to 1995 compared to 17% nationally during the same period (Creech, 1996).

In 1996, the average per pupil expenditure for Tennessee was $4,581 versus the national average expenditure of $5,923. Tennessee was 44th out of 50 states in per pupil funding even with equalization of the BEP. Sales taxes supplied approximately 16% of the BEP funding (Ferrar, 2001).

As of August 2001, finance reform continued to be of primary concern to educators; however, the General Assembly and the voters have repeatedly rejected proposals from Governor Don Sundquist for alternative funding sources such as a state

income tax, personal property taxes for luxury items, or capital gains taxes (Ferrar, 2001). Tennessee has the third lowest personal property tax rates in the country (only Texas and South Dakota are lower), and it has one of the highest sales taxes at an average of over .085 in most localities ("Tennessee Citizens Bask," 2001).

The Tennessee Performance Model. The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) comprises a major part of the Performance Model along with the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS), which is a software program that was designed specifically to analyze TCAP data. TVAAS was specifically mandated in the state educational accountability statutes (Education Improvement Act, 1991; Education Bill, 1992).

Dr. William Sanders, then a professor from the University of Tennessee, developed TVAAS. It is a mixed-model statistical software program, which uses norm-referenced tests items from the TCAP and criterion-referenced tests based on the state's curriculum framework to measure students' progress in reading, language arts, math, science and social studies (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996).

TVAAS is believed to contain the largest student databases in the world (Bratton et al., 1996). Although it generates reports based on three-year averages, it holds up to five years worth of data on each student in its computer files, which makes it possible to have available data on students' previous progress in one of the five areas tested. In the event that students miss a test or any portion of the test, TVAAS has the capability to generate data based on students' past performance and fills in missing data when students are absent from testing sessions. Dr. Sanders and the TVAAS team believe that students will generally answer certain types of test questions the same way each time they are

tested. TVAAS assigns varying statistical weights to both the available data and the missing pieces of data. Sanders argued that TVAAS is able to create a more accurate, longitudinal profile of the students' performance. He believes that this process makes the data more reliable, and that it weakens critics' arguments that critical judgments are made about students based only one test administration each year. National norm gains are used to predict students' expected gains each year. Actual gains in scores may be determined by subtracting the previous year's scores from the current scores in each subject area, to measure students' annual academic gains.

TVAAS was intended to provide principals with information enabling them to make judgments about teachers' effectiveness based on students' cumulative gain scores (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996). Using the district mean as a point of reference, teacher effect may be calculated based on how far students' cumulative gain scores fall above or below the mean in each of the subjects tested. The state accountability statutes do not address sanctions for teaches and only includes administrators; however, scores relative to teacher effect may be used in evaluations if the districts desire to do so (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996). Dr. Sanders piloted TVAAS in Knox County Schools during the 1980s (Keim, 1999).

Dr. Sanders conducted special analyses on TVAAS in an attempt to make predictions about the racial and socio-economic make-up of students based on students' gain scores. He found that it was not possible to make such predictions. However, another equally important discovery was made. Dr. Sanders found data indicating that the most important factor in determining students' performance appeared to be the teacher or the quality of teaching, which he called 'the teacher effect.' Because race and socio-

economic class could not be predicted from data, Saunders believes that the tests have eliminated biases, which might be associated with most standardized tests (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996). Some educators and scholars disagree with Sanders that race and socio-economic biases have been eliminated (Bracey, 1998; "Key to School Success," 2001). Bracey (2000) also criticized the fact that Sanders has not made information available that would enable researchers to replicate his study. In 1966, two members of the University of Chicago and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, R. Darrell Bock and Richard Wolfe, reviewed TVAAS and found that it was valid; however, they made recommendations for computing the annual achievement and gain scores. Bock and Wolf also suggested changing the method of reporting teacher effect scores to more closely resemble students' reports. A researcher from the Florida Department of Education, Thomas H. Fisher, was critical of TVAAS. He recommended broadening the accountability program and not using TVAAS to hold teachers accountable. Most of the recommendations made by Bock, Wolf, and Fisher have not been adopted by the Department of Education (Morgan, Cour, & Detch, 2002).

Items on the test were designed to contain question, which are above as well as below students' expected grade-level performance. Because of the volume of possible test items and the fact that approximately 60% of the items require cognitive processing at the analysis or synthesis level, analysts believe that it makes teaching to the test impossible. Bracey (2000, Fall) challenged Sander's claim that the TCAP and other such multiple-choice tests have the capability to test complex knowledge and higher levels of thinking. Another criticism of using the TVAAS gain scores as a measure of teacher effect is the lack of alignment between the tests used (Terra Nova) and the state

curriculum, and there is concern that as the stakes become higher, many teachers are teaching to the test objectives that are perceived as likely to be tested than to the required state curriculum objectives. This poses a dilemma for educators who are torn between teaching the curriculum and looking good when reports are published in the papers.

Sanders argued that teaching students well and according to their levels of readiness is more important than trying to teach to the test (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996). Both high-achieving and low-achieving students suffer from poor teachers and poor teaching. For example, TVAAS achievement data indicated that high achieving students placed with low-effect teachers tended to achieve fewer gains than students at other achievement levels placed with such teachers (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996). Creech's study (1996) had similar teacher effect conclusions and found that what is taught and how it is taught greatly influenced achievement.

Twelve indicators now comprise the complete Tennessee Performance Model (Morgan, Cour, & Detch, 2002). The Education Improvement Act (1991) and the Education Bill (1992) mandated the indicators. The indicators monitor the following performance areas in terms of student measures, academic standards, and assessments. They are: Attendance, Dropout Rate, Promotion Rate, Value-Added Assessment, Academic Attainment in Grades three through eight in Reading and Mathematics, Academic Attainment in Writing in Grades four and seven, Gateway Examinations in Algebra I, English, and Biology; and Academic Attainment in High School End of Course Tests in Mathematics Foundations, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English I and II, Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and U. S. History.

On the 10 High School End-of-Course Tests, students are expected to achieve average value-added scores of 100% of the expected performance or better. Proficient writing scores must be achieved at grade 11, and ACT/ SAT scores must meet the admission requirements at Tennessee Higher Education institutions. Value-added ACT/SAT average scores must be equal to or greater than 100% of the expected levels of performance (Performance Model, 2000; Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995). Indicators are weighted prior to reporting the scores (Performance Model, 2000).

The Performance Model was implemented in stages. Phase I was implemented from 1999-2001 and included high school end-of- course tests, competency testing, and in 2000, the first individual School Report Cards were issued with grades of A-F in each subject area in addition to Districts Report Cards. The EB (1992) required that School Report Cards be issued four years after the full funding of the BEP (DOE, 1998). Phase II (2001-02) will replace the High School End of Course and Competency Tests with the Gateway End of Course Examinations in Algebra I, English II, and Biology I. Report Cards on those tests will follow in November 2002 (Performance Model, 2000).

Rewards are offered if schools make 100% of their projected gains, or if they exceed the standards. Sanctions may be imposed if schools fail to make appropriate target gains and meet other indicators after a given period of time. Performance contracts for principals are included in the accountability statutes (Education Improvement Act, 1991; Education Bill, 1992).

Effective 2003-2004 in conjunction with the LNCBA (Inside the NCLBA, 2002), schools in Tennessee and nation-wide must make 'Adequate Yearly Progress' (AYP) to close the achievement gap between students based on data disaggregated by race, socio-

economic factors, limited English proficiency, and handicapping conditions or they will face sanctions. All schools will be expected to close the achievement gap for 100% of its students during the 12 years that students are in school or they will be labeled as failing schools. No sanctions will occur after one year of being placed on notice. School choice will be introduced as an option for parents of students attending failing schools after being on notice for two years. Parental choice will continue in year three and failing schools will receive supplementary services during this time. In year four, schools will be subject to state sanctions including reorganization and/or replacement of staff. In year five, failing schools risk possible state takeover or conversion to charter schools (Becker, 2002, March).

There are two instances on record where school districts have been sanctioned for poor academic and poor management performance. One instance involved a myriad of problems, while the other instance centered on poor academic performance based on TCAP scores.

Hancock County, a rural community in the Cumberland Mountains, was the first district to be placed on probation. An audit revealed violations such as the " ... misuse of funds, inadequate school performance, mismanagement of food services, overstaffing of administrative positions, outdated text and library books, and many other problems ..." (Wade, 1997, "p." B1). A Union County Director of Schools was demoted for the failure of his district to make satisfactory progress in achievement (Lawson, 2001). The Education Bill (1992) gave the Commissioner of Education (COE) the authority to place schools on probation for failing to show improvements after a two-year period of assistance. The Commissioner also has the authority to unseat the school board in a

district if improvements are not shown within two years of probation (Education Improvement Act, 1991; Education Bill, 1992). The sanctions enacted against Hancock County Schools and the Director of Union County Schools demonstrated the state's commitment to use TVAAS data to enforce high-stakes accountability.

Currently, there are 98 schools that have been placed on notice and face possible state takeover if their performance does not improve within one year. Approximately 60 of the schools on notice are located in inner city Memphis. The criteria for identifying the schools were based on their value added and attainment scores in mathematics and language arts over the past three years. Exemplary educators will offer special assistance to these schools in an attempt to help them improve and avoid takeover by the state. Special circumstances do not exempt schools from standardized accountability requirements ("State Places 98 Schools on Notice," 2001, September 20).

Concerns Regarding the Use of Standardized Achievement Data for Accountability Purposes

Accountability data are reported using both achievement data from norm referenced tests and gain scores from criterion-referenced tests. Despite the high-stakes associated with TVAAS and the academic progress made in some schools/districts, there continues to be much debate about the efficacy of using higher standards and high-stakes accountability policy systems to improve the quality of education. Standardized tests, which are used in most accountability systems, are designed to sort students into categories, which are above and below the 50^{th} percentile or norm. Scholars posit that as long as standardized tests are used to measure student progress, there will always be

groups of students in the top and bottom categories (Bracey, 2000c, "Thinking About Tests", p.7).

Data from certain studies on national and state achievement tests have yielded mixed results. Achievement scores tended to be exacerbated by certain at-risk factors (such as whether the child came from a single parent home, the mother completed high school, the family had a low income, or English was the primary language spoken at home). In a national longitudinal study of students with at-risk factors, 50% of the students scored in the bottom quartile. There was found to be a cumulative negative effect on standardized achievement scores when students possessed multiple at-risk factors (Creech, 1996, pp. xiv, xx). The more at-risk factors that students possessed, the more likely they were to also have poor health, more classroom behavior problems, problems paying attention in class, and less positive attitudes about school (Creech, 1996). Classroom teachers often find themselves teaching many social skills that are not tested as a prerequisite teaching many of the cognitive knowledge that might be tested. Teachers argued that these at-risk factors make it difficult to judge students' performance solely on achievement scores.

Most studies have looked at the impact that schools have had on learning as measured by achievement tests. Many ESEA programs, such as Headstart, still do not know if they have had the intended results. The "United States Department of Education's Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99" (ECLS) was the first study to look at what students knew as they entered school ("Key To School Success," 2001). The ECLS data will look at how children who enter school with

different skills, backgrounds, and knowledge fare in school and hopefully give insights as to how they may be helped to achieve at higher levels.

Creech (1996) found that disadvantaged students required different strategies to be successful in school such as more time to realize success than students from privileged environments. Students from affluent homes, with educated parents who tend to value education, have generally scored well on tests. Oakes (1999) found that slower students progressed less when placed in low-level tracked classes; however, data are needed about the impact of mixing educationally advanced students with students who learn more slowly (Creech, 1996).

Data from NAEP reports from 1978-1996 indicated that math and science achievement scores had increased for all students. Reading scores increased from 1971-1996 for nine and 13 year olds, and they remained stable for 17 year olds (U. S. DOE, 2000, p.19). A correlation was shown between reading skills and the mother's level of education. Reading scores of black students and Hispanic students increased in grades four and eight from 1994-1998; however, there has been a gap between the achievement levels of black, Hispanic, and white students since 1992 despite increases (U. S. DOE, 2000). Some school districts, such as San Francisco, CA, Wake County, S. C., and La Crosse, WI, attempted to close the achievement gap by using economics and performance versus the housing pattern concept to assign students to schools. They found that poverty hurts student achievement. Schools with high percentages of poor students consistently scored significantly lower than students in more affluent schools despite spending more money and the implementation of traditional integration and reform efforts such as compensatory programs, bussing, and magnet concepts. However, by capping the

percentages of impoverished students allowed to be enrolled in any schools, and redistributing poor students in the same proportions among all schools, they were able to significantly reduce the gap between white and minority students. In one year, Wake County reduced its gap by 10 to 20 points (Schulte & Keating, 2001).

Creech (1996) argued that although more money has been spent on education and much more is needed, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), where he serves as Director of Educational Policies, found improvements in the knowledge of elementary and secondary students' achievement on state and national tests. Tennessee and other SREB states continued to score below the national averages for proficiency level in most areas of achievement; however, they are improving. For example, fourth grade reading, increased by two points from 1992 to 1999, and fourth grade mathematics increased by seven points during that same period (Creech, 2000, pp.17-18). Creech (1996) argued that education must equip all students to achieve, not just the top 40%. There is a need for balance between controls at the state and local levels, accountability and reporting, staff development, educational leadership, and high standards in order to improve the quality of education.

The availability of equal resources was considered by NAEP to be as important as student performance. NAEP studies identified significant inequities in the distribution of resources, which were available to students. The fewer poor students there were in a district, the more money was allocated for per pupil expenditures, and the more poor students there were in the district, the less money was spent per pupil. For example, in districts with less than 5% of poor students, districts spent an average of $9, 143 per pupil versus an average of $6, 791 per pupil in districts with more than 20% of poor students

(U. S. DOE, 2000, p. 19). Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu estimated that of the $9 billion dollars targeted for schools serving poor children, only about 20% of the schools are actually receiving the funds (Toppo, 2001, September 2). Black children were likely to have more deficits when they started school than white children; however, the gap has lessened over the 30 years in which NAEP has collected data. Black students were also three times more likely to be in special education than white students, especially if they were educated in wealthy districts (Toppo, 2001, March 3). In one East Tennessee district, a study revealed than one of five black students had been suspended during the 1999-2000 school year (Keim, 2000, November 25).

Tennessee Accountability Data. Accountability data in Tennessee are reported on state, district, and school report cards. An analysis of Tennessee Report Card data indicated that districts with high achievement tended to be the smaller, affluent, suburban school districts, which had few minorities or disadvantaged students. Examples in Tennessee are Maryville and Oak Ridge (Keim, 2001, March 11; Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program 2000 School Report Card, 2000). Although many schools with low achievement scores earned positive gain scores, while many with high achievement scores earned low gain scores, achievement generally followed along socio-economic lines. In another report, the Tennessee Institute for Public Policy found that the three lowest scoring districts were Memphis, a large urban area; rural Grainger County, and Campbell County (Keim, 2001, March 11). The study ranked all districts by using a rubric, which consisted of 10 categories based on achievement and gain scores in the core subject areas. Many schools had positive gain scores despite low achievement scores. The three highest scoring districts, according to the same report, were Maryville, Oak Ridge,

and Rogersville. All are areas with few minorities and few disadvantaged students. The same patterns of high scores in affluent areas and low scores in poorer areas was also found to be evident in NAEP studies in which the highest scores were in northern, rural states and the lowest scores were in south eastern cities, which had mostly large urban areas with high levels of poverty and large numbers of minorities (Johnson, 1975; "Key to School Success," 2001). Because he was unable to predict the race or socioeconomic status of students tested, Saunders argued that TVAAS factored out the effects of race and socio-economic conditions that might bias data (Bratton, Horn, & Wright, 1996).

TVAAS identified the importance of teacher practices and preparation (Bratton et al., 1996). The selection, training, and retention of quality staffs are widely recognized as crucial factors for students to receive a quality education (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Crosby, 1999; Schaps & Lewis, 1999; Horn, 1999; Gordon; 1999; McNeil, 2000). In Tennessee, there are teacher shortages in some areas (Clemings, 2000; Finn, 1997; Hicks, 1997). For example, Creech (1996) found that 26% of mathematics teachers in SREB middle and high schools actually had math degrees, as opposed to a national average of 61%. Only 40 % of those who taught minorities were math majors versus 62% who taught non-minorities. He also found that only 17% of Tennessee children have access to public preschool, and there is more poverty for children in Tennessee than there was in the 1980s (Creech, 1996, p. 52). Bracey (2000b) argued that TVAAS and other such models don't recognize the special teaching in which schools must engage in order to teach the children of poverty.

Teachers' Concerns About Standardized Tests. Teachers have expressed their perceptions that standardized tests do not recognize the variety of learning that takes

place in schools, and which might not be measured by standardized tests. They also doubted that high-stakes accountability policy systems have the capacity to increase achievement ("State Releases New 'User Friendly," 2000). Scholars (McNeil, 2000; Kogan, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 1997; 2000; Bracey, 2000b) found that in states such as Texas, which has an accountability system similar to the Tennessee model, there were concerns among educators about the narrowing of the curriculum to meet the demands of the tests. Bracey (2000b) also questioned the reliance of multiple-choice tests to measure progress and the use of changes in value-added scores as the only indicator of teacher effect.

Researchers Support Teachers' Concerns About Standardized Tests. David Grissmer, an education researcher with the RAND Corporation, agreed with the teachers' concerns about the relationship of accountability to increased achievement and stated, "... They were right all along" ("Key to School Success," 2001, pp. 1, 6). His research indicated what teachers had been saying ... that smaller class sizes, staff development for teachers, early interventions, and more supportive parents were the keys to school success. Money, if properly targeted in these ways, helps to increase achievement ("Key To School Success," 2001).

Grissmer ("Key to School Success," 2001, pp. 1, 6) expressed concerns about appropriateness of using standardized tests as they are used in TVAAS. He called raw scores "... a terrible way to compare schools. The only fair and meaningful way to compare schools' effectiveness is to compare test data from samples of students with similar family characteristics" ("Key to School Success," 2001, pp. 1, 6). Grissmer argued that TVAAS data should be put to more important use such as identifying and

targeting schools, which are in need of additional resources, instead of using it to assess teacher-effects. Not using TVAAS data in this manner is, in his opinion, flawed research. Tennessee Rep. Johnny Shaw agreed with Grissmer and argued that failing schools are just under-resourced schools, which have many disadvantaged students and argued that such publicity only hurt schools in the eyes of the public ("Key To School Success," 2001).

Gerald Bracey (2000b) argued that statisticians have many questions they would like to ask Sanders regarding TVAAS and how the model works. So little information has been revealed about the design of the system that scholarly debate, which might resolve many of the questions about the appropriateness of the model for measuring student achievement and teacher effect, has not taken place, nor can it take place. The Tennessee State Board of Education expressed similar concerns about the lack of information on the makeup of the TVAAS system in their study, and indicated that, "While Sanders has made the Report Card results available in different forms; he apparently has not provided complete information to anyone who could replicate the model" (Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995, p.9). The capability to replicate a study is considered integral to the validity and reliability of quantitative research.

Curriculum and Accountability

Ornstein (1999) illustrated how educational values and accountability policy systems might influence the curriculum philosophy implemented in districts. Two broad curriculum categories, traditional and contemporary, might be used as an umbrella for separating the various philosophies of curriculum.

The Traditional Curriculum Philosophy. A traditional curriculum, which might be in place under the public control accountability model, "...emphasizes fixed and absolute values and glorifies our cultural heritage;' attempts to '...train the mind, emphasize subject matter, and fill the learner with knowledge and information;' '... certain subjects are more important than others...the teacher is in authority in subject matter, who dominates the lesson with explanations and lectures ..." (p. 17). Education is somewhat passive and is intended to provide "...directions, control, and restraint..." (p.17). Scholars who advocate the traditional philosophy believe that excellence lies in specific subject content knowledge that prepares students for democratic living (Hirsch, 1996).

The traditional curriculum philosophy might be observed in many classrooms today where the teacher is seen as the source of knowledge, and knowledge is transmitted primarily through lectures and paper/pencil, skills-based tasks. Students might be expected to listen and respond when called upon, and teachers would be expected to cover the subject contents or standard curriculum rather than base teaching on students' needs and students' or teachers' interests. Institutional and group values are generally considered more important than those of the individual under the traditional model, and conformity is more desirable than individual expression (Kogan, 1986).

Since most state accountability models are built to support a traditional, objectives-based curriculum philosophy (Kogan, 1986; Hirsch, 1996), the contemporary view has been relegated to the background in many schools. McNeil (1997; 2000) found that teachers who risk teaching according to a contemporary philosophy, while working in a traditional, high-stakes accountability environment, have been placed in precarious

positions. They are torn between doing what is expected, teaching to enable students to pass the tests without time to teach with regard for the depth and quality of the learning experience and teaching for the love of learning and the active engagement of the learner. Therefore, they are faced with an ethical dilemma. They often compromise by engaging in defensive teaching by blending strategies from the two competing philosophies (McNeil, 1997; 2000).

The Contemporary Curriculum Philosophy. The contemporary philosophy "...emphasizes learning for the present and the future...' realizing that '... change is inevitable" (Ornstein, 1999, p. 17). Proponents stress the importance of problem solving with attention paid to students' individual interests and needs. Although subject matter content is important, it is used as a vehicle for teaching, rather than allowing the specific curriculum objectives to completely dictate the learning contents. Teachers place equal value on the core content areas as well as the fine arts and physical education, and they recognize that content, skills, and attitudes are important to the learning process. A variety of teaching and learning strategies would generally be expected in contemporary classrooms, and students would be encouraged to express their feelings and to actively participate in democratic classrooms/schools as preparation for democratic living. Individual values are more important than conformity to group norms, and students are encouraged to believe that they can reshape society. Moral development and active learning are foundational to the contemporary philosophy (Ornstein, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1999; 1992; McNeil, 1997; 2000).

The Purposes of Education. Proponents of both the traditional and contemporary curriculum philosophies have expressed the desire to improve education

and society by producing contributing members; however, they cannot agree on how it should be done. A lack of balance when using either philosophy may do harm and create tensions among educators. "The kind of society which evolves is in part reflected in the education system, which is influenced by the philosophy that is eventually defined and developed" (Ornstein, 1999, p. 19).

Sergiovanni (1992; 1999) suggested that educators and policy decision makers should decide what they value and assess it in appropriate ways, as opposed to the present practice of simply valuing what is being measured without regard to the negative impact that accountability policy decisions might have on the future of education and the society, which they must help to create. Given that students must possess certain cognitive knowledge, principles, skills, and attitudes, they also need certain moral principles by which they must live. They include such character traits such as caring, compassion, integrity, honesty, civic duty, and other skills for democratic living. Rather than teaching these in isolation, scholars propose incorporating them into daily democratic teaching and learning strategies so educators may model them and students may observe and practice them now and in the future. Because accountability systems do not have the capability of measuring this kind of learning, it may be omitted from the curriculum in lieu of quantifiable learning objectives (Lessinger, 1970; 1971; 1973; McNeil, 1997; 2000; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Ornstein, 1999; Gibboney; 1994; Purpel & Shapiro, 1995; Kogan, 1986; Oakes, 1999). The influence of accountability on curriculum and instructional practices helps to understand some of the arguments that center on both the perceived benefits and criticisms of educational accountability.

The Benefits and Negative Criticisms of Accountability

Benefits. Accountability has received mixed reviews from different stakeholders. Despite changing enrollments, some educators have credited accountability with helping to improve test scores. They stated that it also helped them to focus more on education (Keim, 2001), to identify curriculum strengths and weaknesses, to foster programmatic design changes, to provide visionary leadership, to focus on strengths and weaknesses in test scores, to use staff strategically, and most importantly to avoid blaming students for their lack of achievement (Anderson & Edmondson, 1999). While some stakeholders believe that accountability has been beneficial, others have been highly critical.

Criticisms. Other educators have expressed differential views about accountability and have concerns about high-stakes accountability based on testing, which takes place only once during the year. They also doubted that TVAAS could statistically eliminate societal effects, such as low socio-economic status (Keim, 1999). The Tennessee Education Association (TEA) has raised questions regarding the appropriateness of the tests in general and the potential harm, which might be directed toward teachers and students, as a result of the high stakes accountability policy system ("State Releases New 'User Friendly," 2000).

The Need for Discourse Ignored. Several negative criticisms of accountability surfaced with regard to lack of collaboration among stakeholders during the development and implementation of accountability policy systems in general and in Tennessee. The original NAEP model was a mixed model, which used surveys, objectives-based tests, and qualitative methods to involve stakeholders; however, high-stakes accountability policy systems have been mandated and designed primarily by politicians without

substantial input from other educational stakeholders. TVAAS is a mixed model; however, it uses only quantitative data (Lessinger, 1970; Browder, Alkins, & Kaya, 1973; Norris, 1990; Baker & Detch, 1994; Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995; Education Bill, 1992; Education Improvement Act, 1991).

The National Council for Educational Standards (NCES) proposed in 1991, the same year that the Education Improvement Act (1991) was passed, that states involve stakeholders in developing accountability systems, setting standards, and school developing improvement processes (U. S. DOE, 2000). NCES blamed the failure of past reform efforts on the failure to involve stakeholders and argued that states should learn from their mistakes. Early NAEP studies also incorporated stakeholder involvement as a way of improving the process and ensuring local input into their evaluation models (Johnson, 1975). Yet the involvement of stakeholders in discussions about accountability has largely been ignored or centered on the implementation of policies, as they exist, rather than in the development phase. Decision-makers have assumed that the accountability system is a given, and discussions have been limited only to analyzing and using the results. Few opportunities have been provided to discuss whether stakeholders perceive the system itself to be appropriate or whether there might be ways to improve upon it (Kogan, 1986; Lessinger, 1970; Browder, Alkins, & Kaya, 1973; Norris, 1990; Baker & Detch, 1994; Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995; Education Bill, 1992; Education Improvement Act, 1991; Bracey, 2000b). Despite the criticisms, at least one high-achieving school district has attempted to use accountability to gain more financial support for education and has lobbied the Legislature not to change the TVAAS emphasis on teacher effect (TVAAS 101, 2001).

Tensions. Several other negative criticisms were found. Tensions among educators, politicians, and taxpayers can be traced back to the passing of the accountability initiatives. With the increased sales taxes in Tennessee came a mindset that linked additional funding for education in an exchange for high stakes accountability (Education Bill, 1992; EIA, 1991; Miller, 1999; Knoxville News Sentinel, 1997, May 12).

As a nation-wide concept, money for accountability dates back to the erroneous analysis of data in the 1980s and 1990s, which connected the declining SAT scores to increased federal spending. This also prompted interests in the market concept of shopping for schools as a way to jump start failing schools. In reality, the high costs were a result of increased spending for special education, and the declining scores were due mainly to the increased numbers of students, who were not college bound, taking the tests. Schools were actually improving during that time, especially in Tennessee ("Key To School Success," 2001).

Marginalized Groups. Teachers, principals, and directors of schools, who were excluded from the early discourse on accountability, continue to be left out of discussions about the formulation of the policies and whether they perceive the current policy system to be appropriate, especially the Report Card ("State Releases New 'User Friendly," 2000). For example, when they attempted to discuss proposed changes to the tests or the elimination of the teacher effect data, the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education encountered additional restrictions from the General Assembly on their decision-making authority over educational issues (Locker, 1998), which could be perceived as punitive actions. Suspicion and mistrust were generated (Reed, 1997;

Knoxville News Sentinel, 1997, May 12), legal actions (Finn, 1997, June 8), and strong accusations of reneging on accountability were also evident following attempts to enter discussions and propose changes to the system (Finn, 1997, May 29; Knoxville News Sentinel, 1997, May 12).

Concerns About Teacher Effect Data. TVAAS data are used to determine teacher effect, and the state has begun using the data to target schools and curricular areas for receiving technical assistance. The financial situation in Tennessee makes the allocation of additional dollars very difficult ("Key To School Success," 2001).

The importance placed on teacher effect might be perceived as problematic from an ethical perspective. For example, when students miss taking tests, does the statistical generation of students' scores by TVAAS based on past performance, and the use of TVAAS data to hold students, teachers, administrators, directors of schools, and even school boards accountable, pose questions for educational stakeholders and researcher?

Educators are concerned about students' achievement (or their responses on standardized tests), and spend many hours trying to improve test performance. When students miss a test or parts of tests, TVAAS actually generates statistical data for those students based on past performance. Students' scores are reported as if they had taken the tests. This permits the three-year averages of data to be utilized. Suppose, for example, that low-achieving students were to make significant progress on a particular year's test, but they miss certain subsections of the tests and are unable to make up the tests. Is it appropriate for TVAAS developers to assume that students who miss a particular question/type of question in previous years will, given a year of additional instruction, continue to miss the same question/types of questions on future tests? Are educators and

TVAAS developers to assume that students will not benefit from future teaching and learning, which might cause them to later respond correctly to questions/types of questions that they missed previously? Is not the driving principle behind the TVAAS concepts of value-added assessment and teacher effect based on the expectation that students, given additional instruction, will improve their performance from one test administration to the next and increase their gain scores? If not, does this information undermine the whole TVAAS concept? If so, is this fair to students and other educational stakeholders in the policy system to hold the students accountable for data or scores, which they might not have actually provided on the tests? Given this scenario of the likelihood that students will respond similarly to tests year after year, is it really possible that the majority of low-scoring students could actually increase their TVAAS scores from one test administration to the next? Conversely, is it possible for teachers or students to manipulate scores by encouraging high-scoring students, who may be in danger of making low scores on certain tests, to deliberately miss portions of those tests with the knowledge that TVAAS will generate scores for the students based on their past performance?

What are the consequences of not using TVAAS data? The state has invested millions of dollars in the TVAAS data. Would the tests of students who might be absent from school cause the state to eliminate large amounts of incomplete data from the TVAAS system? Do the weights assigned to missing pieces of student data provide greater benefits to teachers and districts than not having the student data at all? These are some of the tradeoffs and questions that must be considered when criticizing the use of TVAAS data (Ubben, 2002).

Criticisms of State Curriculum Standards. State curriculum standards are the frameworks upon which curriculum objectives are built and upon which criterion referenced tests are generated. Clear standards provide guidance for educators about the knowledge that is considered essential for all students to know in each grade and subject area. Local districts base their curriculum on the state standards. The higher standards were intended to improve education. When standards are unclear or too general, educators do not have the sense of direction or focus needed to teach the state mandated curriculum. Tests used to assess the curriculum must be closely aligned with the curriculum in order to truly assess students' mastery of the curriculum and to measure value-added gains or teacher effect. Many districts in the nation, like Tennessee, have struggled to create a balance between standards and test alignment. Without clear standards for guidance, teachers face a dilemma of teaching to the tests that will be used to judge their effectiveness rather than teaching to the state objectives, which may not be specific enough to guide them in their lesson planning and in their teaching. Without properly aligned objectives and tests, schools may not be testing what students really know, and educators may be sacrificing teaching large portions of the curriculum in exchange for teaching to the items that they believe will be on the tests.

The Tennessee standards were criticized in the 'Quality Counts 2001' report for being vague and for relying only on multiple-choice tests. Tennessee received a grade of 'F' on its standards (Orlofsky & Olson, 2001; Keim, 2001, January 11). A study, which was conducted by the American Federation of Teachers, also criticized Tennessee's standards as being vague ("Making Standards Matter," 1999). However, in a recent study,

Tennessee received a grade of 'B' on its standards, and it is believed that they will receive an 'A' in the near future ("Tenn. gets more bang for the buck," 2002).

Because of its high-stakes, accountability might be perceived as offering incentives for educators to cheat on tests, retain more students, and place more students in special education to improve scores (Baker & Detch, 1994; Baker, Xu, & Detch, 1995). Perhaps the greatest negative criticism of the accountability movement is the tremendous growth and far reaching effects of the accountability policy systems in general. Scholars who espouse a contemporary curriculum philosophy have argued that traditional curriculum, which drives and is driven by current accountability policy systems, is not capable of fostering the kind of education, which is espoused by policy-makers. In other words, the lock step, traditional curriculum does not foster the building of professional capacity needed by teachers to teach all children regardless of family background and handicapping conditions. Nor does the rigidity and impersonal nature of the rational model enable teachers to create for students the kinds of democratic classroom environments, which might foster the kind of creative thinking, caring, integrity, and compassion needed to live in a global environment (McNeil, 1997; 2000; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Ornstein, 1999; Gibboney; 1994; Purpel & Shapiro, 1995; Kogan, 1986; Oakes, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1992; 1999).

Summary. Over the past two-three decades, educational accountability evolved from the Congress' desire to evaluate and replicate effective federal compensatory programs, which were designed to promote social justice and equal access to education for all students, especially the poor, racial and ethnic minorities, and students with handicapping conditions. Accountability policy systems were patterned after objectives-

based, systems management, systems analysis program evaluation models, which were used by NAEP. The NAEP systems were intended to promote collaboration among local/state policy-makers, educators, and parents regarding federal compensatory programs and the expenditure of federal dollars for the programs. Instead primarily politicians conceptualized current high-stakes accountability policy systems without substantial input from the very stakeholders, which were intended to become key players in the development and implementation of the accountability process.

High-stakes accountability policy systems in 95% of the nation are supported by state laws that have the capability to reward or sanction schools based on achievement scores on annual standardized state tests. Schools and districts must also adhere to many other state mandated administrative rules and regulations. Sanctions have been used twice in Tennessee and may include actions such as the Commissioner of Education removing directors of schools and/or school boards, or actually taking over failing school districts. TVAAS provides the accountability data used by the state for accountability through individual school and district report cards and is presumed to be free of biases such as socio-economic conditions. However, many researchers have reported a high correlation between high levels of impoverished students within schools, the presence of multiple at-risk factors, the level of education achieved by students' mothers, and poor student achievement, which many teachers have also espoused. Some researchers have shown that early preschool intervention for impoverished children, targeted resources to develop and implement specially designed programs to meet their needs, quality staff development for educators, controlling the percentage of impoverished students within

schools, and parental involvement are integral for improving students' academic achievement.

High-stakes accountability policy systems were designed to improve educational quality, to prepare students to become good citizens, and to prepare them to compete in a global economic market. Yet the traditional curriculum philosophy, which is driven by the accountability policy systems, has been credited with deskilling teachers with the objectives-based, skills-oriented, time-bound, passive curriculums that are generally implemented. Teachers have complained that they have little time left for developing critical thinking skills, developing in-depth understandings of curriculum, pursuing teacher'/students' interests, or engaging students in creative problem-solving because, in many school districts as educators feel pressured to strive to implement the narrow curriculums which presumably enable teachers and students to meet the demands of high-stakes accountability policy systems (state laws) in time for tests. Teachers have criticized the accountability policy systems for failing to take into account other forms of learning, which might not be measurable on standardized tests such as civility, concern, compassion, integrity, and empathy for others. In Tennessee, Dr. Sanders' research on TVAAS identified teacher effect, what teachers teach and how they teach it, as the most important factor in improving students' academic achievement on state tests. Educators face serious ethical dilemmas centered on the use of TVAAS data for high-stakes accountability purposes ... to teach the curriculum or to they the test, and discourse is needed to debate the issues.

Although the need for discourse and collaboration is prevalent in the literature, and both NAEP and NCES have recommended it, educators, parents, and community

stakeholders have consistently been marginalized by politicians during the development of accountability policy systems. Researchers have criticized Sanders' TVAAS system because of a lack of information on the statistical processes used, which hinders scholarly debate on TVAAS. There may be benefits derived from the accountability policy system in Tennessee, which may be positive, but the possibility exists that there are also negative criticisms/consequences, even harmful effects. Without generating educational discourse on accountability, the effects might go undetected until the damage has been done.

There are critical questions related to accountability, which need answers and deserve to be explored. Do stakeholders perceive that accountability is enabling schools in Tennessee to produce the kinds of students/citizens that are intended; do they perceive the accountability policy system to be appropriate for assessing educational achievement; do students, administrators, and teachers, in poverty-stricken schools perceive that they are being penalized by the accountability policy system for lack of achievement? Do stakeholders perceive that it is important to take into consideration many other areas of learning, which might not be assessed quantitatively? Do they perceive that problems are inherent within the accountability policy system itself? One way to ascertain how stakeholders perceive accountability in Tennessee is to engage them in discussions about the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee and how it might be improved.

Rationale for Methodology and Conceptual Framework

This study is unlike most accountability studies that have dealt primarily with the outcomes of accountability. In those studies, the emphasis tended to be on the effectiveness of the model for assessing student progress and on the levels of attainment

of specific goals and objectives on standardized tests. Such studies have assumed that the accountability system was 'right', and that it was not to be questioned. However, few studies have actually looked at the appropriateness of the methods used and whether there were other alternatives that might be more appropriate and/or more effective (Kogan, 1986). This study focused on developing an understanding of a wide-range of perceptions on accountability that did not focus primarily on the achievement data. Based on Standpoint Theory (Harding, 1989; 1996), it focused on how stakeholders perceive the appropriateness and effectiveness of the accountability policy system, how stakeholders perceive that accountability has affected them as differential groups, and whether certain stakeholder groups perceive that they are being or have been harmed or marginalized by the accountability policy system in Tennessee.

The case study, which consisted of interviews, site observations, and reviews of artifacts, was the primary method of data collection for this research. Data were collected in the fall of 2001 and spring 2002. The case study was chosen because it offers a process for collecting and analyzing the perceptions of accountability within the real-life context of the schools and communities affected by it. The case study is appropriate because it enables the researcher to clearly define the phenomenon to be studied. In this case, the phenomenon was accountability, and specific boundaries were drawn around the study in the form of the stakeholders' perceptions about the accountability policy system in Tennessee (Merriam, 1998). The case study also provides a way in which the rich, contextual data gained from various participants in the study could be represented in the final product, a qualitative report.

Conceptual Framework. The literature on policy development and implementation was helpful in understanding and analyzing the Tennessee accountability policy system. The desire to approach accountability from the perspective of the impact that the accountability policy system might have on differential groups of stakeholders and the concern for social justice issues are considered feminist research perspectives. Standpoint theory, also a feminist research perspective, which is concerned with issues of social justice, the marginalizing of differential stakeholder groups by policy systems, and how stakeholders perceive they are affected by policy systems, was helpful in identifying key research questions to be addressed. Standpoint Theory also provided a framework for the collection and analysis of data for the study. Following is an overview of policy literature and standpoint theory.

Policy Development. The literature on policy development addressed the importance of analyzing policies and provided key issues that should be asked in analyzing policies. The key questions included the political environment in which policies systems were developed, the social contexts in which the policies take place, the key stakeholders, how stakeholders perceived the policy system in terms of positive and negative criticisms (Ubben, 2000; Kogan, 1986; Roberts & King, 1996; Fowler, 2000), and the values that underlie perceptions of the policy system by the decision-makers as well as those who are the recipients of the policies (Leonard, 1999).

Policy literature also addressed the problems that were likely to be encountered in implementing policy decisions (Kogan, 1986). Policy decisions included questions about the missions and purposes of education or educational values; the moral implications of the policy decisions upon various stakeholders, especially students and educators; the

feelings of those stakeholders who were affected by accountability policy decisions; and the use of hierarchical authority by policy decision-makers (Kogan, 1986; Thompson, 1976; Lessinger, 1970).

Standpoint Theory. Standpoint Theory enabled the researcher to view a topic such as accountability from several different perspectives. It has often been considered to be a radical research approach in some studies because of the controversial topics with which it was associated (such as in sexual orientation studies). This study may also be considered radical or controversial because it created needed discourse about the appropriateness of the state mandated accountabilities policies, removed participants from their comfort zones, and challenged them to consider whether other viable alternatives to the current accountability policy systems might be feasible. Standpoint Theory provided a variety of perspectives through which the Tennessee accountability policy system was viewed in order to determine some of the affective implications upon stakeholders. An example would be the understanding gained about the impact of accountability policies on teachers, who are primarily women; minorities, poor and at-risk students, and other marginalized groups (Harding, 1989; 1996).

Not all marginalized groups are without power. Some marginalized groups, which might also be considered as powerful, include directors of schools, local school boards, the State Board of Education, and the Department of Education. Through Standpoint Theory, questions were generated to give 'voice' to these marginalized groups. It was important to ascertain their views about the perceived appropriateness, effectiveness, positive and negative benefits of the accountability policy system, as well as their views about viable alternatives to improve upon the current model. Discourse about

accountability has traditionally been limited to discussions of results only (Kogan, 1986). Quantitative or measurable data from objectives-based standardized tests and qualitative or contextual data about the specific school sites, which are not easily measured by the accountability policy system and are seldom reported, yet they are important to accountability studies and should be explored (Campbell, 1999).

Because objectives-based studies are quantitative, they claim to be value-free. Standpoint theory posits that all studies are inherently value-laden (Begley, 1999). However, as with all qualitative research designs, steps were taken to ensure that the methodology of this study was rigorous and that the data collection and reporting processes utilized in the study were applied in a consistent manner throughout the course of the study in order to preserve the integrity and trustworthiness of the data (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). The use of an interview protocol served the dual purposes of providing the structure and flexibility needed to ensure consistency in data collection and of allowing participants the opportunity to express their views on the Tennessee accountability policy system without restrictions.

Educational Values. Perceptions/educational values influence accountability issues such as fairness, equity of resources, social justice, the end purposes of education, the moral and ethical considerations of accountability, and the uses of authority to control education. These issues might be easily overlooked in high-stakes accountability environments, and the conflicts that are found between competing educational philosophies, theories and data sources (Campbell, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1992; Leithwood, 1999; Harding, 1996; Leonard, 1999; Tyack & Hasnot, 1982; Begley, 1999). However, through the lenses of policy literature and standpoint theory, they were purposefully

examined. These concepts provided the frameworks to thoroughly explore the perceptions of the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the accountability policy systems (Keller & Longino, 1996; Leithwood, 1999) in Tennessee, and how stakeholders perceive that it might be improved.

Summary. Accountability policy development dates back to the early NAEP program evaluation models. They were widely adopted because states knew that the evaluation models could easily meet federal government funding criteria by using the NAEP design. Many state continued to use the NAEP model as they developed curriculum goals and standards during the 1980s-1990s. The NCES also developed an evaluation model, which influenced the development of state standards. Both NAEP and NCES advocated collaboration with educators, policy-makers, and stakeholders. Historically, that advice has been ignored as accountability policies have been developed.

The most recent piece of federal legislation is the LNCBA of 2001-2002. Students in low achieving schools will be allowed to transfer out of the schools, or they may use government funds to receive tutoring.

The Tennessee accountability policy system is an example of the public control model of accountability. Under such models, there is little room for discourse except to discus test results. Discussions of the appropriateness of the policy itself are seldom possible.

A lawsuit was filed by 16 small school districts in 1988 to equalize funding, and 66 other districts joined the lawsuit. Another lawsuit is pending as of this writing. Accountability in Tennessee was legislated by the Education Improvement Act of 1991, which was also intended to equalize spending educational opportunities and educational

opportunities throughout the state. A sales tax increase in Tennessee made it possible to invest millions of new dollars in education. Schools realized significant increases in funding in many areas as a result of the BEP. Classroom costs were funded through the BEP; however, teachers' salaries were not part of the BEP funding formula. The BEP has not kept pace with inflation and it does not reflect current coast for operating schools in Tennessee.

There are only two cases on the record where sanctions were imposed against schools; however, 98 schools located throughout the state have been placed on notice that they are at risk for possible state takeover if they do not improve their scores within one year. Approximately two thirds of the schools are in Memphis. There are 12 indicators in the accountability policy system (Morgan, Cour, & Detch, 2002); however, the sanctions are based on a three-year average of test scores in language arts and mathematics.

The LNCBA contains many of the features of the Tennessee Performance Model. It requires schools to close the achievement gap in terms of race, socio-economic conditions, English as a Second Language, and handicapping conditions. Schools must close the achievement gap incrementally by making adequate yearly progress each year, and they must close it completely in 12 years or face harsher sanctions.

A criticism of the accountability movement in Tennessee is the use of one test, which uses three-year averages, to make judgments about students and teachers. There are strong feelings on both sides of the accountability debate. A common factor throughout the movement that has been ignored is the recommendation for discourse among stakeholders, policy-makers, and legislators to improve the policy development and implementation.

A new rung in the accountability ladder is the introduction of Gateway End of Course Exams in Algebra I and Biology I during the 2001-2002 school year. They count for 15-20% of students' grades, and the current ninth grade class must pass them in order to graduate in 2005.

Standpoint theory provides a lens through which the perceptions of stakeholders might be explored to ascertain their views about the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the accountability policy system in Tennessee. Policy theory provides a lens to examine accountability as a policy system.

Chapter III

Methodology

In an effort to pursue the exploration of the perceptions of selected stakeholders in Tennessee, a case study design was chosen. As 'doers' in schools/ districts (implementers), educators seldom have risk-free environments and opportunities to reflect on such policies. Nor are they generally able to consider the implications of those policies on their lives as professionals, their students' lives, on their daily practice. The "tellers" charged with enforcing and implementing such policies are also busy with daily operations and seldom stop to question their impact. So much energy is spent implementing accountability that it becomes accepted, institutionalized practice without regard to philosophical beliefs and best practice. Evaluations of accountability have focused on outcomes rather than the people themselves.

This case study is about the people ... their values and beliefs about accountability, their joys, their frustrations, their fears, their commitment to their students, their professionalism, their willingness to be professionally accountable to many publics for the jobs they are hired to do as educators, their personal pain over an accountability system that may eventually rob them of their creativity and enthusiasm for teaching. Finally, it is about their hope for the future for an accountability policy system that is respectful of the skills, knowledge, and artistry of educators as professionals; equitable to all educators and students, well aligned with curriculum, considerate of the special students and special circumstances in which schools are situated, and yet rigorous enough to ensure that all teachers and schools are effective and that all students are being well educated regardless of where in Tennessee they might live.

Site Selections

The population for the study consisted of a convenience sample of school communities. A search of the state website provided a list of districts along with a listing of the schools categorized as elementary, middle, high schools, alternative centers, and special education facilities. Intent on providing as much diversity as possible, districts were examined holistically in terms of student population sizes, proximity to the University of Tennessee, settings (in terms of whether they were rural, urban, or suburban), socio-economic conditions in terms of local contributions to education, and the variety of grade levels offered in schools. The district list was divided into categories of small districts (less than 5,000 students), medium size districts (10,000 or more but less than 25,000), and large districts (25,000 or more). In order to identify the districts, the researcher conveniently selected from the alphabetical listing of districts, six districts that were of interest. Six sites were selected with a mixture of schools levels. A matrix was developed with districts listed vertically and school levels listed horizontally. The districts were placed in priority of interest on the matrix and labeled as List A (first choice) or List B (second choice). Districts on List A were contacted first and invited to participate in the study. The first two districts gave timely approval; however, after waiting for a long period of time, the third district declined. List B was consulted, and the first district also declined. The second district on List B gave approval immediately. As the districts granted approval to conduct the study, two levels were selected. In the first district, District A, a K-12 school (a high school by state designation) and a school with grades one-eight (a middle school by state designation) were selected. In District B, an alternative school (grades six through 12) and a middle school (grades six through eight)

were selected. In District C, a high school (K-12) and an elementary school (grades K-six) were selected.

Population

A total of six schools, two each from three school districts, within a 150-mile radius of The University of Tennessee, participated in the study. The school districts represent a rural district of less than 5,000 students (District A), a suburban district of more than 10,000 students (District B), and an urban district (District C) with more than 25,000 students. Using different size districts, types of school communities, economically diverse districts, different levels of schools (elementary, middle, and high school), and including students in special education programs and/or students in alternative school settings, provides much diversity among the participants. It also provides rich data for the study and situates the reader within the special contexts of each district. The researcher traveled in excess of 1,000 miles collecting data for this study.

Sources of Data

The sources of data for this study consisted of interviews, observations, and reviews of artifacts. The researcher's reflections were also a source of data.

Interviews. A total of 60 participants participated in this study. In the three districts, individual interviews were conducted with directors of schools, curriculum supervisors in charge of accountability, six selected principals at the elementary, middle, and high school level; one assistant principal, two state politicians, and four state level educational leaders. A state school board representative was also interviewed and is included with four state level educators. Both state level educators and politicians were interviewed individually.

There were a total of 38 females and 22 males interviewed for the study; nine of the total participants were black and 51 were white. Of the 36 teachers, six were black. Of the six principals, three were black (two females and one male) and three were white (two males and one female). School stakeholders from rural, inner city, and suburban schools/districts were included in the study.

Teachers were interviewed either individually or in small focus groups of less than ten depending upon their personal preferences, availability, and time commitments. Interviewing ten or fewer participants at a time enabled all participants to express themselves. When focus groups were used, a round robin process enabled participants to have an opportunity to express their thoughts without interruptions. Teachers were the only stakeholders interviewed individually or in focus groups. No mixed participant focus groups were used. Three 18 year-old adult students were interviewed individually.

To ensure consistency and integrity of data collection, only the researcher conducted interviews, and only one focus group was ever scheduled at a time. Interview procedures were reviewed each time to ensure that participants understood the process and to ensure that all stakeholder groups are treated fairly. Referrals were requested at the conclusion of interviews in order to network and identify the names of other potential interviewees. Networking revealed more referrals than the researcher was able to interview within the timelines allocated for the study. However, interviews were continued until the researcher felt that the data were becoming redundant and no new data were being discovered. A total of 60 participants were interviewed for the study. Table 5 contains a listing of the study participants and is located in Appendix B.

Interview questions were generated from the research questions. Interviews followed a semi-structured interview format, which helped to ensure that the same questions were asked of all participants. This format also allowed the flexibility needed to gather rich data from the participants, which might not included in the interview questions. Participants were given a copy of the Interview Protocol for reference during the interview sessions. Table 4 shows the Interview Protocol (Appendix A).

Interviews were audio taped, and handwritten scripted notes were made as needed to ensure that information was recorded as accurately as possible. The researcher also recorded reflections immediately following interviews to preserve thoughts and to facilitate ongoing data analysis. Interviews allowed the researcher to hear perspectives in the participants' own words, to note the inflexions in their voices, and to observe their body language as they spoke. Their voices and personal expressions were extremely insightful as they shared their personal perceptions and their private feelings about accountability. Interview transcripts were returned to participants for member checking to enable participants to edit and clarify transcripts to ensure that accuracy and trustworthiness of the data are honored. A total of 60 participants were given an opportunity to share their stories for this study. In addition to interviews, data collection consisted of site observations, reviews of artifacts, and the researcher's personally recorded reflections following interviews.

Observations. Observations were conducted while at the sites by making mental notes of the climate and activities taking place in the sites. The school sites provided interesting contrasts in terms of their size, activity level in the offices, and appearance.

Observation plans originally included attending faculty meetings where testing and assessment data might be discussed or attending relevant staff development programs regarding testing. These activities were not possible to attend due to scheduling conflicts. In one case, inclement weather closed schools and cancelled the activity.

Artifacts. Artifacts were reviewed, which included school achievement data, web sites, district strategic plans, school report cards, and school improvement plans. Each artifact helped to triangulate data provided during interviews and from observations. Follow-up strategies included the use of telephone calls, additional face-to-face interviews, focus group sessions, mail, or the use of emails as necessary.

Procedures

IRB Approval. Appropriate informed consent forms to conduct research on human participants were filed with the University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board (IRB), Appendix A. Once IRB approval was received, consent forms were mailed to the selected directors of schools, politicians, and all initial stakeholders, who were selected as participants (Appendix A).

District and School Approvals. After the directors of schools approved the districts' participation in the study, principals were mailed or hand delivered a letter and informed consent form. Once the principals gave consent for their schools to participate, they were asked to identify two teachers, and a parent leader knowledgeable about accountability, who might be interested in participating in the study. Letters and informed consent forms were delivered to the schools for staff members. A return, stamped, self-addressed envelope was included with information that needed to be returned to the researcher.

The only students invited to participate in the study were 18 year-old adult students (Appendix A). Principals and teachers were asked to identify potential 18 year-old students for the study. Informed consent forms were either presented to students prior to interviews, or they were left for them at high schools, and principals were asked to distribute the forms to the students who were identified to participate in the study.

State Level Approvals. Selected state level politicians, policy-makers, local, and state level education association members were also identified for interviews by asking participants and searching newspapers or other media for referrals. Interview appointments were scheduled personally by phone or through the appropriate offices. Sufficient lead-time was provided to ensure that informed consent forms were submitted in a timely manner. Informed consent forms were mailed or hand delivered to the participants. A return due date was given to encourage prompt responses. Correspondence was logged with the dates sent out and received in order to track paperwork and to ensure that follow-up was taken in case information was not returned in a timely manner. This was particularly important in the two instances when approvals were not received in a timely manner from districts, and other districts were able to be contacted without interrupting the flow of data collection.

Participants were contacted by phone to schedule interviews as the informed consent forms were returned to the researcher. Networking yielded several impromptu interviews, which were arranged and conducted spontaneously. Participants signed consent forms prior to being interviewed. The researcher was careful to always have a complete set of interview materials readily available in the event that impromptu interviews opportunities became available.

Face to face interviews were planned with all participants; however, one political leader requested a telephone interview instead because of time constraints and the fear that the appointment would not be kept due to urgent state business. Although letters and consent forms had been sent, it was important to follow-up with phone calls when paperwork had not been returned. When this occurred, consent forms were to be signed at the sites prior to interviewing. Three interviews were scheduled by phone, and their paperwork had not been returned. The researcher started out to the sites, but the weather rapidly deteriorated making travel unsafe. She returned home and called to cancel the interviews; however, it was possible to reschedule them for the same date and same time by faxing the forms to the participants. Two interviews were conducted that same day with state educators. The third person scheduled for the same day later requested to reschedule the interview for a face-to-face session, and it was conducted at a later date.

Data Analysis. Data analysis began as data were collected and continued throughout the study. Names of participants were given a numerical code to protect their identities. Participants received a copy of the informed consent form for their records. All interviews were audio taped. Modified script notes were written on legal pads as needed during interviews to clarify data. Emerging categories were taped or written on script notes. These categories were later condensed into themes. Personal reflections were dictated into a tape recorder following certain interviews to record reflections about the interviews and to maintain a record of significant events that took place during the study.

A typist was hired to help transcribe the interviews, and a confidentiality agreement was signed (Appendix A). They were typed by word processor to preserve the record of conversations and to reduce errors. Electronic copies of the data were stored on

the researcher's home computer, floppy discs, and on hard copies. The researcher read all transcripts and the data were matched to script notes to ensure accuracy. Handwritten notes were made on transcripts as categories, patterns, and themes emerged during data collection and analysis. Different colors of highlighters were used to underline and identify key ideas. Emerging patterns were then coded using colored dots to identify similar categories, which were then labeled according to categories from which themes were identified. Categories and themes were recorded as typed notes and displayed in summary format using large sheets of chart paper.

The researcher decided to manually code data as opposed to using a commercially prepared software program to assist with data analysis since the amount of data was not too massive to permit hand analysis (Creswell, 2002, p. 261). Transcripts were returned to participants to verify the accuracy of the data. This was particularly important because it demonstrated to participants the researcher's desire to honor their contributions to the study, and it also conveyed the researcher's commitment to truthfully represent personal data that had been shared during interviews. Out of 60 sets of data returned to participants, 31 of the 60 participants (51 %) returned the transcripts with comments indicating suggested changes or stating that no changes were suggested. A copy of the Member Checking letter may be found in Appendix A).

Three research questions were asked in this study. The Interview Protocol consisted of ten questions that were designed to elicit responses to the three research questions. Content analyses were performed on each transcript, first by reading the entire transcript and making notes of key ideas or concepts. Next by reading all of the questions of the same number until all had been read and making additional notes of key ideas or

concepts. For example, all responses to question number one, number two, and so on, were read until each had been read as a set. Each question was assigned a particular color to enable the researcher to readily identify a particular response to a question. (For example, all questions about the meaning of accountability were colored pink. Best and worst stories were colored blue.) Patterns, categories, and themes emerged and were recorded in the margins of the transcripts. Key words or ideas were further identified by underlining or by placing them in brackets, which were later clustered into categories and condensed into themes.

After methodically reading the transcripts as described above, the researcher developed a comfort level in the ability to identify key pieces of data and became more aware of overlapping data. Transcripts were then read again from the beginning looking for key concepts without regard to the specific questions. In other words, rather than looking for definitions of accountability in number one, the data about definitions of accountability were listed regardless of where they appeared in the transcripts. The interview questions enabled the researcher to triangulate the data in multiple ways as illustrated in the Interview Question Protocol and the Matrix of Research Questions/ Interview Protocol, which may be found on the following page. These data were also categorized and coded using colored dots to represent the new and overlapping categories and themes. Table 1 is a matrix that shows the relationship of the research questions to the Interview Protocol.

Table 1
Matrix of Research Questions and Interview Protocol

Research Questions	Interview Questions
1. What differences are perceived, if any, by different stakeholders concerning the meaning (#1), the purposes (#1), the evidences (#2, #3), the appropriateness (#3-#7), and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee (#4, #5, #7, #9)?	#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #9
2. What suggestions (#3- #7), if any, do different stakeholders offer to improve the appropriateness (#4, #5, #6, #7, #9) and the effectiveness of current accountability policy system (#2, #3)?	#2, #3, #4, #5, #6, # 7, #8, # 9
3. What are some of the positive benefits (#1, #2, #8) and negative consequences (#9, #10) of the current accountability model as perceived by stakeholders?	#1, #2, #8, #9, # 10

Responses generated by the Interview Protocol were recorded on Question Analysis summary sheets by the code assigned to the participants in order to identify the persons from whom the data came. It also enabled the participants to be accurately cited in case they were quoted in the report. Equally important, the coding also enabled the researcher to analyze the data according to the predetermined demographic categories (code, sex, years of experience, age, and race) in order to ascertain how different groups perceived the particular question and to determine whether perceptions differed based on the categories.

Again, the interview questions provided triangulation of the responses to the interview questions by participants overall, but particularly within the same school sites or districts on many issues that were discussed. Table 5 in Appendix B contains the Question Analysis Summary Sheet as well as the list of participants.

Chapter IV

Findings

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of selected stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) in Tennessee concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of educational accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations these stakeholders might offer for improving the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current accountability policy system.

The Findings of the study are presented in terms of the research questions. The primary source of data were interviews conducted with 60 stakeholders, which included 36 teachers, a teacher assistant, three 18 year old adult students, six school principals, an assistant principal, three directors of schools, three central office supervisors, a school board member, four state level educators, and two state politicians. Artifact reviews provided the secondary source of data, which included printed news media, school and statewide assessment data available on local and state websites, as well as school improvement planning documents. Personal observations and reflections made by the researcher provided additional sources of data.

Three broad research questions were asked in the study. In order to foster dialogue, an interview protocol was used. The interview protocol was designed to provide multiple opportunities for participants to respond to the interview questions. The variety of approaches used to gather information in the interviews provided triangulation of the

interview data and helped to ensure its trustworthiness. Findings are presented in the order of the three research questions. Themes that emerged during the study are also identified.

Standpoint Theory is the conceptual framework used to analyze the data. It specifically guides the researcher to look at the perception of accountability held by the various stakeholder groups and how they might be affected by a particular policy system (Harding, 1989; 1996; Keller & Longino, 1996). The differences among the stakeholder groups were ascertained by making charts to display key phrases as the transcripts were analyzed. A copy of the Interview Protocol is located in (Appendix A).

Research Question One

What differences are perceived if any by different stakeholders concerning the meaning, purposes, the evidences, the appropriateness, and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee?

Students' Perceived Meaning and Purposes of Accountability.

Educational accountability is about students; they are the primary reason that the Education Improvement Act (EIA) was passed. As one state level educator stated, "The accountability train really started leaving the station in the early 1990s ... (SL1)." This was about the same time that the current graduating class of 2002 was starting kindergarten. The EIA was slowly implemented over the past decade or more, and it continues to be the foundational piece of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee. The purpose of the EIA was to ensure that all children in Tennessee received

an adequate education regardless of where in the state they might live or which school they might happen to attend.

The students in this study, Jeanette (S1), Michelle (S2), and Brian (S3), are seniors graduating from two different high schools. They have been under the influence of the Tennessee accountability policy system for all of their school years, yet the term 'accountability' was not one with which they were immediately familiar, either through testing, or discussions with parents, friends, teachers, or as a result of widespread media coverage. The researcher found it necessary to ask probing questions about their experiences with testing to prompt the students regarding standardized tests that they might have taken throughout school. Question one of the Interview Protocol was, "Tell what you know about accountability. What does it mean to you?" It was used to ascertain participants' perceptions of the meaning of accountability in Tennessee.

The following codes were used throughout the Findings to identify specific stakeholder groups: R – Researcher; S-Student, TA-Teacher Assistant, T-teacher; MS- Middle School Teacher; HS-High School Teacher; ALT- Alternative School Teacher; P-Principal; AP-Assistant Principal; CS- Central Office/Curriculum Supervisor; DS – Director of Schools; MGS – Middle School Teacher Group; TG – Teacher Group; SLE – State Level Educator; SG – State Government/Political Leader.

> R: This may be something that you don't know a lot about …you've probably been subject to accountability, but you may not know exactly what it means. But just tell me what you think ... educational accountability means (long pause).
> R: You have had to take tests every year since you've been in school?
> S1: Yeah, I have had to take tests every year.
> R: That's a form of accountability. Tell me what you think about that?
> S1: I think it just shows what you've learned over the years. Some of it goes beyond what it should. If you don't pass the test then, of course, you don't graduate. But that's kind of like ACTs, but in a different form. You see what I'm saying?
> R: Yes.

S2: Really, I don't know what it is?
R: Have you had tests every year since you've been at school?
S2: Hmm-hmm.
R: Have you been told that you have to pass those tests or what have you?
S2: Yes, in my freshman year we had a TCAP test.

The students recalled taking TCAPs as freshmen. They were aware that the Exit Exams were mandatory for graduation, and they stated that the exams could be repeated until they were passed if necessary.

S1: They are really strict about it.
R: In what way are they strict?
S1: If you don't pass of course you don't graduate. And if you don't pass, you take it over and over each, every few nights.
R: The same test?
S1: The same test in different form.
R: Have you had to or do you know other students that have had to do that?
S1: I know students who have had to do that. I haven't had to do that. I just took it twice.
R: When you say "it", which one are you talking about? Is it TCAP, or is it ACT, or Gateway?
S1: No. It's a form of TCAP. We don't take Gateway yet. The freshmen that are now will have to take Gateway.

Brian has completed several vocational programs and has three trades in which he is interested in working after graduation, although he plans to go to college. He stated that he had taken Work Keys as his Exit Exam. Brian stated that some of his friends were nervous about the Gateway Exam because it will count as a percentage of the grade to pass Algebra and Biology courses. Current freshmen will have to pass Gateway Exams in core subject areas in order to graduate in the future. The Gateway Exams must count for at least 15% of the course grade by law.

R: Have you had to take Exit Exams because you're graduating very soon?
S3: Yeah, I took the Work Keys.
R: OK you took Work Keys, and some of the younger students, ninth grades I think, are beginning to take some tests this week, are they not?
S3: Yes, some of them took the Gateway and I guess, I don't know if they took the TCAPs or not. I think they did.
R: How are they reacting to that; do you know?
S3: Well some of them [was] nervous on the Gateways because now it's required as 20% of your grade. So they were a little nervous on that.

When Jeanette was asked about the consequences of accountability, she indicated that there was more personal disappointment that she had not done well than actual consequences.

R: So, do you know of any consequences of accountability? Any negative effects.

S1: Just how disappointed if someone failed the course. The TCAP you take it your freshman year. If you don't pass the course the teachers will help you. They'll help you to learn what would be on the TCAP so you can pass. So that would help you out a lot. Of course, I didn't get that. They just started it in ... like a year after I took my TCAP.

After further discussion, Jeanette went on to describe how she perceives accountability affecting some students who did not pass their exams and dropped out of school. Because jobs are not available for students in the community, they must leave the community to find work in restaurants in neighboring communities.

R: Right. Do you know of any students who have given up and just said, "The heck with it. I'm not taking it [TCAT] again; I'm just going to leave school?
S1: Yes I do. ... Well they do it over and over again and they just get tired of it. They say, "I'm not going to pass, so why am I here?"
R: Is it a particular subject area, or is it more the ACT, or which one? Is it like a math, or language, or is it like algebra, or biology?
S1: It's different stuff.... It's got math, biology, science... well that's the same thing, and it's got English and different stuff like that. Reading, comprehension...

R: What do they do when they give up?
S1: They just quit.
R: Dropped out of school?
S1: Yeah. Most of them do.
R: That's sad. And then what do they do if they don't have a high school education?
S1: They get a job. ...They just get a job. ... Right.
R: Do they stay in this community or do they have to go someplace else?
S1: Most of them live in this community, but of course they have to go outside of the community to get a job. Of course they work in like restaurants and stuff like that.

Students' value added scores are the basis of teacher effect scores. Although students in the study perceive that they take the tests seriously, teachers do not perceive that students generally take the tests seriously. They perceive that students do not do their best to perform well on the tests. This was a theme that emerged throughout the teacher and principal interviews. However, based on the students' interviews, the high school students in this study are aware of the importance of the tests and the high stakes attached to not graduating if they do not pass the End of Course tests.

School and District Level Educators' Perceived Meaning and Purposes of Accountability. Educators at the local level, (teachers, principals, central office supervisors, and directors of schools) in this study responded to Question One by defining the meaning of the current accountability policy system in several ways. First, they spoke in terms of the tests or assessments that are administered annually to students. In elementary and middle schools, educators mentioned the Terra Nova, a standardized test given to students in grades three through eight, as a part of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). High school teachers spoke of

accountability in terms of Exit Exams, End of Course Tests, Gateway Exams, and ACT scores. Not all participants mentioned tests because they favored them, but tests are widely used and regarded as the most visible form of accountability.

Accountability was also defined by teachers and principals as a way the state, school districts, and administrators "makes sure" that teachers are teaching the curricula that they were "supposed to" teach. It was also perceived as a way of ensuring that students were learning the curriculum objectives prescribed by the state. Terms generally used to describe accountability implied that educators feel the need to prove that they are doing their jobs as professionals.

Administrators perceive accountability more broadly than teachers. They perceive it as being multifaceted referring to the total list of 12 indicators identified in the Performance Model for Tennessee.

> DS1: ...We use the word accountability and refer to all kinds of things that happen in education. In Tennessee it's basically referred to as how well we are doing academically; that's what the legislators would probably say. But as the director of schools and as a teacher, we I think we have to look at accountability as not just how well we do academically, how well we are doing accounting for the money, and the financial structure of the school system. How well we do with attendance. How well we do corresponding with parents. And how well we do with communicating with the community in general. So it's a very wide range of things that I would see as accountability but in general terms that's the way it's used, but specifically in Tennessee most people refer to accountability as to how well we are doing on specific test scores.

> P-2: I think that accountability is multi-faceted or more than one thing. One thing has to do student accountability or accountability in terms of assessment. Whether you're talking about academics, whether talking about attendance, or even behavior accountability is multi-faceted. We were trying to progress students along and help them reach benchmarks; help them go from point to point. Either the benchmarks are set by your system or by the State or even the feds can set some benchmarks for you. And you kind of get Five Year Strategic Plan, or some

type of plan, where you aim for those goals and you try to attain those.

Accountability as Professional Responsibility. One theme that surfaced repeatedly during discussions with teachers and principals about the meaning of accountability was professional responsibilities. The consensus of perceptions expressed by teachers and principals, as well as directors of schools and curriculum supervisors, indicated that they all supported the concept of being held accountable for doing the jobs they were hired to do. They had differing perceptions about how accountability should be implemented and measured. The differential perceptions on how accountability should be demonstrated will be presented for each group in the subsections called Evidences of Accountability. Included in the evidences will be perceptions about the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the accountability policy system.

Each stakeholder considered himself or herself to be personally accountable for student achievement and progress. A theme that surfaced in discussions was the teachers' perceptions that they are held more accountable than anyone especially the students. The data support that perception. Teachers gave examples of students deliberately not applying themselves to do well on the tests. Student interview data revealed that students do not have a keen sense of accountability per se, although they are aware of the requirements to pass tests in order to graduate. The attitudes of students will likely change as higher stakes are added to the accountability system as Gateway testing is extended into other areas than Algebra and Biology. Also supporting the concept of teacher accountability were statements made by several principals who described

accountability as 'teacher accountability'.

> T2: Accountability to me means that I am responsible, how students progress in school. It's my responsibility toward children to make gains. It means that I am going to be scrutinized to make sure that these gains are met. ...Well, it's fine with me. I feel very comfortable being assessed. ...That is my goal as a teacher; to make sure that I follow frameworks and standards. Since I've taught in two different states, I am very familiar with frameworks of learning, and I try to gear my plans using the curriculum that is required by the state to meet those guidelines to target those areas.
>
> P3: Well, of course, ... I'm sure we are talking about teacher accountability, mostly that's what I deal with. Being accountable of course is to me being responsible or answerable but I think another big definition of it that is sometimes overlooked is being able to explain why things occurred. That's one avenue I like to look at in teacher accountability is the reasons.
>
> P1: I think the [in] accountability right now under the Tennessee system the only people who are accountable are the teachers. There's no consequence for students until they become high school students in Tennessee. And that's really too late. To let them test all those years and [have] no consequences to those tests; and then get to high school and not be able to do well on a standardized test ... and not get their diploma. So we need to have benchmarks either every year or at certain years that there's a certain standard that they should get to or have some system in place where there is student accountability...and more mandatory parent involvement.
>
> P4: Accountability basically is what's in place in my opinion to make sure that our teachers are teaching and doing what they need to do in the classroom with the students so the students are growing academically.

A politician sees accountability as teacher accountability. He perceives that the teachers' union has thwarted efforts to hold teachers accountable.

> SG2: ... The teachers union, specifically in Tennessee, has really stopped us from doing things that would keep us competitive. We have a charter school thing and it seems like people who are opposed to it are putting out false information, that ... teachers won't have any accountability.

Although teachers feel that they are more accountable than anyone, principals and directors are also accountable. Stakeholders above and below principals (the assistant principal, the curriculum supervisors, and the directors of schools) perceive that others are accountable as well. The following statements illustrate stakeholders' views of the continuum of responsibility or accountability. Also included in the statements are exemplars of educators' personal perceptions of the meaning of accountability.

> AP1: Everything rests on the principal's shoulders, so I don't feel... I probably don't feel that pressure as much as [names principal] probably does even though I'm primarily responsible for K-five. Anything that I do is run by her and approved by her. I feel that if our students didn't do as well, I've not done as well as I should do. I feel like I have more a personal stake in now even as I did as a teacher in high school.

> CS2: Funny you should come in this morning. I was just working on...reviewing the Performance Model for Tennessee. We are looking at what we hold principals accountable for now. And I'm trying to help the new superintendent to determine if we are holding them accountable for what the State holds us accountable for... Just trying to outline things. So it's something that I deal with on a day-to-day basis. As the testing coordinator for the school system I probably deal as much with accountability as anybody. Even though assessment of students is not the only thing we're held accountable for. I personally see accountability as what we're responsible for. Not just to the legislature, not just to the State Board of Education, but it's our responsibility to our students to ensure that they have the highest quality education and at the very minimum meet what Tennessee standards are.

> DS2: I think the, when you say that what most people think about it is test scores. But what I conceive and what I conjure up is where we try to help kids. And I think all the rhetoric and notions that get caught up in that are things that we have to work through, and we have to make teachers feel comfortable with. I don't think there is anything wrong with being accountability. I think boards are going to hold directors more accountable, and directors hold principals more accountable, and principals, teachers, and so on. And the end result hopefully is, without getting into a lot of the details, is to foster student achievement so kids will learn better.

> SB1: ... As a school board member ... we're accountable for the test scores, for

our teachers and even our students. The whole chain, I guess you could say.

State Level Educators' Perceived Meaning and Purposes of Accountability.

State level educators perceive accountability to be a vehicle for accomplishing the mission of educating students to ensure that certain standards are met. They are the designer and the compliance arms of accountability in much the way that schools and districts are the implementers. State level educators perceive their roles as assessing, addressing, and measuring the degree to which all groups of educators are meeting the needs of students based on the state accountability policy system. Following are perceptions offered by state level educators about the meaning of accountability.

> SLE3: Accountability is the degree to which a state, a school system, a school, a teacher, or a student has met the prescribed goals. They generally are very specific goals. The degree to which any one of those of groups has met the goals specified.
> R: Does it mean something different to you on personal level?
> SLE3: To me it means more than assessing whether something is good or bad. Good or bad is not the issue with me, it is the degree of accomplishment. It's a positive thing to me because I think everyone is interested in knowing how much progress has been made, how far you need to go, where you are making adequate progress, where you need to realign and address further.
>
> SLE4: Accountability to me means that when you are addressing the fact that we have some responsibilities to ensure that our students receive the best possible education. I look at accountability positively because I think it helps us identify areas of strength and areas or weakness that we may need to address in order to provide that best education. I am a very much an advocate of increased student achievement. But I think that we have to have a road map to follow. We just can't say we want students to do better.
>
> R: So on a personal level does it mean anything different?
>
> SLE4: When I was in the classroom it typically meant that I wanted my students to perform well on high stakes tests or those sorts of things. In the position that I am in now, it really involves more analysis of that data rather than actually

preparing for it.

> SLE4: ... Now my position... has been to make sure that we have certainly rigid standards and rigorous standards and that the accountability plan, when it is aligned with that curriculum is valid. In other words, the effects really direct the way we want students to be going.

> SLE1: I think accountability is very important in terms specific ensuring that every child has the opportunity to achieve at very high levels regardless of race, gender, socio-economic background, or the prior experiences of their parents or family. I think accountability is a mechanism by which teachers and policy makers, legislators, parents, and students themselves can begin to reach for goals, that are very high goals, that are very achievable goals that will ultimately lead to a society that focuses on social justice and equity. That's how I kind of view accountability.

State Politicians' Perceived Meaning and Purposes of Accountability.

The politicians in the study perceive accountability first in terms of their accountability to the voters. They are in favor of the educational accountability policy system and both spoke favorably about the merits of value-added education. The politicians perceive that teachers view teaching is a ministry versus a business. They expressed support for establishing charter schools. Charter schools and competition are perceived as ways to increase accountability and improve education in general. One politician perceives that opposition to accountability is the result of the fear of loss of power over schools and communities. He also perceives that teachers' unions in Tennessee prevented efforts by the legislature to hold educators accountable.

> SG1: I think it's a great idea. It's one thing that we can use to evaluate what's going on. There are other things that can't be picked up by a test that we have to look at also, but I think it's a great and a very useful tool. You know, politicians look at numbers all the time. They do polls and statistics and figure out things, and value added is really just a statistic.

SG2: Accountability is very important to me. The voters hold me accountable when I was in the House every two years and now I am in the Senate every four years. The thing about accountability I wish it was across the board. It seems like in politics or maybe it's in everything, some people are held more accountable than others. I know that if I make a statement that I could be penalized for it, if someone else makes a statement it just falls off their back like water off a duck's back. I'm all right with that because I try to hold myself to a little standard than apparently people hold on me.

SG2: It's very important to me. I come from a family of educators. My degree is in education from [names university]. We have it seems like a problem with accountability in Tennessee due to the fact that sometimes when we try to hold educators accountable it comes down to becoming more of a bureaucracy more than anything else for them. Our teachers are good people. They are in business for the right thing. It's not a business to them; it's like a ministry I guess. It seems like when we as legislators or the teachers union or anybody, it doesn't seem like we get across accountability. I'm afraid that our education is suffering. That's why you're seeing home schooling explode and the private schools in the [names city] area exploding also.

R: When you say it doesn't get across, what do you mean?

SG2: The ideas, by the time it gets to the paper or the law, everybody has to have their piece of the pie. The teachers union, specifically in Tennessee, has really stopped us from doing things that would keep us competitive. We have a charter school thing and it seems like the people who are opposed to it are putting out false information, that handicapped kids won't be there and teachers won't have any accountability. Actually, the reverse is true. That's why you are seeing people who have the means are pulling their kids out of public education unfortunately.

SG2: One other thing if I could about the accountability, the people that are against are against is because they are going to lose their power. That's what it is all about in the legislature. It's not about tax reform, doing what is right, or helping out kids, it's I'm in power and I am going to make a decision as it will affect "me and my power struggle." With the charter schools, it was presented as a racial issue until the house sponsor of the measure, who was [names sponsor], who is the [names position], she is a black lady and she is ... sponsor of the measure. That was kind of watered that down a lot and now they are going in a different direction. It seems that in education, as in other things, as long as it's over in somebody else's neighborhood or those problems are over there and we don't have to worry about, but the reality is that those problems are everywhere. We've got to look past this barrier; these walls that we have put up and we allow

the media to perpetuate because it gives them something to talk about. They are losing ground there. Unfortunately, the ones that suffer are the poor kids. I'm sorry.
R: It's not to foster accountability or to improve education?
SG2: ...It's to advance their own agenda and their own ability to hold power.
R: Over schools?
SG2: Over schools and communities.

The Perceived Evidences of Accountability. The perceived evidences of accountability were ascertained from responses to questions three through seven of the Interview Protocol. Question three focused on the evidences of a good school. Questions four and five examined perceptions about ways to measure what goes on in schools and the accountability system in place actually measures what teachers do and what students learn in schools. Question six probed for some of the intangible factors that influence what happens in schools in terms of programs and practices. These factors are important to the educational process, but they are not necessarily measured nor can they be measured statistically. Number seven touched upon perceptions pertaining to how stakeholders perceive that accountability should be measured. Since all of the questions in this section of the Interview Protocol were related to what the participants perceive to be evidences of accountability, the researcher chose to present the data in the Findings holistically rather than by individual questions.

There was consensus across all stakeholder groups that both hard data (such as test scores and other data on academic successes) and soft data sources (such as climate, atmosphere, and a caring environment) might appropriately constitute evidences of accountability. The following exemplars were cited to both identify the perceive

evidences and to illustrate how the perceive evidences of accountability might be measured. Many of the responses contained evidences that included references to both hard and soft data as earlier defined; therefore, the researcher did not attempt to classify the statements according to which categories of data they might better belong.

Students' Perceived Evidences of Accountability

The students identified the treatment that they received from their teachers as evidence of accountability. Because Jeanette and Michelle attended a small, rural school, they considered their teachers to be very nice, helpful, and interested in the students. Teachers treated students with respect and were not abusive to students. They were aware of instances throughout school where some teachers might not have been as helpful in helping students to understand their assignments as the students would have likes. When students experience difficulties with classroom assignments, rather than leaving students to fend for themselves, the teachers take the time to explain the work to them and make sure that students understand. They perceive that their teachers were fair and honest. Jeanette and Michelle attend the same school. Jeanette perceives that the current accountability system did not align with what went on in her classes. Michelle, on the other hand, perceive that it was an effective and appropriate way to measure what goes on in schools. Brian attends a different school and perceives that the tests measured what was learned in school throughout the years. However, he does not share that view when he discusses the vocational programs that he completed in high school.

Brian perceives that the tests (accountability system) were not properly related to his vocational educational curriculum and they did not test what went on in his vocational education classes. He feels that his classrooms tests, which are closely aligned with the vocational curriculum, were more appropriate measures of what goes on in his class. Since Brian had completed vocational training in several programs including carpentry and automotive programs, he perceive that accountability should be relevant to what was actually going on in his classes.

The misalignment of curriculum to tests was a recurring theme with teachers, principals, curriculum supervisors, and directors of schools. As Brian pointed out, accountability does not address his program of study.

Another related theme among building level and district level educators, which is illustrated through Brian's story, is the perception that the accountability policy system did not represent an attempt to treat all teachers and students fairly and equitably across the continuum of programs.

The issues of fairness and equity are important to educators because of the high stakes associated with accountability in the form of value added teacher effect scores. Elementary teachers in grades three through five and middle school language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies teachers receive value added scores by which they are judged as professionals. As a matter of fact, each stakeholder group spoke in some way of the perceived merits of value added gain scores. Teachers with high teacher effect or high value added gain scores are perceive to be effective teachers, while those

with low teacher effect or low value added gain scores are often perceived to be marginal or ineffective teachers. Whether teachers receive value added gain scores and the labels associated with them depends upon one factor ... the courses they happen to teach. Only certain teachers who teach in one of the grades or core subject areas tested receive value added scores. This excludes the majority of teachers from the accountability system and singles out a minority of the teachers for accountability.

Professional integrity and responsibility were identified earlier as a major theme that teachers equated to the accountability concept. As Brian's pointed out, neither he nor neither his vocational education teachers are affected by the accountability policy system. Educators perceive that the accountability policy system is not an appropriate way to measure what goes on in schools partly because only certain teachers and students are assessed under the accountability policy system.

Students gave as evidences of accountability the following exemplars.

> S1: The teachers... just the environment itself ...the students ...Just how nice they are. How well the teachers will help you learn instead of just saying, open your book and just do it. I don't think that's right.
> R: Your teachers do or do not do that?
> S1: In the past some of them have. I [ain't] going to lie to you about that. And no one's really ever learned. In high school a lot of them do sit down with you if you don't know it. They'll go over it with you until you get it.
> R: But you don't feel like that necessarily happened in elementary school and middle school?
> S1: Yes, it has happened in elementary and middle school, and little bit in high school.
> R: You say that has happened. Are you talking about [teachers] being helpful or not being as helpful as they should be?
> S1: Not being helpful.

> S2: It measures what we know and what the teachers are teaching us. Like whether or not they're actually ... they're doing a good job or not.

R: Do you believe that the present accountability system ... the tests and ... passing tests to graduate, and what have you; do you think that is a good way to measure what goes on in school?
S1: No [to the accountability system].

S3: Yes.
R: And why is that?
S3: I think the school system's doing real good. There are some people that are failing it, and they need to improve in [them], areas but overall I think the test is just good for the school system.

S3: They help the students. They ... they treat everybody fairly. And they are honest and show respect toward the students. Don't show abusive behavior or anything like that.

R: Do the TCAPs really measure what you do in class?
S1: No. ...I guess it doesn't ask the same stuff like you would in a classroom. It's totally different; a TCAP score is from ... like what you do in a classroom ... like bookwork and stuff like that.
R: ...So how do you think you should measure it? Is that based on what you do in the classroom? Is that what you are saying?
S1: Yes.

S2: I think so because here everybody knows everybody else because it's a very small community, and the teachers are here for us. If we ever had any problems, they are always there to give us advice and to help us get through whatever we're going through.

S3: Yes, I do because you can't cheat on them. And if they get them right you know they learned it through that year so the teachers had to teach them that. So overall I think it is [effective].

R: So are there things that go on in school that are not measured by those tests; other than just being good in one [subject] area or another? Think about the things that happen over a course of schooling.

S3: Like if somebody's going to be a carpenter of something, they don't always have to [do] algebraic equations or stuff like that. They can use simple fractions or simple arithmetic and don't need algebra and stuff. But ... like you're going to become and engineer or something, you do need it. It might not measure [what you're learning in school] depending on what occupation [vocational program] you're going to go into [it depends upon which vocational education

concentration is chosen by the student].
R: [How should accountability be measured?]
S1: How well a student does in the classroom. How well they participate. How do they do on the tests that are given in the class for each chapter or whatever in a book? I wouldn't measure it by like TCAP score, or whatever, because a lot of them do panic and they just forget everything. So no, I would not.

Teachers' Perceived Evidences of Accountability

Of the thirty-six teachers interviewed for the study only four participants responded that they perceive the evidences of the accountability system to be a good way to measure what goes on in schools. Four teachers also gave what the researcher considered to be a 'qualified yes' response, and the remaining teachers perceive that it is not a good way to measure what goes on in schools.

Teachers' Affirmative and Qualified Responses to Perceived Evidences of Accountability

TG11: I kind of understand why they have these Terra Novas to get a broad sample of everybody taking the same test. But ... I think that ... it's the easiest way that they can get the numbers and compare them as quickly as possible within a significant amount of range. If you do a portfolio section like many people think [you should], there is no way that you can really compare three different students across the state fairly, and that would take years. I can understand why they are doing it, like a Terra Nova fill in the blank kind of test. But then, it doesn't take into account of the different levels and other things like that.

TG13: I would add to that. It just doesn't seem to accurately measure what students learn and what teachers do in schools because it only focuses on that single test. We look at developmental stages of children. We know or we have been taught since we began our higher education studies, that children develop differently. When you are looking at a standardized test you are assuming that everyone progresses at the same rate. That is not true.

T1: Yeah. But realizing ...a lot of the educational literature is saying that we should bring all students up. Raise the level. And I fully agree with it. That would be a great thing. But I'm still just not sure how to do that when facing the problems that my students have every day.

T2: I think it is a necessary evil. There's possibly a better test to address what children are able to do. Our test now is not just content based but it's also ... includes problem solving skills which gives you better information as far as what children are able to do. I like that. Value added I think is a fair way to assess teachers. ... Well, I think it's a fair way to assess teachers because if children grow, show a year's growth according to the value added assessment that's used it's easier for teachers to show a year's growth using value added than it would be to use just test scores. Based on the number of students you have. ...There's different ways that you can look at your group as whole using value added. I think it's a truer assessment than just taking test scores and going by state lines or percentages, it's more in depth.

T3: I think it's probably a primary way and probably a good way in many aspects. I like, I have to say I changed my mind, I had real reservations about the value added thing years ago when it first began or was talked about. But now I feel like that measuring not only how your students do, not only compared to the national but how much they've gained, is good to look at both things.

HS1: The overall concept I agree with because I believe that a student should have the same type of education or the same opportunity to education as they would here in rural East Tennessee as they would in Nashville or one of the big city school systems. So, as far as across the board level, I'll agree with it. There again though you've really got to take into consideration the value added. If there was some way that you could take a value added score, say as a bonus point or something, for the test scores that would be great. The whole accountability thing though, it they're looking at one test. That is not good enough. Look at drop-out rates. Look at free lunch. Free and reduced lunches, let's take into consideration the socioeconomic things. What industries are bad? What kind of money is being pumped into school? What is the costing, the expenditure per child?

At least 5 of the teachers stated unequivocally that they did not consider the accountability system to be a good way to measure what goes on in schools. Not all teachers offered specific alternatives to the current accountability policy system.

Teachers identified two categories of responses regarding ways to measure what goes on in schools. Those who perceive accountability to be a good way to measure what goes on in schools based their reasons on the concepts on the fairness of the value-added

assessment model, factors associated with the efficiency of mass testing and reporting, and the economic benefits of standardized tests. The state is able to handle large amounts of assessment data for many students within a relatively short period of time. Those who perceive that it was not a good way to measure what goes on in school based their views on issues related to the lack of accuracy and trustworthiness of the data, lack of fairness, and lack of equity in assessing some teachers and not others.

Teachers' Negative Responses to Perceived Evidences of Accountability

T19: I don't think it is necessarily the best way. I think that it is the way that it has to be done for monetary reasons. To me, the way that evaluation should be done is an evaluator should go into a teacher's room about 10-15 times during the year and really get a sense of what is going on. ... I think evaluations should be done by peers not, necessarily all the time by principals, not all the time by an administrator, not all the time by a supervisor. Simply because your peers ... would have a better understanding of what you are doing with that particular student body or that particular class. They may even know some of the students. When student X over here is acting out, that teacher has seen them act out before and they know the dynamic of what is going on.

T19: I will just say that the way that it is done right now is not a good measure simply because if you have got two or three evaluations that were done by administrators, they may have been done by administrators who happen to like you as a person so they are not going to tell you negative things. If they do, they will lighten it up a bit. If it is an administrator that you don't particularly have a lot of interaction with, they may be a little bit tougher. I am not sure, that dynamic is kind of crazy. What happens if you just happen to have a couple of bad days during those three times? That happens. Or, it may be that you just hit three really good lessons that the kids really happen to like. As far as measuring what goes on in school totally, not just in classrooms, I don't know that we do anything to hold other areas of the school accountable other than finance. Obviously, there is a real tight grip on every dollar that goes everywhere. What about accountability for custodians? I know our administrators have evaluations themselves, but how accountable are we for teaching certain morals to the football team? Where is that measured? Is that measured? Should that be measured?

T18: I want to say no to that question. I think that if I say no, I need to have another way to measure. I don't know of another way to measure, but I don't like

the way that it is measured right now. I have no idea what other way I can measure. I am not sure that you can measure schools. If I am building a car, I can measure if I am Ford I can measure against a Cadillac or a Chevrolet or whatever because I am building the same product. We are dealing with humans. We are not building a product here. How do you measure the human product. I have no idea how you would measure a human product. I don't like the way that it is measured now, but I have no idea how else I would measure it.

TG9: This question sort of brings to mind an incident in my school. There is a teacher who has fairly high test scores. This person is touted as a successful teacher, but working with him as I do I know that there are some things that I consider... For instance, he does not learn his student's names. This is a sixth grade teacher who works from a roll all year long and does not know students' names. He refuses to call them by anything other than their given, official name. If they go by Bill, he won't call him Bill. He will call him William. There are other things, those are just some examples of some of the behaviors he has, yet he is considered an excellent teacher because of the way our accountability system is.

TG9: In that sense it is not a complete accountability. It doesn't take into account all sorts of other things. Any of that goes for the middle school environment. You have special area teachers and you have special education teachers, and you have a majority of the people in your building who are not held accountable by this standard. That's where I find some ethical ...

Regarding issues of accuracy and trustworthiness, they cited concerns that the tests are biased against certain students. They also knew of instances where some teachers behaved unethically during testing situations by assisting students, thus invalidating the students' performance on the tests. Teachers observed that some students do not take the tests seriously by either marking answers randomly or rushing through the tests. Teacher effect scores are not always being attributed to the appropriate teachers such as in middle schools where homeroom teachers are assigned to students, but teams of teachers exchange students for different classes. Scores were reported for homeroom teachers regardless of who taught the students. Some students are perceived to be poor

test-takers, and test scores are not accurately measuring the learning that has taken place. The difficulties experienced by students with learning disabilities are not always accommodated for in testing situations as they are in classrooms. Such accommodations must be included in students' Individual Education Plans (IEP) in order for them to receive accommodations pr modifications to the standard testing conditions.

Teachers cited the following evidences about the accountability policy system measuring what teachers are teaching and what students are learning in school. Because of the richness of the data provided on the themes that were identified above, their responses are divided according to affirmative and negative responses versus the specific themes.

> TG 13: You also have, and I don't know how they do it in middle school but I teach fourth grade, sometimes I don't teach social studies to my group of children. I am a science teacher. The score I receive in social studies is another teacher's social studies who is teaching my children in social studies. The question is do you believe that the present accountability system is a good way to measure, I don't think because it is solely relying on one test and not a multiple of different measurements.
>
> TG15: I agree with [TG] 13. I do teach in middle school and I have a 20-year elementary background. In elementary I taught all of the subjects. That was before we switched around. I did teach all of the information to my students. Now, the scores come back by homeroom roles. I only teach language arts to these children. I don't teach them math, science, social studies or whatever. But their scores are coming back on me with language arts, math, reading... You get a homeroom role and these are their scores under my name when I don't teach those subjects to those children. Also, I have seen this happen many times in my LD years. You have 80 students who failed the Terra Nova test. They will fail it; the one test. They are not good test takers. The time, when they here that click, click, click of the timer, they just freak. They cannot concentrate. Giving the test would be ok if you perhaps take the time factor away. Allow those children to really work at their pace in their time. The other pet peeve that I have is that we have been told for 20 years you modify to that child's ability. Alright; I have

seventh grade students reading on the third grade level. But what do they hand them? A seventh grade reading test that I cannot help them with and no one can help them with. And you expect success? There is no way that those children are successful. You are setting them up for failure before you start. There ought to be a way that if you are going to have a child reading on a third grade level, you bring them the third grade reading section. You don't set a time on it. You say, you work until you finish the test, if it takes a day, if it takes two, if it takes three. Then, you might get a more accurate reading of what that child is capable of doing. We as teachers know, we keep up with stuff from the start to the finish, unit tests, daily tests, seatwork whatever. We know whether that child is progressing or not. No, the present system I do not think is a good way of measuring it. It's just too much to rely on a one or two day test. The children don't really have a chance to show what they can do.

TG13: I would add to that. It just doesn't seem to accurately measure what students learn and what teachers do in schools because it only focuses on that single test. We look at developmental stages of children. We know or we have been taught since we began our higher education studies, that children develop differently. When you are looking at a standardized test you are assuming that everyone progresses at the same rate. That is not true. People aren't standard; there are all kinds of people. In the classroom setting we have the child, like we have all said before, that is slow. When those kids, and we have a lot of those kids who have different learning styles, and I just feel really sorry for them because I know when that test is front of them, they don't know what is going on. I can just see the frustration. And they say, whatever. And they just go down through there and put every bubble just to get it done. They think that the state has a pattern like BCDDDD and like that. Just to put down something, just to finish it no matter what. And they get done and but that is no concept of what they know. There is no reading involved. Shoot, I look at my high and over achievers and they will study to the very end. The other kids are [laying] around in their seats fidgeting.

TG12: I was just going to add to what they were saying on the former question ... you might have a child even at the kindergarten level that can orally give you the answers, but [they] can't write it down on paper. You've got those children all the way up to the high school level, that if you give them the chance to speak to you and tell you the answer, they can tell you, but they cannot put it down on paper. They don't have the skills; they don't have the spelling, and all that to put it down. And when they are given a test like this, even at the third grade level, if the child cannot read at a third grade level, then the social studies, the science, the math, they can't do any of it.

T1: It measures what the test measures, you know the things I enumerated the

different areas on the test. I know there's a lot of talk now about no matter what the child's economic condition that we should be able to bring all students up. And I think that's a great goal. But I don't have it clear in my mind how that can be, because some of our students have so many problems, so many home problems that interfere with their learning at school. And I would think that for some of those students I wish there was a way that could be factored in on their scores. I really don't know how that could be accomplished.

MST2: I believe that if the child does [their] very best on our test, that it is an excellent measure of accountability. However, we cannot factor in with numbers the child whose parents are divorcing, the child that doesn't feel well that particular day, the child who for whatever reason is upset that day whether it was a fight with friend and bus duty, or whatever. You can't factor that in with numbers and that does occur. So I think that if we can always keep in mind that happens. You also have children who will not take tests; they will just bubble in. On the whole I think that the accountability system is excellent if the children try. I believe that you're going to get 95%, 90-95% of the children are actually going to do their best. That's just my opinion. I can't prove it. But that's what I think just from watching children do this.

R: So obviously you have seen children who just bubble in and not take it seriously.

MST2: Oh, of course. They'll be done in three or four minutes. And there's really not a lot you can do about that. You can say, you need to go back and read that chapter, but you can't make them. You can't force a child to do their best.

MSHST1: No. Because there are so many ... that [are] good students but they do not take tests well. And some will just rush through the test and just mark anything. And they know that the accountability is there and that, well, "I'll just mark anything. This teacher's to get a bad mark." ... I think you will see a difference because I'm already seeing a difference from last year's ninth graders to this year. They're more worried about getting the skills to take the Gateway than they were to pass a competency.

R: So they took the competency for granted pretty much?

MSHST1: They either had several times to take it or they tell me that they don't have time, I have three more years to take it.

ALT2: I think it would be hard to measure accountability in a school system. I don't think that is a thing that you can put in some scale and necessarily measure it. And if you're referring to accountability as these tests, then no I do not think a

test is a good way to measure accountability. I think accountability is looking at student success. And again, what students say about the program that they have been in.

MS4: I believe that teachers need to be accountable. I don't think it needs to be the sole accountability system. I think other aspects need to be addressed. I think there's an attempt at that while all of the Terra Nova data may appear in our local paper and in the [names county], it appears on the news everywhere. It's such a hot topic. I also, believe that teacher accountability can go into the yearly evaluations. We go through those three for three years when we first begin and then after that I believe it's every five years. I believe that needs to be looked at as well. I don't think it needs to be one thing that's just addressed.

Teachers reported that some colleagues spend large amounts of time practicing how to bubble in responses rather than actively engaging students and teaching them the appropriate curriculum.

TG6: I would like for anyone to share with me how it is appropriate for a kindergarten teacher to spend really days making children practice bubbling in circles on a page. Otherwise, most kids can't do it. And you think about the numbers of hours that are lost in instruction to mandate the child to do that, it's absolutely ridiculous. You do see a lot of teachers that all they talk about is, "I've got to teach this, this, and this before the test." And just recently out of the paper there was a very nice article on one of the teachers [saying] "...after the test we do fun. We can teach those things that are fun." And it wasn't choosing which things to teach, by no means was she doing that, we see some of that going on which is very disturbing as a professional. But up until that point it's drill, drill, drill, and after that you can do the fun things. And there are learning pieces that should be going on every day of the year. But I understand the pressures that the teachers are under. I haven't been out of the classroom that long, about 2 ½ years, and I know that I had to really focus every day in that classroom seven and eight year old children, so that I did not let the test become the focus.

TG3: My position at the school, I am not a regular classroom teacher. I look at the scores in totality. The test is not a diagnostic test. I never look at an individual kid's gain. I look at large group gains. That's all I really care about is large group gains. I tell teachers if 301 has a large group gain, they can pull up even the rest of the third grade. I understand everybody has done the best that they can, but the few can pull up the bottom. I look at it as large groups, and it doesn't bother me. What does bother me is passing them on to the next school and seeing the scores that we have in the 40th, 50th, 60th percentiles do not go into

the middle school. And you begin to wonder then about the validity of the test and all the rest of the things that you've done when you see the middle school scores just go down like rocks.

MSG5: I think that it is only a part. I think there is a part, a role that testing has. I think it's a piece of the puzzle. I don't think it can be the main piece of the puzzle; it's only a part of what you do.

MSG4: It's not the puzzle; it's just a piece.

MSG5: Yes, it's just one piece. I think right now we're focusing on the test as the primary measure of effectiveness in our classrooms. And I think that's why teachers are so frustrated.

MSG4: There's not too much to add.

T16: Personally, no I don't think so. I think there is a better method somewhere. I don't know what that method is, but it has to be something better somewhere. I don't believe in continuing to beat a dead horse. I think the system has been beating this dead horse for years and you find that it is not working. When it is not working, let's go to something that does work. And this system because if you notice in the papers we get the report cards based on test scores. Some of the same schools are scoring very low. ... you are taking the test but this is what you are basing the accountability on ... the test and all of that. Each year you are constantly giving test after test after test. We need a solution here. There is a problem evidently, but let's try to find another way to solve the problem. Let's try to find another way to reach these students. You can see that there is a problem when you don't have adequate books or materials that are needed in a particular school.

T16: I think sometimes tests can be helpful in a way to see what we need to expound on, but I don't think that should be the final result of everything. When I was in the classroom I would give little pop quizzes to see how well the children were doing. I remember one incident when I gave a test practically every child that I had in the class failed the test. I became alarmed. It really upset me. Not with my students—with myself. I felt that I didn't reach them. Somewhere I am going wrong. Let me go back and revamp and reteach. Maybe there is another method or another strategy that I could use. I knew that it wasn't my students because I knew that they had learned. It was me. I had to go back and find another strategy and another way to reach them. When I did that and when I found out what the problem was. I talked with them to find out what was it that I didn't reach you? What wasn't clear? What is it that you didn't understand? Once I talked with them and found out, communication is very important. In fact, when I

did reteach the lesson test, everyone did well.

Teachers' concerns about the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the tests have long been ignored. Tests alone do not reflect students' life experiences that are noteworthy or those that might affect test performance.

> G15: Probably the worst accountability story I have had, I taught in rural [named county] in the late 70's or early 80's, and at that point in time there was not such a stress on the Terra Nova or TCAP as we called it back then and testing scores. The problem was this was at the early time when Dr. Sanders was first doing his study. I was in the original group that met with Dr. Sanders in Nashville about the process and how these numbers were supposed to value add and balance our effectiveness over a 3 year period. What we tried to get across to him and the other state people were that these tests, these standardized tests, did not take into account a child's life and what they came to school with that morning. The fact that mother may have hit them before they walked out the door, or that they were hungry, or dad died, or something happened in their lives that affected their performance in the classroom for that particular day. There was no way to record on a standardized test that this had occurred in that child's life during the day....

Principals' Perceived Evidences of Accountability

Like teachers, principals perceive that there were multiple evidences or ways to measure accountability in schools. They included personal involvement of parents, the rapport between parents and schools, children's enjoyment of school, and a combination of tests and local measures including parental input from the local community and people familiar with the school. School level educators perceive that they must meet the needs of students in a variety of ways versus relying upon one test as a measure of the success of teachers, schools, and students. Unless the students' needs are met, educators perceive that students' potential to perform might not be realized.

P4: What are the variables outside that may affect whether that school has been identified as a good school or not. If you're in a high socioeconomic area where parents are doctors and lawyers and in the upper class bracket and you have parents that motivate their kids. Then, of course, that school, teachers have to do minimum as far as motivation. But if you're living in an area that is poverty stricken and you've got a wide range of needs that you meet, and motivation being one of those critical things for educating our students and getting them motivated and them to see the big picture of why, if that is not coming from home, then that's also going to impact the school. ... Not only should a parent look at scores and how that school is doing, but what is the environment of the school? How do you feel when you go there? Do you feel welcomed? I think how you feel has a lot to do with how academically successful may be. Is it a warm, welcoming environment? How do they teach? What are their instructional strategies?

P1: It's difficult. It's not... Sometimes I think the portfolio system where actual samples of student work and more individualized programs of instruction for each student are documented. That is very time consuming and even more for teachers to do in addition to their already overwhelming demands so I'm not sure about that. Ultimately, students take the ACT or the SAT and it is a standardized test and it has a lot of importance for students, so I guess like it or not, the standardized form of testing is something we're probably going to have to use for lack of a better tool that can be used with consistency and, I guess the same measurement for everybody.

P3: I think it should be a combination of progress on test scores, standardized test scores, but I think it should also be, there should be more input into it from the local level and the people who really know what all these people put into it and what kind of job they're doing in preparing young people.

District Educators' Perceived Evidences of Accountability

District level educators generally perceive the accountability system to be appropriate and effective; however, they expressed that it only measures part of what goes on in schools. They perceive the value added to be an effective tool for measuring student progress, and it enabled principals to provide feedback on teachers' performance in order to implement corrective feedback and bring about student improvements.

DS1: I can say yes and no and that would be a good way to avoid the whole issue. There are some good things happening with the accountability model in Tennessee. It's gotten the attention of a lot of folks that weren't focused at all. It's also gotten the attention of folks who are being successful and maybe not being quite so successful. So I would like to see some changes made in that.

DS2: I think it measures a portion of what goes on. But ... the whole thing, I don't [think so]. I consider this [accountability] to be something that's here, and I have to work with it. I don't want to let it consume me. I want to do better. I want the kids to achieve and achieve at a higher level. I want to have higher expectations of them. But I don't want to be consumed by a particular instrument or whatever. I think if we do set about doing the kinds of things we need to do and having the other things in place, we're going to see some change in that. And I don't think you do it for that end result's sake. You do it to help kids and to do the things you know to do, and what you've been taught to do, and bringing people together. And then hopefully at the end, it will raise those test scores. We need to look at the process, not the end. Sometimes we dwell, we want to go to the end and work our way back instead of building that from the beginning out. That's what I want to try to do.

DS2: I think you would use a number of factors. I don't think, I know test scores are important and accountability is important, but what I want to try to do is get familiar with what the schedules are like, the atmospheres are like, the climate, and how they treat teachers, and how the community accepts what they do ... a whole array of things. When one person says or complains about something, that's one thing; but if you hear over and over and over and if things are validated through different kinds of experiences that some school has a problem, then all of that collectively would go into saying that something needs to be done, not just one thing. I think test scores or accountability causes, it's a chance for us. It's like SACS accreditation or any type of self-evaluation; it's a chance for us to look at what we're doing and try to get better. I think there are a number of things that go into that and factors that play into that. Although that's debatable with some people, a lot of people don't think that. I think you would begin to see indicators from several different areas, and several different groups of people, and several different observations, if that were the case and happened to be so.

DS1: We don't know for example, if the child that came to school today what condition they came from. If they came from a great family of support and momma dropped them off at the front door and patted him on the head and kissed him good-bye and told him they loved him that morning, we don't know. We put that kid in the same class with a child who may have had a mother or father at home fussing or carrying on or drinking or drugging it, they may have gotten on the bus cold and hungry. We expect that kid to do the same, take the same type

test and grade it the same way. I don't think that's right. I think we've got to deal with the culture that child came from. Until we can do something about that we're not going to change schools much in Tennessee or anyplace else. We have to be able, we have to live like the student lives and talk like the student talks and know the conditions they come from. We have to understand the culture of the child before we start giving him numbers to each child the same way. And it's like the kid who wants to hide behind the big kid in front of him because he'll get called on by the teacher and he hasn't had a chance to study last night because he didn't go home to a nice home or nice environment so. That's the thing that bothers me more than anything else. And I'm probably too sensitive to that point. Because I believe that we teach to children we don't teach tests. We should be grading children more than just on one score one time a year and saying you're good or bad or whatever.

DS3: If it was not for the value added I guess that I would have more concern [about testing]. Apparently he [Dr. Sanders] has literally gotten to it [teacher effect] because there is a lot of correlation between what principals think is a great teacher ... and then when you do the testing, the correlation is rather astounding. What happens over a three-year period as far as whether this is a poor teacher, whether this is a high performing teacher, given the same group of children. I had Dr. Sanders come and talk to my principals. They just were very upset. They just felt that this would be the death knell, ..."here is one more thing." It was interesting how [names city] rejected that until it was forces down, like many other systems, until it was forced down their throats through the legislature. As opposed to folks like [names city] and [names city] who embraced it and said, this is good stuff. Let's really try to improve it and so forth. Again, I don't think that you can point at one thing. There are a lot of little slivers involved in the full picture. But, it is the best that I have seen at really getting at what is happening in the classroom. When you talk to our principals, they have embraced it. They believe that it is a way to sit down with a teacher and say, look here is what is happening over a three year period. Here are the things that you are not addressing. Here's the thing, I know that I have one principal who sits down one on one and says, third grade teacher, you are in a teacher department of five third grade teachers, here is where you are in relationship to the other teachers. Over a three- year period you are not progressing. Let's get you some help and connect you with a high performing teacher and let you see what is happening. Most teachers really do want to do a good job. When teachers understand that the holes in their curriculum they will fill them in. The incompetent and mediocre teacher is a rarity and we have tried to deal with those when it happens.

DS1: I think so. I think it is a good way to measure how well we have taught the test. There are so many other things we teach that are not measured in school by

that one day, one score we get on the test. And I suspect that's the case in any type of test system that you have. But we teach a lot more than is tested.

DS2: I think it's again, part of that, but I don't think it's the whole. I think it has to work in conjunction with hands-on, with people working with each other. There are certain people that I have worked with and I've seen them behave around kids and nobody could tell me that they're a bad teacher. I've seen them produce too many times. I think again that they have to complement each other somewhat. Not just do one or the other. That's how I'm trying; I'm going to approach it with new teachers and young teachers especially.

SB1: I think if it's year after year and the test scores are low and you never see any improvement. I think our schools are pretty, and ... you feel like if you go in and there's trash everywhere and whatever, I think just the atmosphere too. That kind of helps the students. When you walk in and it's a clean school and nice and the environment is good, a think that's a good benefit too. Your first impressions I guess mean a lot. I guess that would be the main thing. And not only just test scores, looking at the children's report cards too and see.

CS1: When I go in and I see a teacher and their students absolutely love school there's something good going on that classroom. When I go to read to students in a classroom and they're excited about reading, then something good is going on in that school. When I ask a child if it likes school and what's its favorite part of school and it says a subject area, other than recess or lunch, I think there's good things going on in that school.

CS2: And that [three-year average] is not going to kill you. It will pull you down. You and I know this, about three year averages, but the public doesn't. That's why I take any opportunity I have to go to PTO meetings, even if there are six parents there. A lot of times there are. So remember what you see in the newspaper is grade over a three-year period of time. And that's the other thing that, accountability I have the worst headaches of the year the night that I know those things are coming out in the paper. Because what the newspaper lists is the school, subject area, and a letter grade. And the public understands, or thinks they understand, what a C is. But what you can't see from that is how close you might be to a B, or whether you might be going down. I try to brace people for when that comes out. And then when it gets here I try to help them walk through where it came from.

State Level Educators' Perceived Evidences of Accountability

State level educators were unanimous in their perceptions that the current accountability policy system is appropriate and effective evidence in terms of measuring what goes on in schools. Because it measures both attainment and non-academic indicators of success, they view the current system as a model for other systems.

> SLE3: I believe that there are two different questions inherent here. How do you know if a school is overall good? Then I think you look at the extent to which a school is meeting the needs of diverse groups of students, not just how is the school doing overall? It could be masking weakness. I think in Tennessee as we move to disaggregation of data next year, we will have a much clearer picture of what a good school is. How would I know if my child's school is a good school? It's the extent to which that school is meeting the needs of my child. As a parent I don't care how well it's doing for other students, if it is not meeting the needs of my student, it's not a good school for my child.
> R: So for you, your child seems to be a key indicator, whether it meets the needs ... for that particular child...
> SLE3: That's right. And the fact that it is meeting the needs of my child does not make it a good school overall if other children are being left behind.

> SLE1: I do believe that what we have is a good model. We look at attainments, we look at nonacademic indicators [attendance, suspensions, expulsions...], we look at value added. That gives us a sense of where we are and how much kids have learned from one year to the next. I think that's a good model. The only thing that I would add, which of course would make it more difficult and more complex, is really what I was saying to you earlier. If we are going to assess teacher performance, the teacher performance should also take into consideration other variables such as observation, material artifacts and how they are used for instructional improvement.

> SLE2: As a parent I'd go to the website of an individual school and you have a first front page that looks at achievement and value added, and I had all As in achievement, which is exemplary, and I had all As in value added, that means the teachers are really teaching, then I would say that is a good school.

> SLE4: I think the starting point is to look at the school report card. How are they doing? Then, when you notice that your child, his performance differs from the

school average, then that's where you need to begin to ask questions. If your child is achieving at a much higher rate or a much higher growth then the average student, then I would want to know why. What is the reason? And the converse also. I think looking at the school to get your benchmark, that's a good starting point. Then try to analyze the child who may differ from that benchmark. Then, you also have to realize, are you satisfied with that benchmark? What can we do to raise that overall performance?

SLE1: OK. I think the Tennessee one is a good one because it represents effectively what is a unitary accountability system. What we have been able to do is to look very closely at legislation, the Tennessee Code as it is related to accountability, and to look at the new reauthorization of the ESEA, and to do our very best to combine those two. Meaning, that be use obviously value added in reading, language arts and math. But we also look at academic attainment relative to normal curve equivalency and on our TCAP achievement test. That I think is an important piece. If you look at where that accountability system is grounded in, it is grounded in the Board's performance model. The performance model has certain performance goals for Tennessee school systems, ranging from, what it basically amounts to is, academic and nonacademic indicators. Meaning, of course, you have attendance/drop-out rates, promotion rates as nonacademic. Then of course, academic including value added, attainment, writing assessment, the Gateway Examinations, practical end of course examinations, and I think that is a very good model. The model has always taken into consideration the legislative changes or any other shifts. It's what we would call a transitional model, based on those indicators. In terms of reporting, we have system-level data. We have school-level data.

SLE2: ... The answer to that is a resounding yes. I think we have a model for the nation. Secretary Ron Page believes we do. We're not only looking at school-wide data, we're looking at individual students. We know that to get off the list they have got to move individual students over the fence to the average or the above average group. Yeah, I think we have the market cornered because we have value added as well as achievement. Achievement is socio-economically driven. We can't help what kids don't know when we get them. We can help what they do once we have them. That's measured in value added.

SLE4: I think it is much better than it has ever been by this two-pronged approach. I still hear and I read about too much emphasis on assessment data or too much this. My philosophy is, the standardized assessment data should be a validator of what is going on in the classroom. It should not be the only way that we're evaluating student progress. But when that data doesn't match the classroom data, then we need to ask questions.

State Politicians' Perceived Evidences of Accountability

State level politicians perceive that the current accountability is appropriate and effective in measuring accountability in Tennessee. They perceive value added scores to be more effective in communicating progress than achievement or letter grades. Parents' perceptions of their schools were also perceived as evidences of accountability.

> SG1: One thing that I think you have to look at is do the parent, does the community want their kids to go to that school. Just a little story, when I was first ran for office and I would go knock on doors, education a lot of times would come up. Depending on what part of my district I was in, you could tell kind of what the people thought of the school. One school I remember where, absolutely all the doors that I knocked on in those neighborhoods, no one ever complained about it. In fact, they said we have a good school here. You get in other neighborhoods and you hear people say, aw (negative sigh) that school, they blah ...blah... blah. I think one thing is, an example of a good school would be the parents want their kids to be there and the parents what to be involved in their child's education. Because they recognize good things are happening. Which we could get into, and I don't know if you're covering it today; but school of choice, where the schools that provide what the parents want in a safe learning environment, whether kids can achieve, schools of choice can help hold schools accountable if parents have the right to go where they think their kids get the best education. In fact, I think research has shown that in, is it Minnesota or Michigan I can't remember right now, where they've started some of the voucher programs where disadvantaged children...They have shown that in the cities where the vouchers have come in the public schools in that area have increased their academics faster than anybody else because suddenly there's competition there. And so competition leads to accountability.

> SG2: I think the letter grade means more than the numbers. Numbers can be confusing. They understand a letter grade. What confuses them is when you compare how a class or a kid scored compared to everyone else and then if you compare how the kid scored compared when you look at value added—how they've scored against themselves and their betterment in learning. There can be some confusing. It's probably best to just look at the value added score. So I think people get confused when they have the two letter grades next because on one you can have a 'B' and then have a 'D' for English in the fourth grade. It might confuse people. One might mean that they scored a 'B'. The kids are above average in the school system. But what people don't know is last year they were way above average, they were 'A' students and they went backwards and

> that's why they got the 'D'. This is from personal experience, these letter grades have gotten the attention of educators and it's forced them to say, I'm embarrassed with that F in this grade. We shouldn't do it. We don't want it to happen again. From that point of view I think it's been great. There is a teacher, ...I was reading in the paper where he was talking about, he thought everything was okay and then he saw his value added science scores. His kids did horrible, horrible. So he took it upon himself to do all kinds [of things]... to focus on science, to bring in speakers, he even went out one night and involved the whole school to come out and look at stars with an astronomer. So I think he would be an example, he saw these grades. He thought the kids were doing fine because based on the test scores that the teachers gave, it looked like they were doing okay. But when it showed, or lack of gain, it got his attention.

> SG1: Most teachers do not like to be exposed individually, or grades, or achievement or lack thereof attached to an individual teacher. A lot of them kind of know their tests and they'll do it. But I have found like in [names county] County, I believe the administration there took these tests seriously and they used them to evaluate and to make changes and [names county] has shown constant improvement in a lot of ways. Where the county could have just brushed it off and said, aw these don't really work, they don't mean anything and they could have been mired where they were.

Summary: Research Question One. Stakeholders share many similar perceptions but differ concerning the meaning, the purposes, the evidences, the appropriateness, and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee. Accountability to the students in the study means passing tests, and the purposes of the tests are to meet graduation requirements. Students interviewed did not perceive that they were significantly affected by accountability at this time since they have passed their exams, and their course grades have not been impacted by mandatory Senior Exams or End of Course tests. However, at least one the student stated that he had actually repeated an Exit Exam that was required for graduation, and another admitted that he, too, had barely passed a required End of Course test. Students were also aware of

others who had dropped out of school after repeatedly failing their "TCAPs" or Exit Exams.

The Gateway Tests have added another rung to the accountability ladder. Passing certain core classes will now be tied to Gateway Exams. In classes where Gateway Exams are given, students will have to pass both in order to graduate. The exams will impact course grades by 15%-20% and may act as greater barriers to graduation. Data presented by the students' perceptions suggest the likelihood that, in the future as additional courses are added to the Gateway Exams, students will become more conscious of the larger concept of accountability.

Overall teachers identified many factors, rather than test scores alone, as good ways to measure what goes on in schools. Those factors included being visible and involved in the school, rapport between teachers, administrators, and students; and providing a caring, nurturing environment learning environment. Teachers perceive that the current accountability policy system is not a good way to measure what goes on in school primarily because students do not take the tests seriously, many scores are inflated by teachers who engage in unethical testing practices therefore, and they perceive that standardized tests scores do not accurately measure what has gone on in the classrooms.

Not all teachers are subjected to judgments made by value added gain scores, and some teachers perceive that they are unfairly singled out. Other issues center around the testing practices involving students enrolled in special education programs and other programs for students with special learning needs. Teachers were especially concerned

about young primary grade students who are also subjected to accountability before third grade, the benchmark years in which testing is mandated. Teachers question the wisdom of administering standardized tests to very young students in the primary grades and perceive that the time spent practicing for the tests could be put to more developmentally appropriate learning. They perceive that an accountability policy system must take into consideration some of the circumstances that are encountered in the lives of students and school communities in order to fully assess what goes on in schools.

Although there is support for the concept of accountability from all stakeholder groups, they differ in their personal perceptions of the meaning and purposes of accountability. School and district level educators interviewed perceive that they must focus on meeting the needs of the 'total child.' They see their roles encompassing all of the indicators of the Performance Model from improving attendance, to improving standardized achievement scores and value-added gains. School and district level educators perceive their roles as ensuring adequate education for students. However, they also perceive their roles as fulfilling a greater need of fostering the social, emotional, and physical development of students if they are to become decent, moral, and ethical citizens.

State level educators interviewed perceive their role in an oversight capacity to monitor accountability, a legislative mandate, to ensure that the state's mission of delivering an adequate education for all children in Tennessee is achieved. They perceive that all students should receive a quality education regardless of where they live or where

they attend school. Although on the surface, it may appear that their role is one of enforcing, they also perceive of their role as ensuring social justice, which they perceive is made possible when all students have equity of opportunities to learn, have highly qualified educators, meet high standards, and have the resources needed to learn at high levels. They perceive the accountability policy system as a model vehicle to achieve and measure the attainment of that goal. State level educators perceive that the combination of value added and attainment scores provides a complete picture of performance, which enables progress to be measured for the state, districts, schools, and individual students. Teacher effect scores are also available for areas that are tested with the accountability system.

Politicians perceive their roles as "... writing the checks... "(SG1) and passing legislation to keep Tennessee competitive in the world market. The politicians interviewed favor a combination of public, charter, and private schools from which parents should be able to choose when their neighborhood schools 'fail' to meet students' needs. Interviewees perceive that accountability efforts have been thwarted by "bureaucratic tendencies" (SG2), which may be fostering a proliferation of non-traditional school settings. Politicians perceive that schools are failing, and students should not have to attend failing schools. They perceive that public schools should not continue to have a monopoly on education, and parents should have the right to send students to schools of their choice. Charter schools are perceived an option to failing public schools, and politicians believe that such options will breed competition, thereby

causing schools to improve.

The politicians' perceptions of failing schools are unfounded based on the latest Kappa/Gallup Poll. The Kappa/Gallup Poll (2001) found that only 11% of the parents with no children in schools rated their community schools as D or F, and 89 % rated them as A-C. Twelve percent of parents with children in public school rated the public schools in their community as D or F, and 82% rate them as A- C. Only 10% of parents rate the school their oldest child attends as D or F, while 90% rated the public their oldest child's public school as A-C.

The LNCBA (2002) provides opportunities for parents, in states with charter schools, to exercise this option as well. The publicity surrounding school accountability data, while embarrassing at times to educators, is also perceive as a way to spark competition and lead to school improvement. Education is perceived as a way to ensure national economic security in a global market. State level politicians perceive that the accountability policy system has helped teachers and administrators to focus their efforts on areas of the curriculum that are in need of improvement. In school districts where accountability has been embraced, they stated that scores have improved significantly.

Research Question Two

What suggestions, if any, do different stakeholders offer to improve the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system?

Most school and district level educators have many complaints about the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current accountability policy system; however,

not all have specific suggestions for making improvements. They are able to articulate what it is that they do not like about the policy system, and they are clear about the problems that they perceive to exist within the accountability model. Therefore, in some instances, the researcher was able to interpret from stakeholders' perceived discrepancy statements of what is wrong with the model into suggestions for improving the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the current accountability system into suggestions. The following themes emerged concerning suggestions for improving the accountability policy system. They are issues centering on testing and reporting, curriculum and instruction, parent and community issues beyond the schools' control, funding, and the professional development of teachers. Themes are integrated within stakeholder groups' responses.

Students. A student suggested that teachers make criterion-referenced, tests, which would allow students to demonstrate knowledge of subject matter through a variety of techniques appropriate for the particular content area.

> S3: The way I think of it, it isn't any different, like if a person is going into, they need to do it on occupational-wise for what a person is going to go in to. So that way if they're going into carpentry or something they can do it in the math level for carpentry. If they're going to go into engineering they can do it in that level. And that way it tests everybody's knowledge for that occupation.

Teachers. Data presented earlier in question one revealed teachers' perceptions that students are not held accountable to the extent that they should be, so the data will not be repeated here. While teachers were overwhelmingly against the current accountability system to effectively assess students' knowledge, they perceive the

importance associated with having to use the existing model. Some teachers suggested that more weight should be given to the percentage of the Gateway Test to the course grade by increasing it from 15 or 20 % to as much as 25%.

MSHST1: The students should be accountable for what I have tried to teach them.

T18: Before this year they saw it as a teacher problem. Beginning this year [named county] has said that the test, the Gateway or whatever they are taking, has to be 15% of their grade. 15% does not account for a whole lot, but if they are academically oriented children, 15% means a lot to them. The other kids who are here just floating through, 15% does not mean anything. At least they have started somewhere. I would have given it a higher stake than that. I would have at least given it a 25%.

Teachers perceive that some of their colleagues have engaged in unethical practices by helping students during testing situations. Some are also teaching to tests. Still others are enrolling students simultaneously in lateral classes to give them more instruction and more time in classes before they are tested with their peers, who have not had the advantage of additional time and instruction. The impact of delaying testing is that it enables students to be well prepared for testing, but it also robs students of opportunities to take the tests. Some teachers suggest that ninth graders should be placed in the core classes as soon as possible, and they should be given multiple opportunities to test until they pass the tests.

T18: ... In fact, we had a meeting the other day and we were talking about these Gateway scores. Some schools are only testing certain children because they want their scores to look good. Those children that they feel will not make the score, they are putting them in a lateral course that they are offering at the same time that is one step below like the Algebra I, they will be put in a pre Algebra class. I said, "Why would you even do that?" Every ninth grader that comes into the school should be tested on that Gateway. Oh, that will make our scores very low.

> I said, "Why would you even be concerned about scores?" If that test is the test that they have to pass for graduation purposes, they should have every opportunity to take that test that is offered. If it is twice a year from the ninth grade on, they should take that test until they pass that test. What do we even care what those scores say? They care at the State level. I said, "Let them care at the State level." What happens when you have a child who gets to the 12th grade and has just now taken Algebra I? They only have two times to pass that test. That is what is going to happen. There is going to be such a mess because we have children in this inner city school who do not take Algebra I until 12th grade. How fair is that? You give them that test because they probably have a real good opportunity of passing that test, they just do not realize it at that point. You have to do certain things even though people say that is going to look bad. Well, so what, it is going to look bad. There are certain things that you have got to do.

Some teachers suggested more authentic forms of problem-based assessments involving the random testing of students on classroom activities with peers testing each others' students. This form of assessment is directly linked to students' learning, and teachers would also be able to make observations regarding the students' work habits, cooperation with others, and processes as they worked.

> T19: I would also say that there would be other methods of measuring the accountability within schools other than fact-based knowledge tests. I really have a big, huge problem with that. I would love to see them say, we are going to come in your school and we are going to randomly pick 20 students. We are going to take them to another location and we are going to give them a problem to solve. We are going to see how they do and they we are going to compare that to all of the other schools. We are going to do the same thing, pick 20 kids, see if they can solve this problem. It could be an environmental problem, or it could be a problem in a business, or it could be something where they would have to think and use some tools and resources to figure out exactly what should we do in this situation. That is the skills that the business people are coming back to us and telling us that they don't have.

Following the idea of random sampling of students in classroom assessments, one teacher also suggested that the accountability model could use a system of random

sampling during certain benchmark years as opposed to the census sampling that is currently done annually in grades three through eight and in certain high school core courses. In addition to giving the same kinds of data on students, teachers perceived that it would also save millions of dollars over the amount of money that is currently being spent on testing.

> TG9: One thing that you would need to do is adopt a system of random sampling. There is no way that you could measure every student or every school or every district or every state, depending on what level of accountability you are talking about, on a yearly basis. But if you do a random sampling you can get it. You can take the resources that are being used. For example, we hear a lot about benchmark years. If we took some of the resources that we use on the years other than those benchmark years, some of the funding that we use to do these standardized tests, then there could be a system in place of random sampling. People could come into the schools and they could look at things beyond those numbers, which is basically what NAEP does, is that right when they do the national assessment of education progress. Isn't that a random sampling? They don't do all of the kids with that.

> HS1: But yet, they went in [SREB Assessment workshop] and ... taught us how to...[raise the bar] and that's ...

> HS2: I don't know what the big technical name for it was, the SREB or something. One of the few times that I've ever been... you know...[taught to] raise the bar. We want to bring that level up and have the students meet the level instead of the teachers dropping to the level of the students. And this actually went through the process of how to do that. And I was so impressed with it that I have incorporated it into all of my classes
> R: What was it called?
> HS1: It was Authentic Assessment

The reporting of tests and the report cards in the media were of concern for teachers. It was suggested that the information might be made available on websites rather than through newspapers and on television. The information is perceived by

teachers to be vast and not easy to understand or explain in simplistic fashions. More extensive information could be provided on a website than could be provided in the limited time for television coverage or in the space that is provided in the newspaper.

> T18: I do not believe that the scores should be published in a newspaper setting. This is the reason. They might need to be published on a website. I can agree with that. If you are published in a newspaper everybody that receives the newspaper reads this. There is not an explanation. Even the writers of the articles do not know how to explain how decipher the test scores. You cannot do that. How does that make children in that school feel? Or teachers? They are already feeling defeated because their scores are so low. You read the newspaper and you say, this school is at the bottom of the barrel. You have not helped that school any. Maybe they need to be published on a website only. They definitely do not need to be in an article with no explanation about how to decipher anything.

Annual testing is perceived as a problem, and some teachers have suggested that having more than one testing session, along with pretesting, and post testing might be one way to assess students' growth in the mastery of content areas. The feedback from students' scores would also enable teachers to assess how successful they were in teaching the concepts, and immediate follow-up could be provided based on the test results.

> TG6: I think one thing, if they are going to use test scores to measure how good the teachers are, then I think there ought to be a test given at the beginning of the school year when that child enters my classroom and then give another test at the end of the year. Making sure that these tests are actually going to measure what I'm told that I'm supposed to be teaching. Like I said earlier, that's a major problem for us in our state. I think that there definitely has to be accountability and the test is a piece of that. My concern is, that's all our legislators see is that one test and the numbers that are produced. I do think that as teachers we must realize that if our kids all across the board aren't learning, then it all attributes to teaching. And there needs to be room for any goal data that impacts at how we look at a child and what their needs are and what needs to be done next. There need to be more diagnostic tools used. I think they're actually going to show where their needs are and what you do. Part of that feature is sharing that

information with parents so they can be part of that accountability piece.

The timeliness of the tests and the reports received are related to the concern identified above. In order to be useful as a tool for assisting students with their work, teachers suggested that tests should be administered in a way that would enable them to use the results to help the students to whom they apply. Under the current arrangement, the results are returned too late in the school year to be of assistance to classroom teachers as a tool to help the students they are teaching.

> TG9: At this point, accountability is unfortunately a set of numbers that I get at least halfway through the next year to reflect my supposed effectiveness in the classroom the year before. Being that it is that late in coming it's usually not very effective as a tool.

> MST1: In Terra Nova, probably not...This is just my third year. I feel that, just getting their regular tests back, that's accountability as well.

Performing well on tests is important; however, teachers also perceive that it is important to look at what kinds of students are being prepared for the future. They perceive the need to ensure that students are well prepared for life as well as the tests. Following up on students after a few years is one suggestion for accomplishing this.

> MSG4: I believe that many of the tests have become high stakes tests. Teachers are being put under a great deal of pressure to have their students perform well on tests, but we're not really noticing whether they're performing well in life. And that concerns me.

> T17: Our present accountability system basically measures academic achievement as it applies to test scores. I do not believe that the single measure of a child's ability or of a school's performance should be academic performance as it applies to testing. Our mandate as an educational institution is to provide an atmosphere that will produce an intelligent and moral citizenry. That is much greater than test scores. Many times, when we become focused on nothing but the single purpose

but raising test scores and raising students' academic performance, we forget about those other qualities that make for a good person, that make for an educated citizenry as our founding fathers of public education put it.

T19: I believe it should be measured in one way would be to go and find some students who graduated from 1998, about 4 years ago, and see what their success are. If they are successful, whether they went to college or didn't, if they are successful let's measure that. Let's measure how successful they are in life instead of what was their GPA.

Testing of students enrolled in special education programs was another area in which teachers perceive the need for change and offered suggestions for improving accountability. The lack of alignment between teaching conditions and testing conditions is perceived to be disadvantageous to students; especially those with learning problems. This concern is also perceived to be problematic for students enrolled in regular education classes who have learning needs as well as students who do not speak English as their first language. Teachers suggested that testing practices be made more consistent with teaching practices so that modifications in the learning and testing environment would be consistent and perceived as fairer to the students.

HS1: As far as some of the worst accountability...The fine line of the special education. That's one thing because with accountability, I know that you're going to have some students, I've got one in particular, that every day in class he's always asking questions. He's working his heart out. He's doing everything he can to learn. But because of his disability, ... he is never going to get that high school diploma because he's not going to reach the level to pass that Gateway. It's not because of nondesire, it's just an inability to grasp some of those higher-thinking concepts.

HS2: If I can chime in. It doesn't have to be special ed kids or a 504 kid it can be your child coming from a home and maybe some things going on there that they are struggling with. School to them is...important; they show up. But I've seen

kids that just don't test well. I could think of examples, I won't name names, but on the math part a young lady we both know had to take math part of the old TCAP test several times before she passed it.

TG1: The amount of emphasis on our special needs students that they have to take this test. We give them all kinds of resources up to the day of the test. And the day of the test we just like put them in a room and say, "You have to take the test today." And we can't give them any type of guidance or help. And if it's not on the IEP a certain way we can't nurture them in that way. Up to that day they are in small groups. They are separated, the least restrictive environment is taking place, but on the day of the test the least restrictive environment is not taking place. So I don't see how you can say that accountability is up and up when you do those types of things. I also addressed it with the ESL students as well. That is the same thing there. In our district they are required to take the test whether they understand it our not. And those scores are put in with the rest of the scores and I still say that's a big accountability issue that they're not addressing from the State Department down.

Teachers made several suggestions for improving accountability through professional development and the teacher evaluation process. One suggestion was to include a peer evaluation component along with the evaluations that are currently in place. It is perceived that peers might have more first hand knowledge about the classroom teaching and activities at a given point in time than would administrators. Because there is not a power relationship, the perception is that peers would give honest corrective feedback, whereas administrators might hold back for fear of offending a teacher with deficiencies, but who might be well liked.

T17: ... I would change the direction that accountability efforts are moving in. Another thing is that I would place a high priority on individual teachers constantly broadening their own academic acumen in specific curriculum areas. What I tend to believe, and this is just personal belief, is that the more expertise I personally can take into the classroom in any subject area, the better off my children are going to be. We don't give our teachers the time to stay abreast of curriculum developments in any subject area. ... One of my pet peeves or pet gripes is that there are so many wonderful programs, there are so many wonderful new ideas out there, and we are constantly bringing those ideas to the table and no

> one has taken the time to measure the implementation process of these ideas. And when I say the implementation, in other words we bring new ideas to the table every day in education, but we never see it through. We are constantly changing horses.

Many teachers teach to the test and ignore the curriculum. One teacher suggested that important objectives should not be eliminated from the curriculum simply because they are not tested under the accountability system. If they are included as part of the state curriculum, they should still be taught. McNeil (1997, 2000) found similar examples of teachers torn between teaching to the tests or teaching the curriculum.

> T1: Just the worst overall is some of the things that may be important we eliminate. We mainly teach the objectives that are enumerated by the TCAP test manual as to what is taught.

> T19: The first thing that I would do is change the fact that I talked about the administrators and supervisors being the only people doing the evaluations. I would certainly want them to be a part of that. I wouldn't want it to swing totally the other way where they have no idea of what is going on. Surely, as a principal or administrator you want to know what is going on in the classrooms of your school. But to have them the sole determinate of how accountable you are ... In my situation where I was just kind of pushed on, that would not have happened had it been another system where I had peers evaluating me as well. I shouldn't say that because they could have gone in the back wings and said, "If you don't give him a bad evaluation then I won't give you a certain schedule next year. They still could have been swayed."

In terms of educational environment and climate, it was suggested that schools pay close attention to the affective roles that they fulfill. There is a perception that these factors have a positive impact on learning and ultimately on accountability.

> T17: If there is anything that I could change about accountability it would be the direction that we are headed, that we have tended to head in I guess in the last few years. The emphasis on academic achievement, which I would not want academic achievement de-emphasized, I would like the other aspects of the curriculum broadened as far as measuring how well a school does. The thing about it is, many people say that these are subjective measure when you talk about the

affective role of schools, but they are really not subjective. The research that has already been done in years passed has shown that, when a child walks into a building where there is a caring a nurturing environment, academic performance increases if we don't do anything academically. It doesn't mean that we should go into the building and not do anything, but if the research has already proven that the most academic progress is made where the atmosphere is conducive emotionally, psychologically, a nurturing type of atmosphere, then why don't we put more emphasis in those areas?

Professional responsibility was mentioned as a theme in question one when teachers talked about their perceptions of accountability. Teachers suggested that they should become more proactive in exercising their professional responsibilities by speaking out about accountability issues that are not perceived to be in the best interest of children. Concerns about special education testing and the testing of young children in grades K- two are two such examples where teachers suggested that they need to become more proactive and advocate for the use of research-based practices as well as appropriate assessment strategies for children. The research should be presented to decision-makers starting with principals, directors of schools, school boards, state level educators, and eventually to legislators who mandate accountability policies.

TG6: [In reference to testing students below third grade]... I think speaking strictly for myself, if I had spent even half of the amount of the 24 years that I have spent classroom being proactive and looking at putting together solutions versus complaining, even my school system as good as it was, could be managed better. And that's why I think we've got to focus all of our energy on positive change. It won't always be as easy as that scenario that I shared with you. But if we band together and do that I think we'll see a whole lot more results in moving where we need to. It grieves me greatly to see what we do to 5-year old children, particularly our kindergarten children, our 5 and 6-year olds. I often wonder how many children have we forever planted in their mind a fear of standardized tests. And they will face that all of their academic life.

TG6 ...If we really study the research carefully, kids who are in highly structured kindergarten classrooms academically structured, I think the teacher needs to be

very structured and that allows you to be flexible with behavior and flexible to work with children, but for children that are in a very highly academically structured classroom, what we see with those kids, what the research shows is that by second grade they are flatlining. They may show great strides in K and 1, but then when they get to second grade and you have to actually begin to use and apply some of that information, they don't really have the background to apply and use that information. They don't have the skills with which to make choices and the skills to interact with their classmates. That's the crucial piece of a really good kindergarten program is to stress those social skills. How do you interact? How do you make choices and decisions as you interact with each other? And we've moved away from that.

TG2: That director of schools I told you about, when I discussed my concerned about testing in kindergarten to him he said, "My philosophy is the earlier you start them in the testing process, the better they will be at taking tests when they get older." That very year I was at the National Association for the Education of Young Children at their annual convention and heard a panel of experts discussing accountability and assessment for young children and one of them said that this philosophy is out there among some administrators. I can't remember whether it was Denmark or Sweden, but it was a Scandinavian country, he said they don't even take a paper and pencil standardized test until they reach high school and they do quite well. So that blows that theory to bits.

Principals. A personnel concern expressed by principals in rural and inner city schools was the rapid and constant turnover of teachers in their schools. They perceive that it is difficult to be accountable for student achievement without stable faculties committed to their unique populations. Much of the time that would, under normal circumstances be spent on instructional issues, these principals are spending filling faculty vacancies. Many times they are for the same positions. In addition, many inner city schools have large numbers of children with multiple at-risk factors, which tend to interfere with teaching and leaning. Parent cooperation and involvement are often lacking. Yet, these schools are held to the same standards, and these special circumstances are not recognized in reporting progress. They suggested that these factors

somehow be weighed and taken into consideration when accountability data are gathered.

> P5: I think that it needs to be considered at a higher level for our schools. Don't compare me to [names school], compare me to me... any other school that is in that particular zone of need. When your reports go out, your reports are going out separate. It is not one whole. When we look [at what is] being published in the paper, it makes our teachers feel bad. They know that they have worked very hard. It makes the administration look bad when we know that we are trying to pull these programs in, give our teachers the resources both monetary wise and then with the community. We have got a lot of mentors, a lot of adopters [partners], and a lot of folk who have invested as stakeholders within our children's education. It needs to be a separate report that ... shows accurately, although they have these extenuators, this is the way that we are going to weigh the progress and the gains made by the students in that building.

Principals suggested that a combination of data comprised of standardized test scores as well as input from the local level should be incorporated into the accountability model. They also suggested the need for tests more criterion-referenced tests. Like teachers, they suggested having greater alignment between teaching and testing, such as during the earlier days of testing prior to using the present instrument, which enabled students to be tested at the instructional level versus the age or grade level to which the students are assigned.

> P3: I think it should be a combination of progress on test scores, standardized test scores, but I think it should also be, there should be more input into it from the local level and the people who really know what all these people put into it and what kind of job they're doing in preparing young people.

> P5: I would think that more criterion-referenced tests should be given. At the beginning of the year if we know that a child is working on a certain instructional level and our instruction in covering that curriculum has been focused all year on that, then the test should be one that reflects what has been taught to that particular child. It used to be, before we did Terra Nova, that some portions of the TCAPS, when we first started and then with some parts of the Stanford that was given, if that child was working and if he was in the fifth grade and he was working on a fourth grade level, he went to that fourth grade and he took that test.

> Or we had small groups of TA's or teachers that pulled the child out to administer that test again. I think more of that should be done, and you will get an accurate picture as to the gains that child has made.

Given all that principals have to do, they perceive that too much of their time is spent in analyzing test data, preparing reports, and developing improvement plans. In addition, they perceive that the rubric for school improvement plans is rigid and cumbersome. The attention to details is perceived as taking the focus away from improvement efforts at the expense of looking good on paper. They suggested placing less emphasis on the form and appearance of the plans would enable them to focus more on the substance of the plans and make more time for instructional leadership activities by principals and teachers. One principal suggested keeping the current school planning rubric offered more consistency of expectations and suggested that it was an improvement over the previous rubric.

> P1: You know, and I feel like we're getting away from the focus,. Even though I'm trying by involving all our teachers here, as we have before, by letting teachers give me input as to what we need to do by using the data and surveys to get our information. Too much time is going to be spent just making sure that it looks right on paper. Which I don't think affects one way or another, our test scores or our improvement or student learning. This is just an activity to keep principals and committee members busy.

> P1: I just think it's becoming, it's growing into, it's becoming a monster that we're having to feed. And I just hope that they are careful about that. And even [though] I know they want us to be consistent, and they want us to have a way to compare from school to school, I liked it better when it was more individualized, it's your school, you do what you need to, and, and if you can show that you are making progress with it then it will be acceptable.

> P2: ... [The rubric] It is cumbersome at times. It acts as a barrier sometimes

because of the paperwork and some of the different things that you have to do in keeping the test irregularities from occurring and that type thing. [It helps] to make sure that you get the same type of data and get the true picture of the data. But ...not just data, but you're looking at all the aspects of school; you're going to be able to see the accountability and see what's going to be running. I like it as [good] or better than I did the previous system that we used which was pretty much a pick and choose where each school or school system would say, hey, here's what we're going to do. Here's what we're measuring. At least everybody has, I won't say a level playing field, they've done things to try and make it level in accommodations. But whenever you're looking at ... the different pieces that go in there, you know that you're going to be accountable for [in] your attendance. You know you're going to be accountable for your promotions. You're going to be accountable for your graduations and for your academics from your achievement and from your value added and your growth.

Some principals suggested extending accountability (the testing program) across all grade levels that are not currently tested. This would include grades K- two in elementary school and all courses not related to English, math, science, or social studies in high school. They perceive that this will ensure fairness since all teachers and students would be assessed. It would increase accountability if everyone were responsible for value-added scores, and it would reduce jealousy among teachers who are and are not subject to accountability. They perceive that it would also treat all students the same.

P2: One thing that I would like to see done if it were possible, and it may be, in the TVAAS, the value added, and they're going toward that area, but there seems to be very specific measurable things for grades three-eight; but then your preschool, your readiness, your kindergarten and first and second grades, I don't know how you can get them on the accountability system. To take 15 students of varying backgrounds and students that learn at different rates. Boys learn different from girls.... and especially in the early years. I would like to see more early education have some type of accountability measure there. I don't know how to do that.

P2: The other thing would be in high school to have some accountability measures there. Now we're getting them like say with the Gateway exams and the exit exams that are in place now; the ACT, Work Keys and SAT. But there

needs to be a class to class type things instead of if you happen to teach Biology, if you happen to teach Algebra, you happen to teach English, what about the ancillary or other, auxiliary subjects that contribute to the students learning but may not be... How do you evaluate a drafting teacher? How do you make them accountable? How do you make an auto body, auto mechanics teacher accountable? How do you make a Latin or French teacher accountable? There's going to be Exit Exams for different courses but where do you draw the line? How do you make it fair for all? As an educator I'm setting here thinking, well if I taught elementary school I'd probably want to teach second grade because you won't get tested.... unless the system chooses to do that. ... If I'm a middle school teacher, I want to teach PE - physical education. That's my major; that's what I went through, and how are you going to make that accountable for me? I mean when parents are looking and test scores are coming out they're looking at mathematics, social studies, science, reading, language arts. But they're not going to look at PE. I want to teach where it's not going to be accountable because that's the path of least resistance.

Principals suggested that they must be given more authority in resolving adverse personnel actions, such as removing ineffective teachers from their buildings, if they are to be held accountable for test results.

P6: ... If you are going to hold principal accountable for test scores, then they are going to have to be able to have some say if this person has to be moved and get them out now. In other words, if the report card comes out and I am going to be held accountable whether it is 'A' or 'F' then yes, we are going to have to have a major role in saying that this person has to go, and they'd better go now. I would have to go through so much red tape.

Increasing resources and community support were suggested as ways to improve the current accountability system. Both rural and urban principals made this suggestion.

P5: When we look [at what is] being published in the paper, it makes our teachers feel bad. They know that they have worked very hard. It makes the administration look bad when we know that we are trying to pull these programs in... give our teachers the resources both monetary ... and then with the community.

P1: ... I know before in different workshops or conferences with High Schools That Work, we're in that program through the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta, and they would tell us that it is good for teachers to actually get

> in there and get that data and get into it. I think, well yes, that probably is good, but we don't have time. You know, there's no time, and I don't know how our system compares. We may have less instructional days for staff development. I'm sure that we have exactly what is required. We don't have any additional days because to do that would be more money, which is what a rural school system doesn't have a lot of.

Improving funding for education is perceived by principals as a way to improve the effectiveness of the accountability policy system. This suggestion could have a significant impact on teacher hiring and retention.

> P1: Our state, it concerns me that as a state, we spend less on education than almost all the other states in the nation. Our current legislature doesn't seem to be too concerned about this spending problem. And being from ... in a rural school that's at the bottom in this state, that's at the bottom of the list that kind of gives you an overwhelming feeling sometimes. How are we going to compete when the attitude of our state and the money that goes along with it is not there. And I know just throwing money at a problem doesn't necessarily fix it, but I do know since I've been here at this school in the last thirteen years, I have seen more money flowing in here. I have seen the school change a lot. And I feel like it's helped, we're headed in the right direction. But a lot of that money has come from things like the Title program, the BEP funding to the schools, where the small schools got some additional funding. And it has helped. So, we need to look at funding as a way to make sure everything is adequately funded and that students that are coming from the poorest neighborhoods aren't getting the least amount spent on them per pupil. And that's one thing about accountability that concerns me. Not everyone, we're not all playing with the same assets or tools, but we're all being compared with the same assessment.

Curriculum Supervisors. Curriculum supervisors, who deal with assessment and accountability, have a unique vantage point form which to view accountability. They support the current accountability policy system; however they have suggestions for changes. They are aware of the best and worst practices within the districts. They suggested using multiple measures including norm-referenced tests to improve

accountability. Part of their responsibilities includes monitoring and preventing unethical testing behaviors from occurring, which might invalidate standardized tests that are perceived to be valid. For example, teaching to the test might be considered unethical on standardized tests; however, it is perceived to be desirable for teachers to teach to a criterion-referenced test because the tests are based on the curriculum.

A common complaint expressed by teachers is the lack of alignment between the curriculum and the tests that are used to assess students and teacher. This is perceived as one of the reasons that teachers teach to the tests. One curriculum supervisor suggested that his district does not allow teachers to test their own children in an attempt to curb unethical behaviors. The following suggestions for improving accountability were also offered by curriculum supervisors.

> CS3: ... There is a fine line between what is appropriate and what is not appropriate as far as teaching to the test. When I taught high school mathematics and we had an algebra one end of course test from the state, it was a criterion-referenced test written by teachers. I had an opportunity to write questions. It was written by teachers looking at the standard. In that case, teach to the test because the test is the curriculum. Here is your state curriculum and the county curriculum, just teach everything on there the way that you are supposed to and you have taught to the test and students should do well. The test will be a good measure of how well you did. At the elementary level we get a list of the objectives that are going to be on the test, how many items per objectives, and that does adjust and affect our teaching. Even though some of those items are not in the curriculum for that grade.
>
> R: It could be sabotaging a curriculum that you thought very carefully about.
>
> CS3: That's right. We base our curriculum on the state's and if that third grade math is supposed to cover these topics and all of a sudden there is a question that is supplementary, you have to teach that and take something else away usually because there is already too much in there. It does have a detrimental effect. I think Texas and North Carolina, North Carolina especially, seems to have the best match. They don't give a norm referenced nationwide test. They give a local test.

Their elementary tests are like our high school tests. I have never in my seven to eight years since they started the math test, I have never heard a teacher complain about the test. You hear that at the elementary level, but I never heard that at the high school level in all those years at the math meetings and stuff. The questions were written by Tennessee teachers, and they were all valid questions.

CS3: I think having taught in [names state] and Tennessee I was at the high school level. For many, many years we were left out of the accountability mix. There were other types of accountability perhaps besides test scores, but that seems to be the most concrete measure that we have. With the onset of the high school, being a math teacher we had the high school test in Tennessee. We had the value added assessment. We've always had that achievement but to receive that value added report showing the effect that I had on those kids and how that measures up to the rest of the teachers in the state. That really changed the way that I look at things as far as moving those kids. I think it was a positive effect on my teaching in receive that accountability... and receive those value gains over the five to six years that they started that I was still a teacher. ...Worst accountability stories ... the worst to me is seeing ... is when we have stories in [names county] or elsewhere of teachers doing unethical things and affecting the scores, inflating the scores. I think that is certainly a disaster for certainly the kids and for the teachers.

Curriculum supervisors suggested simplifying the reports so parents may understand them.

CS2: I think just make it a little simpler. And it's hard to change statistical language where people understand it. But the report card itself, and I refer to that because that is the accountability measure, gets more complicated every year. And I think they're doing some good things to try and refine it. But everything has a different grading scale, you have to know what achievement is and what gain is and that they are two different things even though they come from the same place. Anything that would help simplify that so parents know, okay this is where my child stands relative to other kids, but this is how my child is actually growing from year to year. So a little bit more help in that regard. That's what I do though, I take this and try to couch it in terms that they can use every day.

Directors of Schools. Suggestions offered by directors of schools centered on improving communication and understanding about accountability. The reports are

perceived to be too complex for most teachers and the public to understand. They, like curriculum supervisors, suggested simplifying the reports to make them easier to understand. Directors also suggested that information should be made available, in ways that can be understood, about how the scores are derived.

> DS1: I still would like to see some changes made in how we, actually how we determine the scores so to be, for at least teachers to understand better what they have actually accomplished and why that happened. What we're having now is our scores are making some pretty large leaps or some pretty large dips from one year to the next. And if you ask teachers they'll say we don't know what we did any different this year than we did last year. So we need to try and iron out those peaks and valleys that we have in our test scores so students not, teachers would understand better what made the difference either up or down in those scores.

Although they support the accountability policy system, directors of schools suggested that information about the circumstances surrounding students and their schools would be desirable to include somehow in accountability reports. They suggested finding a way to ascertain from students' reflections about how they perceive their personal growth.

> DS1: I wish I had a real good plan but I don't. And I don't know that I could develop any one, a plan that's much better as far as academic standards is concerned. I wish there was some way that we could measure how much a child has grown as a person. I'm not talking about how tall or how heavy they are I'm talking about how much have they learned about the world and themselves. If we could get some questions on accountability system that the kid would answer questions at least at some level of what they thought about themselves when they came to school, and what they thought about the teacher, and what they thought about their community, and the world in general when they came in. And ask those same type questions at the end and see what we've accomplished as far as the child is concerned. And check the student's background and see what type of conditions happen in the child's life during the cycle that they have been in school instead of saying it doesn't matter what's happened to you during this school year we'll still give you a grade. And take into consideration if there's been a tragedy or something very positive happened to the child that may have caused that actual

score to go up or down. When you look at it as more of an individual experience than just as a score for a child, and I have said put a face on the score. Don't give me a 75 and a 35. Let's look at the face of a 75 kid and look at the face of the 35 kid and then let's take some comparison into it.

Directors suggested having multiple testing throughout the year versus testing annually as it is done under the present policy. These tests would be given by teachers on a schedule such as every grading period, and value added scores would be made available to teachers. The directors also suggested that all school district personnel associated with testing should be expected to be honest and trustworthy.

> DS1: I would make it a broader perspective of accountability other than just a one-day one-test... one-number you get back for a class for an individual student. I think it should be accountability based on a continuum from week-to-week. From 6 weeks to 6 weeks, or whatever; like the old report card type system. There's nothing that says we can't do that with the computerized aids that we have now that we couldn't have norm scores based on tests that teachers give on a more timely basis than just once a year. So I think we need to change one time a year going in and sitting down in a class and taking a test and say this is how well you've done this year.

> We [currently] get a value added score; we have TCAP scores in March and April. We expect scores back before the school is out. And then we try to align kids; at least some school systems do, by how well they did on that test one time a year. Nothing in that test tells us if a child had a bad day. What circumstances or events, I think we ought to have more periodic type test for a student; at least a 6 weeks time. And with the computer age that's here, we can do that. We can give the test and get the test back, and we have to believe that people are honest. We have to believe that teachers are concerned about how well the child learns and not just how much he's going to make on that score. And we have to really challenge teacher, and principals, and supervisors, and directors of schools to develop a system for their school system. Let that be a blend of what goes on throughout the state and throughout the country. But it doesn't just have to be a TCAP test once a year. It has to be something that's given more often than that where people are counted more than just for the one day, one time.

One director of schools addressed a teacher evaluation concern that was also brought up by teachers. He suggested that the evaluation process contain a way for a person other than the principal and supervisor to evaluate teacher performance. The use of value added assessment data was suggested as would be included as a part of the evaluation process, and it could be used as part of the data to terminate teachers perceived to be ineffective teachers.

School Board Member. The school board member suggested that adding other types of assessment, such as an oral component, might be a way to improve the accountability policy system.

State Level Educators. The suggestions offered by state level educators were to teach the state curriculum, and use the data to make improvements. Failure to concentrate on the curriculum might give the perception tht everything students might learn is of equal importance, and the curriculum has been specifically designed to teach certain skills and concepts over time.

> SLE3: Definitely. ... Using that philosophy [ignoring the objectives]...suggests that everything is of equal importance that a student could learn. Now, it might be interesting, it might be good, it might certainly meet my interest need for me to know how to shear sheep, but if shearing sheep is not on the curriculum, and what is on the curriculum is going to determine my success in the future, or is going to make a difference to my overall understanding of the basic curriculum, then shearing sheep is not equal to two digit multiplication. So, I think we have a lot of teachers who think any experiences that you have in the classroom are valuable experiences and are equally valuable experiences. The accountability model says, no that's not true. ... The numbers aren't biased. Whether you agree with accountability or whether you don't agree with accountability, it at least gives you a comparison of where you are with everyone else. I guess those are my horror stories, that you have folks that refuse to benefit from it. On the other hand, I have seen schools and worked with schools where they were able to take the data and move from a mediocre or fairly low-performing school to having straight

'A's. That's exciting.

Schools should focus their efforts on individual student progress as a way of ensuring that all students are progressing according to state level educators. Looking at large groups of students often camouflages pockets of low achievement once students' individual scores are combined with larger groups.

> SLE3: ... And this is the very same strategy that we are recommending statewide. You look at where each student is and you bring each student forward. You're never going to make the progress that you are capable of making if you look only at the big picture. The state will never improve simply by looking at state results. Systems won't improve by looking at system results. What we've had happen in our state and one of the reasons that we've stayed at the same place, no student has stayed at the same place; some have gotten better and some have gotten worse as a result of what we're doing. We're going make true improvement by looking at each student individually. That's where really effective accountability systems come in is when you are not just looking at the big picture, but you go all the down to the individual student level. That's where we have now progressed to in Tennessee.

State level educators perceive that the accountability policy system is unbiased and it is regarded as a model for other states throughout the nation. Although not part of the accountability system, it was also suggested that attention should be paid to issues of school climate and school culture, which might be measured through surveys, as a way of improving accountability.

> SLE2: ... I think we have a model for the nation. Secretary Ron Page believes we do. We're not only looking at school-wide data, we're looking at individual students. We know that to get off the list they have got to move individual students over the fence to the average or the above average group. Yeah, I think we have the market cornered because we have value added as well as achievement. Achievement is socio-economically driven. We can't help what kids don't know when we get them. We can help what they do once we have them. That's measured in value added.

SLE2: The happiness index or the climate/culture issue is difficult to measure. We use surveys and constituency group surveys, and I think they are an important part of this process. You have to have hard data as well as soft data. The business about the safety index and are you comfortable here, those are all critical variables.

Testing for accountability is not mandated until third grade; however, approximately 50% of the schools test in the primary grades as well. In order to obtain value added scores, many also use the same tests that the state uses. They perceive that this gives them advanced warning of the students' future performance. The state level educators suggest starting standardized assessments at grade three; however, they are not opposed to the schools testing primary age students.

SLE4: Oh sure. Currently what we have in pre-K through second grade is not part of any rigid standardized assessment system. I think that I would have to agree with all of the research that says that is where you establish the foundation for learning, is in the pre-K through the second grade experience. Yet, our accountability doesn't begin to collect that data until third grade.
R: Are you ok with that?
SLE4: Yes, I very much support that. I think individualized assessment of student in pre-K-second is where you get the information. I don't think we are ready for a standardized assessment until third grade. So I very much support that. But that really places a burden on the local school on a local community to really decide are we [being communicated] where their children are? What assessment is being used? How is it validated? That puts more of the burden on the community and the local system.

R: And are they going to be prepared for that first big assessment? I have noticed that a lot of schools that I have talked to say that they do assess where they are not required to.

SLE4: Most do. In fact well over 50%. Again, I strongly recommend that they only use that assessment for a placement piece and for a validation piece, but not to look...
R: [At] value added and those kinds of statement?

Politicians. State level politicians perceive that the accountability policy system is fine and they did not offer suggestions for improving it in terms of testing. They suggested that extending school choice and vouchers to parents are ways to motivate school improvement.

> SG1: They have shown that in the cities where the vouchers have come in the public schools in that area have increased their academics faster than anybody else because suddenly there's competition there. And so competition leads to accountability.

> SG2: ... But school of choice, where the schools that provide what the parents want in a safe learning environment, whether kids can achieve, schools of choice can help hold schools accountable if parents have the right to go where they think their kids get the best education. In fact, I think research has shown that in, is it Minnesota or Michigan I can't remember right now, where they've started some of the voucher programs where disadvantaged children...

They suggested imposing sanctions on teachers and school systems where accountability gains are not met.

> SG2: I would make sure that we would hold people responsible whether that is withholding funds or actually ... not graduate a kid from school who could not read and write. It is disgusting to me to say, we need them to read and write at the 5th grade level by the time they're [a] senior in high school. That just to me is accepting defeat. I don't know what all the answers are. We are always compared to China or Japan, but we also know that they send theirs in two different directions. We keep all of our kids in school and I think that's why, handicapped kids and otherwise.

Summary: Research Question Two. What suggestions, if any, do different stakeholders offer to improve the appropriateness and the effectiveness of current

accountability policy system?

Stakeholders' suggestions for improving the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current accountability primarily included ways to expand the frequency of testing and expanding the grade levels or courses in which testing occurs. It was suggested that all students should be tested in all classes so that all teachers might receive value added scores. The random sampling of students in certain benchmark grades was also suggested as an alternative to the current policy of census testing. Criterion-referenced tests were suggested to make tests more relevant to align tests with the curriculum. School and district level educators also suggested that data about students and communities should also be considered in reporting data.

A peer evaluation component was suggested as an alternative to the teacher observations and evaluation process, and the use of value added gain scores was suggested when helping teachers plan for improvement and in adverse personnel actions. Teachers suggested becoming more proactive in advocating for the changes that they perceive necessary to improve teaching practices and testing policies that may adversely affect students, especially those enrolled in special education programs and those involving young children. Changes were also suggested to alter the BEP formula to reflect the inflation that has occurred over the life of the formula and to reflect the current classroom operating costs including teachers' salaries and any unfunded mandates that have occurred since it was passed in 1991-92. Table 2 shows a summary of suggested changes along with the perceived benefits and perceived liabilities of stakeholders'

suggestions.

Research Question Three

What are some of the positive benefits and negative consequences of the current accountability model as perceived by stakeholders?

Students' Perceived Positive Benefits. Students perceive that the tests they take are beneficial because it gives them a sense of where they stand academically in comparison to other students. One student perceived that it also made him feel better as a person knowing that he had done well.

S2: "... It shows that I can do what you can do ... Personally, it makes me feel better as a person to know that I excelled at something."

Students' Perceived Negative Consequences. Students perceive the stress of having the Gateway Exams count for 15-20% of the course grades in the Algebra and Biology classes as a negative consequence. They also perceive the disappointment that might be felt if someone was not successful in passing the tests as a negative consequence.

Teachers' Perceived Positive Benefits. Some teachers perceive accountability to be good for education. They perceive that it has strengthened the curriculum and enabled them to become more focused in their teaching as they teach to the tests/ the curriculum.

Table 2
Summary of Suggestions to Improve the Appropriateness and the Effectiveness of the Current Accountability Policy System in Tennessee

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
Students	**Students**	**Students**
1. Align tests with the curriculum.	1. Tests and classroom curriculum contents would match.	1. Not all classes are currently tested.
Teachers	**Teachers**	**Teachers**
1. Raise the percentage of the grade for the Gateway Exam from 15-20% to 25%. 2. Teach to the tests. 3. Enroll students in classes required for graduation and administer Gateway Exams to students as ninth graders or at the earliest possible opportunity. 4. Delay testing until students have more experience in the required courses and have a better chance of passing the courses/tests. 5. Use authentic forms of teacher-generated, problem-solving assessments. 6. Avoid stereotyping teachers because they happen to teach in high or low achieving schools/districts. 7. Use random sampling assessments at benchmark years.	1. Students will become more accountable and take tests more seriously. 2. Students will show greater value added gains on the tests and teacher effect scores will increase. 3. Students may be better prepared for the tests. 4a. Students will have multiple opportunities to pass the tests. 4b. Some students are dual enrolled in the same courses to master the content, and it increases their chances of passing the tests. 5. Assessment would be more relevant and re closely aligned to students' curriculum. It will raise the bar for accountability. 6. Teachers' reputations will be preserved.	1. More students may fail the tests and risk not graduating from high school. 2. Teaching to the test eliminates the teaching of important curriculum objectives; if they are not tested they are not taught. 3. Teachers may engage in unethical behaviors in order to increase value added gain scores. 4. Some students will be placed at a disadvantage if they are not given every opportunity to pass the exams. 4b. Some students will be placed at a disadvantage; not all students have the same opportunities to receive extra time and supplementary instruction before testing. Their scores will not show the same levels of increase. Teacher effect scores do not account for the differences in programs and preparation.

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
8. Make reports easier to read and understand. Provide staff development for teachers. 9. Post reports on websites as opposed to newspapers. 10. Schedule more than one administration of tests annually. Pretests and posttests may be used to report progress. 11. Include contextual data from teachers about students and the factors that might have impacted their learning during the year. 12. Conduct longitudinal studies of graduates to ascertain if students are well prepared for the future. 13. Compare similar kinds of schools to each other. 14. Teaching and testing should be consistent for students enrolled in special education programs. 15. Provide curriculum guides for teachers who have the responsibility for teaching students enrolled in multiple programs. 16. Increase professional development using peer coaching and evaluation	7. Money would be saved and funds could go to other educational initiatives. 8. Teachers would understand the reports and they would be better prepared to interpret the results to parents. They might be able to use the reports more effectively to improve instruction. 9. Reports will be less embarrassing to schools than if they were written up in print media. 10. Teachers will receive regular and timelier feedback on students' progress while they still have the students in their classes. It would be possible to monitor and adjust instruction to meet students' needs versus waiting until the next year when they are no longer in class. 11. The contextual data may help to explain peaks and valleys in test data. It might also yield important information about students' progress, work habits, and study skills. 12. This information would tell schools what	5. Personalized assessments may not be generalized across scores of other students in the state. Assessments might not be accepted as legitimate because they are not standardized. Communication and staff development would be needed to explain the assessments to the school and the community. 6. Teachers in low performing schools are perceived as ineffective. Negative stereotypes may prevent highly competent teachers from transferring out of low performing schools. Scores do not reflect much of the learning or many of the events that go on in schools. 7. Not all students would be tested annually; students needing individual help might not be identified early, based on the tests, in order to get help. More students might 'slip through the cracks' than under the current system. 8. NA 9. Not all parents have access to the Internet, and some parents may not receive information on the reports.

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
models. 17. Measure the effects of current programs before adding new programs. 18. Teachers should become proactive in exercising their professional judgment about testing young children in grades K-2, students in special education, and students in other special programs such as ESL. They should advocate for the use of research-based programs.	kind of students they are preparing. 13. Schools would be able to compare progress against others with similar challenges and similar demographic conditions. 14. All students must learn at high levels. Tests help determine whether all students are achieving at high levels based on the same standards. 15. Teachers will become familiar enough with all curricular areas to assist students. 16a. Teachers need time to stay abreast in their field. 16b. Teachers have more knowledge of their peers who teach in the same content areas than administrators are likely to have. First hand observations would enable teachers to give honest feedback to their colleagues since there would be fewer power relationships involved. 17. Schools would be able to evaluate programs, retain those that are effective, and eliminate programs that are not effective.	Most parents have access to newspapers. Not printing reports in the papers might also be perceived as an attempt to hide information from the public. 10. One test does not adequately show students' progress or the teachers' accomplishments with the students. One test should not determine the teacher's effect on students. 11. Contextual data could not easily be represented statistically and might be considered too subjective. Data that cannot be measured numerically might not be accepted as valid. Affective data does not tell about overall achievement as compared to others. 12. Educators do not know the effects that schools have had upon graduates such as whether they are good citizens, in college, or in jail. 13. Not all schools could be compared as they are currently. 14. The current system is unfair to students in special education programs. Teaching students at the instructional level encourages them and builds up their self-esteem. Often,

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
	18. Teachers will be likely to implement best practices.	the modifications made during classroom instruction are not included in testing situations. Self-esteem is torn down during testing. Disabilities may prevent some students from reaching grade levels or goals on the Gateway Exams, and they might not receive their high school diplomas. Students are not always tested in the least restrictive environment. 15. Without the curriculum guides, teachers might not have the specific content knowledge to teach students all of the required content. 16. It might still be possible for administrators to coerce teachers into giving poor peer evaluation reports. Administrators might threaten the evaluating teachers with poor evaluations if they do not cooperate and respect their wishes. 17a. Without evaluating program effectiveness, schools may not be using the most effective practices to bring about improvements. 17b. Some programs may be retained because of popularity, but they might not be the most effective practices to bring about improvements.

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
		18a. Testing young children may cause them to fear tests later in school. Students may 'flatline' by grade two if they do not have the requisite skills to apply the factual knowledge that has been acquired. Testing has caused the focus in education to shift from an emphasis on the development of social skills to passing tests and submitting paperwork.
Principals	**Principals**	**Principals**
1. Principals need more authority to hire and fire teachers if they are to be held accountable for improving student achievement. 2. Use a combination of data, not just test scores. Test data should include the special circumstances surrounding schools which impact upon the principals' time and ability to lead effectively and focus on instruction. Similar schools should be compared to each other. Test data should contain the information that schools need and should be easy to understand. 3. Rubrics for school improvement plans are cumbersome. Emphasize the	1. Principals would be able to remove ineffective teachers and hire teachers who might be able to effectively teach the students. 2. The reports would reflect the challenges that schools face, and enable the public to recognize the various forms of progress that students have made. Less time would be spent interpreting data. 3. The rubrics provide consistency in the kinds of data that are included in the school improvement plans. 4. All students and teachers would have value added gain scores. This	1. It is difficult to remove ineffective teachers especially if they are tenured. Achievement is less likely to be achieved with ineffective teachers. 2. Reports ignore the challenges that schools have faced and the progress that students have made in other areas. Administrators look bad even though they are trying to do a good job. Reports have much data that are difficult to read and understand. 3. Some principals perceive that the emphasis is not on students and improvement but on the paperwork. Others perceive that without the rubrics, schools would choose the criteria against

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
substance of the school improvement planning process versus focusing on the appearance of the document. 4. Extend tests to include students in all grade levels. 5. Increase funding for staff development.	might eliminate jealousy. 5. Money helps districts to work with the same assets.	which they would be judged, and there would not be consistency across districts statewide, and that was problematic in the past. 4. Not all students and teachers are affected by accountability. It's unfair to treat teachers and students differently. Costs might be prohibitive if everyone were to be tested. 5. Districts are not playing with the same assets at this time. Some districts have no staff development days beyond the state minimum. More funding may mean more accountability.
Curriculum Supervisors	**Curriculum Supervisors**	**Curriculum Supervisors**
1. Use multiple measures including norm-referenced tests to increase accountability. 2. Use tests to obtain good feedback on teaching. 3. Simplify report cards to make them easier to read. Teach teachers to interpret and use the scores. Teachers should be able to explain the scores to parents.	1. Criterion-referenced tests would be aligned with the curriculum to measure how well the curriculum is taught. Teachers would be able to teach and test the curriculum objectives. Teachers could help to develop the tests and there would be fewer complaints about the validity of the tests. 2. Tests help curriculum supervisors to give feedback to current	1. Curriculum objectives are not aligned with the tests. Many teachers are teaching the test items and disregarding the curriculum objectives. Tests may be actually sabotaging the state curriculum. Teachers are engaging in unethical practices to help students improve gain scores and teacher effect scores. There is mistrust between teachers and administrators regarding the tests. 2. Elementary and middle

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
	teachers on End of Course Exams. 3. Reports show students' growth as measured against their previous growth. Communication would be enhanced if the reports were easier to interpret.	school tests are not well aligned to the curriculum; not all courses are or will be tested. 3. There is confusion among teachers and parents concerning the meaning of gain scores and achievement scores. Different grading scales are used to report scores. This also makes it difficult to compare data.
Directors of Schools	**Directors of Schools**	**Directors of Schools**
1. Simplify the reports and increase communication about how the scores are derived. Explain why there are sharp increases and sharp decreases in the scores. 2a. Use multiple tests throughout the year including criterion-referenced tests versus one standardized test. 2b. Consider adding to the test data reflections from students about their own growth, as persons, and how they feel about their schools or their teachers. 2c. Include data about the schools versus using test data only in the reports. 3. Develop systems whereby districts can decide how they will be assessed.	1. The reports would be more meaningful. Teachers would be able to use the reports and communicate the results to parents. 2a-c. Using multiple forms of data would help to put a face on the students, and it would recognize that other kinds of data about the schools and students as being important. 3. Assessments would be more personal. 4. The use of additional input would guard against administrators using data inappropriately against teachers.	1. The tests are used to place students in many school districts. Reports are difficult to understand and may lack meaning. 2a-c. One test alone cannot measure students' progress. The test data does not put a face on students. 3. Assessment measures would lack consistency across the state and it would be difficult to make comparisons among districts. 4. Value added data could be used to terminate teachers. Data may be based on tests, which do not match the teachers' curriculum especially at the elementary and middle school levels.

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
4. Use value added data to evaluate teachers especially during the termination process. Use a third party in the evaluation process. 5. Change the BEP formula to reflect the inflation that has occurred over the life of the formula and to reflect the current classroom operating costs including teachers' salary increases and any unfunded mandate that have occurred since the BEP was passed in 1991-92.		
School Board Member	**School Board Member**	**School Board Member**
1. Add an oral component to the tests.	1. Some students may not do well on paper and pencil tests.	1. Such data may be difficult to report.
State Level Educators	**State Level Educators**	**State Level Educators**
1. Teachers should teach the curriculum, not the tests. 2. Use the data to make improvements in teaching. 3. Test results give comparisons of where schools are functioning in comparison to others. 4. Data can be used to help large groups and individual students. 5. All students should be expected to improve achievement and value added gain scores.	1. The curriculum focuses on objectives that the state considers to be important at each grade level or in each subject. 2. The numbers aren't biased. 3. Some schools that have used the data have moved from mediocre to high performing schools. 4. The focus on individual progress will help to ensure that all students will learn well. 5. Test data show both	1. Tests are not aligned with the curriculum at the elementary and middle school levels. 2. Teachers regularly observe students who do not take the tests seriously. 3. Some educators refuse to benefit from accountability data. 4. Data shows overall progress of schools or districts and masks pockets of excellence or failures. While some students have improved on test data, others' progress has gotten

Table 2 Continued

Suggestions	Perceived Benefits	Perceived Consequences
6. Use survey and constituency groups to ascertain their perceptions of schools.	achievement and value added gain scores. Schools should make a difference for all students. 6. These sources could yield important data about the schools.	worse. Large group scores will mask individual progress or failure unless the information on individuals is specifically targeted. 5. Norm referenced achievement data are closely related to students' socio-economic conditions. All students are judged against the same criteria, which are closely related to students' socio-economic conditions. 6. Such data are not part of the accountability system. Only data that can be measured consistently may be included in the accountability policy system.
State Politicians	**State Politicians**	**State Politicians**
1. Keep the accountability policy system as it is. 2. Withhold money from schools that do not perform to standards. Do not graduate students that cannot read and write.	1. It will extend parents' choice options as to where they may want to send their children to school. 2. Competition will motivate schools to improve.	1. Not all parents and students might be able to participate in choice options. 2. Taking money away from schools that have large numbers of students with multiple at-risk factors and which are already lacking in resources might further exacerbate their financial problems and still not address the challenges at the particular site that may contribute to their perceived lack of progress.

The standards outlined in the curriculum framework serve as a guide for many teachers as they plan instruction.

MS4: One of the things that we had just gotten back is our figures, our data, and we're trying to look at that and see how we can best help our students. Where are our students? Where are their weaknesses? Where do they like? Our kids, for example the kids on my team, struggle as leaders, very low readers. And that's something I've really stressed with them. And it's hard to juggle, it's really hard to juggle everything in an hour's time and make sure that you're getting the reading and writing and everything. So this year what we've done... we had some of the numbers in by the end of school year, so as a result of that we planned and got a reading program implemented.

MST2: I can honestly tell you that I have been to the point of tears. I have really just felt like just crying when it would come back bad. But it was like [names supervisor] and I just talked about. I ... know what I did wrong. Because my children knew 50% more than what was on that test. But they did not show it. And I know why. We went too broad and not deep enough. We covered too many things but we didn't go deep enough on the objectives at that particular level. That will never happen to me again. I've learned. I'm going to go deeper if I ever teach a regular classroom again.

T2: I think I touched upon both positive and negative a little bit. I think the positive way I have been affected by accountability has been, is that's it's been a guide for me to go by and assess myself to make sure that I am doing what I need to be doing. And I have a guide. I have standards to look at. I have pacing guides that our county has done which has been wonderful and I've had the frameworks you know now that I didn't have when I came here.

Career ladder teachers perceive that they benefited financially under accountability because it enabled them to advance to higher pay scales.

R: What does it mean to you personally, this career ladder?
ALT2: Well, in the past it has given me the opportunity to earn more money by working more hours and being involved in other programs and I was so thrilled at the time because I really did not end up doing a whole lot more than I had done before, but I just got paid for it.

It is also perceived as a tool to enable teachers and teacher assistants to diagnose strengths and weaknesses in order to plan how to better assist students to learn.

R: Are there some consequences or some positive benefits that you can think of about accountability? One of the benefits is you mentioned that they might use the test information to plan where the kids should go the next year. Identify areas where they might need extra assistance, I don't want to [put words in your mouth], but...

TA1: That is what I said.

R: [Clarifying] So that might be perceived as a positive, because it gives you diagnostic information about the kids?

Accountability is perceived by some teachers as "... a benefit to students ...it just keeps everybody in line; it keeps us from getting relaxed" (T19). Teachers also perceive it as a motivating force in lieu of monetary rewards. "We know that we are not going to get monetary motivation, so we have [got] to have other ways" (T19). Other teachers perceived as benefits the End of Course Tests in the core subject areas (T18). They perceive that teachers are now more inclined to finish teaching the curriculum than in the past. "I think a major benefit is ...it used to be you might not have finished the curriculum. Now, you are going to finish those curriculum requirements (T18). Teachers also perceive that accountability set high expectations for teachers (TG10) and helps to 'weed out' those who are less committed to teaching. "I think it kind of filters out those teachers who are in it for the summers off, Christmas break, and spring break ..." (MSG1). Benefits and consequences are not always perceived as positive or negative; sometimes one may be both, such as with value added data.

T1: Oh my goodness. I spend a tremendous amount of time. Some weekends that's basically all I do. I try not to let it interfere with my instructional time so it takes a lot of my free time. I guess I kind of have to slight my classroom planning hour to meet a deadline on doing test analysis but I have gained valuable things and insights from going over the test. I'm not saying that test analysis is not a good thing, it is. It's just, you know, there have to be trade-offs, there is only so much time in day.

Teachers' Perceived Negative Consequences. Teachers perceive teaching to the tests as one of the negative consequences of accountability. "We mainly teach the objectives that are enumerated by the TCAP test manual as to what will be tested (T1)."

The lack of alignment of courses to the curriculum is perceived as a problem (TG13) by teachers.

Another teacher stated that it drives the curriculum. "It pretty much depicts how we have to teach (HS1)." Teachers perceive as problematic the one size fits all approach and question whether it is '... accountability or standardization ... "(HS2).

Teachers support the concept of accountability; however, they perceive that it affects teachers more than students. "I feel like it needs to be for both teachers and students. To be accountable, I feel as though sometimes there is a great deal of pressure to perform and be accountable" (T3). Another concern expressed by teachers is the perception that accountability had a negative impact on their ability to be creative. "...It does take from teacher creativity...you have to stick to your curriculum" (T3). Other teachers perceive that it has created stress and that it has taken the joy out of teaching, especially the negative publicity surrounding report cards. "I do not believe the scores should be published in a newspaper setting" (T18).

> TG1: I think that as was eluded earlier about the school improvement plan and the test and everything, I was very close to that situation this year. The amount of anxiety and stress that came with getting our TCAP scores back and all of our report cards was just horrendous. As was also said earlier, that took a lot of energy out of our faculty and people who were trying to do their jobs because they were so concerned about the scores and because they didn't perform like someone said they were supposed to perform, that took a lot of the joy of their teaching away. It's like, we are depressing our teachers and our staff because we are constantly harping on these scores and they're giving things to try to improve their scores, but still they're not improving, so it's like... try harder, try harder."

Teachers who would prefer to have multiple measures as evidences of achievement perceive relying on one test for accountability as a negative consequence.

"... It's solely relying on one test and not a multiple of different measurements ..." (T13). The time commitment associated with interpreting test reports is perceived to be a negative consequence despite the benefits of having the value added data.

> T1: Oh my goodness. I spend a tremendous amount of time. Some weekends that's basically all I do. I try not to let it interfere with my instructional time so it takes a lot of my free time. I guess I kind of have to slight my classroom planning hour to meet a deadline on doing test analysis but I have gained valuable things and insights from going over the test. I'm not saying that test analysis is not a good thing, it is. It's just, you know, there have to be trade-offs, there is only so much time in day.

Teachers in schools with low standardized achievement scores perceive that they are often penalized because of their school assignments and evaluations. One teacher gave this example of this perceived consequence.

As far as consequences, obviously [in] my situation, sometimes I think that we get pigeon-holed. If an administrator sees you teach one time in three years and that is their impression of who you are as a teacher because that is what they saw the one time that they saw you. That can go both ways. Either you get glorified because the one time you had a really great lesson or the one time that you had a really horrible class, that's that one that they evaluated.

There is a degree of mistrust associated with the espoused uses versus the intended uses of value added teacher effect data. The fact that not all teachers are evaluated on value added assessment data adds to the perceptions of mistrust and pits teachers against teachers, who are assessed depending upon the courses they teach.

> T18: Let's talk consequences first. I really do not know what the consequences are. I would think that if I went to apply at another school system or even in another school in this same district, I know that those principals have access to those test scores. If I really needed to transfer out of my school and my test scores were not good, I am sure that I would not get that job. My supervisor says, no that is not the case ... that is not what happens. I do not believe that. I think that he feels like he is telling the truth, but I do not believe that. I believe that

> they have access to these scores and they want the people with the top scores to apply for their jobs. I just think that teachers will be stuck in a place that they are not productive in any longer. And maybe they would be very productive in another setting. I do not think that test scores should be a means of evaluation and I think that it is a means of evaluation. Everybody says that it is not. I do not believe that. I am not naïve enough to believe that. They would not have these published; they would not have those stake secret documents that we have to open if they were not using them for some purpose. I am sure that we as teachers are rated at the State level in some way. I would love to know that. I would probably love to know where I am rated. I think that the reason that I would love to know that is, I think that there should not be any kind of evaluation of me as a math teacher if there is not an evaluation for a French teacher in the same session. Math is probably the only subject that does this. We have been evaluated this way under value added for the last six years now. We were told on year number 1 that the other subjects are coming along and are going to be evaluated the same way. That has not occurred.

Some teachers fear that the quality of teaching has suffered because of the emphasis on accountability. Some teachers perceive that trade-offs have been made for coverage of the curriculum in lieu of mastery of learning as demonstrated through mastery of concepts and content. As one teacher stated it, "Whether it's introduced in their heads or not is a different story. I'm not even sure that is a benefit. I am going to zip through them. It's not even teaching ..." (T18).

The potential loss of funds and the fear of state over of low performing schools are perceived as threats or negative consequences by teachers. They fear the possible loss of their jobs or they may be required to complete additional training if this occurs. These fears are juxtaposed against the perception that high performing schools receive funding that may not be needed, while lower performing schools might lose funding that is badly needed. Teachers perceive that such stressors may cause colleagues to leave education or at least to leave some subject areas.

T16: The positive I can see where the schools that have high scores they tend to get Federal funds, more money. They do. Better grades on the report cards. The negative would be those schools who fail are doing very low on the test, they are the ones perhaps who are a little threatened about not getting Federal funds. You will have the state coming in and taking over those particular schools. I don't want to say too much, but the ones in charge seem to think that this is a more subservient school, not here, but schools who fail, and that children have not learned anything or are not learning and teachers are not teaching. It labels teachers as well. The thing is, now, I think eventually they are going to try to make teachers accountable if their children fail.

MST1: I've heard that I've not necessarily heard that from people that are getting into this profession, but I've heard that there's going to be a shortage because of all the stuff that we're having to do. And along with the pay scale of teachers along with all this work. I thing that could be a consequence.

Research questions one and two discussed issues surrounding the testing of students with learning difficulties in both special education and regular education programs. They also addressed the perceptions that accountability is fostering test practices that are not appropriate for young children in primary age grades. Also, half of the schools are testing at levels not required by the state (SLE3). Many teachers perceive these as negative consequences of accountability.

Principals' Perceived Positive Benefits. Principals perceive that the value added gain scores provide information about a teacher's effectiveness at a particular grade level, and the scores were helpful in making the decision to place the teacher at a grade level where she is perceived to be more productive.

AP1: I think some of the benefits ... I don't know if it's ever happened here, you've got the teacher teaching the wrong thing. Well, I'll take that back, it has happened here. We've looked at a certain teacher's scores ..., who used to teach math back in the junior high grades, and that teacher was moved because we didn't have her teaching what her best potential was. This was a person who was teaching middle grade aged students there who expressed concerned when she

was hired. I think that she would rather work with the lowered aged children, too. That's one thing that we did.
R: So how's that teacher doing with the lower age?
AP1: Improving; still some problems, but it's a better situation than it was. I think that's a benefit to look at that and say this is what happened in your classroom, let's try something different.

The report card is perceived as a benefit if the school has a positive report, and may serve as a selling point for homes within a community. It is also perceived as an instrument for planning staff development activities in areas that are identified for improvement.

P2: Well, some of the benefits are that it does give your school system notoriety. It gives them a good feeling and it makes people, in [names county] for example, we've been growing big time. But when people call here, the realtors once used to wear me out and say, where does your school line go for this particular school? When parents call, that's one of the main things that they want to look at is the educational system. They want to see that you have good schools, and they want to perceive that it's good schools. So one of the benefits, if you are a good school, is it promotes your school system.

Principals' Perceived Negative Consequences

P3: One of the consequences [are] community support and the way that the community looks at your schools. And you always run the risk of a teacher in the school [as] being put on a probationary program or whatever, an improvement program I guess.

Principals perceive the possibility of being put on notice as a negative consequence. The fear of being placed on notice is perceived as a demoralizing experience similar to actually being placed on notice.

P1: The consequences, as I understand it, are going to be that schools are put on notice; all this information is published in newspapers; which is a very demoralizing consequence for teachers and staff if you're at the bottom. I don't really understand, for example, how in this new system of ranking, we did rank at the bottom even though we are not one of the on-notice schools.
R: They ranked according to achievement and according to value-added.

P1: Both... right. And ACT scores are included in the thing. Even our per capita expenditures and everything, so that may the one factor because ... we're low compared to other schools in the state and nation on our per capita expenditure.
R: So, you're not on notice, but you are?
P1: But we're ranked low, and in many ways that we can be compiled and compared. If school systems don't show improvement, I think administrators will be removed, placed in other areas, and then I guess eventually it will be just teachers it this current system of accountability continues.

P1: Well, in ways it feels threatening. But then in other ways I feel it's like ... teachers feel threatened because it's a new system. Right now, I personally don't feel threatened because I feel like we are going to do what is required. I get the feeling that there's a lot of factors in education that aren't under your control, you know, you can't change your clientele. You work and do, and I'm not, like I said, I think our students are perfectly capable, but there are a lot of factors, like what's going on personally with students that you don't control. I guess compared to if you were working in another industry or line of work, and because education it is something hard to measure. Even though you have standardized test scores, it is still something that is not exact, you can't... there's not an exactness in it.

P1. The accountability system will probably eliminate some administrators and teachers who are just there because, in the past, it has been a job that didn't require a lot. And if this present system continues and forces counties to fire people, then it will probably be a good thing for the schools in the long run. Not good personally for those teachers...
R: Have you had to release anyone because of accountability?
P1: We haven't yet. But I feel like it, you know, that will be the next step. If you do identify teachers, but first, I think the support will be there. I feel that at this school, I have teachers that work hard, who are willing, it's just a matter of ... we're going to have to look at what we're not doing right and fix it. But I feel like that's one thing in school systems, and especially small school systems like ours, you know, there are some people who should probably be doing something else.

Stress is perceived as a negative consequence of accountability. A positive benefit; however, might be perceived as helping the school to focus on the areas that are in need of improvement.

P4: Stress ... my stress is felt by the teachers, and that makes them stressed. And it's really odd that we're having this interview today because during the

> Christmas break that's what I've been looking at...our test scores, ... our achievement, ... our gains. And based on the scores that we got in from last year, and as I look at this I say, this is not good. Now, what can we do? It's a constant planning, it's a constant analyzing, and it's constantly looking at instructional strategies. So, basically stress, but it also puts me on notice as an administrator, I've got to lead a little bit differently in order for our teachers to teach differently so our students are impacted in a positive way. I think one thing that our test data shows is that we're kind of all over the board. In some areas our high achieving students are doing well. In other areas our low achieving students are doing well. So we're trying to determine what our focus needs to be. You can't focus on 10 different things.

Principals advise using caution when making judgments about schools being good or bad. Not recognizing progress that schools make in other areas than achievement scores is perceived as a consequence of accountability. Another consequence is perceived to be the failure to recognize the different places from which students start when accountability is measured.

> P6: I think that we have to be careful in that people perceive a school as not being a good school because of test scores. For example, value added scores for our kids in math for ... gains ever since I have been here. But the report card is an F. It is sort of like running a race. If your freshmen come in and are starting at the 50-yard line and we both have to get to the 100 by May, then your kids only have to go that far and they are there. My kids, if they [were at the 0 yard line and] got to the 80 yard line and didn't make it [to the 100 yard] people don't know that because they didn't make it to the 100. But the gain ...
> R: They gained more as a percentage than the other students?
> P6: But that story is not told.
> R: But the way progress is reported may be another change that you would want to look at. ... That is very important because there again we know that kids learn at different rates and at different paces. Some kids are late bloomers. That's where we have to be careful. I guess that I contradicted myself some too. We have to be careful in that, just because that kid didn't score well or didn't do well this particular year, it doesn't mean that they can't learn. It doesn't necessarily mean that their teacher didn't do a good job. It could mean a lot of different things. It is important that when we look at the results and the scores, we know the whole picture in that accountability process, which I don't think we do now. All we do is whether they make...100% gain in value added.
> R: What about achievement? Looking at how you are doing against the norm group?

P6: Exactly. That is what happens a lot of times at schools that are behind. It's hard to win a race if you are starting from behind.

Curriculum Supervisors' Perceived Benefits. Supervisors perceive that the tests helped to improve their teaching and that it helps teachers improve their students' performance. Gateway exams will also enable the state to save approximately $14 Million dollars a year over the previous costs of End of Course tests. Supervisors perceive this as a benefit of accountability.

CS1: Benefits are you know exactly where the child stands in relation to everybody else because everybody took the test. So that's a benefit. And sometimes there are good benefits to that because sometimes a child actually performs better on the test than he is in the classroom and you say, hey, he has more ability than I'm getting. What do I need to change?

CS3: Some of the positives are, like I said when I was teaching it just started to get in the reports. That put a whole new spin on what I was doing as a teacher; a different way of thinking about things. I think it improved my teaching. Some of the reports we get where you can see how not only your overall achievement and overall gains, but then the gains by the achievement groups and knowing if you are a teacher that teaches to the high end. Those types of diagnostic tools, those are incredible. I think that is all part of the accountability. It's more than just assigning grades. It's reports that the public may not see that just are incredible. You can pinpoint so much of strengths and weaknesses. Those are positives. We have to have, we have to be able to measure what we are doing. The consequences, I think we can put too much pressure. We can put too much pressure on kids, but that usually comes because we put too much pressure on teachers. The teachers see accountability as not something that can help them or is beneficial to them, but they see in only as a negative process. We are out to get them. Then you end up with situations where you have people teaching directly to the test or worse, they are cheating on the test. That is certainly a negative.

CS3: At the high school level, again I don't know what politically led us to adopt those exit tests, but I know that we were trying to get some assessment at the high school level because it was so weak. Now, with our end of course test and Gateway we have enough where we don't need to be requiring these kids to take a test and paying $14 million a year to take that test. Then, some of them just bubble it in as a Christmas tree because they are just trying to graduate. It's been

> an experience to try and balance the budget and do all this stuff, they are going to cut all of this management, and it was never brought up to quit paying that $14-15 million a year to have to pay for that student to have to take that test.

Curriculum Supervisors' Perceived Negative Consequences. Gateway tests will be a part of students' grades as of the current school year. Ensuring that they are received in time for graduation is perceived as a potential problem if seniors are involved.

> CS2: ...These, the Gateways, are actual end of course tests. And it becomes part of their grade. So I think the State did a good thing there even though that is very difficult to manage. Getting stuff back and turned around in time for report cards—we've done it. But it made it more relevant because it was part of a high school course. The kids coming into high school know what those things are.

Tests include items that are not on always part of a grade level's objectives. Curriculum supervisors are aware of the problem, and they do not perceive that teachers are pressured about those items. However they remain part of teachers' scores. Supervisors perceive that teachers apply personal pressure despite the fact that they are not responsible for teaching those objectives.

> CS1: At the same time some of the consequences are after a child has taken this test for two-three times and he winds up at the bottom every time, he loses his self-esteem and he says "why bother?" And then you have the problem of trying to motivate him to do better and so I see self-esteem as a problem there. Also teachers they start wanting to handpick their classes. They want to pick kids that they think they can make a difference in or they can successful with and those kids that have historically scored low, they don't want a great number of those in their class because of the value added. And then we're going to publish this in the paper. That's some of the consequences that I see.

School systems that are perceived as effective are compared to neighboring districts that have similar scores. This is perceived as a consequence since; different communities have different circumstances that the public at large might not understand.

CS2: I don't think that the consequences of accountability here in our school system are when the report cards hit the newspaper, that's when we feel it. And the consequences of that have been for us is that we do not look as good as the city system down the street. And we're in kind of a unique situation here in that you drive into the city limits and you're in one of the highest performing school districts in the state. Glad to have them as neighbors, but they're tough to be neighbors with. Because no matter how hard we scramble, we're always going to be compared to them. Sometimes we should be; and sometimes we shouldn't.

The lack of alignment between curriculum and tests was described earlier. As teachers teach to tests in order for students to make higher scores, supervisors perceive that unethical practices are also increasing.

CS3: ... The consequences, I think we can put too much pressure. We can put too much pressure on kids, but that usually comes because we put too much pressure on teachers. The teachers see accountability as not something that can help them or is beneficial to them, but they see in only as a negative process. We are out to get them. Then you end up with situations where you have people teaching directly to the test or worse, they are cheating on the test. That is certainly a negative.
R: Teaching to test at elementary. Not a good correlation to curriculum. How would I fair? Less well than somebody who taught directly to the test?
CS3: You will fair well. Probably you will do less well. That is right. I think that there are going to be, in most subjects and in most of our grades, if you just teach the curriculum there are going to be some things, some items, some objectives on the test that you won't even cover or that you will cover so little that it won't really matter. If you just teach to the test, the negative consequence of that is that if you do that for every grade if every teacher does that, then at the end of eighth grade there are some things that were never touched upon.
R: In your curriculum. How do you advise teachers?

CS3: We teach to the curriculum. We try to teach to the curriculum. When we look at the scores we look at them by objective and if we see those objectives in fifth grade science that they did poorly on, our fifth grade supervisor says well, that wasn't supposed to be covered. We'll get that in 7th grade.

Directors of Schools' Perceived Positive Benefits. Directors of schools perceive that accountability has helped to focus them on improving test scores, and the tests have

helped teachers as well. It has gotten the attention of the public on the schools' progress as well.

> DS1: I think it's affected the way that I think, and it has affected the way that I expect people to teach and the way I expect people to react because we're forced into being accountable for a test score. ... The head's up list that [was] ... developed a couple of years ago, then the on-notice that was developed this year based on a test score. It's caused us all to think more about ... we don't want to be on a head's up list. We don't want to be on a notice list. And we'll do whatever we need to do to get the scores up. And I'm just as bad as anyone else. I'm pressing for increased test scores. So it's forced me as a director of schools to be more intensive if you will about what scores we actually have more than the things I said earlier about the type of child or what type of student are we actually teaching.

The benefits of it are that it's really drawn attention to how well we are actually doing in school based on that one test.

Directors perceive accountability to be important, but they do not perceive the need to threaten teachers with accountability. Instead they perceive their role as being helpful and providing leadership.

> DS2: I think it's forced me as a young director, a new director, not young, to say to myself what am I going to do to improve. It's brought me from a scattered sort of approach; I'm trying to stay focused. I'm trying to stay focused not on the accountability but putting kids first in that same mode. It's almost like they're team. But it's forced me to say, okay if I do this, is it going to help achievement or achievement scores or people in general or is it going to take away from that process? I want to do all these things but I want to bring it back to now what is it going to do, not only with accountability, but is it going to help kids? I'm task oriented. I like a list that I can check off and things, so that probably structures me more than I might be otherwise if that weren't around. So I'm trying not to let it be a threat to me, to know that they're going to judge me somewhat on what the system does. Not let it be a threat, but know it's out there.

> DS2: The benefits are as I said a minute ago, I think it gives us something to look at, something to work on, something to target. But it's only a piece of the whole, not the whole, as I see it. And that's the way I'm going to approach it.

Directors of Schools' Perceived Negative Consequences. The perceived objectivity of the accountability has shifted the focus from personalized kinds of assessments to standardized measures that do not use contextual data. This may be perceived as a positive or a negative consequence.

> DS1: ... We're not putting a face with the score any more. We're just looking at a score and seeing how well did this teacher do according to what our test scores are on how many kids did you change some other way by influencing him in some other direction as far as character and integrity and that sort of thing.

Negative publicity is perceived as a consequence that affects the community.

> DS1: The consequences are ... if you happen to be a school that's on notice or happen to be a school that's on the head's up list, the consequences there is the publicity that you receive is negative. And it's a depressing type thing for kids, for students who actually go to that school. For parents who have kids in that school. Because once that happens the really good students that have done well on the test are kind of left out there, you go to that X school and X school is a bad school. You get that stigma attached to that. You may another school almost at the same level but they're not placed on the list, so that's the consequence of the accountability system that we have now. The benefits of it are that it's really drawn attention to how well we are actually doing in school based on that one test. So that it's created a more intense atmosphere for teachers to teach more to a specific type of test. And it's, some folks say that's not a benefit, it's probably something that's giving us a kind of problem because we are teaching probably too narrow in the subject.

Politicians are perceived to disingenuous in wanting schools to be placed on the notice. Directors perceive that they are waiting for an opportunity to 'hold schools accountable.'

> DS1: Some folks on the committees who actually, as you say, were the ones that control the dollars, the only thing they were interested in was the publicity they were going to get was "Ha-ha, we finally got you!"

Funding continues to be an issue that directors of schools perceive as a consequence of accountability. Without more funding, schools cannot carryout

responsibilities associated with many state mandates. It is also difficult to hire staff in some content areas.

> R: Do you think the BEP will ever be fully funded? What is it now?
> DS1: It is totally funded now by the BEP formula. It was actually funded in 1998 for the first year that it was fully funded according to the formula. But the formula was developed in 1991 or 1992. There's been only one change made in that formula and that was made this last year when we placed into the formula another category of ELL—English learners. We put some money in a category for that. That's the only change they've made in the BEP formula. You know how outdated that can be over 8-10 year period. It is fully funded. But what's fully funded is based on the categories that were established at that point and time. ... never actually brought the schools up that were real low and couldn't afford to pay higher salaries to any type of level that they could compete. And it's even gotten worse. BEP will show that that band has actually tightened some. But if you look around and take out the top ten and factor the bottom ten, it' actually wider.
>
> R: That's interesting. This is not one of my questions here, but as far as recruiting teachers, that really exacerbates your efforts to recruit teachers; and administrators as well for that matter.
>
> DS1: It does.
>
> DS2: I think the consequences ought to be that it makes us better. Sometimes I see that not happening. I see people being bitter or resentful or thinking that here I have spent all this time in education and here they're judging me on this one little thing. But I think it ought to make us better. And that's how I going to try to sell it.

School Board Member's Perceived Positive Benefits. The School Board member perceives being required to have a plan as a positive.

> SB1: Let's see the other was positive? I think, you know, you have to have a plan.

School Board Member's Perceived Negative Consequences.

> SB1: I think the negative, one thing we've talked about, is having the things that we have to deal with that ... is law, and we have to go by it whether we actually think it's right for our system or not. But if it's the law, it's the law. We have to go by it.

Stale Level Educators' Perceived Positive Benefits. State level educators perceive a benefit of accountability to be a focus on values such as social justice and equity.

> SLE1: I've really kind of looked at accountability, if it's used in the right way, to be linked with social justice and equity. That's why the courts say any accountability model ... and I think ours would pass this test in Tennessee, I don't know about other states.

Definitions of benefits or consequences are perceived to be related how favorably one views accountability.

> SLE3: ... It depends on which side of the accountability issue you are as to whether you perceive something to be a negative consequence or a positive outcome. A person who is negative about accountability would say, it restricts what I am able to teach. My response to that is that it focuses the teacher on those things that are most essential, not necessarily on things where he or she has a particular interest. It focuses the curriculum on the students rather than on interests or preferences of individual educators. It prevents educators from being in private practice. They must be a part of the educational team for the child and not an individual player. It becomes a team sport rather than an individual sport—educating a child does. In fact, it might be a worthy close that accountability requires educators to become a team member of the child rather than an individual.

> SLE1: I think some of the positive benefits are if you operate from the idea that all kids can achieve at high levels, then this means that your expectations are higher. Not only for kids of higher socio-economic backgrounds, which is typically the case in the history of the country, but that you have high expectations for all levels, and that they are performing at high levels. Then, they can really have an opportunity to do whatever their God-given gifts have given the ability to do. I think that's important so that they can contribute to a society and contribute as good citizens...
> SLE3: Two ways. Once people learn to use the data effectively and they begin to see results, they can go from extremely negative to extremely positive overnight. Success breeds success. Those people who tend to be most negative are those who have not yet seen the positive results.

School level educators perceive a need for more criterion-referenced tests, and state level educators are working to make them a reality.

> SLE4: I think we are moving to make that change that I would change, being from a curriculum standpoint and that is, moving to true standards based assessment. We will have hopefully in our revised assessment system, not only the norm-reference test that we have been administering, but also a state-specific criterion reference to the assessment of student progress.

State Level Educators' Perceived Negative Consequences. State level educators acknowledge that there are negative consequences to accountability; however, they perceive that something can and should be done to correct them.

> SLE2: Oh yeah. You have the negative issues; you have demoralized people who are in these schools. You have parents who are wanting to pull their kids out of school. Some of the best teachers and principals that I have ever are in some of these schools. The upshot is, we're not letting the problem lie, with students continuing to not receive a good education. So, the positive is, it's good for kids.

> SLE2: You know law, Tennessee could take over schools [that are under-performing]. So by 2004 or 2005, that will happen. But in the interim we're not thinking sanctions, we're thinking technical assistance. I think drastic measures are necessary. If a mispattern continues... and that means removing the principal and the teachers or whatever, I'm for it. We just haven't gotten to that stage yet.

State Politicians' Perceived Positive Benefits. Politicians perceive that accountability will open the door for parents to choose the schools their children will attend and that the competition for students, as the money follows the child, will foster educational improvements.

> SG1: They have shown that in the cities where the vouchers have come in the public schools in that area have increased their academics faster than anybody else because suddenly there's competition there; and so competition leads to accountability.

SG1: I believe that it is good, but like I said, it's one factor. It should be a major factor because if our kids are going to learn and these test scores show that they're not achieving the levels expected, then it definitely sends up a flag where somebody needs to go in a see what the problem is.

State Politicians' Perceived Negative Consequences. One state politician perceives that there are no consequences of accountability; the other perceives education for all as a matter of national security.

SG1: As far as I know there are not consequences. I guess you have to get into what can a principal do? They cannot hire and fire their staff. And therefore it's hard to hold them accountable when their hands are tied in that way.

SG2: The consequences are in reality even if we don't have the accountability of withholding money from a teacher, or funding, or shutting a school down, the consequences are that these people are going to be a drain on society. We will have failed them and will end up in prison or not reaching their goals, low self-esteem, little girls getting pregnant. You can just look at all of the socio-economic and all those other factors all plays back to kids who are usually in trouble, usually are poorer performers in school. Of course you've got the [names person] and everything else. You have some highly educated people committing blue-collar crime, that's greed, that's the other end. That's a values problem. We'll pay for it one way or another. We might pay for it with our own lives if we are not careful, if we lose this whole country by not giving kids the opportunity.

SG2: I just reiterate the fact that if, I don't have a grudge against teacher unions. They have done their jobs well. Primarily teachers are in teachers' unions is for the insurance. When they got away from education and started going out on all of these other tangents, I think that's when they really do a disservice. I think that is part of the reason we have the trouble now. We can't get effective charter school legislation or school of choice because they have fought it through fear tactics and disinformation. That's a disservice. That is a complete disservice. We're going to see our nation turn into, if we are not already there, we're going to be a socialist nation just due to the fact that we are going to have more kids that don't know how to read and write. We are going to be pulling up the rest of the country. We will be the service industry for the rest of the world.

Summary: Research Question Three. *What are some of the positive benefits and negative consequences of the current accountability model as perceived by stakeholders?*

Stakeholders perceive that accountability has focused educators on improving instruction. The publicity surrounding school and district report cards and teacher effect scores is perceived as a motivating force in improving education.

Other consequences include certain unethical practices by teachers to boost test scores, the misalignment of the tests ands curriculum objectives, and the lack of input from stakeholders regarding the special circumstances at their schools that might affect learning. The testing of students in special education programs and very young children are mentioned as consequences of teaching. Professional responsibilities are linked to accountability, and teachers perceive the need to exercise their responsibilities and become proactive in order to address some of these concerns.

A theme that emerged was the perceptions of politicians towards schools. They perceive there to be no consequences toward schools at this time. Politicians perceive accountability to be a way to reward and sanction schools for not meeting achievement goals.

Directors of schools perceive the need to adjust the BEP funding formula to support the mandates of accountability, especially in terms of salaries and benefits for teachers. The BEP formula is outdated and it is based on indicators and funding dating back to the 1991-92 Education Improvement Act.

Table 3 shows a summary of the perceived positive benefits and the perceived negative consequences of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee.

Table 3
Summary of Perceived Positive and Perceived Negative Consequences

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
Students	**Students**
Tests give students a sense of where they stand academically relative to others. Tests make students feel better as persons knowing that they have done well.	There is stress knowing that Gateway Exams will count for 15-20% their final course grade. Some students may be disappointed if they do not pass the tests and graduate.
Teachers	**Teachers**
Having some form of accountability is good for education. It keeps everybody in line and keeps teachers from relaxing. It has strengthened the curriculum and focused teachers on teaching to the curriculum and/or the tests. Curriculum standards serve as a guide for many teachers. They help to pace instruction. Test data helps teachers diagnose, plan how to help students, and self assess how well they taught the curriculum. The Career Ladder system helped teachers earn more money. Accountability serves as a motivator in lieu of money as an incentive. The End of Course tests and tests in general have caused teachers to finish the curriculum. It helps to weed out teachers who might not be committed to	Teachers are upset when scores are not good and teachers know that students knew more than was demonstrated or covered on the tests. It's hard to get the curriculum in with so many objectives to cover. Interpreting accountability data is very time consuming, and the reports are not always easy to understand. Interpreting data often takes away from planning and teaching time. Data is not always in the form that is needed by the school. Teachers teach to the tests and eliminate curriculum items that are not tested although they may be important. Accountability affects teachers more than students. Teachers feel a great deal of stress, anxiety, and pressure to perform well or have high value added scores. Accountability has had a negative impact on teachers' abilities to be creative.

Table 3 Continued

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
education. Schools with high test scores are perceived to receive more money as rewards for their scores.	It has taken the joy out of teaching. Negative publicity is generated when scores are published in the newspapers. Relying upon one test to make judgments about teacher effect and student performance is a negative consequence. Teachers in low achieving schools are penalized because of their school assignments. They may have good evaluations; however, they are stereotyped outside of their schools as being ineffective. There is a mistrust associated with principals' access to teachers' value added scores and the intended uses verses the espoused uses of that data. It is unfair that not all teachers are evaluated using value added assessment. This pits some teachers against other teachers. The quality of teaching has suffered because of the emphasis on accountability. Teachers have made tradeoffs in terms of covering the material versus teaching for mastery of important objectives or concepts. The potential loss of funds and the fear of being taken over by the state are very threatening to teachers. Teachers fear that they lose their jobs over poor teacher effect scores based on students' value added gain scores. Scores do not reflect what is taught in classes, and many students do not take the tests seriously.

Table 3 Continued

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
	Stressors may cause teachers to switch to subjects or grades that are not tested; some may leave education altogether. Low achieving schools are perceived as being subservient to other high achieving schools. It's as if the students haven't learned anything and the teachers haven't taught them anything. Low pay and high stakes accountability may contribute to the teacher shortage in areas that are difficult to fill such as higher levels of mathematics.
Principals	**Principals**
Value added gain scores provide information about teachers' effectiveness, and they are helpful in making placement decisions at certain grade levels. Positive report cards are a selling point for homes in the community.	Negative report cards can cause the community to look at the school in a negative way. Being put on notice is a negative consequence. The fear of being put on notice is as demoralizing as being put on notice. Some schools that ranked at the bottom are on notice while others aren't. It's difficult to understand how the system works. Stress is a negative consequence of accountability. The state's failure to recognize schools' progress in other areas than test scores is a negative consequence. The failure to recognize the different places from which students started is also a negative consequence of accountability. Schools are perceived as good schools or

Table 3 Continued

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
	they are not perceived as good schools solely on the basis of test scores.
Curriculum Supervisors	**Curriculum Supervisors**
Tests helped curriculum supervisors improve their own classroom teaching. They also perceive that tests help classroom teachers to improve instruction. Approximately $14 Million dollars will be saved as a result of moving to the Gateway Exams versus the End of Course Tests. Teachers know how students rank according to other students tested. If students perform well on tests but not in the classroom, the teacher has another indicator of the students' achievement than might otherwise be available without the tests. Tests can be used as diagnostic tools. Teachers can assess the changes that they might need to make to meet students' needs of high or low achieving students. Reports give teachers information about the overall achievement of groups of students. Tests pinpoint many strengths and weaknesses. Gateway tests are more relevant because they are part of the course grade. Students entering high school know what the tests are. Curriculum supervisors do not	Too much pressure can be placed on students. That comes from putting too much pressure on teachers. Teachers see accountability in negative terms as opposed to something that can help them. Students have not always taken tests seriously. Some have drawn patterns instead of taking the tests and doing their best. The state looks at making cuts in management before considering cutting tests. Gateway tests saved millions of dollars. Gateway tests are part of students' grades for this year. They may not be received in time if they are going to be used for graduation. Getting tests back in time for report card grades is difficult to manage. There is a lack of alignment between the curriculum and the tests. Teachers place pressure on themselves to do well on tests even when items are not part of their curriculum. Items remain part of teachers' value added scores even though they may not be part of their curriculum objectives. This could impact whether a teacher's scores are perceived as positive or negative.

Table 3 Continued

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
pressure teachers about the tests when they do not align with the grade level or curriculum objectives for a particular subject.	Teachers teach to the tests and engage in unethical practices in an attempt to improve their value added scores. Report cards are used to compare districts to each other. Teaching to the tests may result in some curriculum items never being covered in school. Items are still included in reports.
Directors of Schools	**Directors of Schools**
Accountability helped to focus directors of schools and teachers on improving test scores. It has gotten the public's attention concerning school progress. Accountability has affected the way directors think as well as the way they expect teachers to teach and react toward the tests. Schools don't want to be on the heads up list. It has forced some directors to think more about the tests than about the type of students they are teaching. Others say they are putting students first while maintaining focus on the tests. It has created a team environment that looks at the impact of meeting one requires at the expense of another. It's drawn the attention of how well schools are doing based on one test.	The focus of testing has shifted from personalized assessment to standardized tests. Personal data about the schools are not considered in the test reports. Faces are not associated with accountability tests. There is a stigma associated with negative publicity. Being on notice is depressing for the students, staff, and the community. Politicians are waiting for an opportunity to hold schools accountable. Funding has not kept pace with accountability demands. Many mandates cannot be carried out without funds. Funding discrepancies have widened instead of equalizing the disparities between schools. Funding issues make it difficult to recruit and maintain highly qualified staff.

Table 3 Continued

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
The role of the director is perceived as being a helper and providing leadership versus threatening teachers.	
School Board Member	**School Board Member**
School districts have a plan to follow.	Districts are forced to go along with accountability whether they like it or feel that it is good for their system or not.
State Level Educators	**State Level Educators**
Accountability focuses on social justice and equity if used in the right way. Benefits and consequences are related to how favorable one feels about accountability. Accountability focuses teachers on the most essential learnings. It focuses on the curriculum versus the interests or preferences of teachers. It prevents educators from being in private practice. Accountability creates teams versus individual players. It creates high expectations for all students to achieve. Students have an opportunity to reach their potential in order to become good citizens and contributing members of society. Once schools begin to achieve, they see that success breeds more success.	Those opposed to accountability perceive that it restricts teaching. Curriculum does not yet match the tests; however, the state is moving toward this goal. Low performing schools have people who are demoralized and want their children out of the schools. Many good teacher and principals are in low achieving schools. By 2004-2005, the state will take over low performing schools.

Table 3 Continued

Perceived Positive Benefits	Perceived Negative Consequences
Accountability is moving toward true standards-based assessment with state criterion referenced tests to accompany norm-referenced tests. Students in low performing schools will not continue to receive inadequate educations. Technical assistance is being offered from the state to avoid taking over low performing schools by 2004-2005.	
State Politicians	**State Politicians**
Accountability will enable parents to choose where they will send their children to school. The competition for students, as money follows the child, will force schools to improve. Tests signal whether students are learning and tell if assistance is needed.	There are no negative consequences perceived to be associated with accountability. Principals cannot hire and fire staffs. It is hard to hold them accountable when their hands are tied in that way. If money is not withheld or schools are not shut down, people [incompetent high school graduates] might become a drain on society. More will end up in prison and unwed pregnancies will like increase. Teachers' unions have used fear tactics and 'disinformation,' and they have prevented charter school and choice legislation from passing.

Chapter V

Discussion, Conclusions, And Recommendations

Overview of the Study

Since the Education Improvement Act (EIA) was passed in 1991, the focus on education in Tennessee has changed significantly. The intent of the EIA was to level the educational playing field in terms of the funding and the quality of education. The goal was to remove economic barriers to the quality of education, which were largely related to where in Tennessee students happened to live.

Although all districts expressed a need for more money for education, small and rural districts experienced the greatest disparities. They filed a lawsuit to address funding equalization, and the funding that occurred through a small increase in sales taxes became the primary source of the increased funding. With the increased funding came a call for accountability for the money. What results were the taxpayers going to see for their 'bucks?'

Over a decade later, many of the same issues remain. The second lawsuit for equalization is pending as of this writing. Schools are still in need of additional funding for education. Attempts to pass new sales taxes or to legislate alternative sources of funding have been unsuccessful. The state of Tennessee is facing considerable budget cuts as it continues to balance funding and increasing accountability demands.

The primary sources of data used in the study were interviews from 60 educational stakeholders. Included in the list of participants were three students, 36 teachers, a teacher assistant, six principals, one assistant principal, three curriculum supervisors, three directors of schools, one school board member, four state level

educators, and two state politicians. Documents such as report cards, achievement reports, websites, and school improvement plans were among the artifacts reviewed in the study. The researcher's observations and reflections were also a source of data.

This study was designed to explore the perceptions of various educational stakeholders in Tennessee concerning the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the accountability policy system. Three research questions were asked in the study.

1. *What differences are perceived, if any, by different stakeholders concerning the meaning, the purposes, the evidences, the appropriateness, and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee?*
2. *What suggestions, if any, do different stakeholders offer to improve the appropriateness and the effectiveness of current accountability policy system?*
3. *What are some of the positive benefits and negative consequences of the current accountability model as perceived by stakeholders?*

Summary of Findings: Question One. What differences are perceived, if any, by different stakeholders concerning the meaning, the purposes, the evidences, the appropriateness, and the effectiveness of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee?

- All stakeholders in the study perceive accountability to be a high stakes mandate (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- All stakeholders define accountability as responsibility to do their jobs (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).

- Although they have many opinions about the appropriateness, effectiveness, benefits, and the consequences of accountability, they perceive that their voices are not heard or taken seriously (T, AP, P, DS).
- Educators are encouraged to discuss accountability results; however, the appropriateness of the policy system is not a topic that they are given an opportunity to debate (T, AP, P, CS, DS).
- State level educators and politicians perceive questions about changes to accountability to be 'against' or 'not in favor' of accountability (SLE, SG).
- While as few as eight of the 36 teachers and one principal agree that the current policy is an appropriate and effective way to measure learning, the remaining teachers and administrators in the study do not share the view that it is appropriate and effective (T, P).
- One size does not fit all when it comes to accountability, yet schools perceive that they are not permitted to include contextual data about their specific schools to assist in evaluating their effectiveness (T, AP, P, CS, DS).
- All stakeholders acknowledge the presence of contextual data as being important; however, it is not included in accountability (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- Some teachers, principals, and directors of school wonder whether students are learning as well as in the past. The instructional focus is perceived to be on covering the curriculum versus mastering concepts (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).

- Funding continues to be of concern in the state as schools face dire budgets (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- Many districts are finding it difficult to hire quality teachers without attractive salary and benefit packages. The BEP has not been updated since it was developed in 1991-92 except for ESL programs. Rural and inner city districts find it difficult to hire and maintain many highly qualified teachers because of low salaries.
- Value added scores are perceived to be fairer than standardized achievement scores; however, it was perceived that norm-referenced achievement scores are aligned along socio-economic lines (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- All schools are held to the same expectations in terms of measuring progress regardless of their circumstances (T, AP, P, CS, DS).
- Some educators perceive single test administrations as not being fair to students and teachers (T, AP, P, CS, DS).
- Educators would like to see accountability measures broadened to include additional information about the schools and programs for students (T, AP, P, CS, DS).
- The negative publicity surrounding accountability testing is perceived by school personnel as demoralizing (T, AP, P, CS, DS).

Summary of Findings: Question Two. *What suggestions, if any, do different stakeholders offer to improve the appropriateness and the effectiveness of current accountability policy system?*

Stakeholders' suggestions for improving the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the current accountability system fell into four major categories, which are Curriculum, Testing and Reporting, Teacher Evaluations, and Funding issues. They perceive the following suggestions as ways to improve, accountability.

Curriculum Suggestions.

- Align tests with curriculum to reduce teaching to the tests and to broaden the curriculum (S, T, P, CS, DS, SLE).
- Hold students more accountable by increasing the percentage of weight assigned to the Gateway Exams, and test students early to ensure opportunities to pass (T).
- Focus on teaching the curriculum versus teaching to the tests (T, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).

Testing and Reporting Suggestions.

- Test random samplings of students at benchmark years versus conducting census testing yearly to save money and reduce testing (T).
- Test all students in all subjects and produce value added scores to reduce jealousy and avoid pitting one teacher against another (T, P, DS).
- Initiate multiple testing sessions versus annual testing (T, P, DS).
- Consider testing special education students according to the modifications with which they are taught in classroom settings (T, P).
- Eliminate testing of young children below third grade, especially kindergarten (T).

- Reduce the time requirements of analyzing assessment reports and make them easier for the faculty and the public to understand (T, P, DS).
- Incorporate the use of soft data as a part of the schools' accountability information to develop an understanding of the challenges that schools face daily (T, P, DS).
- Develop criterion-referenced tests to align testing with the curriculum.

Teacher Evaluation Suggestions.

- Incorporate a peer evaluation component into the evaluation process (T).
- Incorporate outside evaluators to assist principals with adverse personnel actions (DS).
- Extend the principals' authority to hire, fire, and evaluate teachers (P, SG).

Funding Suggestions.

- Improve funding for the BEP to incorporate changes over the last decade due to inflation (T, P, DS).
- Impose monetary sanctions on schools that do not improve over time (P).

Summary of Findings: Question Three. *What are some of the positive benefits and negative consequences of the current accountability model as perceived by stakeholders?*

The positive and negative benefits of accountability are perceived to fall into the following categories. The perceived positive benefits are clustered under three main categories. The categories are Curriculum and Professional Development, Perceived Benefits to Students, and Areas of Consensus.

Perceived Positive Benefits of the Accountability Policy System.

Curriculum and Professional Development

- Guides teachers by providing them with a Curriculum Framework (T).
- Resulted in more money for Career Ladder teachers (T).
- Focuses teachers on the curriculum objectives (T, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- Strengthens the curriculum; teachers finish the curriculum (T).
- Helps diagnose strengths and weaknesses to plan staff development (T, P).
- Motivates teachers to improve teaching/achievement in lieu of monetary reward (T, SG, CS).
- Sets high expectations for teachers to perform (SG).
- Weeds out teachers that are not committed to education (T, P).
- Provides information about teachers' effectiveness (AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- Assists principals in placing teachers where they might be more effective (AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).

Perceived Benefits to Students

- Gives students a sense of accomplishment (S).
- Benefits the students (T).
- Is good for education (T).
- Focuses education on values of social justice and equity (SLE).
- Opens the door for parents to have choices in schools (SG).
- Lets the money follow the child; competition leads to school improvement (SG).

Areas of Consensus

- Focuses teachers on the curriculum objectives (T, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- Provides information about teachers' effectiveness (AP, P, CS, DS, SLE, SG).
- Motivates teachers to improve teaching/achievement in lieu of monetary reward (T, SG, CS).
- Improves teaching (T, CS, SLE).

Perceived Negative Consequences of the Accountability Policy System. The perceived negative consequences of accountability were categorized into four categories. The categories are Personal and Professional Concerns, Testing and Reporting Concerns, Curriculum and Instruction Concerns, and Funding Concerns.

Personal and Professional Concerns

- Demoralizes employees with the fear of being placed on notice (T, P, DS).
- Is unfair to children in special education and other special programs; not all students are tested at the same instructional levels as they are taught (T).
- Causes stress since Gateway Exams count for 15-20% of students' grades (S, P).
- Causes disappointment if students fail the exams and don't graduate (S).
- Affects teachers' ability to be creative (T).
- Has taken the joy out of teaching (T).
- Has created stress around negative report cards (T).
- Penalizes teachers in low achieving schools; 'pigeon-holes' teachers (T).
- Creates mistrust surrounding the tests (T).

- Pits teachers against teachers; some are assessed with value added assessments while others are not (T, P, CS).
- May cause some colleagues to leave education (T).
- Leads to unethical behavior if teachers cheat to improve scores (T, P, CS, DS).

Testing and Reporting Concerns

- Fosters teaching to the tests (T).
- Lacks alignment with curriculum objectives (T, AP, P, CS, DS, SLE).
- Relies solely on one test (T, P, DS).
- Requires too much time interpreting tests (T, P, CS, DS).
- Fosters testing practices that are not appropriate for young children (T).
- Is closely linked to students' socio-economic status (T, P, CS, DE, SLE).
- Value added scores often arrive too late to help teachers with students tested (T).

Curriculum and Instruction Concerns

- Eliminates many important objectives if they are not tested (T, P, CS, DS, SLE).
- Influences how teachers teach [as well as what to teach] (T).
- Affects teachers more than students (T, AP, P, DS, SG).
- Affects the quality of teaching (T).
- Causes trade-offs between covering tests or teaching for curriculum mastery (T).
- Counts as 15-20% of the grade in certain classes (CS).
- Doesn't align with the curriculum in elementary schools and middle schools (T, P, CS).
- Shifted the focus from personal assessments to standardized tests (DS, P, T).

- Is used to put school on notice (P, DS).
- Does not fund all mandates and affects hiring/maintaining teachers (DS, P, T).
- Causes schools to deal with negative publicity (T, P, CS, SLE, SB1).
- Does not reflect the realities and challenges faced by schools (T, AP, P, DS).

Funding Concerns

- Threatens schools with the potential loss of funds and jobs (T, P, DS).
- Rewards some schools with funds they may not need them (T, P).
- Has not equalized funding; BEP is not current with inflation and prices (DS).

Discussions and Conclusions

Standpoint Theory (Harding, 1989; 1996; Keller & Longino, 1996; Olensen, 2000) was used to guide the data collection and the data analysis to ascertain stakeholders' perceptions about the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the accountability policy system. As I have reflected on the research questions and the data that were explored, I have come upon the following questions: Who, if any, are the stakeholders that have been marginalized by accountability? In what ways have they been marginalized? More importantly, what can be done about the perceptions that they have been marginalized? The following conclusions are drawn from the research and from my reflections on the study.

My first thought is that there is no right or wrong answer to questions about the appropriateness or effectiveness of accountability. Each stakeholder is affected differently by accountability and is assumed to be truthful about their experiences, as they

perceive them. These differences are based on stakeholders' positions or roles in the educational or state government systems.

There are educational stakeholders that have been marginalized by accountability. It is clear that teachers perceive that they have been left out of the accountability debate, and they perceive that they have been ignored when they have tried to enter the conversation (Kogan, 1986; Keller & Longino, 1996; Leithwood, 1999; Popham, 2001). A recent example would be comments by a teacher who said that she was part of the original group of educators that worked on a committee with Dr. Sanders twelve years ago when TVAAS was being discussed.

She and other teachers advised at that time that it was not appropriate to ignore the special characteristics of schools, and they advocated including personal data about schools in school reports. It was not meant to be an indictment against Dr. Sanders; however, it is important in terms of accountability history. Early NAEP and NCES reports recommended including contextual data about schools and students as well the importance of educational discourse among educators and other stakeholders (Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990). To ignore the soft data and rely solely upon hard data in the form of a single test, as in the current Tennessee accountability policy system, continues the pattern of marginalizing teachers. Throughout the literature there is support for my findings and conclusions about marginalization (Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990; Popham, 2001). Typically, teachers are ignored except for discussions about the results of accountability as measured by standardized test scores (Kogan, 1986; "Key to School Success," 2001, March; Johnson, 1975; Norris, 1990). Popham (2001) argued that educators, themselves, are to blame for not speaking out against this form of

accountability and for not advocating for more appropriate and broader forms of accountability during the formative stages of policy development.

What is different in this study is that, in addition to being ignored, teachers perceive that they are also victimized or penalized by the accountability policy system. Teachers stated that they are more accountable than students. Students in Tennessee are assessed using tests that do not match the curriculum at the elementary and middle school grades especially. Student achievement scores and teacher effect data can actually be used to place schools on notice if test scores do not improve after a period of time. Low scores could result in the loss of money for the school and a loss of status in the eyes of the school community. This fear of sanctions and the high stakes nature of the tests create tremendous pressures for teachers to perform effectively. Some may see sanctions as negative consequences; others may view them as positive benefits. Teachers regularly observe students in their classes who do not take the tests seriously, yet they receive teacher effect scores based on these data. There is not a high level of alignment between the curriculum and the tests. There is also concern that the tests are not precise enough to measure the kinds of changes in learning that state educators and politicians believe they should measure. These findings were also consistent with the concerns identified in the findings of other researchers (McNeil, 1997; 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1997; 1999; Purpel & Shapiro, 1995; Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Bracey, 2000a; 2000b; 2000c).

Students have also been marginalized by the accountability policy system. Teachers expressed many concerns about the testing of students enrolled in special education classes and how the learning and testing environments are not consistent. Students' IEPs must state the conditions under which they are to be tested. Somehow, the

modifications for classroom instruction and conditions for testing these students are not in alignment. The laws regarding students in special education must be followed; however, the needs of the students must also be respected. A policy that was intended to ensure that students in special education classes are learning should not have the effect of causing them harm. Perhaps the most unexpected finding in the study was the degree to which teachers perceive that students in special education programs, who are generally believed to be the most protected and well represented group of students, are harmed by the accountability policy system.

Teachers expressed similar concerns about the testing practices associated with primary-grade students. While many teachers, principals, and directors of schools perceive that more practice testing will improve students' scores, others perceive that it is not appropriate to test such young children. They perceive that a better use of time would be to engage the students in meaningful instruction versus paper and pencil drills designed to teach such young children to properly bubble in test responses. Where are the advocacy groups to speak out for these students? Where is the moral outrage about the perceived negative consequences of the accountability policy system?

Another conclusion is that accountability is pitting teachers against each other because of what they perceive as an unfair practice involving value added testing. Although teachers do not perceive the tests to be effective or appropriate measures of their teaching or their students' learning, and they do not perceive that teachers should be assessed using the tests, teachers and principals still support having all of their colleagues subjected to testing. They believe that all teachers should have value added gain scores. If tests disproportionately affect minority students, poor students, and students with various

at-risk factors as researchers posit (Oakes, 1999; McNeil, 1997; 2000; Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Popham, 2001), then their teachers are also adversely affected.

The same attitude of all teachers being assessed applies to all students being tested including very young children. Despite concerns about the tests in general and the concerns about testing young children, teachers still want all children tested. At least 50% of the schools in Tennessee actually test their kindergarten through second grade students, at the schools' expense, although the state does not require testing until third grade according to a state official (SLE 3).

Principals perceive that testing the students early will enable them to have plenty of practice taking tests, which gives them a baseline before value added scores become effective in third grade, and might also enhance their value added gain scores. Much time is spent teaching young children to bubble in responses versus involving them in engaging and enriching learning activities. It also gives the principals value added gain scores on the students' teachers just as they have for teachers in grades three through eight. This form of 'misery loves company' is a direct result of the high stakes accountability policy in Tennessee. Teachers and principals made this suggestion because they want to be treated equally as professionals, not necessarily because they believe that testing is in the best interest of children or best practices. Equal treatment of teachers and students under an accountability policy system that is perceived to be an inappropriate and ineffective policy to measure what students learn and what teachers do in school is not considered, by this researcher, as an example of showing concern for the values of equity and social justice. Some researchers posit that high stakes accountability tests are generally at low-levels, and they have not improved achievement. Instead it has narrowed

the curriculum by fostering teaching to the tests and may be eroding the quality of education (Popham, 2001; Amrein & Berliner, 2002; McNeil 1997; 2000; Darling-Hammond; 1997; 1999). These are important issues that deserve to be debated so that educators can discuss the pros and cons of testing all students with standardized tests, and especially the groups that teachers perceive to be the most vulnerable, students in special education, primary age students, and students in other special or remedial programs.

Principals are also victims of the accountability policy system. They are responsible for personnel, students, and programs, but they do not have the authority to hire and fire their own personnel. Not being able to remove ineffective teachers from the schools is perceived as a serious hindrance to making significant school improvements. How can schools improve if principals cannot remove ineffective faculty members or if they cannot hire the best qualified teachers? Tenured teachers are difficult to remove even if they are not performing effectively. It is perceived as almost impossible to remove in the same year multiple ineffective teachers. Most executives do not have such restrictions associated with personnel management.

From the suggestions for improving accountability, which were listed previously under Question Two, it can be concluded that staff development and funding are also areas that need immediate attention if educators are to be held accountable. Teachers, principals, curriculum supervisors, directors of schools, state level educators, and politicians readily admit that teachers are teaching to the tests instead of the curriculum. The impact is that the curriculum is not being taught systematically across all grade levels, and foundational concepts and knowledge are not being built upon from grade to grade. In other words, teaching to the test may be undermining the curriculum that has

been deemed as important by the Tennessee Department of Education. Educators in the study all know that the problem exists, but what is being done about it? McNeil (1997; 2000) and Popham (2001) also found in their studies that defensive teaching and unethical practices were likely to surface in high stakes accountability systems, and Amrein & Berliner (2002) found that the gains shown on many high stakes accountability tests are not transferring to other assessments such as the NAEP, SAT, or ACT tests. These researchers attribute the lack of transfer of learning to teaching narrowly to the tests and not actively engaging students in broader forms of learning activities that can be measured in a variety of ways.

Teachers perceive that there are more appropriate and effective ways to teach and to measure progress to ensure that students learn well. The literature also supports this perception (Popham, 2001; Gardner, 1999; Sizer, 1992; Darling-Hammond, 1997; 1999).

Adequate funding is needed to enable school districts to hire the best qualified teachers and to enable them to maintain the teachers that are currently employed. Teachers, principals, and directors of schools fear that accountability will cause many older teachers to leave education or retire early, and many new graduates may not enter the profession at all. Many educators are going to other states to teach. If accountability is to work, there must be qualified teachers in classrooms.

The accountability policy system must be reexamined to see if the millions of dollars spent on accountability might be used to develop more appropriate and effective forms of accountability based on assessments that are more aligned to the curriculum objectives, which give teachers guidance about what is to be taught and how it might be assessed (Popham, 2001).

Educators need time to discuss best practices and to learn from each other. This may require release time in order for educators to come together. Time is closely tied to money, so funding is also of primary concern if educators are to work together and engage in discourse about teaching and learning.

The following conclusions are related to question three regarding the perceived positive benefits and negative consequences of accountability. There were many more negative consequences of accountability than there were perceived positive benefits. They were listed previously in the Findings for Question Three so they will not be repeated here. In addition to those concerns, a new Tennessee accountability report stated that teachers are not using tests to improve instruction (Locker, 2002, April; Morgan, Cour, & Detch, 2002). Teachers, principals, curriculum supervisors, and directors of schools admit that teachers are teaching to the tests versus teaching the curriculum, which has the effect of narrowing, undermining or destroying the curriculum. Accountability and teaching to the tests have been found to erode the quality of education, since many skills that are deemed by state education departments of education to be important are not being taught. The high gains that are shown on many state assessments are not showing up on other highly regarded and widely used forms of assessments such as the NAEP, ACTs, and SATs (Popham, 2001; Amrein & Berliner, 2002).

Finally, based on Standpoint Theory, the researcher was interested in knowing if stakeholders' views differed in terms of their age, race, sex, or years of experience in education. There were great similarities within the stakeholders' perceptions; however, the differences appeared to be more closely related to the kinds of school environments that stakeholders were in rather than the factors identified age, race, or sex. For example,

urban and rural principals had similar concerns about funding, staffing, and improving student achievement. Urban, suburban and rural teacher groups, regardless of race, age, experience or sex, had similar concerns about students not taking the tests seriously. The same is true regarding their concerns about the standardized testing of young children and other students in special education. The teachers and principals all expressed similar concerns about the need for staff development.

There were some differences shown in perceptions of accountability between more experienced and less experienced teachers. The teachers who had taught prior to accountability (10 years of more) were more likely to regard the accountability policy system as inappropriate or ineffective. They perceived that accountability has robbed them of their creativity and the joy of teaching. Teachers with less experience teaching in Tennessee were less likely to perceive the accountability policy system as inappropriate or ineffective; however, approximately two thirds of the teachers perceived that the policy system was not appropriate and effective. Teachers did not express other noticeable differences in perceptions according to the other standpoints identified.

The conclusions drawn from the study were helpful in offering recommendations to the field and to the participants. Following below are the recommendations from the study.

Recommendations

The recommendations offered from this study are based on the Findings and center on the following areas of concern. They are issues of Testing and Reporting, Professional Development, Funding, and Personnel Evaluation, and Opportunities for

Dialogue on Accountability. These recommendations are directly related to the themes that emerged during the course of the study, problems that were identified, the positive and negative consequences of accountability, and the suggestions for improving accountability.

Testing Recommendations.

1. The accountability policy system in Tennessee should be disbanded and rebuilt using the current research on assessment with input from educators who have been marginalized by the policy system. Accountability decisions about students, teachers, principals, and schools in general should not rely solely upon scores derived from three-year averages that are based on a standardized test. Stakeholders perceive and the literature supports the idea that it is possible to have large-scale testing that informs instruction, which is not based on a single standardized test (Popham, 2001; Bracey, 200a; 2000b; 2000c; McNeil; 1997; 2000; Darling-Hammond; 1997; 1999; Gardner; 1999; Purpel & Shapiro, 1995).
2. The curriculum should be revised to include fewer 'major concepts' that students are expected to learn (Popham, 2001). Tests should be revised to match the curriculum if they are to become meaningful. Educators should be involved in constructing the tests, and the objectives should have clear descriptors that will enable them to be taught and assessed effectively (Popham, 2001; Sizer, 1992; McNeil, 1997; 2000).
3. Teachers, principals, curriculum supervisors, and directors of schools must have input into the testing policies and the accountability measures that are used. As professionals, they face the dilemmas of teaching to the tests and making high

achievement gains, or teaching the mandated curriculum and risking receiving lower gain scores. Unethical testing practices are brought about because of the fears and stresses associated with the high stakes accountability policy system. Teachers, principals, curriculum supervisors, and directors of schools should become proactive in meeting with other local principals, school boards, the State Board of Education, local politicians, and state legislators to initiate dialogues about accountability and bring about changes in the laws that they perceive to be detrimental to all students and especially those enrolled in kindergarten - second grade, special education classes, ESL, and other special programs.

4. Testing reports should be made less complicated to read and interpret. Specialized reports should be provided for principals, based on their schools' needs if that capability is not currently available. Teachers and principals appeared to be confused about many of the capabilities of the current system and have misinformation about the tools that are available to them, the uses of accountability data, and policies governing the special education concerns that were expressed. These perceptions should be addressed immediately and pervasively to help teachers and principals meet the needs of students.

Professional Development.

5. It is recommended that teachers and principals receive professional development in interpreting assessment reports and in communicating the information to parents. Many principals and teachers are overwhelmed by the data they receive and the reports that they must prepare based on the data. An example would be the school improvement plans. They perceive that the rubric for school planning, which must

be followed, is cumbersome and that the test reports are difficult to interpret. The combination of these two documents coupled with the demands inherent in the principalship and classroom teaching create the perception that they are asked to do impossible jobs. The terms principals used to describe these reports and accountability in general were 'unwieldy' and 'a monster.'

6. It is recommended that teachers and principals receive professional development that will enable them to teach to the curriculum objectives versus teaching to the test items. Often, teachers and principals used the two terms 'tests' and 'objectives' interchangeably, and the data show that teachers, principals, curriculum supervisors, and directors of schools are aware that the practice is occurring. As one of the stakeholders stated, " ... everything is not of equal importance ..." (SL3), and teachers must teach the curriculum in order to build upon concepts from grade to grade. Teaching to the test is more acceptable if the curriculum and the tests are aligned; however, presently that is only a reality at the high school level.

Funding.

7. The BEP should be adjusted to reflect for current costs of operating schools and to adjust for inflation that has occurred over the past decade or more of accountability. Directors of schools and other educators perceive that it is not possible for schools to operate with increasing accountability and dwindling budgets. Teachers' salary increases must be added to the BEP formula, which would likely require changes in the EIA. A second lawsuit is pending regarding the funding equalization issue. All of the stakeholder groups should join forces to

advocate for increased funding for education in Tennessee in order to meet the state accountability mandates and the needs of students.

8. Discourse must take place regarding the vast expenditure of millions of dollars for accountability at the same time that schools are being forced to cut millions of dollars from their operating budgets due to funding deficits. Tennessee spent approximately $10.3 million dollars on testing last year, and a total of $23 million on accountability including payroll (Morgan, Cour, and Detch, 2002). Can the state of Tennessee continue to afford to pay the high costs of high stakes accountability?

Personnel Evaluation.

9. Teachers, principals, and directors of schools expressed concerns about personnel evaluations. Teachers would like what is described in the literature as a more professional model of evaluation involving peer observations, coaching and mentoring. These are highly regarded forms of professional development and have the potential of educational leadership at all levels of the school organization (Guskey, 1998; 1999; Hirsh & Anderson 2000). Creating a professional accountability model would enable teachers to assume more responsibility or accountability for their development and for their students' learning. It may also shift the emphasis from passing tests to improving learning through a variety of measures.

Opportunities for Dialogue on Accountability.

10. One of the goals of the study was to create opportunities for dialogue or discourse

focus group sessions that were conducted in this study, these were highly productive sessions that generated a wealth of data. Educators and politicians wanted to talk about education. Each participant was passionate about his or her beliefs about education. These perceptions or educational values are critical to the continued improvement of education in Tennessee. Each group of stakeholders has something important to bring to the discussion. There is a story to tell about the impact of the current accountability policy system in Tennessee. It is recommended that community forums be scheduled throughout the state to initiate dialogue similar to that which occurred in this study. Each participant, along with the researcher, should commit himself or herself to begin this much-needed dialogue to understand, communicate, and to hopefully improve upon the accountability policy system in Tennessee.

Recommendations For Further Study

The students in this study are 18 year-old graduating seniors. They have already completed their End Of Course Exams and perceive that they are poised to graduate in May 2002. Because they are not affected by the Gateway tests, which will affect 15-20% of the final grades in Algebra and Biology this year and the core areas in future years, they do not have first hand knowledge about the effects of the Gateway tests. It is recommended that the study be replicated when the current freshman classes reach senior status in order to gain the perceptions of 18 year-old adult students after they have experienced this new form of accountability in the form of Gateway Exams first-hand.

A study should be conducted to ascertain how minority and poor students are affected by high stakes accountability tests. For example, Amrein & Berliner (2002), found that in Michigan a lawsuit was filed by minority parents over the disparate number of minority students failing tests.

Teachers were very concerned about the effects of testing on certain groups of students, particularly students in special education and the primary grades. A third recommendation is to replicate this study with a single school district focusing on parents, teachers, principals, and students in special education classes or students in grades kindergarten through two to ascertain how they perceive accountability is affecting their students. There is a need to know if these students are being harmed by the tests, or whether the teachers' concerns continue to exist.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Table 4 Interview Protocol

Educational Values And Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas And Moral Imperatives

Code # _____ Gender ____ Yrs. of Experience _____ Race _____ Age___

Introductions

1. Tell me what you know about accountability. What does it mean to you?
2. What experiences have you had with accountability? Tell me your best and worst accountability stories.
3. How do you know if a school, or your child's school, is a good school? What would convince you that it was or wasn't a good school?
4. Do you believe that the present accountability system is a good way to measure what goes on in schools?
5. Is it a good way to measure what students learn and what teachers do in schools? Why or why not?
6. Are there things that happen in schools that are important educationally, which may not be measured by the present accountability system? If so, what are they?
7. How do you believe that accountability should be measured?
8. In what ways do you feel you have been affected by accountability?
9. If you could change anything about accountability in Tennessee, what would it be? Why?
10. What do you think are the consequences of accountability? What are some of the benefits of accountability?
11. Is there anyone that you would recommend to be interviewed for this study?

Sample Letter to Directors of Schools
October 2001

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear _____:

I am a doctoral candidate in education at the University of Tennessee. This letter serves as a request for permission to conduct research in two schools in your school district. It is also an invitation for you, or your designee, and key central office staff to participate in this study. The title of the study is "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives". The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of selected educational stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations they might offer for improving the current accountability policy system.

The information from this study will be of great significance and interest to educators and other stakeholders. Most accountability systems have relied on the use of standardized test results; however, few accountability studies have focused on the appropriateness of those accountability systems, the benefits, or the perceived harmful effects of relying primarily on objectives-based accountability as the sole evidences of student achievement.

The study will take place during the fall of 2001 and spring of 2002. Interviews will be conducted with individuals or small groups of no more than 10 staff members, parents, and adult students who are at least 18 years old. Observations in selected classrooms will also be made. Interviews will be conducted at the school sites during the school day, or at the convenience of the participants. Interviews will last for approximately 45 minutes. An audiotape recorder will be used to tape the interviews. Staff members will be asked to share certain public documents such as School Report Cards, TVAAS results, and administrative policies.

Enclosed are sample letters and consent forms, which will be sent to principals, staff members, and parents once your informed consent has been obtained. Principals will also be given copies to distribute to 18 year-old adult students to invite them to participate in the study.

If it is acceptable for your district to participate, the University of Tennessee requires that I have your written permission on official letterhead. My goal is to initiate the study as soon as possible, and your prompt response to this request would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Faye E. Patterson
University of Tennessee

Sample Letter to School Principals
October 2001

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear _____:

I am a doctoral candidate in education at the University of Tennessee. (Name of Director of Schools)_____ has granted approval to conduct research in your school district. This letter serves as a request for your school to participate in this study. The title of the study is "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives." The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of selected educational stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations they might offer for improving the current accountability policy system.

The information from this study will be of great significance and interest to educators and other stakeholders. Most accountability systems have relied on the use of standardized test results; however, few accountability studies have focused on the appropriateness of those accountability systems, the benefits, or the perceived harmful effects of relying primarily on objectives-based accountability as the sole evidences of student achievement.

The study will take place during the fall of 2001 and spring of 2002. Interviews will be conducted with individuals or small groups of no more than 10 staff members, parents, and adult students who are at least 18 years old. Staff observations will also be conducted during non-instructional times such as staff meetings where testing might be discussed or by attending relevant staff development activities involving teachers. Interviews will last for approximately 45 minutes. An audiotape recorder will be used to tape the interviews. Staff members will be asked to share certain public documents such as School Report Cards, TVAAS results, and administrative policies.

Enclosed are sample letters and consent forms, which will be sent to staff members, adult students, and parents inviting them to participate in the study once your approval has been obtained. If it is acceptable, the University of Tennessee requires that I have your written permission on official letterhead. My goal is to initiate the study as soon as possible, and your prompt response to this request would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Faye E. Patterson
University of Tennessee

Sample Letter to School-level/Community Participants

October 2001

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear _____:

I am a doctoral candidate in education at the University of Tennessee. (Names of Director of Schools and Principal)_____ have granted approval to conduct research in your school district. Your name has been recommended to me. This letter serves as a request for you to participate in this study. The title of the study is "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives." The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of selected educational stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations they might offer for improving the current accountability policy system.

The information from this study will be of great significance and interest to educators and other stakeholders. Most accountability systems have relied on the use of standardized test results; however, few accountability studies have focused on the appropriateness of those accountability systems, the benefits, or the perceived harmful effects of relying primarily on objectives-based accountability as the sole evidences of student achievement.

The study will take place during the fall of 2001 and spring of 2002. Interviews will be conducted with individuals or small groups of no more than 10 staff members, parents, and adult students who are at least 18 years old. Staff observations will also be conducted during non-instructional times such as staff meetings where testing might be discussed. Interviews will be conducted at the school sites during the school day during non-instructional times, or at the convenience of the participants. Interviews will last for approximately 45 minutes. An audiotape recorder will be used to tape the interviews. School personnel will be asked to share certain public documents such as School Report Cards, TVAAS results, and school policies.

If you agree to participate in the study, the University of Tennessee requires that I have your written permission. Enclosed for your signature is an informed consent form. My goal is to initiate the study as soon as possible, and your prompt response to this request would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Faye E. Patterson
University of Tennessee

Sample Letter to Politicians, State Department of Education and State Association Participants

October 2001

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear _____:

I am a doctoral candidate in education at the University of Tennessee. This letter serves as a request for you to participate in this research study. The title of the study is "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives." The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of selected educational stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations they might offer for improving the current accountability policy system.

The information from this study will be of great significance and interest to educators and other stakeholders. Most accountability systems have relied on the use of standardized test results; however, few accountability studies have focused on the appropriateness of those accountability systems, the benefits, or the perceived harmful effects of relying primarily on objectives-based accountability as the sole evidences of student achievement.

The study will take place during the fall of 2001 and spring of 2002. Interviews will be conducted with individuals or small groups of no more than 10 members. Interviews will last for approximately 45 minutes. An audiotape recorder will be used to tape the interviews. School personnel will be asked to share certain public documents such as School Report Cards, TVAAS results, and school policies. Artifacts consisting of public documents will also be reviewed, which may include school achievement data, staff handbooks, student handbooks, district policies, and local or state policies/reports relative to accountability.

If you agree to participate in the study, the University of Tennessee requires that I have your written permission on official letterhead. Enclosed for your signature is an informed consent form. My goal is to initiate the study as soon as possible, and your prompt response to this request would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Faye E. Patterson
University of Tennessee

Consent Form For Individual Participants

Project Title: "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives"

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of selected stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations they might offer for improving the current accountability policy system. The information from this study will be of great significance and interest to educators and other stakeholders. This study may influence future accountability policies in Tennessee.

Other selected stakeholders (parents, 18 year-old adult students, state level politicians and policy-makers, Department of Education members, local, and state level education association members) will also be identified for interviews by asking participants and searching newspapers/other media for referrals. Interview appointments will be scheduled personally, by phone, or through the appropriate office visits as the informed consent forms are returned to the researcher. A semi-structured interview format will be used to generate discussions and to ensure that key questions are addressed. Interviews will last for approximately 45 minutes. Observations will be conducted while at the sites during non-instructional times such as during faculty meetings where testing and assessment data might be discussed or by attending relevant staff development activities involving teachers. Artifacts consisting of public documents will also be reviewed, which may include school achievement data, staff handbooks, student handbooks, district policies, and local or state policies/reports relative to accountability.

Data analysis will begin as data are collected. A personal research journal will be started to record daily reflections and significant events that take place during the study. All interviews will be audio taped, and modified script notes will be written during interviews for clarification. Names will be given a code to protect the identity of participants. A typist will be hired to help transcribe the interviews, and a confidentiality agreement will be signed. Transcripts will be typed by word processor to preserve the records of conversations and to reduce errors. Participants will have an opportunity to check their portions of transcripts for accuracy. Electronic copies of the data will be stored on the researcher's home computer, on floppy discs, and on hard copies. Tapes will be erased after they have been transcribed and checked for accuracy. Access to the data will be limited to the researcher and the typist. Data will be locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's home office when not in use. At the conclusion of the study, data will be stored for three years in a locked file cabinet at the University of Tennessee in the Educational Administration and Policy Studies Office, 326A Claxton Addition. All data will be destroyed after three years.

No identifying information will be used to connect participants to the study. Your confidentiality will be maintained. Anonymity cannot be guaranteed; however, every attempt will be made to protect your identity. No deception will be used in the study, and information will not be used for any other purposes. There are no known risks to participants. Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary, and your informed consent may be withdrawn at any time.

Please contact Faye E. Patterson, Educational Administration and Policy Studies, University of Tennessee if you have questions. You may reach me by phone at 974-6139; Email: fpatterl@utk.edu.

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study (or have my 18 year-old adult student participate in this study). I have received a copy of this form.

_____ Date_____

Name (Please Print)

_____

Signature

_____ Date_____

* ___ Original * ____ Participant's Copy

Consent Form For Group Participants
Project Title: "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives"

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of selected stakeholders (educators, parents, school boards, citizens, students, local and state politicians) concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current accountability policy in Tennessee and to ascertain what recommendations they might offer for improving the current accountability policy system. The information from this study will be of great significance and interest to educators and other stakeholders. This study may influence future accountability policies in Tennessee.

Other selected stakeholders (parents, 18 year-old adult students, state level politicians and policy-makers, Department of Education members, local, and state level education association members) will also be identified for interviews by asking participants and searching newspapers/other media for referrals. Interview appointments will be scheduled personally, by phone, or through the appropriate office visits as the informed consent forms are returned to the researcher. A semi-structured interview format will be used to generate discussions and to ensure that key questions are addressed. Interviews will last for approximately 45 minutes. Observations will be conducted while at the sites during non-instructional times such as during faculty meetings where testing and assessment data might be discussed or by attending relevant staff development activities involving teachers. Artifacts consisting of public documents will also be reviewed, which may include school achievement data, staff handbooks, student handbooks, district policies, and local or state policies/reports relative to accountability.

Data analysis will begin as data are collected. A personal research journal will be started to record daily reflections and significant events that take place during the study. All interviews will be audio taped, and modified script notes will be written during interviews for clarification. Names will be given a code to protect the identity of participants. A typist will be hired to help transcribe the interviews, and a confidentiality agreement will be signed. Transcripts will be typed by word processor to preserve the records of conversations and to reduce errors. Electronic copies of the data will be stored on the researcher's home computer, on floppy discs, and on hard copies. Participants will have an opportunity to check their portions of transcripts for accuracy. Tapes will be erased after they have been transcribed and checked for accuracy. Access to the data will be limited to the researcher and the typist. Data will be locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's home office when not in use. At the conclusion of the study, data will be stored for three years in a locked file cabinet at the University of Tennessee in the Educational Administration and Policy Studies Office, 326A Claxton Addition. All data will be destroyed after three years.

No identifying information will be used to connect participants to the study. Your confidentiality cannot be guaranteed since others will be present in the group and will hear the tapes. No deception will be used in the study, and information will not be used for any other purposes. There are no known risks to participants. Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary, and your informed consent may be withdrawn at any time.

Please contact Faye E. Patterson, Educational Administration and Policy Studies, University of Tennessee if you have questions. You may reach me by phone at 974-6139; Email: fpatter1@utk.edu.

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have received a copy of this form.

_____ Date_____

Name (Please Print)

_____

Signature

* ___ Original * ____ Participant's Copy

Consent Form For Typist/Transcriber

Project Title: "Educational Values and Accountability In Tennessee: Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Imperatives"

I agree to type/transcribe the research cited above and promise not to divulge the contents to anyone other than the researcher. All data will be the property of the researcher and will be stored in the Educational Administration and Policy Studies Office, 326A Claxton Addition, University of Tennessee, when not in use. I understand that I may withdraw from typing/transcribing the study at any time without repercussions, and I will be paid for services rendered.

My signature indicates that I have read the above information and agree to the terms as described. I have received a copy of this form.

Please contact Faye E. Patterson, Educational Administration and Policy Studies, University of Tennessee, if you have questions. You may reach me by phone at 974-6139; Email: fpatter1@utk.edu.

_____ Date_____

Name (Please Print)

_____

Signature

* ___ Original * ____ Typist/Transcriber's copy

Faye E. Patterson
University of Tennessee
326A Claxton Addition
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996- 3200
Phone: (865) 974-6139; Email: fpatter1@utk.edu

Date

Dear_____:

Enclosed is the transcript of your interview with me. It is being shared with you so that you may clarify anything that does not appear to represent your thoughts at the time of the interview. Feel free to make corrections on the transcript. You may also add information that you feel is pertinent to the interview.

Please return corrected transcripts to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope enclosed in the packet by March 12, 2002. If you have no corrections, please sign the bottom of this letter and return it to me in the envelope provided.

I appreciate your participation in this research study.

Thank you,

Faye E. Patterson

_____ I have read the transcript and do not wish to make changes.

_____ Date _____

Please Print Name

_____

Signature

APPENDIX B

Table 5 Transcript Question Analysis Model: Q# _____

No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age	Response	Category/Theme
1	HSP1	F	13	W	40		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
2	AP1	M	14	W	36		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
3	T1	M	28	W	52		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
4	T2	F	25	W	55		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
5	T3	F	19	W	45		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
6	DS1	M	31	W	59		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
7	CS1	F	31	W	53		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
8	SB1/P	F	2	W	41		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
9	S1	F	N/A	W	18		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
10	S2	F	N/A	W	18		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
11	TA1/P	F	12	W	42		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
12	HST1	M	8	W	31		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
13	HST2	M	6	W	33		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
14	MSP1	M	31	W	56		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
15	MST1	F	3	W	24		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
16	MST2	F	26	W	47		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
17	MS/HSP 2	M	24	W	46		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
18	MS/HSS 1	M	N/A	W	18		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
19	MSHST1	F	12	W	44		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		

Table 5 Continued

20	MSHST2	F	28	W	51		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age	Response	Category/Theme
21	CS2	F	19	W	48		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
22	MSP2	F	13	B	38		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
23	SG1	M	8	W	40		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
24	D2	M	31	W	55		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
25	SG1	M	8	W	40		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
26	HMS1	F	18	W	49		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
27	HMS2	F	3	W	39		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
28	TG1	M	22	W	44		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
29	TG2	F	25	W	51		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
30	TG3	M	22	W	49		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
31	TG4	F	18	W	54		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
32	TG5	F	28	W	50		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
33	TG6	F	27	W	49		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
34	TG7	F	43	B	65		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
35	TG8	M	15	W	37		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
36	MSG1	F	0	W	22		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
37	MGS2	F	25	W	51		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
38	MSG3	F	2	W	24		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
39	MSG4	F	24	W	47		

Table 5 Continued

No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age	Response	Category/Theme
40	MGS5	F	17	W	55		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
41	SBE1	M	12	B	34		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
42	SBE2	F	26	W	50		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
43	SBE3	F	30	W	51		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
44	SBE4	F	29	W	50		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
45	SG2	M	8	W	37		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
46	CS3	M	8	W	34		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
47	TG9	F	6	W	36		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
48	TG10	F	39	B	61		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
49	TG11	M	3	W	26		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
50	TG12	F	28	W	49		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
51	TG13	F	16	B	40		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
52	TG14	F	21	W	58		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
53	TG15	F	21	W	45		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
54	EP2	F	33	B	55		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
55	DS3	M	32	W	58		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
56	HSP6	M	28	B	51		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
57	T17	M	10	B	49		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
58	T16	F	35	B	55		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
59	T18	F	18	W	48		
No.	Code	Sex	Exp.	Race	Age		
60	T19	M	11	W	38		

VITA

Faye E. Patterson was born in Water Valley, Mississippi, and grew up in Memphis, Tennessee, where she graduated from Mitchell Road High School in 1964. Her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education was received from Memphis State University in 1972. She received a Master of Arts Degree in Elementary School Administration and Supervision from Hampton University (Hampton Institute) in 1978. Before coming to the University of Tennessee to complete doctoral studies, Faye served in numerous public school faculty and administrative positions over the course of a twenty-five year career in education. Teaching experiences include sixth grade in Austin, Texas, fifth grade in Hampton, Virginia, and sixth grade in the Department of Defense Schools in Sembach, Germany. Her experiences in administration included 19 years in public schools in Prince William County Virginia as an assistant principal, principal, supervisor of elementary education, and associate superintendent. While at the University of Tennessee she served as a graduate assistant in the Leadership 21 Principal Preparation Program, and she is currently employed in the Educational Administration and Policy Studies Program at the University of Tennessee.