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The Effectiveness of Internal Communication in Selected School Systems in East Tennessee

Ralph Martin Peters
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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Ralph Martin Peters entitled "The Effectiveness of Internal Communication in Selected School Systems in East Tennessee." I have examined the final electronic 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 Educational Administration.

Orin B. Graff, Major Professor

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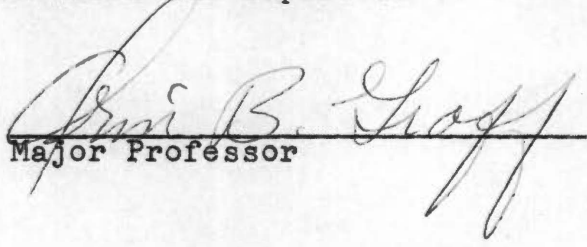
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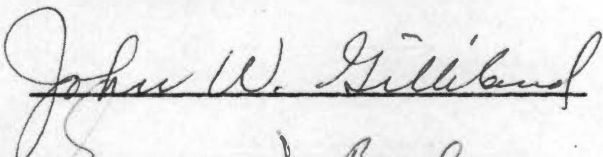
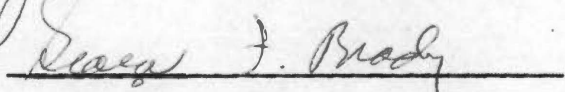
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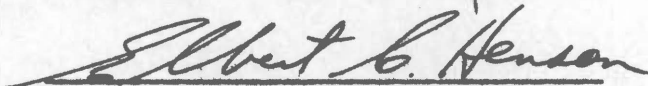
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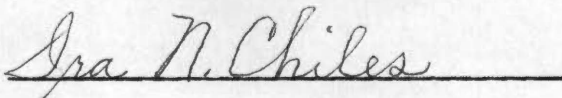
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Major Professor

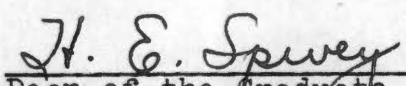
We have read this thesis and
recommend its acceptance:





Accepted for the Council:


Acting Dean of the Graduate School

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN
SELECTED SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN EAST TENNESSEE

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
The University of Tennessee

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Ralph Martin Peters
December 1960

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Sub-problems	3
Hypotheses	4
Assumptions	5
Delimitations	6
Significance of the Study	7
Procedure	9
Organization of the Study	17
II. THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS	19
The Nature of Communication	19
Barriers to Understanding	30
Communication in a Democratic Society . .	40
Effective Internal Communication in a Democratic Organization	45
Summary	52
III. THE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICIES BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS	54
Frequency of Understanding	55
Policies Compared as to Understanding . .	71
Policy Formulation and Policy Understanding	81
Summary	90

	v
CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. THE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICIES BY	
TEACHERS	92
Frequency of Understanding	94
Comparing the Understanding of School	
Policies	112
Relationship Between Understanding and	
Satisfaction	125
Summary	131
V. COMPARING THE UNDERSTANDING OF PRINCIPALS	
AND TEACHERS WITH REGARD TO SCHOOL	
POLICIES	134
Determining the Differences in the Under-	
standing of School Policy Information .	134
Channels of Communication	144
Time Differential	149
Summary	158
VI. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS	160
Summary	160
Findings	163
Implications	168
BIBLIOGRAPHY	182
APPENDIXES	187
APPENDIX A. Questionnaires and Accompanying Letters	
Mailed to Principals and Teachers .	188

APPENDIX B. Schedule of Questions Used in Interviews with Superintendents, Principals, and Teachers	206
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LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
I.	Understanding Among Principals of Policy Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors Visiting Teachers at School During Class Hours	57
II.	Understanding Among Principals of Policy Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers	60
III.	Understanding Among Principals of Policy Concerning the Use of Substitute Teachers .	64
IV.	Understanding Among Principals of Policy Concerning In-Service Education	69
V.	Summary Listing of Correct Answers to Questions Asked About School Policies	73
VI.	Mean Per Cent of Correct Answers from Principals	77
VII.	Mean Percentages of Correct Answers for Principals in Large Systems and for Principals in Small Systems	80
VIII.	Methods of Participation of Principals in Policy Formulation	84
IX.	Differences in Understanding Between Principals Who Participated in Policy Formulation and Principals Who Did Not Participate in Policy Formulation	87

TABLE

X.	Understanding Among Teachers of the Policy Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors Visiting Teachers at School During Class Hours	96
XI.	Understanding Among Teachers of the Policy Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers	99
XII.	Understanding Among Teachers of the Policy Concerning the Use of Substitute Teachers .	104
XIII.	Understanding Among Teachers of the Policy Concerning In-Service Education	109
XIV.	Summary Listing of Correct Answers Submitted by Teachers to Questions Asked About School Policies	113
XV.	Mean Per Cent of Correct Answers from Teachers Concerning School Policy Information	118
XVI.	Mean Per Cent of Correct Answers for Teachers in Large School Systems and Teachers in Small School Systems	121
XVII.	Policy Understanding According to the Number of Years Teaching Experience	124
XVIII.	Communication of Teachers' Feelings of Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction	132

	ix
TABLE	PAGE
XIX. Differences in the Per Cent of Correct Answers to Questions Concerning School Policies . . .	141
XX. Mean Per Cent of Correct Answers Compared . .	143
XXI. Time Policy Information Was Disseminated to Teachers According to Principals	152
XXII. Time Policy Information Was Received by Teachers According to Teachers	153
XXIII. The Receipt of School Policy Information by Teachers According to Experience	157

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The superintendents of several public school systems in East Tennessee met during the summer of 1959 to form an organization for the purpose of improving public schools through cooperative study and research. This organization was named "Public Schools for Cooperative Research" and soon came to be known as the "PSCR." For a number of years such an organization had been the topic of many informal discussions in which superintendents visualized its possibilities and potentialities. Staff members of the Department of Educational Administration and Supervision in the University of Tennessee's College of Education had also expressed a keen interest in this type organization and, serving as consultants, shared in its establishment and early development.

In the pre-organizational planning of the PSCR the various methods of achieving the desired purpose, to improve public schools, were discussed. Subsequently, at their first official meeting, the members of the new organization laid the groundwork for cooperative study and research in various areas pertinent to the work of the superintendent and vital to the success of public education. The PSCR accepted as its first cooperative effort a study of "The

Functions and Organization of the Superintendent's Office."

It was decided that this project would be concerned with determining the present responsibilities of superintendents, how effectively these responsibilities were met, and ways for reorganizing the superintendency to provide for more effective and efficient operation.

It was further decided that perhaps the best method of conducting this project would be to undertake depth studies in certain areas or phases of the superintendency. One of the areas which the superintendents identified as being critical to their work and in which there was a definite need for extensive research was the area of communication. The whole area of communication, both external and internal, appeared to be of major concern to superintendents; however, it was agreed that a study of internal communication should take preference since it is this phase of communication that underlies efficient administration and provides a basis for effective external communication.

The writer had expressed to his advisors at the University of Tennessee a desire to conduct a research study in internal communication in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctor of education degree. Since it would be mutually advantageous to parties concerned, the writer requested permission from the PSCR to conduct this study under the auspices of the newly formed organization. The members

of the PSCR, seeing a need for a study in internal communications and realizing that the results of this kind of a study would be beneficial to each school system, approved the study as one of several companion studies to be conducted as a part of the first PSCR project. It was recognized that the results of this study would provide a base for further research in communication, possibly in the external phase as it might apply to public education.

B. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of the study was to investigate the extent of mutual understanding of policies among professional school personnel in order to determine the effectiveness of internal communication in selected school systems in East Tennessee.

C. SUB-PROBLEMS

In order to be able to determine the effectiveness of internal communication in one school system, or in several school systems, by investigating the extent of mutual understanding of school policy information, it became necessary to provide solutions to the following sub-problems:

1. To develop an instrument of measurement:
 - a) To develop criteria of school policies to be used as a common standard of measurement.
 - b) To develop means of using the common standard

to measure the understanding of school policies.

2. To establish a theory of effective communication which would explain how a common understanding is reached.
3. To secure data from superintendents, principals, and teachers concerning the understanding of school policies.
4. To analyze data by:
 - a) Reporting on the understanding of school policies by school principals.
 - b) Reporting on the understanding of school policies by teachers.
 - c) Reporting on the difference in understanding between principals and teachers.
5. To draw and report the educational implications of the findings.

D. HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were made:

1. The understanding of a school policy is dependent on the understanding of the various aspects of that policy.
2. The understanding of a school policy varies inversely with the distance between its place of origin and its destination.

3. The understanding of policies varies in direct proportion to the size of the school system, that is, the larger the school system the better the understanding.

4. Policy information initiated in the central office of the superintendent has better access to the established channels of communication than does information initiated by teachers.

5. Distortion of policy information is greater when the flow of information is through secondary channels than when it is through the primary channel of communication.

6. The understanding of school policies by teachers is proportionate to the number of years of teaching experience.

E. ASSUMPTIONS

Basic to an analysis of the problem and sub-problems and to subsequent implications, certain assumptions were postulated. These were:

1. Communication is one of the important factors in developing an effective educational program in a democratic society.

2. Superintendents, principals, and teachers are engaged in a cooperative endeavor which requires effective communication among them.

3. The mutual understanding of school policy information is essential to the efficient operation of a school system.

4. The understanding of school policies is conditioned by many variables.

5. The results of this study may be used to improve communication among superintendents, principals, and teachers.

F. DELIMITATIONS

The imposition of certain limitations was necessary in this study in order to confine it to a range in which its accomplishment would be attainable. These limitations were:

1. The study consisted of an analysis of internal communication within each of eight public school systems in East Tennessee.

2. Only internal communication--the communication between the superintendent, principals, and teachers--was considered in this study.

3. This study explored and evaluated internal communication on a basis of the understanding of school policy information transmitted through established communication channels.

4. An evaluation of the techniques of communication was not attempted in this study.

5. Data used in this study were obtained from a

sampling of teachers and principals and from the superintendent in each school system involved.

G. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It has been said that communication is the basis of all social life. The American public school is, indeed, a social institution; it is but a form of community life in which a concerted effort is made for the complete development of children. Many years ago this form of community life, the public school, involved relatively simple processes of communication. It is true that the modern communication devices and conveniences did not exist in that day and age, but neither was there intensive and sometimes terrifying competition for the individual's time. The dynamic and rapidly expanding society of today has sapped man's attention; it has converted his broad look at the horizon into a narrow, selective stare. Man can do nothing else; there is simply too much to see, too much to hear. A large percentage of today's citizenry is faced, through newspapers, radio, television, motion pictures, and other forms of rapid communication, with problems which were entirely unknown to people of one hundred or even fifty years ago. All citizens must engage constantly in communication in order to understand these problems and to formulate and express thoughts about them.

Because schools play such an important role in shaping tomorrow's citizens, they must provide the best learning situations possible for today's children. These situations cannot be provided unless our schools are properly and efficiently administered, and such administration is impossible with effective communication.

This study of internal communication in public schools is of significance because of the need for schools to be operated on a basis of common understanding at all levels of instruction and administration. A common understanding can be attained only through effective communication among school personnel. Since communication of information pertaining to important school policies is most frequently initiated at the administrative level, the results of this study should prove beneficial to school administrators in helping them to establish and maintain channels of communication through which information can freely flow. Two-way flow of communication may ultimately result in a closer relationship between superintendents, principals, and teachers thereby improving the educational program to the profit of the children involved.

The data collected in this study, and the implications derived therefrom, may also result in a better understanding by school boards of internal school problems and the need for adequate and competent administrative and instructional personnel.

H. PROCEDURE

After being granted permission by the PSCR to conduct a study in the area of internal communication, the writer read extensively in literature related to communications and its educational implications. This action was taken for the purpose of improving the competence of the writer so that a more accurate investigation of internal communication in public school systems could be conducted. It was found that only meager attempts had been made to investigate the adequacy or effectiveness of internal communication among professional school personnel. The study by Edward Clifton Merrill, Jr.,¹ concerning communication and decision-making, dealt in part with internal communication but was devoted primarily to the external phase of communication. Many of the ideas in Merrill's investigation were helpful, nevertheless, with this study.

A review of literature related to industrial management disclosed that numerous attempts have been made in that area to measure the understandings and feelings of employees. The procedures used in these attempts did not appear, however, to be applicable in a study of internal communication in public schools.

¹Edward Clifton Merrill, Jr., "Communication and Decision-Making Related to the Administration of Education" (unpublished Ed. D. thesis, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1953).

A number of highly important books have been written concerning the theory of communication. Among those of special importance to this study were: Wilbur Schramm's compilation of fifteen studies in mass media²; a comprehensive volume edited by Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz which is devoted to synthesizing and collating many concepts and propositions in the communications field³; a series of addresses on communication edited by Lyman Bryson for the Institute of Religious and Social Studies⁴; Colin Cherry's book which is a review, a survey, and a criticism of communication⁵; and the recent publication of Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center concerning communication and public relations.⁶ Appropriate mention should be given also to three of Stuart Chases's works concerning the role of communication in reaching agreements, the misuse of language, and the positive

²Wilbur Schramm (ed.), Communication in Modern Society (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1948).

³Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz (eds.), Public Opinion and Communication (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953).

⁴Lyman Bryson (ed.), The Communication of Ideas (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948).

⁵Colin Cherry, On Human Communication (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., and The Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1957).

⁶Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958).

use of words.⁷ From these major sources information was compiled which was helpful in structuring the investigative procedure and in establishing a theory of communication by which the findings of the investigation could be analyzed.

Since this investigation in internal communication involved ascertaining the extent of mutual understanding, it appeared feasible to develop an instrument by which the understanding of certain messages and ideas could be measured. It was recognized that this measurement of understanding would have to be at the origin of the message, at the destination of the message, and possibly at various points along the line of communication where the message would routinely travel. It was also realized that this measurement would have to be taken on messages that would be, or should be, of interest and concern to each person stationed along the communication line.

Because school policies which affect all professional personnel should be understood at any point in the communication channel, the decision was made to use selected school policies as a basis for measuring understanding. In this connection a number of school policies were considered for possible inclusion. A list of these possibilities was given

⁷Stuart Chase, Roads to Agreement (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951); Tyranny of Words (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1938); Power of Words (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1954).

to each of the superintendents involved in the study, and each was asked to indicate those policies which would be applicable to his school system. A tabulation of the responses to this query revealed four policies which were commonly possessed by each of the systems studied. The four policies were those concerning: (1) solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers at school during class hours; (2) sick leave for teachers; (3) the use of substitute teachers; and (4) in-service education. These policies, then, were the items on which measurement was taken to determine the effectiveness of internal communications.

A second step in developing the instrument was that of designing a method of using school policies to measure the extent of understanding of superintendents, principals, and teachers. It was decided that this could best be accomplished by interviews and by questionnaire. Using the policies mentioned above, a questionnaire and corresponding interview schedule were constructed for the purpose of measuring the understanding that teachers had of school policy information.

The questionnaire, which appears in final form in Appendix A, was tested for accuracy prior to its use in the study. Three separate trial investigations were conducted in public schools not involved in the study. The responses obtained in each investigation revealed

that portions of the questionnaire were not clearly understood by the respondents. It was necessary after each trial investigation, therefore, to adjust and revise certain questions. The final selection of questions was made on the basis of their clarity and applicability as indicated by the responses obtained in the trial investigations. These questions were objective in form and were used to secure information pertinent to the following policy aspects: (1) what the policy was; (2) how information concerning the policy was channeled; (3) when the information was received, and (4) from whom it was received. Each school policy was treated individually in the questionnaire.

When the questionnaire was judged to be in a form conducive to adequate response and applicable to each school system in the study, it was distributed to 1,332 teachers in the eight public school systems. From this group 593 teachers responded by completing and returning the questionnaire. The recipients of the questionnaire were selected from the individual school personnel directories. Selection was made without regard to design or assignable cause, except that in each system an attempt was made to send questionnaires to at least 30 per cent of the total number of teachers employed.

A second questionnaire was prepared for distribution to the principals in each school system. This questionnaire,

which also appears in final form in Appendix A, was quite similar to the one distributed to teachers. The major difference in the two questionnaires was in the manner in which the questions were stated. This was necessary because principals and teachers occupy different positions in the communication channel. A total of 125 questionnaires were distributed to principals, 81 of which were completed and returned to the writer.

In order to test the reliability of the responses to the questionnaires and to determine whether the questions asked were being understood by the respondents, personal interviews were conducted with a small selection of teachers and principals in each system. This selection, which consisted of fourteen principals and fifty-one teachers, was made from those principals and teachers who had not been included in the general distribution of the questionnaire. These persons were not selected according to any specific pattern but rather at the convenience of the writer. The selection did include, nevertheless, principals and teachers from each school system which participated in the study. Questions asked during the interviews were the same as those which appeared in the questionnaires. These interview questions appear in Appendix B.

A third source of information concerning school policies was that of the superintendents. Each superintendent

was interviewed by a schedule of questions similar to those asked of principals and teachers. Again, the questions were reconstructed to correspond with the superintendent's position in the communication channel. A copy of the interview schedule appears also in Appendix B.

The data collected by questionnaire and interview were manually and mechanically processed. An analysis of data by summary tabulation and cross-comparisons of related items was made to:

1. Determine the understanding that principals had of school policies.
2. Determine the understanding that teachers had of school policies.
3. Determine the differences in understanding between principals and teachers with regard to school policies.

In determining the understanding that principals had of school policies, the processing of data involved comparing the answers submitted by principals with the answers submitted by superintendents. Data were presented and tables were prepared to: (1) show the differences in understanding between superintendents and principals concerning each policy criterion; (2) show how policies ranked in understanding among principals; (3) show the relationship between the understanding of principals and the size of the school system; (4) present the relationship between policy formulation and

policy understanding at the administrative level; and (5) present the relationship between policy satisfaction and policy understanding, and the relationship between policy formulation and policy satisfaction.

With regard to processing and presenting data concerning the understanding of policies at the teacher level, analysis of major aspects was made to: (1) determine the frequency of misunderstanding of school policies by teachers; (2) determine how policies ranked in understanding among teachers; (3) show the relationship between teacher understanding and the size of the system; (4) show the relationship between policy understanding and teaching experience; and (5) present the relationship between policy understanding and policy satisfaction, and the relationship between policy satisfaction and policy formulation.

These two groups of data, concerning principals and teachers, were then compared to: (1) determine the differences in understanding between principals and teachers with respect to each policy; (2) determine the channels of communication, both primary and secondary; (3) determine the distortion of policy information as it flowed through secondary channels of communication; and (4) determine the differences in the initiation of policy information and the receipt of policy information.

Educational implications were presented on the basis of the findings obtained from analyzing and comparing groups of data.

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study was organized into chapters relating to the sub-problems. The following description of chapters is set forth to explain this arrangement.

Chapter I includes materials of an introductory nature. The specific topics described include the background of the study, the statement of the problem and sub-problems, basic assumptions, hypotheses, delimitations, and the significance of the study. This chapter also contains the procedures used in gathering data for the study.

Chapter II explains the theory of the process of communication. The contents of this chapter are arranged to give the reader a theoretical foundation on which to base his understanding of the analysis of data collected and of the subsequent educational implications.

Chapter III presents an analysis and comparison of data obtained from superintendents and principals, and reports differences in the understanding of school policies. The differences in understanding among principals, the differences in the understanding of individual policies, and the relationship between policy formulation and policy

understanding are the major topics discussed in the chapter.

Chapter IV presents an analysis and comparison of data collected from teachers with data obtained from superintendents. This chapter reports on the frequency of misunderstanding of school policies by teachers, the differences in the understanding of individual school policies, and the relationship between policy understanding and the size of the school system. The relationships between policy understanding and teaching experience, between policy understanding and policy satisfaction, and between policy satisfaction and policy formulation are also presented in the chapter.

Chapter V compares the data obtained from principals with that obtained from teachers. The comparisons presented show the differences between teachers and principals in the understanding of school policy information, the channels of communication, and the time differential pertaining to dissemination and receipt of information.

Chapter VI contains a summary of the procedures used in the study, enumerates the findings, and presents the educational implications as they may pertain to superintendents, principals, and teachers.

CHAPTER II

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Basically, the term "communication" may be referred to as the process by which ideas and information are transmitted from one place to another or from one person to another. This general reference is meaningless until one examines and understands the "process" by which, or through which, this transmission occurs. To state simply that a process exists offers the individual little more than just another term to be categorically used when the subject of communication arises. What is needed is a clear understanding of the two terms, "communication" and "process," in their united form. The attempt here is to develop an understanding of the communication process by giving attention to its major parts and its relationship to effective internal communication.

A. THE NATURE OF COMMUNICATION

It is difficult to think of anything that takes place in our complex society that does not in some way communicate. Some of this communication is overt, yet much of it is un-verbalized. In all that we do, or is done for us, there is

communication. It is the cement which holds our society together.¹

Each individual is born into a world which confronts him with a multitude of audio and visual demands for his attention. The newborn infant reacts to these demands with simple emotions--he smiles, he laughs, he frowns, he cries, he kicks, he waves his arms. Building from sights, sounds, and sensations, the infant will somehow find the means to express himself, to be understood, and to understand.² The pattern continues as the individual matures; learns to speak, read, and write; and seeks his place in society which abounds with the complexities of communication. His society not only continues to exist by communication but it may fairly be said to exist in communication.³

Why Do People Communicate?

Fundamentally, communication is necessary to translate purpose into terms of how to effect it; that is, how to get what we want, what to do and when and where to do it.⁴ The

¹Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958), p. 125.

²Ibid.

³John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), p. 5.

⁴Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 106.

individual feels a need to communicate in order to adjust himself to other persons or to his social environment.⁵

It would be safe to assume that all human actions and reactions, including changes in attitude and knowledge, are in some way directed toward the satisfaction of wants and needs. In other words, whatever people do is in response to some conscious or subconscious requirement or purpose. This does not mean that whatever action is taken is always the most appropriate, or that the action taken to satisfy one need may not work against the satisfaction of another. It may be said, nevertheless, that all of an individual's actions can be traced to needs, and that these in turn can be related to more generalized needs.⁶

What Happens When People Communicate?

It may also be assumed that people's wants and needs are dependent for their satisfaction on the environment in which they live. Most of these wants and needs can be satisfied only if people are able to manipulate or control the parts of the world outside their own, or to adjust in some way to their environment. It may also be that the

⁵Arleigh B. Williams, "Safeguarding Channels of Communication and Social Action," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCL (March, 1947), 1.

⁶W. Phillips Davison, "On the Effects of Communication," The Public Opinion Quarterly, XXIII (Fall, 1959), 343.

satisfaction of wants and needs is dependent more on certain aspects of their environment than on other aspects. As wants and needs become more complicated, the important aspects of environment become more numerous. At this point human attention becomes highly selective; it must become selective and remain that way or else be inundated by the almost infinite complexities of society.⁷

The environment-communication-action relationship, stated in its simplest terms, is expressed by W. Phillips Davison as follows:

A given situation exists in the environment; this situation is reported by a communication that comes to the attention of the individual; the individual then adjusts his behavior in a manner calculated to help satisfy some want or need.⁸

Davison also states that communication can lead to behavior adjustments in three ways:

1. They can report an actual or expected change in environment, or a previously unknown fact about the environment, that is important to the person on the receiving end of the communication.

2. They can point out an existing feature of the environment (not a change or a new fact) and remind the individual that his needs would be served if he adjusted his behavior in a given manner.

⁷Ibid., p. 347.

⁸Ibid., p. 353.

3. They can bring to a person's attention a new way of patterning his relationships to his environment.⁹

What Do People Communicate?

A person can discover by referring to most any dictionary that the word "communicate" means "an act of imparting information," or words to that effect. One would also find that the word "communication" means "intercourse by words, letters, or messages." A liberal definition would not limit communication to words or thoughts but would also include the communication of goods and supplies. The transporting of men and materials by railway, airplane or bus is an essential social function. Without such transport society would certainly crumble. The transportation of goods is not, however, communication in the sense that it is intended in this presentation, and it does not raise the same questions. What "goods" are exchanged when messages are sent to one another?

Physically, individuals transmit signs or signals, but the mere transmission and reception of a physical signal does not constitute communication.¹⁰ What is more important is the

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Colin Cherry, On Human Communication (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., and The Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1957), p. 9.

information content of these signals. The success of the passage, or transmission, of the signals depends upon the meaning that accompanies them. It is the meaning of these signals, not merely the signals or symbols themselves, that give rise to the action or response desired or demanded by the signals. The variation of understanding undoubtedly would be much less if communication were only a matter of initiating and receiving signals.

Meaning. Meaning is the very heart of communication. The preconditions for it are constantly changing, being made better or worse as a human relationship improves or deteriorates; and in this ever-lengthening chain of understanding or misunderstanding, each episodic communication (regardless of the signal used) is one link. The signals used do not matter so much; it is the meaning other persons infer from them that is the final test of communication.¹¹ Meaning, then, is achieved in a joint process between people, a process which is constantly in force.

The vital element in meaning is purpose. People cannot clearly understand that which is communicated to them unless they can recognize the underlying purpose of the communication. In trying to understand what is communicated to

¹¹Paul Pigors, "What is Meaning and How Can We Share It?" Effective Communication on the Job, M. Joseph Dooker and Vivienne Marquis, editors (New York: American Management Association, 1956), p. 37.

him by others, man is always searching for the purpose of the communication.¹² Unless the purposes of both the sender and the receiver are on some common ground, communication is difficult if not impossible.

How Do People Communicate?

To this point the discussion of the nature of communication has been concerned with what communication is, why it is an essential element in our society, and what it is that we are trying to communicate. Attention is now directed to another important aspect, how people go about communicating what they have to communicate.

The individual possesses several techniques of communication. Some of these are so much a part of the individual that he is unaware of their use. Generally speaking, he is most aware of these techniques when communication is blocked or defective. When this happens, he turns his attention to the obstacle and toward himself in an attempt to muster his resources to overcome the obstacle. The individual's communicative techniques can be enumerated as follows: (1) language, (2) gesture, (3) overt behavior, and (4) the communication one receives from the total impact of his culture.¹³

¹²Ibid., p. 47.

¹³Edward Sapir, "Communication," Reader in Public

Language. One cannot usefully talk about language without talking about culture for they are inseparable.¹⁴ In our culture, existing in communication, words form the main carrier for our expressions; words, or the use of them, constitute the first common denominator among society's inhabitants. It is the written and spoken word which is the outstanding feature of civilization. Communication by means of a language of words is man's distinctive activity. Animals as well as men convey messages using sounds and gesture, but they can never use meaningful words.¹⁵ Within a given culture, or between people of different cultures, most agreements must be reached through the spoken or written word.¹⁶

There is obviously great power in words, although it is possible to communicate without using them. Men probably gets his world view of the universe from the words, the language, he learns. He depends on the meanings of these words to make the decisions necessary to his daily living.

Opinion and Communication, Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, editors (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950), p. 161.

¹⁴Stuart Chase, Power of Words (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1954), p. 6.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁶Stuart Chase, Roads to Agreement (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), p. 33.

Gesture. Sapir states that "gesture includes much more than the manipulation of the hands and other visible and movable parts of the organism."¹⁷ There is a constant interplay between gestures and language, and there are facts which indicate firm lines between the two. For example, a message of words may flatly contradict a message transmitted by gestures. The former message may be conscious, the latter entirely unconscious. The linguistic system of communicating tends to be the socially accepted one, but the unofficial and unconscious symbolisms of gesture may be more significant in a given context.¹⁸

Overt behavior. This technique, while not communicative in intent, has always the retroactive value of communication. The consolidation of society depends primarily on the imitation of overt behavior. Individuals fall into the patterns of society as though a communication had been received and acted upon. The individual's social experience is rationalized by language and gesture while he is in the process of acquiescing to society's demands for imitation.¹⁹

The total impact of the culture. This technique is less directly communicative than overt behavior. It is the

¹⁷Sapir, loc. cit.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 162.

sum total of new acts and new meanings made possible by the various types of social behavior. Because of this social suggestion a person may revolt against doing something that, because of overt behavior (imitation), he has been doing for many years. Such is the case when a person revolts against the habit of going to church.²⁰

Perception and Communication

In a discussion of the nature of communication it is altogether appropriate, and quite necessary, to consider perception and its effect on communication. The importance of language, both verbal and non-verbal, is readily observed. The unobserved feature of language, however, is that of individual perception which, in the case of language, means the recognition of speech. Perception is the most difficult problem in semantics, the science of what words really mean, because the interpretation of symbols rests heavily on the perception of symbols. To the sender of a message the word "go" may mean "to depart"; but to the receiver of this message the word "go" may be perceived to have the exclamatory meaning of "to run."

Interpretation not only depends on the meaning of the symbol, it depends also upon the accompanying attitude or

²⁰Ibid.

intent. Robert E. Park expresses it thusly:

Communication, whether it takes place through the medium of gesture, articulate speech, or conventional symbols of any sort whatever, always involves, it seems to me, an interpretation of the attitude or intent of the person whose word or gesture supplied the stimulus. . . . Communication is a process or form of interaction that is interpersonal, i.e., social in the narrower sense. The process is complete only when it results in some sort of understanding. In other words, communication is never merely a case of stimulus and response in the sense in which those terms are used in individual psychology. It is rather expression, interpretation, and response.²¹

The importance of perception in the communication process appears more prominently as a barrier to understanding. This will be discussed more fully later in the chapter. The following statement by Daniel E. Griffiths, however, stresses the positive significance of perception:

A close relationship exists between communication and perception in that perception sets the limits within which communication is possible. Each of us creates the world within which we live. By so doing we (with the help of others) set up the conditions under which it is possible to communicate with others, or to have others communicate with us.²²

²¹Robert E. Park, "Reflections on Communication and Culture," Reader in Public Opinion and Communication, Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz, editors (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1953), p. 168.

²²Daniel E. Griffiths, Administrative Theory (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959), p. 84.

B. BARRIERS TO UNDERSTANDING

The basic elements in the communication process are: the message or symbols, the source or sender, and the destination or receiver. A breakdown can involve one or more of these elements. Effective communication requires efficiency on the part of all three. The communicator must have adequate information; he must be able to present it in symbols that the receiver will understand; he must use a channel that will carry the message to the receiver; the message must be within his capacity to comprehend; and it must motivate the receiver's self-interest.²³

The barriers to understanding can be categorically arranged according to the above elements: those related to words or the message, those relating to the communicator who sends the message, and those relating to the communicatees who receive the message.

Barriers Related to the Message

One of the more serious errors made by administrators is that of taking for granted that others understand the messages he imparts. Not only does he assume that others use words just as he does, but he also assumes that his word, ideas, gestures, and other symbols have the same meaning to

²³Cutlip and Center, op. cit., p. 126.

others as they do for him. He risks his professional welfare on the assumption that his personality, plans, and purposes are being effectively communicated.

The power of words and the perception of words have been treated briefly in a previous section of this chapter. Consideration is now given to words as a barrier to understanding. In this connection Jack Culbertson has written:

Words are only symbols for things and not things themselves. As symbols they suggest diverse meanings to different individuals. The meaning stems not only from dictionary meanings but also from unique experiences which communicatees have had with the things which a word symbolizes.²⁴

The idea that is being expressed is that while words, as a set of symbols, give people the power to increase the efficiency of communication, this power sometimes works in reverse. The main fault is not with words themselves, but rather in the way they are used.²⁵ The meaning of words rarely is the same for the communicatee as it was for the communicator; a message rarely reaches its destination in as good a shape as it was in its original form. Earl C. Kelley explains why all people cannot have the same perception, hence the same understanding:

²⁴Jack E. Culbertson, "Recognizing Roadblocks in Communication Channels," Administrators Notebook, VII (March, 1959), 1.

²⁵Stuart Chase, The Tyranny of Words (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938), p. 353.

No one can ever completely understand another person. This is true because we can never fully get the other person's point of view--that is, we can never be precisely where he is. Added to that, we cannot appreciate his own experimental background, nor his unique purposes. . . . In order to be effective social beings we have to approach the other person's point of view. This can only be done through better and better communication.²⁶

As culture changes, new specializations appear which strongly affect language and communication. Most important in this regard is the uniqueness of individual experiences. These unique experiences have led to what may be called selective perception. In other words the individual's perceptive attention is narrowly focused. He hears what he wants to hear; sees what he wants to see; and responds to only that which interests him.²⁷ Also, it seems a valid observation that people place an unwarranted trust in spoken words, partly because they disregard, or do not appreciate, the inefficiency of air waves as carriers of information and evaluation. The reasons for this inefficiency apparently lie both in the speaker and in the listener as well as in the air waves themselves. What the listener ends up with is therefore a highly abstracted version of what the speaker meant

²⁶Earl C. Kelley, Education for What Is Real (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 54.

²⁷Educational Policies Commission, Mass Communications and Education (Washington: National Education Association, p. 50.

to convey.²⁸ Formal language is symbolic in that its verbal terms stand for aspects of reality beyond themselves. Because of this symbolic nature, language is a poor substitute for the realities it tries to represent. People live in a world which is much more complex and colorful than the pale words or oversimplified signs used to convey meaning.²⁹ The words which represent the realities of life are often so weak that understanding what is really meant by them is impossible. The cardinal premise to be remembered is that an individual cannot tell a person something that cannot be understood by that person; and rarely can an individual tell another person something that he himself cannot understand.³⁰

In summary it may be said that communication is more than a mere exchange of words; it is more an attempt to exchange the unique meanings associated with words. Misunderstanding arises when people do not, or cannot, distinguish between words and the things for which they stand.

²⁸Wendell Johnson, "The Fateful Process of Mr. A. Talking to Mr. B.," Harvard Business Review, 31 (January-February, 1953), 54.

²⁹Daniel Katz, "Psychological Barriers to Communication," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCL (March, 1947), 17.

³⁰Cutlip and Center, op. cit., p. 126.

Barriers Related to the Communicator

One of the most recognizable barriers associated with the origin of a communication is the message itself. The misunderstanding of meanings of words has been discussed in the preceding pages. It is intended here to point out that messages often simply do not contain sufficient information. They may be decorated with ornate terms and conveyed to the communicatees by elaborate and expensive media; but when the message is read, or heard, and analyzed by the communicatees, they know little more than before they received the message. It should be remembered that many misunderstandings can be traced not only to misinformation but to the lack of it. This lack on the part of those with whom congenial relationships are desired can be the root of needless frictions and aggressions. The messages flowing through the communication channels of an organization are actually the measures of that organization. It is possible, then, to say that when there is entropy of messages, there is entropy of organization.³¹ This obviously means that when there is entropy of organization, there is disorganization.

A second barrier to effective communication, as related to the communicator, is that of "flooding" the communication

³¹Norbert Wiener, The Human Use of Human Beings (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1954), p. 4.

channel with the kind of messages that are mentioned above. Too many communicators, and in this sense reference is made to administrators and executives, believe that going through the motions of communication is really all that is necessary. Some administrators acquire an enthusiasm for communication as an end in itself, a conviction that establishing a formal system--a news letter, memos, features in the local newspapers--will in some way (not quite identifiable) take care of communication problems automatically. Repeated messages without particular substance, however, actually develop in the communicatee a tendency to pay little attention to anything. One of the first necessary qualities of good internal communications is that there must be something worth communicating.³² Also, when there is communication without need for communication, the quality of communication drops considerably.³³

Another barrier to administrative communication is the setting in which the administrator is placed by his employees, his "viewers." The "picture" that his employees have of him can readily facilitate or inhibit communication. There has been a widespread cultural tendency in this country to be critical, even suspicious, of persons in authority. Persons in

³²Educational Policies Commission, op. cit., p. 120.

³³Wiener, op. cit., p. 134.

authority may not be aware of their vulnerability, they may not realize that their messages are interpreted on the basis of "mental pictures." This barrier can be at least partially removed by projection of an administrator's pleasing personality, and by his actions to improve the welfare of those who work in the organization. By the same token, this barrier can be strongly fortified if the administrator's personality is repelling and if his actions are not in the best interests of the entire group. More will be said about the working relationship of employers and employees in a future section of this chapter.

A fourth barrier to effective communication on the part of the communicator is that of the personal feelings of the communicator. This is especially true in small organizations where there are many face-to-face situations involving employers and employees. A good example of this type of situation may be found in the public school. There, the principal of the school will receive a communication concerning a certain matter. The principal will disagree with the action that is required by the communication, but he must nevertheless pass the information on to his teachers. The transmission will likely carry the principal's feeling of disagreement and, if it does, the message will be so received by his teachers. The subsequent performance of the teachers in response to the communication from the principal

will in all probability be of inferior quality, or certainly a quality less than what was desired and expected. Communicators should remember that feelings and emotions are contagious. Expressions of emotion tend to evoke similar responses in those that hear or see them.³⁴ They often can be communicated as easily as words.

A final barrier to understanding exists in the extent to which the communicatee believes the communicator is competent. The acceptance or non-acceptance of a message depends largely upon whether or not the communicatee thinks the communicator knows the subject about which he is disseminating information. Such is the case when a school administrator is talking about a core program and teachers think him to be inexperienced in curriculum matters.³⁵

Barriers Relating to Communicatees

Earlier in this chapter note was made of the rapidly expanding demands for individual attention. This competition for attention constitutes a formidable barrier to understanding. In fact, it may be the most troublesome and critical block in the communication channel for it affects practically every aspect of communication. Symbols, feelings,

³⁴Harold H. Titus, Living Issues in Philosophy (New York: American Book Company, 1946), p. 316.

³⁵Culbertson, op. cit., p. 3.

perception, motivation--all are influenced by the overwhelming demands for the individual's attention. As a result, communicatees (those on the receiving end) give their attention to only those messages for which they have some particular need or interest. The employee who has never been sick a day in his life may pay little attention to messages concerning sick leave or disability insurance. The employee who has little free time to attend civic functions will rarely pore over messages relating to voluntary meetings of citizens. An even greater barrier to understanding is created when people are required to take action on matters which do not fall into their select category of attention. For example, the employee in apparent good health may not understand his being required to undergo a complete physical examination. He may even misunderstand this requirement to be a threat to his security.

The barrier to understanding which has been discussed in the paragraph above has a direct connection with a second communication barrier, the lack of common purpose. If individuals qualitatively respond to only those communications which have meaning for them and to which their selective attention is directed, then it is fair to conclude that barriers are apt to arise as the immediate purposes of the

communicator and communicatees differ.³⁶ The close relationship of attention and purpose, and the influence of this relationship on the effectiveness of communication, must not be underestimated.

Perception has already been discussed as a barrier to understanding words and those who disseminate words. Without laboring the point, it should receive thoughtful consideration here as a barrier related to those who receive information. Suffice it to say that individual perception--of words, of things, of abstracts, of people, of culture itself--is the vehicle on which rides effective communication. The communicatee's perception of the messages he receives and those who send the messages (the communicators) is dependent on prior information and prior experience. If these two variables are deficient, the barrier to understanding is powerfully sustained.

It should be remembered also that persons who are under tension, or who feel antipathy or distrust toward those who are trying to communicate with them, often cannot accept messages without distortion or misunderstanding. It then follows that misunderstanding increases tension in a sort of circular effect.³⁷

³⁶Culbertson, op. cit., p. 3.

³⁷American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Public Relations Ideas, VII (March, 1959), 2.

C. COMMUNICATION IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

The purpose of this section is to provide a statement of the major tenets of a democratic society and to characterize the functions of communication in such a society.

The Democratic Concept

It should be recognized at the outset that democracy is not merely a form of government, but rather a way of living together in a highly complex society which is undergoing rapid changes. From this point of view, Harold Albery has written:

Our institutions, our social and economic programs, our standards of ethics and morality are in a constant state of reinterpretation. Upon the nature of these interpretations, free men are bound to disagree. In fact, it is out of these disagreements that clarity and common plans of action arise. All of the avenues of communication must be kept open.³⁸

There can be little doubt, as emphasized above by Albery, that communication in a democratic society is largely responsible for the status of that society.

It would seem that the core concept of democracy is the belief in the optimal development of human personality.³⁹ This faith and respect for the common man--irrespective of religion, race, political views, occupations, or social

³⁸Harold Albery, Reorganizing the High School Curriculum (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 34.

³⁹Ibid., p. 35.

position--does not mean that one is free to exploit his fellow man.⁴⁰ Neither must this concept be interpreted as rugged individualism. Albery expresses it in this manner:

The test, therefore, is in reality, a social one in the sense that human action must ultimately find its justification in the extent to which such action enhances the living of all individuals who are touched by it. This introduces the concept of intelligence which is part and parcel of the way of life which we call democratic. We have faith in the intelligence of the common man, faith that he has the potentialities which when developed make it possible for him to solve his problems by setting up hypotheses, marshaling data, and drawing conclusions that are at least relatively free from caprice or whim. In other words, we have faith that once the ideal of the enhancement of human personality is accepted, it becomes the criterion by means of which the individual tests his conclusions and arrives at plans of action. Once we deny that human beings can so act, democracy will languish and die. . . .⁴¹

In the above quotation, Albery has again emphasized the importance of communication in a democratic society by pointing out that man has the potential to solve problems intelligently when adequate information is made available to him. Herbert Y. Livesay has written that the democratic processes depend upon the free interchange of intelligence among the members of a democratic society. He further maintains that communication may be defined as the free interchange of intelligence, and that the entire concept of social

⁴⁰B. Othanel Smith, William O. Stanley, and J. Harlan Shores, Fundamentals of Curriculum Development (Yonkers-on-Hudson: World Book Company, 1950), p. 106.

⁴¹Albery, loc. cit.

interaction rests upon the assumption of adequate communication.⁴²

Edward Clifton Merrill, Jr., in his study of communication related to decision-making, emphasized the above assumption as follows:

Democracy assumes that the common man can solve his personal problems and those of common concern in a manner characterized by reason and intelligence. Such a concept gives man freedom of inquiry and a right to make the maximum use of his creative power. It underwrites the necessity of intellectual integrity and attaches value to the method of science and the subsequent contributions which may result in the application of this method.⁴³

Merrill further stated that life in a democratic society is assumed to be a cooperative enterprise, and that

. . . The most significant aspect of cooperation as a characteristic of a democratic society resides in the unlimited potential for the improvement of human welfare which results from the willingness of people to accept common purposes and to pool their energies in pursuing them.⁴⁴

How else can men accept common purposes, how else can men pool their energies in pursuing these purposes, except by effectively communicating with one another? There is doubtless more than a mere verbal tie between the words common,

⁴²Herbert Y. Livesay, "A Competency Pattern for the General Supervisor as Expressed in Theory" (unpublished Ed. D. thesis, The University of Tennessee, 1955), p. 229.

⁴³Merrill, op. cit., p. 61.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 62.

community, and communication. A community exists by virtue of the things that men have in common. Communication is the way in which men come to possess things in common. What men must have in common in order to form a community or a society are aims, beliefs, aspirations, and knowledge. When these are commonly acquired, there is understanding. Such attributes, however, cannot be passed physically from one person to another; they cannot be shared piece by piece.⁴⁵ A common understanding is reached only when there is the type of communication that involves sharing of experiences until the community elements become common possessions. This type of communication modifies the disposition of all parties involved.⁴⁶

Basic Democratic Assumptions

It has been established in this chapter that the democratic concept is founded on the belief that all individuals have worth, dignity, and the potential to solve their own problems. The following basic assumptions, developed by Orin B. Graff and Calvin M. Street, provide the proper perspective needed by this foundation:

1. Paramount value is placed on the dignity and inherent worth of each individual.

⁴⁵Dewey, op. cit., p. 5.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 11.

2. All who are influenced by a decision should have an appropriate part in its determination and its implementation.

3. Every individual is obligated to become reliably informed concerning social problems and to act with others in their solution.

4. Actions, both individual and group, should be based on the method of intelligence rather than upon intuition, revelation, authoritative decree, or impulse.

5. Both social and individual development of the best kind is realized through calculated evolutionary means rather than through expediency or revolutionary violence.

6. Freedom of action is not laissez-faire license, but rather is earned as the result of increasing individual and group responsibility for the results of action.⁴⁷

The acceptance of the foregoing assumptions is necessary for the understanding basic to the analyzation of the data in this study, and to the subsequent conclusions, implications, and recommendations.

Principles of Communication in a Democratic Society

The appropriateness of setting forth the principles of communication in succession to the preceding basic assumptions of democracy is derived from the close relationship of the two. The following principles of communication were developed by Livesay on the basis of the democratic concept:

⁴⁷Orin B. Graff and Calvin M. Street, Improving Competence in Education Administration (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 170.

1. There must be a common core of interests, experience, understanding, and the like among those who are to communicate. Primary communication should involve this common core.

2. Each participant in communication represents a definite "contact" area of social, psychological, and physiological forces. These areas are variable and subject to constant change. In order to communicate, each participant must be able to enter into the "contact" area of the other participants.

3. The democratic principle of mutuality of respect must be operative among the participants if communication is to be effective.

4. Communication is most effective as a social process as it is directed by purpose and intelligence.

5. Communication may be aided by sympathetic identification.

6. Communication skills are best developed in relation to concrete, direct and purposeful experiences.

7. Improvement in communication is best motivated by a realization of its usefulness.

8. Communication is most effective when its development is adjusted to personal developments of the participants.⁴⁸

D. EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN A DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION

The term "internal communication" as used here means communicating with the people working in an organization. The working internal relationship between those who administer

⁴⁸Livesay, op. cit., p. 230.

or manage an organization and those who are considered employees of the organization is usually referred to as employee relations. The use of the term "employee relations" should not be restricted to business and industry. Employee relations are as prevalent and important in the field of education as anywhere else.

The Basic Relationship

The basic working relationship in any organization brings about daily communication. The effectiveness of communication in an organization is not only dependent on the working relationship but also responsible for the working relationship. This basic relationship should be of prime concern to those who manage an organization.

A good working relationship can exist only in a climate of belief; correspondingly, internal communication is effective only when there is a climate of belief.⁴⁹ The above phrase is often misused. It does not mean that employees must believe that employers, or administrators, are "good" people. It does not mean that employees must believe that employers are trustworthy, although this is a high commendable attribute. A genuine climate of belief exists when employees believe that they have security, importance, individuality, and the friendship and esteem of others. Unless

⁴⁹Cutlip and Center, op. cit., p. 189.

these sociological or psychological needs of employees are satisfied, communication cannot be effective and a good working relationship is impossible.⁵⁰ It is clear that communication works most effectively when it builds on existing attitudes, or on an existing climate of belief.

Building a Climate of Belief

Cutlip and Center have said:

. . . The main asset of any enterprise is the confidence of the men in their leaders; the confidence of the leaders in their organization and the confidence of both in their product or service.⁵¹

Insofar as administrators are concerned, the above statement has reference to the acceptability which employees should have of employers. There are three components to the process of earning acceptability for the administrator. One is a genuine interest in the employee's affairs. The interest needed is not the type to which lip-service is often given. It must never be artificial; it must always be humane.

The second component is the actions that administrators take to solve the problems that employees have. This means that policies of an organization must be shaped with every consideration for employee welfare, thus giving positive direction to the employer's genuine interest.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 191.

⁵¹Ibid.

A third component is a free and candid flow of information between employers and employees.⁵² The free and candid flow of information means much more than simply administrative messages transmitted to employees. Robert H. Roy points up three fallacies in this regard:

1. That administrative communication need consist only of telling.
2. That administrative communication need consist only of listening.
3. That communication of decisions to subordinates before taking action upon them equates to sharing authority for the decisions themselves.⁵³

The climate for effective internal communication requires the exchange of differing viewpoints and the efforts to reconcile these differences for the best interests of all concerned. Thus, employees must be provided a situation in which they can fully participate. True participation provides employees means of two-way communication; it provides them with means of self-expression; it uncovers obstacles and opposition to plans before they are put into effect; it encourages a sense of responsibility for the decisions made.⁵⁴

Accepting the premise that a climate of belief is the main asset to effective internal communication, it must follow

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Robert H. Roy, The Administrative Process (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1958), p. 161.

⁵⁴Cutlip and Center, op. cit., p. 198.

that the place to start effective communication is not in the formation of messages but in the cultivation of a climate so that messages will be received with the meaning they are intended to convey.

Communication and Action

One of the more vexing administrative questions is, "How do administrators get action?" As an end result of communication, action is sought by practically all administrators. They know that a message can be read, understood, believed, but yet not acted upon. There is ample research in the communication field to indicate the omission of action or the failure to act. The vital communications concerning civil defense and the poliomyelitis vaccine are good examples. People read, people believed, but they did not act. One could cite numerous examples of action failures in internal communications.

The kind of action that is desired in a democratic society is intelligent action. Yet, advocates of the scientific method will fail to act even though by scientific study they have determined that the desired action will be valuable to them. Edgar Dale has written that action involves learning, which he describes as an application of an accepted idea or the mastering of a new one.⁵⁵ He points out that often

⁵⁵ Edgar Dale, "How Do You Get Action?" The News Letter, XXV (January, 1960), 2.

this learning may require the reconstruction of one's self. He states further that people resist change, or refuse to act, because: (1) there is a fear of failure which looms large as a motivation for not acting, and (2) they often simply do not know what to do.⁵⁶ In the former instance, the fear of failure, people are unwilling to exchange their present success at a lower level for problematic success at a higher level. In the second instance, people may sincerely wish to respond to a communication, but the techniques of the particular response are unknown to them.

This discussion of communication and action has progressed to the important aspect of feedback, as it may be applied to motivating people to act. Norbert Wiener has written extensively on this subject. It is his opinion that in order to gain effective performance, as an end result of communication, there must be a system of feedback. As a function, feedback simply enables a person to record performance or non-performance of a task. Thus the principle of feedback involves the ability to adjust future conduct by past performance.⁵⁷ This measurement of the gross successes or failures of performance is the simplest form of feedback. Another form of feedback is learning, and it has already

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Wiener, op. cit., p. 33.

been established that learning is responsible for action. Wiener affirms that if feedback data is used solely for the purpose of criticizing the performance, it is nothing more than a system of autocratic control. If, however, the information which comes in a backward direction from the performance is used to change the general method and pattern of future performance, the process may well be called learning.⁵⁸

There would seem to be, then, a strong relationship between feedback and learning, and learning and action. Democratic administration is possible when this is realized, for feedback is in a way a return communication. Non-performance is an indication of misunderstanding, or a lack of information, or a lack of the will to do. Motivation for action can be built on this realization. The more important decisions which are made are usually those which change the purposes of an organization.⁵⁹ These decisions should be made through a cooperative effort of all who will be affected. The learning, and the action, which is desired will be attained when all individuals can share in the decisions which control their work.

A basic consideration in this regard, especially on the part of administrators, is the skillful art of listening.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 61.

⁵⁹Graff and Street, op. cit., p. 195.

The sharing of decisions, the cooperative effort to construct, cannot be achieved without the application of this art. Too often the responsibility for listening is not accepted by persons in authority. When this happens, the manifest belief in the worth and dignity of the individual, so necessary in a democratic organization, is artificial and insincere. The consequences will be anything but democratic.

Effective internal communication, especially in a democratic organization, is a difficult task for it requires not only skill in language but also a thorough grasp of the psychological and sociological realities of the people involved in the communication process. In an operation involving a large number of people, such as might be found in the public school systems, success is dependent upon both the information about and the acceptance of plans. The formulation and the execution of these plans are bound together by virtue of the communication process.

E. SUMMARY

In this chapter there has been presented an analysis of the theoretical aspects of the communication process. This analysis included discussion of the nature of communication, the barriers to understanding, communication in a democratic society, and effective internal communication in a democratic organization.

The specific topics dealt with were placed in a sequence which attempted to provide the reader with an understanding of why people communicate, what happens when people communicate, what it is that people communicate, how people go about communicating, and why people have difficulty communicating. These aspects in their totality were then related to a democratic organization.

The purpose of the chapter was to convey to the reader the concept of the communication process as perceived by the writer. It was anticipated that this transmission of the writer's perception would be helpful in establishing a common understanding of communication, and that from this common understanding an analysis of the data and the findings could be pursued.

CHAPTER III

THE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICIES

BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze data collected from principals in the eight school systems identified in Chapter I. In this analysis an attempt will be made to measure the understanding that principals have of school policies. The subsequent discussion will show wherein policies are mutually understood, and what differences exist between principals and superintendents insofar as school policies are concerned. Data will also be analyzed and discussed in this chapter to show how policies rank in understanding and how the various school systems differ in the understanding of policies.

In order to evaluate the understanding of school policies, it was necessary to design an instrument by which certain measurements could be taken. This instrument, which was discussed more fully in Chapter I and which appears in the Appendixes, was developed around the following school policies:

1. Solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers at school during school hours
2. Sick leave for teachers
3. Use of substitute teachers

4. In-service education

In questionnaire and interview form, the instrument contained certain questions pertaining to each policy. The answers to these questions provided the data for this analysis. In processing the data collected from the ninety-five principals who responded by questionnaire and interview, each answer to each question was coded as correct or incorrect. This was necessary because the correct answers, as obtained from the superintendent of each system, were not the same in all of the systems studied. Coding made it possible for the answers to be tabulated and from these tabulations certain comparisons were made.

A. FREQUENCY OF UNDERSTANDING

This section is devoted to determining from data collected the frequency, or the number of times, that a policy was understood or misunderstood by school principals. Each policy was treated separately, and the answers to each question were tabulated collectively and also according to individual systems. Correct answers to each question were obtained from the superintendent of the respective system. The coding of answers submitted by principals was made on the assumption that the information obtained from superintendents was the best interpretation of the policy.

Policy Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors

The instrument contained two questions which were designed to determine how well principals understood the policy concerning salesmen and solicitors visiting teachers during school hours. These questions were:

- I. Is it necessary for a salesman or solicitor to have a permit from you (or the superintendent) before he can visit one of your teachers during school hours?
- II. After a salesman visits one of your teachers, is that teacher required to make a report to you concerning the visit?

Question I. In response to the first question, ninety-three principals answered correctly, one answered incorrectly, and one did not answer the question. The number of correct answers was 97.7 per cent of the total number of principals. The high percentage of correct answers attests to the mutual understanding of this aspect of the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen. The tabulations by system are presented in Table I.

Question II. In answer to this question eighty-three principals responded correctly, eight incorrectly, one was uncertain, and three did not answer. Although some principals require their teachers to make a report concerning the

TABLE I

UNDERSTANDING AMONG PRINCIPALS OF POLICY CONCERNING SALESMEN AND SOLICITORS VISITING
TEACHERS AT SCHOOL DURING CLASS HOURS

Question	System	Correct answers	In- correct answers	Un- certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. Is it necessary for a salesman or solicitor to have a permit from you (or the superintendent) before he can visit one of your teachers during school hours?	A	21				21
	B	6				6
	C	26				26
	D	19				19
	E	7			1	8
	F	4				4
	G	9	1			10
	H	1				1
Totals		93	1	0	1	95
II. After a salesman visits one of your teachers, is that teacher required to make a report to you concerning the visit?	A	18	3			21
	B	6				6
	C	24	2			26
	D	17		1	1	19
	E	6	1		1	8
	F	3	1			4
	G	8	1		1	10
	H	1				1
Totals		83	8	1	3	95

visits of salesmen, this was not a general system-wide regulation in any of the systems studied. It is altogether possible that the low number of correct answers, as compared to Question I, resulted because reports are required in some individual schools. This does not mean that such reports are undesirable, but simply that the practice may have caused some principals to view it as a system-wide regulation. Tabulations to this question are presented also in Table I.

Policy Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers

Measuring principals' understanding of the policy concerning sick leave for teachers involved the following four questions:

- I. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of illness, is it necessary for that teacher to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from the attending physician, certifying the cause of the teacher's absence?
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that a teacher can accumulate?
- III. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of the illness of an aunt or an uncle, can that teacher count this as sick leave (assuming the teacher had accumulated some sick leave days?

IV. If because of illness it became necessary for a teacher to be absent from his (or her) teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days he (or she) had accumulated, whom should the teacher contact?

The tabulation of answers to the above questions are presented in Table II, and are discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

Question I. As to whether or not teachers were required to submit documentary evidence certifying their absence due to illness, eighty principals answered correctly. This figure was 84.2 per cent of the possible correct answers. Although the question referred to "an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from the attending physician," several principals apparently understood the question to mean any type of a report such as might be used for record-keeping. This misunderstanding probably accounted for the thirteen incorrect answers submitted in response to the question.

Question II. When asked to give the total number of sick leave days that a teacher could accumulate, seventy-four principals, or 77.9 per cent of the total, responded with the correct answer. In most of the eight systems studied, sick leave policies have been adopted to comply with the minimum number of accumulated sick leave days as established by the

TABLE II

UNDERSTANDING AMONG PRINCIPALS OF POLICY CONCERNING SICK LEAVE FOR TEACHERS

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of illness, is it necessary for that teacher to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from the attending physician certifying the cause of the teacher's absence?	A	17	3		1	21
	B	6				6
	C	26				26
	D	14	5			19
	E	6	2			8
	F	3	1			4
	G	7	2		1	10
	H	1				1
Totals		80	13	0	2	95
II. What is the total number of sick leave days that a teacher can accumulate?	A	18	2		1	21
	B	4	2			6
	C	24	2			26
	D	11	8			19
	E	6	2			8
	F	4	0			4
	G	7	2		1	10
	H		1			1
Totals		74	19	0	2	95

TABLE II (continued)

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
III. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of the illness of an aunt or an uncle, can that teacher count this as sick leave (assuming the teacher had accumulated some sick leave days)?	A	16	3	1	1	21
	B	4	1	1		6
	C	26				26
	D	10	6	3		19
	E	6	2			8
	F	2	2			4
	G	6	3		1	10
	H		1			1
Totals		70	18	5	2	95
IV. If because of illness it became necessary for a teacher to be absent from his (or her) teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days he (or she) had accumulated, whom should the teacher contact?	A	18	2		1	21
	B	6				6
	C	24	2			26
	D	16	3			19
	E	7	1			8
	F	4				4
	G	8			2	10
	H	1				1
Totals		84	8	0	3	95

State Board of Education.¹ The state minimum has been increased in recent years from thirty-six to forty days; yet, a majority of the incorrect answers were those which indicated thirty-six days as the maximum accumulative total.

Question III. With regard to whether teachers could count their absence due to the illness of an aunt or uncle as sick leave, seventy principals responded correctly. This number was 73.7 per cent of the possible correct answers. In only one system did all of the principals submit the correct answer. While the policy in most of the eight systems studied did not permit this type of absence to count as sick leave, two superintendents acknowledged that exceptions were allowed. This may have accounted for the low percentage of correct answers.

Question IV. Of the ninety-five principals who responded by questionnaire or interview, eighty-four of them knew which person a teacher should contact when that teacher's absence exceeded her accumulative sick leave. This number represents 88.4 per cent of the total number of principals who participated in the study. Although the percentage was comparatively high among principals, this question

¹Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards (Nashville: Tennessee State Board of Education, 1959), p. 26.

was later omitted in analyzing data collected from teachers. This action was deemed advisable by several principals and teachers who thought the question was not generally applicable in all schools. In some systems absences in excess of the accumulative sick leave total are a matter of bookkeeping to which teachers need pay little attention.

Policy Concerning Use of Substitute Teachers

The attempt to measure principals' understanding of the policy concerning the use of substitute teachers resulted in the construction and use of the following questions:

- I. Which one of the following persons should a teacher contact when he (or she) needs a substitute teacher? (Several choices were given.)
- II. When a teacher is absent because of illness (and the teacher has accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover the absence) is that teacher required to pay the substitute from her own personal funds?
- III. If a teacher is absent from her teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, is that teacher required to pay the substitute teacher from her own personal funds?

Answers to the above questions appear in Table III and are analyzed in the following paragraphs.

TABLE III
UNDERSTANDING AMONG PRINCIPALS OF POLICY CONCERNING
THE USE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. Which one of the following persons should a teacher contact when he (or she) needs a substitute teacher? (several possible choices)	A	20	1			21
	B	6				6
	C	24	2			26
	D	19				19
	E	8				8
	F	4				4
	G	10				10
	H	1				1
Totals		92	3	0	0	95
II. When a teacher is absent because of illness (and the teacher has accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover the absence), is that teacher required to pay the substitute from her own personal funds?	A	21				21
	B	6				6
	C	26				26
	D	19				19
	E	7	1			8
	F	4				4
	G	9	1			10
	H	1				1
Totals		93	2	0	0	95

TABLE III (continued)

Question	System	Correct answers	In- correct answers	Un- certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
III. If a teacher is absent from her teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, is that teacher required to pay the substitute teacher from her own personal funds?	A	17	4			21
	B	2	4			6
	C	22	4			26
	D	17	2			19
	E	7		1		8
	F	3	1			4
	G	10				10
	H			1		1
Totals		78	15	2	0	95

Question I. The mutual understanding by superintendents and principals of this aspect of the policy was very high. With the exception of three incorrect responses, all of the principals gave the correct answers. The percentage of correct answers was 96.8 per cent of the total. In six of the eight systems examined all of the principals gave the correct answer. Generally, when a substitute teacher was needed, teachers were required to contact their principal. Some superintendents and principals, however, permitted teachers to contact either the principal or his representative such as the assistant principal or school secretary. These deviations from the general regulation were taken into consideration when the answers were coded and tabulated.

Question II. In each system the answer to this question was the same. Regular teachers, absent because of personal illness, were not required to pay the substitute from their own personal funds. Ninety-three of the ninety-five principals, or 97.9 per cent, knew the answer to this question. Interviews with principals in each system revealed no misunderstanding of the question. The high percentage of correct answers observed in the tabulations bespeaks this understanding.

Question III. This question was designed as a follow-up to the preceding question. Whereas Question II had

reference to the payment of substitute teachers by regular teachers absent because of illness, Question III referred to payment of substitute teachers by regular teachers absent for reasons other than illness. Again the interviews revealed no apparent misunderstanding of the intent of the question. The write-in comments on the questionnaires indicated, however, that some principals either misunderstood the question or simply misunderstood the policy. When teachers in most of the systems were absent for reasons other than personal illness, their regular pay was deducted. The substitute was then paid by the system an amount less than the amount deducted from the teacher's salary. Some principals apparently viewed this payment of substitutes as being made by the regular teachers.

Of the ninety-five principals who responded by questionnaire and interview, seventy-eight of them gave the correct answer. This number was 82.1 per cent of the total which was considerably lower than the percentages obtained for the other two questions asked about the policy.

Policy Concerning In-Service Education

For several years principals and teachers have been cooperatively engaged in system-wide in-service education programs for the purpose of improving curriculum and promoting the continuous growth of all personnel. These system-wide in-service education programs have been operated

according to a plan recommended by the local superintendents and adopted by the local boards of education. Each school system receiving State funds is required to maintain a school term which provides for at least ten days in-service education; however, the in-service plans of individual systems may provide for in-service days in excess of this minimum.

In an attempt to measure the understanding that principals had of the in-service education policy in their system, the following questions were asked:

- I. In how many days of in-service education are your teachers required to participate each year?
- II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?
- III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education?
- IV. Are your teachers permitted to count their attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting as in-service education?

Table IV presents a tabulation of the answers to the above questions. This tabulation is analyzed in the following paragraphs.

As with the other policies used to measure understanding, the correct answers to the above questions were obtained from the superintendents of the systems studied. The answers to the questions were not the same in all of the

TABLE IV

UNDERSTANDING AMONG PRINCIPALS OF POLICY CONCERNING IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. In how many days of in-service education are your teachers required to participate each year?	A	20	1			21
	B	6				6
	C	25	1			26
	D	15	4			19
	E	8				8
	F	4				4
	G	4	6			10
	H		1			1
Totals		82	13	0	0	95
II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?	A	20	1			21
	B	6				6
	C	25	1			26
	D	19				19
	E	8				8
	F	4				4
	G	10				10
	H	1				1
Totals		93	2	0	0	95

TABLE IV (continued)

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education?	A	21				21
	B	6				6
	C	26				26
	D	19				19
	E	8				8
	F	4				4
	G	10				10
	H	1				1
Totals		95	0	0	0	95
IV. Are your teachers permitted to count their attendance at the ETEA meeting as in-service education?	A	20		1		21
	B	6				6
	C	24	2			26
	D	17	2			19
	E	2	5	1		8
	F	4				4
	G	4	6			10
	H	1				1
Totals		78	15	2	0	95

systems. Coding the answers as to which were correct and which were incorrect made it possible to analyze the data by system, yet compile it collectively.

When the answers submitted by principals were compared with those obtained from superintendents, the results indicated that principals had a high understanding of two aspects of the policy. They had little difficulty in answering correctly questions II and III. Of the ninety-five principals, ninety-three of them knew whether or not their system's in-service education program provided for pre-school system-wide meetings, and all of the principals knew if all teachers were or were not required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education.

The ninety-five principals did not rate highly, however, with regard to how many days of in-service education were required and to whether or not attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting counted as in-service education. Table IV shows that eighty-two principals correctly answered the former question while only seventy-eight principals knew the correct answer to the latter.

B. POLICIES COMPARED AS TO UNDERSTANDING

The discussion in the preceding pages of this chapter has revolved around the answers to certain questions about each of the policies employed as criteria in the measurement

of the understanding among school principals. The answers to these questions were tabulated by system and also as one collective body. The tabulations present not only the correct and incorrect answers but also those who answered "uncertain" and those who failed to submit answers. The ensuing discussions, however, were concerned primarily with the number of correct answers as compared to the total number of possible correct answers. A summary listing of the correct answers, along with corresponding percentages is presented in Table V.

The differences in the understanding of certain aspects of each policy has been noted. The analysis of data is now concerned with combining these answers to each policy to determine how well a policy was understood. Also important at this point in the analysis is the determination of (1) how policies are ranked in understanding, and (2) what influence the size of the system has on understanding of policy information.

In order to make the above comparisons it was necessary to develop some device or method by which comparisons could be made. The sum totals of right answers to each policy could not be compared because the same number of questions were not asked about each policy. If certain assumptions were accepted, however, comparisons could be made using the mean number of correct answers to the questions asked

TABLE V

SUMMARY LISTING OF CORRECT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS
ASKED ABOUT SCHOOL POLICIES

	Question	Number of correct answers	Per cent of correct answers
Policy 1	I	93	97.9
	II	83	87.1
2	I	80	84.2
	II	74	77.9
	III	70	73.7
	IV	84	88.4
3	I	92	96.8
	II	93	97.9
	III	78	82.1
4	I	82	86.3
	II	93	97.9
	III	95	100.0
	IV	78	82.1

about each policy. These assumptions were:

1. The questions asked about each policy represented important aspects of the policy.

2. The relative importance of each policy was the same.

3. The mean number of correct answers, that is, the average number of correct answers, concerning a policy was a true indication of how many principals understood the policy.

On the basis of the assumptions made, the mean of correct answers for each policy was computed by totaling the number of right answers to each question and by dividing the total by the number of questions asked. The averages, or means, were rounded to the nearest whole number for computational convenience. The means were converted to percentages when it was desirable to make comparisons on a per cent basis.

Policies Ranked According to Understanding

Operating on the premise that the average number of correct answers to a policy was an acceptable measure of understanding, means for each policy were computed and were then ranked. The ranking shows that there was comparatively little difference between the understanding of the policies concerning solicitors and salesmen, use of substitute teachers, and in-service education. The understanding that principals had of the policy concerning sick leave for

teachers was, however, much less than their understanding of the other policies.

The rank order of means, and their corresponding percentages as related to the total number of principals, is as follows:

<u>Policy</u>		<u>Mean</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
1	Solicitors and Salesmen	88	92.6
3	Use of Substitute Teachers	88	92.6
4	In-service Education	87	91.6
2	Sick Leave for Teachers	77	81.1

No attempt was made to arbitrarily establish a certain mean or percentage at which point understanding might be termed sufficient or insufficient. Neither was an attempt made to statistically compute the differences in understanding. The statistical method of research was not employed in this study because of the manner in which data were collected and processed. In order to use statistical techniques in analyses, it would have been necessary to design the instrument and plan the program of measurement so that the data extracted would have been of an exact nature.² This did not appear feasible in this type of study. The analysis in this study has been made with the full realization that

²Francis G. Cornell, The Essentials of Educational Statistics (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956), p. 4.

data were not entirely of a factual quality. The manipulation of these data by use of statistical techniques would have resulted in statistical conclusions derived from non-statistical data.

Policy Understanding Compared by Systems

The data obtained from school principals has been analyzed to present (1) the understanding of the various aspects of each policy and (2) the comparative understanding of the policies themselves. The tabulations of correct answers and the means of correct answers have provided a basis for making comparisons as to which aspects of a policy are best understood and as to which policies were best understood.

The analysis is now directed to presenting the differences in understanding in the eight individual systems studied. These differences are presented in Table VI. The means of correct answers have been converted to percentages so that comparisons could be made.

The second column in Table VI contains the mean per cent of correct answers from all of the ninety-five principals. This mean was used as a standard, or norm, with which the means of the individual systems could be compared. Referring to Policy Number One, which concerned solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers, the table shows that the means in five of the systems were above the mean for the aggregate,

TABLE VI
MEAN PER CENT OF CORRECT ANSWERS FROM PRINCIPALS

Policy	Mean per cent for all systems	Systems							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	92.6	92.9	100.0	96.2	94.7	81.2	87.5	85.0	100.0
2	81.1	82.1	83.3	96.2	67.1	78.1	81.2	70.0	50.0
3	92.6	92.1	77.8	92.3	96.5	91.7	91.7	96.7	66.7
4	91.6	96.4	100.0	96.2	92.1	81.2	100.0	70.0	75.0
Mean of Means	89.5	90.9	90.3	95.2	87.6	83.1	90.1	80.4	72.9

while the means of three systems were below it. With reference to Policy Number Three, which pertained to the use of substitute teachers, the means in only two systems fell far below the average. In-service education, Policy Number Four, had a better than average mean in five systems, but was well below normal in the three remaining systems.

It has been noted previously that one aspect of a policy may be very well understood by principals, yet they may have only slight understanding of another aspect of the same policy. Also, one policy may be very well understood by principals, yet they may have only slight understanding of another policy.

Table VI can also be used to compare the understanding of the policies in a system with understanding of all the principals when considered as a single group. The mean per cent of correct answers submitted to all of the policies was 89.5. The table shows to what extent the mean in each system surpasses or falls below the mean of the aggregate. In four of the systems the mean of means, which was considered as the mean of understanding, was above average. In the other four systems, the mean was below the average calculated for the eight systems.

Understanding and the Size of the System

Using the mean of means for comparative purposes, the differences between systems in the understanding that

principals had of system-wide school policies was observed in Table VI. To carry the analysis further by use of the mean average method, Table VII shows the differences in understanding in small school systems and in large school systems. Of the eight school systems studied, Systems A, C, and D were considered representative of large systems. Systems B, E, and F were considered representative of small systems because of the number of principals in each system rather than because of the number of questionnaires returned. Systems G and H were omitted from this comparison because they did not appear to be representative of either large or small systems. These six systems were selected for comparative purposes also because a similar comparison was made with processed data collected from teachers in these systems. This latter comparison will be discussed in Chapter IV when data obtained from teachers are analyzed.

In comparing the principals' understanding in large systems with principals' understanding in small systems, the mean of means were totaled and a new mean of means computed. These means show that if the correct answers to policy questions provide a valid measurement, the principals in large school systems had a slightly better understanding of school policies than did principals in small school systems.

TABLE VII

MEAN PERCENTAGES OF CORRECT ANSWERS FOR PRINCIPALS IN
LARGE SYSTEMS AND FOR PRINCIPALS IN SMALL SYSTEMS

Large systems	Mean per cent for all policies	Small systems	Mean per cent for all policies
A	90.9	B	90.3
C	95.2	E	83.1
D	87.6	F	90.1
Average mean for large systems	91.2	Average mean for small systems	87.8

C. POLICY FORMULATION AND POLICY UNDERSTANDING

This chapter has been devoted to the understanding that school principals had of four system-wide policies. An attempt will be made in this section to show if the principals who participated in the formulation of these policies had a better understanding of them than did principals who had nothing to do with their formulation. The questionnaires which were distributed among the principals contained a question about each policy which gave the respondent an opportunity to indicate his participation in the formulation of that policy. The principals who were interviewed were also asked this same question. The answers to this question will be analyzed in the following discussion.

Method of Participation

Since the policies were considered separately, each of the ninety-five principals had four opportunities to indicate his participation in policy formulation. An examination of the responses from the principals who indicated they had some part in the formulation of policies resulted in the following tabulation:

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Principals who participated</u>	<u>Principals who indicated how they participated</u>
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	43	38
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	24	17
3. Substitute Teachers	19	12
4. In-service Education	51	45

The above tabulations are presented to show that while there were 137 indications of participation in policy formulation, there were only 112 indications of the type or method of participation. The tabulations also show in which policy formulations the participation of principals was most frequent.

Principals specified that their most common method of participation in policy formulation was that of meeting together as a group (in each system), discussing the policy or proposed policy, and then making recommendations to the superintendent and board of education. Principals meetings obviously were considered by principals to be an important aspect of administration.

The second most frequent type of participation by principals involved their meeting as a group with the superintendent and members of the central office staff. This type of participation was most prevalent in System G. Until recently, the administrative staff and principals in that system had full responsibility for formulating policies.

Principals also indicated that quite often they had helped with policy formulation by serving on system-wide teacher-principal committees. These committees studied the policy or proposed policy and made recommendations to the superintendent.

Participation in the local teachers' association (or education association), either as a member of the entire organization or as a member of a special committee, was mentioned by some principals as the method in which they had helped to formulate policies. This participation involved voting on relevant issues, studying and ascertaining the need for a policy, or merely discussing the policy in general fashion.

A few principals interpreted faculty meeting discussions as being a method in which they helped to formulate the policies in question, and a few others indicated that they had assisted with formulation by discussing the policy with the superintendent.

The various methods of participation, which were discussed above, are presented in Table VIII.

Participation and Understanding

Since there were some principals who said they participated in policy formulation, and some who said they did not, attention is now directed to the differences between these two groups in the understanding of policies.

TABLE VIII

METHODS OF PARTICIPATION OF PRINCIPALS IN POLICY FORMULATION

Policy	Principals' meetings	Administrative staff and principals' meetings	Teacher-principal committees	Local teacher association or local education association	School faculty meetings	Conferences with superintendent	Participated but did not indicate how	Total number principals participating
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	21	12	2	6	1	3	5	43
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	3	4	4	6			7	24
3. Substitute Teachers	5	4	1	2			7	19
4. In-service Education	19	6	11	4	5		6	51
Totals	48	26	18	12	6	3	25	137

As previously stated, the ninety-five responding principals were given an opportunity to indicate the manner in which they had participated in the formulation of the four policies included in the instrument. These principals submitted 137 responses of participation. Referring again to Table VII, in which these responses are presented according to each policy, forty-three principals participated in the formulation of the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers during class hours. From this group, there were only four incorrect answers submitted to the questions asked about this policy. The remaining fifty-two principals, those who said they did not participate, failed to submit the correct answer on ten occasions.

There were twenty-four principals who said they had participated in the formulation of the sick leave policy in their system. These principals submitted fourteen incorrect answers to the questions asked about the policy, whereas the remaining seventy-one principals failed to give the correct answer in forty-three instances.

Concerning the formulation of the policy pertaining to the use of substitute teachers, the nineteen principals who said they had assisted with its formulation failed to answer the questions correctly in only three instances. The seventy-six principals who did not participate in the formulation of the policy failed to answer the questions correctly

on nineteen occasions.

There were fifty-one principals who indicated participation in the formulation of the in-service education policy. There were only nine instances in which principals of this group failed to give the correct answers to the questions asked about in-service education. On twenty-three occasions the remaining forty-four principals failed to submit the correct answer.

An important fact should be noted concerning the answers to the questions which were asked about the policies. Answers of one kind or another were obtained from almost all of the principals who indicated they had participated in policy formulation. Many of the principals who had not participated, however, did not submit answers to a number of questions. This would seem to indicate that those principals who did not submit answers really were not able to answer the questions.

Table IX was constructed to give the reader a tabulation of the responses discussed above. From this tabulation one can observe and evaluate the differences in the understanding of the two groups of principals. A positive approach was taken in the construction of the table to show the mean percentage of correct answers rather than the means of incorrect answers.

TABLE IX

DIFFERENCES IN UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PRINCIPALS WHO
PARTICIPATED IN POLICY FORMULATION AND PRINCIPALS
WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN POLICY FORMULATION

Policy	Percentage of correct answers	
	Principals who participated	Principals who did not participate
1 Solicitors and Salesmen	95.3	90.4
2 Sick Leave for Teachers	85.4	84.9
3 Use of Substitute Teachers	94.7	91.7
4 In-service Education	95.6	86.9
Mean of Means	92.8	88.5

Table IX shows that in the case of each criterion there was a better understanding among the principals who indicated that they had helped with the formulation of the policy. Although the differences are slight in some cases, they consistently show better understanding of policies by those who helped formulate them. This consistency suggests that there is certainly a tendency for understanding to be greater among principals who participated in policy formation. This tendency possibly would have been even more prominent if critical and arbitrary exclusions had been made of some of the answers which principals gave as being indicative of participation.

Sources of Information for Non-participating Principals

If a principal did not participate in the formulation of a policy, how did he find out about the policy? This question was asked of each principal who classified himself as a non-participant.

From the responses of non-participating principals, the system's handbook of regulations and policies was indicated most frequently as the source of information. The second largest number of responses was accorded to system-wide meetings of principals. These responses were interpreted to mean that principals were given the information at a principals' meeting after the policy was already formulated. It is also possible that handbooks were distributed among

principals in such a meeting, which would account for the consecutive ranking of these two sources. Approximately 80 per cent of the non-participating principals gave one of these two as the source of information concerning the policy. A few principals designated other sources as being memoranda from the central office and conferences with the superintendent or supervisor. Two of the principals commented that they had never received any official information about a particular policy and that it was "taken for granted" that such a policy existed.

The importance of these findings seem to reside in the connection between policy formulation and sources of information. Data has been presented which evidenced the positive influence of participation in policy formulation on the understandings of information pertaining to policies. The analysis of data has disclosed also that the principals who did not participate in policy formation, and these were the principals who had the least understanding of policy information, gave system-wide principals meetings and the handbook of rules and regulations as the two primary sources of information. This suggests at least three possibilities:

1. Handbooks and principals meetings do not adequately substitute for participation in the formulation of policies.

2. Information communicated by means of handbooks

and principals' meetings does not equal information gained through meaningful participation.

3. Other methods of transmitting policy information are either overrated by superintendents or actually contain information of little significance to principals.

D. SUMMARY

This chapter has been devoted to analyzing data obtained from school principals. The data, which were collected by questionnaire and interview, had reference to the understanding that principals had of information pertaining to four system-wide policies.

Using the mean per cent of correct answers for comparative purposes, this analysis revealed that the understanding that principals had for each policy was dependent on their understanding of the various aspects of each policy. The principals, as a group, had neither the same understanding of all aspects of a policy nor the same understanding of all policies. Three of the policies--those concerning solicitors and salesmen, the use of substitute teachers, and in-service education--were understood much better than the policy concerning sick leave for teachers.

The understanding that principals of large school systems had for policies was found to be slightly better than the understanding of principals of small school systems.

The analysis also revealed that principals who had helped in policy formulation had a slightly better understanding of the policies than did principals who had not helped in policy formulation.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICIES BY TEACHERS

Chapter III was concerned with the extent to which school policies in the systems studied were mutually understood by school administrators. It will be recalled that the criteria of policies used in measuring administrative understanding dealt with: (1) salesmen and solicitors visiting teachers at school during class hours, (2) sick leave for teachers, (3) use of substitute teachers, and (4) in-service education. Data collected using these criteria were analyzed to determine the differences in understanding among principals and between principals and their superintendents. Understanding of policies by both superintendents and principals is an important aspect of internal communication in a school system. People in these two positions are not, however, the only persons involved in the communicative process. Teachers also occupy positions vital to the successful operation of a school system, and it seems imperative that they too understand school policy information which directly concerns them.

In this chapter an analysis will be made of data obtained from 644 teachers concerning each policy mentioned above. Data were collected both by questionnaire and interview, but were treated collectively rather than separately

since no marked differences in the responses were noted. The questionnaire and interview charts appear in Appendix A and Appendix B, respectively. Since questions both by interview and by questionnaire were the same, the investigator made note of the instances in which the interviews revealed that a particular question was misunderstood. This misunderstanding will be explained as the responses are analyzed.

The responses to the questions concerning the policies were tabulated by individual school systems as well as in aggregate form. In each of the eight systems studied, the correct answer to each question was supplied by the superintendent of the respective system. In other words, the investigator based his scoring of the answers on the information obtained from the superintendent. Since the correct answers to all questions were not the same for all systems, it was the responsibility and task of the investigator to code the correct or incorrect answers in compliance with information supplied by the individual superintendents. This coding made possible a summary tabulation of answers for each system and for all of the systems in combined form. It was this tabulation, and the cross-comparisons made therein, that provided an organization of data which could be analyzed and appraised.

A. FREQUENCY OF UNDERSTANDING

The attempt in this section of the chapter is to determine the number of times a policy was understood and misunderstood. Certain questions pertaining to each policy were so constructed as to obtain from teachers answers which would demonstrate whether or not they understood policy information as it was intended. A tabulation of these answers provided a composite basis for ascertaining the degree of teacher understanding.

Policy Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors

In reference to Policy Number One, concerning salesmen and solicitors visiting teachers during school hours, two questions were asked. These were:

- I. If a salesman or solicitor visited your classroom during class hours, would he need an official permit from the superintendent, principal, or assistant principal?
- II. After a salesman visits you in your classroom, are you required to make a report to your principal concerning the visit?

Question I. In response to the first question, 541 of the 644 respondents supplied the correct answer. This means that, if the eight systems studied may be considered corporately, 84 per cent of the teachers were able to answer the

first question correctly. As it will later be indicated, this was one of the higher percentages of correct answers obtained to the questions concerning school policies. Several of the teachers in answering correctly commented that "it was taken for granted" or a "generally known fact" that salesmen and solicitors could not visit teachers at will. This seems to indicate that in this case some teachers have unexplained knowledge or awareness of the policy although it may be impossible for them to remember whether or not an official communication was received. The tabulated responses to Question I are found in Table X.

Question II. With regard to the second question concerning salesmen and solicitors, 422 of the 644 teachers responded correctly, that is, 65.5 per cent of the teachers gave the correct answer. It should be mentioned that the investigator discovered in the interviews that several teachers did not choose to answer this question presumably because they thought it unnecessary. In some of the systems studied, salesmen and solicitors are forbidden to visit teachers; consequently, some teachers in these systems may have felt that the second question was not applicable to them. This may account for the smaller per cent of correct answers, as compared with the number of correct answers to the first question. The responses to Question II are presented in Table X.

TABLE X

UNDERSTANDING AMONG TEACHERS OF THE POLICY CONCERNING SALESMEN AND SOLICITORS.
VISITING TEACHERS AT SCHOOL DURING CLASS HOURS

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. If a salesman or solicitor visited your classroom during class hours, would he need an official permit from the superintendent, principal, or assistant principal?	A	132	16	16	1	165
	B	43	2			45
	C	138	7	14	2	161
	D	114	5	6	1	126
	E	32	7	1		40
	F	28	3	5		36
	G	46	3	5	1	55
	H	8	6	2		16
Totals		541	49	49	5	644
II. After a salesman visits you in your classroom, are you required to make a report to your principal concerning the visit?	A	99	18	46	2	165
	B	26	9	10		45
	C	127	5	28	1	161
	D	72	11	28	15	126
	E	34	3	1	2	40
	F	25	3	5	3	36
	G	27	6	16	6	55
	H	12	2	2		16
Totals		422	57	136	29	644

Policy Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers

The second criterion used to measure teacher understanding was the policy concerning sick leave for teachers. Three questions were asked in an attempt to determine how well the teachers knew the policy of their respective system. These three questions were considered to be extremely important to the understanding of the policy. This feeling was supported by the teachers who were interviewed. The questions were:

- I. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness, would it be necessary for you to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from your physician, certifying the cause of your absence?
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that you can accumulate?
- III. If you were absent from your teaching position because of the illness of one of your aunts or uncles, could you count this as sick leave (assuming you had accumulated some sick leave days)?

A fourth question was included in the questionnaire. It related to whom the teacher would contact if it became necessary for her to be absent for a period in excess of the number of sick leave days accumulated (see Appendix A).

Many of the teachers interviewed, and some of the principals and superintendents, were of the opinion that this question was not a matter of general policy. In some systems this is handled "automatically" without need for action on the part of the teacher. Because of these sentiments, the writer decided to omit this question and its responses from the tabulations which concerned teachers.

Table XI presents the correct answers to the above questions, tabulated by school system.

Question I. It can be observed in Table XI that 497 correct answers were obtained for this question, which indicated that 77.2 per cent of the teachers who participated in this study knew whether or not they were required to submit documentary confirmation of the reason for their absence.

Question II. Of a possible 644 correct answers to this question, concerning the number of sick leave days a teacher could accumulate, 346 teachers gave the correct answer. This number represented only 53.7 per cent of the total number of teachers who participated in the study. Interviews with teachers in each system revealed no apparent misunderstanding of this question. A few of the respondents, by questionnaire or interview, commented that since it had never become necessary for them to use their sick leave, they did not feel "obligated" to know the exact number of days

TABLE XI

UNDERSTANDING AMONG TEACHERS OF THE POLICY CONCERNING SICK LEAVE FOR TEACHERS

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness, would it be necessary for you to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from your physician, certifying the cause of your absence?	A	135	24	6		165
	B	21	24			45
	C	152	4	5		161
	D	81	42	3		126
	E	23	16	1		40
	F	32	3	1		36
	G	42	10		3	55
	H	11	5			16
Totals		497	128	16	3	644
II. What is the total number of sick leave days that you can accumulate?	A	92	73			165
	B	24	21			45
	C	96	65			161
	D	51	75			126
	E	23	17			40
	F	20	16			36
	G	35	20			55
	H	5	11			16
Totals		346	298			644

TABLE XI (continued)

Question	System	Correct answers	In- correct answers	Un- certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
III. If you were absent from your teaching position be- cause of the illness of one of your aunts or uncles, could you count this as sick leave (assuming you had ac- cumulated some sick leave days)?	A	137	11	17		165
	B	36	4	5		45
	C	141	4	16		161
	D	63	33	29	1	126
	E	15	16	9		40
	F	16	16	4		36
	G	11	36	6	2	55
	H	12	2	2		16
Totals		431	122	88	3	644

that could be accumulated. The questionnaires disclosed further that the most common incorrect answer to this question was that which referred to the earlier State provision of thirty-six days accumulated sick leave. Teachers who gave this answer obviously did not have knowledge of the increased minimum of accumulative sick leave days. Recent legislation has increased the State minimum from thirty-six to forty days.¹ All but one of the systems studied had included this minimum in their own school policy concerning sick leave. The one exception was a system in which teachers were permitted to accumulate sick leave days well in excess of the State minimum.

Question III. This question had reference to teachers being absent because of the illness of aunts or uncles. The tabulated responses indicated that 431 teachers, or 66.9 per cent, knew whether or not this type of absence could be counted as sick leave. The personal interviews with teachers did reveal some misunderstanding due both to the structure of the question and to the policy in the particular system. In System E, the policy being followed is that which was incorporated in the Tennessee General Assembly's Public Acts of several years ago. The Public Acts have since changed, but in System E teachers were still entitled to the provisions

¹Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards (Nashville: Tennessee State Board of Education, 1959), p. 26.

of the earlier ruling. It appeared possible that some teachers in System E were confused by the contradictory rulings.

In System F and in System G provision was made for teachers to be absent for a limited number of days because of the illness of relatives. The days were non-accumulative from year to year and might be used for personal illness if not used for the illness of (in this case) an aunt or uncle. The total number of days that a teacher might be absent for personal illness and the illness of the relatives in question, however, might not be in excess of the accumulative sick leave. The teachers in these systems may not have understood the question as it was constructed by the investigator, or they may have understood the question but did not consider that their absence due to a relative's illness would count as personal sick leave. It also may be that teachers in these systems simply had an honest misunderstanding of the sick leave policy.

Policy Concerning the Use of Substitute Teachers

Three questions were considered by the investigator to be of major importance to the understanding of the policy concerning the use of substitute teachers. These were:

- I. What person would you contact if you needed a substitute teacher?

- II. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness and you had accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover this absence, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute from your own personal funds?
- III. If you were absent from your teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute from your own personal funds?

Table XII contains the tabulations by system of the correct answers to these questions. The responses are briefly explained in the following paragraphs.

Question I. This question was of the multiple choice type in which the respondents were given several possible answers from which to choose. The respondents were also provided an opportunity to submit an answer not offered in the list of choices. In coding the answers as to which were correct and which were incorrect, the writer took into consideration that in some school systems more than one person may serve as the official contact when a substitute teacher was needed. In the larger systems, for example, many of the schools had assistant principals, others had secretaries, and in still others there were both. Teachers in these systems often were permitted to contact either the assistant

TABLE XII

UNDERSTANDING AMONG TEACHERS OF THE POLICY CONCERNING THE USE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. What person would you contact if you needed a substitute teacher? (several choices given)	A	155	9		1	165
	B	38	7			45
	C	152	9			161
	D	124	1		1	126
	E	37	3			40
	F	36				36
	G	54	1			55
	H	16				16
Totals		612	30		2	644
II. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness and you had accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover this absence, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute from your own personal funds?	A	159	3	2	1	165
	B	44		1		45
	C	155	2	4		161
	D	121	2	2	1	126
	E	37	2	1		40
	F	32	2	2		36
	G	54		1		55
	H	16				16
Totals		618	11	13	2	644

TABLE XII (continued)

Question	System	Correct answers	In- correct answers	Un- certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
III. If you were absent from your teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute teacher from your own personal funds?	A	89	57	18	1	165
	B	5	39	1		45
	C	74	60	27		161
	D	69	35	19	3	126
	E	39		1		40
	F	9	21	6		36
	G	41	3	10	1	55
	H	15	1			16
Totals		341	216	82	5	644

principal or the school secretary when a substitute teacher was needed. The board of education in some of these systems condoned this practice.

Table XII shows that of the 644 respondents, 612 of them, or 95.1 per cent, submitted correct answers.

Question II. Of all the questions asked about school policies, this question received the highest per cent of correct answers. From the grand total of 644 respondents, 618 of them, or 96.1 per cent, gave the correct answer. The answer to this question was the same in all systems, that is, when teachers were absent due to illness, they did not pay the substitute teacher.

Question III. This question referred to the payment of substitute teachers when they worked for a teacher who was absent for personal reasons other than sickness. It was the opinion of the writer that this question was a reasonable followup to Question II which dealt with the payment of substitute teachers working for teachers on sick leave. In constructing the questionnaire the writer could see no possible misunderstanding of the question. This confidence was further supported when the questionnaire was tested in three schools prior to its general distribution in systems participating in the study. Responses from 644 teachers indicated, however, that either the question was misunderstood

by many teachers, or that this aspect of the policy concerning substitute teachers was widely misunderstood by teachers in several systems.

Only 341 teachers, or 53 per cent of the total number of respondents, supplied the correct answer to this question. Whereas the preceding question received the highest number of correct answers, this question received the fewest correct answers. In most of the systems studied, teachers did not receive their regular pay for each day they were absent for personal reasons not covered by sick leave or professional leave. In these systems the substitute teacher was paid by the system an amount which was less than the amount deducted from the regular teacher's pay. Many teachers in these systems apparently construed this to mean that the responsibility for paying a substitute rested with the regular teacher for whom the substitute was working.

The difference in the answers to Questions I and II and to Question III shows that teachers did not have comparable understandings of all aspects of the policy.

Policy Concerning In-service Education

In attempting to determine the extent to which teachers understand the in-service education policy in their system, four questions were asked. These were:

I. In how many days of in-service education are you

required to participate each year?

II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?

III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education?

IV. Are you permitted to count your attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting as in-service education?

The answers to the above questions, tabulated by system, are presented in Table XIII and are explained briefly in the following paragraphs.

Question I. The minimum number of in-service education days established by the State Department of Education was ten.² In some of the systems studied, however, the prescribed minimum number of in-service education days exceeded the State minimum. These increases over the minimum were taken into consideration by the writer when the responses were coded as correct or incorrect. Of the total 644 teachers responding by questionnaire and interview, 420 of them gave the correct answer to Question I. This figure was 65.2 per cent of the total responses. This percentage,

²1959 Public School Laws of Tennessee (Nashville: Tennessee State Department of Education, 1959, p. 15.

TABLE XIII

UNDERSTANDING AMONG TEACHERS OF THE POLICY CONCERNING IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
I. In how many days of in-service education are you required to participate each year?	A	123	42			165
	B	32	13			45
	C	112	48		1	161
	D	58	67		1	126
	E	31	9			40
	F	30	6			36
	G	19	35		1	55
	H	15	1			16
Totals		420	221		3	644
II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?	A	153	6	6		165
	B	43	1	1		45
	C	139	10	10	2	161
	D	122	1	3		126
	E	39		1		40
	F	35		1		36
	G	50	2	2	1	55
	H	15	1			16
Totals		596	21	24	3	644

TABLE XIII (continued)

Question	System	Correct answers	In-correct answers	Un-certain	No answer	Total possible correct answers
III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education?	A	156	1	8		165
	B	41	4			45
	C	150	2	6	3	161
	D	107	12	6	1	126
	E	39		1		40
	F	34	1	1		36
	G	51	2	1	1	55
	H	16				16
Totals		594	22	23	5	644
IV. Are you permitted to count your attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting as in-service education?	A	150	2	13		165
	B	44		1		45
	C	134	8	17	2	161
	D	84	19	23		126
	E	22	16	2		40
	F	34		2		36
	G	27	17	9	2	55
	H	6	8	2		16
Totals		501	70	69	4	644

incidentally, was the lowest obtained from the questions pertaining to in-service education.

Question II. When asked if the required number of in-service education days included any pre-school system-wide meetings, 596 teachers responded with the correct answer. This figure represented 92.5 per cent of all the teachers who participated in the study.

Question III. When asked if all teachers were required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education, 594, or 92.2 per cent, gave the correct answer. While there were few incorrect answers to this question, and to the preceding question concerning pre-school system-wide meetings, there was a relatively large number of "uncertain" answers. Table XIII shows that "uncertain" answers were not considered as incorrect; however, they did have a direct bearing on the percentage computation since the per cent of correct answers was calculated from the total number of responses.

Question IV. With reference to whether or not they could count their attendance at the annual meeting of the East Tennessee Education Association as in-service education, 501 teachers responded correctly. This number was 77.8 per cent of the total number of respondents. The interviews revealed no apparent misunderstanding of the question insofar as sentence structure and wording were concerned.

B. COMPARING THE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICIES

The preceding pages of this chapter have been devoted to the understanding of the individual policies employed in this study as an instrument of measure. The discussion has thus far dealt with the number of correct answers that were obtained from teachers concerning the questions asked about each policy. Table XIV shows the total number of right answers to these questions and the percentages that the figures represent in relation to the possible number of correct answers. The writer did not attempt to arbitrarily establish a percentage mark, or a certain number of correct answers, at which point knowledge or understanding might be considered adequate. One could assume that 100 per cent correct answers would indicate sufficient understanding, but one could neither accurately nor fairly establish a cut-off mark at some point less than that.

The analysis of data has now reached a point where it is desirable and important to know how the policies used in this study compare with each other. It also seems important at this point to determine: (1) how these policies are ranked in understanding insofar as the individual school systems are concerned; (2) whether the size of the school system had any bearing on the understanding of school policies; and (3) if teaching experience had any influence on the understanding of school policies.

TABLE XIV

SUMMARY LISTING OF CORRECT ANSWERS SUBMITTED BY TEACHERS
TO QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT SCHOOL POLICIES

Question		Number of correct answers ^a	Per cent of correct answers
Policy 1	I	541	84.0
	II	422	65.5
Policy 2	I	497	77.2
	II	346	53.7
	III	431	66.9
Policy 3	I	612	95.1
	II	618	96.1
	III	341	53.0
Policy 4	I	420	65.2
	II	596	92.5
	III	594	92.2
	IV	501	77.8

^aAll systems combined.

In order to make the above comparisons it was necessary to follow the same procedure as in Chapter III. One obviously could not compare the sum totals of right answers to the individual policies because the same number of questions was not asked about each policy. If certain assumptions were accepted, however, comparisons could be made using the mean number of correct answers to the questions concerning each policy. These assumptions, which were the same as appeared in the analysis of data collected from principals, were:

1. The questions asked about each policy represented important aspects of the policy.
2. The relative importance of each policy was the same.
3. The mean number of correct answers, that is, the average number of correct answers, concerning a policy was a true indication of how many teachers understood the policy.

To analyze the data collected from teachers by use of an arithmetic mean also required the recognition of these probabilities:

1. Some of the respondents who submitted correct answers did so purely by guessing.
2. Some respondents who answered incorrectly did so because they misunderstood the question.
3. Some respondents did not know the answers to the questions but availed themselves to sources of information

which made it possible for them to submit correct answers.

Accepting the foregoing assumptions and recognizing the above probabilities, comparisons of understanding were made by use of the mean average method. The mean for each policy was calculated by dividing the total number of correct answers by the number of questions asked. Averages were rounded to the nearest whole number. The whole numbers were converted to percentages when it was desirable to make comparisons on a per cent basis.

Policies Ranked According to Understanding

Using the average number (mean) of correct answers for comparative purposes, the writer was able to rank the policies in the order in which they were understood. This rank order of averages, and their corresponding percentages as related to the total number of respondents, is as follows:

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
4	528	82.0
3	524	81.4
1	482	74.8
2	427	66.3

For sake of identification, Policy Number Four refers to in-service education, Policy Number Three to the use of substitute teachers, Policy Number One to salesmen and solicitors visiting teachers, and Policy Number Two to sick leave for teachers.

The ranking which appears above in tabular form indicates that when the responses from teachers in the eight systems were considered collectively, the policy which was most or best understood was that concerning in-service education. The reader is cautioned to remember that this finding is based on the mean number of correct answers to the questions concerning each policy. The results of the computations are not intended to suggest that the understanding of a policy, as represented by the mean of correct answers, is either sufficient or insufficient. This method of analysis was used merely for comparative purposes.

In comparing the differences in the means, statistical computations were not attempted because of the general nature of the questionnaire and because data obtained were highly subjective. The successful application of the statistical method depends heavily on the degree of exactness of data. The data obtained in this study were conditioned by many variables, possible misunderstanding of questions, guessing on the part of the respondents, the possibility that some respondents resorted to official documents, and others. Because of the absence of exactness, the lack of preciseness, analysis of data in this study does not lend itself to the statistical method.

Policy Understanding Compared by Systems

In the various tables presented in the first section of this chapter, the correct answers to policy questions were tabulated according to the individual school systems studied. Carrying this analysis a step further, Table XV presents a summary listing of the policies and the mean correct answers as they were obtained from the individual systems. The averages have been converted into percentages in order to give the reader some common basis for making comparisons.

Table XV also shows in percentages the average (mean) number of correct answers from all respondents to each policy. Reading horizontally to the right, one can thus observe the extent to which each system falls below or exceeds the mean. In System A, for example, the mean for Policy Number One was less than the mean computed from the total number of responses. This suggests that in System A, the understanding of the policy concerning salesmen and solicitors is slightly less than average.

Also disclosed in Table XV is the wide range between the means of correct answers to policies. System E, for example, has a very high mean of correct answers to Policy Number Three, yet a very low mean to Policy Number Two. Similar ranges appear in other systems.

It will be recalled that elsewhere in this chapter (page 115) the criteria of policies were ranked according to

TABLE XV

MEAN PER CENT OF CORRECT ANSWERS FROM TEACHERS
CONCERNING SCHOOL POLICY INFORMATION

Policy	Mean per cent of total correct answers from all systems	Mean per cent of correct answers from each system							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	74.8	70.3	77.8	82.0	73.8	82.5	75.0	67.3	62.5
2	66.3	60.0	80.7	51.6	50.0	63.9	63.9	52.7	56.2
3	81.4	81.2	64.6	78.9	83.3	95.0	72.2	90.9	98.1
4	82.0	88.5	88.9	83.2	73.8	82.5	94.4	67.3	81.3
Mean of Means	76.1	79.2	72.8	81.2	70.6	77.5	76.4	69.6	74.5

the mean per cent of right answers. All respondents, and all systems, were considered collectively in this ranking which revealed that Policy Number Four, pertaining to in-service education, had the highest mean. It also indicated that Policy Number Two had the lowest mean and ranked fourth. In Table XV, which presents the means of correct answers obtained in each system, it can be seen that in four systems Policy Number One ranks first. The table also shows that Policy Number Three, concerning the use of substitute teachers, ranks first in four systems and that Policy Number Two ranked fourth, or last, in five systems.

In Table XV the means of correct answers have been totaled according to systems, and then a mean of means has been computed for each system. This mean of means affords the reader a method of determining in which systems teachers have the best understanding of policies. The table shows that, according to the mean method of comparison, teachers in System C had the best understanding of school policy information.

The Understanding of Policies and the Size of the School System

Since the mean per cent of correct answers has been used to measure the understanding of policies by individual school systems (see Table XV, page 118), this method can be

used now to determine if the size of the school system has any bearing on understanding. To conduct this part of the analysis, the understanding of teachers in three large school systems was compared with the understanding of teachers in three small school systems. Of the eight school systems in the study, Systems A, C, and D were considerably larger than the remaining five systems. Systems B, E, and F were of like size not only as to the total number of teachers employed but also as to the total number of questionnaires returned. These systems were considered representative of small systems. System G was larger than either System B, System E, or System F but smaller than the three larger systems; consequently, it was not used in this part of the analysis. System H was considerably smaller than any other system in the study. It was not used for comparison in this part of the analysis because the writer did not think it to be representative of small systems.

To compare Systems A, C, and D with Systems B, E, and F, the writer totaled the respective mean percentages of correct answers to each policy for each system and then computed a mean of means. The final comparison, to determine the difference in understanding, was made between the mean of means of large systems and the mean of means of small systems. Table XVI, which demonstrates the procedure, shows that in large school systems the mean of means was 77.0 per cent.

TABLE XVI
 MEAN PER CENT OF CORRECT ANSWERS FOR TEACHERS
 IN LARGE SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND TEACHERS
 IN SMALL SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Large systems	Mean per cent for all policies	Small systems	Mean per cent for all policies
A	79.2	B	72.8
C	81.2	E	77.5
D	70.6	F	76.4
Average mean for large systems	77.0	Average mean for small systems	75.6

The table shows that in small systems the mean of means was 75.6. According to the mean average method which has been used throughout this analysis, the computations show that teachers in large school systems may have a slightly better understanding of school policy information than do teachers in small school systems.

Understanding and Teaching Experience

Since communication is a continuing process, the writer sought to determine if teaching experience had any effect or influence on the understanding of school policy information. Each of the 644 participating teachers was asked to indicate the number of years that she or he had taught in their particular school system. For convenience in making comparisons the writer placed the tabulations in the following categories:

- Category 1. Those who were in their first year of teaching.
- Category 2. Those who had taught more than one year but less than six years.
- Category 3. Those who had taught more than five years but less than eleven years.
- Category 4. Those who had taught more than ten years but less than twenty-one years.
- Category 5. Those who had taught more than twenty years but less than thirty-one years.

Category 6. Those who had taught more than thirty years.

Because it was not feasible to make comparisons for all the questions in each policy, the writer selected one question concerning each policy. Each question selected was one which teachers had indicated in interviews as being clearly understood insofar as wording and sentence structure were concerned.

The questions selected were:

Policy Number One, Question I: If a salesman or solicitor visited your classroom during class hours, would he need an official permit from the superintendent, principal, or assistant principal?

Policy Number Two, Question II: What is the total number of sick leave days that you can accumulate?

Policy Number Three, Question II: If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness and you had accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover this absence, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute from your own personal funds?

Policy Number Four, Question I: In how many days of in-service education are you required to participate each year?

Table XVII presents a tabulation of the number of correct answers to each question. The answers are categorized

TABLE XVII
POLICY UNDERSTANDING ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER
OF YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Policy	Number of correct answers					
	1 (One year)	2 (2-5 years)	3 (6-10 years)	4 (11-20 years)	5 (21-30 years)	6 (Over 30 years)
1	41	118	97	160	69	50
2	18	66	63	115	38	36
3	54	143	114	171	70	52
4	23	97	77	113	61	41
Total Number of Correct Answers	136	424	351	559	238	179
Possible Number of Correct Answers	244	592	476	696	288	216
Per Cent of Correct Answers	55.7	71.6	73.7	78.9	80.6	82.9

by the arrangement mentioned previously in this section. The correct answers and the number of respondents who identified themselves by experience are totaled at the bottom of each column (category). The per cent of right or correct answers is given beneath the totals. It will be observed that not all of the 644 respondents identified themselves by experience; that is, some respondents refused to indicate the number of years they had taught. There were, however, 628 teachers who identified themselves according to experience and it was from their responses that computations were made.

In Table XVII it will be noted that there is a continuous increase in the percentage of correct answers beginning with the category of first year teachers and continuing to the category representing over thirty years of teaching experience. This increase is presented in Figure 1, page 126. In Figure 1 a sharp increase in understanding may be observed in the years immediately following the first year of teaching. After five years of teaching experience, however, there is only a slight but steady increase.

C. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNDERSTANDING AND SATISFACTION

An attempt was made in this chapter to determine what relationship existed between the understanding of a policy and the satisfaction that teachers had for the same policy.

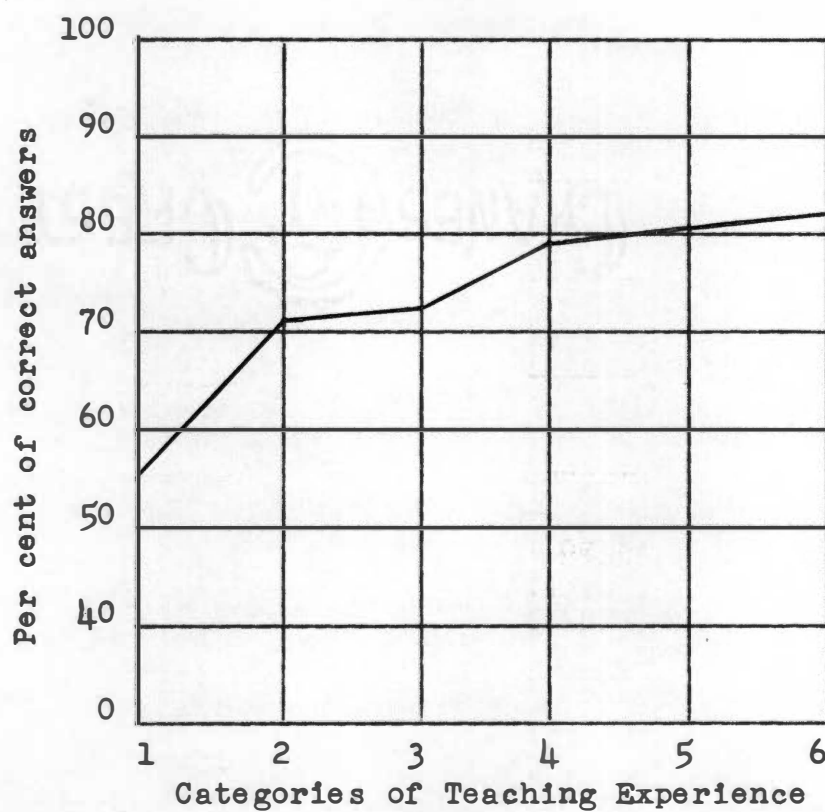


FIGURE 1

TEACHER UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICY
INFORMATION ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER
OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Since the mean number of correct answers to a policy was accepted as an indication of how well a policy was understood, the means of the individual policies were compared with the number of times the respondents answered that they were satisfied with a policy. This comparison resulted in the following tabulation:

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Mean number of correct answers</u>	<u>Number who indicated they were satisfied</u>
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	482	516
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	427	524
3. Use of Substitute Teachers	524	482
4. In-service education	528	475

Comparing the above figures, it was determined that knowledge of a policy does not equate with satisfaction regarding it. In fact, there may be an inverse relationship between understanding and satisfaction. The tabular organization above shows that while the mean number of correct answers to Policy Number One, concerning solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers, was 482, the number of teachers who answered that they were satisfied with the policy was 516. Pursuing the comparisons to the other extreme, the tabulations reveal that the mean number of correct answers to Policy Number Four, concerning in-service education, was 528; yet, only 475 teachers said that they were satisfied with the policy. This relationship between understanding and

satisfaction suggests that the more teachers know about a policy, the less likely they are to passively accept it. If policies are ever to be improved and if the professional growth of teachers is desired, then passive acceptance of anything is not desirable. Teachers need to critically analyze school policies in order to understand them better; and, if this understanding results in dissatisfaction, the possibilities for improved administration and instruction become greater.

It is interesting to note that the policy which had the highest mean of correct answers and the lowest number of "satisfied" responses also was the policy which most involved teachers in its formulation. By questionnaire and interview, teachers were asked: "Did you help with the formulation of this policy?" The answers by policy were as follows:

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Total number respondents</u>	<u>Number indicating they helped formulate</u>
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	644	21
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	644	18
3. Use of Substitute Teachers	644	13
4. In-service Education	644	50

The above figures show that there were more teachers involved in the formulation of Policy Number Four than there were in the formulation of the other policies. These

comparisons suggest the following circular relationship:

1. The greater the participation of teachers in the formulation of a policy, the greater the understanding of that policy.
2. The better a policy is understood, the greater the possibility of dissatisfaction.
3. The greater the participation of teachers in the formulation of a policy, the greater the possibility for dissatisfaction.

At first glance the above statements convey the supposition that more opportunities for teacher participation in policy-making would eventually lead to complete teacher dissatisfaction of policies. This is not at all the case for it may be assumed, from the comparisons made, that uninformed teachers passively accept policies and may be satisfied with them even though they do not understand them. More important than satisfaction is the effectiveness of the policy. In this regard, the collective body of 644 teachers ranked the in-service education policy of their system second in effectiveness.

Upward Flow of Communication Concerning Teachers' Attitudes Toward Policies

In this section of Chapter IV, the relationship of policy satisfaction to policy understanding has been discussed.

The comparisons made from teacher responses have pointed up the tendency on the part of teachers to become less satisfied with a policy as they learn more about the policy. Although this tendency may add little to the professional character of teachers, it nevertheless demands some consideration from the prudent administrator. How well known are teachers' feelings concerning school policies? Do these feelings get through the communication channel? Do feelings of satisfaction have priority in the communication channel over feelings of dissatisfaction? These seem to be some of the questions which may be important to efficient administration insofar as school policies are concerned.

The analysis of data collected from principals in the eight systems revealed that, in almost 90 per cent of the cases, principals believed that teachers were satisfied with school policies. This exceeds, by more than 10 per cent, teacher satisfaction as indicated by teachers themselves. In only 1 per cent of the cases did principals believe that teachers were dissatisfied with policies. The remaining 9 per cent consisted of principals who admitted that they did not know whether or not teachers were satisfied or dissatisfied. These figures support the contention that teachers' likes and dislikes, their satisfactions and dissatisfactions, are not readily channeled to school administrators. Much of the blame for this communications inadequacy must be directed to

teachers themselves if they do not exercise their option to initiate a return flow of information.

Further analysis of data shows that when the feelings of teachers are communicated to administrators, they are more often those feelings of dissatisfaction. Referring to the four policies collectively, there were 315 responses of dissatisfaction. Of this number, ninety-six, or 30.5 per cent, indicated that their feelings had been communicated to a school administrator. The 644 respondents also submitted 1,997 responses of satisfaction to the four policies and of this number only 348, or 17.4 per cent, indicated that they had communicated their feelings to a school administrator. Table XVIII presents a breakdown and summary of these tabulations.

D. SUMMARY

Chapter IV has dealt with processing data obtained by questionnaire and interview from 644 teachers. Analysis of data was made on the basis of the understanding that teachers had of four system-wide policies. The extent of understanding was measured according to the mean per cent of correct answers submitted to various questions asked about each policy.

As was noted in the analysis of data from school principals, the analysis of data from teachers revealed that the

TABLE XVIII

COMMUNICATION OF TEACHERS' FEELINGS OF SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION

Policy				Frequency	
1	Number respondents expressing dissatisfaction	23	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	3	.13
	Number respondents expressing satisfaction	516	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	101	.195
2	Number respondents expressing dissatisfaction	73	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	19	.26
	Number respondents expressing satisfaction	524	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	85	.16
3	Number respondents expressing dissatisfaction	99	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	26	.26
	Number respondents expressing satisfaction	482	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	71	.14
4	Number respondents expressing dissatisfaction	120	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	48	.40
	Number respondents expressing satisfaction	475	Number respondents communicating feelings to principal or superintendent	91	.19

understanding of each policy was dependent on the understanding of the various aspects of each policy. Teachers, as a group, had different understandings of different aspects. In like manner, their understandings of policies were such that they could be placed in rank order. The policy concerning in-service education had the best understanding among teachers. The policy concerning sick leave for teachers had the least understanding among teachers.

The analysis revealed further that teachers in large school systems had a slightly better understanding of policies than did teachers in small school systems. Also shown in the analysis was the relationship between teaching experience and policy understanding. Understanding was found to improve as teaching experience within the system was gained. Teachers who had participated in policy formulation were found to have a slightly better understanding of policies than teachers who had not participated in policy formulation. The analysis disclosed further that teachers who had helped in policy formulation, and who thereby had the best understanding of policies, were also the teachers who expressed greatest dissatisfaction with policies.

CHAPTER V

COMPARING THE UNDERSTANDING OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS WITH REGARD TO SCHOOL POLICIES

In Chapter III and Chapter IV attempts were made to determine the extent that principals and teachers understood school policies. Data collected from principals and teachers were processed and presented separately. The purpose of this chapter is to make comparisons of the two groups of data and to show wherein there is mutuality of understanding as well as differences in understanding. This chapter will also present certain factors, such as the channels of communication and the time of dissemination and receipt of information, which may contribute to the understanding or misunderstanding of school policies.

A. DETERMINING THE DIFFERENCES IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL POLICY INFORMATION

Policy Concerning Solicitors and Salesmen

As previously discussed in Chapter III and in Chapter IV, two questions were asked about the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen. Principals and teachers were subjected to the same type of inquiry by questionnaire and interview. Principals had a high mean of correct answers to this policy. In fact, this policy concerning solicitors and

salesmen was tied with the policy concerning the use of substitute teachers for first place in understanding among principals. However, according to the mean number of correct answers to the questions, this policy ranked third in understanding among teachers.

The first question asked sought to determine if principals and teachers knew whether or not a salesman or solicitor had to have a permit before he could visit a teacher. In percentage terms, 97.9 per cent of the principals knew the correct answer as compared to 84 per cent of the teachers.

The second question asked whether or not a teacher was required to make a report to the principal concerning the visit of a solicitor or salesman. To this question, 87.1 per cent of the principals and 65.5 per cent of the teachers gave the correct answer.

The mean percentage of correct answers for principals and teachers was: principals, 92.6 per cent; teachers, 74.8 per cent. The difference in the mean per cent of correct answers was 17.8 per cent.

The difference in the mean per cent of correct answers for the two groups was greater than exhibited for any of the other policies. This difference can be interpreted to mean that the range of misunderstanding was greater with respect to the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen than for any of the other policies. It suggests also that the internal

communication of information relating to this policy was less effective than the communication of similar information relating to other policies included in this study.

Policy Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers

Fewer correct answers were obtained to the questions asked about this policy than for any of the other policies used in measuring understanding. This was true for both principals and teachers, although the difference between the two groups was not as great as for the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen.

The first question asked had reference to whether or not an affidavit, or similar statement, was required of teachers who were absent due to illness. The responses indicated that 84.2 per cent of the principals knew the correct answer, compared to 77.2 per cent of the teachers.

The second question concerned the total number of sick leave days that could be accumulated by teachers. The responses revealed that 77.9 per cent of the principals knew the correct answer, compared to 53.7 per cent of the teachers.

The third question concerned whether or not teachers could count as sick leave their absence due to the illness of an aunt or an uncle. The per cent of correct answers obtained from principals was 73.7, while 66.9 per cent of the teachers submitted correct answers. Although the percentage

difference between the two groups of answers was small, the percentages themselves were relatively low. This would indicate that the degree of understanding that teachers and principals had for this policy was quite limited, and was relatively inadequate.

A fourth question, which had reference to whom a teacher should contact when her absence had exceeded her sick leave, was asked of both principals and teachers; however, it was not included in the computations for the teacher group because some principals thought this aspect of the policy was not generally applicable to all teachers. Since the principals did not object to answering the question themselves, it was included in the computations for their group. In 88.4 per cent of the responses from principals, correct answers were submitted.

The mean percentages of correct answers to all the questions concerning sick leave for teachers are as follows: principals, 81.1 per cent; teachers, 66.3 per cent. The difference in the per cent of correct answers was 14.8 per cent, which was the second largest difference among the four policies.

Policy Concerning the Use of Substitute Teachers

This policy was accorded a comparatively high rank in understanding among both teachers and principals. Along with the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen, this policy

ranked first in understanding among principals. While the understanding of this policy by teachers was lower than that of principals, it ranked considerably higher than the two policies previously discussed in this chapter. This policy ranked second in understanding among teachers, but only slightly below the in-service education policy.

The responses to the first question, which asked whom a teacher should contact when a substitute teacher was needed, indicated that 96.8 per cent of the principals knew the correct answer as compared to 95.1 per cent of the teachers. These percentages were relatively high and the difference was comparatively small, thus indicating that both principals and teachers had a very good understanding of this aspect of the policy.

The second question had reference to payment of substitute teachers who were working for teachers who were absent because of personal illness. Principals and teachers also had a superior understanding of this aspect of the policy. For principals the number of correct answers was 97.9 per cent of the total, as compared to 96.1 per cent for teachers. Only a slight difference in the percentages was again noted.

The responses to the third question, however, showed an inferior understanding of another aspect of the policy. Principals and teachers were asked whether or not a regular

teacher had to pay a substitute teacher when the regular teacher was absent for reasons other than sick leave or professional leave. To this question, 82.1 per cent of the principals submitted correct answers, as compared to only 53 per cent of the teachers.

The mean percentages of correct answers to all the questions concerning substitute teachers are as follows: principals, 92.6 per cent; teachers, 81.4 per cent. The difference in understanding was 11.2 per cent.

Policy Concerning In-service Education

When the responses from teachers were considered collectively and not by individual system, the policy concerning in-service education had the highest mean of correct answers. The mean per cent of correct answers obtained from principals was also high, but did not rank first in understanding when compared with the other policies.

Concerning the number of days of in-service education in which each teacher was required to participate annually, 86.3 per cent of the principals gave the correct answer while 65.2 per cent of the teachers responded correctly.

The second question asked whether or not the in-service education program included any pre-school system-wide meetings. To this question, 97.9 per cent of the principals gave the correct answer as compared to 92.5 per cent of the teachers.

When asked if all teachers in the system were required to participate in the same number of days of in-service education, all of the principals (100 per cent) responded correctly, as compared to 92.5 per cent of the teachers.

To the fourth question, which asked whether attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting could be counted as in-service education, 82.1 per cent of the principals and 77.8 per cent of the teachers gave the correct answer.

Calculating the mean per cent of correct answers to all the questions on this policy for the two groups resulted in the following comparison: principals, 91.6 per cent; teachers, 82.0 per cent. The difference in the mean per cent of correct answers was 9.6.

Summary of Differences

By arranging the percentages of correct answers in tabular form, the differences that existed between principals and teachers, with respect to the questions asked about the individual policies, could be readily observed. Table XIX, which combines Tables V and XIV, presents a summary listing of the answers in percentage terms for principals and teachers. The table shows that in at least one aspect of each policy there was considerable difference between the understanding of principals and the understanding of teachers.

TABLE XIX
DIFFERENCES IN THE PER CENT OF CORRECT ANSWERS
TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING SCHOOL POLICIES

Policy	Question	Per cent of correct answers		
		Principals	Teachers	Difference
1	I	97.9	84.0	13.9
	II	87.1	65.5	21.6
2	I	84.2	77.2	7.0
	II	77.9	53.7	24.2
	III	73.7	66.9	6.8
	IV	88.4		
3	I	96.8	95.1	1.7
	II	97.9	96.1	1.8
	III	82.1	53.0	29.1
4	I	86.3	65.2	21.1
	II	97.9	92.5	5.4
	III	100.0	92.2	7.8
	IV	82.1	77.8	4.3

Table XIX also shows that to each question the per cent of correct answers from teachers was less than the per cent of correct answers from principals. This consistent deficiency conclusively supports the following hypothesis: The understanding of a school policy varies inversely with the distance between its place of origin and its destination.

The differences in understanding between principals and teachers can be summarized further by computing the mean per cent of correct answers to each policy. This computation is found in Table XX. The differences in mean percentages, also presented in Table XX, show clearly which policies had better mutual understanding by principals and teachers. The in-service education policy was best understood of the four policies employed in this study. With regard to those policies for which the differences were rather large, such as the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen, a serious defect in communication is implied.

Calculating a mean of means for both principals and teachers revealed the over-all, average difference in the understanding of policies between the two groups. This calculation is also presented in Table XX. Although only four policies were considered in this study, these final averages are an indication of the general understanding that principals and teachers had of all school policies.

TABLE XX
MEAN PER CENT OF CORRECT ANSWERS COMPARED

Policy	Principals	Teachers	Difference
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	92.6	74.8	17.8
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	81.1	66.3	14.8
3. Use of Substitute Teachers	92.6	81.4	11.2
4. In-service Education	91.6	82.0	9.6
Mean of Means	89.5	76.1	13.4

B. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The first section of this chapter was devoted to presenting and discussing the differences in understanding that existed between principals and teachers with regard to school policies. In this and succeeding sections of the chapter an attempt will be made to explain the factors which contribute to these differences in understanding.

One of the factors which doubtless influences the understanding of school policy information is the channel of communication through which the information flows. Ideally, a school system might wish to have a communication channel in which there were no barriers and through which information could travel directly to its destination. Such is not the case, however. Administration of the present day school system is not an easy task. Its internal communications is often a maze of confusing and baffling arteries, and organizing this network into what might be considered an official communications system has resulted in a milieu of communication media. There are system-wide principals' meetings, system-wide teachers' meetings, school faculty meetings, countless memoranda from superintendents, supervisors and principals, and innumerable conferences between individuals and groups--all for the purpose of maintaining and improving the mutual understanding of school matters. Whether this objective has or has not been reached is a question that has

neither been fully nor satisfactorily answered. The findings presented in this section may help administrators to better organize their programs of internal communications.

Primary Channel of Communication

For communication purposes a channel may be defined as "that through which anything passes," or "a closed course or conduit through which anything passes."¹ A communications channel provides a passage through which information can freely flow. In this study a primary channel was considered to be one through which information flowed most frequently.

Data were obtained from principals which showed in which manner they most frequently transmitted school policy information to teachers. Data were obtained from teachers which showed the manner in which school policy information was most frequently received. Under ideal circumstances, the findings obtained from the two groups of data would be identical. Since the ideal situation could be expected to yield to the practical in the average school system, however, the comparison of the findings of the two groups of data was made to determine their similarity.

From the first group of data, which was collected from principals, the responses indicated that in approximately

¹Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1951), p. 139.

77 per cent of the cases school policy information was disseminated to teachers by principals. This means that the school principal served in the capacity of a relay station, or connecting link, between the central office of the superintendency and instructional personnel. These responses from principals also indicated that information concerning solicitors and salesmen was obtained from principals more frequently, and information on in-service education less frequently, than was information concerning the other policies employed in this study.

However, while principals reported that in 77 per cent of the cases they disseminated school policy information to teachers, the teachers reported that in only 57 per cent of the instances did they consider the principal as being the person who had given them information concerning school policies. The figures above show a considerable difference in the responses with regard to the principal's station in the communication channel. Both percentages are sufficient, however, to show that principals are an essential element in the primary channel of communication.

After it was determined that principals outranked all other persons in the dissemination of school policy information to teachers, an attempt was made to determine by what methods or media information was disseminated. As one might surmise, the individual school faculty meeting far outnumbered

the responses to all other possibilities. This was especially true for the policies concerning solicitors and salesmen and in-service education.

By connecting the two portions of the foregoing discussion, it was possible to determine the primary channels of communication in the eight systems studied. The data presented in Chapter III revealed that school principals obtained their information about school policies from several sources. The three most frequently mentioned were: (1) they assisted in the formulation of the policy, or (2) they read about the policy in the system's handbook of regulations and policies, or (3) they heard the policy discussed and explained at a meeting of principals. After the principal had the information, he passed it along to teachers most frequently in school faculty meetings.

Secondary Channels of Communication

If teachers did not receive school policy information through the principal-faculty meeting channel, how then did they learn about the policies? The data obtained by the instrument disclosed that, second to principals, most of the information received by teachers came from the superintendent or some member of the central office staff. The methods used by superintendents to transmit this information were most frequently that of the handbook of policies and regulations, written memoranda, and system-wide meetings of teachers. The

handbook of rules and regulations was, however, the predominant medium for transmission of policy information by superintendents. Several of the respondents commented that the handbook had been distributed at system-wide meetings or faculty meetings, but did not recall what person--superintendent, principal, supervisor, or clerk--had been responsible for their distribution.

Another channel of communication, evident in each system, involved teachers obtaining policy information from other teachers. This channel was present in each system and involved each of the four policies used in the measurement of understanding. Of the two-thirds of the respondents who submitted answers which might be used to distinguish the channels of communication, approximately 25 per cent indicated that personal and individual conferences with other teachers was a channel through which school policy information was obtained.

Distortion of Information

Because secondary channels of communication, as well as a primary channel, were evidenced in each system, it became important to determine whether or not the use of secondary channels resulted in distortion of policy information. As previously discussed, the primary channel of communication was that through which information was disseminated by principals to teachers in individual school faculty meetings. Teachers who indicated this channel as the primary channel of

communication had a slightly higher percentage of correct answers to questions about policies than did those teachers who indicated other channels. This supports the hypothesis that distortion of information is greater when it is received through secondary channels of communication.

Important to this discussion is the fact that approximately one-third of the responding teachers failed to indicate any channel whatsoever; and from this group of teachers the highest per cent of incorrect answers was received. This finding suggests two possibilities: (1) teachers in this group simply may have been unable to recall how or where they received information, or (2) teachers in this group may have been unable to identify the sources of information. Another interesting discovery resulted in a recheck of the tabulations. The teachers in this group were those with the highest per cent of incorrect answers; yet, there were just as many teachers in this group (from a percentage standpoint) who acknowledged receipt of information as there were in the groups who distinguished primary or secondary channels of communication.

C. TIME DIFFERENTIAL

The differences in the understanding of policies has been discussed in the preceding pages. The findings of this study gave support to the following hypotheses: (1) the

understanding of a school policy varies inversely with the distance between its place of origin and its destination; and (2) distortion of information is greater when it is received through secondary channels of communication.

This chapter has also presented data which distinguished the primary and secondary sources of information pertaining to school policies, and the communication channels through which the information flowed. The sources and channels appear to be influential factors in the understanding of school policies.

Another important factor having influence on the understanding of school policies was the time differential relating to the interval between when information was disseminated and when it was received. One can reason that when information pertaining to school policies is delayed, or when it must travel a circuitous route to its destination, the possibilities for complete understanding of school policies are greatly diminished. Reflection on this matter persuades one to believe that the direct and unretarded transmission of information greatly enhances the understanding of school policies.

Dissemination and Receipt of School Policy Information

Data were obtained in this study from principals and teachers which when processed disclosed certain differences concerning the dissemination and receipt of school policy information. More pertinently, it was found that principals

and teachers did not agree as to the period in which they communicated about school policies. These differences point to one glaring misapprehension: transmission of information does not equal communication. To explain this by example, appropriate reference is made to the transmission of school policy information. Principals may transmit school policy information to teachers either by word of mouth or by written memorandum. The transmission may take place in a school faculty meeting or in a personal conference. The principal may believe that he has communicated with the teacher, not realizing that the teacher actually has not received the information. The teacher may have taken momentary note of the information in its verbal or physical form, but the information was not acquired as knowledge. The relationship of learning to understanding was discussed in Chapter II. There it was theorized that the action desired by the person who disseminated information could not result unless the recipients retained the information in knowledgeable form. The findings of the study give credence to this theory.

The above idea is illustrated by comparing Table XXI and Table XXII. Table XXI shows that, when all four policies were considered in the aggregate, approximately 70 per cent of the principals stated that information had been disseminated to teachers during the current school year. An impression contrary to, or at least quite different from, the

TABLE XXI

TIME POLICY INFORMATION WAS DISSEMINATED
TO TEACHERS ACCORDING TO PRINCIPALS

Policy	Information disseminated				Uncertain or no answer
	This year	Last year	Longer than two years ago	None	
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	53	6	30	4	2
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	66	9	18		2
3. Use of Substitute Teachers	67	9	18		1
4. In-service education	77	2	14		2
Totals	263	26	80	4	7
Mean number principals in each category	65.8	6.5	20	1	1.8
Per cent mean is of total responses	69.3	6.7	21	1.1	1.9

TABLE XXII
TIME POLICY INFORMATION WAS RECEIVED
BY TEACHERS ACCORDING TO TEACHERS

Policy	Information disseminated				Uncertain or no answer
	This year	Last year	Longer than two years ago	None	
1. Solicitors and Salesmen	205	52	231	148	8
2. Sick Leave for Teachers	379	54	165	40	6
3. Use of Substitute Teachers	331	55	190	63	5
4. In-service Education	454	38	121	19	12
Totals	1,369	199	707	270	31
Mean number teachers in each category	342.3	49.8	176.8	67.5	7.8
Per cent mean is of total responses	53.1	7.7	27.5	10.5	1.2

above is obtained from Table XXII. There it can be seen that on the average only about 53 per cent of the teachers said they had received information during the current year. These findings should not be interpreted to mean that principals responded falsely or erroneously to the questionnaires and interviews. The findings may be interpreted, however, as an indication of ineffective internal communication. They mean simply that although principals disseminated school policy information, teachers did not actually receive it. This strongly supports the tenet that dissemination does not equal communication.

Receipt of Information According to Policies

Comparing Tables XXI and XXII also revealed certain differences with respect to individual policies, although there was general agreement between principals and teachers as to the time of dissemination of information and the time of receipt of information. The superintendents of the PSCR asserted that information concerning each of the policies was given to principals during the school year, or immediately prior thereto. The superintendents stated that principals of the various schools were responsible for channeling this information to their teachers during the school year, but added that supplementary information may have been issued and circulated by memoranda, in system-wide meetings of teachers,

and in conferences involving teachers and members of the central office staff. The findings revealed, as mentioned previously in this section, that only about 70 per cent of the principals indicated that they had channeled the information on to teachers during the current year. A few principals stated that information had been given to teachers during the preceding year, and approximately 20 per cent stated that it had been longer than two years since information had been given to teachers.

These percentages were computed from the mean number of responses to each policy. Table XXI shows that during the current school year information about all policies was not disseminated by all principals. According to the number of responses, there were fewer principals who disseminated information about solicitors and salesmen (during the current school year) than there were who disseminated information about the other three policies. The data also showed that the policy which received the most "current year" responses was the policy concerning in-service education. These findings are reinforced by the data presented in Table XXII. There it can be seen that the smallest number of teachers indicated the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen, and the largest number of teachers indicated the in-service education policy. This signifies the general agreement between principals and teachers with regard to which policies were

most recently communicated. It is interesting to note that a substantial number of teachers indicated that they had never received any information about certain policies. This was especially true for the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers during class hours. These indications presumably had reference to official information and not to information received from unofficial sources.

Receipt of Information According to Teaching Experience

One phase of this investigation sought to determine if teachers with certain experience qualifications had better access to information than did teachers with other experience qualifications. In Chapter IV it was found that first year teachers had the least understanding of school policies. The improvement in understanding was observed to increase as teachers gained teaching experience (see Table XVII, page 124). With reference to certain categories of experience, Table XXIII shows which teachers had or had not received policy information during the current school year. The policy concerning solicitors and salesmen was observed to be the weakest in each experience category with regard to receipt of information during the current school year, and the policy concerning in-service education was observed to be the strongest. Table XXIII also shows that in each category of experience the policy with the largest number of "no information received" responses was the policy concerning

TABLE XXIII

THE RECEIPT OF SCHOOL POLICY INFORMATION BY TEACHERS
ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE

Experience in Years	Policy			
	1	2	3	4
<u>1 Year</u>				
This year	37	57	50	55
Last year	0	0	0	0
Longer than two years	0	0	0	0
No information	24	4	11	6
<u>2-5 Years</u>				
This year	56	99	81	111
Last year	18	22	26	16
Longer than two years	29	15	18	16
No information	43	11	17	2
<u>6-10 Years</u>				
This year	30	72	70	92
Last year	4	6	6	5
Longer than two years	47	33	32	18
No information	36	8	11	4
<u>11-20 Years</u>				
This year	57	94	80	112
Last year	17	16	12	5
Longer than two years	77	54	71	45
No information	24	10	11	9
<u>21-30 Years</u>				
This year	17	26	23	39
Last year	5	7	5	5
Longer than two years	44	35	38	26
No information	5	3	5	2
<u>30 or More Years</u>				
This year	8	23	17	35
Last year	8	3	2	5
Longer than two years	29	21	32	13
No information	8	5	7	1

solicitors and salesmen.

These findings are presented here to relate the important and obvious connection between understanding and receipt of information. The findings show that, in some instances, teachers did not understand certain policies because they had not received information about these policies, or at least they were not aware that information had been channeled to them. Even when teachers acknowledged receipt of information, many of them indicated that it had been received prior to the current school year, perhaps longer than two years previous. This may account for the fact that many teachers did not know of various changes in school policies.

D. SUMMARY

In this chapter data obtained from principals were compared with data obtained from teachers. The purpose of this comparison was to show the differences in understanding between the two groups concerning school policy information.

The comparison revealed that in at least one aspect of each policy there was considerable difference between the understanding of principals and the understanding of teachers. It was also found that to each question asked about a policy, the per cent of correct answers from teachers was less than the per cent of correct answers from principals.

By comparing the mean of correct answers for each group, the degree of mutual understanding was obtained for each policy. The in-service education policy was best understood of the four policies employed in this study.

This chapter also revealed that the primary channel of communication between principals and teachers was the individual school faculty meeting, and that the secondary channels involved various combinations of personnel and media. Distortion of school policy information appeared to be greater when received through secondary channels of communication.

The time interval between the dissemination of policy information by principals and receipt of policy information by teachers was also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: first, to review in summary the problem, the hypotheses and the procedure by which the study was conducted; second, to present the findings as derived from the analysis of data; and third, to present and discuss the implications as they may apply to the efficient operation of public school systems.

A. SUMMARY

The intent of this summary is to review the design of the study. The problem and hypotheses will be re-stated and the procedure for resolving the problem will be briefly discussed.

The Problem

As stated in Chapter I, the problem of this study was to investigate the extent of mutual understanding of policies among professional school personnel in order to determine the effectiveness of internal communication in selected school systems in East Tennessee.

Hypotheses

At the outset several hypotheses were made. These hypotheses were established to guide the investigation and

the analysis of data. They were considered to be such that the findings of the study would either verify or refute them. The hypotheses are re-stated as follows:

1. The understanding of a school policy is dependent on the understanding of the various aspects of that policy.
2. The understanding of a school policy varies inversely with the distance between its place of origin and its destination.
3. The understanding of policies varies in direct proportion to the size of the school system, that is, the larger the school system, the better the understanding.
4. Policy information initiated in the central office of the superintendent has better access to the established channels of communication than does information initiated by teachers.
5. Distortion of policy information is greater when the flow of information is through secondary channels than when through the primary channel of communication.
6. The understanding of school policies by teachers is proportionate to the number of years of teaching experience.

Procedure

In order to approach the problem with an intelligent concept of the process of communication, the first step in

the investigation was that of examining literature in the field of communication and then pulling together the various ideas as theorized by the authors. In Chapter II of this study these were presented in sequential order to show the nature of communication, to reveal the barriers to understanding, and to describe communication in a democratic society and in a democratic organization.

Basic to the investigation was the collection of data. This was accomplished by use of a measuring instrument which had been developed around four system-wide school policies, namely: (1) policy concerning solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers during class hours; (2) policy concerning sick leave for teachers; (3) policy concerning the use of substitute teachers; and (4) policy concerning in-service education. These policies were selected because of their common applicability to all of the school systems participating in the study. In questionnaire and interview form the instrument was used to obtain information from 8 superintendents, 95 principals, and 644 teachers in eight public school systems in East Tennessee. This sampling consisted of six city systems and two county systems with instructional personnel ranging from over one thousand to less than one hundred.

The next step in the investigation was that of analyzing and comparing the groups of data in an attempt to determine the extent of mutual understanding of school policies.

This analysis, which is presented in Chapters III, IV, and V, sought to: (1) determine the understanding that principals had of school policy information; (2) determine the understanding that teachers had of school policy information; and (3) determine the differences in understanding between principals and teachers. School policy information obtained from superintendents was accepted as being a valid interpretation of policies, and comparisons were made on the basis of this interpretation.

The findings derived from the analysis and the extent to which they support the hypotheses of the study appear in the following pages.

B. FINDINGS

Analyzing and comparing data from superintendents, principals, and teachers resulted in the following findings:

1. Both principals and teachers showed a wide variation in their understanding of different policies and even aspects of the same policy. The analysis revealed that neither principals nor teachers, as two separate groups, had complete understanding of all four policies or of the different aspects of any one policy.

2. The understanding of a school policy varied inversely with the distance between its place of origin and its destination. The comparison of the three groups of data

disclosed that the understanding among superintendents was consistently better than the understanding among principals, and that the understanding among principals was consistently better than the understanding among teachers.

3. Teachers who had the best understanding of policies were also the teachers who submitted the most responses of dissatisfaction for policies.

4. Teachers who said they had participated in the formulation of policies were also the teachers who submitted the most responses of dissatisfaction.

5. Teachers' feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for policies were not frequently communicated to principals and superintendents. Teachers indicated that when such communication did occur, it was more often in cases of dissatisfaction.

6. The understanding that principals had of the policies concerning solicitors and salesmen, the use of substitute teachers, and in-service education was considerably better than their understanding of the policy concerning sick leave for teachers.

7. The understanding that teachers had of individual policies was ranked as follows: (1) policy concerning in-service education; (2) policy concerning the use of substitute teachers; (3) policy concerning solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers during class hours; and (4) policy

concerning sick leave for teachers. This ranking means that teachers, as a group, had a better understanding of the in-service education policy than they had of any of the other policies employed in this study.

8. The differences in understanding between principals and teachers, computed from the mean per cent of correct answers to each policy, were ranked as follows: (1) policy concerning solicitors and salesmen; (2) policy concerning sick leave for teachers; (3) policy concerning the use of substitute teachers; and (4) policy concerning in-service education. This ranking means that the greatest difference in understanding (hence, the least mutual understanding) between principals and teachers was in regard to the policy concerning solicitors and salesmen visiting teachers. The policy concerning in-service education had the least difference in understanding, therefore, the highest mutuality of understanding.

9. Principals and teachers in large school systems had a slightly better understanding of school policies than principals and teachers in small school systems.

10. Principals and teachers who helped in the formulation of policies had a slightly better understanding of the policies than principals and teachers who had not helped in policy formulation.

11. Understanding of policies increased as teaching

experience increased. The greatest increase in understanding of policies occurred between one and five years of experience; the understanding of policies was best among those teachers with more than five years of teaching experience.

12. The primary channel of communication between principals and teachers was the individual school faculty meeting.

13. There were several secondary channels of communication involving various combinations of personnel and communications media. Most prominent of these was the system handbook of policies and regulations issued through the superintendent's office.

14. Distortion of policy information was greater when received through secondary channels of communication.

The above findings support the hypotheses of this study to the following extent:

Hypothesis Number One. The understanding of a school policy was found to depend on the understanding of the various aspects of that policy. Analysis of data, collected from both principals and teachers, disclosed that the understanding of school policies or school policy information was not uniform. Some policies were better understood than others, and some aspects of a particular policy were better understood than other aspects of the same policy. There was at least

one aspect of every policy which was better understood than the other aspects of that policy.

Hypothesis Number Two. The understanding of a school policy was found to vary inversely with the distance between its place of origin and its destination. In every aspect of every policy, understanding decreased the farther school policy information traveled from the central office of the superintendency. Policy understanding among superintendents was superior to the understanding among principals; policy understanding among principals was superior to that among teachers.

Hypothesis Number Three. The findings of the study did not prove conclusively that the understanding of a policy varied in direct proportion to the size of the school system. The understanding of policies in three large school systems, however, was found to be slightly better than the understanding in three small school systems.

Hypothesis Number Four. Analysis of data revealed that policy information initiated in the central office of the superintendent had somewhat better access to the channels of communication than did information initiated by teachers. Data were obtained from teachers which indicated that very little information was placed in the official communication channel by teachers.

Hypothesis Number Five. The findings indicated that distortion of policy information was greater when the flow of information was through secondary channels of communication. Data obtained from superintendents, principals and teachers established the primary channel of communication as being the individual school faculty meeting presided over by the school principal. Policy information was least distorted when disseminated and received through this channel.

Hypothesis Number Six. It was found that the understanding of school policies by teachers was proportionate to the number of years of teaching experience. The responses from teachers indicated an increase in understanding which paralleled the increase in teaching experience. The greatest increase in understanding seemed to exist among those teachers with from two to six years of teaching experience.

C. IMPLICATIONS

The various tables presented in this study, and the discussions related thereto, have disclosed a number of specific findings with regard to the understanding of school policies. These findings clearly signify several tendencies among principals and teachers. They offer some basis for making intelligent predictions or forecasts of behavior, as might concern school administrators and teachers. The

findings also possess latent, perhaps obscured meanings. The purpose of this section is to express these meanings in terms of their implications for public education.

Implications for Superintendents

Democratic administration of public schools is identified with the problem of management. Skillful administration of a group, or system, of public schools is vital to the successful operation of the individual units within the group. Other things such as money and technical knowledge are necessary, but without a competent superintendent no system of schools can enjoy progress. This study of internal communications has resulted in several implications for superintendents, the recognition of which may improve their competence as educational administrators.

Planning. Administration cannot possibly take place all by itself; it is inextricably tied to the energies and actions of all persons whose performances affect the success of the group. In light of the findings of this study, and of the theory of effective internal communication as discussed in Chapter II, the planning of the educational program must involve as many persons as the limits of time and ability will permit. Within the school systems belonging to the PSQR, more effective communication of school policy information was evidenced when more people were involved

with the preparation and formulation of the information.

The involvement of teachers, however, must be of significance to the teachers. It was found in this study that teachers who had helped to formulate policies were also the teachers who expressed dissatisfaction for the policies. This fact may imply that as teachers learn more about a policy, they cease to passively accept it. On the other hand, it may imply that their participation in policy making was of an insignificant, even artificial, nature. In reviewing the responses it was found that several teachers who thought they had participated in policy formulation actually did little more than listen to someone explain the policy to them. This type of teacher participation may result in a "rigged" effect, and although the participating teacher may have voiced approval of the policy, she also may have resented being placed in a position subordinate to that of the persons who actually drafted the policy. School administrators should remember that opportunities for participation must be used with sincerity and not as a manipulative device.

Organization. A group cannot exist without organization; neither can organization be forced on a group. Since the formal organization of a school system is the responsibility of the board of education and the superintendent, great care should be taken by these official leaders to provide that type of organization which will contribute to

effective internal communication.

The analysis of data in this study disclosed numerous sources and channels of communication. A large number of teachers did not attempt, however, to distinguish the source or the channel; yet, they indicated that school policy information had been received. This may imply that teachers were bombarded so frequently with messages of information that they simply could not recall which volley was responsible for their knowing about the policy. Policy understanding may have come about by diffusion and, since the objective of the information was achieved, it may be said that the communication was effective. This understanding does not preclude the possibility of an immunity to future understanding being built up among teachers who now have very good understanding of school policies. When communications channels are flooded with school policy and other information, there always exists a situation of competition for attention. It is this competition that renders teachers susceptible to some parcels of information and immune to others. The flooding of a channel also gives rise to new sources and new channels of information, thus aiding the possibilities of greater distortion of information. At the risk of oversimplification, then, it behooves superintendents to safeguard the channels of communication by: (1) establishing and maintaining of an official channel of communication, and

(2) discretely processing the information which has access to the official channel.

The duty of the writer would be negligently performed if the urgent need for a return flow of communication were not noted. The organization for effective internal communication will provide teachers opportunities for self expression. The findings of this study revealed very little feedback as the return flow of communication might be termed. The possibility that teachers do not take advantage of their opportunities to communicate is implied; however, this does not negate the implication that the opportunities may not exist in some school systems. If internal communication is to be effective, situations in which individuals are provided means of self-expression, and situations which tap the creative ideas latent in the group, must subsist.

Media. The effectiveness of internal communications depends to a certain extent upon the means by which information is transmitted. Principals and teachers who participated in this study indicated that the school faculty meeting was most frequently the place in which teachers obtained information about school policies. Handbooks, written memoranda, and newsletters issued through the central office of the superintendency were also indicated as communications tools. Another medium, secondary in nature, was that of individual

and group conferences and meetings. Despite all of these means of communication, there were some teachers, and a few principals, who said they had never received any information about particular policies; and, the analysis of responses disclosed that many teachers and principals could not provide correct answers to certain questions asked about policies, even though they acknowledged receipt of policy information. Four inadequacies of transmission are implied by the findings: (1) the information did not reach all of the people it was designed to reach; (2) the information reached its destination but, because it had been delayed or had changed routes several times, was not the same as in its original form; (3) the information reached its destination but was of such poor quality in its original form that it was misunderstood by the recipients; and (4) the information reached its destination but was of such poor quality that it did not command the attention of the recipients.

Concerning the first two inadequacies, the need for an official channel of communication has been discussed previously. The discussion here is directed to the remaining two inadequacies, which pertain to the poor quality of information. To imply that the written and spoken word does not adequately inform teachers, especially in school policy matters, is an indictment of school faculty meetings and system-wide handbooks. The findings imply, nonetheless, that

the conduct of faculty meetings in some schools may contribute little to the professional improvement of either principals or teachers, and that the value of system handbooks is greatly overestimated. Referring to the analysis of data, it was found that these two means of communication were indicated by teachers as being major sources of school policy information. This does not mean that faculty meetings and handbooks should be abandoned, however, because the analysis also indicated that information received from these two sources was better understood than information obtained elsewhere. It does mean that an extended effort should be made to improve these major sources, as well as any supplementary sources that may exist.

Personnel. The implications for superintendents extend also into the area of personnel. The responses from both principals and teachers designated the school principal as the prime conductor of school policy information. The school principal was the connecting link between the office of the superintendent and instructional personnel. While there were supplementary forces such as supervisors, assistant principals, other teachers, and even the superintendent himself, the school principal remained the key to effective internal communication.

The findings of the study imply a serious communications defect at the level of the principal. In every aspect

of each policy, the understanding among principals was better than the understanding among teachers. While this speaks well for principals' understanding, it presents a breakdown in the communication line. Many factors possibly attributed to this breakdown, but none of these abrogate the need for competent school principals. Superintendents should strive continually for greater competence among principals by employing only qualified persons and by providing worthwhile experiences in in-service education programs.

The need for qualified personnel throughout a school system is exemplified to some extent by the lack of general understanding of school policies.

Implications for School Principals

Some of the implications for school principals have been touched upon briefly in the foregoing paragraphs of this section. The importance of the school faculty meeting to effective internal communication has been discussed, and some concern for the conduct of school faculty meetings was mentioned. The role of the principal in the faculty meeting is imperative to effective internal communications. Unfortunately, most principals begin their work with goals already preconceived for them and their faculties. In the case of school policies, this situation is almost untenable. If the principal is democratic, his attempts to work with his faculty to study policies are crippled by teachers who

cannot become enthusiastic about policies formulated by superior authority. If he is undemocratic, his attempts to force teachers to learn about policies may result in chaos for his entire program.

The findings of the study implied a breakdown in the communication line at the point where the principal supposedly relays information on to teachers. Although most of the principals stated that they had relayed policy information to their teachers during the school year, a large number of teachers responded to the contrary. Insofar as the role of the principal is concerned, this situation suggests three possibilities: (1) the principal has not been accepted by his faculty as their official leader; (2) the principal has been unable to develop a concern for school policies among the members of the group; or (3) the faculty may have been resisting the efforts of the principal to force policy information on them.

It was found in this study that principals and teachers who participated in policy formulation had a better understanding of policies than principals and teachers who did not participate. This clearly implies the necessity for greater involvement of personnel in policy formulation. If policies are made by superior authority outside the local school unit, however, the principal must take adequate measures to keep his teachers informed. Merely reading

policy announcements to teachers, or distributing memoranda to them, will not suffice. Principals should seek to develop a concern among teachers for school policies. He should give them opportunities to disagree with the policies and assist them in forming protests if they feel such action is necessary. If teachers agree with the policy, the principal can work with them to determine the best way of implementing the policy in their local situation.

Principals also should make every effort to keep teachers informed of changes in policies. Keeping a staff informed of policy changes enables the staff to adapt individual plans to the changes, and makes it possible for the principal to plan with his staff the ways the new policy will be put into action. This prevents a disconcerting surprise when customary routines are interrupted.

The analysis of data also revealed that first year teachers most often stated they had not received any information whatever about particular school policies. This implies a need for some type of orientation program for new teachers. Orientation (concerning policies) should consist of more than passing out handbooks to new teachers. It should involve discussions and opportunities for question and answer sessions. The success of the new teacher is largely dependent on the orientation that does or does not take place.

Implications for Teachers

The findings revealed that teacher understanding of certain policies was better than their understanding of other policies. It was also revealed that certain aspects of policies were better understood than other policy aspects. This disharmony implies two things: (1) only certain aspects of certain policies attract the attention of teachers; and (2) the attention of teachers is given only to those policies, for which teachers have a definite need. The close connection of the two statements above is obvious. Policies, or policy aspects, are actually learned by teachers only after their interest is captured and corraled; teacher interest and attention is best maintained when the teacher has need for policy information.

The need for involving all personnel in the planning and formulating of projects and policies has been mentioned in connection with the implications for superintendents and principals. The implications for teachers, which are discussed above, befit this suggestion. Experiences should be planned which will help teachers to develop a concern for school policies. Concern for policies may result accidentally from a personal, unplanned experience, but this is the least desirable method because its consequences may be detrimental to the welfare of the teacher as well as the school system. If proper opportunities for learning are

provided, this concern will parallel the actual need for policy information. If this concern for policies cannot be developed among teachers, it is doubtful that the desired understanding can be achieved. As was discussed in Chapter II, the demands for attention are many and the amount of time that the teacher has left--after preparing lessons, grading papers, adjusting records, and doing other chores--usually is too meager to permit attention to be focused on things which are not of immediate concern. The competition for time causes teachers to establish a screening system whereby only those matters of great importance actually get through. Handbooks, memoranda, speeches, even personal conversations cannot be expected to break through this veil of indifference. As supplementary tools, they can be invaluable; however, the basic problem remains as one of getting attention.

Another implication for teachers is related to the return flow of information, the feedback of communication. The vast majority of teachers who participated in this study indicated that they rarely ever communicated their feelings (about policies) to their principal or superintendent. The responses showed further that when teachers did communicate their feelings, it was usually in cases of dissatisfaction for policies. This implies that many teachers simply do not care whether or not policies are good, or whether or not they have specific meanings for all teachers. They passively

accept the policy without question.

The findings also disclosed that teachers who communicated feelings of dissatisfaction to their principal or superintendent actually had a better understanding of policies than other teachers did. This implies that as teachers began to learn more about policies, they became qualified to question some of the aspects of the policies. Unless dissatisfaction develops into grievances, much good can result by using dissatisfaction to build satisfaction. Unfortunately, most schools are almost completely lacking in ways of calling complaints to the attention of the principal. Through fear of being labeled troublemakers, many teachers have hesitated to complain. Many have found that the only way to resolve their problems is to move to another teaching position. In either case, the school has lost their valuable contributions.

The important point for teachers is not that irritations exist but the way principals and superintendents react to them. This points to the necessity for teamwork among administrators and teachers to remove the causes of dissatisfaction. Unless teachers know that some attempts are being made to remove irritating factors, they grow in the mind of teachers until they are magnified all out of proportion.

Implications for Needed Research

The outcomes of the present study seemed to imply that there should be additional studies to further exploit the

possibilities for determining and improving the effectiveness of internal communications in public school systems. Following are brief descriptions of some of these studies:

1. There are good possibilities that a follow-up study to determine the extent of improvement in internal communications in the eight school systems of this study would result in information beneficial to all school personnel. This type of study would involve obtaining data similar to that of the present study. It would be anticipated that the eight school systems would have used the findings of the present study to improve their internal communications.

2. A study similar in purpose to the present one but extended by the provision for a control group and an experimental group would enable the investigator to draw comparisons and point up probable causative influences. This type of study would involve the free exchange of policy information among administrators and teachers in the experimental group. Personnel in the control group would receive no official communication about school policies, and their only knowledge of policies would be of a second hand nature. The investigator might wish to conduct the investigation among first year teachers only. Comparisons of the two groups would show the extent to which the understanding of policies was better in the control group or in the experimental group.

3. Control and experimental groups could also be used in a study to ascertain the better techniques of communicating school policy information. Such a study would provide valuable information for superintendents and principals.

4. If effective internal communication may be considered vital to the successful operation of a school system, then its influence on external communication must be recognized. The external publics--which may include parents, government officials, the press, taxpayers, and other groups--depend largely upon school employees for information concerning their educational enterprise. Only as these employees are adequately informed can the body politic be adequately informed. The findings of this study indicate a definite need for a study in the area of external communication. Such an investigation would involve analyzing the opinions found in samples of various external publics. These analyses should reveal not only the attitudes of the publics but also their causes and possibly their effects. The findings should contribute appreciably to the improvement of school public relations programs and school-community relations.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaires and Accompanying Letters Mailed to Principals and Teachers

PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR COOPERATIVE RESEARCH

University of Tennessee

Knoxville, Tennessee

April 22, 1960

Dear Principal:

As a member of the organization, Public Schools for Cooperative Research, your school system is participating in a study to determine ways and means for improved operation. This study, in which eight public school systems in East Tennessee are involved, is concerned with the possible improvement of the organizational structure of the superintendency. One of the areas which has been identified in the study as being critical to efficient operation is the area of internal communication. Consequently, some extensive research regarding internal communication is now in process.

The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in the study. A questionnaire concerning the communication of school policy information is enclosed. You are asked to complete the questionnaire and to return it as soon as possible. A return envelope is also enclosed. The use of the questionnaire has been authorized by your school superintendent.

It is important that your answers to the questions be given after careful consideration so that the final results of the research will be clear and unbiased. Your signature on the questionnaire is NOT required. The intent of the study is not to embarrass any person in the school system; rather, it is hoped that the results of the research will aid in improving the overall school program in each of the eight school systems studied. Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

MARTIN PETERS
Martin Peters
PSCR Research Assistant

Enclosures

PSCR QUESTIONNAIRE TO PRINCIPALS

Name of school system in which you are employed _____

Name of school of which you are principal _____

Number of years you have been employed in this system _____

Number of years you have been principal of this school _____

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION
OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING SALESMEN AND
SOLICITORS VISITING TEACHERS AT SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

- I. Is it necessary for a salesman or solicitor to have a permit from you (or the superintendent) before he can visit one of your teachers during school hours?
Yes ____; No ____; Uncertain ____
- II. After a salesman visits one of your teachers, is that teacher required to make a report to you concerning the visit? Yes ____; No ____; Uncertain ____
- III. Did you help with the formulation of this policy or regulation concerning solicitors and salesmen? Yes ____;
No ____

If you answered "yes," how did you help?

If you answered "no," how did you learn about the policy?

- ____ System-wide principals meeting
____ Handbook of regulations and policies
____ Memorandum from the central office
____ Conference with the superintendent
____ Conference with a supervisor
____ Conference with another principal
____ Conference with a board member
____ Other (list) _____

- IV. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?
____ This school year
____ Last school year
____ Longer than two years ago
- ____ Check here if no information has been given to your teachers concerning this policy

Who gave this information to your teachers? (check one)

☐ Board member ☐ Assistant principal
☐ Superintendent ☐ Supervisor
☐ You, as principal ☐ Other (list) _____

How or where was this information given to your teachers? (check one)

☐ System-wide teachers meeting
☐ School faculty meeting
☐ Teachers handbook
☐ Memorandum from the central office
☐ Memorandum from your office
☐ Other (list) _____

- V. Is this policy being carried out effectively? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- VI. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- VII. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___

QUESTIONS CONCERNING SICK LEAVE FOR TEACHERS.

- I. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of illness, is it necessary for that teacher to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from the attending physician, certifying the cause of the teacher's absence? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that a teacher can accumulate? _____
- III. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of the illness of an aunt or an uncle, can that teacher count this as sick leave (assuming the teacher had accumulated some sick leave days)? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- IV. If because of illness it became necessary for a teacher to be absent from his (or her) teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days he (or she) had accumulated, whom should the teacher contact?
- ☐ Superintendent ☐ Substitute teacher
☐ You, as principal ☐ Other (list) _____
☐ Assistant principal _____

V. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?

Yes___; No___

If you answered "yes," how did you help?

If you answered "no," how did you learn about the policy?

- ___ System-wide principals meeting
- ___ Handbook of regulations and policies
- ___ Memorandum from the central office
- ___ Conference with the superintendent
- ___ Conference with a supervisor
- ___ Conference with another principal
- ___ Conference with a board member
- ___ Other (list) _____

VI. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| ___ This school year | ___ Check here if no information concerning this policy has been given to your teachers. |
| ___ Last school year | |
| ___ Longer than two years ago | |

Who gave this information to your teachers? (check one)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| ___ Board member | ___ Assistant principal |
| ___ Superintendent | ___ Supervisor |
| ___ You, as principal | ___ Other (list) _____ |

How or where was this information given to your teachers? (check one)

- ___ System-wide teachers meeting
- ___ School faculty meeting
- ___ Teachers handbook
- ___ Memorandum from the central office
- ___ Memorandum from your office
- ___ Other (list) _____

VII. Is the policy being carried out effectively?

___ Yes; ___ No; ___ Uncertain

VIII. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?

___ Yes; ___ No; ___ Uncertain

IX. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

___ Yes; ___ No; ___ Uncertain

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING THE USE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS.

- I. Which one of the following persons should a teacher contact when he (or she) needs a substitute teacher?
(check one)

Superintendent

Substitute teacher

— You, as principal

Other (list)

Assistant principal

- II. When a teacher is absent because of illness (and the teacher has accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover the absence), is that teacher required to pay the substitute from her own personal funds? Yes___; No___; Uncertain

If you answered "yes," how much must the teacher pay?

- III. If a teacher is absent from her teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, is that teacher required to pay the substitute teacher from her own personal funds?

Yes ; No ; Uncertain

If you answered "yes," how much must the teacher pay?

- IV. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
Yes____; No____ If you answered "yes," how did you
help?

If you answered "no," how did you learn about the policy?

System-wide principals meeting

Handbook of regulations and policies

Memorandum from the central office

Conference with the superintendent

Conference with a supervisor

—Conference with another principal

—Conference with a board member

Other (list)

- V. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?

This school year

— Last school year

Longer than two years ago

— Check here if no information concerning this policy has been given to your teachers

Who gave this information to your teachers? (check one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board member | <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You, as principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (list) _____ |

How or where was this information given to your teachers? (check one)

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> System-wide teachers meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School faculty meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers handbook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum from the central office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum from your office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (list) _____ |

VI. Is the policy being carried out effectively?

Yes___; No___; Uncertain___

VII. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?

Yes___; No___; Uncertain___

VIII. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

Yes___; No___; Uncertain___

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING IN-SERVICE EDUCATION.

- I. In how many days of In-Service Education are your teachers required to participate each year? _____
- II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings? Yes____; No____; Uncertain ____
- III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of In-Service Education? Yes____; No____; Uncertain____
- IV. Are your teachers permitted to count their attendance at the ETEA meeting as In-Service Education? Yes____; No____; Uncertain____
- V. Did you help with the formulation of the In-Service Education policy of your system? Yes____; No____

If you answered "yes," how did you help?

If you answered "no," how did you learn about the policy?

- ____ System-wide principals meeting
- ____ Handbook of regulations and policies
- ____ Memorandum from the central office
- ____ Conference with the superintendent
- ____ Conference with a supervisor
- ____ Conference with another principal
- ____ Conference with a board member
- ____ Other (list) _____

- VI. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?

____ This school year ____ Last school year ____ Longer than two years ago	____ Check here if no information concerning this policy has been given to your teachers.
--	---

- Who gave this information to your teachers? (check one)
- | | |
|--|--|
| ____ Board member
____ Superintendent
____ You, as principal | ____ Assistant principal
____ Supervisor
____ Other (list) _____ |
|--|--|

How or where was this information given to your teachers? (check one)

- ☐ System-wide teachers meeting
- ☐ School faculty meeting
- ☐ Teachers Handbook
- ☐ Memorandum from the central office
- ☐ Memorandum from your office
- ☐ Other (list) _____

VII. Is the policy being carried out effectively?

☐ Yes; ☐ No; ☐ Uncertain

VIII. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?

☐ Yes; ☐ No; ☐ Uncertain

IX. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

☐ Yes; ☐ No; ☐ Uncertain

PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR COOPERATIVE RESEARCH

University of Tennessee

Knoxville, Tennessee

April 14, 1960

Dear Teacher:

As a member of the organization, Public Schools for Cooperative Research, your school system is participating in a study to determine ways and means for improved operation. This study is concerned with the possible improvement of the organizational structure of the superintendency. One of the areas which has been identified in the study as being critical to efficient operation is the area of internal communication. Consequently, some extensive research regarding communication is now underway.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that you have been selected to receive the attached questionnaire concerning the communication of school policy information. This questionnaire should be completed and returned as soon as possible. A return envelope is enclosed. The use of the questionnaire has been authorized by your school superintendent.

It is important that your answers to the questions be given after careful consideration so that the final results of the research will be clear and unbiased. You are asked to answer each item without consulting another person or an official school document. The intent of the study is not to embarrass any person in the school system; but, rather, it is hoped that the results of the research will aid in improving the overall school program. Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

MARTIN PETERS
Martin Peters
PSCR Research Assistant

Enclosures

P.S. You are NOT required to sign your name on the questionnaire.

PSCR QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS

Name of school system (city or county) in which you teach _____

Name of school in which you teach _____

Subjects which you teach _____

Number of years you have taught in this system _____

Number of years you have taught in this school _____

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING SALESMEN AND SOLICITORS VISITING TEACHERS AT SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

- I. If a salesman or solicitor visited your classroom during class hours, would he need an official permit from the superintendent, principal, or assistant principal? (check one) Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- II. After a salesman visits you in your classroom, are you required to make a report to your principal concerning the visit? (check one) Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- III. When did you last receive information about this policy? (check one)
- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ___ This school year | ___ Check here if you have |
| ___ Last school year | received no informa- |
| ___ Longer than two years ago | tion about this policy. |

Who gave you the information about this policy? (check one)

___ Board Member	___ Principal
___ Superintendent	___ Another Teacher
___ Supervisor	___ Other (list) _____

Where did you receive information about this policy? (check one)

___ System-wide teachers meeting
___ Faculty meeting
___ Teachers Handbook
___ Memorandum from Central Office
___ Conference with another teacher
___ Other (list) _____

- IV. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___.
If "yes," to whom? _____
- V. Is the policy or regulation being carried out effectively? Yes___; No___
Are you satisfied with the policy? Yes___; No___
Have you communicated your feelings about this policy to your principal and/or superintendent? Yes___; No___
- VI. To your knowledge, has this policy been changed in the last twelve months? Yes___; No___
- VII. Did you help with the formulation of this policy? Yes___; No___
If "yes," how did you help?

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING SICK LEAVE FOR TEACHERS

- I. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness, would it be necessary for you to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from your physician, certifying the cause of your absence? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that you can accumulate?_____
- III. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness of one of your aunts or uncles, could you count this as sick leave (assuming you had accumulated some sick leave days)? Yes___; No___; Uncertain___
- IV. If because of illness it became necessary for you to be absent from your teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days which you have accumulated, whom would you contact? (check one)
 ___ Superintendent ___ Substitute Teacher
 ___ Principal ___ Other (list) _____
 ___ Assistant Principal
- V. When did you last receive information about this policy? (check one)
 ___ This school year ___ Check here if you have
 ___ Last school year received no informa-
 ___ Longer than two years ago tion about this policy.
- Who gave you the information about this policy? (check one)
 ___ Board Member ___ Principal
 ___ Superintendent ___ Another Teacher
 ___ Supervisor ___ Other (list) _____
- Where did you receive information about this policy? (check one)
 ___ System-wide teachers meeting
 ___ School faculty meeting
 ___ Teachers Handbook
 ___ Memorandum from Central Office
 ___ Conference with another teacher
 ___ Other (list) _____

VI. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person?

Yes___; No___. If "yes," to whom?_____

VII. Is the policy being carried out effectively?

Yes___; No___

Are you satisfied with the policy? Yes___; No___

Have you communicated your feelings about this policy or regulation to your principal and/or superintendent? Yes___; No___

VIII. To your knowledge, has this policy been changed in the last twelve months? Yes___; No___

IX. Did you help with the formulation of this policy? Yes___; No___ If "yes," how did you help?

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING THE USE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS.

- I. What person would you contact if you needed a substitute teacher? (check one)

☐ Superintendent

☐ Substitute Teacher

☐ Principal

☐ Other (list) _____

☐ Assistant Principal

- II. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness and you had accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover this absence, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute from your own personal funds? Yes ☐; No ☐; Uncertain ☐

If you answered "yes," how much would you have to pay?

- III. If you were absent from your teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute teacher from your own personal funds? Yes ☐; No ☐ Uncertain ☐

If you answered "yes," how much would you have to pay?

- IV. When did you last receive information about this policy? (check one)

☐ This school year

☐ Check here if you have

☐ Last school year

received no informa-

☐ Longer than two years ago

tion about this policy

Who gave you the information about this policy? (check one)

☐ Board Member

☐ Principal

☐ Superintendent

☐ Another Teacher

☐ Supervisor

☐ Other (list) _____

Where did you receive information about this policy? (check one)

☐ System-wide teachers meeting


☐ School faculty meeting

☐ Teachers Handbook

☐ Memorandum from Central Office

☐ Conference with another teacher

☐ Other (list) _____

- V. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person? Yes___; No___. If "yes," to whom? _____
- VI. Is the policy or regulation being carried out effectively? Yes___; No___
Are you satisfied with the policy? Yes___; No___
Have you communicated your feelings about this policy or regulation to your principal and/or superintendent? Yes___; No___
- VII. To your knowledge, has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?
Yes___; No___
- VIII. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
Yes___; No___
If "yes," how did you help?
- 

THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE REFER TO THE POLICY OR REGULATION OF YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM (CITY OR COUNTY) CONCERNING IN-SERVICE EDUCATION.

- I. In how many days of In-Service Education are you required to participate each year? _____
- II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings? Yes ___; No ___; Uncertain ___
- III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of In-Service Education? Yes ___; No ___; Uncertain ___
- IV. Are you permitted to count your attendance at the ETEA meeting as In-Service Education? Yes ___; No ___; Uncertain ___
- V. When did you last receive information about this policy? (check one)
- ___ This school year
 - ___ Last school year
 - ___ Longer than two years ago
 - ___ Check here if you have received no information about this policy

Who gave you the information about this policy? (check one)

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| ___ Board Member | ___ Principal |
| ___ Superintendent | ___ Another Teacher |
| ___ Supervisor | ___ Other (list) _____ |

Where did you receive information about this policy? (check one)

- ___ System-wide teachers meeting
- ___ School faculty meeting
- ___ Supervisor
- ___ Memorandum from Central Office
- ___ Conference with another teacher
- ___ Other (list) _____

- VI. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person?
- Yes ___; No ___. If "yes," to whom? _____

- VII. Is the policy or regulation being carried out effectively? Yes___; No___
Are you satisfied with the policy? Yes___; No___
Have you communicated your feelings about this policy to your principal and/or superintendent? Yes___; No___
- VIII. To your knowledge, has this policy or regulation been changed in the last twelve months?
Yes___; No___
- IX. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
Yes___; No___
If "yes," how did you help?

APPENDIX B

Schedule of Questions Used in Interviews with Superintendents, Principals, and Teachers

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A SUPERINTENDENT

Place of Interview _____ Date of Interview _____

Name of Superintendent Interviewed _____

Name of School System _____

Policy: Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors Visiting Teachers
at School During School Hours

- I. Is it necessary for a salesman or solicitor to have a permit from you (or the school principal) before he can visit one of your teachers during school hours?
- II. After a salesman visits one of your teachers, is that teacher required to make a report to you (or to the school principal) concerning the visit?
- III. Who formulated this policy?
- IV. How was information concerning this policy given to your principals? To your teachers?
- V. When was information concerning this policy last given to your principals? To your teachers?
- VI. Is this policy being carried out effectively?
- VII. Are your principals satisfied with this policy? Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?
- VIII. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

Policy: Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers

- I. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of illness, is it necessary for that teacher to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from the attending physician, certifying the cause of the teacher's absence?
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that a teacher can accumulate?
- III. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of the illness of an aunt or uncle, can that teacher count this as sick leave (assuming the teacher had accumulated some sick leave days)?
- IV. If because of illness it became necessary for a teacher to be absent from his (or her) teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days he (or she) had accumulated, whom should the teacher contact?
- V. Who formulated this policy?
- VI. How was information concerning this policy given to your principals? To your teachers?
- VII. When was information concerning this policy last given to your principals? To your teachers?
- VIII. Is this policy being carried out effectively?
- IX. Are your principals satisfied with this policy? Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?
- X. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A SUPERINTENDENT (continued)

Policy: Concerning In-Service Education

- I. In how many days of In-Service Education are your teachers required to participate each year?
- II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?
- III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of In-Service Education?
- IV. Are your teachers permitted to count their attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting as In-Service Education?
- V. Who formulated this policy?
- VI. How was information concerning this policy given to your principals?
To your teachers?
- VII. When was information concerning this policy last given to your principals?
To your teachers?
- VIII. Is this policy being carried out effectively?
- IX. Are your principals satisfied with this policy?
Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?
- X. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A PRINCIPAL

Date of Interview _____ Place of Interview _____

Name of Principal Interviewed _____

Name of School System _____ Name of School _____

Number of Years Employed in This System _____

In This School _____

Policy: Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors Visiting Teachers
at School During School Hours

- I. Is it necessary for a salesman or solicitor to have a permit from you (or the superintendent) before he can visit one of your teachers during school hours?
- II. After a salesman visits one of your teachers, is that teacher required to make a report to you concerning the visit?
- III. Did you help with the formulation of this policy or regulation concerning solicitors and salesmen?
If so, how did you help?
- IV. If you did not help with the formulation of this policy, how did you learn about it?
- V. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?
____ This school year ____ Longer than two years ago
____ Last school year ____ No information given
- VI. Who gave this information to your teachers?
____ Board Member ____ Assistant principal
____ Superintendent ____ Supervisor
____ You, as principal ____ Other (who?)
- VII. How or where was this information given to your teachers?
____ System-wide teachers meeting
____ School faculty meeting
____ Teachers handbook
____ Memorandum from the central office

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A PRINCIPAL (continued)

 Memorandum from your office
 Other (explain)

VIII. Is this policy being carried out effectively?

IX. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?

X. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

Policy: Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers

- I. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of illness, is it necessary for that teacher to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from the attending physician, certifying the cause of the teacher's absence?
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that a teacher can accumulate?
- III. If a teacher is absent from his (or her) teaching position because of the illness of an aunt or an uncle, can that teacher count this as sick leave (assuming the teacher had accumulated some sick leave days)?
- IV. If because of illness it became necessary for a teacher to be absent from his (or her) teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days he (or she) had accumulated, whom should the teacher contact?
 - Substitute teacher
 - Superintendent
 - You, as principal
 - Assistant principal
 - Other
- V. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
 If so, how did you help?

- VI. If you did not help with the formulation of this policy, how did you learn about it?
- VII. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?
☐ This school year ☐ No information given
☐ Last school year
☐ Longer than two years ago
- VIII. Who gave this information to your teachers?
☐ Board member ☐ Assistant principal
☐ Superintendent ☐ Supervisor
☐ You, as principal ☐ Other (who?)
- IX. How or where was this information given to your teachers?
☐ System-wide teachers meeting
☐ School faculty meeting
☐ Teachers handbook
☐ Memorandum from the central office
☐ Memorandum from your office
☐ Other (explain)
- X. Is this policy being carried out effectively?
- XI. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?
- XII. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A PRINCIPAL (continued)

Policy: Concerning the Use of Substitute Teachers

- I. Which one of the following persons should a teacher contact when he (or she) needs a substitute teacher?
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent | <input type="checkbox"/> Substitute teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You, as principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant principal | |
- II. When a teacher is absent because of illness (and the teacher has accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover the absence), is that teacher required to pay the substitute from her own personal funds? If so, how much must the teacher pay?
- III. If a teacher is absent from her teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, is that teacher required to pay the substitute teacher from her own personal funds? If so, how much must the teacher pay?
- IV. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
- If so, how did you help?
- V. If you did not help with the formulation of this policy, how did you learn about it?
- VI. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> This school year | <input type="checkbox"/> Longer than two years ago |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Last school year | <input type="checkbox"/> No information given |
- VII. Who gave this information to your teachers?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board member | <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You, as principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (who?) |
- VIII. How or where was this information given to your teachers?
- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> System-wide teachers meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School faculty meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers handbook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum from the central office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum from your office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain) |

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A PRINCIPAL (continued)

- IX. Is this policy being carried out effectively?
- X. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?
- XI. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?
-

Policy: Concerning In-Service Education

- I. In how many days of In-Service Education are your teachers required to participate each year?
- II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?
- III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of In-Service Education?
- IV. Are your teachers permitted to count their attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting as In-Service Education?
- V. Did you help with the formulation of the In-Service Education policy of your system? If so, how did you help?
- VI. If you did not help with the formulation of the In-Service Education policy, how did you learn about it?
- VII. When was information concerning this policy last given to your teachers?
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> This school year | <input type="checkbox"/> No information given |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Last school year | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Longer than two years ago | |
- VIII. Who gave this information to your teachers?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board member | <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You, as principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (who?) |

IX. How or where was this information given to your teachers?

- ☐ System-wide teachers meeting
- ☐ School faculty meeting
- ☐ Teachers handbook
- ☐ Memorandum from the central office
- ☐ Memorandum from your office
- ☐ Other (explain)

X. Is this policy being carried out effectively?

XI. Are your teachers satisfied with this policy?

XII. Has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH A TEACHER

Date of Interview _____ Place of Interview _____
 Name of Teacher Interviewed _____
 Name of School System _____ Name of School _____
 Subjects Taught by Teacher Interviewed _____
 Number of Years Interviewed Teacher Has Taught in This
 System _____ Number of Years Teacher Interviewed Has Taught
 in this School _____
 - - - - -

Policy: Concerning Salesmen and Solicitors Visiting Teachers
 at School During School Hours?

- I. If a salesman or solicitor visited your classroom during class hours, would he need an official permit from the superintendent, or principal, or assistant principal?
- II. After a salesman visits you in your classroom, are you required to make a report to your principal concerning the visit?
- III. When did you last receive information about this policy?
 ___ This school year ___ No information received
 ___ Last school year
 ___ Longer than two years ago
- IV. Who gave you the information about this policy?
 ___ Board Member ___ Principal
 ___ Superintendent ___ Another Teacher
 ___ Supervisor ___ Other
- V. Where did you receive information about this policy?
 ___ System-wide teachers meeting
 ___ School faculty meeting
 ___ Teachers handbook
 ___ Memorandum from Central Office
 ___ Conference with another teacher
 ___ Other

- VI. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person? If so, to whom?
- VII. Is this policy being carried out effectively?
- VIII. Are you satisfied with this policy?
- IX. Have you communicated your feelings about this policy to your principal or superintendent?
- X. To your knowledge has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?
- XI. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
- If so, how did you help?
-

Policy: Concerning Sick Leave for Teachers

- I. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness, would it be necessary for you to execute and submit an affidavit, or a report such as a statement from your physician, certifying the cause of your absence?
- II. What is the total number of sick leave days that you can accumulate? _____
- III. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness of one of your aunts or uncles, could you count this as sick leave (assuming you had accumulated some sick leave days)?
- IV. If because of illness it became necessary for you to be absent from your teaching position for a period in excess of the sick leave days which you have accumulated, whom would you contact?
- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| _____ Superintendent | _____ Substitute Teacher |
| _____ Principal | _____ Other (list) _____ |
| _____ Assistant Principal | |
- V. When did you last receive information about this policy?
- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ This school year | _____ No information received |
| _____ Last school year | |
| _____ Longer than two years ago | |

Who gave you the information about this policy?

☐ Board Member ☐ Principal
☐ Superintendent ☐ Another Teacher
☐ Supervisor ☐ Other

Where did you receive information about this policy?

☐ System-wide teachers meeting
☐ School faculty meeting
☐ Teachers Handbook
☐ Memorandum from Central Office
☐ Conference with another teacher
☐ Other

VI. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person? If so, to whom?

VII. Is the policy being carried out effectively?
 Are you satisfied with the policy?
 Have you communicated your feelings about this policy or regulation to your principal or superintendent?

VIII. To your knowledge, has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

IX. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?
 If so, how did you help?

Policy: Concerning the Use of Substitute Teachers

I. What person would you contact if you needed a substitute teacher?

☐ Superintendent ☐ Substitute Teacher
☐ Principal ☐ Other (list) _____
☐ Assistant Principal

II. If you were absent from your teaching position because of illness and you had accumulated sufficient sick leave days to cover this absence, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute from your own personal funds?

III. If you were absent from your teaching position for personal reasons, not covered by sick leave or professional leave, would it be necessary for you to pay the substitute teacher from your own personal funds?

If so, how much would you have to pay? _____

- IV. When did you last receive information about this policy? (check one)
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> This school year | <input type="checkbox"/> No information received |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Last school year | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Longer than two years ago | |

Who gave you the information about this policy?

<input type="checkbox"/> Board Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal
<input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/> Another Teacher
<input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Where did you receive information about this policy?

<input type="checkbox"/> System-wide teachers meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> School faculty meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers Handbook
<input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum from Central Office
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference with another teacher
<input type="checkbox"/> Other

- V. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person?

If so, to whom?

- VI. Is the policy or regulation being carried out effectively?

Are you satisfied with the policy?

Have you communicated your feelings about this policy or regulation to your principal or superintendent?

- VII. To your knowledge, has this policy been changed in the last twelve months?

- VIII. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?

If so, how did you help?

Policy: Concerning In-Service Education

- I. In how many days of In-Service Education are you required to participate each year?
- II. Do these days include any pre-school system-wide meetings?
- III. Are all teachers in the system required to participate in the same number of days of In-Service Education?

IV. Are you permitted to count your attendance at the East Tennessee Education Association meeting as In-Service Education?

V. When did you last receive information about this policy? (check one)

☐ This school year ☐ No information received
☐ Last school year
☐ Longer than two years ago

Who gave you the information about this policy?

☐ Board Member ☐ Superintendent
☐ Principal ☐ Another Teacher
☐ Supervisor ☐ Other

Where did you receive information about this policy?

☐ System-wide teachers meeting
☐ School faculty meeting
☐ Supervisor
☐ Memorandum from Central Office
☐ Conference with another teacher
☐ Other

VI. Was it your responsibility to pass this information on to another person?

If so, to whom?

VII. Is the policy or regulation being carried out effectively?

Are you satisfied with the policy?

Have you communicated your feelings about this policy to your principal or superintendent?

VIII. To your knowledge, has this policy or regulation been changed in the last twelve months?

IX. Did you help with the formulation of this policy?

If so, how did you help?