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A Survey of a Selected Public Group in the Vinton Community School District With Implications for the Improvement of Certain Educational Services in the Senior High School

Arnold H. Gaumnitz

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A SURVEY OF A SELECTED PUBLIC GROUP IN THE VINTON COMMUNITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF
CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL,

An Abstract of a Thesis

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Specialist in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by

Arnold H. Gaumnitz

August 1974

ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were (1) to determine what a selected group considered to be the major role of a high school education; (2) to determine some attitudes of this public relative to certain educational services being offered in the Vinton High School; (3) to determine the feelings of the group concerning the need for changing certain educational services in the Vinton High School; and (4) to determine some attitudes of the select group concerning what forces have produced change and the best way to bring about educational change in the Vinton High School.

The principal method used was a 24 item questionnaire survey distributed to 296 selected adults. This group consisted of the parents of all eleventh and twelfth graders in the Vinton (Iowa) senior high in 1973-74; the thirty-three teachers in the high school; the high school principal, the school superintendent and the curriculum coordinator; and the five school board members. Two hundred five forms were returned for a 69.3 percent return.

The significant findings were as follows:

1. The public felt the major purpose of a high school education was to prepare youth for the world in which they will one day be living.
2. The people in the Vinton community were slightly in favor of disciplining unruly students rather than trying to understand them.

Eighty-two and nine-tenths percent of the surveyed group indicated that they wanted one type of discipline or another.

3. A combination of teacher reports on student progress, test scores, parent-teacher conferences, and the pass-fail system was the majority response to the question "What would you like to see in place of letter grades?"

4. A total of 177 people (86 percent) felt the main duty of the counselor was to help students with their problems.

5. The public generally was opposed to the initiation of new and innovative services in the Vinton High School System.

6. Teachers received high rank (67.3 percent) for their efforts in trying to change with the times.

7. An overwhelming majority of the respondents wanted classroom discussion on controversial topics such as black student rights, sex hygiene, contraceptives, and drugs.

8. Parents do not want to be involved in choosing courses, class conduct, grading, and discipline, nor do they want student involvement except in the area of what courses will be taught.

9. A majority of the public (76.1 percent) felt that changes in the Vinton school were the result of "the change in our way of living and the structure of our society." They also felt that students have changed and now see the world from a different point of view than did students five years ago.

10. The select group favored the idea of bringing about change in education through four-way communication between parents, students, teachers, and administrators.

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This Study by: Arnold H. Gaumnitz

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has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the Degree of Specialist in Education .

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In a recent five-year follow-up study completed in 1972, 93 percent of the graduates of the Vinton High School rated their education as being very satisfactory but expressed the need for changing certain areas of the educational services. In the spring of 1973 a North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools Evaluation Team gave the Vinton High School a high rating but also noted ways whereby the school program could be improved. Survey findings provide local school districts with information which may be used to improve programs.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine what a selected public group considers to be the major role of a high school education; (2) to determine some attitudes of this public relative to certain educational services being offered in the Vinton High School; (3) to determine the feelings of the group concerning the need for changing certain educational services in the Vinton High School; and (4) to determine some attitudes of the select group concerning the best way to bring about educational change in the Vinton High School.

Importance of the Study

Public attitudes toward schools are continually changing and information pertaining to the public's attitude regarding the Vinton High School needs to be assessed periodically.

Limitations of the Study

This survey was limited to a selected sample of all the adults in the Vinton school district.

Definitions of Terms Used

Survey. A study of public attitudes regarding certain aspects of education in the Vinton High School.

Selected public group. The selected public group included (1) the parents of all the eleventh and twelfth graders in the Vinton senior high; (2) the thirty-three teachers presently teaching in the high school; (3) the high school principal, the school superintendent, and the curriculum coordinator; and (4) the five school board members.

Vinton Senior High School. The Vinton Senior High School includes grades 10, 11, and 12.

Implications for improvement. The act of implying or suggesting improvement in certain educational services in the Vinton High School as a result of the survey.

Certain educational services. Certain educational services

include (1) major role of the school, (2) disciplinary measures, (3) grading practices, (4) counseling, (5) courses being taught, (6) teaching methods, (7) student-parent involvement, and (8) innovative practices.

RESEARCH TECHNIQUES USED

A questionnaire was used to obtain responses concerning attitudes of those involved in the study.

Development of the Questionnaire

The writer developed the questionnaire during the summer of 1973. The instrument contained 24 questions concerning public attitudes toward education. This questionnaire is shown in the Appendix.

Selection of Respondents

The questionnaire containing an explanatory letter was sent to 296 adults. This selected group included the parents of all juniors and seniors in the Vinton High School, all teachers, the three administrators, and the five school board members.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature in this field may logically be divided into four areas. The first area to be reviewed concerns the major role of a high school education. The second area is concerned with criticism and critics of education. The third area will be concerned with the need for change in education and the last area of literature to be reviewed will concern public and community involvement in the educational process.

MAJOR ROLE OF A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Ebel believes the major role of a secondary education is to promote learning and what ought to be learned is useful knowledge; a knowledge built out of information by thinking about an integrated structure of relationships which come from given concepts and propositions. He feels that schools should be designed to cultivate cognitive competence to be used to foster the learning of useful knowledge.¹

Briggs believes the purpose of an education is to make a habit of learning and to instill within students the eagerness to go on and on in learning through fields to which they have been introduced.

¹Robert L. Ebel, "What Are Schools For?" Phi Delta Kappan, September, 1972, p. 3.

Briggs feels that young people should have revealed to them higher types of literature, music, and art; higher ideals of political and social life; higher conceptions of the development of men and nations; and higher views of science and math. Only then, he states, can students know the direction in which progress for them is possible.²

In a survey conducted at Gladbrook, Iowa, Winke found the local public to be in favor of teaching students how to solve problems and to think for themselves. The public felt that this was the program which needed emphasis in the secondary school.³

Knudson reported that the graduates of Denver, Iowa, felt the main goal of high school should be the preparation of youth for further education. The report also indicated that former students listed the "citizenship aspect" as that part of their high school education which proved to be of most value to them.⁴

Academic achievement and the development of attitudes, skills, and habits necessary for community living were the two things that Miller found needing emphasis in the local high school.⁵

²Thomas H. Briggs, "The Basic Duties of a Secondary School," Bulletin of the National Association of School Principals, October, 1971, p. 85.

³Darwin A. Winke, "A Survey of Attitudes Toward a Public School System" (unpublished Ed.S. thesis, University of Northern Iowa, 1973), p. 42.

⁴Ronald G. Knudson, "Certain Relationships Between the High-School and Post High-School Experiences of Graduates at Denver, Iowa" (unpublished Master's thesis, State College of Iowa, 1963), p. 87.

⁵Leland D. Miller, "A Follow-Up Study of Former Students of the Cedar Falls Secondary Schools" (unpublished Master's thesis, State College of Iowa, 1964), p. 70.

Glatthorn states that we have failed to provide students with meaningful study; failed to relate what they have learned in school to the problems of the world; failed to show them how to apply what they learn to solve immediate, practical problems. He wants seniors to spend one half their time in school, the other half being spent working at part time jobs, doing volunteer service, or studying in art museums and research institutions.⁶

Glatthorn would like students to be taught how to seek knowledge, not how to memorize an assortment of facts. He indicated that students need to read critically, to write precisely, and to think logically. This, he states, will have equipped them for a lifetime of learning.⁷

Williams suggests that in the last quarter of this century more and more of our children will be educated off school grounds and outside the hallowed classrooms. Students will spend extensive periods of time in actual life experiences. He states that students now attend schools made up mostly of classrooms where they listen to lectures, read texts, take notes, and cram for exams. In the future, city kids will work in ghettos, future scientists will go to marine biology labs, future

⁶Allan A. Glatthorn, "What Makes a High School Effective? A Principal Gives His Views," Parents Magazine, September, 1969, p. 64.

⁷Ibid., p. 65.

economists will live on farms, and other students will do research in private industry.⁸

CRITICISM AND CRITICS OF EDUCATION

High school students and many teachers are dissatisfied with educators. Each year the kids have less enthusiasm. They dread going to school. The basic complaint is that the school is out of touch with their lives and that it has failed to keep pace with the great change in American life during the past two decades.⁹

Most United States high schools have not kept pace with the society they expect to serve. Learning is more mechanical than personal. Curriculums are what they were twenty years ago. Students are expected to be passive receptacles for knowledge.¹⁰

Silberman, Fortune editor, visited 100 schools during a 3½ year period. He was appalled by the mutilation of spontaneity in the joy of learning and the lack of sense of self-accomplishment. Adults fail to appreciate what grim, joyless places most American schools are--what contempt they unconsciously display for children.¹¹

⁸George L. Williams, "Beyond the Classroom, Life Experiences in the Field," The Clearing House, October, 1970, p. 82.

⁹Education Column, "What's Wrong with the High Schools?" Newsweek, February 16, 1970, p. 65.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Charles Silberman, "Joyless, Mindless, Schools," Time, November 2, 1970, p. 57.

Silberman goes on to say that most of the reforms instituted by educators have left schools unchanged . . . because it never occurs to the staff to ask why they are doing what they are doing . . . what is wrong is mindlessness . . . a failure to think seriously about purposes or consequences.¹²

The literature has much to say about the teachers in charge of the classrooms. Several of the most noted critics of education convey the impression that schools are staffed by "sadists and clods"--and that it is the social misfits who are the root of repressive practices in schools.¹³

A National Education Association report entitled Schools for the 70's and Beyond alludes to the fact that teaching does have its share of incompetent teachers but most are decent, honest, well-intentioned people who do their best under trying circumstances.¹⁴

If they appear otherwise, it is because the institution in which they are engulfed demands it of them. If placed in an atmosphere of freedom and trust, if treated like professionals and as people of worth, teachers behave like the caring, concerned people they would like to be. They, like their students, feel they often are victimized by the way in which schools are currently organized and run.¹⁵

¹²Ibid.

¹³Warren T. Greenleaf and Gary A. Griffen, Schools for the 70's and Beyond (Washington, D. C.: NEA Center for the Study of Instruction, 1971), p. 75.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

Administrators also come in for their share of criticism.

Harold Full, writing in a book entitled *Controversy in American Education*, states that before high school can make real sense to teenagers, we have to change it in important ways.¹⁶

We have to find administrators who will be more responsive to students than to bureaucratic higherups. We have to tune the high school experience in on the real concerns of young people; self-utilization, money, power, failure, sex, and most important, we have to try to relate what we teach in high school to the other things adolescents are learning and to those other sources of experience, information, and understanding that teaches them so much today.¹⁷

Muessig and Cogan suggest that humanizing education is one of the paramount tasks we face if we want to improve our schools. Much of our educational theory is steeped in a humane tradition. We know what we ought to do. We have teachers and others who are loving, sensitive, empathetic, accepting, imaginative, lively, colorful, humorous, thoughtful, generous, and charismatic. What we must do is put it all together and develop specific programs, practices, and procedures which will translate our vision of humanized education into realities in the classroom and school.¹⁸

¹⁶Harold Full, *Controversy in American Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 120.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Raymond H. Muessig and John J. Cogan, "To Humanize Schooling," *Educational Leadership*, October, 1972, p. 34.

Many of our young people also see a lack of "humaneness" in student government. They see through what they consider to be the student government hoax and demand more voice in decisions that affect their lives.¹⁹

Muessig and Cogan summarize by saying that in far too many places throughout the nation, students and others see the school as a cold, aloof, negative, punitive, joyless, boring, irrelevant, bureaucratic institution instead of a warm, friendly, positive, rewarding, happy, vital, relevant, flexible, glorious, human community.²⁰

And everywhere the literature is full of complaints about the curriculum. Almost everyone has some idea of what a good curriculum should include and students as well as educators are speaking out.

Referring once again to the National Education Association article Schools for the 70's and Beyond, the writers insist that the curriculum must move away from an emphasis on the retention of facts to an emphasis on the processes of inquiry, comparison, interpretation, and synthesis. A student in whom the desire or the need to know has been developed can learn to go after the information he needs; a student to whom knowledge has been presented as a grab bag of names, numbers, and duties will have little trouble forgetting all of them as soon as the final exam is over.²¹

¹⁹Dorothy Graves, "Adolescent Grievances at School," PTA Magazine, October, 1971, p. 28.

²⁰Muessig and Cogan, loc. cit.

²¹Greenleaf and Griffen, op. cit., p. 52.

School patterns as we now know them are beginning to change. The old egg carton school is passing, along with the fifty minute period divided by a bell. We are moving away from the idea that education is something a teacher does to a student. We are rejecting the idea that we can train teachers using the same old mold and the same tired finish. We can't continue to prepare children for a world which no longer exists.²²

NEED FOR CHANGE IN EDUCATION

Harris and Associates, Inc., surveyed 100 United States high schools holding 2,500 interviews with students, teachers, and principals.²³

The Harris report showed that a majority of the students want to participate in deciding their future. They are willing to be taught but not told. They are willing to abide by rules, but they will not abide by rules which put them down. They are aware of the need for authority, but not impressed by it for its own sake. They are excited by the prospect of living in a fast-changing society and they want their high school education to help prepare them for it--not some society in the past.²⁴

²²Kevin A. Ryan, "Schools in the 1990's," School and Society, December, 1970, p. 454.

²³Louis Harris, "Crisis in the High School," Life, May 16, 1969, p. 23.

²⁴Ibid., p. 24.

The Harris report was full of surprises when it came to the attitudes of adults and children over standards of discipline. Far more students complained about rules being too lenient than complained of arbitrary strictness, and a clear majority were satisfied with things as they are. Even on matters of dress and haircut regulations, a majority felt matters were "about right" as they stand and two of three students felt control over extracurricular activities and sports was fair. About 25 percent of the students felt administrators were too lenient.²⁵

When it comes to discipline, there is a radical split between parents and children with teachers and principals taking the middle ground.

Fifty-six percent of the students voted for understanding rather than punishment. Sixty-three percent of the parents said, "crack down." Fifty-four percent of the teachers and 41 percent of the principals also voted for understanding.²⁶

The general conclusion of the Harris report was that students have few complaints about the curriculum, facilities, and staff, but they do complain about the way schools are run. Today's youth want more participation and involvement and see these two features as being the keys to a good education.²⁷

²⁵Ibid., p. 29.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., p. 30.

What do high school students want? They want more involvement in establishing policy and curriculum. They want an open, sensitive environment to which they can contribute. They want the school to become important to them because they need the help it is capable of giving them. They want to be a party to the restructuring of the school, not the rearranging of it.²⁸

The students are saying that they do not want to learn what their parents learned, no matter how cleverly the old is dressed up in new garb. To some extent, they are right, to some extent, they are probably wrong. The point is to develop criteria that will help us decide when the old retains its validity, when the new is little more than a sensation of the moment, and when the lasting parts of the traditional can be blended with the desirable aspects of the contemporary.²⁹

The National Education Association insists that in addition to purely intellectual growth, the curriculum should regard emotions, attitudes, ideas, ambitions, and values as legitimate areas of concern for the educational process, and should emphasize the student's need to develop a sense of respect for self and others.³⁰

²⁸Neil P. Atkins, "What Do They Want?" Educational Leadership, February, 1970, p. 441.

²⁹Greenleaf and Griffen, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 53.

How do you do this? By designing, states the National Education Association staff, a curriculum that has as its central core the exploration, revitalization, and sympathetic consideration of the learner's sense of himself as a self-directed human. The submersion of the eternal verities of the 3 R's--and their "bedfellow" science--need not result in lack of concerted attention to these bodies of content. Rather, they would take their rightful places as tools with which a person can be more rational, more understanding of people and things, more responsive to the needs of his fellows and his environment, and more capable of living fully and effectively in a world such as will be his. Such a curriculum demands a reordering of the priorities of the school and the instructional program must be reflective of the new order.³¹

What, then, are the educational innovators asking for? The new approach advocates a fresh style and structure for schooling in the 70's. The "free-open-informal style" approach seeks to reshape and free the classroom from its rigidities, assigns to the teacher a new role as the orchestrator or catalyst of learning rather than its dictator, and incorporates in the schools a new view of children and their development, based on the discoveries of prominent researchers of the learning process.³²

³¹Ibid.

³²Anonymous, The Shape of Education for 1971-72 (Washington, D. C.: National School Public Relations Association, 1971), p. 37.

In the typical high school of today, students enter and are handed a predetermined schedule which only slightly fits their real needs and is virtually without regard for their desires. The curriculum is already decided. Every student will be treated like every other student and they will find that the mass production syndrome negates many meaningful kinds of study. Little individualization is attempted or possible and teachers are forced to work as functionaries of the program, extolling its merits and rationalizing its inequities.³³

In the new schools parents, students, and teachers sit down together and chart the student's future. Courses are chosen to fit their future plans with students being permitted to make many of the decisions. The new schools are much more open and innovative with participants being given the opportunity to choose, to plot their own courses, and to make their own mistakes.³⁴

For some, open schools and the new innovative ideas are the natural road to learning. But, on the other hand, researchers were quick to point out that youth are inexperienced and far from mature. They have yet to learn, most of them, that it is easy to get promises but hard to get them kept, easy to make bold plans but hard to get the sustained cooperation required to carry them out;

³³Miles C. Olson, "A School for the 70's--An Immodest Proposal," The Clearing House, April, 1971, p. 488.

³⁴Ibid., p. 490.

easy to win approval of a noble ideal but hard to get people to sacrifice for it.³⁵

PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Molloy indicated that learning which takes place in many activities outside the classroom is giving new meaning to community education. So is the growing awareness that learning is dependent on the quality of the learner's home life, health, recreation, social activity, and environment. Acceptance of the concept of education as lifetime learning, to be pursued by the adult and the handicapped as well as by the young and the gifted, is also contributing to the rationale for community education.³⁶

Molloy goes on to report that schools cannot be all things to all people, so there are now hundreds of school districts running community school programs. This idea is not new but its implementation is rare.³⁷

Punke says that the broad purpose of maintaining schools should be to make young people into better citizens; thus public schools should

³⁵Graves, op. cit., p. 28.

³⁶Larry Molloy, "Sharing the Space and the Action," School and Community, May, 1973, p. 5.

³⁷Ibid.

be community centered and this community centeredness requires frequent re-examination.³⁸

One school district which has taken steps to enlist the community in the total school program is the high school district in Oak Park and River Forest, Illinois. In this district a citizen's council of forty-five (including not only public school parents but also non-parents, senior citizens, and parochial school parents) meets monthly for systematic study of questions which have come from other citizens. In addition, an annual school report is distributed to all school families, to interested citizens, and to business and professional officers. Groups of students, lay citizens, and faculty members meet for noontime luncheon discussions. Greater student and staff involvement in school matters is being sought, and community members, including senior citizens, are serving as aids and paraprofessionals.³⁹

Murphy reported in Progressive Architecture that the architects of East Orange Middle School in East Orange, New Jersey, got the community involved by setting up an East Orange School design center. Students, parents, teachers, and the community were invited to give input into the design of the new school. They were included in all phases of the design of their new school building.⁴⁰

³⁸Harold H. Punke, "A Functional Community Philosophy of Education," Illinois Schools Journal, Winter, 1970, p. 266.

³⁹Ibid., p. 270.

⁴⁰James A. Murphy, "School Planning by the People," Progressive Architecture, February, 1972, p. 88.

The aforementioned community involvement projects are a reflection of the public relations philosophy of Rosenberg. Rosenberg's community relations approach is one where citizens and educators form an inseparable partnership. They plan together, decide together, and work together for the continual improvement of educational and community life.⁴¹

Rosenberg goes on to say that good communication is important and that joint participation in the life of the school and the community is needed. This will create sensitivity to the views of the people, give recognition to their aspirations and concerns, identify problems, and promote cooperation between the school and the people.⁴²

Cunningham also reports that citizens are producing ingenious new ways to affect the schools. Some ways are through an individual such as the ombudsman; others are through groups such as assessment councils and advisory committees. Some are neighborhood in scope; others are metropolis wide.⁴³

Cunningham's report states that there was remarkable, almost desperate, concern for good schools, good teachers, equality of opportunity and the like. There was little evidence of self-seeking or

⁴¹Max Rosenberg, "Community Relations-Approaches Educators Use," The Clearing House, September, 1973, p. 50.

⁴²Ibid., p. 52.

⁴³Lavern A. Cunningham, "Community Involvement in Education," Educational Leadership, January, 1970, p. 363.

rabble rousing for its own sake. There was considerable interest in the concept of accountability which may become the most important thrust leading to educational change.⁴⁴

These and other programs develop closer ties with the community and are an important avenue of professional involvement towards reducing indifference to educational needs and possibilities. The operating philosophy of people who are interested in education is the one that only a public comprehensively and accurately informed about school aims, needs, and achievements can be creatively loyal to the school.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 365.

⁴⁵Funke, op. cit., p. 274.

Chapter 3

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the findings of the survey administered in the Vinton (Iowa) Community School District during the summer of 1973. A review of literature related to the public's attitude toward education indicated a need for information concerning attitudes toward education at both the national and local levels. The purposes of this study were (1) to determine what a selected public group considers to be the major role of a high school education; (2) to determine some attitudes of this public relative to certain educational services being offered in the Vinton High School; (3) to determine the feelings of the group concerning the need for changing certain educational services in the Vinton High School; and (4) to determine some attitudes of the select group concerning what forces have produced change and the best way to bring about educational change in the Vinton High School.

The questionnaire, developed by the writer, was sent to 296 selected adults. This group consisted of the parents of all juniors and seniors in the Vinton High School, all teachers, the three administrators, and the five board members. Two hundred and five forms were returned out of the 296, for a 69.3 percent return. Information concerning the background of the respondents is shown in Table 1, page 21.

Table 1. Background of the 205 Respondents

Category	Number	Percent
1. Sex		
A. Father or stepfather	57	27.8
B. Mother or stepmother	132	64.4
C. Other (not married or guardian)	16	7.8
2. Age		
A. 20-29	12	5.9
B. 30-39	56	27.4
C. 40-49	90	43.9
D. 50-59	39	19.0
E. 60 years and over	4	1.9
F. No age given	4	1.9
3. Education		
A. Some high school	19	9.3
B. High school graduate	104	50.7
C. Some college	24	11.7
D. College graduate	13	6.3
E. College graduate plus graduate work	30	14.6
F. No answer	15	7.3
4. Occupation		
A. Agriculture	57	27.8
B. Skilled	21	10.2
C. Semi-skilled	23	11.2
D. Unskilled	17	8.3
E. Managerial	77	37.6
F. Professional	10	4.9

In this chapter the results of the questionnaire are presented

by each category stated in the problem.

ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

The Major Role of a High School

To determine public feelings regarding the major role of a high school education, the questions shown in Tables 2, 3, and 4 were asked.

Table 2. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "What Do You See as Being the Major Role of a High School Education Today?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. Prepare youth for college	11	5.4
2. Prepare youth for the world in which they will one day be living	120	58.5
3. To educate in the 3 R's, health, and perhaps science and math	4	1.9
4. To produce good citizens	9	4.4
5. To help young people to understand themselves and to know who they are	13	6.4
6. Other	48	23.4

Table 2 shows that a large percentage of the surveyed public felt the major purpose of a high school education to be that of preparing youth for the world in which they will one day be living. A number of people (48) never responded to the question and "other" suggestions usually pointed to the aforementioned reason of preparing youth for life after graduation.

Table 3. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Some People Would Say that our High School Curriculum Should Include More Vocational Education Where we Prepare Students to Enter a Career in such Areas as Mechanics, Electronics, Plumbing, etc. What is Your Opinion on Vocational Education?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. It is needed for all students	68	33.2
2. It is not needed by the college bound students	28	13.7
3. The school's task is to give a general education, not to prepare students for careers	45	22.0
4. I have mixed feelings and cannot say	19	9.3
5. I have no opinion	1	.5
6. Other	44	21.5

Table 3 indicates that the public has mixed feelings about vocational education. Thirty-three and two-tenths percent wanted all students to have it while 22 percent want the school to offer a general education. One person noted that he would like to see the school educate the student so that he will know how to educate himself after completing his formal program of education.

Table 4. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Due to the Boredom, Disinterest, and Academic Failure on the Part of Some Students, People are Asking for Open Schools Where Students Move About a Great Deal Within the System and do Much of Their Learning Through Experience Out in the Community. How do you Feel About This?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. This is great and would turn kids on	7	3.4
2. The idea is good but many students are not mature enough to govern themselves	80	39.0
3. I would have to know more about this before giving my approval	104	50.7
4. It would never work	5	2.4
5. I have no opinion	9	4.4

Table 4 indicates that 42.4 percent of the respondents felt that the "open school" idea would be either great or good but expressed doubt as to whether students would be mature enough to govern themselves under such a setting. One hundred four people would need more information before committing themselves, indicating that "open schools" are a new idea in the Vinton community.

Public Attitude Relative to Certain Educational Services Being Offered in the Vinton High School

In an attempt to determine the attitude of the public relative to certain educational services being offered in the Vinton High School, the questions shown in Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 were asked.

Table 5. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "In Your Opinion What Would be the Best Way to Handle Unruly Students?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. Disciplinary measures	95	46.3
2. Try to understand them	75	36.6
3. Leave them alone	0	0.0
4. Not sure	14	6.8
5. No answer	21	10.2

Table 5 shows the public to be slightly in favor of disciplining students rather than trying to understand them. The response in favor of discipline was only about 10 percent larger, but 82.9 percent of the respondents indicated that they wanted one type of discipline or another.

Table 6. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "If Our School was to do Away with Letter Grades, What Would You Like to See in Their Place?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. Teacher reports on student progress	50	24.4
2. Test scores	6	2.9
3. Parent-teacher conferences	17	8.3
4. Pass-fail system	13	6.3
5. Combination of above four	85	41.5
6. Other	34	16.6

Table 6 reveals that many people had some idea concerning what should replace letter grades in the high school. A combination of the first four items seemed to be the most popular response, with "teacher reports on student progress" being second. Relatively few people chose "test scores," "parent-teacher conferences," or the "pass-fail system."

Table 7. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Do You as a Parent See the Following as Being Part of the Duties of a Counselor?"

Response	<u>Yes</u>		<u>No</u>		<u>Uncertain</u>		<u>Other</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Help students to get into college	132	64.4	40	19.6	16	7.8	17	8.2
2. Help students with their personal, social and emotional problems	177	86.4	8	3.9	14	6.8	6	2.9
3. Help student to find jobs	83	40.5	75	36.6	28	13.6	19	9.3
4. Help students to decide on a future career	176	85.8	11	5.4	6	2.9	12	5.9
5. Help the principal with discipline problems	125	60.9	43	21.0	17	8.3	20	9.8

According to Table 7, the public definitely viewed all of the items as being duties of the counselor, the most conclusive being helping students with their problems and careers. The surveyed public also expected the counselor to help with discipline problems.

Table 8. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Would You Like to See the Following Changes Take Place in the Washington High School Program?"

Response	<u>Yes</u>		<u>No</u>		<u>Can't Say</u>		<u>No Answer</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Open campus (students need only be in school when they have a class)	26	12.7	164	80.0	11	5.4	4	1.9
2. More released time for work	55	26.8	100	48.8	40	19.5	10	4.9
3. Open noon hour (students free to leave the school during the noon hour) .	27	13.2	155	75.6	15	7.3	8	3.9
4. Mini courses (short 9 week courses)	119	58.1	38	18.5	39	19.0	9	4.4
5. More one-semester courses	119	58.1	22	10.7	47	22.9	17	8.3
6. Three year high school (do away with senior year)	6	2.9	170	82.9	23	11.3	6	2.9
7. Three and one-half year high school (do away with last semester of senior year)	36	17.6	128	62.4	34	16.6	7	3.4
8. More community experiences in an attempt to show students what life and living is all about	152	74.1	14	6.9	30	14.6	9	4.4

As indicated in Table 8, the public is generally against the initiation of new and innovative services in the Vinton High School system. Most people do not want an open campus, released time for work, an open noon hour, a three year, or a three and one-half year high school. The respondents were in favor of short term and one-semester courses and would like to see more community involvement for the students.

Table 9. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Supposedly, There Are a Lot of New Ideas, Experiments, and Changes in the Schools These Days. In Your Opinion, is This Generally Good or Not Good?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. Generally good	135	65.9
2. I have mixed feelings and cannot say	55	26.8
3. Generally not good	10	4.9
4. I have no opinion	3	1.5
5. No answer	2	1.0

Tables 9 and 10 are very much alike, indicating that the public prefers change in the schools to the same degree that it prefers change in the fields of science, politics, religion, and social customs.

Table 10. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Aside from Schools, There are a Lot of New Ideas, Experiments, and Changes in Other Fields Such as Science, Religion, and Social Customs. In Your Opinion, is This Generally Good or Not Good?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. Generally good	123	60.0
2. I have mixed feelings and cannot say	56	27.3
3. Generally not good	21	10.2
4. I have no opinion	2	1.0
5. No answer	3	1.5

Table 11. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "During the Past Five Years Have You Noticed a Great Deal of Change in the Following Areas?"

Response	Yes		No		Can't Say		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Courses being taught	121	59.0	65	31.7	16	7.8	3	1.5
2. Grading practices . . .	58	28.3	117	57.1	26	12.7	4	2.0
3. Discipline	123	60.0	60	29.3	19	9.3	3	1.5
4. Student dress . . .	192	93.7	8	3.9	4	2.0	1	0.5
5. Citizenship	105	51.2	52	25.4	43	21.0	5	2.4
6. Homework	81	39.5	93	45.4	28	13.7	3	1.5
7. Honesty	90	43.9	81	39.5	32	15.6	2	1.0
8. Teaching methods . . .	118	57.6	51	24.9	33	16.1	3	1.5

As indicated in Table 11, the public has noticed the greatest change in the areas of courses being taught, discipline, student dress, and teaching methods. They noticed the least change in homework and grading practices.

The Need for Changing Certain Educational Services in the Vinton High School

To determine the feeling of the group concerning the need for changing certain educational services in the Vinton High School, the questions shown in Tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 were asked.

Table 12. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Some People Say that the Average Student Who Attends Our High School Today is Quite Different from the Student of Five Years Ago. He has more Money, a Different Set of Values, and Sees the World from a Different View Than Does His Parents. How Do You Feel About This?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. I agree	166	81.0
2. I disagree	18	8.8
3. I am not sure about this	20	9.8
4. I have no opinion	1	0.5

Table 12 shows that most people agreed that we have a different type of student in our school today. Eighty-one percent of the respondents agreed to the question while only twenty-one were "not sure" or had "no opinion."

Table 13. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Some People Would Say that the Schools of Today have had to Change Due to the Breakdown of the American Home. Students Lack Respect, Discipline, and the Will to Abide by Rules. How Do You Feel About This?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. I agree	112	54.6
2. I disagree	50	24.5
3. I am not sure about this	39	19.0
4. I have no opinion	0	0.0
5. No answer	4	1.9

Table 13 indicates that the majority of the surveyed public felt that the schools have had to change due to the breakdown of the American home. Only 21 percent were "not sure" or gave "no answer" indicating that the public has definite feelings on the subject.

Table 14. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Some People Say that While Students and School Policies have Changed, Teachers have not. They Continue to Use the Same Traditional Methods of a Decade Ago. How Do You Feel About This?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. I agree	21	10.2
2. I disagree	138	67.4
3. I am not sure about this	42	20.5
4. I have no opinion	4	1.9

As indicated in Table 14, teachers in the Vinton High School evidently have changed with the times for the public generally disagreed with the question, but 20.5 percent were not sure. Ten and two-tenths percent agreed with the question, indicating that some feel that teachers have not changed their teaching methods in the past ten years.

Table 15. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Do You as a Parent Feel that These Topics Should be Discussed in Class?"

Response	<u>Yes</u>		<u>No</u>		<u>Uncertain</u>		<u>No Answer</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Folk, rock music . . .	133	64.9	42	20.5	25	12.2	5	2.4
2. Black student rights .	164	80.0	19	9.3	18	8.8	4	1.9
3. Underground papers and films	105	51.2	56	27.3	36	17.6	8	3.9
4. Sex hygiene	164	80.0	23	11.2	11	5.4	7	3.4
5. Contraceptives . . .	116	56.6	51	24.9	33	16.1	5	2.4
6. Styles and fads . . .	153	74.6	32	15.7	15	7.3	5	2.4
7. Drugs	188	91.8	7	3.4	6	2.9	4	1.9

Table 15 shows that the people surveyed are in favor of students discussing controversial subjects in the classroom. An overwhelming majority want discussions on black student rights, sex hygiene, styles and fads, and drugs. The item receiving the least positive response was underground papers and films.

Table 16. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Do You as a Parent Feel that You Should Have More Say In--?"

Response	Yes		No		Uncertain		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Deciding what courses will be taught	69	33.7	105	51.2	31	15.1	0	0.0
2. Deciding how classes will be conducted . .	27	13.2	155	75.6	23	11.2	0	0.0
3. The determination of grades	26	12.7	159	77.5	17	8.3	3	1.5
4. Determining the discipline of students .	65	31.7	117	57.1	23	11.2	0	0.0

Table 16 reveals that parents do not want to become involved in curriculum, class conduct, grading, and discipline. The results were most emphatic in the areas of class conduct and the determination of grades. Evidently parents are willing to place these decisions in the hands of administration.

Table 17. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Do You as a Parent Feel that Students Should Have More Say In--?"

Response	Yes		No		Uncertain		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Deciding what courses will be taught	123	60.0	52	25.4	28	13.6	2	1.0
2. Deciding how classes will be conducted	59	28.8	125	60.9	19	9.3	2	1.0
3. The determination of grades	46	22.4	133	64.9	23	11.2	3	1.5
4. Determining the discipline of students	60	29.3	117	57.1	24	11.7	4	1.9

Table 17 indicates that the only area where the public favors more student input is in the realm of deciding what courses will be taught. Responses were almost two to one in favor of this item. In the area of class conduct, grading, and discipline, the public seems to want the decisions made by administration.

Table 18. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Some Students Say that the Student Council is Democratic Only up to a Point--and that Point is Reached when Administrative Policy does not Agree with Student Policy. In Other Words, Many of Their Decisions are Overruled by the Principal and They Lose Faith in Democracy. How Do You Feel About This?"

Response	Number	Percent
1. I agree	48	23.4
2. I disagree	62	30.2
3. I am not sure about this	71	34.6
4. I have no opinion	17	8.3
5. No answer	7	3.4

Table 18 reveals that the public had little idea concerning the power of the student council in the local high school. About one-half of the respondents had a definite opinion, the remainder not being sure or having no opinion.

The Best Way to Bring About Educational Change in the Vinton High School

To determine the attitude of the select group concerning the best way to bring about educational change, the questions shown in Tables 19 and 20 were asked.

Table 19. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "Some People Say that our School has Undergone a Number of Changes in the Past Five Years. If so, to What Causes do You Attribute These Changes?"

Response	Number*	Percent*
1. Parental pressure to make education more meaningful	34	16.6
2. Student pressure to make education more meaningful	65	31.7
3. Public demand in holding the school accountable for the way the tax dollar is spent	78	38.0
4. The change in our way of living and the structure of our society	156	76.1
5. I do not believe our school has changed much in the last five years	31	15.1

*People were permitted to respond to more than one item so total does not equal 205 and the percentage is more than 100.

Table 19 shows "the change in our way of living and the structure of our society" most often mentioned for the changes taking place in our school system. The second and third largest responses were "student pressure" and "public accountability for the way tax money is spent." Most respondents seemed to agree that our school has changed, since only thirty-one checked the "no change" item.

Table 20. Responses to the Questionnaire Item "In Your Opinion, the Best Way to Bring About Necessary Change in Education Is--"

Response	Number	Percent
1. Listen to students. They know what is best for them	1	.5
2. Hold the school and the administration accountable for their program	14	6.8
3. Four-way communication between parents, students, teachers, and administrators where they talk it out as a group and then decide what to do	149	72.7
4. Withholding the tax dollar until necessary changes are made	0	0.0
5. Study educational research and follow its recommendations	15	7.3
6. I have no opinion	26	12.7

Table 20 reveals that the public prefers to bring about change with four-way communication between parents, students, teachers, and administrators. In this age of accountability, it is interesting that only fourteen people wanted to hold the school accountable, while no one was interested in withholding the tax dollar.

In summary, the public assessed the role of the school as being one of preparing youth for the world in which they will one day be living.

Parents agreed that today's students differ from those of five years ago and that educational services should change to keep up with the times. As a rule, the surveyed group was in favor of incorporating new ideas into the local school program but was against the "far out" innovative practices.

The people in the Vinton community appear to have faith in the school and its services and prefer to act as a change agent by communicating with the students and school personnel.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine what a selected group considered to be the major role of a high school education; (2) to determine some attitudes of this public relative to certain educational services being offered in the Vinton High School; (3) to determine the feelings of the group concerning the need for changing certain educational services in the Vinton High School; and (4) to determine some attitudes of the select group concerning what forces have produced change and the best way to bring about educational change in the Vinton High School.

A questionnaire was developed by the writer which contained twenty-four questions concerning public attitudes toward education. The questionnaire, accompanied by an explanatory letter, was sent to 296 adults, which included the parents of all juniors and seniors in the Vinton High School, all teachers, the three administrators, and the five school board members. Two hundred five forms were returned for a 69.3 percent return.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Reviewing the literature was the first phase of this study. The literature in the field was divided into four areas: (1) the major role

of a high school education, (2) criticism and critics of education, (3) the need for change in education, and (4) public and community involvement in the educational process. The literature revealed that some people feel that American education is meeting the needs of society, while others indicate that American education needs to take a new look at itself. Critics state that educators have failed many times to provide young people with meaningful study, failed to relate learning to today's problems, and have spent too much time teaching an assortment of facts rather than teaching students how to seek knowledge so as to equip them for a lifetime of learning.

The literature also revealed that citizens are producing ingenious new ways to affect the school. Some ways are through individuals such as ombudsmen; others are through groups such as assessment councils and advisory committees. Some are neighborhood in scope; others are city wide. This involvement lends itself well to the use of attitude sampling either by questionnaire or by personal interview at the local level. The writer chose to use a questionnaire because it alerts educators and interested lay people to public reactions toward many aspects of school programs and policies.

Through the analysis of the questionnaire data it was found that a large percentage (58.5) of the surveyed public felt the major purpose of a high school education was to prepare youth for the world in which they will one day be living. This finding was supported by the number

of people who were in favor of students "learning by doing" while living out in the community. Eighty-seven respondents out of the two hundred five felt the "learning by doing" idea to be a good one, but many expressed doubt as to whether students would be mature enough to govern themselves in an independent community setting.

With regard to unruly students, the Vinton public was slightly in favor of disciplining unruly students rather than trying to understand them. Forty-six and three-tenths percent responded as favoring "discipline measures" while 36.6 percent indicated that "understanding" should be substituted for "discipline." Even so, 82.9 percent of the public indicated that they wanted one type of discipline or another.

The proposal that the Vinton High School do away with letter grades and substitute such things as teacher reports or parent-teacher conferences met with mixed reactions. A combination of teacher reports on student progress, test scores, parent-teacher conferences, and pass-fail seemed to be the most popular response. Eighty-five of the two hundred five respondents checked this item. The most popular single response was "teacher reports on student progress."

A total of one hundred seventy-seven people (86 percent) in 1973 indicated the main duty of the counselor was to help students with their problems. Eighty-five percent of those surveyed also felt that it was the counselor's duty to help students to decide on a future career. To a lesser degree, they want this person helping students to

get into college or to find jobs. The public also expects the counselor to help the principal with discipline problems.

The public generally was opposed to the initiation of new and innovative services in the Vinton High School system. The majority do not want open campus, released time for work, an open noon hour, a three year, or a three and one-half year high school. The respondents were in favor of short term and one-semester courses and would like to see more community involvement for the students.

The consensus of the Vinton public was that students have changed. Eighty-one percent of those surveyed felt that students now see the world from a different point of view than did students five years ago. The results were not quite so conclusive as to reasons for this change but 54.6 percent indicated that it is due to the breakdown of the home.

Teachers received high marks (67.3 percent) from the public for their efforts in trying to change with the times. Some reported that they were not sure or had no opinion but only twenty-one of the two hundred five who were polled indicated that teachers have not changed and continue to use the methods of a decade ago.

If schools are to change, then the discussion of controversial subjects in the classroom must be considered. An overwhelming majority of the Vinton public want classroom discussion on controversial topics such as black student rights, sex hygiene, contraceptives, and drugs.

The one item receiving the smallest vote of confidence was "underground papers and films."

The survey revealed that parents do not want to be involved in choosing courses, class conduct, grading, and discipline; nor do they want student involvement except in the area of what courses will be taught. Sixty percent felt that students should be consulted concerning course offerings in the school system. Generally, the public seems to be willing to place these decisions in the hands of the administration and teachers.

A majority of the public (76.1 percent) felt that changes in the Vinton High School were the result of "the change in our way of living and the structure of our society." Thirty-eight percent indicated that change has come because of public demand for accountability concerning the way the tax dollar is spent.

The surveyed public favored (72.7 percent) the idea of bringing about change in education through four-way communication between parents, students, teachers, and administrators. In this age of accountability, it was interesting to note that only fourteen (6.8 percent) wanted to bring about change by holding the school accountable for its program and not one person was interested in withholding the tax dollar until his wishes were met.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the public in Vinton, the major purpose of a high

school education was preparing youth for the world in which they will one day be living.

The proposal that the Vinton curriculum include more vocational education met with mixed reaction. Some felt that all students need it, some felt the school's task to be that of offering a general education, and others had no opinion at all.

The public indicated that they wanted one type of discipline or another, and, by a narrow margin, chose using "disciplinary measures" over the method of "discipline by understanding" for unruly students.

A majority of the public felt that if letter grades were abolished, they should be replaced by a combination system which would include teacher reports, test scores, parent-teacher conferences, and the pass-fail system.

The Vinton public assessed the two main counselor roles as those of helping students with their problems and helping students to decide on a future career. The public expects the counselor to help the principal with discipline problems.

The public generally was against the initiation of new and innovative practices in the Vinton High School. They did not want open campus, an open noon hour, a three year high school, and released time for work. The people seemed to have ambivalent feelings since they wanted students to be prepared for the world in which they would one day be living but, at the same time, were reluctant to open the system and permit students to do much of their learning in the community.

The majority of the public felt that students differ from those of five years ago and that educational services should change to keep up with the times.

A majority of the respondents felt that teachers have changed with the times and now use methods applicable to the society in which we live.

According to the survey, parents were willing to leave decision making such as course offerings, class conduct, grades, and discipline in the hands of the school and the teachers. They also expressed confidence in teachers by consenting to controversial discussions in class. The one area where parents wanted more student involvement was in the area of deciding what courses will be offered.

At this time, people felt that the best way to bring about change in education was by four-way communication between parents, students, teachers, and the administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An evaluation should be made of Vinton's existing public relations program. The school needs to be sensitive to the views of the people and recognition should be given to their aspirations and concerns. New means should be sought for keeping the public involved and informed.

The Vinton community should be given the opportunity to evaluate the need for relating learning to the problems of the world.

Getting students into the community to develop actual life experiences would better prepare them for the life which follows graduation.

When a majority of the public feels that students and society have changed and that this is due to the child's home life, then a program needs to be developed to find ways to deal with these home factors. This program could include home visits by teachers, administrators, school nurses, counselors, or any other agency deemed necessary.

Students should be given the opportunity for more input relative to course offerings in the Vinton High School. Perhaps a student advisory committee could be established which would work closely with the principal and the teachers regarding course offerings and the curriculum.

The installation of a citizens' council of approximately thirty members which would include parents, students, teachers, administrators, and board members should be considered. The duty of the council would be to meet monthly for systematic study of questions concerning the Vinton school system and a monthly report would be distributed to all interested school citizens. The purpose of the council would be greater school and community involvement in matters concerning both students and citizens.

Career education should be incorporated into the existing curriculum and have as its goal the creation of positive career objectives through involvement of community resources and educational agencies. The career education council which now exists needs to be given new impetus and teachers should be urged to become more involved.

This study should be continually updated and revised to better adapt it to the needs of the times. The results could be used to improve instruction and the educational services at school.

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APPENDIX

The Instrument

September 12, 1973

Dear Resident,

One of the things that we can be certain about in this world is change. Most things do not remain the same, nor would we want them to. People change, customs change, values change and so do schools.

This questionnaire comes to you from the counseling office at Washington High in Vinton. Through it we hope to find out how you feel about change in our school system. We are attempting to find answers to such questions as (1) Are changes taking place? (2) What caused these changes? (3) What changes would you like to see? and (4) What are the ways which can be used to bring about needed change? We feel that the only way to answer these questions is to go directly to the people and to ask them.

After the results have been tabulated, we plan to conduct a series of personal interviews with a small, select group of people in the community with regard to their ideas on change in our school. This information will be used to help clarify our evaluation of the responses given on the questionnaire.

Change is good only if it benefits the students and that is why we are seeking answers. You are asked to fill out this questionnaire and return it, unsigned, as soon as possible. Merely tear off your address and drop the other portion into the mail. Do not put either your name or address on the paper, please.

Your cooperation is very important and is earnestly requested. It will take you but a short time to fill out and mark the questions for which we wish to thank you in advance.

Arnold Gaumnitz
Counselor

John Rawlings
Principal

WASHINGTON HIGH INVENTORY OF PARENT OPINION

Counseling office
Vinton, Ia.

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER. By making it impossible to know who says what, most people are more likely to say what they really think.

USE EITHER PENCIL OR A PEN IN MARKING YOUR ANSWERS.

ANSWER EVERY QUESTION. FILL OUT THIS INVENTORY NOW IF YOU POSSIBLY CAN.

PLEASE MAIL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. A RETURN ADDRESS AND A STAMP ARE PROVIDED.

1. Which parent filled out this inventory? (Check one.)

1. The father.
 2. The mother.
 3. The male guardian or stepfather.
 4. The female guardian or stepmother.

2. How far did you yourself go in school? (Check one.)

1. Some High school.
 2. High school graduate.
 3. Some college.
 4. College graduate.
 5. Graduate work.
 6. Other training. (Please specify) _____

3. In what age group do you belong? (Check one.)

1. I am under 30 years of age.
 2. I am in my 30's.
 3. I am in my 40's.
 4. I am in my 50's.
 5. I am 60 years of age or older.

4. What is your occupation? _____

What is your spouse's occupation? _____

5. Supposedly, there are a lot of new ideas, experiments, and changes in the schools these days. In your opinion, is this generally good or not good? (Check one.)

1. Generally good.
 2. I have mixed feelings and cannot say.
 3. Generally not good.
 4. I have no opinion.

6. Aside from schools, there are a lot of new ideas, experiments, and changes in other fields such as science, politics, religion and social customs. In your opinion, is this generally good or not good. (Check one.)

1. Generally good.
 2. I have mixed feelings and cannot say.
 3. Generally not good.
 4. I have no opinion.

7. During the past five years have you noticed a great deal of change in the following areas? (Check each one.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Can't say</u>
1. Courses being taught.	_____	_____	_____
2. Grading practices.	_____	_____	_____
3. Discipline.	_____	_____	_____
4. Student dress.	_____	_____	_____
5. Citizenship.	_____	_____	_____
6. Homework.	_____	_____	_____
7. Honesty.	_____	_____	_____
8. Teaching methods.	_____	_____	_____

8. Some people say that the average student who attends our high school today is quite different from the student of five years ago. He has more money, a different set of values and sees the world from a different view than does his parents. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

8. (continued)

1. I agree.
 2. I disagree.
 3. I am not sure about this.
 4. I have no opinion.

9. Some people would say that the schools of today have had to change due to the breakdown of the American Home. Students lack respect, discipline and the will to abide by rules. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

1. I agree.
 2. I disagree.
 3. I am not sure about this.
 4. I have no opinion.

10. Some people say that while students and school policies have changed, teachers have not. They continue to use the same traditional methods of a decade ago. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

1. I agree.
 2. I disagree.
 3. I am not sure about this.
 4. I have no opinion.

11. Do you as a parent feel that these topics should be discussed in class. (Check each one.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
1. Folk, rock music.	_____	_____	_____
2. Black student rights.	_____	_____	_____
3. Underground papers and films.	_____	_____	_____
4. Sex Hygiene.	_____	_____	_____
5. Contraceptives.	_____	_____	_____
6. Styles and fads.	_____	_____	_____
7. Drugs.	_____	_____	_____

12. Do you as a parent feel that you should have more say in-- (Check each one.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
1. Deciding what courses will be taught.	_____	_____	_____
2. Deciding how classes will be conducted.	_____	_____	_____
3. The determination of grades.	_____	_____	_____
4. Determining the discipline of students.	_____	_____	_____

13. Do you as a parent feel that students should have more say in-- (Check each one.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
1. Deciding what courses will be taught.	_____	_____	_____
2. Deciding how classes will be conducted.	_____	_____	_____
3. The determination of grades.	_____	_____	_____
4. Determining the discipline of students.	_____	_____	_____

14. Some people say that our school has undergone a number of changes in the past five years. If so, to what causes do you attribute these changes? (Check all which you think apply.)

1. Parental pressure to make education more meaningful.
 2. Student pressure to make education more meaningful.
 3. Public demand in holding the school accountable for the way the tax dollar is spent.
 4. The change in our way of living and the structure of our society.
 5. I do not believe that our school has changed much in the last 5 years.
 6. Other (Please specify.) _____

15. What do you see as being the major role of a high school education today? (Check one.)

1. Prepare youth for college.
 2. Prepare youth for the world in which they will one day be living.
 3. To educate in the 3 R's, health, and perhaps science and math.
 4. To produce good citizens.
 5. To help young people to understand themselves and to know who they are.
 6. Other (Please specify.) _____

16. In your opinion, what would be the best way to handle unruly students?
(Check one.)

- 1. Disciplinary measures.
- 2. Try to understand them.
- 3. Leave them alone.
- 4. Not sure.

17. If our school was to do away with letter grades, what would you like to see in their place? (Check one.)

- 1. Teacher reports on student progress.
- 2. Test scores.
- 3. Parent-Teacher conferences.
- 4. Pass-fail system.
- 5. Combination of above four.
- 6. Other (Please specify.) _____

18. Some students say that the student council is democratic only up to a point--and that point is reached when administrative policy does not agree with student policy. In other words, many of their decisions are overruled by the principal and they lose faith in democracy. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

- 1. I agree.
- 2. I disagree.
- 3. I am not sure about this.
- 4. I have no opinion.

19. Some people would say that our high school curriculum should include more vocational education where we prepare students to enter a career in such areas as mechanics, electronics, plumbing, etc. What is your opinion on vocational education? (Check one.)

- 1. It is needed for all students.
- 2. It is not needed by the college bound students.
- 3. The school's task is to give a general education, not to prepare students for careers.
- 4. I have mixed feelings and cannot say.
- 5. I have no opinion.
- 6. Other (Please specify.) _____

20. Do you or a parent see the following as being part of the duties of a counselor? (Check each one.)

20. (continued)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
1. Help students to get into college.	_____	_____	_____
2. Help students with their personal, social and emotional problems.	_____	_____	_____
3. Help students to find jobs.	_____	_____	_____
4. Help students to decide on a future career.	_____	_____	_____
5. Help the principal with discipline problems.	_____	_____	_____
6. Other (Please specify.) _____	_____	_____	_____

21. Would you like to see the following changes take place in the Washington High School Program? (Check each one.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Can't say</u>
1. Open campus. (Students need only be in school when they have a class.)	_____	_____	_____
2. More released time for work.	_____	_____	_____
3. Open noon hour. (Students free to leave the school during the noon hour.)	_____	_____	_____
4. Mini-courses (Short 9 week courses.)	_____	_____	_____
5. More one-semester courses.	_____	_____	_____
6. Three year high school. (Do away with the senior year.)	_____	_____	_____
7. Three and one-half year high school. (Do away with last semester of senior year.)	_____	_____	_____
8. More community experiences in an attempt to show students what life and living is all about.	_____	_____	_____

22. Due to the boredom, disinterest, and academic failure on the part of some students, people are asking for open schools where students move about a great deal within the system and do much of their learning through experience out in the community. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

- _____ 1. This is great and would turn kids on.
- _____ 2. The idea is good but many students are not mature enough to govern themselves.
- _____ 3. I would have to know more about this before giving my approval.
- _____ 4. It would never work.
- _____ 5. I have no opinion.

23. In your opinion, the best way to bring about necessary change in education is-- (Check one.)

1. Listen to the students. They know what is best for them.
2. Hold the school and the administration accountable for their program.
3. Four way communication between parents, students, teachers and administrators where they talk it out as a group and then decide what to do.
4. Withhold the tax dollar until necessary changes are made.
5. Study educational research and follow its recommendations.
6. I have no opinion.
7. Other (Please specify.) _____

24. If you have any suggestions that would improve the program at Washington High School, please indicate below.
