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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL-COMMUNITY  
CONTACTS IN BIGFORK, MONTANA

by

Kedric William Flint

B.A., Montana State University, 1952

Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree

of


Master of Education

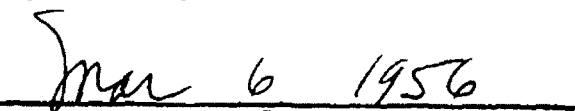
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1956

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the effects of various school-community contacts on school-community relations in a specific community during a specific year, (2) to make recommendations for improving school-community relationships, and (3) to determine the need for additions or deletions from the existing program, including the use of community resources for instruction.

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM

"It has not been so many years since the school was an isolated island in the community. This island was completely surrounded by the cold waters of formality and awe. The climate of the adjacent land and fog of misconception and artificiality hung over it and obscured it from the view of the inhabitants of the 'regular world'..."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Malvina W. Leibman, "Building Better Community Relations," National Elementary Principal. Dec. 1952 Vol. 32:5.

"School and community relations have long been of concern to educators, but of late interest in the field has assumed a new importance due to two related trends. One seems to be the general disappearance of the old primary community, the effective educator of children in so many ways; while the other is the spread of community-centered education..."<sup>2</sup>

An education journal, reviewing the issues, problems and accomplishments of the schools in 1954, summarizes these in a series of statements by various people. The following, which appear in this section, dwell on the general topic of school and community relations and indicate the importance which is attached to this topic.<sup>3</sup>

A School Administrator (Lawrence D. Detherick, Superintendent of Schools, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and 1953 president of AASA) "...But credit is also due school administrators and other teachers who have with increasing effectiveness come to grips at the grass roots with a great wave of severe and upsetting criticisms that have prevailed in recent years..."

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<sup>2</sup>  
Loyd Allen Cook and Edward Olsen, "School and Community," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Walter S. Monroe, Editor (The Macmillian Company, 1950), p. 1074.

<sup>3</sup>  
"A Summing Up, Highlights of the Year from Four Viewpoints. School Executive, 74:96, January 1955.



A Professor of Education (Van Miller, Professor of Education, University of Illinois) "...The educators themselves are more frequently inviting into their meetings and studies the general public and scholars from other disciplines. School men should not feel that their special domain has been invaded. They should rather rise to co-ordinate the new popular interest and activity bearing on education..."

A Chief State School Officer (Finis E. Englemen, State Commissioner of Education, Connecticut) "...During the past 25 years public schools seemed to lose their intimate relationship with neighborhood they served..Wise superintendents are realizing that broad understanding among citizens is necessary if broad and adequate support is forthcoming..."

A Lay Citizen (Henry Toy Jr., Director of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools) "...At every level, national, state, and local, the story is the same. Laymen and educators approach each other with new confidence. Citizen-School co-operation is no longer a radical experiment reserved for crisis situations; talking citizens into continuing partnership has become a normal way to conduct our school affairs..."

School boards, too, have entered into the spirit of the "new look" in school-community relations as evidenced by their "Statement of Beliefs and Policies," issued by the National School Boards Association at their 1955 convention in St. Louis. Their platform on Public Relations in Public Education included, among the other statements, the following:

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<sup>4</sup>  
Edward M. Tuttle, "National Association Adopts Basic Platform on Beliefs and Policies," American School Board Journal, 130:5, April, 1955.

"The National School Boards Association recognizes that underlying in every problem of public education--teacher supply, buildings, curriculum finance, and other--is the problem of how to enlist the understanding and support of the American Public as a whole. When people are accused of apathy toward the schools, it is usually because they did not know the facts regarding school conditions, needs and potentialities..."

To labor the point on the importance and desirability of good school-community relationships is unnecessary. However, to make the transition from generalized statements on the broad topic to specific items, methods, and practices is another thing. To accomplish this, it would seem desirable to examine and evaluate the effects of school-community contacts in a particular school community. Such is the purpose of this study.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

Contacts. The term, contact, as used in this study, included: (1) direct contacts, and (2) indirect contacts. Group meetings or individual conferences between school personnel and the people of the community were considered direct contacts.

By indirect contacts was meant any contacts or meetings between the people of the community and the school through means other than the face-to-face or direct contacts. Contacts through the school paper, school annual, or any bulletins that were sent out periodically from the office of the superintendent were considered to be indirect. These also included any meetings using school facilities where there was no direct contact with school personnel.

School. No attempt was made to divide the elementary school patrons from those of the high school level. School here refers to the Bigfork Public Schools.

Community. For the purpose of this study the community referred to as Bigfork included all the area from which Bigfork enrolled high school students. These were: Echo Lake School, Swan River School, Ferndale School, the Bigfork School District, which includes the east lake shore of Flathead Lake in Lake County and the Holt Area.

## LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study was limited to the Bigfork Public Schools, elementary and secondary, and the community served by these schools. The study was further confined to the school year 1954-55. In treating school-community contacts, only those direct contacts that were made by the staff of the Bigfork Public Schools and the Board of Trustees, School District No. 38 were considered. The indirect contacts considered were those that were made with some regularity, the school paper which was issued once every month, the school annual which was printed once each year by the senior class and sold to the citizens of the community, the school newsletter which was sent out from the office of the superintendent of schools, the use of school facilities by the community, and the school elections. In so far as possible, the study was also limited to conditions as they existed in the school year 1954-55.

## METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

In the fall of 1954, a questionnaire was prepared to be used in measuring the effects of school-community contacts. The preliminary questionnaire was submitted to each of the teachers of the Bigfork School system. These teachers were asked to evaluate the questionnaire and make any suggestions as to its form or content which necessary for the success of the project.

All of the elementary teachers suggested some additions. At their request a series of questions on the school lunch program was added. The majority of the elementary teachers also requested a section on report cards. The revised questionnaire was also submitted to the high school teachers for suggestions. The majority of the high school teachers were satisfied with the questions as set up in the questionnaire. The administrator requested the addition of a section on school elections and school board policies.

A copy of the final questionnaire may be found in Appendix "A".

It was then printed and sent under postal permit to all local, rural, and star rout box holders.

The day the questionnaire went into the mail, each class in high school was given a copy of the questionnaire. The purposes and aims of the study, as well as its importance, were thoroughly explained to them. Students were also told how the return would be of help to their parents.

The questionnaire was also explained to the members of the Parent-Teacher Association the same day that the questionnaire was mailed out. Questions were answered and explained in detail. There were two main questions in the minds of parents at this meeting. One was whether they were to fill out the questionnaire if they had only

lived in Bigfork for a short while and whether they should fill out the questionnaire if they had no children in high school. The people were road workers who had moved in from other parts of the state and were to be in Bigfork for the remainder of the school year (about three months in all). Both of these questions were answered in the affirmative.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL

Ray L. Peck, in a previous study,<sup>1</sup> aptly described the community and school as follows:

Bigfork, Montana is located on the northern end of Flathead Lake in the southern end of Flathead County. Bigfork is thirty-three miles north of Polson, the Lake County Seat, by way of highway "35", which is known as the "Flathead Lake East Shore Highway." By the way of highway "35" and United States highway "2" Kalispell, the Flathead County Seat is twenty-three miles northwest of Bigfork.

As Bigfork is an unincorporated community, no official census figures are available on the population, but estimates place the population at about "400" people. As settlement along Flathead Lake has increased, it has become more difficult to define the area of Bigfork proper. Homes are very close together along the lake, without legal limits to the town. One has difficulty in defining what is the outlying rural community.

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1

Ray Peck, "A Follow-Up Study of Eighth Grade Graduates of Bigfork High School District for the Years 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, and 1949" (Unpublished Professional Paper, Montana State University, Missoula, 1954), p. 12.

Most of the people of Bigfork high school district depend on three separate industries for their livelihood. These industries are lumbering, farming, and the service trades. The area has no real large mills, but many men work in the number of small mills. Small farms provide seasonal work for some residents. The service trades offer some full time employment and additional part time employment during the tourist season.

Flathead Lake and the East Shore Highway have become very important tourist attractions in Montana. A few men of the community work for the United States Forest Service on a full time basis and a larger number receive summer employment from this agency. The Mountain States Power Company employ a number of men in Bigfork.

Bigfork High School is fully accredited by the State Department of Public Instruction and by the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools. Like all third class districts, Bigfork has a board of trustees of three members. The high school and elementary grades of the Bigfork community proper are all housed in one building.

This Bigfork High School district is composed of five common school districts operating six elementary schools: Bigfork, Ferndale, Echo, Swan River, Swan Lake and Salmon Prairie. Bigfork, Swan River and Echo schools are in Flathead County, and Swan Lake, Ferndale, and Salmon Prairie schools are in Lake County.

In 1954-55 the enrollment for Bigfork School District averaged 123 in the elementary school and seventy nine in the high school.

## CHAPTER II

### ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The data collected by the questionnaire and presented in this chapter deal with school-community contacts, both direct and indirect, that took place during the school year 1954-55.

Residents of each of the five common school districts were asked to take part in answering the questionnaire. Table I shows the number of copies sent to each district and the number and percent of returns from the various school districts.

TABLE I

#### NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF QUESTIONNAIRES SENT OUT AND RETURNED

School District	Number sent out	Number returned	Per Cent of returns
Echo Lake	21	5	33.8
Swan River	41	30	73.2
Ferndale	56	30	54.6
Swan Lake	48	14	29.2
Bigfork	240	134	55.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>52.6</b>



General Information. General information was sought in order to identify the respondent by classification and location, not by specific individuals.

Table II shows the total tabulations of this section according to school districts, county, sex, children in school, and whether the respondents had ever attended school at Bigfork. Most of the respondents lived in Flathead county and did have children in school.

Out of 406 questionnaires that were sent out, 213 (52.6 per cent) were returned. Many respondents did not answer anything other than the first section that dealt with the general information. Most of the incomplete returns were from people who had moved in from some other area. Since they had little or no connection with the school they may have felt unqualified to answer the questions that were asked in the questionnaire. Of the respondents answering this questionnaire, 80.3 per cent were women; of this same group of respondents 17.4 per cent had attended school in Bigfork. Almost 68 per cent of the respondents had children in either the elementary school, high school, or both.

Parent-Teacher Association. Seventy-two and three tenths per cent of the respondents were non-members of the Bigfork Parent-Teacher Association. Many of the respondents checked the item indicating that they did not know the P-T-A program well enough to evaluate it. The responses of the members and non-members in

TABLE II

CLASSIFICATION OF BIGFORK COMMUNITY RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR DISTRICT,  
 COUNTY, SEX, CHILDREN IN SCHOOL, AND SCHOOL ATTENDED

School	County		Children in School		If yes, what level		Sex		Attended School	
	Flathead	Lake	Yes	No	Elem.	H.S.	Male	Female	Bigfork	Elsewhere
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Echo	5	--	3	2	--	3	--	5	2	3
Swan	30	--	24	8	--	13	8	22	5	25
Ferndale	10	20	25	5	--	18	3	27	2	12
Swan Lake	--	14	12	2	--	7	3	11	1	13
Bigfork	91	43	98	36	74	60	40	91	38	96
Total	136	77	162	53	74	91	64	159	48	149

regard to those those features that should be eliminated, added to, or should remain the same were insignificant. According to Table III respondents thought buzz sessions and socio-dramas should be decreased. Nearly all of the respondents were satisfied with the Parent Teacher Association as it was. Twenty six members would like to add more outside speakers to the program.

The Bigfork Parent Teacher Association had a paid up membership of sixty-one in 1954-55. Fifty-nine members returned the questionnaire. The areas that were best represented by membership in the Parent-Teacher Association were Bigfork, Swan River, and Ferndale. Swan Lake is eighteen miles east of Bigfork and provides a transportation problem for those who desire to take part in school activities. The people of Echo district very seldom participate in the activities of Bigfork High School. It was encouraging to receive the few returns from this area.

Slightly over one-half of the respondents were satisfied with the achievement of goals set by the Bigfork Parent-Teacher Association for the year 1954-55. Very few (5.8 per cent) did not know whether their goals were attained or not; 41.8 per cent indicated they did not know the goals that were set and consequently did not have opinions on this question.

TABLE III

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON ORGANIZATION AND TYPES OF PROGRAMS MADE BY BIGFORK  
 RESPONDENTS WHO WERE MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS OF THE  
 PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

TYPE OF PROGRAM	Suggest Less			Adequate as is			Suggest More		
	Member	Non-	Total	Member	Non-	Total	Member	Non-	Total
		Member			Member			Member	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
a. Programing	2	0	2	38	10	48	19	0	19
b. Social Sessions	0	2	2	38	14	52	21	0	21
c. Buzz Sessions	3	4	6	35	24	59	16	0	16
d. Outside Speakers	3	0	3	30	4	34	26	0	26
e. Discussion Demonstrations	3	0	3	32	2	34	14	0	14
f. Panel-Discussions	3	0	3	35	9	44	21	0	21
g. Socio-Dramas	5	1	6	37	14	51	17	6	23

Student Progress Conferences. Student progress conferences were held in Bigfork every spring. School was dismissed and each parent was given an appointment with his child's advisor. The parent could also make an appointment with any other teacher on the Bigfork staff at the same time. This made it possible on one trip to take care of all appointments. The 1954-55 attendance indicated that approximately 82 percent of the families in elementary and high school participated at student progress conferences.

Returns from this survey indicated that the patrons of the school did have an interest in their children's studies and school attitudes. The comments on this area of the questionnaire indicate that those who attended one or more of these conferences were well satisfied with the student progress conferences. School records indicated a tendency for the same parent to be absent from each of the student progress conferences. Records were kept in the school office of the parents who made appointments and those who kept them. Student progress conference records for the school year 1954-55 show that 28 percent of the parents had attended four or all of the conferences; 31.1 per cent had attended only three conferences; and 24.3 per cent had attended only two of the conferences. The remainder had attended for the first time in 1954-55.

School Publications. There were some responses to this phase of the study that the school could well consider. Almost 12 per cent of the people indicated they were not kept well informed about school news and business. The school business on which they were not kept informed was not made clear, but indications were that they were dissatisfied in general. From the comments that were made, it appeared that they were referring to all business that did not relate to taxation. They did indicate that taxes were well explained to them. Only one-fourth (29.2 per cent) of the respondents indicated they received and read "The Bay Breeze," the school paper. This indicated need for more effort on the part of the school to see that this paper reached the parents.

Use of the School Facilities. Citizens of Bigfork community were permitted the use of school facilities at any time they were not in use by the school. If they wished to use the school facilities they were required to apply to the office of the superintendent for permission and make arrangements for the payment of utilities. If they desired to use some facility requiring a skilled operator or instructors, special arrangements could be made for them.

The school was willing to do clerical, mechanical, or other jobs for the public or any organization. Such jobs as printing programs or running off schedules were

often done. All that was asked for these services was payment for the cost of materials. Those respondents who had had work done by the school were all satisfied with the quality of the work. More people might have used this service if they had known of the board's policy on this aspect of the school. Of the respondents answering this questionnaire only 30.3 per cent indicated they knew this policy.

School Elections. When asked about voting in the recent trustee election, 60.8 per cent replied that they had not voted at all. A majority of people apparently did not take an interest in voting or were not well enough informed to vote. The percentage of respondents voting on the special levy for the purchase of new land for the high school district was somewhat higher than the percentage voting for school trustees. About 49 per cent of respondents indicated they had voted in the trustee election. In spite of the small number participating in the vote for the special levy, only 4.6 per cent of the respondents thought that the levies were not explained thoroughly enough.

Teacher Visitation. Each teacher was asked why he did not visit more parents at their home. The prevalent response was that the distance to the majority of homes was too great. The teachers did indicate that they thought home visits were important and a good source of home-school relations. Despite this, only three of the faculty

of twelve had made any calls to the home on school business. All but two of the twelve teachers did make social calls at the homes of a few of the parents.

Of the total number of people answering this questionnaire, 23 per cent had been visited by one or more teachers during the school year. Forty-one per cent of the respondents called upon were called upon for school business. The remaining calls were of a social nature.

Most of the respondents (88.7 per cent) indicated that they felt the teachers participated sufficiently in community activities.

Report Cards. In 1952, the Bigfork Schools developed, through teacher participation, a new set of report cards. They were of three types: one for the primary grades, one for the intermediate and upper grades, and one for the high school level. The school administration thought many of the people were dissatisfied with the new report card. However, the returns from this questionnaire showed that 86.9 per cent of the respondents thought that the reports provided sufficient information and desired no change in the report cards or the marking system. A very small minority of the respondents indicated a desire to go back to the letter method of grading instead of using the "S" and "U" method in use in the primary grades at the time this study was made.

The patrons were asked if they preferred to have periods changed from the six-week periods.



Almost 91 per cent indicated they would rather stay on the six weeks basis.

School Lunch. The respondents were divided on the question of school hot lunches. When asked if they had ever eaten at the hot program about one-third of the respondents indicated they had eaten there at one time or another. They were then asked if the lunch appeared satisfactory and a great majority indicated they felt the lunch was satisfactory. About half of the responding parents indicated that their children were satisfied with the school lunch program. The majority of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the cost of the lunches.

Student Activities. The majority of the respondents of the district had attended some sort of student activity during the school year 1954-55. No attempt was made by this study to determine the frequency of attendance, but rather to find the number patrons who did attend any school function. Table IV indicates the number from each area who attended one or more of the school functions that were held regularly throughout the school year in Bigfork.

During the year the school offered three plays, one music concert, two home economics shows, and one physical education demonstration all of which were free to the public. There were nine home basketball games for which there was a charge. Over 96 per cent of the respondents indicated that the activities observed reflected good preparation.

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED ONE OR MORE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1954-55 FROM BIGFORK, SWAN RIVER, FERNDALE, SWAN LAKE AND ECHO

1	2	3	4	5	6
School	Dramatics	Music	Athletics	Home Ec.	Physical Ed.
Bigfork	85	93	72	67	60
Swan River	19	13	19	9	11
Ferndale	6	9	11	2	2
Swan Lake	8	2	2	4	4
Echo	--	--	--	--	--
Total	122	114	100	91	77

Respondents indicated by three to one majority, that they were dissatisfied with the gymnasium. About one-half of the people indicated that the elementary playground was inadequate.

School Board Meetings. It was the intent of this section to discover whether or not the patrons of Bigfork School understood how their schools were governed. About 54 per cent of the respondents knew where to find out when the school board held its meetings. Less than one-third of the patrons had attended a board meeting and

and 63 per cent of the respondents did not think the school board publicized its actions enough.

School Board Policies. A majority of respondents did not know that the school board set the policies by which the school is operated. Over fifty copies of School Board Policies handbook were given out to the patrons of the school district after the questionnaire was distributed.

Many people do talk to board members on school matters, but the returns indicated only about 28 per cent of these people had talked to any of the board members concerning any of the policies of the school board. Of this 28 per cent that had talked to one or more of the board members, about 21 per cent had requested the board to change some of its existing policies. Of the total number about 4 per cent thought some board policies should be changed. Most of the respondents were well satisfied with the school board and believed its members were very competent.

## CHAPTER II

### SUMMARY

#### REVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

The problem as stated in this study was that of (1) determining the effect of various school-community contacts on school-community relations in a specific community during a specific year, (2) making recommendations for improving school-community relationships, and (3) determining the need for additions or deletions from the present program, including the use of community resources for instruction.

#### RESTATEMENT OF THE LIMITATIONS

This study was limited to the Bigfork Public Schools, both elementary and high school, and the community served by these schools. The study was further confined to the school year 1954-55. In treating school community contacts, only those contacts made by the staff of the Bigfork Public Schools and the members of the Board of Trustees, School District No. 38, were considered in the direct contacts. The indirect contacts included contacts between the community and school through any means other than these direct methods. In so far as possible, the study was also limited to conditions as they existed in the school year 1954-55.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS

Of all the questionnaires that were sent out to the rural, star and local box holders of Bigfork High School district, nearly 52 per cent were returned. Of these respondents, 67 per cent had children in school at the time of this survey. About 58 per cent of these children were attending high school in Bigfork. Almost 80 per cent of the respondents were women. Nearly 83 per cent of the respondents had never attended school in Bigfork at any time.

Approximately one person out of three of those replying to the questionnaire was a member of the Bigfork Parent-Teacher Association. Nearly all respondents (87.5 per cent) indicated they believed the Bigfork Parent-Teacher Association did achieve the goals it set for the year.

The majority of both the members and non-members were satisfied with the present program. They did indicate they would like to see more outside speakers and more social sessions within the Parent-Teacher Association.

A large number of respondents had attended one or more student progress conferences. About 29 per cent of

the respondents indicated they had never attended any of these conferences.

A majority of the respondents said they were satisfied with the conferences, and thought they were of benefit to the students and parents alike. The respondents indicated that the teachers were courteous, and had worth while things to say to the parents.

A majority of the respondents thought that all of the school publications listed in the questionnaire displayed good student work and were informative in content.

Most of the respondents had no occasion to use the school buildings. One out of every five of the respondents indicated that work had been done for him by the school; of these who did have work done, all were satisfied with the results.

About one-half of the people were familiar with the school board's policies on the use of school buildings and equipment. About two-thirds of the respondents knew where copies of these policies could be obtained if they desired them.

Of the respondents answering the school election series of questions, about 99 per cent thought the request for special levies had been well explained by the administration.

Approximately 61 per cent of the respondents indicated they had voted in the most recent trustee election,

and approximately 47 per cent of the respondents indicated they had voted in the last special levy election.

Home visitation on the part of the teachers was very infrequent. One out of six of the respondents had been visited by a teacher either socially or on business. The majority of respondents indicated, however, that the teachers participated in community activities enough.

Seven out of every eight respondents indicated the present report cards were satisfactory as they were. The six-weeks marking system was favored over the nine-week marking system by a ratio of eleven to one.

About one half of the respondents indicated that their children were well satisfied with the school lunch program. A majority, or about 88 per cent, indicated they were satisfied with the price (25 cents) charged.

A majority of the respondents had attended some student activity during the school year. About 90 per cent of these respondents indicated that the activities they had attended did reflect good preparation. Approximately 77 per cent were dissatisfied with the gymnasium and about one half of the respondents indicated they were dissatisfied with the stage. About one half of the respondents also indicated they were dissatisfied with the playground for the elementary students.

One out of four of the respondents stated he had attended a school board meeting and about the same number

knew where the school board held its meetings. About 54 per cent knew where to find out where the meetings were held.

Approximately 63 per cent of the respondents indicated they believed the school publicized its actions very well.

About 70 per cent knew that the school board set the policies whereby the school operated, but only 24 per cent knew these policies were available to them in booklet form.

Five out of thirteen respondents had talked to a board member or members, concerning one or more of the board policies, with one out of thirteen requesting the board change some part of the policies. When asked if there were any policies they would like to see changed in the present set of policies, one out of nine indicated they would like to see some changes. They gave no indication of which policies they would like to see changed.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the effects of various school-community contacts on school-community relations in a specific community during a specific year, (2) to make recommendations for improving school-community relationships, and (3) to determine the need for additions or deletions from the existing program, a use of community resources for instruction.



Following is a list of recommendations that have been made from this study.

1. Provisions should be made to bring more outside speakers to the Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

2. An intensive effort should be made by the Bigfork Parent-Teacher Association to bring in more members from the outlying districts.

3. More effort should be made by the school to see that the school publications such as the "Bay Breeze" get into all homes.

4. An effort should be made to hold more than the usual one Student Progress Conference each year. More information should be given the parents regarding their appointments with teachers.

5. More information should be given the public about opportunities for them to have work done by the various departments of the school.

6. A determined effort should be made to secure more health services from the county.

7. The time and location of the school board meetings should be more extensively publicized. The school should use the bulletin board down town to advertise these meetings as to time and place. If an advance notice on the new or old business that will be discussed could be included, it would provide a motive for more participation

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**APPENDIX A**  
**THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Bigfork Public Schools  
Bigfork, Montana

Dear School Patron:

This questionnaire is part of a study of school-community relationships being made by Mr. Kedric Flint, one of our high school teachers. Mr. Flint is working on his Master's degree at Montana State University. He has been asked to make an inquiry into the effects of various school-community contacts. The results of this inquiry will be made available to our school. From these results, we may be able to see where we can improve our school-community relationships. We may also be able to correct certain aspects of our program which you, the community, would like to see corrected.

Won't you complete the questionnaire and return it in the attached stamped envelope? Your cooperation will not only be appreciated, it will aid your school.

Very truly yours,

C. E. Naugle  
Superintendent

Arthur B. Whitney  
Chairman of the Board

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SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP SURVEY

Directions: This is an attempt to evaluate the school-community relationships in our community. Will you please read the items carefully and then mark as requested to indicate your feelings. If there are practices you don't like, perhaps we can make changes. Likewise, we will certainly retain those things which the community seems to desire.

Identification: We do not want your name. However, some information is desirable so that proper interpretation of the survey can be made.

- 
1. I live in the school district which contains the school checked below:  
 Echo School                       Ferndale School       Bigfork School  
 Swan River School               Swan Lake School
  2. I live in                               Flathead County       Lake County
  3. I have children in school       Yes                       No
  4. They are in                               Elementary school       High School
  5. I am a                                       Male                       Female
  6. I attended school in               Bigfork                       Some other Place
- 
-

Parent-Teacher Association

- 1. Do you belong to the Bigfork P-TA?  Yes  No
- 2. Do you feel that the Bigfork P-TA achieves the goals it sets for the year?  Yes  No
- 3. How do you feel about the following P-TA matters? (check appropriate entry).  

	Suggest Less	Adequate as is	Suggest More
a. Programming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Social Sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Buzz Sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Outside Speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Discussion-Demonstrations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Panel Discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Socio-Dramas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome:

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Student Progress Conferences

- 5. How many Student Progress Conferences have you attended in Bigfork?  
 none  one  two  three  four
- 6. Are you satisfied with the results of these conferences?  Yes  No
- 7. Do you feel that the students benefit from them?  Yes  No
- 8. Do you feel that these conferences make better relations between the home and the school?  Yes  No
- 9. Do you feel that the teachers are courteous, have worthwhile things to say, and know what they are talking about?  Yes  No
- 10. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome:

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School Publications

Note: Your school has three regular publications and the usual notes sent home with students. The school paper is The Bay Breeze, and is published by the high school journalism class. The school manual is the Le Lac, and is published by the senior class. Your School Newsletter is sent home periodically from the school office. We would appreciate your help in judging the effectiveness of these publications.

- 11. Do you feel that you are kept well informed about school News? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 12. Do you get to see and read The Bay Breeze, our school paper? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 13. Do you feel that the contents of The Bay Breeze are informative? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 14. Does the school paper reflect good student work? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 15. Have you seen the 1954 Le Lac? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 16. Do you think the Le Lac reflects good student work? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 17. Have you received a copy of Your School Newsletter? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 18. Do you consider the contents of Your School Newsletter worthwhile? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 19. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome :
- 
- 
- 

Use of School Facilities

- 20. Have you had any occasion to use the school building for any purpose lately? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 21. Have you had occasion to have any work done by the school in the last year (typing, duplicating, etc.)? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 22. Have you been satisfied with the quality of work done for you by the school? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 23. Are you familiar with the Board's policy on the use of school buildings, equipment, etc.? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 24. Do you know where you can obtain copies of this policy? ( ) Yes ( ) No
  - 25. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome:
- 
- 
-

School Elections

26. Did you vote in the most recent (April, 1955) trustee election? ( ) Yes ( ) No
27. Did you vote on the most recent (April, 1955) Special levy? ( ) Yes ( ) No
28. Do you feel that requests for special levies are explained thoroughly enough? ( ) Yes ( ) No
29. Any comments you might like to make about the school election will be appreciated.
- 
- 
- 

Teacher Visitation

30. Have you been visited, at your home, by a teacher this year? ( ) Yes ( ) No
31. Was this call regarding school business? ( ) Yes ( ) No
32. Do you feel that our teachers participate in community activities enough? ( ) Yes ( ) No
33. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome:
- 
- 
- 

Report Cards

34. Do the school report cards give you the information you want? ( ) Yes ( ) No
35. Our report cards are issued every six weeks. Would you prefer that they be issued every nine weeks? ( ) Yes ( ) No
36. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome:
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-



Pre-School Clinic and Health Service

37. Has your child ever been examined at a pre-school clinic here? ( ) Yes ( ) No
38. Are you satisfied with the health services provided by the country? ( ) Yes ( ) No
39. Have you ever attended any meeting which sought to improve health services? ( ) Yes ( ) No
40. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome.
- 
- 
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School Lunch Program

41. Have you ever eaten at our school lunch program? ( ) Yes ( ) No
42. If you ate here, did the lunch appear and taste satisfactory? ( ) Yes ( ) No
43. Does your child seem satisfied with the school lunch program? ( ) Yes ( ) No
44. Does the price (25¢ per lunch) seem satisfactory? ( ) Yes ( ) No
45. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome. (Please be specific).
- 
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- 

Student Activities

46. Have you attended any school student activity programs? ( ) Yes ( ) No
47. Did these involve ( ) Dramatics, ( ) music, ( ) athletics, ( ) Physical education, ( ) Home Economics?
48. Did these involve ( ) elementary students, ( ) high school students ( ) both?
49. Did you feel that these activities reflected good preparation? ( ) Yes ( ) No
50. Are you satisfied with the facilities the school has for a gym? ( ) Yes ( ) No
51. Are you satisfied with the facilities the school has for a stage? ( ) Yes ( ) No
52. Are you satisfied with the facilities the school has for a playground? ( ) Yes ( ) No
53. Any comments you care to make regarding this topic will be welcome.

School Board Meetings

54. Have you ever attended a school board meeting? ( ) Yes ( ) No
55. Do you know when District No. 38 holds its board meetings? ( ) Yes ( ) No
56. Do you know where to find out when the meetings are held? ( ) Yes ( ) No
57. Do you feel that the Board publicizes its actions enough? ( ) Yes ( ) No
58. Any comment you care to make on this topic will be welcome. ( ) Yes ( ) No
- 
- 
- 

School Board Policies

59. Are you aware that the School Board sets the policies by which the school is operated? ( ) Yes ( ) No
60. Do you know that these policies are available to you in booklet form? (You may obtain them from the Superintendent's office). ( ) Yes ( ) No
61. Have you ever talked to a board member concerning any of the policies of the board? ( ) Yes ( ) No
62. Have you ever requested a change in existing policy? ( ) Yes ( ) No
63. Are there any board policies you would like to see changed? If your answer is "Yes" please list the desired change below. ( ) Yes ( ) No
- 
- 
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THANK YOU!

Watch copies of Your School Newsletter for a summary of the results of this survey.

**APPENDIX B**  
**RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

*QUESTIONS	BIGFOK				SWAN RIVER			
	Children in School		No Children in School		Children In School		No Children in School	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Satisfied with conference	84	2	7	—	8	—	2	1
Students are benefited	85	4	8	3	5	—	1	2
Make better home-school relations	85	2	14	1	6	—	5	1
Teachers are courteous	87	1	14	—	7	—	6	—
<u>SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS</u>								
Kept well informed	82	9	19	3	8	—	6	3
Receive the Bay Breeze	70	20	18	18	8	—	2	6
Bay Breeze is informative	68	4	19	—	4	—	2	1
Paper reflects good work	69	—	21	2	8	—	2	3
Have seen 1954 Le Lac	73	14	21	14	6	1	6	2
Le Lac reflects good work	72	4	21	9	7	4	5	5
Receive school Newsletter	79	8	22	13	7	2	4	3
Newsletter is worthwhile	79	—	15	—	6	—	3	—
<u>USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES</u>								
Have used school buildings this year	35	46	5	26	1	9	3	11
Had work done by school	21	87	7	26	2	5	—	11
Satisfactory in quality	21	1	7	—	2	—	1	—

\*For more complete list of the questions on the questionnaire See Appendix "A".

FERNDALE		ECHO				SWAN LAKE				TOTAL			
Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		Yes	No
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
8	3	--	--	1	--	--	--	14	0	--	--	125	6
7	3	--	--	1	1	--	--	12	2	--	--	126	6
12	--	3	--	1	1	--	--	12	2	--	--	138	8
8	1	1	--	1	--	1	--	14	--	--	--	139	2
10	--	2	1	3	--	--	--	12	3	--	--	142	19
10	--	--	5	1	2	1	--	14	--	--	--	124	51
10	--	--	--	1	--	1	--	14	--	--	--	119	5
10	--	1	--	1	--	1	--	13	1	--	--	118	6
9	6	--	4	1	1	1	--	11	3	--	--	122	45
9	1	--	3	1	1	--	--	9	2	--	--	124	30
9	1	1	2	2	--	--	--	8	6	--	--	141	25
10	--	3	--	--	2	--	--	10	--	--	--	126	2
3	9	--	13	--	1	--	2	--	14	--	--	54	131
--	10	--	5	--	1	--	1	--	14	--	--	30	160
--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	30	2

*QUESTIONS	BIGFORK				SWAN RIVER			
	Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<u>USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES</u>								
(Continued)								
Know board's policy on use of school building	35	65	17	8	5	6	1	18
Know where to obtain policies	52	38	11	9	3	3	2	9
<u>SCHOOL ELECTIONS</u>								
Voted in most recent election	63	48	12	26	5	8	5	4
Voted in recent Special levy	77	36	14	7	5	9	6	10
Feel requests for Special Levies are well explained	83	7	26	--	11	--	8	1
<u>TEACHER VISITATION</u>								
Teacher has visited your home this year	17	56	15	23	3	5	2	8
This was on school business	9	21	4	23	--	2	3	1
Teachers participate in community affairs enough	70	9	49	3	8	--	5	1
<u>REPORT CARDS</u>								
These give you the information you desire	80	10	9	2	12	--	8	4
Prefer a nine week marking period	4	63	2	10	--	10	1	11

FERNDALE		ECHO				SWAN LAKE				TOTAL			
Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		TOTAL	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1	9	--	3	--	1	--	2	9	4	--	--	67	116
3	7	--	4	--	1	--	2	7	3	--	--	78	109
3	7	3	1	--	1	--	1	--	14	--	--	91	120
3	12	3	11	--	1	--	1	--	7	7	--	115	94
10	--	2	--	1	--	1	--	12	2	--	--	154	10
--	24	2	4	--	1	--	2	2	7	--	7	46	132
1	--	1	2	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	19	50
--	3	9	2	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	141	18
3	--	8	2	1	--	--	--	5	1	--	--	127	19
--	3	--	12	--	4	--	1	4	5	--	--	11	123

QUESTIONS	BIGFORK				SWAN RIVER			
	Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b><u>PRE SCHOOL CLINIC AND HEALTH SERVICE</u></b>								
Your child has been examined in a pre-school clinic here	27	51	1	34	—	7	2	12
Satisfied with county health service to schools	26	32	1	29	3	4	1	5
Have sought to improve the health services	27	29	6	24	2	4	3	5
<b><u>SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM</u></b>								
Have eaten in school lunch	39	32	15	26	1	12	5	4
Appeared and tasted satisfactory	28	3	15	2	1	—	8	3
Your child seems satisfied	39	16	3	4	3	3	7	3
Price (25¢) is about right	54	1	32	3	5	1	2	2
<b><u>SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS</u></b>								
Have attended school board meetings	19	81	6	28	8	11	5	5
Know when District 38 holds its meetings	20	79	6	36	5	8	7	10
Know where to find this information	49	21	29	5	5	3	4	5
Feel the board publicizes its actions enough	24	34	10	22	5	5	2	10



FERNDALE		ECHO				SWAN LAKE				TOTAL			
Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		Yes	No
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
--	4	2	5	--	1	--	1	--	4	--	--	48	115
--	2	1	2	--	--	1	--	2	1	--	--	35	83
--	3	9	1	--	--	--	2	1	3	--	--	62	94
--	6	1	6	--	1	1	1	1	4	--	--	61	92
--	--	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	2	--	--	54	10
1	--	3	5	1	--	1	--	3	1	--	--	74	48
--	--	9	1	1	--	1	--	5	--	--	--	109	11
--	16	2	5	--	1	--	2	2	3	--	--	42	152
--	11	--	5	--	1	--	1	--	5	--	--	38	156
1	2	4	3	--	1	1	1	4	1	--	--	90	74
--	3	5	--	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	--	47	76

QUESTIONS	BIGFORK				SWAN RIVER			
	Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b><u>SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES</u></b>								
Know the school board sets the policies by which the school is operated	84	25	41	2	—	8	10	8
Know that these are available to you in booklet form. Free.	32	56	9	47	2	10	6	3
Have talked to board member concerning policies.	26	82	14	11	3	3	6	3
Have requested a change in any existing policy	2	42	4	34	6	—	9	2
Are there any policies you would like to see changed	3	44	3	28	3	—	6	1
<b><u>STUDENT ACTIVITIES</u></b>								
Have attended any student activities this year	79	2	40	3	8	—	12	1
Feel these reflected good preparation	75	—	18	22	16	—	14	—
Satisfied with the gym	10	80	14	27	2	14	3	5
Satisfied with the stage	29	37	19	20	14	3	12	3
Satisfied with the facilities for elementary playground	22	43	8	20	14	3	12	3

FERNDALE		ECHO				SWAN LAKE				TOTAL			
Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		Children in School		No Children in School		TOTAL	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
3	10	5	--	--	1	1	--	5	--	--	--	149	64
--	3	2	--	--	--	1	--	--	5	--	--	53	135
--	5	1	4	--	--	1	--	--	5	--	--	51	130
--	4	--	4	--	--	--	--	--	5	--	--	11	147
--	1		2	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	9	86
14	3	13	--	--	2	--	2	4	11	--	--	165	24
4	--	8	--	--	--	--	--	4	--	--	--	154	7
3	--	--	6	3	--	--	--	1	4	--	--	36	126
11	--	4	6	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	69	80
14	--	--	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	61	72

**ATTENDANCE AT VARIOUS STUDENT ACTIVITIES AT BIGFORK HIGH SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR  
1954-1955 BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

	Dramatics	Music	Athletics	Economics	Education	Students	High School Students	Both
<b>Bigfork</b>	85	93	72	67	60	9	8	103
<b>Swan River</b>	19	13	19	9	11	5	6	17
<b>Ferndale</b>	10	6	9	11	2	---	6	6
<b>Swan Lake</b>	8	2	2	4	4	---	4	---
<b>Echo</b>	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Total</b>	122	114	100	91	77	14	24	126