Community evaluation of the school

Hazen Robert Lawson

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A COMMUNITY EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL

by

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B. A., Jamestown College, 1933

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requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

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CHAPTER I

DEVELOPING THE PROBLEM

INTRODUCING THE PROBLEM

The project of the community evaluation of the school suggests the setting of the problem in the Cascade Public School District. This district lies in central Montana between Great Falls and Helena. In this district the social background of the Cascade Public School consists of many divergent groups. Heads of families are listed as professional (teachers, a dentist, ministers), business men, farmers, ranchers, skilled and unskilled laborers, and retired. Five years of observation in this district have preceded this study. In this Cascade School District were many problems confronting an administrator which were common to many school districts as well as problems which were of a purely local nature.

The Problem: What do the people in the community think of the Cascade Public School? In order to study this general problem, it was necessary to find the answers to these specific questions:

1. What suggestions may one derive from reading related literature on conducting surveys?
2. How can the community be involved in the planning and the conducting of the study?

3. How can the faculty be involved in the planning and conducting of the study?

4. What questions need to be developed to ask the people about the schools?

5. What forms for guiding the interviews need to be developed?

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In many cases the first indication that something has gone wrong with the administration of a school has been the dismissal of the administrative official. Too often the superintendent does not react constructively to criticism from the community. It is believed that appraisal by the community as suggested in this study would encourage people to make valuable suggestions for the improvement of the school program. If criticism exists, the sooner it is brought to the attention of the administrator and acted upon, the better. If the criticism is unjust, it indicates the need for a better program of the interpretation of the schools. From such practices it is hoped that the community will become better informed about the school program. It is also hoped that the basic findings will result in an improved curriculum. The community will feel closer to the school because people have had a part in its development, and last,
but not least, the process will be valuable to an administrator who seeks to improve all phases of his school program.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The residents of Cascade School District Number Three were first selected to participate in this study. Interest spread to such an extent, however, that parents of students attending school who resided outside of District No. 3 were included. The High School District of Cascade includes nine districts. Parents of students attending school who resided outside of District No. 3 yet within the high school district were allowed to participate in the study. Only one member from each family was interviewed. Data for the survey were collected during a one year period.

METHODOLOGY

All teachers had a part in making up the survey questionnaire which was presented to the public. For background material, many related surveys and books were studied.

Questionnaires developed by Harold C. Hand and included in What People Think of Their Schools were used in a former survey of the Cascade High School District four years previously and published in Montana Education, April, 1952.

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The Pittsburg School Survey, of Contra Costa County, California, was read by the teachers as well as other surveys relating to community problems.

Of national interest and inspiration was the article, "What U. S. Thinks About Its Schools," in the October, 1950 issue of Life Magazine.

The Denver Survey entitled "Denver Looks at Its Schools" was of great help to the people who had the job of making up the Cascade Survey.

How To Conduct A Citizen's School Survey by Merle R. Sumption was especially helpful in developing the survey report.

A form of group dynamics, that is selecting students and adults by means of Sociograms, was used considerably to select representative students and adults. A lay group of eleven citizens, representing a cross section of the community, met several times. Their part in the program was to interpret the survey to the other members of the community, to be responsible for collecting the data from a certain number of citizens, and to advise and to approve the final survey questionnaire. These citizens contacted one person

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3Pittsburg School Survey, (Mimeographed questionnaire from office of the County Superintendent of Schools, Martinez, California, 1952), 13 pp.


in each home.

Students who had a part in the survey were the Cascade student body as a whole, the student council, and the students enrolled in the office practice class. A few families who could not be reached by the adult council were contacted by means of office practice students, who went to the homes, secured the necessary information, and returned to the school. The results were tabulated by these same students, the remarks typed up, and the information was distributed to each teacher and to each school board member.

A summary was prepared and certain conclusions were drawn. A full explanation of the summary will be found in Chapter V.
CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

A considerable number of writers have written articles and books on the subject of school surveys. Different aspects of the surveys were treated quite voluminously in different texts. Specific helps are found in several educational articles in magazines. Especially appropriate was this definition of a school survey, developed in the next paragraph.

There is nothing mysterious about a school survey. It is simply a careful, systematic study of one or more schools, school systems, or educational institutions on a local, state, or national basis to determine trends, present status, and needs, and to attempt to propose steps which, if taken, should result in substantial progress toward attaining desirable objectives.¹

The purpose of a survey is to bring to light certain practices within a school system which are not good for the education of the whole child or for the community in which he lives, and to assist in bringing about needed improvements.

Several different types of surveys were found in combing the field of survey literature, four of which will be described in more detail.

¹Edgar L. Morphet, "How To Conduct A School Survey," School Executive, 67:11-14, April, 1948
First is the continuous survey. This type of survey was depicted as the ideal type. It went on year after year, continuing to better the system, not waiting but always looking forward towards improvement as fast as plans could be laid. This was not to come about automatically but was the result of certain sound underlying factors. Real leadership was a must in such a program. It was necessary that a recognised plan be carefully developed in a democratic atmosphere. This plan included a part for every staff member. To give incentive it is necessary to bring in experts from the outside. Certainly there must be a provision for lay participation. Periodical meetings must be held from which reports would be forthcoming. For a roundup of all activities it would be necessary for a single individual to be responsible for the summarising.

A second style of survey is called the periodic survey. This type of survey may take several different forms. A survey by educational experts would cost many thousands of dollars. Another type of periodic survey might be by a lay organisation with a certain purpose in mind. Such a survey might be made by a taxpayer's association, as an example. Still another type of survey would be a self-survey by educational groups. The most popular and successful of all periodic surveys are those that are known as cooperative surveys. In this type of survey, the limitations of the self-study type of survey would be avoided. A sound basis
of understanding and cooperation between the lay-citizens and the educational people would be provided; whereas, this is not possible where the study is carried on by educators alone. Florida, Georgia, New Hampshire, Virginia, and Tennessee are states which have carried on successful studies of this type.\(^2\)

A question might be raised as to what is the justification for a survey. In the case of the self-survey in a school system, almost any situation would be justified. The improvement which follows would more than repay the effort put forth. In certain situations an outside survey might be desirable. A situation may call for a survey by outside personnel when local personnel are unable or unwilling to do it. Another example is that in which problems have multiplied so rapidly that local personnel are unable to cope with them. Still another case in which an outside survey would be desirable would be when a new administration wishes a thorough analysis of the system. A system might become "ingrown". Too great a difference of opinion could be another reason. Lastly, there might be the desire of all concerned to undertake a general review of conditions.\(^3\)

Steps in carrying out a survey and desirable characteristics of a satisfying survey are listed below. There is no formula but certain principles should be followed:

\(^2\)Morphet, op. cit., p. 13.

1. The procedure used in planning and carrying out the survey should be adapted to the school system concerned.

2. Other things being equal, a study which involves extensive participation by both lay citizens and educators on a cooperative basis offers greater possibilities than either working alone. The situation should be fully explored to enlist the cooperation of individuals and groups in planning and carrying on the study. Use should be made of a sponsoring committee working in harmony with the board of education. This committee should consist of interested and capable lay citizens.

3. A trained educator would be necessary for directing and coordinating the study.

4. A number of committees should be appointed to carry on major studies.

An important term in the literature of school surveys is group dynamics. Groups have a life of their own; they form, develop into working organisations, and disband when their work is accomplished. The way in which a group lives, or functions, influences all its members. 

Administrators have found that under certain conditions groups can work wonders. Many characteristics are brought together in a group. They form a nucleus from a larger group. They bring from this larger group certain wisdoms and attitudes; they will bring orders, enthusiasms, prejudices, and loyalties.

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The problem the group is working on must be a live issue, a challenge, and be worthwhile. Temporary committees are usually more effective than standing committees.

Certain cautions and observations are needed when working with groups. A consensus of opinion, that is, a group decision, is much better than a majority vote. A majority vote implies that there is a minority which may withdraw or block action. Consensus also means "mulling over" the goals and methods until the best stand out.

There is a prevailing rule that persons affected in a study should share in policy making; leadership is used wherever it may be found, and these leaders will need help in order to function effectively.

The superior value of group thinking may be summed up in a study by Murphy, Murphy, and Newcomb:

From such studies the superior values of group thinking over individual thinking, when demonstrated, is clearly due in part to (1) the larger number of ways of looking at the problem; (2) the larger number of suggestions for a solution; (3) the larger number of effective criticisms of each proposed plan; (4) the patent need to accept social criticism and not be bull-headed (as subjects working alone frequently are).^5

This pooling of material provides more adequate and valuable information.

Literature related to the development of the questionnaire itself has previously been listed in Chapter I.

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CHAPTER III
DETAILS OF DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

For the purpose of enlarging the scope of lay participation, a community council was formed. The selection of members for the community council was done by means of a sociogram. Five people from different organizations (such as Masons, Eastern Star, Cascade Commercial Club, one teacher, a minister) were asked to name persons who were active or vocal in discussing school affairs. Eleven most mentioned persons were then chosen to become members of the community council.

A letter was sent to each member thus chosen asking for participation in the council. In every case, the person asked to become a member of the council accepted. Special emphasis was stressed in the relationship of this council to the school board. School board members were not members of the council. It was emphasized to the council there was to be no interference or pressure brought on the school board members.

Frequency of council meetings was based upon the needs of the survey. At least a week's notice was given in advance of such a meeting. Interest was developed by
announcing council meetings in the local press.

It was interesting to note the changed attitudes of members working on the council. Straight voting of likes and dislikes gave way to consensus of opinions. Likewise, attitudes toward school problems and attitudes toward each other showed marked improvement. More will be said of this in a later chapter.

The complete faculty of the Cascade School also had a very important part in this community survey. Several meetings were held. During the first meeting, the objectives of the survey were presented. The teachers decided that their part in the study would be to develop or make up the actual questionnaire. A second meeting of teachers was utilised to study the different types of surveys. Each teacher agreed to make out a set of questions for the survey, based upon his own inclinations and his choice of items from other surveys. The administrator summarized items that were identical in each teacher's questionnaire. At a later meeting, the teachers in the group selected or rejected items in the summarization, and the total number of items was selected. Each time a meeting was held, it was announced in the local paper. Each teacher was responsible for presenting certain items to the people in a public meeting. Details of this will be found in Chapter V.

After the rough draft of the survey questionnaire had been completed by the teachers, members of the council
were presented with a copy and any deletions or additions were made on the advice of the council. A list of names of all people who were to respond to questions in the survey were then distributed to each member. Each council member chose at least ten names from this master list. His job was to present the survey to each of these people, explain any portion of it, and collect the results and turn them in. A final meeting of the council was called for the purpose of discussing the results of the survey, and to make plans for presenting the results to the public as a whole.

Still a third type of group to participate in the survey was the one representing students. There were several of these groups. The first was the sociology class. This class made a map of the district. The students named and located each house in the town proper, besides pin-pointing students in the total district. This map was used also for collecting the names of the master list mentioned in the above paragraph. A second group of students who worked on the survey was the office practice class. These students typed and mimeographed two hundred copies of the questionnaire. They delivered questionnaires to people that were not listed with the lay-council members. Approximately two days later these were collected for the tabulating process. These pupils then helped total and tabulate the items of the questionnaire. They typed on separate sheets all comments that were written in addition to the items that were checked.
The student body as a whole was briefed from time to time on the developments of the survey. Each child was urged to explain and to discuss the survey with his parents.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

For convenience, the findings of the Cascade School Survey have been separated into seven categories: administration, teachers, curriculum, student activities, special services, building, facilities and equipment.

Under the first category—administration—the activities of the school board and activities of the superintendent were listed. No attempt was made to separate the two divisions in the questionnaire. In answer to the question—What things do you like about the Cascade Public School as it is today?—sixty-six per cent of those answering checked administration. Thirty-four per cent answered negatively to the above question. The last question at the end of the questionnaire asked for any additional comments about any of the points covered in the questionnaire.

Sub-headings under the activities of the superintendent were itemised as the overall picture, the supervising of students, and the supervising of teachers. Listed under the overall picture were such items as hours of school, the noon hour and other general supervision problems. There was considerable adverse comment in regard to the long noon hour of elementary pupils, in regard to students being down town
during school hours, and in regard to students driving around
town in cars and motorcycles during the noon hour. Typical
comments of the above are quoted below as follows:

- Increase the tax levy to warrant hiring matured teachers of higher qualifications.
- We need a school board with higher qualifications.
- Better incentive pay for our instructors, who I think are doing a fine job.
- The high school has too much freedom during study-halls. The pupils should stay in the building and study-halls and not be allowed to go outside and play horse-shoes or go downtown. I do not approve of "Senior Privileges". It doesn't look good when you see all the kids downtown during school hours. People wonder what kind of a school we've got up there when we see all of them downtown.
- Children should not run cars at noon or during noon hour. They should not drive so fast coming from the school.
- Things to do with school affairs—such as "Senior privileges". Some people in Cascade think that when they (the students) go downtown they are skipping school. They think that students have more things to do than come down town and that the school is too easy. When students start high school they work towards a goal to graduate or to be a senior. During past years the seniors have had certain privileges. If some people do not leave them alone to run things the way they see fit, students will not have these privileges and there will be a lack of morale and school spirit. Little things like that make a better school.

I believe that the school should control use of cars and motorcycles at least during the noon hour. A few years ago those driving to school were compelled to leave their cars and could not drive even during school hours.

For the benefit of the majority of girls of high school age it seems to be a popular belief that pregnant students should certainly be dropped. What sort of influence are they for younger children?
How can the parents and school teach right from wrong when the wrong-doers (boys and girls) receive no punishment and are welcomed in their midst as if nothing had happened.

More strict moral regulations in being able to attend school.

I think a rule should be set up so that these young folks who get married and otherwise not be allowed to go to school.

Comments on the supervision of teachers ranged from complimentary to adverse. Examples of both are listed below:

I think the administration and the teachers I know are fine people with a terrific job to do. . . . children being what they are today. I will say this--though youngsters may beef a bit at the time, they like the security of rigid discipline, and the respect of it. I feel this might be a fact of school life that might be overemphasized for awhile. Good Luck!

We need a superintendent that could get the rest of the teachers on the ball. Cascade has too many teachers that believe that they are permanent fixtures and have become lax in discipline and teaching habits.

A second category of this study referred to teachers. There were a total of ten teachers in the Cascade School System. Eighty-one per cent of those people who answered this part of the questionnaire said the teachers were one of the things they liked about the school. Comments under this heading were as follows:

Teachers should not smoke on school grounds or in buildings.

The teachers should get their own mail instead of sending a student for it during school time.

Need more teachers--some incompetent.

Teachers show too much favoritism.
Some teachers unable to see the students side, unjust accusations, never admitting when they are wrong loses child’s respect.

There is not sufficient supervision of pupils during school hours such as noon and recess.

The faculty should have a more friendly attitude.

As a whole teachers are putting less effort year by year at higher wager than ever before.

Teachers should not take time off during school hours to have lunch and leave a student in charge of a room.

Teachers should over-see play grounds at all times.

I do not approve of the teaching methods and there is too much emphasis on letting the child get out of a subject what he can on his own without help from the teachers.

If the teachers would have more heart to heart talks with their classes, and the individual who seems to be having trouble and find out the reason, then work from there, they would have better results.

Curriculum was listed as a third category. Seventy-two per cent of these people who answered this part of the questionnaire were in favor of the Cascade School curriculum. Twenty-eight per cent said they did not like the curriculum. Certain subjects lacking in the curriculum were listed as the subjects that the Cascade School was neglecting. Choral music and art were outstanding as the two neglected subjects. Languages, English, and shop followed in that order. Home-making, social studies, mathematics, health, commercial, sciences, and vocational agriculture were about tied in popularity. Written comments on the curriculum were quite voluminous and are listed below:
Add chorus and foreign languages.

Not enough in the high school curriculum.

A music teacher is badly needed.

The history and geography books that are being used today are the same identical books that were used twenty-five years ago. Since nearly all of the geography of the world has been drastically changed during this period, it is senseless to waste the teachers and the pupils with such study. Current events would be of much greater value.

Would like to see more manual training pushed.

I believe there should be a course added in high school spelling and vocabulary expansion.

Where is bookkeeping? Even a home and personal finances need this subject.

I have watched rural pupils enter your high school for ten years and a big percentage quit because they can't handle English--so what's the use? It is required to graduate is the phrasing that sends them looking for a job. Not a diploma. It is a disgrace to rural teachers, but the high school could still give them the English they need, not something above their heads. P.S. I was once a rural teacher and this does not insult them. I am just stating a problem.

In answer to the question--What subjects are we neglecting?--the following answers and comments are listed below:

High school spelling and English.

Arts: glee club and chorus.

It is simply shameful the lack of music, art, physical education, and penmanship in the grades.

Arts: need a regular teacher.

Manual Training--should be given to 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - grades.

More home economics, more public speaking,
physiology should be taught, more commercial work; art should have a specialist.

A healthy body makes a healthy mind and promotes a better study. Since the greatest changes in youth are between the ages of 7 and 14 there should be a regular gym period set aside daily for the children in the grade school, if not possible for all of the grades, from the fourth through the eighth by all means. No education is complete without learning sportsmanship, to win and to lose. When high school is reached without learning this, it is too late to readjust.

Music: only in respect to vocal chorus for older students. No parent could ask for a better department in band.

Penmanship; many of the high school students do not write as well as they should in the sixth grade.

Shop: Should be in condition to be used all year so that children may have the advantage of manual training all school year.

More mathematics for all lower grades.

Arts: especially in the grades.

Shop; for some of the boys.

The following subjects should be added: speech, geometry, arts, painting and drawing.

The fourth category listed in this chapter was student activities. In a small school certain activities, which in a larger school would be termed extra-curricular, are found within the regular school program. Reasons given to justify this are that bus students would lose out on such activities if they were not held on school time. Thus band and athletics become a part of the daily curriculum and cause conflicts and bidding for student time. Seventy-five per cent of the public answering the questionnaire were in favor
of activities as they now exist, leaving twenty-five per cent opposed to the student activity program as administered in the Cascade School. Written comments to this topic are as follows:

Too much play in high school.
Too much emphasis on student activities.
Student-activities ever emphasized a bit.
Too much activities and not enough subject matter.
Too much play and not enough school.
Too many activities for some of the students and not enough for others.

There is too much individuality in athletics instead of team work.

A few years ago the buses were taken to basketball and football games. I think it is a good idea to take an extra bus for the cheering section.

There is too much emphasis on student activities.

I think more bus space for the cheering section at games, if possible, should be provided.

Put in six hours of school instead of three hours study and three hours of foolishness.

I think there is too much time spent on extra-curricular activities and not enough on the 3 "R's".

End the foolishness in school. Put an end to the funny book studies. Put an end to the square-dancing. Put an end to the stupid radio programs. Children can learn this foolishness at home without having it in school. If the tax-payers want this taught to their children then the school might as well be closed so that it will save us all some money.

I believe there are not enough school activities.
Tee much school time is given to activities which should be conducted after school hours.

Gym could be used for out of school or after school activities for those students who find leisure time on their hands.

Too many money raising projects. Some control should be used on these ventures instead of any and all classes selling a raffle ticket on anything that comes along. Also students shouldn't be exempt from study period or class to do these things.

Special services were listed fifth in findings of the survey. An item under this heading was bus service. Cascade has three bus routes: one, extending north and east for a total run of forty-five miles, running twice a day; a second, extending south and west to Wolf Creek which makes a daily run of sixty-four miles; a third, extending in a partial circle of the valley of the Missouri for a distance of thirty-five miles twice a day. Ninety-five per cent of the survey returns were pleased with this service. Only five per cent were dissatisfied. Written comments on this service were listed as follows:

Why is school dismissed early, buses sent out and the parents not informed ahead of time? In the country one plans on the children arriving home at a certain hour and make their plans in that way. This could have very serious repercussions in cold weather.

The bus service is fine if the drivers have some consideration and discipline.

A second item under special services was the school lunch. Three years prior to this survey a program of school lunch was inaugurated. Each year there had been a deficit
which was made up from the general budget. The survey showed ninety per cent checking in favor of the school lunch program with ten per cent checking in disfavor. Comments are quoted below:

Child should not be forced to eat anything they do not want. Dessert should not be withheld as parents are paying for it. Diet needs revision.

This should be a break-even proposition as it is other places. Why should the taxpayers have to pay for lunches of those who have money to throw away? If any student cannot afford to pay, why not give his lunch to him and charge the majority more to make up for it? I think the price is too low; I think the lunches should be sold by the week. Then if the student decided to eat elsewhere the lunch program could come out even, or some way so that the cooks would know how much to cook. Personally I do not think that the children in town should be allowed to eat at school— but of course at the price that is being charged— who wouldn't eat there if they could? A better lunch is served at school than the majority of us have at home. That is OK but why should those of us who cannot take advantage of it have to pay for it? Why not charge enough so you can come somewhere near to making ends meet? Why not serve hot soup and milk, and let those who live in the country bring their own sandwiches? From what I know Great Falls does not serve such elaborate lunches. In some places the mothers get together and can fruit, etc. to save expenses.

School lunch is fine— if possible a bill should be sent along with report cards, payable in advance. We never seem to know where we are in regard to payments.

I think those in charge of lunch should be compelled to go to school and study. There are schools in Gt. Falls under Miss Hauser.

A third item under this category of special services was driver training. This might well be listed under the curriculum, but because of adult classes it was classified here. The superintendent taught the course during the
students' free periods. Adult classes were given in the evening free of charge. Comments from the survey are listed as follows:

I think in a school as small as Cascade that the superintendent should teach some classes besides the student driving classes as all children can learn to drive at home. I have seen the car running around with one student in it. I think that is not a sufficient number for the expense involved.

Cut down on driver's training as so far the course is considered a joke and cheap transportation for the superintendent.

Superintendent drives driver's training car on taxpayers' money too much for his own interests.

Discussion about the pros and cons of a PTA organization in Cascade had been going on for some time. The teachers had been wondering about parent-teacher conferences. A former PTA had not been very successful. A poll of the sentiment of the community towards the above question showed the following:

1. Eighty-eight per cent in favor of a PTA.
2. Ninety-three per cent in favor of parent-teacher conferences.
3. A large majority felt that the conference should not be held on school time.

Written comments pertaining to the PTA question were as follows:

The fact that there has been much discussion should make it obvious that there is a need for a PTA.

Yes, if people are such that they could work together and cooperate.
The difference between a PTA and parent-teacher's conference hasn't been made clear enough. A PTA should not merely be an excuse to complain about the school.

If it could be carried out with parliamentary procedure and not be burdensome or irksome to the teachers.

It will not work.

Feel that PTA is much needed to bring students, teachers and parents closer together. Should be patterned after other well organized PTAs and meetings held at least each six weeks.

If people will work together, much could be done to benefit our school and children from this organization.

If everybody would take an active part and not leave it up to a few.

A parent-teacher's conference would be enough.

Comments about the parent-teacher conferences were as follows:

Yes, but I do not favor them taking the place of report cards.

Yes, but not as a substitute for a PTA.

Parents and teachers should have some schedule for meetings for individual students of problems which tend to arise in any grade in school. Neither the parent nor the teacher should be greatly inconvenienced. Monthly or six-weeks meetings should be sufficient for ironing out difficulties and could be scheduled where needed by advice on part of either parent or teacher to a central committee (for scheduling) as the need for discussion arises.

Need a home room mother's club.

Buildings were listed as a sixth category under this chapter. The Cascade Public School System is housed in three separate units. The school house proper consists of a three
story building, built in 1909, and a semi fire-proof addition built in 1916. All academic classes from the first grade to the twelfth grade are held in this building. A second unit built in 1942 is the gymnasium. This is a well-built and modern looking structure. The stage is used for band practice. A third unit is an uninsulated building which houses the vocational agriculture shop, as well as an addition which is used for a bus garage. Comments from this study concerning buildings are listed below as follows:

Classrooms fair; gym very good; shop obsolete and not large enough. I believe the present school house is inadequate and not only a fire hazard but that it is gradually falling apart. We need a new school house, built on level ground.

Schoolhouse obsolete; shop not large enough.

Gym very good but we need a new school house.

New school house would be nice all on one level and would eliminate so many stairs. Other small communities are getting good schools, we could have one too. Could use new bathrooms.

I think the school house is satisfactory for the time being, but the bathrooms and the fountains should be improved.

Should bond district for a new, modern school.

I would like to see a new building (school) and we are in bad need of a youth center.

Cascade needs a bigger shop with more facilities.

I would like to see a new high school building. The present one is out-moded, dark, and does not reflect the character of the school nor the interest of the parents.

To summarize the above comments, the result showed eighty-seven per cent liked the gymnasium. Only twenty-five
per cent liked the school house proper, and forty-one per cent liked the shop building.

A seventh and last category listed in this chapter was entitled facilities and equipment. Because of the type of buildings which were described in the preceding paragraph, it follows that facilities would be lacking. Girls' and boys' rest rooms situated in the basement were not what one would wish for in a modern school. Heating facilities in the shop building were inadequate during extreme cold weather. Comments from the survey showed a need for a drinking fountain on the second floor, where the grade classrooms were housed. A new toilet system with additional washing facilities, to speed up cleanliness before lunch, was also recommended. Comments on school equipment are listed as follows:

- Shop needs adequate heating facilities; needs more tools; workbenches need replacing.
- School equipment; What happened in the lab? Has chemistry and physics been forgotten?
- Short a lot of items the boys need.
- The shop should be cleaned up and have up-to-date equipment.
- Could improve school equipment.
- Need more playground equipment.
- They need about three new wash basins and a new knob on the door.
- The heating system should be improved so the temperature would be more even in all the rooms.
- The Ag room should have more up-to-date books and bulletins.
I suggest enough money be budgeted that a boy can learn to weld without paying for the rod, etc.

My greatest criticism is that I feel our children should be in, or on the school grounds, not forever and always downtown soliciting for something. If the school is not self-supporting raise the taxes, sell your tickets for your functions. Have our children at school during school hours and then send them home.

I feel that a Youth Center is badly needed in Cascade. The present situation is causing the students to obtain their recreation outside of Cascade. Many times it is objectionable. Youth Center could be held even once a week where students and young folks could square dance, buy hamburger, maybe a juke box—just a social gathering place where the social instinctive need of teenagers could be met.

A summary of the above category showed fifty-seven per cent checking school equipment and facilities as items that they liked about the Cascade Public School System.
CHAPTER V

EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The next logical step was to make use of the knowledge which was obtained from the survey. It was necessary to justify certain practices that were causing irritation or else remove the source of irritation. A meeting was held with the teachers and the results were shown and discussed. Then a meeting was held with the community council and the results of the survey were shown to them. A copy of the results was sent to each school board member. As a result of the above, a pattern evolved. There was to be a public meeting in which the results of the survey would be made known by the teachers. Each teacher was to take one or more items and tell the per cent in favor of it. It was the job of the administrator to summarize the comments and justify practices or propose changes. These recommendations and conclusions will be enlarged upon in the following paragraphs of this chapter.

One of the things that was brought out in the survey was the failure of the administration to clarify the financing of the school district. As a direct result, a large set of charts entitled "Know Your School" was designed and shown to the public at every opportunity. Some of these
charts are reproduced in the appendix.

The criticism of students being down town during school hours was very disturbing. Rules were put into effect that students would not be seen on the streets during school time without special permission. Because of the "hue and cry" against "senior privileges", this practice (of letting seniors free from study halls during the last six weeks of school) was abolished.

The matter of allowing married students (who often became pregnant) to remain in school was taken care of at a school board meeting. Although it was known that married students cannot be prevented from attending public school, still it was thought best that these students be discouraged from attending. Results have since proved quite worthwhile. The wave of underclassmen marriages ceased. Before the above edict went into effect, one-fourth of the senior class of twenty were married students. A year later not one senior was married and the community appeared well satisfied with the results.

The question of the noon hour remained the same. People living in town wanted the long noon hour. People in the country wanted a short noon hour. As soon as the public was informed of the situation, the clamor to change the noon hour died down. A sort of "gentleman's agreement" was reached with those boys and girls who drove cars to school. They drove only when they had errands to do and fast driving
driving was almost eliminated. The driving students understood what they were up against after the comments about their driving were made public to them.

The adverse comments about the driver's training car being used by the superintendent was explained in this manner. An agreement with the dealer was made that this car might be used on school business. If it were used for school business, only the cost of gas and oil came out of school funds. If a personal car had been used, the cost would have been seven cents per mile; hence, it was cheaper to the district to use the driver's training car than the personal car of the superintendent. It was also explained that the driver's training car was not used out of town unless for purposes of student training.

The teacher criticism took care of itself. The teachers had access to the comments and they knew how the public felt about certain things. The responsibility was theirs to do as they saw fit.

Perhaps the greatest change of all as a result of the survey was made in the curriculum. An art and vocal music teacher was added to the staff. This new teacher spent forty-five minutes each morning with the four different rooms of the grade school. This gave all grade teachers a "break" of one period each day. In the afternoon this special music and art teacher moved into the high school where he taught two classes. This enriched the curriculum
of both the grades and high school, and it was certainly well received by the community as an added improvement. Other subjects in the curriculum received a certain amount of impetus from the comments on the survey questionnaire.

Possibly as a result of the survey, the periods of the high school were changed from forty-five minutes to one hour. This gave the teachers more time with the students and some chance of supervised study. It meant cutting out two study halls, and shortening the athletic period from one and one-half hours to one hour. It meant less tension on the part of teachers and students, which, in turn, meant better school morale.

No obvious changes were made about special services such as bus routes, school lunch, and driver's training classes. The survey did make it possible, however, to explain the above program to the public.

A direct result of the survey was the forming of an authorized PTA group. So far it has enthusiastic support from both parent and teacher groups. The future looks bright for this organization because of certain developments which will be discussed under buildings. The parent-teacher conferences have not been made a fact for two reasons: First, according to the survey, parents were unwilling to give up school time for this purpose, and it did not seem fair to ask this extra time from the teachers; second, it was felt that this project might be a natural development from the PTA.
The building category under this survey needs an explanation. According to the survey there was great dissatisfaction with the main school building. It was felt that repairs were in order and perhaps a new school building should be contemplated within the next ten years. An engineer was hired to inspect the building and his report was made public. A special levy of $7,000 was proposed and voted upon for the repair of the old building. The levy did not pass for this, although five other items requiring a special levy did pass. The reason given for not passing this special levy for repair was, "It is a waste of money when we need a new school building." At the present writing the PTA has over fifty per cent of the signatures of the qualified voters in both the elementary and high school districts on petitions which are to be presented soon to the school board. What part the survey played in the present building program is a "moot" question. A new heating system was installed in the shop. The entire gymnasium interior has been painted with two coats of a pleasing color. This improvement should not be attributed to the survey except that it has caused public awareness to school improvement of buildings.

As a result of the plans mentioned above the school facilities phase is at a stand-still. Furnishing of equipment has seldom been a problem of the Cascade School.

As a result of the questionnaire certain conclusions
were drawn:

1. Certain buildings were not adequate for the job they were supposed to be doing.

2. There was a need for changing or interpreting certain administrative policies.

3. The school lunch was highly successful.

4. There was a definite need for the arts to be taught in Cascade; namely, public school music and art.

5. Our English courses needed interpretation to the public.

6. There was a definite need for a shop program.

7. Interpretation of public school discipline was necessary.

8. A shortened noon hour was not favorable to the majority of people.

9. Student absences for non-illness excused by the parent has become a problem.

10. Parent-teacher conferences was a must for the next year.

11. There was definite interest for a PTA program in Cascade.

The school has benefitted from this survey by certain practices of an unpopular nature being brought to the attention of the administrator, by giving the teachers a chance to see the problems as the lay-citizens see them, and giving support to projects that show the fine support of the public.
The author feels that the community has benefitted by means of this survey because they have been made to feel that their influence has been made a part of the school, that every voice has been heard, and that the school is wholeheartedly trying to do a better job for the citizens of the community.

A few words of caution might be in order. Do not take too much recognition of single isolated remarks. Hoot carefully many references to a single subject. Do not conduct a survey if you wish to be flattered.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


A CHART SHOWING HOW THE PURCHASING POWER OF THE DOLLAR AFFECTED THE BUDGET OF THE CASCADE HIGH SCHOOL OVER A TEN YEAR PERIOD

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A chart showing how the purchasing power of the dollar affected the budget of the Cascade Elementary School over a ten year period.

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A CHART SHOWING THE AMOUNT OF MONEY RAISED BY A ONE MILL LEVY IN FIVE HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN CASCADE COUNTY

Cascade

Belt

Neihart

Simms

Centerville

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$252.

$1979.

$1042.
A CHART SHOWING THE AMOUNT OF MONEY RAISED BY A ONE MILL LEVY IN FIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN CASCADE COUNTY

Cascade: $1535
Belt: $447
Neihart: $110
Simms: $723
Centerville: $418
APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What things do you like about the Cascade Public School as they are today?
   __ a. Administration (Supt. the way things are running, etc.)
   __ b. Teachers or Instruction (teaching methods, etc.)
   __ c. Student Activities
   __ d. The curriculum
   __ e. School lunch
   __ f. Buildings
      a. Gymnasium
      b. Schoolhouse
      c. Shop
   __ g. School equipment and facilities
   __ h. Hours of School
   __ i. Bus Service

2. What things do you not like about the Cascade Public School as they are today?

   __ a. Administration
   __ b. Teachers
   __ c. Student Activities
   __ d. The curriculum
   __ e. School lunch
   __ f. Buildings
      a. Gymnasium
3. Which of the following Subjects do you feel the Cascade schools are neglecting?

- Homemaking: (food, clothings, child care)
- Social Studies: (history, geography, government)
- English: (reading, spelling, speech, literature)
- Mathematics: (arithmetic, algebra, geometry)
- Health: (physical and mental health, gymnasium)
- Arts: (Music, painting, drawing)
- Commercial: (Typing, journalism, shorthand)
- Sciences: (Biology, Gen. Science, Chemistry, Physics)
- Languages: (Spanish, Latin, French)
- Voc. Agriculture
- Shop

4. Which of the following do you feel that the Cascade School is spending too much time on or wasting time?

- Homemaking
- Social Studies
- English
- Mathematics
- Health
- Shop
- History

- Arts
- Commercial
- Sciences
- Languages
- Agriculture
- Athletics
- Journalism
- Office Class
5. How about public school discipline:
   ___ Much too easy
   ___ Little too easy
   ___ About right
   ___ Too strict

6. Do you think the teachers in Cascade give enough personal thoughtfulness and individual attention to your child or each child?
   ___ Yes, no complaint
   ___ No, but not teacher's fault, teachers do the best they can, inevitable.
   ___ No, and particularly teacher's fault, teachers not interested, have pets.

7. Since school began last fall, have you
   ___ Visited the school?
   ___ Talked with a teacher?
   ___ Attended open house or a school meeting?

8. Some parents feel that our noon-hour is too long. (Simms begins at 12:30 and lets school out at 3:30.)
   ___ I favor the noon hour as is.
   ___ I favor the "Simms plan."

9. Sometimes student absences become a problem. Which of the following do you believe the administration should accept as excuses?
   ___ Illness and serious family matters.
   ___ Shopping visits to Great Falls.
   ___ Any reason as long as the parents know about it and write the excuse.
   ___ Truancy
10. Would parent-teacher conferences meet with your approval and co-operation?
   ___ Yes
   ___ No

11. How often should these be held?
   ___ Monthly
   ___ Each six weeks
   ___ Once a semester

12. What about time of these conferences?
   ___ Should be held on school time with students dismissed.
   ___ Should be held after school or on Saturdays.
   ___ Half on school time and half on Saturdays.

13. Check the grades that you feel parent-teachers conferences should be used for reports?
   ___ 1-6
   ___ 7-8
   ___ 9-10
   ___ 11-12

14. There has been much discussion about a P.T.A. in Cascade. What is your opinion?
   ___ I would favor starting a P.T.A.
   ___ I do not favor starting a P.T.A.
   ___ I have no opinion.

15. If you favor a P.T.A. or if we had a P.T.A., how often should meetings be held?
   ___ Monthly
   ___ Every six weeks (Six Meetings)
   ___ Four meetings per year
   ___ Two meetings per year
16. Turn to Question 1. Add any comments that you wish to make from that list, that you feel would help us in making Cascade a better school.