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THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN OPEN EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING

by
John Crawford Crozier

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Education
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in The University of Michigan
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Professor Andrew Ehrenkreutz
Lecturer Gary Vreeman

Dedicated to:

Sarah, Mylenda, Christopher,
John, Stephen, Clifford
and to my wife
Barbara

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in the gathering of the information
and in the writing of the dissertation.

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CHAPTER I

THE NEED FOR THE CASE STUDY

To begin an open classroom project within a public school setting is a difficult task at best. Many problems arise primarily because of the difficulty in operationally defining an open education program. Such problems as how to begin an open education program, how to maintain a successful program and how to insure that one is effectively presenting to children the academic and social skills they will need are a few of the many problems to be faced. In part, this study reflects a way of meeting these problems.

For the reader involved in implementing his own open education program, this study is necessary because it examines a number of needs which the reader may encounter in implementing his own open education program. These are:

1. The necessity of a study which reflects an actual attempt to develop and implement an open education program. There are several studies (Barth and Kohl) which attempt to do this but only in a rather superficial way. Although they do allow the reader to gain useful information, they do not include information on such items as finances, materials, transportation, etc.

2. The need for a study which examines the role of the building principal as he relates to the open education program in his building. The building principal must be supportive of the open program, he must communicate the program to many sources such as the board of education, the superintendent, parents and community. He must overcome the conflicts which develop between the open and traditional programs, he must be the instructional leader of both programs, and most importantly he must work closely with the children.

3. The necessity of a study which looks at the attitudes of the parents as they place their children in the open program. Barth points out the importance of the parents' role by stating:

> The negative effect of parents on school has all but nullified the positive effect of teacher and child. Parental opposition to the efforts of the school or the teacher is inevitably conveyed to children. In a situation where parents neither accept or respect what the teacher is doing, little learning can occur.[1]

Parents need information about the program in general and how their children are doing in particular. They have certain ideas which need to be discussed either through individual conferences, parent meetings or through a newsletter. Parents need to be involved in the program either by working in the classroom, assisting on field trips or making materials to place in the room.

4. The need to bring the philosophical basis of open education and the practical considerations necessary to implement it together in such a manner that the program itself rests upon a firm foundation and at the same time operates on a successful basis. It is one thing to discuss the philosophical platitudes of open education. It is quite another thing to develop practical ideas and communicate them to the board of education, parents, teachers and administrators so they understand an open education program.
5. The need for a systematic presentation of those elements which brought about the program. These elements range from money to personnel, from capital outlay items to day-by-day supplies, from criticism to compliments, from a private school setting to a public school seeting, from teacher to administrator and from parent to board of education.
6. The need for a study which points out the value of communication. In such a program two particularly useful methods of communication were the parent feedback questionnaires as well as the "Assumptions about Knowledge and Learning" developed by Barth.[2] Other means of communication such as classroom visits, reports, letters and parent-school activities were also utilized.
7. The need for those in the field to have a study which reflects the steps which need to take place when one

considers the development of an open education program. Perhaps the failures and successes of this program can assist those who are planning to undertake such a program.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

[1]Roland Barth, Open Education and the American School, New York, Agathon Press, 1972, p. 218.

[2]Roland Barth, Assumptions About Learning and Knowledge, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1970.

CHAPTER II

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE STUDY

This paper presents a case study of an open education program which was operated over a four-year period first as a private school program and then as a public school program.

The first section will examine those factors which were needed to begin the program within the public school setting but under private auspices. These will include:

1. An analysis of the public school system which undertook the program.
2. The actual beginning of the open education program over a two-year period as a private school.
3. The role that the parents played in bringing the private school's program to the attention of the public school.
4. The reasons parents and students gave for endorsing such a program.
5. An analysis of the human resources necessary for the program.

The second section will look at the first two years of the open education program as as integral part of the public school program. Such topics as room arrangement, scheduling, record keeping, field trips, special services

and visitors will be discussed. It is also necessary to examine the role of the two program teachers as they worked in their classrooms. Even though both conducted open classrooms, there existed differences in the way each room was operated. A substantial amount of work was necessary to bring each teacher together so that a coordinated kindergarten through sixth grade program developed. Finally, it is necessary to look at the factors involved in the decision to divide children into a kindergarten through third grade program and fourth grade through sixth grade program.

During the first year a person from outside the school district provided an evaluation of the program. His importance will be discussed in terms of his comments concerning the teachers, the building principal and the program in general.

Between the beginning of school and the Christmas vacation, a formal parent group was established which permitted direct parent involvement. Through their activities various materials were obtained, special trips arranged, outside resources secured and active parent-teacher interaction encouraged.

During the second year, several changes took place which caused certain problems within the program. First, the building principal was moved to a new assignment and the new administrator lacked the knowledge and the willingness to support the program. Second, the lower elementary teacher left the program for a year and the replacement did

not bring to the program the commitment which was expected. The negative effects of these two changes add considerable support to the argument that if a new program is to remain strong, a supportive administrator and a committed teaching staff must be available on a long-term basis.

The third section will examine the role of the elementary principal. It is difficult to analyze this role because the functions carried on by the principal do not lend themselves to a theoretical construction. The role emerges from efforts to apply the open education philosophy to the real classroom situation. As Barth points out in his own experiences in implementing an open classroom program:

> The role discussed is derived primarily from my own attempt as principal to introduce the ideas and practices of open education . . . This role developed as a collection of practices which, moment by moment, seemed consonant with assumptions discussed earlier and which seemed to offer some possibility of positive change.[1]

Despite the difficulty in defining the principal's role, a number of important functions do stand out. The principal provides the opportunity for the teachers to participate in decision making. He gives teachers the opportunity to make choices and to confer with other teachers. Two, he attempts to determine and understand teachers' needs. Once he has done this, he provides appropriate services. Three, he attempts to lead, influence, and affect teachers' behavior. He does this by supporting and responding to their needs and by initiating new ideas. Four, at times the principal performs what seems to be menial

and insignificant tasks and responsibilities. He may do this in order to release the teacher from tasks which take her away from working with the children. Five, the principal provides teachers with a variety of experiences, materials, and opportunities. Six, he assists teachers in critically examining, developing, and refining their open classroom philosophy. He does this by providing instructional alternatives and the opportunity for teachers to select from them. As Barth indicates:

> The principal must be sensitive to where each teacher is on his thinking and practice, able to make appropriate suggestions which will help to extend the teachers' ideas and action.[2]

Seven, the principal helps teachers work with children. He must know what steps are comfortable for each teacher to take and at what rate. Eight, the principal anticipates and analyzes problems so they can be solved and/or avoided. Nine, he confers often with teachers and supports their efforts. Ten, the principal establishes a positive relationship with the community. He brings parents into the school program, he includes them in school activities and meetings, he developes frequent communication with them and encourages them to visit the school and to work with children.

These ten functions represent a framework within which one can consider the role of the elementary principal and the open classroom. The role is very different from that of the more traditional principal who generally perceives his position as one in which he tells teachers what to teach

and how to teach it, maintains order, maximizes production, and minimizes dissonance, and attempts to exercise direct, authoritarian, hierarchical leadership. The traditional principal's role is to arrange schedules, maintain tight control over money, supplies, adults and children, and to perform clerical duties because it is "part of the job."

In summary, the open education principal places more accountability and responsibility on himself and his teachers while the more traditional principal relieves teachers and himself of accountability and responsibility for their actions.

The fourth section of this study examines the role of the parents who have children in the open education program. It is the impression of the writer that parents, in general, view open education as a risky, untried experiment with their children's lives. This belief is fostered by the fact that their concepts about quality education parallel the traditional, rigorous, transmission-of-knowledge model. Added to this, however, is the belief that parents care deeply about their children and the education which they receive and that parents rely heavily upon the school to bring their children success, wealth and satisfaction.

Considering the above, it becomes apparent that if parents are to support the open education program they must first be given the choice as to whether they want their child in the program or in the more traditional classroom.

Parents who elect to have children in the program will be more interested, more supportive, and more eager to assist in its development.

Parents need continual help in understanding the program. They need to be given as much feedback as possible via newsletters, questionnaires, reports, etc. They need to be kept informed of their child's progress during the year. They need to visit the room on a regular basis and to take part in the many activities. They need to feel confident of the teacher, the building principal and others who work in the program.

The final section of this study will begin with a recapitulation of the program, highlighting critical areas. Additional information will be directed at one, the need for a philosophy which provides unity for the staff and parents involved in open education practices, two, the need for evaluative instruments for open education and three, the future of open education.

Program in Transition

This section of the study examines a variety of factors, which, when considered in their totality, were necessary in order to bring the open classroom program into the public school setting. These factors are:

1. A description of the school district which took the program from a private school setting into a public school setting. It is important that one understand

the effect of the make-up of the total school district on the open education program. Certain characteristics of the school district such as wealth which allocated financial resources for the program, a stable population to remain rather fixed, a large school population which permitted children from a variety of backgrounds to attend the program and a school philosophy which allowed alternative programs to develop all provided the climate necessary for the program to come into being.

2. An analysis of the many meetings held between the school board and the private school concerning the movement of the school into the public school setting.
3. An analysis of the private school program as it operated over a two-year period.
4. An analysis of the decision of the parents who had children in the program.
5. An analysis of the steps which were necessary prior to the beginning of the open classroom program in the public schools. This will include the selection of teachers, securing materials and locating the classrooms for the program.

a. Analysis of the Public School District

The school district represents a geographical area of eighty square miles. It is composed of a city of 12,000 population, a village of 5,000 and a number of independent townships. The total population, as of the 1970 census, is approximately 24,000.

Politically the area is conservative. Change does not take place easily. Economically, the area follows a continuum from low income to high income.

The state equalized valuation for the school district for the 1976-1977 school year is 193 million dollars or on a per pupil basis, 31,000 dollars. This places the school district above most other districts in wealth primarily because of a substantial industrial tax base. There are approximately one hundred diversified industries within the district ranging from small businesses employing only a dozen or less people to large companies employing several hundred. Employment is steady, work stoppages are few and the general business climate is good inspite of the present economic situation.

The school district offers a kindergarten through twelfth grade program for 6,000 students. A community education program serves the needs of young children through senior citizens. A Title I program provides services for children from lower-socio-economic families through a preschool program for children under five and a program for children in the elementary school utilizing guidance counselors and teacher aids. Special education programs are also available. There are two private schools serving five hundred students in a kindergarten through ninth grade program. About 40 percent of all graduating seniors pursue some form of higher education.

The school district in 1973 established a citizens' group to develop goals for the education program. Ten equally important goals, which in theory represented the direction in which the school district would move were adopted by the school board. These goals were:

1. Positive Self-Image. To know one's present abilities and have a desire to improve them. To have personal goals, and a desire to achieve them. To feel that one is loved and valued by others. To have respect for one's self. To believe that by one's own efforts, one can alter circumstances.
2. Desire to Learn. To wish to learn on one's own initiative about a variety of ideas and issues by many methods. To wish to become a more skillful learner.
3. Learning Skills. To be progressively better able to communicate (receive, comprehend, and transmit ideas) through the use of all senses, as well as written and spoken language. To have the ability to handle mathematical operations and concepts. To be able to apply rational intellectual processes to the identification, consideration, and solution of problems. To become increasingly proficient in learning how to learn.
4. Creativity. To possess skills of creative thinking and acting. To feel free to explore independently situations or problems that are new and different.
5. Self-Discipline. To be capable of self-direction. To be able to set goals and be willing to work toward those

goals. To control concentration and temper and avoid impractical commitments.

6. Honesty. To become progressively honorable in principles, intentions, and actions. To be fair, just, sincere, free of deceit or fraud; and not subtle, tricky, or beguiling.

7. Tolerance. To have love and respect for fellowmen, and the ability and willingness to accept differences. To be able to examine with respect and an open mind without prejudging behavior patterns and value systems that stem from other cultures and subcultures. To be able to listen with compassion and give serious consideration to differing personal opinions, and not generalize about the worth and capabilities of others who might differ in race, religion, or culture.

8. Morality. To adhere to a set of values based upon the worth and dignity of each human being, with emphasis upon the examination of values and value conflicts, rather than upon the indoctrination of specific values. In order that effective citizens and concerned human beings will develop, students must think about moral issues. Students must be encouraged to build their own set of values which they can bring to bear on the issues of the times. Students should be able to justify their personal sets of values as rational and logical.

9. Social Awareness and Concern. To realize that problems exist and be willing to help solve them through individual

participation. To be concerned and involved in the functioning of society through questioning, studying, comparing and evaluating. Students should be aware of man's impact on his environment, the barrenness of the lives of many, and of what their role can be to help alleviate problems.

10. Physical Fitness. To attain basic coordination skills and basic health knowledge, leading to maximum physical potential and understanding of health, to enrich leisure and recreation through enjoyable programs.

It is interesting to note that the Eighth Annual Gallup poll of the public's attitudes towards the public schools as reported in the October, 1976 issue of the Phi Delta Kappan magazine points out that those qualities most important in the development of a child as indicated by those responding were in order of importance:

1. learning to think for oneself
2. ability to get along with others
3. willingness to accept responsibility
4. high moral standards
5. eagerness to learn
6. desire to excel

As can be seen many of the school district goals such as a desire to learn, honesty, tolerance and morality were also listed in the Gallup poll. Through a Title III project concerned with school accountability, methods were developed to implement these goals and to assess the school district's program in meeting them.

A change in administration resulted in the employment of a new school superintendent who supported building autonomy, alternative schools and schools of choice for children and their parents. This change contributed to the climate necessary for the development of the open education program.

b. Analysis of the Private School Open Education Program

The private school open education program needs to be analyzed since it represents the start of the open program within the school district. Briefly, the school began in September of 1971. It was certified by the State Board of Education and lasted for a two-year period at which time in September of 1973 it became a part of the public schools.

The school began through the actions of two parent groups which joined together. One group had children within the local district while another group came from a neighboring school area. Initially twenty families were involved. This gave the school an enrollment of twenty-two children, which was later increased to twenty-five. The range of the program was kindergarten through sixth grade with chronological ages of five through thirteen.

One classroom was rented from a local church and all students were instructed within this one room. Most materials, such as books, magazines, paper, pencils, desks, ditto machine and other items were donated by the parents. Materials which could not be donated were purchased but because

of the very limited budget only those materials especially needed, such as ditto paper, ditto masters, and special writing paper were ever purchased. In general, almost all materials which were used were donated to the school.

Finances to support the school came from tuition of approximately $500 per year per student. Parents who could not pay this tuition were asked to pay what they could and some families paid no tuition. This was a critical period for the school because initially no one knew how much money would be available. In the end, one reason for the termination of the program was financial.

A certified teacher was hired by the parents for the first year. The salary was low compared to that of public school teachers. Although the teacher enjoyed the students and worked hard, a problem immediately arose as to what the program should be. The teacher, whose experience was with traditional education, saw the program as allowing the children to do only what they wanted while the parents, who each had different ideas about the program, either saw the program as not structured enough, or were pleased with the way it was operating. Also, parents who worked in the program on a regular basis at times supported the teacher and at other times did not. Although five to six meetings were held between the teacher and parents, the problem of the direction in which the program should move continued. Differences still existed between some parents and the teacher and between groups of parents. The program lacked strong leadership to pull it

together. This became another reason for the discontinuation of the program.

The program was essentially academic with emphasis on math, reading, and spelling. It was individualized and a variety of methods and materials were used. As mentioned previously, children were given free choice as to what they would do, when they would do it and how fast they would proceed. In addition to the subjects above, a variety of materials were available which allowed students to move into areas of science, social studies, writing, history, language arts, and other learning areas. Field trips were arranged, special activities planned, and guest speakers scheduled to talk with the children about their special areas of interest, such as government, medical services, and teaching.

Although the area of finances still presented serious problems and the relationship between some parents and the teacher still remained poor, the program at the end of the first year was considered somewhat successful based upon the continued interest of parents in enrolling their children in the program.

However, during the summer, the group of parents from the neighboring school district decided to start their own program within their own district. The need to drive their children to the present school, a considerable distance, was the major reason for this decision and not any philosophical differences. By the end of the summer, thirteen families remained with eighteen students in the program.

The second year of the program began in September of 1972. It was housed in the same location and staffed by the same teacher. Problems of financing still persisted and the lack of program direction remained. The program continued to operate as it previously had the first year.

In January, the teacher left the program due to illness. The teaching position was filled by several parent volunteers. It was not until March that a new teacher was employed. The teacher began to give some direction to the program, some structure to the classroom, and related to the parents in a more positive manner. It was also at this point that the parents began to explore with the public schools the possibility of incorporating the program into the system. A variety of reasons were given for this decision but essentially they were: a poor financial base, inadequate funds for materials, inability to keep a teacher, a feeling by the parents that they should not and could not run the program, and a decrease in enrollment.

c. Analysis of Parent Meetings

The transition of the open school program from the private sector to the local public school program can be seen through an analysis of the meetings which were held between the private school parents and the public school board of education and administration.

A number of meetings were held at various times beginning in March of 1973. The first few meetings were between the school superintendent and parents. They were essentially

informational meetings and gave both groups a chance to exchange issues of concern. This period of time also allowed the superintendent the opportunity to discuss with the board of education the open education program. At the beginning of May a meeting was held involving the total board and all the parents from the open education program as well as other interested parties. At this meeting the board of education presented their conditions for the open program to come into their system. These conditions were:

1. The program would not cost any more per pupil than other "regular" elementary school classrooms.
2. The school would not provide transportation.
3. Children from the entire school district would be eligible.
4. A parent committee would be established. It would work with the administration in selecting students and selecting teachers. In the selection of teachers the parent committee would recommend teachers to the superintendent.
5. The pilot project would consist of classrooms operating within the concept of open education.
6. Teacher aids and student teachers would supplement the professional staff.

The parents in turn offered their conditions which were:

1. A meeting of parents would be held and they would elect five of their members to serve on a parent advisory committee to the program and board of education.

2. The committee would work with the administration in advertising for and contacting teacher candidates. The committee would interview the recommended candidates and present a recommendation to the board of education. The board would make the final decision on accepting or rejecting the recommendations.
3. The parent committee would hold periodic meeting with (a) other parents, (b) the teachers, and (c) the administration.
4. The parent committee would make recommendations to the teacher and administration concerning all operational aspects of the program.
5. The parent committee would appoint subcommittees of parents which would handle administrative tasks for the classrooms such as field trip arrangements, learning center development, materials procurement, evaluation, coordination of aides and other such tasks.
6. Finally, the family of each student in an open classroom would make a commitment of two hours per week to help with the program. The volunteer activity would range from helping students in learning tasks to supervising field trip activities and developing learning materials.

As can be seen, both the board and the parents had similar ideas especially in regards to the duties of the parents in selecting teachers and working in the program. The parents recognized the board's responsibility to the total school district. Their main concern was that the

board would commit itself to the open education philosophy in regards to the program. This commitment on the board's part was made easier by the fact that the parents were already in the program and they were committed to placing their children in it.

On June 5, 1973, the board of education approved the operation of a pilot program in open education. Following this approval, additional parent meetings were held on June 14 and August 2. The purpose of the June 14 meeting was to answer any further questions that parents might have, to gain more information about the selection of students and to select a committee of parents to help in the interviewing of teachers. The committee was selected by the parents attending the meeting. Additional items included the further exploration of the parent role during the school year and those skills and attitudes parents would like represented in the classroom teacher.

The August 2 meeting was different from all others. Its sole purpose was for the parents to gain enough information and feeling about each other so they could more effectively vote for the parent advisory committee. A resource person was brought in from a university to work with the parents. Activities included having each parent write a statement about his expectations for the program, having each parent interview another parent whom he did not know in order to become better acquainted and conducting group sessions during which parents shared their feelings about the program.

This was a valuable experience for a number of reasons. First, it assisted parents in getting to know other parents better. Second, it helped the building principal to better assess the feelings and concerns of the parents as their children were getting ready to enter the program. Finally, this meeting created within the parent group a sense of unity, belonging, and a common cause which during the first year helped the program to be the success that it was.

Parent meetings continued throughout the school year. They were a necessary and enjoyable part of the program and were an excellent means of involving the parents in program development.

d. Parents' Reasons for Choosing the Open Education Program

There were a variety of reasons given by parents for placing their children in the open school program. First, several parents were unhappy with their child's program in the traditional classroom. They saw the program as too structured, the teacher as unable to meet their child's needs, the text and workbooks as uninteresting and the general climate of the room as unsuitable for proper learning. Whether these were legitimate reasons or not, they were sufficient enough in the eyes of the parents to place their children in the open program. If attempts were made in the traditional classroom to change these perceptions, they were not successful.

Two, several parents had children in the traditional program who were experiencing moderate to severe academic

problems, such as poor reading skills and low math achievement. Some perceived this as an outgrowth of the traditional classroom while others saw their children's problem and felt that a change in a classroom would assist the children and the parents in working out a solution. It is important to note at this point that one of the real dangers in developing a new program for this reason is that parents see the program as an answer to their child's problem when in fact it is not. One must be careful not to place children in the program for this reason because of the danger of harming the purposes of the program. Like any other new program, the open classroom is not the place for all children having difficulties in school.

Another reason given by parents was that their children were not receiving enough learning experiences within the classroom such as in the areas of social studies, science and creative writing. This is a difficult reason to analyze because what one parent considered a learning experience was not a learning experience to another. What one teacher created as a learning experience was not what the parent saw as one. Therefore, the problem was more philosophical than practical. It did not lend itself to concrete examples. It did, however, allow parents who were unhappy to find an alternative choice for their child.

Four, many parents criticized the emphasis placed on learning "by the book." They saw their child's education being directed by the material and not by the child's

interests. Almost all of the parents felt this way. In examining the traditional classrooms from which their children came the criticism tended to be valid.

Five, many parents did not like the emphasis placed on testing in the traditional program. They felt that there was too much teacher-made and standardized testing, that the testing was not valid, that it was placing pressure on their children, that it was hurting them emotionally and that the testing results did not communicate to them how their child was doing. As will be noted later, the whole question of testing within the open classroom was a difficult one for the board of education and the parents of the open education program.

The structure of the traditional classroom was another reason parents placed their children in the open program. A number of parents did not appreciate their children spending most of their day at desks which were all in straight rows. They did not believe a child should always be required to ask permission when he wanted to do something or that a child should be doing what all other children were doing at a certain time.

Seven, many parents disliked the teacher's methods of instruction. They saw the group lecture method as unprofitable and unworkable. As far as they were concerned, their children were being deprived of many educational experiences and of the freedom to work with other children in a learning situation.

A rather unusual reason given by parents was that they had read an article on open education and wanted their child to experience it as a program. As the first year of the program progressed, many of these parents became its best supporters because of the fact that even when the program did not turn out as expected, they were flexible enough to change with it. They believed their child could have a better education and receive more learning experiences within the open classroom.

Nine, parents felt that they would have more to say about their child's education in the open classroom. The many meetings held for the parents and the encouragement parents received to become involved in the program supported this feeling.

A final reason parents sent their children to the program was a combination of several events which took place within the district which increased interest in open education. Because of a Title III project several well-known educators such as Dwight Allen and Edward Pino were brought in as guest speakers. In addition, a twelve-week program was made available to teachers and parents concerned with open education. Many attended this program which helped to create a climate of interest within the school district.

e. Analysis of Steps Necessary to Bring the Open Program into the Public Schools

The steps that were necessary to begin the open classroom in the public school system were many and varied. The

most important step was the selection of two teachers for the classrooms followed by finding a location for the program, securing materials and selecting children.

The selection of teachers began in the middle of July. A procedure was used whereby a parent committee made recommendations to the building principal based upon their feelings following an interview with each candidate. The building principal also interviewed each candidate. Following the completion of interviews by both the parents and principal, two candidates were selected. A recommendation was then made to the superintendent and two candidates were hired for the school year.

The selection of the two teachers was an important step because for the most part the success or failure of the program would depend on their teaching. The building principal and parent committee believed this too, and in their report to the superintendent the opening paragraph stated:

> We believe it is important to acknowledge that the pilot program in open education will undoubtedly be a learning experience for all involved. Credentials and past experiences will not necessarily have prepared the teachers for the novelties of open classroom teaching. The usually ascribed roles of parent, teacher, principal, and pupil will not necessarily fit the situation in and surrounding the open classroom. In general, all parties may find that they must relinquish certain kinds of control they have found dear in order to deal with other persons in a genuinely reciprocal way.[3]

Among the many qualifications considered in selecting the teachers was the philosophical and personal

commitments of each to the open education philosophy, to the children that would be in the program, to the parents, and to the teaching profession. Other criteria which were used concerned the previous training and experiences of the candidates, their university course work, their professional plans for the future, their general appearance and presentation during the interview and their letters of recommendation.

The interviewing parties examined how the two teachers would complement each other. One of the teachers had a strong background in working with kindergarten through third grade children and had moved toward open education out of a desire for autonomy and responsibility as a teacher. The second teacher, although lacking in teaching experience, had a strong desire to work with children and had moved toward open education out of a sense that students must not endure the kind of schooling that the teacher as a student had experienced.

To facilitate the ability of the teachers to support and learn from each other, the teachers were appointed with joint responsibility for the program. They would work together as co-equals in planning and preparation for the program as a whole. To facilitate the ability of teachers and parents to support and learn from each other, the parents were encouraged to regard admission of their child to the program as expressive of a commitment to learn about open education.

To facilitate the ability of the two open classroom teachers and the building principal to support and learn from each other, a spirit of cooperation was encouraged along with a desire to make the program a successful experience.

The selection of a location for the program was the next step. The criteria for this selection are:

1. Both rooms needed to be next to each other with a work area common to both between them.
2. The rooms would, to the extent possible, be located in an area of the building which lent itself to some privacy since many activities would be going on outside the classroom. Although the program did not want to be a separate part of the school building, it did need some privacy so as not to disturb the other classrooms.
3. The classrooms themselves needed to be of such a size and design that they lent themselves to the design and structure of the open classroom.
4. The program would be located in an area of the school district where bus transportation was available for all children. Although parents were told they may need to transport their children, attempts were made to locate the rooms in a school where a special education program was located so the open classroom students could use the special education bus runs. This did work out and several children who would not have attended the program because of transportation were able to do so.

The rooms finally selected were located in an elementary school which had several vacant rooms, a special education program and a supportive building administrator. The rooms were of adequate size, located at the end of a long hallway and connected by a common work room and coat room. The hallway in front of the classrooms was large enough to be used by the children and was far enough away from the traditional classrooms so as not to interrupt them.

The selection of materials and supplies for the program was a difficult job because both rooms had none. Because money was limited and expenditures could not exceed those of other programs, it was necessary to allocate funds for special items only. All other items would need to be donated or taken from other schools where they were not being used. Tables, chairs, teacher's desks, file cabinets, etc., were all taken from other rooms and schools. The teachers brought in many materials which they had previously used. Several parents who worked for companies selling school materials were able to obtain donations such as a variety of science materials, a math learning center, a woodworking center, and a mimeograph machine along with two typewriters. Several families in the community donated books, magazines, newspapers, and literary items. Parents of children in the program made learning centers, games, and assisted in the general set-up of the room. Several items such as reading kits, books, paper, and pencils were purchased.

Because the open classroom lent itself to the use of many materials, donations were very much welcomed. They added to the structure of the program and helped to point out the fact that when starting a program like this, it need not be an expensive undertaking.

f. Recruitment of Students

Students who came into the program in September were from the entire school district. Three children were from a neighboring district and their parents were required to pay tuition. Eighteen of the children had been in the private school the previous year. When school opened in September, fifty-four children were enrolled.

Parents became aware of the program through a number of sources. First, several articles appeared in the newspaper and on the radio which gave information about the many meetings which were held. Second, parents heard about the program through other parents. Third, parents became aware of the program through other teachers who felt their child would do well in such a program. Finally, the various workshops held in the district also brought information to the parents.

If parents had any concern about their children and the program they were encouraged to seek out answers. If these doubts remained they were encouraged to think seriously about not enrolling their child unless they were certain about the program. One of the critical questions most

parents asked was, "How would my child feel about leaving his neighborhood school and friends and attending this program?" At that time no one really knew. Because the teachers and principal were aware of the possibility of this problem, steps were taken so as to overcome it. Children were given the opportunity to visit the room and teacher prior to the beginning of school, parents rode the buses with the children, especially the younger ones, and if need be, the parents remained in the classroom. As a result, this was not a serious problem.

The program as a whole tended to attract children from middle to upper income families. The reasons seem to be that these families were more aware of this type of education and that many previously placed their children in the private program.

Many procedures were required in order to bring the open program into the public schools. It was necessary to fit these procedures within the framework of the community, the school district, and the private school. Had this not happened, the program probably would not have become a part of the school system. It was an easy step to simply label a program as open and then to hire a teacher. It was a difficult step to develop a real open program with teachers who supported it and were willing to spend extra time building it.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

[1]Roland Barth, Open Education and the American School, New York, Agathon Press, 1972, pp. 176-177.

[2]Ibid., p. 178.

[3]Open Classroom Parent Screening Committee, "Open Class Teacher Selection Report", July 1974.

CHAPTER III

THE BEGINNINGS OF OPEN EDUCATION

Open education is a way of thinking about children, about learning and about knowledge. Learning is dependent on the child. Knowledge is the child's personal capacity to confront and handle new experiences successfully. Children are encouraged to have an openness of self and an openness with other children and adults.

Open education has a variety of historical roots. Students of open education refer back to the accounts of progressive education during the 1920's and 1930's and to the writing of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Montessori, Troebel, and Dewey for support of the open education philosophy. Contemporary writers such as Piaget, Bruner, Holt, Featherstone, Kohl, and Heendon also lend support to the philosophy and practices of open education.

Some people look at the practices of open education as a return to the so-called "one room schoolhouse." There were limitations with this type of organization: teacher turnover was high, teacher quality was low, materials were in short supply and there was limited interaction for older children and little help for those with special needs.

The foundation of open classroom practice began in England in the British Infant Schools. During the 1930's and 1940's, several events occurred which began to change people's thinking about how education could or should be structured. The first event was the Hadow Report: A Report on the Consultative Committee on the Primary School, which advocated a curriculum based upon activity and experience rather than the acquisition of factual knowledge alone. This report was written to bring into proper perspective the development of informal education in the British school system prior to the 1940's. The second event was World War II which forced teachers to use whatever materials were available and to teach in many different situations.

The changing ideas about education in England found their expression in the Plowden Report which focused on informal practices in large numbers of infant and junior schools. This study was an official commitment to active methods of learning based upon the theories of Issacs, Bruner, and Piaget. It also stressed the importance of play as an integral part of learning for young children. With the publication of this report in 1967, there was considerable interest in similar educational reform in the United States. This movement was given emphasis by a shift from the behavioristic view of learning toward the developmental point of view articulated by theorists such as Bruner and Piaget.

By the mid 1960's critics in the United States such as Holt, Kozol, and Silberman had made a public issue of the failure of traditional schools to provide for the needs of a large segment of the school population. At the university level, individuals responsible for teacher training programs investigated the concept of the "open classroom." Such a university was the University of North Dakota under the direction of Vito Perrone.

At the local school level, Lillian Weber's Open Corridor program in a number of elementary schools in New York City called for making changes within the old system and within the old buildings in small, carefully worked out steps using the corridor, for example, as learning space. Her goal was to create a community of classrooms and teachers. At the secondary level, a store front school was created in New York City called Harlem Prep. Its major aim was to provide a school program for the "drop-outs" and "push-outs" from the city's schools using the open school model. Independent schools like Shady Hills in Massachusetts and Prospect School in Vermont provided an alternative for those who could afford it.

The Assumptions about Open Education

There is no blueprint or set of specifications for developing, establishing, and organizing an open classroom. There are certain assumptions about learning which underlie open education as discussed by Barth, Nyquist, and Perrone. The assumptions which form the foundation of open education

are many and varied. Each represents an unique look at open education and assists in defining this movement.

The first assumption is concerned with how children learn. Open education views the child as an active person in his own learning process. Rathbone emphasized this by stating that the child:

> . . . is one who by his own volition causes things to happen. Learning is seen as the result of his own self-initiated interaction with the world. The child's understanding grows during a constant interplay between something outside himself--the general environment and something inside himself--his concept-forming mechanism, his mind.[1]

The child learns from direct experience. He needs the freedom to explore many varied activities. Froebel demonstrated that children use play as a learning vehicle. Montessori called upon educators to know the importance of materials and surroundings for structuring the learning of young children. John Dewey defined the process of educating children as the reconstruction of experience. Piaget concluded that education becomes more important when it recognizes that the individual's interaction with his environment is indispensable to his cognitive development. Thus in the open classroom, the child is seen as an active participant in his learning process. He can and does learn through his interaction with materials, other students and his teacher.

The second assumption is concerned with what the child learns whether it be in reading, math, science, or social studies. Advocates of open education see learning

in these many subject areas as individualistic. What one person learns may or may not be important for another person to learn. Other advocates have felt that knowledge is not inherently ordered or structured. Rathbone expressed it best by saying:

> Open education sees a fundamental independence of each learner from all others, from all would-be assistants, such as teachers and parents, and from all codified knowledge as it exists.[2]

It is important that within the open classroom what a child learns and understands depends to a great extent on his own individualistic exploration of his environment.

A third assumption concerns a perspective of the school itself as an institution. Open education views the school as a social institution with its primary goal being the facilitation of learning for children on an individual basis. To accomplish this goal, the school should develop many situations through which a child can learn in a pleasant and fulfilling manner. Rathbone comments:

> The function of the school is to encourage exploration, to help children acquire competence at self-selected tasks, to facilitate in short, children's learning to learn.[3]

Within the open classroom the child is given the freedom of choice in the content and sequence of learning. He sets his own value judgments and style for developing these judgments. By providing group interest centers, children learn to play together, to work cooperatively on projects and to develop values related to social learning. From these interest centers and through relationships with others,

it is hoped that the child will begin to develop the ability to make generalizations and eventually form abstractions in the effective and cognitive domains.

A fourth assumption concerns the psycho-emotional climate of the open classroom. Bathbone suggests that the atmosphere of the open classroom be:

> . . . a place of trust and openness, where interpersonal defensiveness have nearly disappeared, where expression of feeling is encouraged by others and accepted by the group. Feelings are aired freely as inhibitions are loosened and people become more and more receptive to honest observations of themselves, their own motives and the behavior motives of others.[4]

A number of factors create this atmosphere. There are no rigid goals for each child. Those goals which are developed by the teacher and/or student serve only as guide lines to be followed. Competition is kept at a minimum. It is difficult to be aggressive and competitive when everyone is doing something different. A wide variety of talent and ability is found in the open classroom. A five year old child may work with an older child on a certain project and his peers in another task. The teacher looks at errors as a normal part of the learning process. One cannot expect a child to learn something when fear of failure inhibits him from completing a task.

The Characteristics of Open Education

Having defined open education by its assumptions, it is necessary to turn to another method of definition by examining some common characteristics of open education.

One, open education approaches learning in such a way that as Smith explains:

> The question isn't to decide whether children should have fun or whether they should learn--the question is how do you insure that children learn while they are doing things that they enjoy and increase their knowledge.[5]

Two, open education is centered around the child. The child, rather than the teacher or the text books, becomes the focal point of his own learning. In past practices the child was made to fit the books he used or the style of the teacher he had at a particular time. Open education is based on a respect for childhood in its own right and is built upon the ability of the teacher to trust the child's own desire to learn. Children develop at different rates and levels. The young child, not having unforeseen psychological problems, does not distinguish between play and work. As the young child matures the distinction between play and work is still not the same as it is for adults.

Three, open education gives children the freedom they need in making selections, in deciding what to do and how to do it. The program is flexible and individualization is encouraged.

Four, open education is designed along informal lines. The relationship between student and teacher is relaxed and cordial. It is based upon a mutual respect which allows open interaction. Children are free to express their feelings as is the teacher. Within the classroom children may work

as one large group, several small groups or on an individual basis.

Finally, open education is a highly structured program. Although it allows the child to make choices, it does not allow the child to do only what he wants to do. The structure itself is based upon the total classroom with its individual guidance, informal atmosphere, materials, and learning centers.

As can be seen, open education is not easily defined, for it is not a specific set of rules and regulations nor a special philosophy. Open education examines the child first and then develops a curriculum based on the child's needs, interests, and desires. Open education looks at the teacher as a guide who helps the child progress through the program. Finally, open education, realizing the differences in children, uses a variety of materials which meet the many needs of children. Nyquist and Hawes refer to open education as an approach to teaching:

> . . . that discards the familiar elementary classroom setup and the traditional stylized roles of teachers and pupils for a much freer, more informal, highly structured child centered learning experience.[6]

An analysis of the current status of open education indicates that only a small percentage of classrooms in the United States can be described as open.

The Learning Experience in the Open Education Program

A third method of defining open education is to analyze the learning experience. The contrast between the

traditional view of the learning experience and the open classroom view is illustrated in two models offered by Barth.

Transmission of Knowledge Model

K → C → A → S

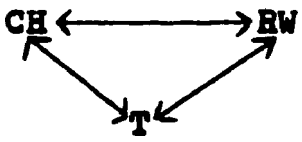
K--Accumulated body of knowledge

C--Curriculum--selected portions of "K" which are considered crucial and appropriate for children to know

A--Agent who transmits "C" to students. This may be a teacher, but could be a written program, tape, or movie.

S--Student--receiver of pre-selected "K"

Open Education Model



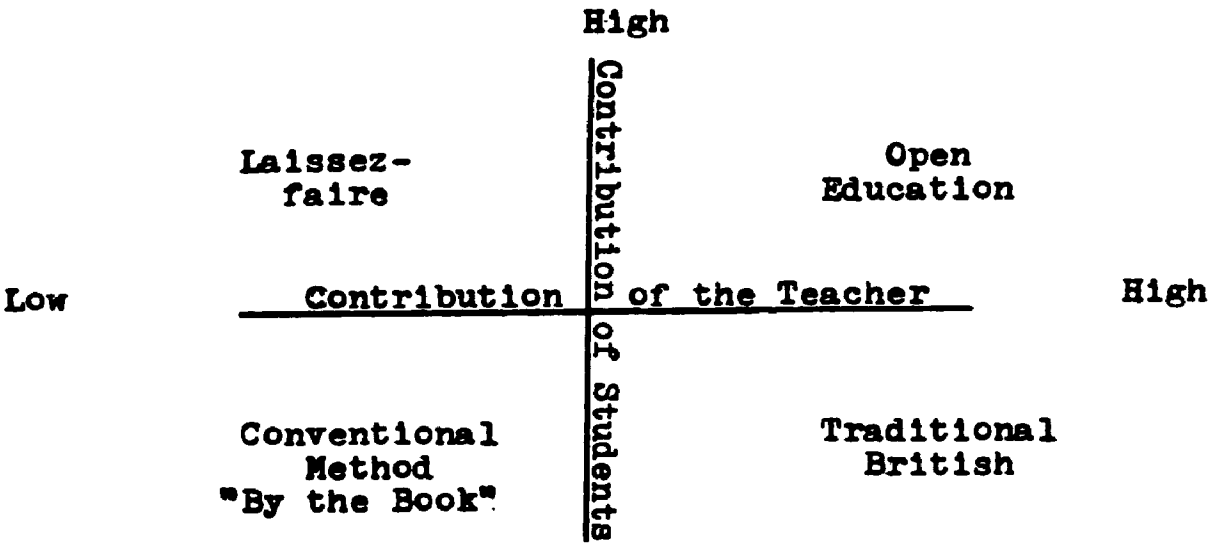
CH--Child--principle agent of his own learning

RW--Real World--learning is seen as a consequence of the interaction between the child and the real world

T--Teacher--provides the conditions which will make the child's active exploration of the real world both likely and fruitful.[7]

These theories are reflected in new definitions of the roles which the child and the teacher are to play in the classroom. Bussis and Chittenden[8] using a classification scheme illustrate the teacher-child role. It indicates the

need for both teacher and child to determine the selection and direction of learning activities.



The theories of open classrooms are reflected in learning environments which are characterized by:

1. An ever changing variety of materials. Many are scrap materials and only a portion of them are printed materials. If it is assumed that learning is an individualistic process involving significant elements of choice, then it is necessary to have at hand a wide variety of materials.
2. If learning is seen as a process of acting upon things in the environment, effective learning materials are those which can be acted upon in an infinite variety of ways.
3. An informal atmosphere prevails. Movement about the room is necessary in order to obtain materials.

4. Pace and scheduling are determined as little as possible by arbitrary time schedules and as much as possible by the nature of the work people are engaged in.
5. The room is relatively noisy. The exchange of ideas and communication with others are assumed to be an important part of the learning process and not a detraction from it.

The Research Concerning the Open Education Program

Available research on open education seems to fall into two general categories. These are descriptive studies, which attempt to find ways to define or identify open classroom practice and its important characteristics, and evaluative studies, which attempt to determine the effects of open classroom practices in regard to achievement, attitudes, self-concept and other areas thought to be important aspects of the educational process.

Descriptive Studies

The descriptive studies defined the behaviors of pupils and teachers in the open classroom that are distinctive or different from the behavior of those pupils in the traditional classroom. Organizational patterns of the open classroom and specific characteristics of the open classroom which distinguish it from the traditional classroom were also investigated in these studies.

Descriptive Studies--British Schools

There is considerable agreement on pupil behavior found in the open classrooms. Particular aspects of this behavior were increased pupil interaction, more movement about the room, spontaneous or informal groupings of pupils, and independent work with less teacher direction. Brandt[9] in the infant school found that children in the open classroom were more likely to be involved in divergent tasks while children in the traditional classrooms were more likely to be engaged in convergent tasks. Brandt also found, when contrasting the time spent in free play versus the time spent in academics, that in the open classroom half the children's time was spent in what he characterized as free play activities. However, Stephens[10] in the primary school found that the majority of the open classroom children spent their time in academics (math, reading, and writing) while only 18 percent of their time was spent on play activities. Two reasons may account for the differences in these studies. First, the observations were made in different settings and with different age groups. Second, the fact that one observer recorded almost three times as much play as the other may be a reflection of a broader definition of what constitutes play as opposed to academic work and whether the two can ever be considered mutually exclusive categories.

Teacher behavior in various studies consistently reveals that teachers do have a strong role in the open classroom. Stephens found that teachers exercise considerable

authority on decision making while Brandt described the expectations and standards which those teachers regularly enforced. Gardner[11] in studying the infant and nursery school open programs, found that teachers are most concerned about providing intellectual stimulation and adding to children's knowledge and skill, which tends to support Stephens' findings that the three "R's" are not as neglected in the open classroom as some may think.

An additional theme regarding teacher behavior is the concern for the social and emotional climate. Brandt found teachers to be doing less telling and more listening and questioning.

Descriptive Studies--American Schools

The nature of the diagnostic evaluation process and its relationship to instruction was a finding in various research projects. Evaluation in the open classroom tended to be based upon the observation and personal contact (Walberg and Thomas)[12] rather than on standardized measures. Evaluation also was of a personal rather than of a comparative nature. Open classroom instruction as distinguished from traditional instruction tended to be individualized and to emphasize subject matter integration.

There is an inconsistency in the findings in that while teachers do exercise considerable authority both in their expectations and in decision making, yet they are described as doing less telling and more questioning and

listening. This inconsistency is revealing of the open classroom's method of operation. Open classroom teachers appear to be functioning in a manner described by progressive educators from the time of John Dewey to the current work of the Educational Development Center in Newton, Massachusetts, which stresses the input of the teacher in providing guidance and direction for learning.

Flexibility and diversity are the two distinguishing elements of the open classroom revealed by the above studies. Tuckman[13] based upon his observations, found more flexible use of space in the open classroom while Walberg[14] using an observation rating scale, found that such rooms could be distinguished by the variety of instructional materials.

Evaluative Studies--United States

In contrast to the general accord of the descriptive studies, the evaluative studies are characterized by considerable disagreement and inconsistency. Scheirer[15] used the Stanford Achievement Test as a measure of academic achievement in his study of one open classroom school and five "traditional schools." Crandall[16] did find that mean gain scores in reading did favor open classroom girls, although it was not significant. In the infant school study, she found no clear-cut indications of superior achievement in the open classroom group except that students in the open classrooms tended to be slightly better in reading.

Crandall studied 188 first grade students who attended six open concept classes and six more formal classes.

There is some evidence that open classroom children view school and teachers more positively (Ruedi[17] and Tuckman[18]) but Crandall found no significant differences in attitudes toward reading and Corlis[19] found that the openness of the program is not significantly related to curiosity behavior.

There is also some evidence (Goldupp[20]) that open classroom children have more internal control and behave better in their teacher's absence than do students in a traditional classroom and that at the junior high level they are superior in the neatness, care, and skill with which they do their work.

Evaluative Studies--British

The investigations of children's thought processes provide some conflicting evidence. Gardner[21] found junior high school level children in the open classroom superior in thinking and remembering and found infant school level children superior in concentration, listening, remembering, and ingenuity. Also, Tuckman found that open classroom children have more positive self-appraisals.

The Problems and Weaknesses in Open Education Research

It is difficult to underestimate the problems involved in studies which attempt to measure or quantify an idea like

the open classroom or what contributes to a definition of a warm or flexible or traditional teacher. There is a need for more descriptive studies so that these may be used in evaluative studies so that one is sure what one wants to study one is actually studying.

A major weakness of many studies is their failure to define open and traditional classrooms. This is probably because of the difficulty in developing a comprehensive definition of open education. The basic problem, as Chittenden and Bussis point out, is that:

> . . . the term (open education) refers to a set of assumptions about human learning which is all too easy to buy as a label without understanding the underlying premises.[22]

Walburg and Thomas[23] in developing an operational definition of open education indicated that open programs differed from traditional in meeting individual differences, humanness, diagnosis of student needs, instructional programming, and evaluation of the work undertaken by students.

Another weakness of the studies was the lack of random sampling, although most tried to provide matched groups. This lack of random sampling may be due to the small number of children available to study as indicated by Brandt, Kohler,[24] and others.

An additional weakness is that any sort of comparison is no better than the instrument one uses to make such a comparison. The large variety of instruments used in these studies raises the question as to whether there is any truly

valid measure of originality, internal control, self-concept, or the like.

Not to be overlooked are such factors as the Hawthorne effect, which may be present in any innovative program, and the unconscious bias that may result when those who support an idea attempt to investigate it.

Many of the instruments used do not adequately measure what it is that the open classroom advocates consider worth measuring. The open classroom advocates personal, individualistic measures rather than quantified, standardized measures. This makes comparison between open and traditional classrooms very difficult. There are, to some extent, irreconcilable differences between the traditional and the open classroom definition of what constitutes a valid measure of the success of a program.

Another major problem is that most existing measures for evaluating programs are traditionally oriented. Most studies consist of attempts to measure programs by traditional standards. At the present time, the Educational Testing Service is developing a research model[25] which allows for the evaluation of the open classroom based upon the child's work, his work habits, and his problem-solving abilities.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

[1]Charles Rathbone, The Open Education Classroom, School Book Service, New York, 1971, p. 100.

[2]Ibid., p. 100.

[3]Ibid., p. 104.

[4]Ibid., p. 108.

[5]Peter Smith, "Questions and Answers," K-Eight, March 1974, p. 19.

[6]Edward Nyquist and Gene Hawes, Open Education, Bantam Books, New York, 1973, p. 83.

[7]Roland Barth, Open Education and the American School, New York, Agathon Press, 1972, pp. 61-63.

[8]Anne Bussis and Edward Chittenden, "Analysis of an Approach to Education: Interim Report" (Princeton, Educational Testing Service.)

[9]Richard M. Brandt, "Three Weeks in the British Infant School," Current Research and Perspectives in Open Education (A Research Review from EKNE, American Association of Elementary, Kindergarten, and Nursery Education, Washington, D.C.)

[10]Lillian S. Stephens, "A Study of Aspects of Individualization in Informal British Primary Schools" (Ph. D. dissertation, New York University, 1972.)

[11]D. E. M. Gardner, Experiment and Tradition in Primary Schools, London, Methven & Company, 1966.

[12]Herbert J. Walberg and Susan Thomas, "Open Education: An Operational Definition and Validation in Great Britain and the United States," American Educational Research Journal 9 (Spring 1972): 197-208.

[13]Bruce Tuckman, "Evaluating the Open Classroom" (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, February, 1973.)

[14]Walberg and Thomas, "Open Education: An Operational Definition and Validation in Great Britain and the United States," pp. 197-208.

[15]Mary Ann Scheirer, "A Study of the Effects of Open Classroom Education on Children's Achievement, Self-Concept, and Attitudes" (Thesis, Binghamton, State University of New York.)

[16]Audrey Crandall, "A Comparison of Reading Attitudes and Reading Achievement Among First Grade Children in Open Concept and More Formal Classes" (Ph.D. dissertation, Storrs, University of Connecticut, 1973.)

[17]Jane Ruedi and Charles K. West, "Pupil Self-Concept in the Open School and in a Traditional School" (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.)

[18]Bruce Tuckman, "Evaluating the Open Classroom" (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, February 1973.)

[19]Carol Corlis, "Curiosity and Openness: Empirical Testing of a Basic Assumption" (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, February 1973.)

[20]Ocea Goldupp, "An Investigation of Independent Child Behavior in the Open Classroom: The Classroom Attitude Observation Schedule" (Arizona University, Tuscon, Arizona, Center for Educational Research and Development, October 1972.)

[21]D. E. M. Gardner, Experiment and Tradition in Primary Schools.

[22]Edward Chittenden and Anne Bussis, "Alternative Paradigms in Educational Evaluation: A Position Statement" (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, October 1974.)

[23]Walberg and Thomas, "Open Education: An Operational Definition and Validation in Great Britain and the United States, pp. 197-208.

[24]Terrence Kohler, "A Comparison of Open and Traditional Education: Conditions that Promote Self-Concept" (Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, 1972.)

[25]Edward Chittenden and Anne Bussis, "Alternative Paradigms in Educational Evaluation: A Position Statement" (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, October 1974.)

CHAPTER IV

THE BEGINNING OF THE OPEN EDUCATION PROGRAM WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The second section of this case study examines the open program from its beginning in the public school through its second year. The first major area to address is the curriculum itself. Two specific area, math and reading, are cited for special attention. Following this, attention will be directed at room location and arrangement, scheduling, record keeping, field trips, special teachers, and visitors.

The Curriculum of the Open Education Program

Hughes, as quoted in Silberman, listed three purposes for the curriculum of the open classroom. First, the curriculum should emphasize the development of a child's language so that he talks freely and comfortably. Second, the curriculum should help the child to develop skills involved in learning, processing information, solving problems and classifying and labeling. Finally, the curriculum should assist the child in the development of reading, writing, and math skills. Hughes went on to state that:

> Each of these objectives requires a change not only in curriculum, but in teaching methods and classroom organization as well, for each requires a degree and kind of individualization not possible in the conventional classroom.[1]

Perrone points out that open education moves away from the belief that subjects are divided into specific areas such as math, reading, science, social studies, art, and music. Rather, Perrone states:

> They (open education advocates) see the integration of learning, its wholeness, as an essential base for personalizing the educational process.[2]

Those skills which are considered fundamental such as reading and math are not learned in isolation, but as a part of the child's natural experiences. The child is stimulated to learn the basic skills because they are related to his own interest.

The open education program did not require that any specific body of knowledge needed to be known by all children. What is important to one child may not be to another. Because open classroom teachers believe that learning is child-centered and child-initiated, it is therefore difficult to require all children to do the same thing. Postman and Weingartner point out:

> There is no learning without a learner. And there is no meaning without a meaning maker. In order to survive in a world of rapid change there is nothing more worth knowing, for any of us, than the continuing process of how to make viable meanings.[3]

The curriculum becomes a large framework which provides for the extension of interest in children. When children slow down and their interest begins to wane, then the curriculum allows for new stimulation which may be in the form of new materials, a trip, or working with another child. The open classroom allows the teacher to connect what chil-

dren would like to do with what the teacher feels they need to know.

Barth suggests that we abandon the notion of subject matter as something fixed and ready-made in itself. He expresses the belief that the curriculum must reflect that a child's experiences are not hard and fast but fluent and vital to him and, therefore, the curriculum must be based first on a child's own experience and then on the experiences of others. The curriculum must move from what a child knows and experiences to what the teacher would also like him to know. Barth, as quoted by Silberman, states:

> It (the curriculum) is continuous reconstruction, moving from the child's present experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies.[4]

In keeping with these general principles under which the open classroom operated, the areas of reading and math as they developed will be examined.

The open program began with the belief that in teaching reading the use of formal reading groups, fixed time blocks and basal texts was not necessary or desirable. The way to approach reading is to help children see it as an activity serving a real purpose for them and at the same time to meet their individual reading needs. Reading becomes an attitude and a way of life. It involves the fostering of certain basic attitudes about reading. These attitudes come from the teacher. She must present these attitudes to the children in such a way that they are related to the experiences

of the children. She must consider the child's growing sensitivity and curiosity about books so as not to discourage the development of reading interests.

The teacher helps the child to develop his awareness of sound through records, tapes, music, stories, and poetry. She helps the child to develop his ability to see the printed word with all its complexity. The classroom provides the child with a wide variety of materials to help him recognize sizes, shapes, structures, relationships, and visual patterns. Soon, he begins to relate these skills to the reading task.

In teaching reading as a skill, the open classroom recognizes four interrelated aspects. One, reading is related to expression and communication through speech. Oral speech is the basis of language and reading and, therefore, reading instruction must be related to the oral speech of a child. As an example, children may dictate a story to the teacher or to an older child who writes it down for them. They begin to realize the relationship of what they say to what is printed on paper.

Two, the child begins to see reading as an extension toward independence. As his sight word vocabulary increases, the teacher begins to help him develop word attack skills so that he can become more independent in his search for new words and to recognize symbols which they represent. The child starts to look and think ahead and to draw inferences from what he sees and hears.

Three, the child begins to practice and consolidate his skills. The teacher helps the child select the books he wants to read, always keeping in mind the child's interest and development level. She examines the content, vocabulary, illustrations, the types of presentation, and the gradual introduction of new vocabulary. She looks at the various activities which the child will do to make sure he will understand the desired outcome.

In the teaching of math, children in the open classroom actively pursue their own learning in much the same way as in reading. The teacher keeps in mind the developmental level and learning style of each child. Many materials are brought in which the child can explore and can manipulate.

The math materials in the classroom are such that children can make things from them. Such materials are sand, water, string, paper, prisms, cones, tiles, pencils, felt pens, scissors, and many more. There are also materials such as clocks, timers, slide rules, calculators, play money, and puzzles which are especially designed for math learning centers. For children working at higher levels, printed materials are available in textbooks, library materials, self-checking guides, teaching machines, and duplicating materials.

When discussing curriculum in the open program, it is imperative that one examine the work of the epistemologist,

Jean Piaget because his studies have assisted the curriculum of the open classroom. Although Piaget did not address himself specifically to the open classroom concept, his studies about children have been used to support the open education philosophy. Schwebel and Raph supported Piaget's belief about the aim of education by stating:

> . . . if the aim of intellectual training is to form the intelligence rather than to stock the memory, and to produce intellectual explorers rather than mere erudition, then traditional education is manifestly guilty of a grave deficiency.[5]

Three basic pedagogical principles of Piaget can be directed toward those things which open education is attempting to accomplish. A first principle is the view that learning has to be an active process because knowledge is constructed from within the child. In Piaget's view, one of the major sources of learning and probably the most essential one, is the intrinsic activity of the child. The child must feel free to manipulate objects and act upon them. Commenting on Piaget, Ginsberg and Opper point out that a good school:

> . . . should encourage the child's activity and his manipulation and exploration of objects. . . . By promoting activity in the classroom, the teacher can exploit the child's potential for learning and permit him to evolve an understanding of the world around him.[6]

In the open classroom, learning by the child is an active process. Many materials are available for the child to manipulate and the teacher stands ready to assist.

A second principle suggests the importance of social interactions among the children in school. Piaget believed

that intellectual development and social interaction are closely related and that one could not take place without the other. Group work was very important because it allowed children to become more aware of their own feelings and beliefs due to their interaction with other students. Piaget stresses that the school should not only allow interaction among children, it should encourage it.

A third principle of Piaget was that intellectual activity needs to be based on actual experiences rather than on just language. Even though Piaget acknowledges the importance of language, it should not be at the expense of thinking. The idea that every child should read at the first grade level whether he is interested or ready to read should not be the goal of education.

Piaget also developed periods or stages of cognitive development. These stages of development are:

1. <u>The period of sensory-motor intelligence</u>
   (0-2 years) During this period the child's behavior is primarily motor. Some cognitive development is apparent, but the child does not yet think conceptually.
2. <u>The period of preoperational thought</u>
   (2-7 years) These are the years of language and conceptual development.
3. <u>The period of concrete operations</u>
   (7-11 years) During these years the child works on concrete problems but in a logical thought process.

4. The period of formal operations

(11-15 years) At this point the child is able to apply logic to most problems. It is during this period that the child reaches his greatest development of cognitive structures.

Piaget did not believe that these ages assigned to each level were fixed. He used them only as guidelines. However, he strongly felt that every child must pass through each stage and that a child could not move from the period of preoperational thought to formal operations and skip the period of concrete operations. He also felt that the school could not demand of a child an activity which was not related to his cognitive level. Finally Piaget believed that there are four broad factors which affected the way the child passed through each stage. These are: (1) maturation, (2) physical experience, (3) social interaction, and (4) a general progression of equilibrium.

Piaget saw in traditional education four assumptions about the nature of children and learning which he believed were great deficiencies in the understanding of children. These are also seen as deficiencies by the open education program.

The first assumption is that all children at a given age level should learn essentially the same material. Piaget believed that when a task is presented to a group of children at different levels of cognition, some will find the experience either so boring or so new that they will not be able

assimilate it into their cognitive structure. A second assumption is that children learn best through the verbal explanation of the teacher or through written books. Piaget believed that the child needs concrete experiences and that only after a good foundation is formed by these experiences can the child begin to understand the teacher's verbal thoughts and the writing of the textbooks. A third assumption about traditional education is that when children begin to control their own learning, they will waste their time and therefore learn little. Again, Piaget felt that a major part of learning depends on self-regulatory processes and that for adults to control the child's learning is self-defeating. A final assumption is that uncontrolled talking in class is disruptive to the educational process. Although a great deal of noise may hinder learning, Piaget stressed that intelligent and spontaneous conversation in school is beneficial for mental growth.

In summarizing Piaget, one can draw together some of his principles and relate them to the open classroom. One, a child's thoughts and language are different from those of adults. In the open classroom, the teacher perceives the child as an individual in his own right. She realizes that learning needs to be based on a child's own experiences and not on hers. Two, children need to manipulate things in order to learn as evidenced by Piaget's studies. The open classroom provides the necessary tools and materials for this manipulation. Three, children learn

when experiences are moderately novel. The teacher is aware of the child's development and its relationship to the curriculum. She moves in at the right time so as to guide the child in his learning process. Fourth, the child moves through various stages, each containing new strengths and weaknesses. The teacher is aware of these stages and works to provide appropriate materials. Finally, children should be encouraged to talk and interact in school because such social interaction promotes intellectual growth. In the open classroom, children are given this freedom. They may work individually or in groups. Interaction between younger and older children is encouraged. Again drawing from Ginsberg and Opper, Piaget believed that:

> The principle goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things--not simply of repeating what other generations have done--men who are creative, inventive, and discovers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify and not accept everything they are offered. So we need pupils who are active, who learn early to find out by themselves, partly by their own spontaneous activity and partly through materials we set up for them; who learn early to tell what is verifiable and what is simply the first idea to come to them.[7]

Having looked at the curriculum of the open classroom and the work of Piaget, the topic of room location and arrangement can be examined.

The Location of the Open Education Classrooms

The room is arranged so that there is space for large and small activity. There are also places for children to work alone. Adequate storage space for all materials must

be available. The children must be aware of the fact that materials which are in the room are kept in certain places and that after they are used, they are returned to those places in working order so that other children can use them.

In setting up the rooms where the program was located, there were four primary goals. One, the children must be able to move freely within the room so that each child could explore the room environment in a way which benefited him. Two, the classroom materials and supplies must be arranged in such a fashion so as to be available to all the children when they are needed. Three, the room should be arranged so that the teacher has a clear view of all the activities in order to evaluate their tasks and be able to move in and assist the children as the need arises. Finally, the rooms need to be attractive. It should create an atmosphere of warmth and understanding. Children should feel that this is their room and that their work is helping to decorate it.

Both open classrooms were divided into areas. One area was language arts. It contained places for the children to work and the materials such as paper, pencils, magazines, books (picture and reading) and games needed to carry out tasks. Another area contained science and math materials. At times the teacher set up her own experiments, especially with the younger children, while at times the children would create their own with the materials available. A third area was used as a reading or library center. This contained a variety of books at different reading levels and areas of

interest. It was used by the children on a regular basis. Specific attention was directed at arranging the books so they were easy for the young children to use. A separate room was used for arts and crafts because of the noise level, the activity which was necessary, and the variety of materials. This area became an excellent place for the younger children to work with the older children.

The center of the room became a group meeting area. It allowed the teacher a place to meet with the children as a group whenever necessary and at the beginning of each school day. The children decorated the area, exhibited special activities, provided a place for a bulletin board and viewed audio-visual materials in this space.

Scheduling

Scheduling was another area with which the open program needed to deal. First was the scheduling of the children's day. At the beginning of the school year, most of the children had activities scheduled for them. Some were told only that they needed to spend some time in a particular area while others were given certain activities to carry out. This was done because many of the children did not know what to do with their time, how to use it, or what activities to carry out. It became necessary to help children through this period prior to expecting them to structure their own time. As the year progressed, many children became able to plan their own day although some continued to need the teacher's help.

The very young children (kindergarten) needed the teacher's help on a daily basis. The teacher would sit down with the child, help him plan a certain activity, and make sure that he understood the directions. She would then check up on the child on a regular basis. As these children became more interested in the room and more accustomed to the activities, it became easier for them to plan their day and eventually a whole week. There were other activities in the room which the young child could do without teacher supervision.

Second was the scheduling of the various extra activities such as music, art, and physical education. This became more of a problem for the special teachers. They were concerned with the multi-age grouping of students. How could one teach music to kindergarten and third grade children at the same time? With the help of the open classroom teacher, the special teachers attempted successfully to teach multi-age groups and the problem was solved.

Third was the scheduling of special consultants such as the speech therapist and the elementary reading teacher. Because these people served more than one building, it was necessary to simply schedule a certain time for the child receiving these services. Although this created some problems in the child's day, it permitted the child to receive the services.

Another scheduling area involved field trips. When the entire class when on a field trip, there were few

problems. A time was arranged and a school bus was used. However, many times only a few children went. To meet this problem, several parents volunteered their services. The teacher would call a parent and let them know that several children needed a trip to a certain place. The parent would then organize the field trip and arrange for another parent to drive the children there. This procedure worked out well. It did not take the teacher's time and allowed parents to take an active role in the program.

A final scheduling area involved visitors. Because the program was new, many people requested to visit. For the first twelve weeks, no visitors were allowed because the program needed time to establish itself. When the twelve weeks were over, only a few visitors were allowed to see the program because it was felt that too many would create problems for the children. Such was not the case. In fact, after the first few visitors, the children tended not to pay any attention to them as they came into the room.

Visitors were encouraged to interact with the children. It was not uncommon to see a child ask a visitor for help on a certain project. Time was made available to visitors following school to talk with the staff, to ask questions and to make comments.

Record Keeping

Record keeping was another important task during the first year. In the class, the teacher maintained records on the child's academic and social development. In reading,

the teacher made notes about how well the child reads, the books he chooses, the difficulties he is having, and whether or not he uses reading as a tool to gain information. The teacher also kept notes about the child's math ability, and how he uses the math skills he has. In other words, an on-going, up-to-date written record was kept on each child so the teacher knew what he was doing and how he was doing it.

The teacher also kept samples of each child's work. Through this, the child became aware of the relationship between what he has done and what he would be doing. He could use samples of his work for reference at a future time.

Three record keeping instruments were used in the open program. The first was Barbe Reading Skills Check List.[8] This check list provided an organized and systematic list of reading skills and sight vocabulary. The teacher could use this list as a guide as well as a record keeping instrument. It was not meant, however, to be a substitute for the teacher's knowledge of the reading process. It did provide parents with a useful list of skills explaining their child's progress.

The Check List itself is divided into the various grade levels beginning with kindergarten and continuing through sixth grade. Each grade level is then divided into major reading skills which are further divided into specific tasks. As an example, at the kindergarten level, four major skill areas are defined: (1) vocabulary, (2) perceptual

skills, (3) comprehension, and (4) oral expression. At the first, second, and third grade levels, the major divisions are: (1) vocabulary, (2) word analysis, (3) comprehension, and (4) oral reading. Each section is again further divided. As an example, word analysis at the first grade level is divided into phonic skills, consonant sounds in certain positions, vowels-consonant blends, structural analysis, and common word families.

Although the complete Check List is divided into grade levels, it is not necessary to use them. The list is of value in that it provides the teacher and parent with an organized and systematic approach to record keeping in the area of reading. It can be used by the teacher as she would like it to be used.

A second record keeping instrument used was in math. It is based on Piagetian development of mathematical ideas. The instrument contains no grade levels. It is divided into seven mathematical skills, those being: (1) money, (2) time, (3) weight, (4) length, (5) capacity, (6) shape, and (7) number structure. Each skill area is further divided into specific areas. As an example, money is divided into such beginning topics as exchange play and simple shopping activities and into more difficult topics of currency conversion, savings and interest. As the child's skills develop, additional skill areas are introduced such as visual representation and operations.

A child need not work in any certain area, but rather he may be involved in several areas at a particular time depending upon his developmental level. This instrument does provide for the parent a graphic presentation of the child's work in math as he progresses through the school year.

A third record keeping instrument was also used in math.[9] It too broke the math process into level areas. These were: (1) numbers, (2) addition and subtraction of whole numbers, (3) telling time, (4) calendar, (5) money, (6) measurement, (7) temperature, (8) multiplication, (9) division, (10) fractions, and (11) measurement at high levels. Further division occured at each level. For example, numberness was divided into conservation of numbers, reversibility, classification, counting, writing numerals, place value, and terminology.

Assignment of Children

Specific attention should be directed to the assignment of children in the program. As was previously mentioned, the open classroom was for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. There were two teachers and two classrooms. The goal of the program was an integrated kindergarten through sixth grade program. However, at the start of the program it was decided to divide the children on a rather arbitrary basis, this being that kindergarten through third grade children would be in the lower elementary room and

those in four, five, and six would go in the upper elementary room. The major reasons for this was that the lower elementary teacher's strength was at that level and the upper elementary teacher's was at the upper level. It was also felt that in order to know the needs of the children, it was important to assign them to a particular teacher for the time being. Parent communication was another reason for this division. Those who ran the program believed that initially parents would like to know which teacher their child has so that when questions came up, they would know whom to see. Parents seem to feel more secure when they know that their child is assigned to a specific teacher.

In looking back over the first year, this division of the children was a good step. It allowed teachers the time to know their students, to develop their program, to acquire materials, and to know the parents. Although this arrangement remained throughout the year, children on their own began to work together not taking into consideration which room they were in. Such a move was encouraged by the staff. Art, crafts, and science were excellent areas for this interaction to take place.

Problems With the Open Education Program

It would be impossible to say that the first year went by without any problems. A major problem concerned the teachers employed to work in the program. Although both believed in the concept of open education, differences

existed. These centered around control of students, demands placed upon them, teachers working together, and comparative openness of one program versus the other. Problems like these, when not handled immediately tend to grow bigger and begin to produce a situation which inhibits the program. As an example, the art room was shared by both rooms. The older children tended to monopolize it, not to clean up when finished, and to bother the younger children when they came. The upper elementary teacher believed that they should be free to use it when they wanted to, should clean up only when they felt it necessary, and that the older children would eventually begin to work well with the younger children. The other teacher felt that because the room needed to be shared, it should be on a schedule, that when a student used materials he should be required to pick them up so other children could use them, and that if the younger children could not get along with the older children, they should not be in the same room until they could work together.

Other problems such as this developed and it became necessary for the building administrator to step in. Certain temporary rules were set up. The art room was placed on a scheduled basis in the morning and an open schedule in the afternoon. Students were to clean up all materials used and only when a child from the lower room wanted to work with a child in the upper room could they go into the room together. Other rules which were set up stated that

a child could not go into the other room unless asked, that any discussion among the teachers and building administrator would be kept within the group, that neither classroom teacher would carry on a discussion in her room or with her children's parents about the other's teaching style and that for the present time, students would be more closely supervised. The final two rules were the most important, for they stated that: (1) a plan would be formulated within three weeks indicating ways in which the two rooms could work more closely together and (2) that both teachers did not need to reflect the same teaching style, but if the program was to succeed, both must work together.

As stated before, open education does not lend itself to a specific process or definition. Therefore, to expect both teachers to have the same teaching style was not expected nor was it desirable. Rather, the program needed two teachers willing to share ideas and to work together. Over a period of time this was achieved.

Evaluation

The use of an outside person to evaluate the open program was an important step. There were several reasons for this. One, people who are involved with the program on a day-to-day basis do not always see events taking place which can be or should be altered nor do they allow for the introduction of new ideas. Two, there were certain concerns (classroom freedom, discipline, etc.) which, although dis-

cussed among teachers and building administrator, were not coming to a successful conclusion. It was felt that a third person who was not attached to the program or system could bring some new light on these concerns. A final reason was that when it was necessary to report to the board of education, the fact that an outside evaluator had been used, would lend support to the program. Such was the case.

The evaluator came for a full two days approximately three months into the school year. He spent time observing both rooms, talking with teachers, parents, and children, examining children's work, looking at the various materials, inspecting the layout of the room, meeting with the school superintendent, and attempting to bring into perspective open education philosophy with what he was observing. At the conclusion of the two days, the staff and evaluator sat down to discuss the report.

A variety of issues were raised. Some were new, others added new light to old problems and some provided a different insight into the workings of the program. Consider a number of examples. First, the problem of children moving between rooms was addressed. The evaluator felt that children should have the freedom to move into another room or situation but it was not the quantity of moves that was supported but the quality or purpose. Second came the concern about the rules within the program for children. It was felt that children need definite rules

to live by until they learn their rights, responsibilities, and self-discipline. It is not a question of teacher control versus student control, but rather a combination of both because some children cannot learn self-discipline by themselves.

Another example looks at classroom activities and assignments. Any activity within the room should have a purpose. The teachers need to be constantly aware of this. It is important that when children take on a project, it be completed. Children need to know, some more than others, that requirements will be made upon them and that in many cases they have a responsibility to meet them.

Three new ideas resulted from the consultation with the evaluator. These were: (1) both rooms should make better use of space within the room, (2) each child should have a diagnostic workup to better acquaint the teacher with the child's needs, and (3) it would be necessary to structure both rooms until the children became more aware of the program.

The use of an evaluation such as this should be included in any open education program. Even though some comments were critical and other complimentary, the overall effect was that the program took a positive step forward.

Parent Group

A brief comment should be made concerning the parent group which was formed during the first year, although more

time is devoted to this topic in the next section. The group became very active. Parents performed many tasks such as transporting children on field trips, working in the classroom and making materials to be used by the children. It was rather easy to involve the parents in the program because they wanted it to be a success.

The Second Year

The final part of this section attempts to deal with the second year of the program. Although the program remained much the same from the standpoint of curriculum, assignment of children, activities and field trips, two changes occurred which greatly affected the program. First, the building administrator was transferred to another elementary unit and second, the lower elementary teacher left the program for a year and a new teacher was hired to replace her. As a result, two significant problems occurred:

1. The elementary building lacked a building administrator who was knowledgeable about open education and who was not entirely supportive of the program.
2. The new teacher, although believing the open classroom philosophy, could not carry it out in the classroom, thus creating unhappy children and parents.

It is important to examine these two problems because they serve as a reminder for making sure that the program has the "right" teacher and supportive administrator, for without these the program is in danger of failing.

With a change in the building administrator, several changes took place which affected the open classroom program. One, the program lacked a spokesman who could articulate the needs and desires of the classroom to the parents, central administrators, and visitors. If the administrator is not aware of what the program is or what its needs are, others tend to develop a negative attitude. After all, if the building administrator does not understand the program, who else can? Two, the program lacked a building administrator who was willing to do the many seemingly unimportant tasks which needed to be done. The teachers saw this as an unwillingness on his part to help them and the parents saw it as a lack of concern for the needs of their children. Three, the new administrator had his own ideas about the way the school should be run. Many of these ideas were contrary to the open education philosophy. This produced a severe strain on the relationship between the administrator and program teachers. The teachers were torn between what they believed was right and what they were permitted to do.

It is imperative that the building administrator be supportive of the program. This does not mean that there cannot be disagreements. There were and will continue to be disagreements, but in the end resolution of these problems should be based on a mutual respect for each others' views.

Finally, the building administrator would not take a leadership role with the parents. The parent group

became less active, less involved in the program, and more concerned with their child in the room.

Later on in this study, the role of the building administrator will be discussed in more detail. The intent of the above comments was to point out the importance of the principal as he functions with the program. As was indicated, serious problems do arise when this is not the case.

The employment of a new teacher, made more difficult by the introduction of a new building administrator who had misgivings about the program, produced many of the same problems experienced by the program at its conception. As the year progressed, additional problems became evident. Parents became concerned about how their children were doing in the program. They were not encouraged to come into the room, nor did they feel very good about what was happening in the room when they were there. Communication among the two teachers became strained and movement between the two rooms by the children appeared to be diminishing. Some children came home unhappy and complained about the school day. Finally, attempts were made to improve the situation and they did not work.

For those people who had been involved in the program since its beginning, this was a difficult time. Only their desire to see the program succeed and the realization that the previous teacher would be returning kept the program going for that year.

The importance of a knowledgeable and supportive building administrator and a teacher who can communicate the program to others cannot be overemphasized. These two elements can and will make the program a success or failure.

What has been attempted in this section is to briefly describe the program during the first two years. Such topics as curriculum, scheduling, record keeping, division of children, the parent group, and the use of an outside evaluator have been examined. The purpose of this section was to give only a brief outline of some of the events which shaped the program and to acquaint the reader with the program.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

[1]Charles Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom, Random House, New York, 1970, p. 312.

[2]Vito Perrone, "Open Education, Promises and Problems," Phi Delta Kappa Fastback, no. 3, p. 8.

[3]Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, Teaching as a Subversive Activity, Dell Publishing Co., New York, 1969, p. 81.

[4]Charles Silberman, The Open Classroom Reader, Vintage Books, New York, 1973, p. 523.

[5]Milton Schwebel and Jane Raph, Piaget in the Classroom, Routledge and Kegan, Paul, London, 1974, p. 21.

[6]Herbert Ginsberg and Sylvia Opper, Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1969, p. 221.

[7]Ibid., pp. 231-232.

[8]The complete Barbe Reading Skills Check List has been placed in the Appendices of this dissertation for the convenience of the reader.

[9]The complete math checklist has been placed in the appendices of this dissertation for the convenience of the reader.

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCIPAL

The role of the elementary building principal is a difficult one in that it does not lend itself to an easy definition. What one principal may define as his role in the school may not be the same as the role defined by another principal. Each brings to his job his own philosphy about teachers, children, and curriculum. It is within this framework that he works.

The material in this section represents the writer's involvement in the program from the time it was a private school through the two years when it became a part of the public school. Ten specific areas are identified which provide a role description for the elementary principal in his relationship with the open education program. These are:

1. The principal facilitates the development of new approaches to learning problems.
2. The principal attempts to lead, influence, and affect teachers' behavior.
3. The principal attempts to determine and understand teachers' needs.
4. The principal provides teachers with a variety of experiences, materials, and opportunities.

5. The principal assists teachers in examining, developing, and refining their philosophy.
6. The principal helps teachers work with children.
7. The principal anticipates and analyzes problems so that they can be solved or avoided.
8. The principal confers often with teachers and supports their efforts.
9. The principal establishes a positive relationship with the community.
10. The principal must perform menial and insignificant tasks and responsibilities.

These areas represent the thinking of Barth[1] for few others have written about the role of the elementary principal and the open classroom.

Miller points out:

> You do not need complete authority over a social organization in order to reform it. The important thing is not to control the system, but to understand it. Someone who has a valid conception of the system as a whole can often introduce relatively minor changes that have extensive consequences throughout the entire organization.[2]

This is essentially the role of the elementary principal as he relates to the open classroom. He does not need to feel that he must control the program, but rather he should work to understand it. Once he begins to understand the program, his role will become more evident.

Another problem in defining the role of the principal is the difficulty in defining open education. As

previously stated, open education does not lend itself to a clear and easy definition. How can one clearly define the role of a person involved in a program which cannot clearly be defined except by looking at its characteristics and assumptions. Despite these difficulties, let us examine the role of the building principal in the open classroom program as it relates to those ten areas listed above.

One, the principal facilitates the development of new approaches to learning problems. He allows teachers to make choices because he believes that when teachers make their own decisions, they will be more inclined to stay with them once they are made, their teaching style will remain more consistent, and they will feel better about their program. The example below serves to illustrate this point.

As the year began, the question came up as to whether kindergarten children who were just starting their school experience should attend half or full days. Several alternatives were available. First, the children could attend all day. Second, they could only go half days. Third, the children could attend either, depending on a parent and teacher decision. Several factors had to be considered. One, the enrollment in that room was twenty-seven students. Two, the program was just beginning. Three, tradition in the school district said that children just starting went only half days. Four, if one school program allowed full days, what would keep other parents from asking for the

same at their school. Finally, the teacher felt that half days were adequate for some while not for others. It would have been easy for the principal to say that because children starting school in other buildings attend half days, so should these children. After some discussion between the teacher and principal, it was mutually agreed that children would attend half days for six weeks after which individual parent conferences would be held. At this time, a decision would be made for each child regarding half or full day attendance.

Another example serves to illustrate a more difficult problem. The upper elementary teacher felt that children in his room should not be required to spend time at every learning center in the room. The principal felt that the room was too unstructured, that children were spending too much time in the woodworking area and that the academics were being overlooked. Again, it would have been easy to tell the teacher what needed to change; rather, the principal began to spend time in the room facilitating the children's interest into other areas. Over a period of time, the room took on a different direction. The teacher commented that he believed the children were involved in more things and appeared happier in the room. Although the problem was never completely resolved, the situation improved with both the teacher and principal feeling more comfortable with it.

Although the principal allows teachers to make decisions, it does not mean he shirks his responsibilities.

There are times when he must decide what is going to happen. He must be able to make these decisions and then live with them once they are made. The principal has a position of leadership and responsibility to the open program. As the principal is allowed to make decisions by the superintendent, so is the teacher allowed to make decisions by the principal and so is the student allowed to make decisions by his teacher.

Two, the elementary principal attempts to lead, influence and affect teachers' behavior. Teachers should know his position on issues, not that they necessarily need to follow him. However, it is important that the building administrator assist teachers in understanding their attitude toward children, school, work, discipline, etc. Some methods which were used to achieve this goal included arranging workshops, films, and professional visits.

To illustrate, the principal encouraged program teachers to visit several open classroom programs. It was fortunate that the school district had a federal grant which provided travel expenses for visiting other programs. Both teachers were able to visit several open classroom programs. These visits allowed them to see other programs in operation, to talk with other teachers and to gather new ideas for their own rooms. The principal's role was largely clerical and facilitative: seeking out other schools, making lists, arranging travel, and writing letters. Visits were also encouraged to community resources. One particularly

useful visit was to a furniture shop. Not only were a variety of odds-and-ends made available to the program, but a worker agreed to visit the school and help the children in the woodshop program.

The principal also made available to the teachers the use of professional books and films. Many of these materials are excellent. They provide a means of exploring other programs and the ideas of people who are working in open education. They are easy to obtain, cost less money, and in certain ways, provide a better overview of a program than one can gain in a short visit.

A particularly useful experience encouraged by the principal was the year-long workshop provided by a university. The program met twice a week at the same building that housed the open program. Courses were available in open classroom philosophy, Piaget, learning center development, classroom materials, and learning theory.

The newsletter also assisted in this area, for it provided an opportunity to communicate not only with teachers, but with parents and children. The newsletter was the responsibility of the upper elementary program. Anyone could contribute, and by the end of the month, there were enough articles to fill the newsletter.

As the year progressed, it became clear that because of these opportunities, the staff was stimulated to examine, question, and refine their own educational ideas and practices.

Three, the elementary principal attempts to determine and understand the teachers' needs. He is aware of both verbal and nonverbal communication from the teachers to him. He actively seeks this out because he realizes the importance of teachers' believing that someone is supporting them. Two examples illustrate this point.

While visiting the upper elementary room one day, the principal became aware of an uncomfortable situation developing between two students and the teacher. It appeared to him that the situation would not come to a successful conclusion, and that something should be done. The principal walked over to the teacher, asked if he could take the two students to his office and work on a special project for a period of time. At the end of the day, the teacher expressed his appreciation for the action taken, and indicated that it had just been one of those days when nothing seemed to be going right. Although the action was a small step, it served to illustrate two things. First, it showed the value of the building administrator's being in the classroom and second, it pointed out how the principal can determine what a teacher needs at a particular time simply by observing carefully the situation.

The upper elementary teacher wanted to purchase several reading series costing a considerable amount of money. Already on a limited budget, the principal was concerned not only about the cost, but also about how valuable such

a series would be for the program. Discussing the point further, the building principal saw a concern on the teacher's part for the reading program in general. The teacher was questioning whether he had enough material, whether the students were receiving the instruction they needed, and whether the students were gaining an interest in reading. Some alternative methods were explored. Were there other reading materials in the school system which could be used? Could the school library be put to more use? Was the teacher's perception of the children's progress in the reading program correct? Finally, could the school reading consultant be of help in this situation? After much discussion, it was decided to ask the reading specialist to come in and make recommendations. As it turned out, the reading series were not purchased, but better use was made of the library and of other materials within the system.

These examples illustrate that when teachers express their needs, action by the principal should be taken quickly and effectively. The principal should study the situation completely and then, with the teacher involved, work out a solution which benefits the children.

This area of determining and understanding teacher needs can do more to help the principal work with the teachers than any of the others. It develops in the teacher a sense of understanding that the building principal cares for them and their program. This, in turn, leads to a mutual respect for each other which can only help the program.

Four, the principal performs what seems to be menial and insignificant tasks. He does this not because he has to, but because it frees the teachers so that they can spend more time in the classroom with the students. Again, some examples can illustrate this point.

Preparing the school newspaper was a valuable and creative experience for the students. It provided for them a rich variety of academic skills such as reading, math, spelling, writing, and grammar. One task which required a substantial amount of time was the duplicating of the newspaper for parents and other students. Because the only duplicating machine was in the office, it was necessary to have some supervision of those using the machine. Having the teacher out of the room for this length of time would have been unwise. The building principal thus did the supervising. The supervision of this task provided more time for the teacher to spend with students, allowed the building principal to work closely with several students, and finally, indicated to the students his interest in the project.

Another example concerned the need to pick up some building materials from a local company which had donated them. It would have been necessary for the teacher to do this during her lunch time or after school. It took the principal only a few minutes to pick up the materials during the day, but it pointed out to the teacher the importance of her time in the classroom.

A variety of other illustrations can be used. The principal may write letters, arrange visits, take the children to the store, or help clean up a particular messy art project. He does it not because he has to, but because he wants to. He realizes that only when he is involved in the total activities of the program can he be considered a part of it.

Five, the principal provides a variety of rich experiences, materials, and opportunities. This is an on-going process throughout the school year, and one which continually helps the program become a better place for children.

One such way of accomplishing this is to encourage teachers to attend meetings concerning various elements of open education. During the school year, many "make-it, take-it" workshops were held in the immediate area. They were easily accessible, inexpensive to attend, and allowed the teachers to work on projects which they could take back to the school and use in the classroom or turn over to the parents who worked on them for the classroom. Math, spelling, and language games were made from a variety of materials such as cardboard, clothespins, felt markers, and paints. Science centers were developed using sand, stones, dirt, rocks, and water.

A local firm contributed a math center to the program. It was looking for an opportunity to utilize this center so as to evaluate its effect on children. It provided for the program a wide assortment of math materials

for all ages and a place to store them. The school's obligation was only to use them, evaluate their effectiveness, and report back results by the end of the school year. Many of these types of opportunities are available to open programs, and they can provide some excellent materials for the classrooms.

Another experience for the teachers was that they were allowed time to visit the teacher center located in a neighboring school district. The center contained a variety of books, teaching materials, and other items. It also provided materials which teachers could use for classroom projects.

What one can draw from this is that it is important for teachers to be involved with outside activities and not shut-off in their own classroom. They need the chance to communicate with others, to see new materials, to get new ideas, to be supported in what they are doing, and to spend some time away from the school building. Without this, one runs the risk of stagnation in the classroom, uncertainty about what one is doing, and unhappiness about not being able to talk with others involved in open education. A building principal will find his job easier and more productive when he encourages new experiences, locates new materials, and provides educational opportunities.

Six, the elementary principal assists teachers in critically examining, developing, and refining their open

education philosophy. This is a critical step because as one becomes involved in the program, many doubts about what is happening in the room come to light. Beliefs which were once strong become weak. Ideas which one thought would work only fail.

An excellent example of this was a concern as to whether or not children really learn in such a setting. The writer always thought they would, but at the end of the first six weeks of school, some serious doubts existed. Many students spent more time in the art center than any other place in the room, academic areas were not used as much as was thought they should be, and the children's ability to work together was questionable. To overcome these concerns, some serious steps needed to be taken by the staff. First, a series of discussions was held which permitted the staff to examine as a group what it believed should happen and what it saw happening. Attempts were made to look at the philosophy of open education, particularly how children learn and what it is important for them to learn. This was not an easy step because on the one hand, the teachers needed to feel comfortable with the situation while on the other hand, what was comfortable for them may not be what is best for the children. It is easy to voice one's belief about learning and children, and it is another thing to put that belief into practical operation and then to find out it is not working.

A second step was to put into practice those new ideas which had been discussed. Some children were allowed only a limited time in the art room area and were to spend more time in the science or reading area. Other children were allowed to continue as they were because the teacher felt that given time, their interests would broaden. A few children were given specific math or reading projects to do and a specific time to complete them.

The final step was again to meet and discuss what had taken place. The staff found changes occurring, that the scheduling had helped, and that the need for scheduling was diminishing with several children.

This whole area of examining the philosophy of open education and its practical implications in the classroom continued throughout the year. It permitted teachers to develop the strengths of the classroom and to overcome its weaknesses. Just as the children in the classroom were allowed to change, so was the program, illustrating one can never be completely satisfied with what is taking place.

Seven, the building principal helps teachers work with children. The principal must be sensitive to where the teacher is in his thinking and practice. He must be able to make suggestions which will be seen by the teacher as a way of helping her work with the students in her class. He must know what steps are comfortable for the teacher to take and at what rate and how to overcome those problems which

appear. There are a variety of ways to do this, such as teaching demonstration lessons, setting up learning centers, and making classroom observations.

It is very important that the building principal visit the program on a daily basis. These visits are not to just evaluate what is taking place but to become involved in the program, to get to know the children, and to become aware of the materials in the room. This can be done by reading to a group of children, helping a student solve a problem, explaining directions about a science project, or helping a student understand a new learning game in the room. A principal should work towards the goal of being able to function in the room as a part of it and not as a person from the office. He should attempt to be as much a part of the program as the teacher. An example can illustrate this point.

An area of expertise for the principal was in science. It became his job to develop some of the science projects for the program. One such project which took several weeks and involved many students, involved taking a plastic swimming pool and making it into a shallow lake for turtles, fish, and vegetation within the school. The children had gone on a field trip to study the swamp. They wanted to continue their work within the school. The fish pond created much interest and was a fine learning experience for all. Not only was it a learning center, but at other times

was a demonstration lesson. Barth points out the value of this when he expresses that:

> Although a learning center may be short lived, the concept of an instructional alternative to classrooms within the school offers exciting possibilities. It provides children with an incentive to continue functioning in their classrooms or a constructive alternative for those unable to do so.[3]

It is imperative that the principal seek out the children in the program and become involved with them. Only then can he help the teacher to better understand the children in the room.

Eight is the area of anticipating and analyzing problems which may and do come up. It is important that the building principal attempt to be on top of the many issues which affect the program. He can only do this by being involved in the program on a regular basis. An example of a situation which developed when the building administrator did not anticipate a problem concerned the area of evaluation.

The parent committee had voiced their disapproval of any type of group evaluation. They believed that any evaluation of the program should be based on how well the open classroom benefited the child. The building administrator, agreeing with this, sent out a questionnaire to all the parents requesting information about their children's work in the program. This questionnaire was not intended to be an evaluation instrument. However, several parents took it as such. Within two days, a letter was received

expressing their dismay over the survey. Comments such as, do not ask parents to participate in the decision-making process, eliminate parent meetings, and reconsider the building placement of the program were made.

The problem the principal did not anticipate was the reaction of the parents to the questionnaire. He did not see it as an evaluation instrument while they did. Had the principal presented it to the parent group at a meeting, the situation which developed could have been avoided. As it turned out, a parent meeting was held during which the questionnaire purpose was explained and approved by the parents.

Another problem which came up concerned the reactions of parents who did not have children in the program but who had children in the same school. Several parents came to the first few meetings believing that their children were being forced into this type of educational program because they were told that the entire school would be organized along the lines of open education. Again a situation developed which was not anticipated, although it should have been. Once these parents were assured that the program would have only children in it who wanted to be in it, the problem was resolved.

The value of anticipating and analyzing problems cannot be overemphasized. When beginning a new program, many people, both those involved and not involved in the program, tend to become more aware of the issues, more

concerned about their child's needs and more vocal about their beliefs, many times on an emotional level. It is important that the building administrator be aware of this.

Nine, conferring with teachers and supporting their efforts is another role of the building principal during the school year. If the principal expects to run the program on his own, he is asking for problems which need not take place. Although at times he will need to make decisions on his own, he will be in a better position of living with them if he has discussed them previously with the teachers. Several examples can illustrate this point.

During the second year, the board of education directed the superintendent to evaluate the program using a standardized testing instrument. It would have been easy for the principal simply to tell the teachers that such a testing program was going to take place. Rather, the principal chose to involve the teachers in the complete process of setting up the testing process, designating the instrument to be used, determining the method of testing, and deciding how best to present the results. Because of teacher involvement, the testing program took place with a minimum amount of confusion.

Other issues came up such as report cards, parent conferences, new materials, and new children in the program which called for the teachers and principal to work together. One teacher, needing more information on a child, requested that the school psychologist do an evaluation of the child.

The parents were concerned about this step. Knowing the teacher's feelings, the parents met with the principal. Being aware of the situation and agreeing with the teacher's request, the principal asked the parents to reconsider the area of evaluation. After assuring the parents that the report would not go into the child's folder and that a copy would be available to them, the evaluation took place with the results being helpful to the school and the parents.

To confer with teachers and support their efforts, especially when developing a new program, is very important for both the teachers and the principal. Without this, both parties will find themselves on uneasy ground with parents, children, and themselves.

The final area in which a building principal must operate is in establishing a positive relationship with the community. Whenever a new program begins in a school, it immediately becomes the center of attention, particularly in the neighborhood where the program is to be placed. Community groups as well as groups outside the school district want to know more about the program. As the program progresses through the year, the board of education requests more information. The burden of meeting these requests becomes the responsibility of the building administrator. Several examples can illustrate this role.

At various times during the school year, several calls were received requesting someone to speak to groups about open education. Realizing that some of the groups

may know nothing about open education, other may know something, and yet other may be interested in placing their children in the program, the building principal must present a program which is clear, consise, and interesting. In many of these presentations, slides were used to show the classroom, children's work was brought in to illustrate the activities, and teachers talked about how their classes functioned during the day. At the end of the presentation, time was allowed for individuals to ask questions of concern to them. A good presentation goes a long way in selling the program to the community.

As another example, during the school day individuals came to the school to visit the program and see its daily operation. This was encouraged by the principal because it was felt that only when people saw the program would they become interested in it and begin to understand it. There is, however, a danger to this. Because the visits may be short, the individuals may see something going on which they find questionable. To overcome this, an introduction to the program was given before a visit and vistors were always given time at the end to ask questions.

The community and the parents were also included in the same activities as teachers: workshops, films, professional trips, demonstrations, lessons, classroom observations, learning centers, and newsletters. As Barth points out:

> . . . one can move as fast and as far as parents (and children) will permit. And generally that is not very

> far and not very fast. Attempts to move behind parents' backs may result in small temporary gains and changes today, but by next week all that was gained may have been lost . . . Slower, more direct and open means seem more promising, if more difficult.[4]

Summary

This section of the study has been devoted to analyzing the role of the building administrator as he works with the open education classroom. Specific examples were used to identify situations which actually developed during the course of the program. These specific examples and their use within a particular area were meant to illustrate some of the situations which needed to be faced by the principal. However, a particularly important problem with which the principal must deal, which has not been mentioned, is summarized by Barth:

> To facilitate in one quarter is to make waves in another. There cannot be a pure role for the administrative facilitator, for the principal is a political as well as pedagogical position; he must be supportive at one point and display initiative, leadership, firmness and authority at another.[5]

There is no question that the principal who follows this role will make waves. One is the problem of having an open education program in a building which also contains traditional classrooms. Such was the case with the program in this study. The role the principal follows with the open program may be opposed by the more traditional teachers in the building. They may not wish to have parents in their room to develop learning centers, to allow children to have freedom, or to use a variety of materials.

They may see the principal's role as administrator not educational leader, as disciplinarian not counselor, and as supervisor not co-worker. They may feel that the principal shows favor to the open program by allowing children to do things which they do not allow their students to do. They may especially feel threatened when they are allowed to make instructional decisions because it is an opportunity to fail or to be blamed forfailing.

The principal will also make waves with fellow administrators. They may be envious of the program or look upon it as a waste of money on the school's part. When children attend the open program from another school attendance area, the administrator may feel cheated because children are leaving his program for another one. When the virtues of the program are brought up at board or staff meetings, other administrators may say nothing or may attempt to change the subject.

The building principal of the open program must approach these problems in such a way that he does not create a feeling of superiority, a climate of conflict, or an attitude of supporting the open program as the answer for every child. In many cases, the less said the better is a good philosophy, and when speaking about the program, doing so in an orderly, friendly, and concise way.

The open classroom places a heavy burden on the principal. He is accountable to the board of education, the

central administration, the classroom teachers, the parents, and the children in the program. He is at times a clerk, at times a teacher, and at times an administrator. He permits and encourages teachers to make decisions. He believes that just as children should become agents of their own learning, so should teachers become agents of their own teaching.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER V

[1]Roland Barth, Open Education and the American School, New York, Agathon Press, 1972, pp. 175-201.

[2]George Miller, Psychology Today, December, 1969, p. 13.

[3]Roland Barth, Open Education and the American School, New York, Agathon Press, 1972, p. 193.

[4]Ibid., p. 195.

[5]Ibid., p. 179.

CHAPTER VI

THE PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN THE OPEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

This chapter of the study examines the attitudes of parents who placed their children in the program. During the course of the program, several questionnaires were sent out to the parents asking such questions as:

1. Why did you choose to send your child to the open classroom program?
2. At the beginning of the school year when your child first came to the program, what were his feelings about the program?
3. Now that school has been in session for three months, what are your child's feelings about coming into the program?
4. Do you as a parent feel your child had a difficult time adjusting to the open education program?
5. Are you as a parent satisfied with your child's experience in the open classroom program?
6. Do you feel your child has been able to better manage his own time while in the classroom?
7. What kind of gains did your child make in the social area such as responsibility and freedom?

8. What kinds of gains did your child make in the academic areas such as reading and math?
9. How did you find out about the progress your child made?
10. Do you as a parent feel you have learned enough about the progress of your child?
11. How did your child adjust to attending school away from his own neighborhood?
12. What changes would you like to see in the program?
13. What information did you receive about your child that you particularly appreciated?
14. What information did you not receive that you would have liked to receive?

In addition to the questionnaires sent out, parents were also asked to respond to statements developed by Barth[1] concerning open education entitled Assumptions About Learning and Knowledge. Barth's purpose was to develop a number of assumptions about children's learning that underlie the practices and utterances of open education. The classifications are generative. Each assumption is based to some extent upon those that preceded it and gives rise to those that follow.

The first twenty-four statements are under the general classifications of assumptions about children' learning. They are further divided into three areas, those being: motivation which has two assumptions, conditions for learning

which has eight assumptions, social learning for which there are seven assumptions, and evaluation for which there are seven assumptions. Some examples under each area are as follows:

Motivation--Assumption:
Exploratory behavior is self-perpetuating.

Conditions--Assumption:
The child will display natural exploratory behavior is he is not threatened.

Social--Assumption:
Concept formation proceeds slowly.

Evaluation--Assumption:
Objective measures of performance may have a negative effect upon learning.

The remaining five statements are under the general classifications of assumptions about knowledge. Two examples are:

Assumption:
Little or no knowledge exists which is essential for everyone to acquire.

Assumption:
Knowledge is a function of one's personal integration of experience and therefore does not fall into neatly separate categories or "disciplines."

In discussing the first area of motivation, Barth points out that open education must have an underlying trust in the innate abilities of children to learn and to direct their own learning and in their wanting to learn. Children have an inner motivation to learn and the teacher in the open classroom must realize that at times she must not interfere with this process. Open education believes that in keeping with the child's innate abilities to learn, he must also

have the freedom to explore, to try and to fail, and in the process, he will find a sense of mastery in his knowledge. Through this, the child begins to understand himself as a person and as a learner.

In discussing conditions of learning, open education is concerned with the relationship of children to social situations and how this affects their learning. Although open education places strong emphasis on individualized instruction and learning, it must also emphasize the value of children's interaction with other children, for this has certain implications in the learning process of children. First, children learn to talk intelligently through group activities. They become aware of other children's feelings, interests, needs, and desires. Other children, especially older ones, may become a resource or teacher for younger children. Even children of the same age may experience the same learning-teaching relationship. Second, group activities encourage teachers to understand the dynamics of children and their interaction, an area which open education needs to explore more fully.

The area of social learning also is concerned with examining the intellectual development of the child. Essentially it emphasizes that children need time to learn, and that to demand of a child something he is not yet capable of doing is to hinder his development, that children pass through developmental stages (as Piaget has suggested) and that no amount of adult pressure can speed up the develop-

mental process, and that the thinking of children progresses from concrete to abstract and therefore, all learning activities must be planned along this continuum.

Another aspect of social learning is the concept of evaluation. Essentially, open education supports the belief that the best evaluator of a child's work is the child himself. Through self-evaluation the child is able to pursue his own interests and problems, to gain feedback from his work and to gather information about his learning activities. One of the critical problems that open education must deal with is the problem that every conclusion or every answer need not be the correct one for the child. He must feel that when he does fail or face frustration, it does not carry a stigma or a label, but rather it encourages him to try again.

In discussing the third area concerned with knowledge, open education believes that knowledge is a means of education, not an end. Within the program itself the open classroom emphasizes to the child how to learn, not what to learn.

Parents were asked to respond to each assumption on a continuum ranging from strongly agree, agree, no strong feelings, disagree, or strongly disagree.

The assumptions were tested on a variety of people from England involved in open education such as teachers, headmasters, and inspectors, and also with a number of American proponents at the Educational Development Center

in Newton, Massachusetts. With this introduction in mind, let us examine the answers parents gave to the questions asked of them.

Parent Questionnaires

A question about which the teachers and principal were concerned was the reasons parents gave for sending their children to the open education program. Some children had been in their neighborhood school for four or five years while others were beginning their school program. Most parents responded in a practical way by giving such reasons as:

1. My child would experience less pressure.
2. Because my five year old has a borderline birthdate, the lock-step traditional system makes it more difficult for him.
3. My child could move ahead at his own rate and be challenged.
4. Our child chose the program after visiting the classroom.

Some parents responded by indicating dissatisfaction with the program their child was in. Their answers were:

1. Because he was too regimented in his program.
2. Better opportunities for his own social skills to improve.

Several parents, who were more knowledgeable about open education, answered by saying:

1. Because of what open education can do for children.

2. To know the fun of learning
3. It is the best way for a child to develop
4. It is child-oriented

Finally, some parents answered by what they felt the program could do for their children. Their answers were:

1. So our child can be more flexible in his thinking
2. So our child can be more self-reliant
3. Opportunity for new experiences

As can be seen, these responses fell into several categories. In general, they reflected parental feelings about school, their child, and open education.

In order to analyze the feelings of children coming into the program at the start of the school year, parents were asked to indicate what their perceptions were of their child's feelings. In general, the responses of the parents indicated some degree of uncertainty by the children. Their comments were:

1. A little skeptical
2. Felt uncertain at first
3. Apprehensive about going to a new building
4. Shy and uncertain at first because this was the first time he encountered this type of program.
5. Concerned about having friends

It was felt by the staff that the transition for the children would be a particularly serious problem because of the new program and new school. Special steps were taken to overcome it. Children visited the room and met the teacher

prior to the start of school, children met other children going into the program, and parent meetings brought parents together. As it turned out, the problem was not serious, and within a week the children and their parents realized that they could make new friends at school and that once home they could also play with their neighborhood friends. During the first year only one child left the program because he wanted to be with his "old" friends.

In February, parents were asked about their child's feelings about the program at that time. Most responded in a variety of positive ways, giving such statements as:

1. My child is finally happy about going to school.
2. My child likes being able to go at his own rate.
3. Loves it--a wide opening learning experience.
4. Likes being able to set his own learning schedule.
5. She is proud of what she is learning.
6. My child really enjoys school.

Even though all the parents were positive about the program, some doubts still existed. Parents of older children expressed concern about their child's readiness for junior high school. Too much noise and freedom were two additional concerns expressed about the program. In general, these concerns subsided as parents became involved in the program.

A final question presented to the parents in February was whether or not their child had a difficult time in adjusting to the program. Only five parents indicated any problem.

Their replies were:

1. Had a difficult time in understanding he was accepted as a good student.
2. Problems in keeping track of materials.
3. Yes--but she would have had difficulty in the regular classroom.

Of the five parents, two indicated that even though there were adjustment problems, they were either because of being held back in the traditional program or because of the competition for grades which had been experienced in previous years.

The open education staff believed that being prepared to handle problems such as those stated above assisted the program by keeping them at a minimum. This made the program a better place for children.

At the end of the first year of the program, parents were again given a questionnaire to indicate their feelings about the program. The first two questions required only a yes or no answer. The questions were concerned with whether or not parents were satisfied with their child's experience in the program and whether they felt their child was able to manage his time better in the classroom. In response to the first question all parents indicated satisfaction with their child's experience in the program. One parent indicated mixed feelings but continued the child in the program the second year. All but three parents felt their child used his time

more wisely in the classroom. Those three felt that it would take a little more time for this to happen.

The third question asked parents to indicate gains they felt the child had made in the academic area. Some parents indicated excellent gains in all areas, especially reading and math. Others were more specific by responding with such statements as:

1. Gained in skill development
2. Math--excellent; oral reading--would like to have done more
3. Gained more confidence in herself in the area of math
4. Much progress in reading skills
5. Math excellent, reading fair

Some parents indicated that their child enjoyed academics more, that their children wanted to read at home more and that they were eager to show parents their work.

Parents were also asked to respond to gains in the social areas such as responsibility and getting along with classmates. Here again, parents gave a variety of responses:

1. Gets along better with classmates, relates better in a group, has more friends, and enjoys being with other children.
2. Better management of time and confidence in his own judgment
3. Has a sense of responsibility for getting work done
4. Has more confidence in self
5. An individual with greater independence for own responsibilities

It is important within the open classroom that one act on both the academic and social area, because to neglect one is to neglect the concepts of open education.

Question five asked parents to indicate how they became aware of their child's progress in the academic and social areas. In general, the parents listed several areas: observation within the classroom, teacher comments, work brought home, attitudes at home, child's comments and progress charts. It is interesting to note the variety of areas which are indicated. It points out that just as children need to be instruments of their own learning, so do parents need to be instruments of their own methods of learning about their children. It was important to the open program that all these methods be made available to the parents.

Along with the previous question, parents were asked to make comments about the progress of their child. Their responses were:

1. Would like specific long-and short-range objectives
2. We were satisfied. If we haven't learned enough, it is our own fault.
3. More teacher conferences
4. Child talked about school constantly
5. The teacher was available whenever I wanted to see her

Parents were again asked to respond to a question that had been previously asked at the beginning of the school year about how their children adjusted to school. In general, problems which were given previously were absent. Their

responses were:

1. Great--they made new friends and kept former friends
2. My child did not want to return to his neighborhood school
3. My child experienced no problems

In order to give parents the opportunity for input into the program for the next year, they were asked to suggest changes which they would like to see. The primary change was a longer school day. Parents also asked for more family activities because they felt that they were a valuable method of providing support for the program. Some parents requested more specific diagnostic testing if children were experiencing certain academic problems. It was interesting that throughout the school year, parents who wanted to rely on the teacher's advice, still found security in standardized testing instruments.

The final two questions asked parents to respond to information which they received about their child that they particularly appreciated and to information which they did not receive which they would have liked to receive. The information they received and appreciated were files of the children's work kept by the teacher, their children's general attitudes and comments about school, and the positive peer relationships. The information they would have liked to receive included specific goals in science, health, and social studies, more information about school activities, and individual contacts between the child and the teacher.

At the end of the second year of the program, another questionnaire was sent to parents with a variety of questions. The first question asked parents to respond to the growth they had seen in their children in the academic, emotional, social, and personal areas. In the academic areas parents consistently reported good to strong improvement in reading, math, and writing skills. Other development was seen in the opportunities for independent research in areas of individual interest, in discovering new areas of interests, and in the children's feeling of enjoyment in the learning process and feelings of success with their growth. One parent observed that his child showed no significant academic growth at this time and two expressed concern that greater efforts be made to motivate students in needed skill areas. On the critical side, one parent felt that two children were not challenged academically.

In the emotional areas, parents were very pleased, frequently citing such factors as increases in maturity, confidence, responsibility, independence of self-direction, and emotional stability. The program was seen as fostering happiness about learning, empathy and respect for others' abilities, lower frustration levels, and resourcefulness in facing and dealing with daily problems. Numerous parents noted the strong effective relationships with peers.

On the social side, parents rated social attitudes as good to excellent, always stressing the importance of growth at the child's own rate in close friendships with

peers. Specifically, they noted the strong sense of camaraderie, social tolerance, concern for others, adaptability to various situations, and increased interest in social problems and community relations. The broad range of ages and backgrounds enhanced social attitudes as did the teacher's role in correcting behavior which produced a learning situation for all involved. Four parents remarked on anti-social tendencies and conflicts, friction stemming from the placement of "problem" children in the upper level and friction with those outside the program. However, one of these parents stated that the child's situation would have been worse in a traditional classroom.

In the personal area, diverse reasons were noted to support the overall satisfaction which parents expressed regarding their children's personal growth. Several commented that the measure was the children's good feeling about themselves and their accomplishments, others that it was the gains in integrated growth of the children through cognitive, emotional, and social areas already covered; or the widening ranges of interests and activities; the possibility of setting one's own goals and the willingness to work toward them and to recognize weaknesses and work on them, and to deal with daily situations without fear. One parent suggested that this area could be evaluated only by the children.

Another question asked of parents was whether the open classroom philosophy complemented their philosophy of child-rearing. All answers to this question were strongly

affirmative. However, different kinds of relationships between the open classroom and the home were mentioned. The most common correlation saw the open classroom as an extension of their personal philosophy about learning; that is, it provided an environment supportive of the uniqueness of the child to be and become a total person who can experiment, make choices and decisions, work, play, etc., according to his own needs and at his own pace. This set stressed the mutual reinforcement between the child's world at school and at home. Another parent saw the school experiences as helping children to live up to the high standards deemed important by the parents. These answers leaned toward results rather than philosophy. One response indicated that the class had less structure than the home. Another parent was positive in all respects, but one said that the open classroom did not meet with his philosophy in that the teacher should present a more authoritative face as a parent by proxy. Several parents emphasized the importance of having their children's growth monitored on an individual basis rather than by preconceived standards based on age or grade level.

Another question of parents concerned the child's attitude toward his/her learning situation. Positive characterization of children's attitudes started with <u>fine</u> or <u>good</u> and moved to <u>very excited</u>, <u>excellent</u> or <u>just loves it</u>. Further descriptions spelled out how much the children enjoyed the opportunities available in the open classroom and

that they were happy about themselves and felt successful. Stimulation of curiosity, self-motivation, and self-discipline were frequently mentioned, as well as warm feelings toward the teachers and the children's reactions to the respect shown for their own individuality. Only one parent said that his child did not feel as though he learned enough. Because of their overall satisfaction, numerous parents voiced their children's and their own concern that open education would not continue and expressed some fears of moving into a traditional system.

Parents were also asked whether or not teacher contact gave them insight into their child's growth. Out of the entire sample, there were two blanks and three "no" answers to this question. Only one of the latter elaborated by saying that more concrete forms of evaluating and more examples of work would have been desired. The remaining evaluation forms were affirmative. The teachers overall gave more than adequate evaluation of their students. They were available for conferences which was greatly appreciated. Several respondants stated that one teacher tends to stress academic over personal growth; and more criticism, information and documentation should have been made available to parents. Other parents were totally supportive and satisfied with their teacher contact. The second teacher received high ratings for concern, performance, and detail of communication with parents. With respect to both teachers, a number of parents commented upon the significance of being able

to discuss their child with another adult who is objective and sees the child consistently and is vitally concerned with strengths and weaknesses in developmental areas.

One question about which the staff was particularly interested was whether or not the parents wanted the program to expand. There was total consenses that the program be allowed to expand. Various directions were suggested pertaining both to the present class and its growth and to the school system as well.

With respect to the current situation, parents stressed the need for larger classrooms, another teacher to lower the student-teacher ratio or provisions for consistent "aides" or student teachers, more integration and interaction of activities between the two classrooms, adequate supplies for learning centers, more involvement of parents in outings and classroom activities. Also, numerous parents stressed the fact that the entire success of the program depends on having innovative and qualified teachers who are trained in and committed to the principles of open education. Likewise, the teachers need the backing of an informed principal who will not only support the program but will provide administrative leadership for its stability, enrichment and development.

Directions for the total school system were as follows:

1. Acceptance of alternative education by the board of education and a willingness to hear and meet parental demands for an increased number of elementary open classes

in more than one, if not all, neighborhood schools.

2. The possibility of offering open education for K-12 either in one school or offering such alternatives in junior and senior high to supplement the continuity of kindergarten through sixth grade program. Again, the importance of vertical age grouping was noted.
3. If additional open classes are added, such classes should be designed to include variation in and individualization of the student/teacher/parent needs in the new location.
4. A more cohesive and systematic effort to inform the public about the presence of choices within the school system through news releases, parent meetings, and the like. Thus, the open concept, its program, and its evaluations could be explained to as many parents as possible. Furthermore, this should be done early enough so that interested parents can place their child in the program. Parents' wishes for expansion should be made known at the offices of the principal, superintendent, and the school board.
5. The feasibility of using the presence of the open classroom as a model for informing, involving, and teaching any interested teachers in the system about fresh approaches which would be used within their own classrooms.

"Are you happy with the location?" was another question put to the parents. In geographic terms, eighteen parents were satisfied with the location; of these, two

wanted a more central location, three said they would follow the program wherever it was, and one thought another new elementary school would be more suitable for the open program. Three parents stated that physical location was not a major issue and their children would go wherever the program was available. Other comments were made stressing the need for a more conducive or receptive environment, for a supportive principal, and for administrative support and leadership for the program.

Finally, parents were asked to make any additional comments they felt would be of value. Several were made as follows:

> "During the past two years, the program had many hardships and setbacks to overcome. In spite of these problems, the open classroom has facilitated good development in all areas for the children. Results of growth in cognitive skills are reflected in evaluation instruments. These primary skills are significant to parents but other areas are equally important. Because a child learns when ready to and intelligence is built through concrete experience and interaction, the open classroom serves the diverse and individualized needs for learning of the different children involved. Since the open classroom has met these diverse needs of the children, the parents are very satisfied with the productiveness of the program. Although their individual reasons vary, there is strong parental consent for support and continuation of open education within the system."

> "The two year experiment seems to have worked well, but this is not a sufficient length of time for an in-depth evaluation of open education in the school system. To be absolutely fair, one must assess the progress of children who enter kindergarten and stay in the program through sixth grade or higher. In the future we must carefully consider the whole problem of educational objectives and evaluation of the child, the teachers, and the program both from the point of view of open education and the view of evaluation by others. Insuring evaluation of the program by an outside,

> qualified expert in open education would be more desirable for both evaluative points of view. Affective areas such as confidence, self-motivation, self-disciplines, joy of learning, attitudes, etc., are critical to us as parents for the development of the whole child."

Among the parents there was overwhelming concern with the issue of preserving alternative opportunities in the school system. Many remarked that eliminating the open classroom for financial or political reasons would be a mistake. As one parent indicated, "Alternatives in education are basic and not a luxury. Differences in family life styles, basic philosophies, and attitudes defy any one person to tell others what the basics of education are. The three 'R's' may be basic to some, whereas a whole panoply of educational objectives may be basic to others."

Because we live in a diverse and varied society, another parent said that "whenever there is sufficient demand for a diversity, and it is not inconsistent with our basic social structure, that diversity should and must be supported whenever possible . . . (to) give both strength and flexibility to our growing social order."

In summary, parents stressed the demand for alternatives in education today since these permit choices between educational modes, provide equal opportunity, and allow the school system to serve the educational needs of a pluralistic society.

"Assumptions About Learning and Knowledge"

During the school year, parents were given twenty-nine assumptions about learning and knowledge which they were asked to respond to on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree. These assumptions, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, represent the practices of open educators. The school staff was attempting to see whether parents who had placed their children in the open education program supported these assumptions. Although it is difficult to draw any conclusions, some responses are interesting as they relate to the learning process.

Those assumptions, listed under their major headings, with which parents either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" were as follows:

MOTIVATION
Assumptions
None

CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING
Assumption 3:
The child will display natural exploratory behavior if he is not threatened.

Assumption 5:
Active exploration in a rich environment, offering a wide array of manipulative materials, will facilitate children's learning.

Assumption 6:
Play is not distinguished from work as the predominant mode of learning in early childhood.

Assumption 10:
If a child is fully involved in and is having fun with an activity, learning is taking place.

SOCIAL LEARNING

Assumption 11:
When two or more children are interested in exploring the same problem or the same materials, they will often choose to collaborate in some way.

Assumption 14:
Children learn and develop intellectually not only at their own rate, but in their own style.

Assumption 15:
Children pass through similar stages of intellectual development, each in his own way and at his own rate and in his own time.

Assumption 16:
Intellectual growth and development take place through a sequence of concrete experiences followed by abstractions.

Assumption 17:
Verbal abstractions should follow direct experiences with objects and ideas, not precede them or substitute for them.

EVALUATION

Assumption 18:
The preferred source of verification for a child's solution to a problem comes through the materials he is working with.

Assumption 19:
Errors are necessarily a part of the learning process; they are to be expected and even desired, for they contain information essential for further learning.

Assumption 20:
Those qualities of a person's learning which can be carefully measured are not necessarily the most important.

Assumption 23:
The best way of evaluating the effect of the school experience on the child is to observe him over a long period of time.

KNOWLEDGE

Assumption 27:
The structure of knowledge is a personal and idiosyncratic; it is a function of the synthesis of each individual's experience with the world.

Those assumptions, listed under their major headings, with which parents either "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" were as follows:

MOTIVATION
Assumptions
None

CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING
Assumption 7:
Children have both the competence and the right to make significant decisions concerning their own learning.

SOCIAL LEARNING
Assumptions
None

EVALUATION
Assumption 22:
Learning is best assessed intuitively, by direct observation.

KNOWLEDGE
Assumption 28:
Little or no knowledge exists which is essential for everyone to acquire.

Those assumptions, listed under their major headings, about which parents indicated "no strong feelings" were as follows:

MOTIVATION
Assumptions
None

CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING
Assumptions
None

SOCIAL LEARNING
Assumption 13:
Concept formation proceeds slowly.

EVALUATION
Assumption 24:
The best measure of a child's work is his work.

KNOWLEDGE
Assumptions
None

Finally, those assumptions, listed under their major headings, on which parents' responses indicated either "strong agreement," "agreement," or "no strong feelings" were as follows:

MOTIVATION

Assumption 1:
Children are innately curious and will explore their environment without adult intervention.

Assumption 2:
Exploratory behavior is self-perpetuating.

CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

Assumption 4:
Confidence in self is highly related to capacity for learning and for making important choices affecting one's learning.

Assumption 8:
Children will be likely to learn if they are given considerable choice in the selection of the materials they wish to work with and in the choice of questions they wish to pursue with respect to those materials.

Assumption 9:
Given the opportunity, children will choose to engage in activities which will be of high interest to them.

SOCIAL LEARNING

Assumption 12:
When a child learns something which is important to him, he will wish to share it with others.

EVALUATION

Assumption 21:
Objective measures of performance may have a negative effect upon learning.

KNOWLEDGE

Assumption 25:
The quality of being is more important than the quality of knowing; knowledge is a means of education, not its end. The final test of an education is what a man is, not what a man knows.

Assumption 26:
Knowledge is a function of one's personal integration of experience and, therefore, does not fall into neatly separate categories or "disciplines."

It is interesting to note that parents as a group supported those assumptions dealing with the way children learn, such as their natural exploratory behavior, their active exploration, their play as a mode of work, but they were uncertain as to the child's ability to make decisions about the work he should do during the school day. This was evident in the program. Parents were usually concerned about the work their child was doing rather than how he was doing the work. To remedy this situation, children were encouraged to write down their daily schedule so parents could see during conferences with the teacher or when visiting the classroom what they were doing on a daily basis.

When parents visited the class, they were anxious to see the work their child was doing as a measure of the child's work in class. This indicated many things. First, many parents, especially during the first year, always wanted to know the grade level at which their children were working. Simply seeing the work did not provide the feeling of confidence they needed that their children were doing well in school. Second, when showing the child's work to the parent, the teacher needed to express a feeling of confidence that the child was doing the best he could.

On nine assumptions, parents were generally divided. Some strongly agreed, some agreed, and others expressed no

feelings. These assumptions tended to reflect the way children learn and not the choice children should have in learning. Again, these responses tended to support the staff's impressions when talking to parents.

The importance of this exercise is twofold. First, it allows the staff to form some opinions about parent's philosophies as they enroll children in the program. It allows the staff to formulate general concepts about parent expectations as a result of talking with them, thus eliminating some potential problems. Second, the exercise provides for the parents an explanation about open education and its philosophical basis, its origin, and its historical basis. Many parent meetings were centered around this exercise.

In summary, this section of the study has attempted to look at and analyze the feelings of parents involved in the open education program and to reemphasize the need to work with parents on a consistent basis. In follow-up interviews with many of these parents who continue to have children in the program, many of their concerns have been eliminated. They continue to have more confidence in the teachers and the programs which they offer. In addition, those children who have entered the junior high have not encountered any major difficulties. Parents and junior high teachers have reported that they have no more problems with their courses than any other students, and that they are better able to plan and use their time when in school.

FOOTNOTE FOR CHAPTER VI

[1]Roland Barth,"Open Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1970.)

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

The open education program represented an attempt by a few educators and parents to provide for children an alternative educational program from that which was available in public schools. Their initial attempts began as a private school available to children on a tuition basis. Over a two year period the program experienced some success but faced many problems; in particular, money, staff consistency, and a lack of materials. Towards the end of the second school year, a group of parents and educators approached the school board about the possibility of including the open education program as a part of the public schools. After many meetings, agreement was reached and the program became a part of the public school system.

The open education program continues to function at this time. It has been successful in meeting the needs of children, the expectations of parents, and the needs of educators wanting an alternative mode of education for children.

As has been pointed out, the building principal finds himself in a difficult role. He is asked to perform in a way which does not lend itself to any traditional

framework. He must be knowledgeable and supportive of a program which does not lend itself to an easy definition. When such a principal is not available, the program faces serious challenges to its chances of survival as indicated in a previous chapter.

It is clear from this study that the parents of children in the open classroom play an important role, for without them the program would not exist. Parents must be included in all phases of the program: to visit the rooms, to work with the children, and to assist in making materials.

The study has indicated that the parents as a group have responded favorably to the program and continue to do so as indicated by their response to the parent questionnaires and follow-up interviews. One cannot over-emphasize the need for parental support, for without it, problems multiply.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the success of the open classroom approach continues to be a difficult problem. Considerable research has been done on evaluating open classrooms both in terms of academic achievement and of effective measures. The Education Development Center has been involved in the process of evaluation particularly in regard to the development of better evaluation instruments. It is in the use of such instruments that the crux of the problem becomes very

apparent. Existing instruments for evaluation are essentially based upon a traditional model of education and behavioristic interpretation of learning. They are also based on a number of assumptions:

1. The important aspects of learning are measurable.
2. The structure of knowledge is both universal and divisible into subject matter areas.
3. Learning experiences are essentially uniform.
4. Learning can be separated from the context in which it occurs.

These assumptions are the antithesis of the assumptions discussed earlier in this study. Thus, the question raised is whether or not present evaluation instruments can be used to give an accurate assessment of open education.

There is, at the Educational Testing Service, some work being done which may provide some new techniques to evaluate open education. Some of these techniques involve indepth interviews, observation and problem-solving situations, and the child's classwork.

A critical problem facing open education is the evaluation of such programs with achievement tests. With the growing emphasis on accountability, standardized achievement tests are becoming increasingly used in schools. There are a number of characteristics regarding open education that need to be reviewed in the use of any evaluation instrument.

These include:

1. Open education encourages children to work together.
2. In the open education program, children find many ways to express their knowledge and achievement as they pursue their general academic goals.
3. Children in the open education program are allowed to progress at their own rate through the various tasks they are involved with.
4. In the open education program, each child has his own program and competitiveness among the children is discouraged.
5. Each child in the open education program is viewed as a unique individual in his own right.
6. In the open education program, the self-concept of children is supported and when help is necessary, the teacher is there to provide it.
7. In the open education program, critical and thoughtful thinking is encouraged by the classroom teacher.
8. Learning in the open education program is for the learner's sake. With the assistance of the teacher and others students, the learner developes his own rewards.

DeRivera[1] of The Educational Development Center reported that standardized testing is a danger to open education and a serious threat to its development. These dangers are:

1. The test serves to pressure the teachers to teach in more traditional ways, to slow down, and in some cases, abandon any change to open education.
2. Testing programs take valuable time from the educational program.
3. The testing program damages the learning climate of the open education classroom.

How then should open education be evaluated? First, open education looks upon each child as a unique individual whose learning rate and style are his own. Therefore, evaluation must be an individual adventure between the child and his teacher. Second, open education sees the development of the child as a series of stages through which he progresses at his own rate. Each child is at his developmental level and, therefore, evaluation must be based on this. Finally, because each child is a unique individual, he will show his abilities in many different ways and at different times. Evaluation must take this into consideration.

The Future of Open Education

Open education offers a bright future for children, for it fosters within them initiative and responsibility for their own learning. The program is based on what we

know about children. Open education offers a program which helps children to deal with a changing world by allowing them to develop individually and to find adequate methods of meeting new problems as they arise. Open education offers to children an opportunity to look at learning as an exciting experience which can be pursued at all times, not just in school.

Open education will also allow the community to become an area where children can learn. Instead of having children come into the school, the school may become a place from which they go out to take part in the resources of the community. The lives of children can be enriched through these resources. The teacher and the classroom no longer become the limits of a child's education.

In the future, open education will allow educators to re-examine their basic educational assumptions about learning and child development. Perrone points out:

> Open education can serve as a catalyst to redefine our notions of what are acceptable and significant areas of involvement for children, causing schools to move away from the narrow focus of learning objectives that can be easily measured over short periods of time.[2]

Through this re-examination, school should become more personalized and will be looked upon not as a subject-oriented place of learning but a place where children may come to find the resources they need in their own learning.

Teachers may find that upon examining open education practices, their behavior in the classroom begins to

make a dramatic change. Children will be trusted to participate in teaching decisions about learning and learning will become an enjoyable experience not only for the teacher but also for the children.

Nyquist and Hawes concluded:

> Fundamental change in the climate of the American school is necessary if children are to find there the challenge and the sense of personal fulfillment and commitment that lead on to a life of learning and purposeful endeavor. . . . The educational system does not need minor adjustments. It requires a major overhaul. When we recognize in all seriousness that education begins with individual human beings, we shall have made a significant beginning.[3]

Perhaps open education can be a major component through which educational change can and should take place. It begins with the individual as a person in his own right, with his own learning style and his own environment.

Open education will also need to be accompanied by a comprehensive philosophy. The everyday practices of the classroom will need to be reflected in sound statements of principle. To give unity to the program, the staff will need to work from a philosophy which is firm but changeable, theoretical but practical, and child-centered not adult-centered.

A Summary of Considerations and Recommendations

When one attempts to analyze those ideas which stand out as important to the open education program and which the reader can and should be aware, a variety of issues come into mind. Eleven of these seem to be the most important.

1. The open classroom philosophy and its development into an open classroom program can work within a public school setting if parents and teachers are willing to work together.
2. Parents play a very important role in the open classroom program. They are committing themselves and their children to a new type of educational experience.
3. It is preferable for parents to have a choice as to whether or not their children should be a part of the open classroom program. Parents will be more supportive if their children are in a program in which they want to be and not in a program in which they are forced to be in.
4. Children coming into the program, especially those who have been in a more traditional setting, need to be assisted in adapting to the program. They may need help in planning their time, selecting materials, or making good use of their school day. Some children adapt quickly while others take a longer period of time.
5. The building principal's role is critical to the success of the open classroom program. Without his support, the program's development becomes very difficult if not impossible. This is especially true during the first year of the program.
6. The building principal and the open classroom teachers need to have a strong belief in what they are doing

and to convey this belief to the children and parents who are a part of the program.

7. Planning is another key to successful open classroom implementation. It is time-consuming and frustrating but important and, most of all, necessary.
8. The ability to anticipate problems and concerns which could affect the open classroom program is a necessary and important area for teachers and the building principal to be aware of during the operation of the program.
9. The building location and the subsequent room location are important. To the extent possible, the building location should be centrally located within the school district.
10. Materials and supplies for the open classroom program need not be expensive. Teacher and parent-made materials, books, magazines, and other materials can be used within the classroom as a part of the instructional program.
11. Those who plan to start an open classroom program need to be aware of various groups who will present problems such as board of education members, teachers, administrators, and parents. Being aware of these groups, one can make plans to meet their concerns.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

[1]Margaret DeRivera, "Academic Achievement and the Survival of Open Education," Open Education, no. 7, Educational Development Center Publication, Newton, Massachusetts.

[2]Vito Perrone, "Open Education: Promises and Problems," Phi Delta Kappa Fastback, no. 3, p. 8.

[3]Ewald Nyquist and Gene Hawes, Open Education, Bantam Books, New York, 1973, p. 45.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Barbe Reading Skills Check List

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

READINESS LEVEL

(Last name) (First name) (Name of school)

(Age) (Grade Placement) (Name of Teacher)

I. Vocabulary:

A. Word Recognition

1. Interested in words
2. Recognizes own name in print
3. Knows names of letters
4. Knows names of numbers
5. Can match letters
6. Can match numbers
7. Can match capital and small letters

B. Word Meaning

1. Speaking vocabulary adequate to convey ideas
2. Associates pictures to words
3. Identifies new words by picture clues

II. Perceptive Skills

A. Auditory

1. Can reproduce pronounced two and three syllable words
2. Knows number of sounds in spoken words
3. Can hear differences in words
4. Able to hear length of word (Which is shorter? boy or elephant)
5. Able to hear sound:
   a. at beginning of word
   b. at end of word
   c. in middle of word
6. Hears rhyming words
7. Aware of unusual words

B. Visual

1. Uses picture clues
2. Recognizes
   a. colors

b. sizes (big, little; tall, short)
c. shapes (square, round, triangle)

3. Observes likenesses and differences
   a. in words
   b. in letters
4. Left-right eye movements

III. Comprehension

A. Interest

1. Wants to learn to read
2. Likes to be read to
3. Attention span sufficiently long

B. Ability

1. Remembers from stories read aloud
   a. names of characters
   b. main ideas
   c. conclusion
2. Can keep events in proper sequence
3. Uses complete sentences
4. Can work independently for short periods
5. Begins at front of book
6. Begins on left hand page
7. Knows sentence begins at left

IV. Oral Expression

A. Expresses self spontaneously

B. Able to remember five word sentence

C. Able to make up simple endings for stories

D. Able to use new words

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

FIRST GRADE LEVEL

I. Vocabulary:

A. Word Recognition

1. Recognizes words with both capital and small letters at beginning
2. Is able to identify in various settings the following words usually found in preprimers:

a	come	green	mother	something
airplane	cookies	has	morning	splash
an	cowboy	have	my	stop
and	daddy	he	near	surprise
apple	did	help	no	table
are	dinner	her	not	thank
at	dish	here	oh	that
away	do	hide	on	the
baby	dog	home	one	tree
ball	down	house	party	to
be	father	I	pie	toy
bed	fast	in	play	two
big	find	is	pretty	up
birthday	fine	it	puppy	want
blue	fish	jump	ran	we
boat	for	kitten	red	what
bow-wow	funny	like	ride	where
cake	get	little	run	will
call	girl	look	said	with
can	give	make	see	work
cap	go	may	she	yellow
car	good	me	show	you
Christmas	good-by	mitten	sleep	your

Only additional words found in six of seven leading primers were:

about	eat	let	sat	us
again	farm	long	saw	walk
all	from	man	so	was
am	fun	many	some	water
as	had	Mr.	soon	way
black	happy	must	take	went
boy	him	night	them	were
but	his	new	then	when
came	how	now	there	white
could	just	of	they	wish
cow	know	put	this	who

II. Word Analysis

A. Phonics

1. Recognizes single initial consonants and can make their sound:

b	k	q	w
d	l	r	x
f	m	s	y
h	n	t	z
j	p	v	

2. Knows single consonant sounds in final position (hat)
3. Knows single consonant sounds in middle position (seven)
4. Names of vowels are introduced
5. Knows sounds of initial consonant blends (listed in order of difficulty)

sh	tr	ch	sp	tw
st	fr	fl	sm	
bl	wh	cl	sn	
pl	th	gl	sw	

B. Structural Analysis

1. Knows endings
   - ed sound as "ed" in wanted
   - ed sound as "d" in moved
   - ed sound as "t" in liked
   - ing
   - s
2. Recognizes compound words (into, upon)
3. Knows common word families:

all	it	en	an	ell	ake
at	et	in	ill	ay	or

C. Word Form Clues

1. Notices capital and small letters
2. Notices length of words
3. Notices double letters

III. Comprehension

A. Understands that printed symbols represent objects or actions
B. Can follow printed directions (Find the boy's house.)

C. Can verify a statement (See if Sandy ran away.)
D. Can draw conclusions from given facts (What do you think happens then?)
E. Can recall what has been read aloud
F. Can recall what has been read silently
G. Can place events in sequence
H. Can remember where to find answers to questions

IV. Oral and Silent Reading Skills

A. Oral Reading

1. Uses correct pronunciation
2. Uses correct phrasing (not word-by-word)
3. Uses proper voice intonation to give meaning
4. Has good posture and handles book appropriately
5. Understands simple punctuation
   - period(.)
   - comma (,)
   - question mark(?)
   - exclamation mark (!)

B. Silent Reading

1. Reads without vocalization:
   - Lip movements
   - Whispering
2. Reads without head movements

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

SECOND GRADE LEVEL

I. Vocabulary:

A. Word Recognition

1. Recognizes 220 Dolch Basic Sight Words (by end of year)

a	as	again	about	any
all	away	ate	after	better
am	be	black	always	both
an	black	but	around	bring
and	brown	cold	ask	carry
are	by	cut	because	clean
at	came	fast	been	could
big	did	first	before	done
blue	eat	five	best	don't
call	fall	fly	buy	draw
can	find	four	does	drink
come	for	give	for	eight
do	get	goes	found	every
down	going	going	full	hurt
funny	have	got	gave	know
go	her	green	grow	light
good	him	has	hold	myself
he	his	had	how	never
help	if	hot	just	own
here	into	its	keep	pick
I	laugh	long	kind	right
in	let	made	much	seven
is	live	many	must	shall
it	may	new	now	show
jump	my	not	off	their
like	no	of	once	them
little	old	open	only	then
look	on	please	round	there
make	one	or	sleep	these
me	put	our	small	think
out	saw	pull	take	those
play	said	read	tell	together
pretty	she	saw	thank	use
ran	sit	say	that	very
red	some	sing	they	want
ride	stop	six	this	warm
run	three	soon	too	wash
see	today	ten	try	went
so	two	upon	under	what
the	was	us	walk	when
to	will	who	well	where
up	work	why	were	which

2. Use word form clues
   a. Configuration
   b. Visual similarity of rhyming words (call, fall, ball)

3. Is familiar with structural analysis
   a. Little words in big words (many)
   b. Compound words (barnyard)
   c. Possessives and word endings
      's; d; ed; ing; t; er; est; y; ly
   d. Contractions:
      I'm; I'll; can't; don't; won't

B. Word Meaning

1. Multiple meanings of words
2. Synonymous meanings (jolly-happy)
3. Opposites (up--down)
4. Words pronounced the same (rode--road)

II. Word Analysis

A. Phonics

1. Knows consonant sounds taught in first grade (b, d, f, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, y, z, and st, tr, fr, sm, sn, sw, tw, bl, gl, fl, pl, cl, sh, ch, wh, th)
2. Applies these sounds and blends to:
   a. initial position in words (let)
   b. final position in words (bank)
   c. medial position in words (little)
3. Knows word families

ou as in out	ing as in sing
ow as in show and cow	ight as in night
oy as in boy	ind as in find
oo as in balloon and book	ir as in bird
aw as in straw	oi as in oil
ike as in like	eck as in neck
er as in her	ick as in sick
ur as in fur	ack as in back
ew as in new	uck as in duck

4. Short vowel sounds (a, o, i, u, e)-taught in this order
5. Long vowel sounds
6. Understands function of "y" as a consonant at beginning of word (yard) and vowel (bicycle) anywhere else
7. Knows the two sounds of c and g
   c followed by i, e, or y makes s sound (city)
   c followed by a, o, or u makes k sound (cat)
   g followed by i, e, or y makes j sound (gym)
   g followed by a, o, or u makes guh sound (game)

8. Knows initial consonant sound includes all consonant up to first vowel
9. Knows three letter initial blends
   str thr spl
   sch spr chr
10. Phonics rules
    a. a single vowel in a word or syllable is usually short (hat)
    b. a single e at the end of a word makes the preceding vowel long (hate)
    c. a single vowel at the end of a word is usually long (she)
    d. When there are two vowels together, the first is long and the second is silent (pail, train)
    e. Vowels are influenced when followed by r, w, and l (star, saw, all)

B. Structural Analysis

1. Recognizes root or base words (mines, mined, miner)
2. Recognizes word endings:
   en in waken; ful in careful
3. Knows contractions:
   isn't I'm you're it's
   I've he's let's we've
4. Knows possessives (Bill's)
5. Can disconnect printed fi and fl (fish and fly)

III. Comprehension

A. Association of ideas of material read

1. Can draw conclusions
2. Can predict outcomes
3. Can find proof
4. Can associate text with pictures

B. Organization of ideas

1. Can follow printed directions
2. Can find main idea
3. Can follow plot sequence

C. Locating information

1. Can use:
   a. table of contents
   b. page number
   c. titles
2. Can find specific information

D. Appreciation

1. Able to dramatize stories read
2. Able to illustrate stories read
3. Able to tell a story which has been read previously
4. Owns at least several books which he particularly likes

IV. Oral Reading

A. Reads clearly and distinctly

B. Reads with expression

C. Reads fluently

D. Reads so that listeners enjoy the story

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

THIRD GRADE LEVEL

I. Vocabulary:

A. Word Recognition

1. Recognizes Dolch 220 Basic Sight Words

a	as	again	about	any
all	away	ate	after	better
am	be	black	always	both
an	black	but	around	bring
and	brown	cold	ask	carry
are	by	cut	because	clean
at	came	fast	been	could
big	did	first	before	done
blue	eat	five	best	don't
call	fall	fly	buy	draw
can	find	four	does	drink
come	for	give	for	eight
do	get	goes	found	every
down	going	going	full	hurt
funny	have	got	gave	know
go	her	green	grow	light
good	him	had	hold	myself
he	his	has	how	never
help	if	hot	just	own
here	into	its	keep	pick
I	laugh	long	kind	right
in	let	made	much	seven
is	live	many	must	shall
it	may	new	now	show
jump	my	not	off	their
like	no	of	once	them
little	old	open	only	then
look	on	please	round	there
make	one	or	sleep	these
me	put	our	small	think
out	saw	pull	take	those
play	said	read	tell	together
pretty	she	saw	thank	use
ran	sit	say	that	very
red	some	sing	they	want
ride	stop	six	this	warm
run	three	soon	too	wash
see	today	ten	try	went
so	two	upon	under	what
the	was	us	walk	when
to	will	who	well	where
up	work	why	were	which
we	yes	wish	white	would
you	yellow	your	with	write

2. Refinement of skills previously taught
   a. Compound words
   b. Prefixes and suffixes
      a, un, ex, be, dis, in, th, ty, ful, less, ness
   c. Identification of root words
   d. Knows all initial consonant sounds (single sounds and blends--up to first vowel in word
   e. Can read all contractions

B. Word Meaning

1. Provided many experiences to increase speaking and reading vocabulary
2. Able to select descriptive and figurative words and phrases
3. Able to supply synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms
4. Understands use of elementary school dictionary to find word meaning

II. <u>Word Analysis</u>

A. Review and refine previously taught skills

1. All initial consonant sounds
2. Short and long vowel sounds
3. Changes in words by
   a. adding s, es, d, ed, ing, er, est
   b. dropping final e and adding ing
   c. doubling the consonant before adding ing
   d. changing y to i before es
4. Compound words
5. Contractions
6. Vowel rules
   a. vowel in one syllable word is short
   b. vowel in syllable or word ending in e is long
   c. two vowels together, first is long and second is silent
7. Possessive forms
8. C followed by i, e, y makes s sound
   C followed by a, o, u makes k sound
9. G followed by i, e, y makes j sound
   G followed by a, o, u makes guh sound
10. Silent letters in kn, wr, gn

B. Learns new skills of:

1. Forming plurals
   --by adding s, es, ies
   --by changing f to v and adding es
2. Similarities of sound such as x and cks (box and blocks)

C. Syllabication rules

1. There are usually as many syllables in a word as there are vowels
2. Where there is a single consonant between two vowels, the vowel goes with the first syllable (pu/pil)
3. When there is a double consonant, the syllable break is between the two consonants and one is silent (lit/tle)

D. Can hyphenate words using syllable rules

E. Understands use of primary accent mark

F. Knows to accent first syllable, unless it is a prefix, otherwise accent second syllable

III. Comprehension

A. Can find main idea in story

B. Can keep events in proper sequence

C. Can draw logical conclusions

D. Is able to see relationships

E. Can predict outcomes

F. Can follow printed directions

G. Can read for a definite purpose

1. For pleasure
2. To obtain answer to question
3. To obtain general idea of content

H. Classify items

I. Use index

J. Alphabetize words by first two letters

K. Knows technique of skimming

L. Can determine what source to obtain information (dictionary, encyclopedia, index, glossary, etc.)

M. Use maps and charts

IV. Oral Reading

A. Reads with a pleasing voice quality

B. Reads with adequate volume

C. Reads with clear and distinct enunciation

D. Accuracy in pronunciation

E. Ability to convey meaning to listeners

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

FOURTH LEVEL READING SKILLS

I. Vocabulary

A. Word Recognition

1. Introduce new words in content fields
2. Recognize similarities of known words
   a. compound words
   b. root words
   c. suffixes, prefixes
   d. plurals
   e. hyphenated words
   f. contractions
3. Recognizes unusual characteristics of words

B. Word Meaning

1. Develop ability in getting meaning from context
2. Use new words in sentences to show meaning
3. Knows punctuation
   a. italics
   b. quotation marks
   c. parenthesis
   d. exclamation marks
4. Use of map skills

C. Review Dolch Words

II. Word Attack Skills

A. Structural analysis

1. Knows rules for syllables
   a. Each syllable must contain a vowel and a single vowel can be a syllable
   b. Suffixes and prefixes are syllables with meanings of their own
   c. The root word is not divided
   d. If the first vowel is followed by two consonants, the first syllable usually ends with the first consonant (pen cil)
   e. If the first vowel is followed by a single consonant, the consonant usually begins the second syllable (a maze, am ple)
   f. If a word ends in le preceded by a consonant, that consonant begins the last syllable
   g. The letter x always goes with the preceding vowel to form a syllable (ex it)
   h. The letters ck go with the preceding vowel and end the syllable (chick en)
2. Knows accent clues
   a. The first syllable is usually accented, unless it is a prefix

b. Beginning syllables de, re, be, in and a are usually unaccented
c. Endings that form syllables are usually unaccented (run ning)
d. ck following a single vowel is accented (jack et)

3. Teach these suffixes and prefixes:
   a. Suffixes:

ness	(being)	sickness
ment	(result of)	movement
ward	(in direction of)	backward
ous	(full of)	joyous
ious	(abounding in)	gracious
eous		
et	(little)	leaflet
able	(capable of being)	capable
ible		credible
ic	(like, made of)	magic
ish	(like)	foolish
ant	(being)	vacant
ent	(one who)	president
age	(collection of)	baggage
ance	(state of being)	disturbance
ence	(state of quality)	violence
wise	(ways)	crosswise
ling	(little)	duckling
ty	(state)	unity
ity		vicinity
ure	(denoting action)	pleasure
ion	(condition or quality)	action

   b. Prefixes:

dis	(not, apart)	dismiss
in	(not)	invade
mis	(wrong)	mistake
anti	(against)	anticlimax
non	(not)	nonsense
com	(with)	combine
con	(with)	connect
pre	(before)	prepare
super	(over)	superior
tri	(three	tricycle
sub	(under)	submarine
post	(after)	postscript
ab	(from)	abnormal
trans	(across)	translate
em	(in)	embark
de	(from)	depart
inter	(between)	interurban
pro	(in front of)	promote

ex	(out of or out)	explain
en	(in)	enter
ob	(against)	object
per	(fully, through)	perfect

B. Phonic analysis

1. Review phonic skills
   a. Single consonants and blends
   b. Short and long vowels
   c. Vowel teams:
      ee ai au oa oi ou
      ea ay aw oo oy ow
2. Review Vowel rules
   a. In attacking a vowel sound try first the short sound; if the word then doesn't make sense try the long sound
   b. Vowels are usually short when they appear as single vowels and are followed by a consonant
   c. Vowels are usually given the long sound when they appear alone and are the last letters of a word
   d. When two vowels appear together in a word, the first vowel is long and the second is silent
   e. In short words containing two vowels where one of the vowels is a final e, the first vowel will have a long sound while the final e is silent

C. Training in use of dictionary and glossary

1. As taught on third grade level
   a. Review order of letters in alphabet
   b. Review the alphabetical arrangement of words
2. Teach the division of dictionary to determine in which 1/3 or 1/4 the word may be found
3. Teach the meaning and use of the phonetic spelling that follows in parenthesis each word in the dictionary
4. Teach the meaning and use of the pronunciation key given at the bottom of every page.
5. Teach the selecting of the meaning which fits best according to the context in which the word is used.
6. Teach the meaning and use of guide words
7. Teach the meaning and use of the secondary accent mark

III. Comprehension

A. Finding the main idea

1. Choosing titles for material read
2. Summarizing
3. Can identify key words and topic sentences

B. Finding details

1. Finding specific information
2. Interpreting descriptive words and phrases
3. Selecting facts to remember
4. Selecting facts to support main ideas
5. Using study guides, charts, outlines
6. Verifying answers
7. Arranging ideas in sequence

C. Creative reading

1. Able to interpret story ideas (generalize)
2. Able to see relationships
3. Able to identify the mood of a reading selection
4. Able to identify author's purpose
5. Able to identify character traits

D. Formal outlining

1. Form
   a. Main Ideas (I, II, III)
   b. Subordinate ideas (A, B, C)
2. Talking from an outline

IV. Oral Reading

A. Review previously taught skills

B. Eye-voice span of three words

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

FIFTH LEVEL READING SKILLS

I. Vocabulary

A. Word recognition of vocabulary in content areas

Social Studies, English, Arithmetic, Science, miscellaneous

B. Meaning of words
1. Interpreting word meanings
2. Semantics
3. Synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, heteronyms
4. Knows abstract meanings of words
5. Understands figurative and colorful expressions
6. Understands colloquial speech

III. Word Attack Skills

A. Phonics skills

1. Syllabication
   a. Each syllable must contain a vowel and a single vowel can be a syllable
   b. The root or base word is a syllable and is not divided
   c. Blends are not divided (th, str)
   d. Suffixes and prefixes are syllables (dusty, in come)
   e. If the vowel in a syllable is followed by two consonants, the syllable usually ends with the first consonant
   f. If a vowel in a syllable is followed by only one consonant, the syllable usually end with a vowel
   g. If a word ends in le, the consonant just before the l begins the last syllable
   h. When there is an r after a vowel, the r goes with the vowel to make the "er" sound (er ir ur)

2. Vowel sounds (review long and short sounds)
   a. When there is only one vowel in a word or syllable the vowel is short
   b. When there are two vowels in a word or syllable, the first vowel is long and the second is silent

3. Accent
   a. In a word of 2 or more syllables, the first syllable is usually accented.

B. Dictionary

1. Alphabetization
   a. Division into quarters and thirds
   b. Classifying words by second, third, and fourth letters

2. Using a dictionary
   a. Recognize and learn abbreviated parts of speech as n. = noun; v. = verb; adj. = adjective; adv. = adverb
   b. Learning the preferred pronunciation

3. Use of guide words
4. Syllabication and accent
5. Interpreting diacritical markings (bottom of page)
6. Interpreting key to pronunciations (bottom of page)
7. Interpreting phonetic re-spelling
8. Cross references
9. Plurals--irregular (deer, deer; shelf, shelves)
10. Comparative and superlative adjectives (many, more, most)
11. Change in accent and its effect on pronunciation and meaning of words (pre' sent, present')
12. Secondary accent
13. Parts of a verb. Tenses--present and past
14. Adverbs derived from adjectives (ly ending as a clue or help)

C. Glossary

1. Dictionary of words for one particular book
2. Use guide words
3. Find meanings to understand what is being read

D. Context clues

1. Review using context clues
2. Review associating ideas with words
3. Review associating ideas with characters
4. Sentence structure (noun, verb)
5. In poetry, rhythm scheme can sometimes help

III. <u>Comprehension</u>

A. Locating information

1. Table of contents
   a. Examine tables of contents of several books

b. List titles and have pupils use table of contents to locate pages

2. Examine books to find: title page, pictures, key, guide words, publisher, copyright year

B. Reference materials

1. The encyclopedia
   a. Topics arranged alphabetically
   b. Show meaning of characters on back of each volume
   c. Compare dictionaries and encyclopedias for differences of materials
   d. Pupils should know names of important children's encyclopedias

2. The atlas and maps
   a. Examine atlas to find answers for questions on location, relative size, directions and distance
   b. Use maps to explain latitude and longitude. Compare with known facts about streets and highways

3. Magazines and newspapers. Use to supply more recent information than textbook could contain
4. Knows proper use of dictionary
5. Time tables
   a. Reading and interpreting
   b. Following directions
6. Card catalogue
   a. Explain that every book has its place on the shelf
   b. Each class of books has its own call number
   c. Examine cards--author, title, subject
   d. Give practice in location of titles and call numbers

7. Using a telephone book
8. Catalogues

C. Reading to organize

1. Outlining; use roman numerals and letters
2. Establish a sequence; list sentences in order of event
3. Follow directions
4. Summarize

D. Note taking

1. From reading
2. From lectures

E. Reading for appreciation

1. To derive pleasure
2. To form sensory impressions
3. To develop imagery
4. To understand characters
   a. physical appearance
   b. emotional make-up

IV. Oral Reading

A. Recognize and pronounce words with speed and accuracy

B. Group words into meaningful phrases

C. Interpret marks of punctuation accurately

D. Re-express to an audience the meaning and feelings expressed by an author

E. Express emotion sincerely

F. Read in a pleasant, well-modulated voice

G. Read with poise and self-confidence

H. Dramatize portions of the story

I. "Televise" or give radio version of story incidents

J. Take part in a stage version of a story

K. Verify answers to questions

L. Interpret characterizations

M. Interpret word pictures

N. Interpret general mood of text (humor or suspense)

O. Interpret sensations given by words

P. Interpret the organization of text

1. Main thought in the paragraph
2. Main events in sequence
3. Main heads and sub-heads in outline
4. Directions for carrying out an activity

BARBE READING SKILLS CHECK LIST

— SIXTH LEVEL READING SKILLS

I. Vocabulary

A. Word Recognition

1. Context clues
   a. How the word is used in a sentence
   b. Function of word
2. Picture clues
   a. Visual impressions of words
   b. Configuration
3. Language rhythms
   a. Rhyming clues
   b. Appreciation for general rhythm of well-expressed ideas

B. Prefixes and suffixes

Prefix	Meaning
ab	from, away
an	without, not
ad	to, toward
ante	before
bi	two, twice
circum	around
de	from, down from
dia	through, around
ex	out of, from
im	not, in
il, un, in, ir	into, not
inter	between
in, en	in, into, among
intro	within, against
mis	wrong, wrongly
non	not
pan	whole, all
per	fully, through
peri	around, about
post	after, behind
pre	before
pro	for, in front of
re	back, again
se	aside
semi	half, partly
sub	under
super	above, over
trans	beyond, across
tri	three, thrice
un	not

Suffix	Meaning
able, ible	capable of being
acy, ace, ancy, ance	state of being
an, ean, ian	one who, relating to
age	act or condition
ant	n.--one who; adj.--being
er, ar	relating to, like
ary	n.--one who (place where) adj.--relating to
ante	
en	one who is little, made
ence	state of quality
ent	adj.--being; n.--one who
full	full of
fy, ify	to make
hood	state, condition
ic	like, made of
ice	that which, quality or state of being
id	being in a condition of
ion	act or state of being
ize, ise	to make
ist, ite	one who
ity, ty	state
ive	relating to
less	without
ly	in a way
ment	act or state of being
ness	state of being
or, ar, er	one who, that which
ory	
ose, ous	abounding in
some	full of
ward	turning to, in direction
y	like, or full of

(Prefixes and suffixes list prepared by Ruth Strang)

4. Initial and ending sounds
    a. Listening for beginning sounds
    b. Completing sounds of words

C. Word Meaning

1. Multiple meanings
2. Associating words and feelings
3. Formal and informal language
    a. Speech pattern
    b. Level of language usage
4. Recall
    a. Aided
    b. Unaided

5. Hyphenated words
6. Synonyms--same or nearly same
7. Homonyms--pronounced same, different meaning and spelling
8. Antonyms--opposites
9. Heteronym--pronounced differently, same spelling
10. Interpreting colloquial and figurative expressions
11. Enriching imagery

II. Word Attack Skills

A. Phonic and structural characteristics of words
   1. Initial consonants--word families--simple endings
   2. Consonant blends and short and long vowels
   3. Syllabication, prefixes and suffixes
   4. Teams (oi, oy, aw, au)

B. Vowel sounds
   1. Vowel rules
      a. When there is only one vowel in a word or syllable, the vowel is short
      b. When there are two vowels in a word of syllables, the first vowel is long and the second is silent
      c. When there are two vowels together, the first vowel is long and the second is silent
   2. Rule I--Every syllable has at least one vowel in it. e.g. ever--never--children
   3. Rule II--Two vowels in a word or syllable--first is long, second is silent. e.g. kit--kite; at--ate
   4. Rule III--When two vowels are together, the first is long and the second is silent. ("ou" an exception) e.g. mail, meat, pie, boat
   5. Blended sounds of vowel forms. The combination of au and aw makes a sound like <u>awe</u>. <u>OU</u> and <u>ow</u> make the sound "ow" like when you are hurt. <u>Oy</u> and <u>oi</u> make sounds like boy.

C. Syllabication
   1. Rules for syllables
      a. Each syllable must have a vowel and a single vowel can be a syllable
      b. The root word is a syllable and not divided
      c. Blends are not divided (th, str, wh, etc.)
      d. Suffixes and prefixes are syllables
      e. Suffix "ed" if preceded by a single d or t usually forms separate syllable (rest ed)

f. If vowel in a syllable is followed by two consonants, the syllable ends with the first consonant
g. If the vowel in a syllable is followed by only one consonant, the syllable ends with a vowel
h. If a word ends in le, the consonant just before the l begins the last syllable (ta ble, han dle)
i. When there is an r after a vowel, the r goes with the vowel to make the "er" sound

D. Accents
1. In a word of two or more syllables, the first syllable is usually accented unless it is a prefix
2. In most two syllable words that end in a consonant followed by y, the first syllable is accented and the last is unaccented
3. Beginning syllables de, re, be, er, in, and a are usually not accented
4. When a suffix is added, the accent falls on or within the root word
5. Endings that form syllables are usually unaccented
6. When a final syllable ends in le, that syllable is usually not accented

E. Possessives

F. Contractions

G. Silent letters

H. Dictionary skills

I. Glossary

III. Comprehension

A. Outlining

1. Note taking
2. Sequence of ideas or events
3. Skimming
a. Locating facts and details
b. Selecting and rejecting materials to fit a certain purpose
4. Main ideas of paragraphs
5. Interpreting characters' feelings
6. Topic sentences

B. Following directions

C. Drawing conclusions

D. Reading for verification

E. Locating information
   1. Reference materials in reading
      a. Graphs
      b. Maps--reading and interpreting in detail
      c. Encyclopedias--locating materials or research
      d. Headings and other typographical aids

   2. Library skills
      a. Card catalogs, use of (cross reference)
      b. Book classifications
      c. Care of books and other materials

   3. Periodicals or sources of information
      a. Authors
      b. Introductions--author's
      c. Table of Contents
      d. Index--use of
      e. Glossary
      f. Title page
      g. Copyright
      h. Date of publication
      i. Footnotes
      j. Tables

   4. Resource materials
      a. Packets and pictures
      b. Charts--detail

   5. Resource people

F. Rate of reading
   1. Different rate for different purpose
   2. Comprehension at high level

G. Critical reading

IV. <u>Oral Reading</u>

A. Choral reading and poetry
   1. Pronunciation
   2. Phrasing
   3. Rhymes
   4. Interpretation

B. Listening appreciation

APPENDIX B

Mathematics Skills Check List

NAME OF STUDENT_____

GRADE_____SCHOOL_____

TUTOR_____

CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS

SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF SKILLS

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
NUMBERNESS (N)					
N-1 Conservation of numbers					
N-2 Reversibility					
N-3 Classification					
N-4 Counting by 1's to 100					
N-5 Writing Numerals 0 to 100					
N-6 Place Value ones, tens, hundreds					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
N-7 Terminology greater, less, more, before, after, few, many, large, small					
ADDITION OF WHOLE NUMBERS (A)					
A-1 Terms--add, sum, answer, total					
A-2 Addition of two whole numbers					
A-3 100 Basic addition facts					
A-4 Vertical addition problems (alogrithm)					
A-5 Column addition					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
A-6 Horizontal addition problems; mathematical sentences					
A-7 Two place addition					
A-8 Three place addition					
A-9 Addition with no carrying					
A-10 Addition carrying from one's place					
A-11 Addition carrying from tens' place					
A-12 Addition carrying from consecutive places					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
A-13 Addition carrying from alternate places					
A-14 Counting by 2's, 5's' 10's, 4's, 7's . . . Try starting at another number, i.e. by 5's starting at 3 (3,8, 13, 18 . . .)					
A-15 Problem solving story problems involving addition					
SUBTRACTION OF WHOLE NUMBERS (S)					
S-1 Terms: subtract, difference, take away					
S-2 Subtraction of two whole numbers					
S-3 100 basic subtraction facts					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
S-4 Subtraction with no regrouping necessary					
S-5 Subtraction with regrouping in tens' and ones' places					
S-6 Subtraction with regrouping in hundreds' and tens' places					
S-7 Subtraction with regrouping in consecutive places					
S-8 Subtraction with regrouping in alternate places					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
S-9 Problem Solving story problems involving subtraction					
TELLING TIME (T) T-1 Terms: clock, watch, hour, minute, second, half-hour					
T-2 Adding hours, minutes to a specified time					
T-3 Subtracting hours, minutes from a specified time					
T-4 Problem solving involving the clock					
CALENDAR (C) C-1 Terms: year, month, week, day					
C-2 Names of the months					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
C-3 Names of a month before and after a certain month					
C-4 Problem solving involving the calendar					
MONEY (MO) MO-1 Terms: dollar, cents, signs, decimal, point, penny, nickel, dime					
MO-2 Equivalency of coins					
MO-3 Problems involving the addition and subtraction of money					
MEASUREMENT (ME) ME-1 Ruler measurement--inch $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
ME-2 Liquid, dry, and weight measurement--oz, pts, qts, gal					
TEMPERATURE (TE)					
TE-1 Reading a thermometer as a number line					
TE-2 Using addition and subtraction to find temperature differences					
TE-3 Reading and writing the degree symbol for temperature					
TE-4 Reading and writing the negative symbol for below zero					
MULTIPLICATION (M)					
M-1 Terms: factor, product, times					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
M-2 100 basic multiplication facts					
M-3 Multiplication with no carrying					
M-4 Multiplication with no carrying but a zero in the ones' place					
M-5 Multiplication with carrying from the ones' to the tens' place					
M-6 Multiplication with zero in the tens' and/or hundreds' place					
M-7 Multiplication with carrying from the tens' to the hundreds' place					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
M-8 Multiplication with carrying in consecutive places					
M-9 Multiplication with carrying in alternate places					
M-10 Multiplication with two place numbers					
M-11 Multiplication with numbers ending in zero					
M-12 Multiplication with three place numbers					
M-13 Search for missing factors in sentences					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
M-14 Problem solving involving multiplication					
DIVISION (D) D-1 Terms: quotient, divisor, dividend					
D-2 90 basic division facts					
D-3 Even division one place divisors					
D-4 Uneven division in the subtraction but no remainders					
D-5 Uneven division in the subtraction with remainders					
D-6 Two place divisors--easy types					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
D-7 Two place divisors--complex types					
D-8 Two place divisors--estimation difficulties					
D-9 Two place divisors--zero's in quotients					
FRACTIONS (F)					
F-1 Terms: part of, numerator, denominator, like and unlike fractions (proper and improper) mixed numeral					
F-2 Naming certain parts of a whole: 1/4, 1/2 . . .					
F-3 Recognition of fraction families (1/2, 1/4, 1/8) (1/5, 1/10)					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
F-4 Addition of like fractions					
F-5 Subtraction of like fractions					
F-6 Finding equivalent fractions					
F-7 Addition of unlike fractions					
F-8 Subtraction of unlike fractions					
F-9 Addition of mixed numerals with like fractions					
F-10 Subtraction of mixed numerals with like fractions					
F-11 Addition of mixed numerals with unlike fractions					
F-12 Subtraction of mixed numerals with unlike fractions					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
F-13 Subtraction of mixed numerals with regrouping					
F-15 Multiplication of a fraction and a whole number					
F-16 Multiplication of a fraction and a mixed number					
F-17 Multiplication of mixed numerals					
F-18 Multiplication of mixed numerals and a whole number					
F-19 Division of fractions					
F-20 Division of whole number by a fraction					
F-21 Division of a mixed numeral by a fraction					

SEQUENCE	EXAMPLE	Fall (blue)	Winter (red)	Spring (green)	COMMENTS (please color code)
R RATIO (R)					
DE DECIMALS (D)					
PC PER CENT (PC)					
MEASUREMENT--HIGHER LEVEL (ME)					
ME-3 Perimeter					
ME-4 Area					
ME-5 Volume					
ME-6 Cubic					

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX C

Assumptions About Learning and Knowledge

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE

INSTRUCTIONS: Make a mark somewhere along each line which best represents your own feelings about each statement.

Example: School serves the wishes and needs of adults better than it does the wishes and needs of children.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

1. ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT CHILDREN'S LEARNING

Motivation
Assumption 1. Children are innately curious and will explore their environment without adult intervention.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 2. Exploratory behavior is self-perpetuating.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Conditions for Learning
Assumption 3. The child will display natural exploratory behavior if he is not threatened.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 4. Confidence in self is highly related to capacity for learning and for making important choices affecting one's learning.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagreee	strongly disagree

Assumption 5. Active exploration in a rich environment, offering a wide array of manipulative materials will facilitate children's learning.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 6. Play is not distinguished from work as the predominant mode of learning in early childhood.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 7. Children have both the competence and the right to make significant decisions concerning their own learning.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 8. Children will be likely to learn if they are given considerable choice in the selection of the materials they wish to work with and in the choice of questions they wish to pursue with respect to those materials.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 9. Given the opportunity, children will choose to engage in activities which will be of high interest to them.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 10. If a child is fully involved in and is having fun with an activity, learning is taking place.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Social Learning

Assumption 11. When two or more children are interested in exploring the same problem or the same materials, they will often choose to collaborate in some way.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 12. When a child learns something which is important to him, he will share it with others.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Intellectual Development

Assumption 13. Concept formation proceeds very slowly.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 14. Children learn and develop intellectually not only at their own rate but in their own style.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 15. Children pass through similar stages of intellectual development, each in his own way and at his own rate and in his own time.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 16. Intellectual growth and development take place through a sequence of concrete experiences followed by abstractions.

---

strongly agree | agree | no strong feeling | disagree | strongly disagree

Assumption 17. Verbal abstractions should follow direct experience with objects and ideas, not precede them or substitute for them.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Evaluation

Assumption 18. The preferred source of verification for a child's solution to a problem comes through the materials he is working with.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 19. Errors are necessarily a part of the learning process; they are to be expected and even desired, for they contain information essential for further learning.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 20. Those qualities of a person's learning which can be carefully measured are not necessarily the most important.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 21. Objective measures of performance may have a negative effect upon learning.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 22. Learning is best assessed intuitively, by direct observation.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 23. The best way of evaluating the effect of the school experience on the child is to observe him over a long period of time.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 24. The best measure of a child's work is his work.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumptions about Knowledge

Assumption 25. The quality of being is more important than the quality of knowing; knowledge is a means of education, not its end. The final test of an education is what a man is, not what he knows.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 26. Knowledge is a function of one's personal integration of experience and therefore does not fall into neatly separate categories or "disciplines."

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 27. The structure of knowledge is personal and idiosyncratic; it is a function of the synthesis of each individual's experience with the world.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 28. Little or no knowledge exists which it is essential for everyone to acquire.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

Assumption 29. It is possible, even likely, that an individual may learn and possess knowledge of a phenomenon and yet be unable to display it publicly. Knowledge resides with the knower, not in its public expression.

strongly agree	agree	no strong feeling	disagree	strongly disagree

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