Methods for securing public support for public schools in a small New England industrial community.

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Thesis

Methods for Securing Public Support for Public Schools
In a Small New England Industrial Community

Submitted by

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(A.B., Holy Cross, 1928)

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First Reader: [signature]

Second Reader: [signature]
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Statement of problem. -- It is the purpose of this study to determine some practicable methods of gaining both moral and material support for the schools of a typical small New England industrial community, like Ware, Massachusetts.

Source of the problem. -- The writer has worked as teacher and administrator in this community for over twenty years. The town, situated in a picturesque river valley, surrounded by hills, is rich in the beauty of its natural setting, in a history going back to its settlement in 1717 and its Indian name Nenameseck, and in community pride.

It is proud of the fact that since the establishment, early in the nineteenth century, of sawmills, grist-mills, and a textile mill, it has become an established industrial and shopping center. Its principal manufactures are woolens and worsteds, cotton goods, gummed and coated papers and cloth, women's hats and shoes, ice-skating and baseball shoes, pipe-fittings and machinery. The resources of the three banks in the town total over $25,000,000; its library has over twenty thousand volumes; its hospital has recently
been modernized and enlarged. The town has a beautiful hundred-acre park, a weekly newspaper, an airport, and an independent radio station. It is served by bus-lines and freight-train lines. The people in the town are also proud of its record of freedom from crime. The majority of them are church-going, God-fearing people. The population of the town is 7517\(^1\) of which number eighty per cent are native-born. Of these the majority are first-generation Americans of Polish and French-Canadian descent. The rest of the racial stock is English, Irish, Italian, Jewish, English-Canadian. Almost fifty per cent of those employed are "operatives" in the mills. The rest of the population is employed as follows:\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-professional</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and Farm Management</td>
<td>2.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proprietors, Managers, Etc.</td>
<td>7.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical-Sales</td>
<td>10.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Service</td>
<td>7.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Laborers</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers - other</td>
<td>6.97</td>
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\(^1\)Town Clerk's Statistics.

\(^2\)Community Statistical Abstract, Bureau of Business Research, Boston University College of Business Administration, Boston, 1949.

\(^3\)Ibid.
Ware's parents send 269 children to the high school, 147 to the junior high school, 417 to the elementary grades. Two parochial elementary schools (grades 1 - 8) enroll 416 pupils.

**Importance of the problem.**

"In recent years democracy is being taken less and less for granted. New meaning and deeper significance are being attached to the great American dream. There is a growing realization that freedom is not something bestowed automatically upon each generation, but something which must be safeguarded continuously and exercised responsibly by every individual. Continued development of the American way of life requires a vastly improved system of public schools. An adequate and appropriate education must be provided for all."  

"To the extent (these) schools continue strong we may have confidence in the vigor of our American traditions: to the degree the effectiveness of public education is increased, we may be hopeful that the oncoming generations will be committed to American ideals and equipped to develop still further this unique society of free men."

But here in New England, the earliest home of democracy, where the most democratic of political instruments - the town meeting - is still in use, that most essential and democratic of American institutions, the public school,

1/Ware School Dept.


is regularly supported by only a minority of the townspeople voting at town-meeting. Many voters stay away from town-meeting; many of those who go do not vote. There are 4,806 voters in the town of Ware; the Town Hall can seat 840; the number at the regular town meeting in February 1951 was 560. The vote on the school budget totaled 500. Those who voted for the amount of money requested by the school committee were 200. During the ten years 1941-1951 school committees have received less than they asked for. The above facts show a public opinion in Ware either antagonistic or indifferent to the fate of the public schools. During the twenty years of the writer's observation, plans for the improvement of the Ware schools have suffered almost consistent defeat. The records show a similar history previous to that. The vote of the majority attending the town meeting year after year is for limitation of the budget, which results in crowded classrooms, underpaid teachers, antiquated buildings, insufficient curricular offerings, with the resulting crippling effects on the education of the children. If the opinion of a number of the voters can be changed by the use of various community relations techniques, then the children, the community, and society will be benefited, and—at least in one small

1/Town Clerk’s Statistics.
town—the bulwarks of democracy will have been strengthened. It is possible that the community attitude cannot be changed. However, it is the belief of the writer that since public opinion on school matters has been changed elsewhere, it can be changed in Ware, and that if it is changed the town will vote adequate funds for school purposes; new buildings, better salaries, more adequate curricular offerings.

**Definition of terms.**—By "moral" support is meant the kind of support that is given by the mother to the child, the wife to her husband, the college to its athletic team, the civilian at home to the soldier at the front. It supplies the necessary basis for effective work: the feeling that someone trusts the worker to do his best, that to someone what is being done and how matters, that his efforts are of major, sometimes critical, importance, and that there is someone who is constantly hoping for his success and who will do everything in his power to assure it. The public that gives moral support to the schools supplies the essential emotional basis for action. No effective work is done by human beings or their institutions without this support. Moral support of the schools by the public means also that the people who are obliged to maintain the schools must want to do so. In other words, the attitude of the public toward the schools must be "pro" rather than "anti." "The term attitude signifies a certain
bent, bias, or predisposition - an inclination to activity."
Thus moral support means that the public has an inclination to favorable rather than unfavorable action toward the schools. "The American public school is limited in its institutional effectiveness by the confidence of the people." Support of the educational program is determined by the willingness and the ability of the people to contribute their moral (and financial) support. Without such support the functioning of the schools is feeble, partial, ineffective. With it there is "effective teamwork" and "a harmony of understanding."

"Material support" means the furnishing of funds for an adequate school program within the limits of the community's ability. But what is an "adequate school program"? And what are the "limits of the community's ability"? Obviously, an adequate school program cannot be exactly defined: it differs from place to place and from time to time, and its limits cannot be set. According to The Finance Programs of the Forty-Eight States, it is generally recognized that in addition to the traditional twelve grades, kindergarten and junior college facilities should be available,

1/AASA Yearbook, op. cit., p. 12.
3/Ibid., p. 476.
4/AASA Yearbook, op. cit., p. 16.
and that school systems should make provision for certain year-round educational activities, for adult education, for the education of exceptional children, for vocational education, and for necessary administrative and supervisory services. Ideally, these phases of the program should all be of highest quality. Suffice it to say, then, that any community that has a school program less comprehensive than this should not abandon tax effort short of the community's ability to be taxed.

Needless to say, the answer to the question, "What are the limits of the community's ability?" is not simple to determine. There are wide variations. Since in New England most revenue for the schools comes from a property tax (79.9% of it in Massachusetts in 1949-50) the question of assessed valuation is involved. In any community the assessed value of property may be lower (or higher) than the actual value. Since the amount of money raised by taxation depends on assessed value as well as on tax rate, the question of whether the assessed valuation of real estate represents the actual value of such property is an important one in determining a community's paying capacity. Finance Programs of the Forty-Eight States has the following to say:

"Some communities in nearly every state are making three or four times the effort of other communities to support their schools from local taxes. In most

communities the people are spending more for certain 'luxuries' than for education. There seems to be no valid evidence to indicate that the states and communities making the greatest effort to support their schools are seriously handicapped.... Obviously.... many communities in nearly every state are not yet making the effort which is necessary to support the type of program which will be needed to care properly for the children and youth in the coming years."

For the purposes of this study, then, moral support means that the public which is obliged to support the schools wants to do so and thus supplies the necessary emotional basis for the effective functioning of the schools; and material support means the furnishing of funds for an adequate school program within the limits of the community's ability.

1/Ibid., p. 62.
CHAPTER II
SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE

In order to become acquainted with ideas basic to understanding school-community relations, the writer read literature in the field. This included a study of books treating of public relations in general, others dealing with public relations in connection with education, the literature of the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools, and magazine articles. The information thus gained is organized in this chapter under the following four aspects:

1. Various concepts of community relations
2. The importance of community-school relations in a democracy
3. Guiding principles which may be used as a basis for formulating and putting into practice a program of school-community relations.
4. Agents involved in community-school relations.
1. Concepts of Community-School Relations

Public Relations.-- Public relations in connection with public schools began with the first school; no public school ever operated in a social vacuum apart from the society it served. In every school and community many opportunities arise for affecting public relations in some degree. Even the most casual contacts tend to influence the public either favorably or unfavorably. The fascinating accounts (true or false) carried home by the children can scarcely be eliminated, even if one should desire to do so. Some parents will at some time come to the school and leave with some impressions. Tax bills are a part of public relations. The school plant makes impressions, even from the outside. Every school activity and every contact between members of the school personnel and the children and adults of the community are public relations. Thus some sort of public relations is inevitable.

Lesly defines public relations as "all activities and attitudes intended to judge, influence, and control the opinion of any group or groups of persons in the interest of any individual, group, or institution."


Another definition can be derived from the following statement of Elton Mayo:

"I believe that social study should begin with what may be described as communication: that is, the capacity of an individual to communicate his feelings and ideas to another, the capacity of groups to communicate effectively and intimately with each other."

"Public Relations for America's Schools," the Twenty-Eighth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators, has this to say:

"Public relations seek to bring about a harmony of understanding between any group and the public it serves and upon whose good will it depends. Public relations so defined must call upon many areas of knowledge for its background material. Social and educational psychology, economics, sociology, history, and even philosophy have contributions to make. One writer refuses any severe delimitation of his definition:

'Public relations is more than a narrow set of rules - it is a broad concept. It is the entire body of relationships that go to make up our impressions of an individual, an organization, or an idea. In building good public relations, we must be aware of all the forces, drives, emotions, and conflicting and contradicting factors that are part of our social life and civilization.'

Harmony of understanding, at least in the case of school public relations, involves far more than 'publicity' or 'interpretation.' It means genuine cooperation in planning and working for good schools, with the public giving as well as receiving ideas. It becomes a two-way process, a two-way flow between school and community which provides the basis for mutual understanding and effective teamwork."

2/AASA Yearbook, op. cit., p. 12.
"School public relations are as old as teaching itself. They began when the first pupil faced the first teacher in the first classroom. They are also basic and inescapable. Those who work in education have public relations simply as the natural result of the contacts of teachers and other members of the staff with pupils, parents, and others in the community.

...A school's public relations consist of what people think about the school staff and program, and how they value them and what they are trying to do."1/

Publicity.-- It is clear from the above statements that the term public relations is not synonymous with publicity. Publicity is a tool of public relations.

"Public relations describes a condition more accurately than it does a program...Publicity is only one activity aspect of the total program and should be restricted narrowly to materials which appear in public print, motion or talking pictures, or are transmitted over the radio."2/

"It was probably the necessity of 'selling a new idea' that prompted the educator to appropriate the term 'publicity' from the business world....Every device of communicating thought had been employed in this service. Well-trained and well-paid directors of publicity make a practice of taking advantage of every persuasive trick of psychology and base their practices upon laboratory research and experimental study that comprehend the use of the most refined statistical measurements...It was quite natural for those who were interested in maintaining support of the public schools to seize upon an already developed technique for increasing the appreciation of a commodity or service. Through some such process publicity took its place in the schools."3/

Farley evaluates educational publicity as follows:

1/Ibid., p. 155.


3/Benjamin Farley, School Publicity, Stanford University Press, Stanford University, Cal., 1943, pp. 4-5.
"The concept of educational publicity as a means of 'selling the schools to the public' is not comprehensive enough, however, to encompass the whole job. The phrase may have value on certain occasions, and may serve as a stereotype in visualizing some of the functions of publicity for certain people, but it falls far short of describing the practice and suggesting the significance of this new school service. The need for interpretation, like that for administration and for research, has arisen from the nature of organized education itself. For while it may often with advantage employ the principles of psychology used effectively in ordinary advertising, both its objectives and its results differ essentially from those of a sales campaign."1/

Interpretation.-- This suggestion of Farley's was developed more completely by later writers and the term "interpretation" superseded "educational publicity." Grinnell stated in 1937,

"As month after month what has been called 'school publicity' gains deeper purpose and more dignity, and is conceived by school men as a moral responsibility to the community, the word 'interpretation' becomes more generally heard.... Everywhere in progressive educational circles today the idea is taking root that information to the public should be carefully organized and interpreted."2/

Moehlman says that:

"Social interpretation for the schools may be considered as those institutional activities which keep the institution aware of community opinion and needs and keep the people informed of the purposes, values, conditions, and needs of public education.... It is an ethical attempt to maintain the institution close to the people through understanding and appreciation."2/

1/ Ibid., pp. 4-5.


"Its purpose is not selfish, its motives are not ulterior - it merely represents recognition and acceptance of the legal and moral responsibility to render a constant account of stewardship to the community." \(^1\)

Yeager defines educational interpretation as follows:

"The basic principle underlying educational interpretation then may be said to be a realization that the public school must comprehend a philosophy of continuous right relationships with the public it serves, acquainting the public understandingly with the needs, functions, costs, and outcomes of public education. It involves a certain resilient sensitivity to the community it serves, as to its needs, reactions, desires, and abilities to mesh with the school program."

**Mutual Interaction.** — A more recent conception of public relations that has developed is: "cooperative endeavor in the interests of child welfare in which the community and school cooperate." \(^2\)

Yeager explains it as follows:

"A common endeavor on the part of all concerned to amalgamate home, school, and community interests, values, agencies, materials, and institutions adequately in the interests of a better democratic way of living for all children.... Obviously, then, the education of the whole child is a cooperative endeavor. The school is but one agency in the process. The home has a definite place and a responsibility which it cannot avoid or delegate. The community has certain responsibilities which its members can neither void nor fail to assume. The problem is how to coordinate all of those desirable learning situations in which the child finds himself towards the finer ends of a better living in a democracy, under the cooperative endeavor of all...

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 104.


\(^3\)Ibid. p. 415.
of all who are or should be concerned in the endeavor. Added to this thought is that of seeking more desirable learning situations and nullifying others less desirable, towards a better social order.\footnote{1/}

This would result in developing policies that would integrate the child and the community - would reestablish the adaptation to his society that was and is the end-result of the education of the child in primitive communities, and in a simpler social and economic order.

"Complexity has replaced simplicity in human relations. An impersonal attitude which submerges the dynamic force of personalized concerns has invaded living. Independence has been shattered as an ideal by the brutal reality of interdependence. . . . It is on this level that we must now struggle with the problem of recapturing those values which the sense of being one with a community introduced into living.\footnote{2/}"

Yeager's point of view apparently differs from Moehlman's quantitatively rather than qualitatively.

The concept of school-community relations is a broad one. It includes "publicity." It includes "educational interpretation." It includes "mutual interaction." School-community relations, in brief, involve a two-way flow of ideas between school and community, working toward harmony of understanding, to the end that there may be cooperation in working for good schools.

\footnote{1/}{Ibid., pp. 418-419.}

\footnote{2/}{H. Gordon Hullfish, Developing Common Concerns: the Road to Democracy, quoted in Yeager, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 418.}
2. Importance of Community-School Relations in a Democracy

Close community-school relations, of whatever type and at whatever level appropriate to the individual community circumstances are absolutely essential for the school to do its work effectively. Social institutions in a democracy exist at the pleasure of the people; the public school must not be considered as "operating in a social vacuum, responsive only to academic whim."

"A democratic institution, reduced to its simplest terms is merely a means of providing an essential social service through the willing cooperation of the people accompanied by the efforts of specialized personnel."2/

"The schools belong to the people; they have established them and they support them; they expand them or retard them in accordance with peculiar economic and social conditions and attitudes."3/ As in any relationship among human beings cooperation and support must be mutual.

"Public education finally rests on public opinion, and its existence depends on the maintenance of a public attitude of understanding and confidence. Schools can operate efficiently only to the extent that community confidence results in wholesome cooperation with its program and in provision for adequate finance. Confidence can be established only as the people understand and appreciate the significance and value of the program."4/

2/Ibid., p. 1.
3/Yeager, op. cit., p. 111.
4/Moehlman, op. cit., p. 40.
Conversely, the school must understand the community, its publics, and the nature of public opinion.

Recognition of these facts in a world where the values of democracy are everywhere being challenged has made it imperative that schoolmen and alert citizens everywhere see to it that means be found of creating, bolstering, reanimating the closest of bonds between the people and the schools, to the end that the schools may be in every aspect an organic expression of the educated will of the people, not a mechanical adjunct superimposed upon them.

"Public education finally rests on public opinion, and its existence depends on the maintenance of a public attitude of understanding and confidence. Public opinion develops out of a feeling or conviction toward already accepted beliefs or through the process of education or the impact of propaganda toward the acceptance of new beliefs. Although a large reservoir of static opinion exists in customs and traditions, it is obviously necessary to maintain and improve these attitudes by the process of educating the adult population to current institutional conditions and needs."  

It thus becomes clear that it is the community-relations job of the school personnel both to respond to the public will and to educate that will. "The key to the solution of these relations problems seems to be in the nature, virility, and good judgment of educational leadership." In defining the task of the school administrator in this respect Farnsworth says:

1/Ibid., p. 22.
2/Yeager, op. cit., p. 65.
"He will know the forces at work in his district and will project educational goals and services that are defensible and desirable in a democracy. He will steadily, if slowly, make progress in the achievement of these goals.... By creative application of intelligence it seems possible for man to maintain, advance, and redirect the existing social institutions and particularly the schools.... to meet the changing needs of an evolving social order."

The purpose of this section has been to show the importance of intimate community-school relations in a democracy.

3. Guiding Principles for Community Relations

Yeager names the four philosophical approaches to the community-relations problem as follows: indifference to home and community; selling the schools; educational interpretation; and cooperative endeavor in the interests of complete child welfare. As policies, these are named by the same writer, respectively, Laissez-faire, salesmanship, interpretation and simple participation, and mutual interaction.

There are three points to be kept in mind:

a. Whichever of the latter three approaches is chosen as the most appropriate in any given community as the basis for a community relations program, it is the job of school personnel to respond to the public will and to educate that will.

b. This means educating adults to the "purposes, values, conditions, and needs of the public schools."

1/Yeager, op. cit., p. 404 f.
c. Since adults are human beings, the laws of learning apply to them as well as to the teaching of children.

A fundamental concept then in any community relations program is that human nature is bound to be its main element.

"All associated with the public school enterprise should realize that they are dealing not only with things and issues but also with personalities associated with them." 1/

As pointed out in The Polls and Public Opinion the science of human nature is the one we know the least about.

"Man began his scientific studies at the farthest distance from himself—with astronomy. After a while he crept up a little closer and began to study geology, and mathematics, and geography, and only with considerable reluctance did he begin to study even his own physiology and anatomy. The science of psychology is a very new thing....Finally and very reluctantly did he come down to study himself." 2/

"The techniques of the natural scientist are not suited to the social scientist. The former are not concerned with values and morals. Free will is not involved. Physical phenomena don't just change their minds....The problem of the social scientist is to find out what people are thinking, why they are thinking as they do, and the implications of their thinking." 3/

Although our knowledge of the nature of human beings is relatively meager, certain facts are known about how they learn and how they acquire favorable and unfavorable attitudes. These form the basis of any community relations

1/Yeager, op. cit., p. 379.
3/Thid., p. 10.
program.

The principles based on facts about human nature underlying community relations as worked out by the American Association of School Administrators are as follows.

1. "School public relations must be honest in intent and execution. ... The character of its effort is on display for critical examination by numerous publics. Any misrepresentation carries not only the burden of its lost opportunity to inform but the doubled penalty of eventual public censure and wrath. 'Know the truth and the truth shall make you free.' Sow the truth and the truth shall make you friends.

2. School public relations must be intrinsic. The public relations effort has no identity extrinsic to the program which is going on in the schools. The public relations program should be neither an apology for what is lacking in the school program nor a sales effort to promote what is not fundamentally wanted by school patrons. It passes on to the schools' publics what has been said or done by those responsible for the education of children, and collects and synthesizes the ideas of publics as to what ought to be done in the schools. In this all-inclusive sense the public relations effort is not contained in the utterances of the public relations director. The everyday contacts of teachers and other school employees with the children of a community or their parents are in themselves public relations of the most personal and effective sort—both for good and for ill. Any program which aims to supplement the effectiveness of these everyday contacts cannot be out of harmony with the aims and methods which are found in the classroom itself. The publics resent being fooled and react vigorously when they feel they have been misguided."

This principle means, therefore, that the public relations value of the educational program itself is the proper basis for the school public relations effort. The "child in a good school," according to Public Relations

1/AASA Yearbook, op. cit., p. 59 (Title of Chapter III).
for America's Schools, is the sine qua non of good community relations. "The evidence of research is that the core of the public relations program should be the regular school experience of the children." Grinnell states that

"...to survive complete and honest interpretation the schools must be worthy...Any school man who embarks upon a complete program of interpretation will first assure himself that his schools are sound and progressive, that they merit the continuous support he is asking."  

As Reeder says,

"In the final analysis the work of the schools is the most potent publicity which the schools can receive....The first duty of school officials and employees is to run the most effective school possible with the available funds....To paraphrase an old remark, the people cannot hear what is said about the schools when what the schools are is constantly dinning in their ears."

No exaggerated claim, no high-sounding set of principles, no flashy publicizing of interesting school activities is of any avail unless the interpretation "holds the mirror up to nature" - in this case the nature and the essential worth of the school program.

"Our educational practice should be so sound and rewarding in its achievements that an adequate, interesting, factual, and attractively presented campaign of information will preserve and enlarge the goodwill which results from intelligent contacts with the schools' publics."  

1/Grinnell, op. cit., p. 25.


School public relations must be continuous. Perhaps one of the most harmful mistakes in public relations strategy is the notion that the public relations effort is essentially a series of crises. Crises do sometimes occur in public relations, but the brilliant thrusts in such situations must not be regarded as characteristically the heart of the public relations plan. It should be noted that while sound public relations is a continuous process, there comes a time when a change of pace or an acceleration of activity and an intensification of effort must take place.

Educators can root this principle of continuity in the findings of psychology. The laws of learning...appear to apply to learning, to emotional reactions, and to attitude formation. A continuing stimulus produces a more highly predictable and stronger response than an intermittent or random stimulus. Public opinion in action will result from the combined effects of learned experience, emotional set, and attitude formation - the bases of opinion.

Opinion is not formed on the spot out of the evidence at hand but is developed out of a mysterious interplay between a present situation and the past experience, present attitudes, and emotions of the opinion rooted in deep-laid attitudes and images which are colored by past experience and cultural patterns. In a crisis situation public opinion usually is not the result of cool and deliberate attention but a spontaneous outbreak based upon stereotypes, hostile or friendly, which have been months and even years in forming....

School public relations in the large sense, therefore, must be continuous so that by means of everyday contacts through the months and years the public will be sympathetically conditioned.

Moehlman says:

"The operation of the adult interpretive program should be so smoothly integrated with the actual functioning of the institution that it is accepted as an essentially normal activity instead of something
that requires occasional attention through pressure methods."1/

4. "School public relations must be positive in approach. Negative statements should be studiously avoided in dealing with school publics. Denials are usually wasted breath. Statements regarding what the schools are not doing generally are misguided and should always give way to a positive statement of what the schools are doing. Especially in large publics few opinions are changed by being disproved. People do not like to be contradicted....The evidence is conclusive that change in public opinion is best brought about by specific positive appeal repeated often enough and with sufficient evidence to receive acceptance.

5. School public relations should be comprehensive. No phase of the school program is ignored, no segment of the staff excluded, no possible medium of contact with any public missed. Every aspect of the educational enterprise has its own peculiar relations significance and use should be made of the most varied media for discharging this obligation.

6. School public relations should be sensitive to its publics. School public relations should be a two-way process. Educators must not ignore the attitudes, opinions, drives and desires of the public itself. Applicable conclusions that psychologists have reached in this connection are: 'Suggestion creates nothing, but can only arouse, combine and direct tendencies which already exist.' 'Whatever effect the printed page may have upon the reader it can influence him only in terms of his apperceptive mass, of his previous habits and conditionings. That it can entirely remake his attitudes is doubtful.'

The heart of these discoveries about man is that one must take him where one finds him, and, if necessary, lead him from that point. Educators have recognized the same principle in handling the children placed under their

care; the principle does not lose validity as the individual passes from youth to adulthood... The basic drives or needs of the public must be considered in any community relations plan....

7. The ideas communicated must be simple. Not only the meaning but the emotional connotation of words must be studied. Words which mean essentially the same thing to most people should be used.... To seek for simplicity in the public relations effort is to seek to recognize the many short cuts which man's own nature has adopted.... Since it is possible to oversimplify, public relations must be honest. Tools which are edged with the capability of dishonor can be entrusted only to those of strict integrity."

In this connection Grinnell says:

"Educators are justly accused of loving their professional language. Among one another there is never any wrinkling of brows at the mention of A.Q.'s or I.Q.'s or 'unit activities.' But when the same terms creep into annual reports, talks before service clubs, and occasional news stories, they defeat the cause they are meant to serve. Every profession has its jargon. Education is not exceptional.... Clear, forceful expression is what the public demands."1/

Fisk says:

"As with other arts and sciences, education has been prone to develop its own language to fit its own purposes. In one way this 'pedagogue' has aided in the development of education by providing a means for educators to converse, but it has impeded the growth of public understanding of education."2/

To sum up: public relations activities will be honest, intrinsic, continuous, positive, comprehensive, sensitive to the publics concerned, and presented in simple terms.

Reeder states that since the basis of a public-relations program is information, the chief task of school officials and employees is to secure, to organize, and to present that information. In doing so, the following standards must be met: it must be truthful, unselfish and unbiased, continuous, humanized, have universal appeal and be given in the proper amount and with the proper balance.

Grinnell lists these as desirable: honest, inclusive, understandable, dignified but aggressive, reach everyone in the community, use every facility at hand.

Farley believes the following to be important principles: suitable objective, plan, interest (the concrete, the vital, the animate, conflict, the unusual,) repetition, co-ordination, graphic representation.

Noehlman lists twelve principles of institutional interpretation that are applicable to a community relations program.

1. "Democratic social institutions are merely facilitating means for the achievement of a social purpose and have no fundamental value apart from purpose.

2. The educational function is constant, but its institutional organization must be considered as a purely transitory expression of the function.

3. Democratic social institutions rest on public confidence which depends ultimately upon the honesty and sincerity of institutional functioning. The democratic public school is limited in its institutional effectiveness and breadth of program by the confidence and understanding of the people and cannot rise far above the popular concept and understanding of function. Informational material must be adjusted to the interest and intelligence of a culturally complex adult audience.

4. The public school as an impartial democratic agency operates on the central tendency in public opinion and will always be subject to criticism by reactionary and radical opinion.

5. The theory of democratic institutional authority definitely limits both purpose and method of interpretation and considers the enlargement or contraction of institutional activity to be a function of the people. The interests of all of the people are superior to the interests of the teaching profession.

6. The public school acts as an institution for harmonizing cultural differences and must avoid the creation of social conflict. Institutional interpretation must avoid all implications of a propagandistic motif. Institutional interpretation must be based on the larger objectives of public education and be truthful, sincere, and simple.

7. The partnership concept of public education in the United States requires the active interest and intelligent participation of parents in the educational program.

8. Institutional interpretation is a process of adult education to the purposes, values, conditions, and needs of public education. Interpretative methodology demands the application of the laws of learning to adult education and information that is constant and regular in character.

9. The process of social interpretation is cooperative in nature, and its success is contingent on the active and intelligent participation of every institutional agent.
and can be ultimately effective only to the extent that all participating agents conceive of their functional responsibility for participation in a functional activity.

10. The legal responsibility for determination of interpretive policy and the approval of means for making policy effective is a function of the educational legislative body—the board of education.

11. The use of children in the interpretative program is limited to the development of understanding and appreciation of the purpose and value of all social institutions.

12. The teaching profession as an interest group may make normal attempts, in accord with sound democratic practice, beyond institutional limits to convert other individuals and other interest groups to the support of normal institutional enlargement and betterment of their own personal interests."

Another principle not explicitly stated in the foregoing discussion of guiding principles, but in the opinion of this writer important enough to be so stated, is that sufficient time must be allowed for the development of mutual understanding or for the establishment on firm ground of any needed changes. Since the Industrial Revolution and the development of modern technology, the tempo of the external lives of human beings has become such an accelerated one that we (and we includes many administrators) are likely to assume that hurrying is better than not hurrying. However, it is not nature's way to be hurried—witness the procession of the seasons, the development from seed to flower to fruit, the ebb and flow of the tides. Nor is rushing native to human nature, as any parent can testify.
Dr. Alexis Carrel stated:

"It appears that the environment which science and technology have succeeded in developing for man does not suit him because it has been constructed at random without regard to his true self."

Stuart Chase in his Roads to Agreement summarizes as follows his conclusions as to what it takes to get men to agree.

1. All who are parties to the bargain must have an equal chance to participate in reaching it.
2. There must be full opportunity for the wisdom of the group to develop.
3. Communication between the members of the group must not be obscured or blocked by slogans and loaded words.
4. The relevant facts must be fully exposed at the outset.
5. The tendency for individual insecurity to manifest itself in dissent must be recognized and allowed for.

The importance of the element of time in successful human relations is obviously a consideration in this set of principles.

Although wise and worldly Michel de Montaigne was not

1/Alexis Carrel, Man the Unknown, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1935, p. 27.
referring to education when he wrote the following, it expresses somewhat the same idea.

"Let things work themselves out. The same order of nature that provides for fleas and for moles will provide also for men who have as much patience as fleas and moles to put themselves under its governance. We get nowhere by shouting 'Gee!' and 'Haw!' This is all very well to get hoarse, but it does not get us ahead.... Follow the order of nature, for God's Sake! Follow it! It will lead who follows: and those who will not, it will drag along anyway, and their tempers and their medicines with them."¹

Moehlman refers to "slow and rational change."² Again, "... change without preparation is not only unintelligent but institutionally disastrous."³ The same writer says,

"If educational leaders confuse their own desires with social need and rationalize themselves into action before a sufficiently broad public opinion has developed, the final result is the same that exacting public opinion will demand a change in control."⁴

Referring to the superintendent's job, Moehlman also points out that time is needed in which the superintendent can gain the thorough understanding of his community necessary for appropriate action on his part.⁵

Grinnell, in presenting support for the principle that interpretation should be continuous, quotes Carter Alexander's "The Continuous School Publicity Program" as follows:

³Ibid., p. 450.
⁴Ibid., p. 44.
⁵Ibid., p. 205.
"The school as a public institution needs the continuous interest of the people. Public opinion is very slow to develop....Publicity spread over a long period is bound to be more sound and honest than drive publicity because the people have plenty of time to test calmly its reasons and contentions....Particularly does progress, in any real sense, wait on a patient process of interpretation, one that is steady, reasonable, and consistent. A background of appreciation of the achievements of modern education and of the sincere efforts of the public schools to select only the best of the new ideas and to put them into economical and efficient operation cannot be impressed on the public in a week or a month or even a year."

He who is impatient with the necessity for continuous conditioning of the public mind should remember Shakespeare's words: "Too fast arrives as tardy as too slow." 1/

Moehlman has expressed concisely the substance of good school-community relations in the following passage:

"Democratic institutions can function effectively only as the people are kept aware of their purpose, value, conditions, and needs, thus placing upon public institutional personnel the legal and moral obligation of interpreting these popular agencies through continuous informational programs based on fact, simple in form, continuing in type, and reaching all members of the community."

The accounts given in this section of the principles to be used in formulating and putting into practice a program of school-community relations point toward three major ideas:

1. That responding to the public will and educating

1/AASA Yearbook, op. cit., p. 23.
that will, constitute the core of any school-community relations program;

2. That the public is made up of human individuals to whom the laws of learning apply in their education;

3. That the application of these laws of learning to a community relations program shows the need for certain characteristics in any such program, such as:

   (a) complete honesty
   (b) a continuous two-way flow of information and ideas
   (c) a positive approach
   (d) the expression of information and ideas in understandable terms, often repeated
   (e) comprehensiveness - the use of every possible means of interpretation
   (f) sensitiveness to the various publics - particularly to the fact that their opinions often have emotional bases
   (g) time enough for learning - the community about the schools; the schools about the community.
4. Agents in Community Relations Programs

The public-relations program of a school cannot be assigned just to a few people in a special committee. All school personnel, non-teaching as well as teaching members, are involved in it. The Twenty-Eighth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators says:

"Every staff member is a public relations agent. His manners, dress, and his attitude toward and treatment of children and parents are the raw materials out of which school public relations are forged. 'Every staff member' means not only teachers and supervisors. It means clerks, custodians, bus drivers, secretaries, school doctors, nurses, cafeteria managers, and the host of administrative employees who are an integral part of school organizations. Too often in thinking about school personnel and their part in the public relations program, the superintendent tends to forget the highly important people who answer his telephone, greet his visitors, and play host to the general public. Yet, it must be remembered that the very first contact with the school authorities comes through members of the non-teaching staff.... The appearance of the building and the grounds, the way a visitor is treated and greeted by the clerk or the principal's secretary - these, particularly when they are first impressions, are likely to be lasting ones.... So in educating the staff to its public relations responsibilities vis-a-vis parents, visitors, and interested citizens, special pains must be taken to point up the importance of all school employees as public relations agents.... From top to bottom of the teaching and non-teaching staff, contact with pupils, parents, and community builds either positive or negative attitudes toward the schools...."

Superintendent as community-relations agent.—The leadership of the entire staff in the community-relations program is the responsibility of the superintendent of schools. According to Public Relations for America's

Schools:

"His responsibility involves at least five areas: (a) providing leadership on public relations; (b) maintaining a working partnership between the school system and the community; (c) gearing school policy to good public relations principles; (d) organizing public-relations assignments; (e) evaluation."

Moehlman says:

"The primary function of the superintendent in social interpretation is as leader and general director. The process of interpretation is so involved and complicated, requiring the services of so many diverse individuals, that attempts at accomplishment by autocratic means and individual executive effort are futile. High-pressure publicity will not compensate for low morale or negative attitudes on the part of clerk, custodian, or teacher. Some of the most successful administrators include those whose names appear infrequently in public press and in school publications. The wise superintendent recognizes and attempts to build the popular esteem for and confidence in the teaching profession by building up its members to wider and more successful participation. He attempts through multiplicity of contact to bring school and community together. In so doing he astutely avoids the spotlight of temporary personal publicity for the more solid backlog of group achievement."

Principal as public relations agent.-- Like the superintendent, the principal has leadership functions in the school's community relations program.

"The building principal is the most important field administrative agent in any well-rounded interpretation program. The maintenance of primary community relationships is one of his major responsibilities. Within the limits of the attendance area for which he is administratively responsible, the principal is in direct control of all aspects of the plan. His duties are similar to those of the superintendent in so far as scope is concerned. They

1/ Ibid., p. 128.
differ in area and in so far as the principal is required to place the program into actual operation and to direct specialized agents in their various duties.... As director of the entire instructional program, of which interpretation is a single phase, the principal must be able to instruct the personnel with respect to the entire field of problems, the basic necessity for the program, the technique of execution.... The success of any venture, no matter how skilfully conceived and intelligently developed depends finally on the attitude, ability, and skill of the personnel involved. 

The agents of most importance in community relations programs are: teachers; pupils; parents and parent organizations; and community groups.

Teachers.-- Farley says:

"In the course of his daily work the teacher comes closer to the home than any other worker in the school. If a child likes his teacher, he likes the school. Parents second the motion.... In school and out the teacher's influence is fundamental.... However, the work of a well-prepared teacher may be greatly discounted by failure to understand the parent."

The same writer compiles from suggestions of the Joint Commission on the Emergency in Education thirteen items concerning what parents want teachers to do, and states that teachers sometimes fail to satisfy the desires of parents because of:

1. The failure to take the attitude of an educational specialist toward non-adjusted pupils

1/Ibid., p. 215.


2. The failure of some school executives to encourage teachers to feel that the individual teacher has a most important part in an effective program of public relations.

3. The tendency of some teachers to be too much concerned with ways parents can help the school rather than with ways teachers can help parents.

4. The unwillingness of some parents to cooperate with the teacher.

5. The lack of appreciation of the value of goodwill as an asset to the school.

The National Education Association has published a pamphlet for use by teachers, "Am I a Plus or a Minus in Public Relations?" containing numerous specific suggestions for community relations activities for teachers.

These are arranged in two sections - "In My School" and "In My Community." The first section indicates the importance to public relations of good effects on pupils: such matters as having the pupils' liking, respect, and confidence; the use of democratic procedures in relationships with pupils; the cultivation of good relationships with parents through the encouragement of visits and keeping the parents informed of their children's successes as well as failures. The second section suggests that what the teacher is counts heavily in the community; that participation in the community life is important; that contributing
to the public-relations obligations of the local teachers' group is part of each teacher's job.

Grinnell 1 agrees with the other authorities that "....the teacher is at the very heart of the interpretation program. Of all the public servants teachers are nearest the pupils and consequently nearest the parents." The same author points out that teachers must realize that educational interpretation

"....is not the work of the superintendent alone, or the principal, or a few members of a committee, but of every teacher on the force, and of every other employee....No two teachers have exactly the same contacts with the public. Among them all they should reach into substantially every civic, religious, social, or other group in the community and should be able to do much toward keeping the public informed on significant school issues."2

Hand 3 says that it is inconceivable that any parent who feels that his children are not being properly treated by their teachers could be satisfied with the school. "Conversely, there is good reason to believe that few, if any, of the other components of parent satisfaction carry as much weight as does the feeling that one's children are being treated as they should be."

It may well be pointed out, however, that the basic job of the teacher in public relations is her job of...

2/Ibid., p. 245.
instruction - of helping children by teaching them. It is a question whether those teachers who are overburdened in schools that are far from ideal but who are doing their job as well as they can should be expected to carry any special public relations assignment beyond cultivating a friendly attitude toward the public. If the effectiveness of the school program is the indispensable element in the community relations program, this element should not be sabotaged by making it humanly impossible for teachers, because of overwork, to do their first, most important job well.

Yeager presents the thought that

"...no teacher can do his best work emotionally disturbed by perplexing and unpleasant administrative parental and community relationships in which his work is questioned, his salary lowered or withheld, his relations with the administration disarranged, or his job at stake."

Community relations can have no higher excellence than the school program, the school program no higher excellence than the teacher's effectiveness.

Teachers must be conscious of the fact that in their classroom work and in their social contacts they are number one public relations agents.

Fisk adds that they "...must know and understand what is going on within the school system as a whole...." if they are to be capable interpreters of the school to the community.

Moshman says:

"As the most important agent in the interpretive process the teacher is responsible for work in many fields. The final degree of success will be determined by the effectiveness of teaching, which in turn is conditioned directly by his knowledge of and acceptance by the community....If the teacher fails in his professional obligations as a constructive agent in the continuing process of institutional interpretation, no amount of effort by administrative agents can overcome the deadly effect of negative effort in the field of primary contacts."

The Twenty-Eighth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators emphasizes the fact that it is here at the source, in the interaction of pupil and teacher, that the most lasting and vital public relations attitudes are built and that

"...the best public relations program, manned by the ablest people who can be employed, and executed with all the subtlety and effectiveness of a well-run public relations organization is no match for the stubborn, ineradicable, often irrational attitudes that twelve years of schooling have built....Fundamentally, then, the public relations program is a problem of grass-roots attitudes, because public opinion is conditioned by them - by the memories each person has of his own youth and by the experiences and reactions of his own children...."

1/op. cit., p. 38.
2/op. cit., pp. 245-6.
3/op. cit., p. 156.
The same authority continues as follows:

"The average person thinks in stereotypes; that is, he has in his own mind a picture - created out of his own limited experiences and reinforced and distorted by such pervasive and influential media as the radio, television, the movies, the theater, and the comics - a picture (to repeat) of the doctor, the politician, the teacher, racial types, and others. With each picture go certain attitudes. His judgments and reactions come to him in terms of these stereotyped images and attitudes. The word teacher conjures up for many Americans the unflattering picture of 'an old maid - aloof - fussy - snobbish - irritable - unsympathetic - bossy - ineffectual' - besides being paid too much and having too long vacations. This image is created by the following facts.

1. Some people have unpleasant memories of teachers and schools.

2. The number of men attracted to teaching is small.

3. The actions of legislatures, boards of education, and community groups have through restrictive legislation and social and economic discrimination forced teachers to function as second-class citizens.

4. Superintendents and supervisors have often failed to wage a good fight for teacher status and rights: in some areas the fight of teachers for recognition as human beings and citizens worthy of their hire is far from won.

These causes for the stereotypes in the mind of the public must be eliminated if a positive, personal image of teachers as the human, sympathetic, skillful individuals they usually are is to replace the unflattering stereotype - for without a basic alteration and reorientation of the public mind (in this respect) any public relations program is a house built on sand."1/

1/ Ibid.
Removing these causes is a long and difficult road to travel, but there is no chance for success otherwise in building a community relations program.

Pupils.--

"While the school exists for the child and his immediate and ultimate welfare, he should accept an increasing responsibility in helping to achieve that welfare. He ought to be made to realize that problems which arise in which he is concerned, and which affect the...community because of some act of commission or omission, are his to help in finding a solution."1/

This is not the first consideration, however, in the case of the pupil's part in a community relations program. 2/ Moehlman says that the first job is to establish conditions under which the child and teacher may work to best advantage; and the second job is to limit

"....the education of the child with regard to institutional values and needs to those civic-social curricular areas concerned with the knowledge and understanding of democratic institutions. Extreme care should be exercised against indoctrinating the child with purely professional concepts of institutional needs....The use of children as proselytizing agents for building programs, increases in teachers' salaries, extension of the curriculum, and other immediate institutional demands cannot be condemned too strongly."3/

Farley says:

"The measure of successful interpretation at the elementary level is whether the children like school. The school interpretation program in the lower grades will be largely the building of attitudes - interest in school, loyalty, appreciation. In the secondary

1/ Yeager, op. cit., p. 391.
school it is important for pupils to learn the historical significance of education, its present problems, its probable future. The blind faith which has prompted so large a proportion of American citizens to support education will fade before the skepticism fostered by selfish interests and unfavorable economic circumstances unless to faith is added certain knowledge of good works."

The part played by pupils in the public relations program has been indicated. The Twenty-Eighth Yearbook says:

"Pupils are among the most effective of all the school's public relations agents. Much of the information which the general public has about the schools... reaches the parents by way of the children. Each day that schools are in session the pupils travel back and forth between home and school, carrying in both directions a steady stream of information, opinions, and attitudes. Not only do they help the public to size up the school; they also help the school to understand its community."

Parents and parent organizations.-- The parents are recipients of the school’s interpretation, on the one hand, and on the other, public relations agents for the schools. They get their impressions of the school first from their children, then from meetings with school personnel and from teachers – parent social contacts. It is essential that these experiences be satisfactory.

"The school staff in all its contacts with the community should make it clear that schoolhouse doors are always open to the public. The atmosphere of the school should be genuinely friendly. Parents should be welcome either in the school office or in the classrooms in which their children are studying. For that reason most schools need to encourage them

1/AASA, op. cit., p. 59.
to come to the school, to see special demonstrations and exhibits of pupils' work, to attend specially arranged programs that demonstrate what is being done in one or more departments, or to visit regular class-rooms at critical stages of the children's development."

What the parents learn of the school through these avenues they pass on to a larger public.

Moehlman considers that the general objectives of the Parent-Teacher association should be six. They are arranged in the order of their chronological importance.

1. Social: the activities or means by which parents and teachers become thoroughly acquainted with each other, such as school and home visitation, social gatherings, and personal conferences.

2. Educational: activities concerned with an understanding of the community and of the functional relationship of the school to the community. This involves consideration of the economic, religious, social, and racial backgrounds of community life and the study of the child and child life.

3. Cooperation: the association should cooperate with the community and the school for the welfare of the child in every possible way.

4. Public Opinion: those who understand and participate will serve as disseminators of information and

1/ AASA Yearbook, op. cit., p. 70.
guardians of the welfare of the child.

5. **Advisory:** the location of trouble spots by friendly eyes is most helpful in public administration. The parent-teacher association that has been through the first four steps in the development of its objectives is qualified to act in an advisory relationship to both the board and the teaching profession.

6. **Improvement:** Such a group will have become aware of weaknesses and inadequacies in the existing schools and can support desirable change. In connection with fiscal support there is no logical excuse for a parent-teacher association to raise funds to support any activity in a tax-supported school system - it should be spread on the tax rolls and paid for by the community.

**Community groups.** Community groups other than the parent-teacher organizations are likewise to be considered both as recipients of the interpretation process and as avenues to a larger public. Such organizations as the American Legion, Rotary, League of Women Voters, and other service clubs, fraternal orders, labor unions, women's clubs can interpret the schools to their own members and to the public. Moehlman 1/ thinks that the school organization

contacts with these groups are probably best confined to knowing the organization and its directing personnel, and keeping them informed through personal contacts and written material.

One of the most important developments in the field of school-community relations in recent years has been the increasingly widespread formation of citizen groups within a community to serve as advisory groups to school boards and to work for better schools in whatever way seems most suited to their community. The National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools was formed in 1949. Henry Toy, the director of this commission, in an article entitled "Citizens Committees - a Report to the People from the Director of NCCPS" gives the account of the development of this movement which follows.

"At that time, the Commission was in touch with only a handful of citizens' school improvement committees. There were many more in existence but we did not know about them until a year later, when we announced at the first annual meeting that 300 groups were writing to us for information. Four months after that we had 500 on our mailing list - but many of the 'new' 200 were as old as the original 300.

The few with whom we were in touch started a cooperative effort that has snowballed and is now helping more than 1500 groups which write us....Our experience would indicate that several times this number are active."1/

Walter D. Cocking, Chairman of the Board of Editors of School Executive, in an article entitled "Schools Belong to the People," says:

"There are many good reasons for greater citizen participation in school affairs. After all, the schools do belong to the people. We have seen enough of absentee ownership of land and plants to know that such ownership is not healthy either for the people and property immediately concerned or the economy as a whole. This is equally true of the schools. Without active citizen participation in school affairs, other-school boards, administrative staffs, selfish groups—are encouraged to act as if they owned the schools and to take over the functions of the owners."  

Eleanor Cole, Assistant Director of the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools, states:

"...the letters telling of the accomplishments of citizens committees show that no clearcut line can be drawn to distinguish between what lay groups can and cannot do. A good citizens committee, working cooperatively with the school authorities, representative of the community and proceeding on the basis of fact, can accomplish just about anything."  

It is important to notice what are considered the qualifications of a good citizens committee. After examining the methods of organization and modes of procedure of some 1500 local, county, and state committees, the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools points out three common denominators for all effective groups:


"1. They are representative of the entire community.

2. They start with fact-finding to make certain their recommendations and actions are based on an objective evaluation of the problems.

3. They work cooperatively with school authorities but preserve their independence of thought and action."1/

Theodore Reller, Professor of Education at the University of California, in an article entitled "The Purposes, Work, and Value of Citizens Committee" makes the following comments.

"The work of citizens committees may vary greatly. In some instances the citizens committee may have as its primary challenge the actual study of a situation; in other cases it will serve as an advisory committee in regard to policy matters; and in some instances it will be an action body.

In developing or expanding the role of citizens committees, care must be taken in order that essential confidence, respect, and ability are built. Such committees are not a panacea and are not to be unthinkingly indulged by lay and professional people. Thus gradual introduction and expansion appear to be desirable. Both lay and professional people must learn how such committees can operate effectively, what aids they need, the contributions they can make, the limits within which they have responsibility, the skills which must be developed, the problems which confront them.

Citizens committees must be seen as instruments through which much can be learned and achieved. Their contribution will increase as our abilities to employ them do, and as we develop willingness to study educational problems cooperatively. Through citizen participation a finer educational system and a finer democracy can be achieved, even in our troubled times."2/

1/"Some Pointers for Citizens Committees", School Executive, (January 1952), 71 No. 5: p. 66.

Summarizing statement.-- The most important agents involved in community-school relations are: teachers; pupils; parents and parent organizations; and community groups.

Summary

In this chapter the writer has reviewed the literature on public relations. This includes books about public relations in general, books on public relations for the schools, the literature of the National Citizens' Commission, and various magazine articles. This study has brought out the following points.

1. The proper concept of school-community relations is a broad one.
2. Such relations involve a two-way flow of ideas between school and community to establish harmony of understanding as a basis for working for good schools.
3. Intimate community-school relations are essential in a democracy.
4. Certain principles should be used in any community-relations program. They are:
   (a) The core of such a program consists of responding to the public will and educating that will.
   (b) The adult education involved in a community-relations program must be based on a knowledge of how human beings learn.
(c) A community-relations program must be honest,
continuous, simple in expression, comprehensive,
sensitive, and unhurried.

5. Although all school personnel including superintendent
and principals are agents in the school-community
relations program, the most important agents are
teachers, pupils, parents and parent organizations,
and community groups.
CHAPTER 111

COMMUNITY-RELATIONS PRACTICES IN OTHER PLACES

For the purpose of discovering the bases of good community-school relations as they have been tested in actual practice, the writer used the following two procedures: first, a study of the accounts in educational literature of community-school relations throughout the nation; second, an investigation of community-school relations in twenty-two selected New England communities. The sources of information about the procedures and programs that had proved successful throughout the nation were the literature of the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools, the Kiplinger Magazine Changing Times, and the School Executive. The source of information about New England was a questionnaire sent to superintendents in the communities. To obtain the communities, the writer sent a letter to the Commissioners of Education in each of the New England states and asked them for the names of communities in their states of about Ware's size where they considered community relations good. The names of twenty-eight communities were thus secured; a questionnaire was prepared and sent to the superintendent in each; and twenty-
four of these were returned.

This chapter gives an account of what these other communities in New England and throughout the nation have done successfully through community-school relationships which brought good results.

In former days there was no wide separation between community and school; consequently no effort to bring them together was needed. Frank Lowden, former governor of Illinois, is quoted in Mark Sullivan's *Our Times* as saying:

"The country school of my early days was the center of a genuine community life. The schoolteacher was a very important person, a leader in the intellectual and social life of the community. The schoolhouse was something more than a mere educational center...it was...a dynamic force in the life of the community."

Mark Sullivan continues: "In every respect, the old-time school was tied close to the community and to the home. It was a folk-institution."

But the increasing size and complexity of the educational enterprise have resulted in an ever-widening distance between school and community, and the problem of educational leadership is to close or at least to narrow this separation. The most effective means developed in recent years of bringing school and community into their original close

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A widespread effort is active to bring increasing numbers of laymen into participation in the work of understanding and improving the schools.

In a pamphlet entitled "Community Leadership" the American Association of School Administrators says:

"The public school is a community institution. What it is and what it does are determined by the people themselves. Through legally constituted channels of government they construct and equip buildings, select and employ teachers, fix the length of the school term, and decide the age at which children enter school and the age at which free public education ceases. Bonds, budgets, salary scales, and broad course offerings are elements of the educational program that are quickly responsive to community action. The public schools are no better and no worse that the people make them. Of all the factors which influence a community educational program none is more important than the vision and attitudes of the people themselves. Creating a will to have good schools and releasing the community energies necessary to build them are two of the most important functions of the school administrator. In a rural neighborhood or in a metropolitan center, his success as an educational leader (and it may also be said the success of the schools as effective educational institutions) depends largely on his skill in working with community leaders to accomplish these ends." 1/

One answer to this problem has been the creation in recent years of the lay advisory commission. Although, as Moehlman points out, theoretically the local board of education should be well balanced with respect to extremes and central tendencies of opinion, this is not always so.


Neither is it possible to insure at all times careful appraisal of the individual candidate for office.

"Until it is possible through more highly perfected political organization to secure better balance in educational representation, it appears desirable to develop and use supplementary devices of an extralegal nature."

This will bring community and school together and form the broad base of mutual understanding that is the proper soil for the flourishing growth of effective schools. The purpose of such a commission—made up of representatives of the various interests in the community—is strictly advisory—"...to learn what the community is thinking and what is acceptable by the people." Any recommendation of the commission, however, should certainly carry great weight with the board of education.

The most powerful stimulus to the encouragement of the participation by laymen in efforts to improve the schools has come through the formation in 1949 of the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools. Its origin, principles, and the nature of its work are described as follows in its own descriptive literature.

"Basic principles of the Commission.—The problem of its children's schools lies at the heart of a free society. None of man's public institutions has a

1/Ibid., p. 351.

deeper effect upon his conduct as a citizen, whether of the community, of the nation, or of the world.

The goal of our public schools should be to make the best in education available to every American child on completely equal terms.

Public school education should be constantly reappraised and kept responsive both to our educational traditions and to the changing times.

With these basic beliefs in mind, the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools has set for itself two immediate goals: To help Americans realize how important our public schools are to our expanding democracy, and to arouse in each community the intelligence and will to improve our public schools.

Origin of the Commission.-- A year after the end of the war (World War II) a group of men and women began a series of exploratory meetings to discuss the problems and opportunities of public school education in the United States. They concluded that there is an urgent need for laymen as well as educators to participate in efforts to improve the public schools - that a broad and active public interest in the public schools must be evoked to achieve the kind of schools which are needed. Encouraged by a group of distinguished educators, headed by President James B. Conant of Harvard University and Professor Paul R. Mott of Teachers College, Columbia University, they formed the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools.

The Commission is a non-profit corporation for the improvement of the public schools. Its formation was announced May, 1949. Its members are U. S. citizens not professionally identified with education, religion, or politics. They reflect many different kinds of experience, serve as individuals and do not represent any organization or group. The Commission has received financial support from the Carnegie Corporation and the General Education Board.

Commission Program.-- The Commission makes every effort to encourage the formation of independent community groups for the purpose of improving local public schools. It acts as a clearing house to enable existing groups to benefit from the experience of others, in the hope that community efforts now being carried on in isolation can benefit from the continuing
encouragement and pooling of information which the Commission provides.

As part of its efforts to encourage a broader and more active public interest in the public schools, the Commission is cooperating with the Advertising Council in a campaign designed to dramatize the problems and opportunities of public school education in newspapers, in magazines, on outdoor posters and on radio and television.

Guided by the experience of local groups which use it as a clearing house, the Commission will conduct studies of many aspects of public school education throughout the United States. The Commission is particularly interested in working out ways to help communities set and attain higher goals and standards for their public schools.

How the Commission Can Help.-- The Commission will supply upon request the following:

1. Case histories and promotional material, showing how other communities have tackled their school problems.

2. The booklet, 'What Do We Know About Our Schools?,' a collection of 540 questions to ask about the schools.

3. Newspaper advertisements calling for better schools, for merchants and businessmen to sponsor in the local community, prepared by the Advertising Council.

4. Details of how to obtain a free showing of the two March of Time movies, 'The Fight for Better Schools,' and 'Action for Your Public Schools.'

5. The monthly news bulletin, 'Citizens and their Schools,' which tells what other communities are doing in behalf of better schools."

In the February, 1951, edition of "Citizens and Their Schools," the National Citizens' Commission described the

1/Eleanor Cole, "Director's Diary," Citizens and Their Schools, National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools, (February 1951) 1:4, p. 3.
growing interest of the people in their schools as follows:

"The letters /i.e. to the Commission about various local school situations/ have come from every state and territory in the Union....They have come from all kinds of people - lay citizens, professional educators, school board members, farmers, policemen, business and labor representatives, housewives, doctors, ministers, nuns, school children, and working members of a long list of national and local civic and service organizations. Some of them have famous names and are serving in high places; some are unknown and have had very little schooling themselves. The great majority, whether they live in the 'grass roots' or in the great metropolitan areas, are convinced that the intelligence and action of all the people are needed to make our schools the kind we need today.

A great many of the letters ask about the work of the NCCPS and ask - in tones ranging from simple curiosity to desperation: 'How can we organize a citizens' school committee?'

One group of early letters echoed many times over the words of Mrs. John E. Grigsby of Columbus, Indiana: 'I am a member of a mothers' club in a small city.... We should like to start a movement to improve our schools but do not know how to proceed.'

As the months went by and the number of letters grew, their weight began to shift from inquiry to report, and they told jubilant news of successful campaigns.

The mail has not always been pleasant. Many letters have shown discouragement over public apathy and taxpayers' indifference toward doing anything about the schools except keeping taxes low.

Taken all together, however, the Commission mail shows that the fight for better schools has become an all-out national campaign, that public apathy is more and more being changed into an active interest....The people know that they are needed, that in war or peace the public schools are everybody's business."

Following are a few examples of what has been accomplished in various communities in the United States by lay participation.
Urbana, Illinois.-- The following report is summarized from an article in the December 1950 Nation's Schools.

Early in the school year of 1948 the schoolboard members and new superintendent in Urbana, Illinois, realized that the school population was fast outgrowing the housing facilities. Teachers and other members of the community felt that the educational program should be examined with a view to improvement. Out of this situation a cooperative survey grew. The University of Illinois College of Education assured the board of their cooperation.

The survey was inaugurated in September 1948 as a community project. The board of education selected a citizens' central committee consisting of eleven members. (Twelve were invited to serve.) Every attempt was made to select representatives of proved ability willing to give time and effort to the project. A second central committee of thirteen teachers was selected by the teaching staff. Nine students were chosen by the student body to be members of a third central committee.

Each central committee assumed primary responsibility for one or more areas of the study. Each formed sub-committees enlisting additional citizens, teachers, and students in the various phases of the enterprise. The chairmanship of these subcommittees was sometimes assumed.

by a member of the central committee personnel. These subcommittees made extensive studies of specific phases of the educational program assigned to them by the central committees and brought back reports.

The various members of the three central committees worked in close relationship and served on a number of interlocking committees that helped to coordinate the work of the survey.

At the first meeting of the central committees each one selected its chairman and secretary. With the help of university staff members the structure of the survey was decided upon and areas of specialization for each committee were selected.

The first phase of the study necessarily consisted of obtaining and interpreting facts. All committees and subcommittees shared in this activity. The information obtained was submitted by subcommittees to the central committees, which then shared the collected data. The chairmen of the three committees kept in close working relationship and acted as a coordinating force.

The second phase of the study involved a careful appraisal and analysis of the facts obtained and of their implications for improving the educational program of the community. The study was primarily oriented toward finding out wherein the educational program was failing to meet
needs. The guidance program, the administrative set-up, pupil population trends, the financial condition of the district, the curriculum, community resources, and vocational opportunities came in for critical appraisal.

The third phase of the study consisted of the formulation and coordination of a series of recommendations based on the pertinent facts that had been unearthed, the analysis and evaluation of these facts, and the desire to obtain for the community the best educational program it could afford. The recommendations were arrived at as follows. Each subcommittee submitted recommendations for the area to which it was assigned. These were then carefully considered by the appropriate central committee. In some cases they were modified to avoid duplication and to affect unity. The tentative recommendations in all areas were then mimeographed and submitted to all members of the three central committees. Then followed a series of individual and joint central committee meetings out of which grew the final recommendations that were adopted by the central committees and incorporated into the final report. Specific recommendations for the improvement of the school program were made in the following areas: student personnel, staff personnel, elementary education, secondary education, services for exceptional children, co-curricular activities, administration, the school plant, and financing the schools.
During the course of the survey, wide publicity was given to it by newspapers, radio stations, and other mediums of communication. This publicity did not deal with the recommendations; publicity on the recommendations of the survey came after the final report had been submitted to the board of education—ten months after the survey began.

When school opened the following autumn, the board of education had given general endorsement to the recommendations of the survey, and the implementation of the survey program began.

First, in a week-long planning conference, the teachers and the administrators laid plans for putting the recommendations into effect. This was to be a long-range program; but it was hoped that progress could be made. Four implementation groups were organized around the following areas: philosophy, curriculum, guidance, and public relations; the specific purpose of these groups was to cooperate with the board in seeing that recommendations were actually carried out.

The philosophy-area group had as its special task helping teachers improve classroom practices to bring them in line with expressed philosophy of the schools.

The curriculum-area group considered reading the basic curriculum-improvement problem and made this the object of its concentrated study. Need for smaller classes and more
school space is constantly being pointed up and evidence
given to the board of education as the committee attacks
this problem at its roots. It plans to continue the work
of analyzing each subject-matter field. Ways and means
were devised to expand offerings in the light of discovered
needs as rapidly as facilities and staff could be provided.
In the spring of 1950 the College of Education set up a
course in curriculum-development specifically designed to
help this group achieve the desired goals.

The guidance-area group began trying to formulate a
better reporting system; to revise the student record
system; and to establish a closer relationship between the
guidance program and the resources of the community.

The public-relations-area group adopted as its purposes
(1) making teachers more aware of their responsibilities;
and (2) acquainting the public with the actual classroom
work done in the schools. This group also offered its
services to the board in connection with the new school
building program.

For its part the board of education, in line with
recommendations of the survey, employed architects to get
the building program underway. The board treated the project
as a community enterprise: various committee members were
consulted for advice as preliminary drawings were made;
the building program was discussed at parent-teacher meetings,
and the site of the proposed Southeast School was discussed at an open meeting. At the bond election held in the spring of 1950, the voters overwhelmingly approved a school bond issue of more than $1,500,000.

The professional groups at work in the four areas make reports to the board of education, while the board makes known to the staff its progress. The survey report, available to all teachers and members of the community, is serving as a flexible blueprint to point the way to a better school program for Urbana.

Muncie, Indiana.-- The May 1951, School Executive in an article entitled "Mr. and Mrs. Muncie Learn About Their Schools" gives a report of lay participation in Muncie, Indiana. A booklet, planned and executed by many persons - school board, administrators, parents, and teachers - told Muncie about the need for new school buildings and additions, and what had to be done about it.

In the foreword Superintendent of Schools Shaffer explained that seven planning committees would formulate specifications for a new building program; committee chairmen were elementary school principals and supervisors. The work of the committees was to prepare bibliographies, subdivide assignments, consolidate reports, confer with

architects, and submit written recommendations. Under such headlines as "Setting for the School," "Within the Classroom," "Electricity as a Teaching Aid," "The Heart of the School Plant," "Your Child's In-School Living Surroundings," "The Functional School and Room Location," committee chairmen interpreted the work of their committee and made practical suggestions for buildings, grounds, and furnishings.

The booklet also contains many photographs and architect's drawings of new classrooms, additions, and the building being erected this year.

Another chapter reports the findings of a survey on school building needs in Muncie prepared by the Bureau of Educational Research of Ohio State University and T. B. Calver, former research and budget director of Muncie's schools.

The business director of Muncie's schools explains bond issues, cumulative building funds and levies in language Mr. and Mrs. Muncie would understand.

There is also a message from the president of the Parent-Teachers' Association, a young father.

In the final chapter Mr. Shaffer discusses "The Plan Ahead" and shows the necessity of continuing the building program and the importance of maintenance and repair programs to keep buildings safe, sanitary, and attractive.
This booklet, distributed by civic clubs, parents, pupils, school groups, PTA members and other interested citizens, is a record of Muncie's way of working together to plan better housing for their schoolchildren.

Great Neck, L. I.-- This account is summarized from mimeographed material from the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools.

Great Neck, L. I., is a growing community, one of many large incomes, one where the people in general have appreciated the benefits of public education. Interest of parents in the schools has been shown not only by their support of education and by their informal contacts with the schools but also by their participation in local organizations concerned with education.

What is more unusual than the common parent-teacher organization is a so-called Great Neck Education Association, launched about nine years ago by a group of parents and non-parents, people who felt that laymen should be more alive to educational principles and practices and to needed improvements in the local system. Membership in the education association is open, upon payment of dues, to any Great Neck resident. This organization has stimulated interest on the part of citizens in strengthening the Board of Education, in examining the educational program,

and in encouraging public support of special school projects. (One of the noteworthy projects of this group was the organization of about six hundred citizens, including several school-staff members, into some thirty-five or forty discussion groups, each of which met five times to review the findings of a two-year Cooperative Study of the school system, a survey undertaken jointly by Teachers College, Columbia University, and the Great Neck Public Schools.)

During the school year 1945-46 an attempt was made by two members of the central administrative staff to study, evaluate, and expand the school system's public-relations program. This study indicated that the school public-relations program would be more effective if all those influenced by the program had a share in planning it. Therefore the Superintendent recommended to the Board the following year that a representative committee of laymen and faculty members be named to advise the superintendent of schools on certain desirable public-relations activities. The communication sent to presidents of certain community organizations from which representative citizens were to be selected for the first committee read as follows:

"The degree to which a school system's community relations program, even the inter-school-relations program, meets local needs depends in part upon the breadth of representation on a planning committee. It seems wise, therefore, to organize a Public Relations
Advisory Committee to recommend policies and practices to the Superintendent of Schools. Will you arrange to have some representative from your organization appointed to serve on a committee that will hold its first meeting in September? The time and place of the first meeting will be announced later."

In the early autumn of 1947 the first Advisory Committee on School-Community Relations became a reality when it was formally created by the Great Neck Board of Education. Meetings were held on an average of once a month.

Each year the Committee has focused its attention upon these activities:

1. Securing information concerning the existing local program of school-community relations and similar activities in other localities;
2. Evaluating practices in the light of stated goals formulated by the first committee.
3. Recommending improvements to the Superintendent of Schools and through him to the Board of Education.

It is obvious that the work of the Committee has been effective. It is fair to assume that the efforts of the Advisory Committee on School-Community Relations played a definite part in the success of endeavors for school-system expansion involving new, costly projects during a period of unprecedented expenditure of public funds. That the Board of Education has found the Committee of immeasurable help is evident from the fact that the Board is increasing the number and variety of advisory committees in which
laymen play active roles, and from the fact that when a vacancy occurred during the year on the Board of Education, it was the Chairman of the School-Community Relations who was appointed to fill the vacancy.

Fairfield, Connecticut.-- In 1950 a group of citizens in Fairfield, Connecticut, banded together to do what they could for the improvement of their schools. The organization, called the Citizens School Study Council of Fairfield, has for its purposes:

1. To determine the present condition of the schools of Fairfield.

2. To determine what steps, if any, must be taken to give the school children of Fairfield the best possible education.

3. To inform the citizens about the needs of the schools and develop a program which will result in the adoption of the recommendations of the Council.

The Council is divided into four principal study groups: Curriculum, Teachers, Buildings, and Administration. Much of the work is incomplete. However, certain committees have progressed to a point where they can make specific recommendations. Each of these committees has handed in a report embodying its recommendations and reasons for these recommendations. The Council's Steering Committee has approved

these reports and copies of the reports have been submitted to the Board of Education. A copy of each complete report is available to those interested. Some of the recommendations concerned improved lighting, a minimum building program, full-time clerical assistance for principals, gradual development of an improved guidance program, more efficient accounting.

The Council plans to set up a financial Committee to explore the town’s resources and to arrive at some specific recommendations for school financing, since it is well aware that the question of town financial ability to pay for school improvements will become an issue.

Other committees will also keep active during the coming year.

The following three case histories, Arlington, Virginia, Manchester, Vermont, and Delaware, are taken from "Changing Times" the Kiplinger magazine.

Arlington County, Va. -- This county, a suburban neighbor of Washington, D. C., saw its population double in eight years. Its school system, in 1948, was essentially the same as it had been 15 years ago. The schools were giving only half-day education to most students, and even so every class was overcrowded. Teachers had no standard

salary scale. The state controlled all school building funds. The county had no money to build additional schools, and therefore had no plans to do so.

Worst of all, the school board was appointed, not elected, and removed from the electorate through a series of other appointive offices and boards. Under these circumstances there seemed to be very little that parents could do to improve their children's schooling.

In 1946 the term of a school board member expired. A group of parents proposed that a young minister who had shown active interest in school problems be named to fill the spot. The appointing authorities coldly ignored the suggestion and reappointed the incumbent for another term.

That rebuff started the whole thing. Hurt and angry, the group of parents attended the next school budget meeting, determined to find out what could be done. They were told that in order to build new schools a bond issue would have to be voted upon, but to get it on the ballot would need 1,000 registered voters' names on a petition.

With a tangible goal to work for, a formal organization, the Citizens Committee for School Improvement, was formed. Not 1,000 but 5,000 signatures decorated the petition when they turned it in! Heartened by this success, the committee went to work and brought to referendum another measure providing for the direct election of a school board.
Now there were two clear-cut issues before the electorate. Did it want to authorize a bond issue for school improvement? Did it want an elected or an appointed school board?

The school improvement group went into high gear. A speaker's bureau was established; its members went doorbell-ringing in behalf of the schools; radio and newspapers were used to put the issue to the electorate; handbills littered the county's doorsteps.

That election brought out more voters than any special election in the county's history. When the returns were published, the "ins" were shocked to learn that from now on the county school board would be elected by the people, and furthermore, it would have a $1,776,000 bond issue to work with. That vote may never go down in the history books as a minor revolution, but old-line Virginia politicians considered it to be just that.

Then came the school board election. Four members of the old, appointed board announced that they would run for election. Quickly the citizens' committee organized a county-wide nominating convention, to which 51 organizations sent delegates. Five candidates were carefully selected.

Three independents also filed for election, making a total of 12 candidates for 5 offices. Again the citizens' growing organization went to work. This time there was little doubt, the school improvement candidates won handily.
A new day had dawned for Arlington County education. With solid citizen support behind it, the only elected school board in Virginia started out to revamp the school system from top to bottom. In two years' time it has chalked up some notable reforms:

1. All-day schooling for all grades
2. A new school superintendent
3. Six new schools planned or under construction
4. Three existing schools modernized
5. Inequities in teachers' pay eliminated
6. School lighting modernized
7. Full-time psychologist employed by schools
8. Speech correction department added.

Of course, there is no stopping point in school improvement. Surveys have shown that there will be twice as many children in school in 1955 as there are now.

Yet in the November election, another bond issue for school construction was defeated by a slim margin. Disappointed, but not at all ready to quit, the committee leaders made their position clear: "The issue cannot be permanently evaded; the fight will go on."

**Manchester, Vt.**—This town's newest school building was more than 40 years old in 1948. Parts of some buildings dated from 1870. The existing elementary schools were one, two or three-room frame buildings.
Before World War II it had been suggested that a new, consolidated elementary school be built to replace the five obsolete ones. As late as 1949, however, the town had not appropriated enough money to build it, and showed no signs of doing so until the local newspaper published a shocking report on the sanitary conditions in the old schools.

As a result, 200 angry citizens came to a meeting called by the Manchester P-TA council. They heard the chairman of the school board and the school superintendent describe the long-dormant plan for a new central elementary school.

The audience was inspired. They voted to ask the state for permission to conduct a town referendum on a $400,000 school construction bond issue.

In the weeks before the election "there arose differences between husbands and wives, between generations, between employer and employee," according to one citizen-observer. People who hadn't marked a ballot in their lives came forward on this election day.

At six o'clock the polls closed. "People drifted home for dinner. But many hurried back to stand outside in the raw drizzle or sit in their cars to await the result. The word came early in the evening. The bond issue was approved by a two-to-one margin in the largest vote in the town's history!"
Construction was scheduled to begin in September. But rising costs had pushed the low bid over $400,000. What to do?

Again the P-TA council went to work. A central school fund-raising committee was organized. Within a few months, citizens contributed $8,000 - enough to permit a go-ahead on the construction.

Delaware.-- In a published rating of state school systems in 1946 Delaware's was 46th. The worst of it was that the same scale showed that Delaware had the resources to support a system that would rank 6th among the 48 states.

About that time, a P-TA meeting was held in a suburb of Wilmington. The chairman was discussing inadequate salaries of teachers and how they contributed to Delaware's low-ranking school system. A young du Pont executive was there, substituting for his wife. When he heard that the average teacher was paid only $42 a week, he was shocked enough to volunteer to serve as chairman of a committee to investigate teachers' pay. He soon discovered that the problem was state-wide, so his committee asked the Delaware Congress of P-TA's to sponsor a state-wide conference on the public schools, with particular emphasis on pay scales for teachers.

Out of that first conference came a new organization - the Council for Delaware Education, Inc.
In its first two years of life the council
1. Published a layman's analysis of all state laws regarding education;
2. Prepared financial statements for every school district in the state, showing where the money came from, and how it was spent;
3. Surveyed the physical plant of every public school and gave a detailed public report on each one;
4. Appointed special committees to study finances, administration, personnel policies and school boards in each school district.

By the time all this had been done, the citizens of Delaware knew just about all there was to know about their ailing school system. The council drew up a series of legislative recommendations for school improvement.

In the 1949 session of the General Assembly, this legislative program for the schools came to a vote. Outside the state capital, parents, teachers, lawyers, newspapers and radio stations were stumping the state in behalf of the educational "New Deal." As each part of the legislative program came before the Assembly, the council issued a "Legislative Flash," describing the measure, explaining how it would help the schools, and what it would cost. Every legislator received a copy, as did every school board member, and each member of the council. Public pressure
reached tremendous proportions.

The council had lived up to its name. Educational advancement bills by the dozens passed that session of the legislature, and the whole structure of the school laws was overhauled and improved.

The outstanding results:

1. Appropriations for the Delaware school system were increased 41% - from about 16 million dollars to nearly 23 million dollars.
2. Teachers' salary scales were increased 20% to 40%.
3. Twelve million dollars worth of school construction bonds were authorized.
4. Mandatory school term of 180 days was instituted.
5. A system of uniform per-student appropriations to the schools was established.

Thus did citizens of Delaware start a movement that revamped the state school system in three years.

Palo Alto, California.-- The School Executive for January 1952 gives the following case history.

On January 7, 1948, an educational council was formed with an executive committee and subcommittees as needed whenever any community group wants to investigate or promote any phase of public education.

1/School Executive, (January 1952,) 71:5, p. 81.
Initially organized with the help of 49 civic organizations, the Education Council now includes a general membership of approximately 300, an executive committee of 12, and between 50 and 75 citizens actively engaged in committee work, representing a broad cross-section of the community.

Believing that ignorance on the part of the public with relation to "modern educational progress" was the greatest handicap to school improvement, the Education Council's goals are: to foster a cooperative effort on the part of the people of the community to think about the goals of education and the ways in which these goals may be realized; to give people a chance to be informed on the extent of agreement or disagreement on what is wanted of the schools; and to furnish a practical plan of coordination and direction for citizens and organizations who want to work for more effective community support of the schools.

The following projects have been attempted: stimulation and maintenance of higher levels of community interest in what is going on in the schools; adequate provision for rapidly increasing enrollment; survey of needs for more adequate supervisory services in the schools, guidance and counseling services; curriculum reorganization to meet individual needs, and maintain good teacher-community
relations; studies conducted by subcommittees on finance, teacher-community relations, and shop courses.

Monthly community meetings were held to discuss educational problems. Conferences, public forums and teacher-parent meetings were held by the Teacher-Community Relations Committee. Subcommittees were to study specific issues. The Council participated in a bond issue campaign. A questionnaire was sent to 100 parents, chosen at random, to answer the question: "What do you want the schools of Palo Alto to do for your children?" Members attended school board meetings.

The Council sponsored four meetings interpreting the program of modern education to parents. It was instrumental in working out a program of welcoming new teachers to the community, through large pot-luck dinners. It helped to conduct successful campaigns for increasing financial support for schools. It conducted successful weekly radio programs throughout the school year. Finance, teacher-community relations, and shop-course committees made surveys. Intangible results include public interest in the needs of the schools, and ways in which improvement can be brought about, and more understanding of the value of "talk" as a basis for community cooperation.

The Education Council's goal for the future is the continuation of the curriculum development program.
Superintendent of Schools Dr. Henry M. Gunn reports that in working in close cooperation with the community

"...we can keep our citizens groups informed about what the public schools are attempting to do, and they in return can inform us whether we are interpreting their goals clearly; and we can use their counsel and advice in developing a school program which will meet community needs."

Eugene, Oregon. -- The following account is taken from the January 1952 School Executive.

In 1950 the school board appointed the Lay Advisory Committee on the Curriculum following criticisms of the school program brought to the attention of the board through petitions requesting that changes be made in the curriculum and methods to provide greater emphasis on the fundamentals. The board selected eleven citizens who had children in the schools and who were believed to be representative of various points of view concerning the school program. These parents had children at the different grade levels and lived in different community areas of the district. Two of the committee members of the group were responsible for the original petition to the board.

The objectives of the committee were: to evaluate criticisms of curriculum and methods of the schools; to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum and methods; to recommend any necessary changes to the board.

1/Ibid., p. 82.
The following projects were attempted: evaluation of the following areas: art education, counseling and guidance, discipline, foreign languages, health and physical education, home economics education, mathematics, music, reading, science, social living, history and geography, language arts, grammar, spelling, literature, vocational program, public relations, adult education, health department, kindergarten, promotion and failure, high school graduation, school law governing compulsory school attendance, selection and training policies, special education and testing, superior and dull students and ability grouping, teacher tenure law, and teacher training program.

The committee consulted with members of the school staff, attended conferences, conventions and meetings where the school program is being discussed, heard leaders in the field of education and representatives of the critical group, examined courses of study to determine content and adequacy, examined textbooks to determine content and adequacy, visited classrooms to observe and evaluate methods. Subcommittees studied the special fields of mathematics, reading and language skills.

The Lay advisory Committee submitted a final report to the board with recommendations on all areas that were to be considered. The report was accepted by the Board of Directors and the chairman of the board wrote:
"It is the intention of the school board to instruct the administrative staff to begin work with the opening of school next fall on those recommendations which will not require the expenditure of additional funds. For those which do, action will be taken as rapidly as the voters of the district will approve the additional expenditures required."

(The recommendations were published in booklet form by the board of Directors, School District No. 4, 275 Seventh Avenue East, Eugene, Oregon, June 25, 1951.)

The lay advisory committee was disbanded by the board at the group's request. However, one recommendation was for a continuing public relations committee.

Buncombe County, North Carolina.-- Another account reported in the School Executive for January 1952 follows.

In 1949, when it came to light that Buncombe County had built only one schoolhouse in 22 years and two of Asheville's school buildings were condemned, the county commissioners appointed a citizens committee of eighteen. The original committee was composed of representatives of labor and capital, whites and Negroes, rural and urban communities. Countless volunteer workers for the campaign were recruited from civic organizations, PTA's, and fraternal groups.

The objectives of the committee were to investigate the school building needs of Buncombe County and to make recommendations to the county commissioners.

\[1\text{Ibid., p. 84.}\]
Following a recommendation that all school districts be consolidated and the debt be assumed by the county and that the commissioners call for an election for a five and a half million dollar bond issue for building schools, the committee set out to assure the passage of the measures at an election.

A State School Survey Panel was called in and published a report which recommended the reorganization and bond issue. The citizens advisory committee held mass meetings in practically every town of the county to acquaint the public with the need for reorganization and greater funds. Newspapers offered support in the form of editorials, feature articles and pictures. According to the Asheville Citizen, many organizations, civic, professional, and industrial, were devoted to the cause. The so-called "heavy" industries which are also heavy taxpayers, spared no effort to support school forces in the interest of the general welfare. Organizations such as the Parent-Teacher groups and the energetic League of Women Voters rang doorbells and buttonholed voters. County Superintendent T. C. Roberson and City Superintendent J. W. Byers helped to develop the essential school information and stood at all times courageously for their convictions. The Central Labor Union rallied its members and gave generously of its resources. The PTA staged a parade on election day with
white and Negro children, floats, banners, and so forth. A front page editorial in the morning paper on election day helped insure a large turnout at the polls. As a result of all this, Buncombe County, by a decisive vote, approved the consolidation of the debt and the five and a half million dollar bond issue.

The citizens committee of eighteen was dissolved when its mission was accomplished, but immediately reorganized into a permanent Citizens Committee for Better Schools. This new group is now investigating other phases of the school program, with emphasis placed on curriculum and school health.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.—This fourth case history is taken from an account in the School Executive for January 1952.

The Citizens' Committee on Public Education was organized in Minneapolis in December 1939. Representatives of civic organizations and members-at-large made up the membership. The original committee had for a nucleus representatives of the Minneapolis Branch, American Association of University Women, the Minneapolis League of Women Voters, and the Parent-Teacher Associations, Inc. The Committee's membership today totals approximately 175. This represents 75 members-at-large of whom 50 were new in 1950, and 100 representatives of 86 groups of whom 43 were new in

Ibid., p. 86.
The Citizens' Committee on Public Education is not an action committee but is a non-partisan, fact-finding group primarily interested in the dissemination of factual information about local school problems and in the promotion of sound public education in Minneapolis. However, while the Citizens' Committee is not an action committee, it urges its member groups and members-at-large to take individual action on the recommendations and resolutions which it presents to the general membership. When definite action is required, it steps out and makes way for the action committee.

The Committee began a study of the school budget, as the basis for plans to change the school mileage limitation established in the 1920's which was keeping the schools from levying enough money to finance an adequate program of public education. It worked with the schools to show the citizens what was being done to teach citizenship in the public schools. It spearheaded a successful move to secure legislation making it possible for outlying school districts to pay tuition for their high school students to the Minneapolis public schools. After a survey of the schools by the Public Administration Survey of the University of Chicago, the Committee acquainted the public with the findings. The Committee recommended increased state aid.
as well as temporary financial "stop-gap" measures. The present project is to find a permanent long-range solution to the school finance issue.

The Committee meets regularly once a month to acquaint its members with the newest developments in Minneapolis public schools. Members of organizations take this information back to their parent groups and, if the membership approves, the organizations take action on recommendations of the Citizens' Committee. The legislative subcommittee plans and prepares a school program for consideration of the legislature in cooperation with the State Department of Education, the local school administration and board of education. The Committee works to educate the community with respect to school needs through various publicity media such as the press, radio, speakers bureau, and a monthly publication.

The Committee has been instrumental in securing legislation on the state level for Minneapolis schools. It has been a force in arousing interest in the schools and in interpreting the school program to the public.

Chicago, Illinois.-- The following report is also taken from the School Executive of January 1952.

The Citizens Schools Committee was organized in 1933. It has governing officers, a Board of Directors, and a

\(^1\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 88.}\)
Board of Advisors (including some professional educators); maintains a small office and a staff; invites all citizens to membership at annual fees of $2 (active) or $5 or more (contributing). Such individual memberships now number around 1500.

The objectives of the Committee are to improve educational opportunities of Chicago children and to protect the public schools from partisan politics.

In 1933 Chicago schools faced financial chaos. The teachers were being paid in warrants, redeemable - at a discount - at banks or stores. The depression was everywhere. The school budget was being cut to the bone. Junior colleges and junior high schools were eliminated from the system. Home economics and manual training courses were cut from the elementary school program. The Save our Schools committee, started to oppose the Board of Education program, became the permanent Citizens Schools Committee. One of its first actions was to get 375,000 signatures for a petition asking the board to revise its thirty-odd cuts in public education. Public opinion on the school issue began to crystallize into the most powerful single political issue in Chicago. The final break came after the council hearing on charges made in a booklet published by the National Education Association and reprinted for distribution in Chicago by the Citizens Schools Committee, The Teachers' Union, and other groups. After publication of this report,
the North Central Association threatened to take all Chicago high schools off its approved list because of the political control of the schools. At this, most of the old board membership resigned. In January 1946, the superintendent of schools was removed from the NEA rolls. After that, the mayor ordered an investigation and the Committee published a report which brought about the superintendent's resignation. A year later, Mayor Kennelly was nominated and elected on a clean-school platform, and the process of cleaning up the schools began. Throughout, the Citizens School Committee was a powerful agitating force, which, with the support of two newspapers, kept the schools fight before the citizens of Chicago. The Committee takes a good deal of the credit for the installation of Superintendent Herold Hunt and his reform program.

The Committee publishes a monthly bulletin, holds conferences with other civic organizations, undertakes specific reforms (especially local politics where schools are concerned) and serves as a clearing-house for constructive citizen interest in education. It studies proposed legislation for schools and offers its recommendations to the legislators and the governor. It holds an annual city-wide meeting at which the superintendent reports to the people.

The Committee received the Lane Bryant award in 1948
for "distinguished volunteer efforts which have advanced
the welfare of the American family and the community."

The Committee will continue to nominate members for
the board of education, publish the voting records of
legislators, publicize the needs of the schools, review
proposed legislation for schools, and keep the public
informed.

Thus far this chapter has reported procedures and
programs that have proved effective in various communities
throughout the nation in gaining support for the public
schools.

New England communities.—As it is the purpose of this
study to find out how to gain public support for the public
schools in a small New England industrial community, the next
step was to investigate, if possible, the bases for public
support of the schools in that particular type of community.
In order to do this, a letter (appendix, page 142) was sent
to the Commissioners of Education in each of the New England
states requesting the names of industrial towns in their
states with populations between 5000 and 15000 (Ware’s
population group) where they considered school-community
relations good, as a source of information for a study of
this kind. Thus were secured the names of twenty-eight
towns similar to Ware scattered throughout the New England
states. Then a questionnaire (appendix, page 144) was
constructed to be sent to the superintendents in these communities to find out from them what they thought were the best means of getting and keeping good community relations. In the construction of the questionnaire the writer used pertinent ideas presented in the literature on public relations and also methods and suggestions taken from Koos' *The Questionnaire in Education* and Hand's *What People Think About Their Schools*. The questionnaire lists some methods of securing public support and possible sources of public satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the schools. It was sent to the twenty-eight superintendents in the recommended communities with an accompanying letter asking them to check which ones had been methods of securing public support for, or sources of public satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the schools in their communities. Twenty-four of the twenty-eight questionnaires sent were returned. The results of this study follow.

The following table lists methods for securing support for the public schools and shows to what extent each has been used successfully in the twenty-four communities responding to the questionnaire.

---


Table 1. Methods Used with Success in Community-School Relations in Twenty-Four New England Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Did Not Report As Using</th>
<th>Number of Communities Reporting Successful Use</th>
<th>Number of Communities Reporting Exceptionally Successful Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Use with Exceptional Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Parent-Teachers' Organization a/....</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use of school facilities by community groups......</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultivation of good relations with press b/.............</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Satisfactory pupil reports to parents.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Planned program for continuous interpretation of schools to public c/</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Use of community facilities by school for educational purposes....</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lay participation committee d/.......</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(concluded on next page)

a/One respondent qualified this as "elementary."

b/Two respondents added "and radio."

c/Four respondents qualified this as follows: "continuous, but not a cut-and-dried program" - "informal" - "friendly personal contacts most important" - "publicity."

d/One respondent noted "tried but they didn't want."
Table 1. (concluded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Did Not Report As Using</th>
<th>Number of Communities Reporting Successful Use</th>
<th>Number of communities Reporting Exceptionally Successful Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Use with Exceptional Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Campaign tactics on special issues.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Planned program for continuous contact with community leaders.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Training of all staff members in their job as community relations agents........</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Reorganization of school program.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Adult education...</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Graphic superintendent's reports.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e/Qualified in the same way as number 5.

Note: The following three methods were added to the list by respondents: "pre-school bulletin"; "good annual report"; "loyal, hard-working, impartial school committee."

Table 1 shows that every one of these methods has been used successfully in from 7 to 24 small New England industrial communities and that every one has been used with exceptional success in from 2 to 14 communities of the same type. The
fact that some of these methods were not checked on some returns is more likely to mean that they were not tried than that they were tried and failed, since comment was requested but no respondent reported failure. (One said "tried but they did not want.") The table also shows that the methods ranking lowest in success—that is, reported least often as successful—numbers 8, 10, 11, 12, and 13—are all of the type where school personnel are the active, initiating elements. This is in contrast to the methods ranking highest (numbers 1 and 2) where the community, or a group within it, is the active, participating element. Eleven of the thirteen communities reporting successful use of number 7—lay participation committee—reported this device as exceptionally successful: that is, where it was used, its percentage of use with exceptional success is 84.6%, as compared with percentages ranging from the lowest, which is 22.2%, to the next highest, which is 63.6%.

The results recorded in Table 1 seem to indicate that all these methods might be used with success in a small New England industrial community and that the method most likely to be exceptionally successful is the lay participation committee.

Table 2 lists various phases of the schools' program, achievements, attitudes, activities which might cause public satisfaction with the schools, and shows the number
out of the 24 communities in the study where these were believed by the respondents to have done so.

Table 2. Causes of Public Satisfaction with the Schools in 24 New England Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Number of Communities Reporting Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Achievement of pupils in extra-curricular activities</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Scholastic achievement of pupils</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Treatment by teachers and administrators of pupils in schools</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Guidance program</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teacher attitudes toward public</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Adequacy of the school's offering</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Driver education</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kindergarten</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Lunchroom arrangements a/</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Activities of the health staff b/</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Adult education program</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a/One respondent added "in newer schools."

b/One respondent added "in most cases."

The following sources of satisfaction were written in on the replies: work-experience; audio-visual program; safety program; pre-school bulletin.

Table 2 shows that each of the phases listed has been a source of satisfaction to the public in from 2 to 24 of the selected New England communities. Those sources reported by the greatest number of communities as bringing satisfaction
to the public - Numbers 1, 2, and 3 - have a characteristic in common: through them the parents know the effects on the children of what the schools are doing.

Table 3 lists possible causes of dissatisfaction with the schools on the part of the public and shows the number of communities where each item listed had been such a cause.
Table 3. Causes of Public Dissatisfaction with Schools in Twenty-Four Selected New England Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Number of Communities Reporting Dissatisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Increase of taxes necessary to support the schools a/................</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parents' feeling that their children are not learning what they should be learning b/...............................</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. No pre-school education c/...........................................</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teacher attitudes toward public d/.....................................</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dissatisfaction with methods of discipline......................................</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dissatisfaction with school program..........................................</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Cutting of school services..................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Unsatisfied desire for information about schools on part of public.....</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Pupils' dissatisfaction with methods of teaching............................</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a/Qualified by one respondent as "very little" and by another with "opposition comes from group without children in the public school."

b/Qualified in five instances: "very little," "a few vocal ones," "in one section only," "some," "in some cases."

c/Qualified in one case by "except clinics."

d/Qualified by one respondent with "in some cases" and by another with "including parents - some teachers seem to be unable to take criticism."

The following added sources of dissatisfaction were written in on the replies: "old buildings"; "school lunch"; "school committee decision not to reelect principal, resulting in pupil strike"; "sub-standard, overcrowded buildings"; need for more classrooms"; "additional facilities" (ut sic).
Table 3 shows that with one exception each of the listed sources of dissatisfaction has existed in at least one community selected as having good community-school relations. The one exception is number 9: not a single community reported dissatisfaction by pupils with methods of teaching. The range of frequency of cases reported in Table 3 is lower than that in Table 2 - 1 to 13 instances as compared with 2 to 22 (a total of 39 reported instances of dissatisfaction as compared with a total of 146 instances of satisfaction). Topping the list in Table 3 is "increase of taxes necessary to support the public schools" - 54.1% of the respondents report this source; the only respondent who explained it reported that the opposition comes from the group who have no children in the public schools. Second on the list is "Parents feeling that their children are not learning what they should be learning" - 45.8% of the respondents checked this. The other sources of dissatisfaction are slight in comparison: they are reported as existing in only 1 to 5 of the possible 22 cases: that is a range of from 4.1% to less than 23.0% of the possible instances.

In general, the study of the small New England industrial communities shows that good community relations exist where there is lay participation and where the parents feel that their children are learning what they should be learning. This shows that the same methods of securing public support
have succeeded in New England communities as were found practicable in cities and towns throughout the United States.

Acceptance of lay participation is in no way to be construed as abdication of professional responsibility. The function of laymen in the educational enterprise is largely advisory. One purpose of lay participation is the formation of a broad base of public opinion. It is the responsibility of educational leadership to guide the development of the public will. Education is a profession, but will never be seriously believed in as such so long as educators appear to have no strong convictions as to the content, the purpose, or the methods of their profession. Education is, however, also a social institution and cannot flourish without continuous public support. The School Executive for January 1951 has the following to say in this connection:

"There are some well-established ways in which the voice of the people may be heard in education. They speak at the polls when board members are elected and when educational issues are submitted to referendum. They speak through their organizations such as service clubs, civic clubs, civic groups, and P-TA's. They speak personally on occasion to the teachers, board members, and superintendents of schools.

But it is not enough that the people speak and

1/Abel Hanson, Teachers College, Columbia, "What Laymen Should Know About Their Superintendent of Schools," School Executive, (January 1951,) 70:5, p. 21.
that their voice be heard. It is even more important that the quality of that voice improve, that deeper understanding of what the schools are trying to do have reached high levels. This is no accident. Rather, it is because the superintendent of schools and his staff of teachers, encouraged by the board of education, have taken the real problems of the schools directly to the people for analysis and study. Lay participation of this kind is the most important single development in school administration in the last decade."

It is important because it narrows the breach between the community and its schools; it restores the schools of this democracy to their natural, proper, and historic position as expressions of the popular will; and it gains for them moral support, financial support, and definite, invaluable suggestions for their improvement. For education "does not operate in a social vacuum, responsive only to academic whim"; on the contrary,

"...the democratic institution can thrive only in so far as it meets social need, maintains itself in harmonious relations with the beliefs and desires of the people and promotes greater social effectiveness through the building of an understanding public opinion." 2/

No more direct and practical way has been devised whereby "...the institution is made aware of community conditions and needs" and the "...people kept continuously informed of the purpose, value, conditions, and needs of their educational program." 3/

2/Ibid., p. 39.
3/Ibid., p. 104.
Summary

To discover the bases of good school-community relations as they exist in practice in other places, procedures and programs in use in other communities were investigated. They have been reported in this chapter in two sections. Section 1 reviewed practices that have gained public support for the public schools throughout the nation. It gave descriptions of school-community action in twelve communities throughout the nation and discussed the organization and purposes of the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools. Section 2 showed that the experience of twenty-four New England communities recommended by their State Commissioners of Education as having good community-school relations had been similar to the communities throughout the nation: good public relations exist where there is lay participation and where the parents are confident that the children are learning what they should be learning.
CHAPTER IV
A STUDY OF WARE

In this chapter is reported a search for answers to the following questions. Does Ware make its best effort to support the schools? If not, what are the reasons for its failure to do so? Can the situation be improved? Section I reports evidence that Ware could probably make a greater tax effort for its schools than it does. This evidence is first, the "equalized valuation" figure used by the State of Massachusetts and second, a comparison of Ware with other communities of about the same population. Section 2 describes and gives the results of a poll of public opinion in Ware undertaken in order to discover causes for the support of the schools being somewhat short of the maximum possible. Three groups were involved in this study - former students of Ware High School, parents of children in school, and leaders in the community. The former two groups were polled by questionnaire, the latter by personal interview. The results include opinions about possible causes for the lack of support and suggestions gathered from the three different sources for improving the school situation.

(98)
1. Extent of Ware's Ability and Effort to Pay for its Schools

"The support of public education in the United States is derived from three public sources: the local, state, and federal governments....In view of the concept of the public school as a primary agency for the invigoration of community culture and of the American tradition of local school administrative control, it should be the prevailing policy to expect the local community to make a reasonable effort in providing support from local sources....Historically, the main burden of tax support has been on local property tax sources."1/

One factor commonly considered in deciding any taxation problem of a community is the tax rate. In the year 1950 the tax rate in Ware was $53 per $1,000. This is high. Does the fact that the tax rate is high necessarily mean that a reasonable tax effort is being made? No, this is an erroneous deduction. "The tax rate," says State Tax Commissioner Henry F. Long, "is the damnedest liar there is - it doesn't mean anything." That is, it means nothing considered alone. It must be considered in connection with assessed valuation and valuation practices. For instance, if a parcel of property valued at $3,000 is actually worth $5,000, the high tax rate on the assessed valuation of the property misrepresents its real taxability. It is well


known that assessment practices vary from community to community. To quote Commissioner Long again: "There is a vast amount of injustice in assessments in various towns and cities." And according to The Finance Programs of the Forty-Eight States, "...the ratio between assessed valuation and real valuation may be four or five times as high in some districts as in others." Thus, only by determining true valuation (as nearly as possible) can a fair picture of tax effort be obtained.

Intensive studies have been made to establish methods of determining this, the basis of the actual taxability of a community. Arthur L. Bergren, Principal Local Examiner for the New York Board of Equalization and Assessment, had the following to say about this problem in a paper presented at the Regional Training School for Assessors in June 1951:

"The assessment of real property for purposes of taxation is a complex and many-sided problem that is deserving of the best study and effort that can be given to it...The assessment of real property is no longer so completely a hodge-podge of guesswork as it quite generally was just a little while ago. Men and organizations such as our national, state, and local associations of assessors...are meeting and pooling their experiences and making their solutions of our common problems available...Much of what those who have gone before us in the study of valuation problems

1/ Ibid.

2/ Morphet & Lindman, op. cit., p. 69.

3/ "Valuation Methods," Mimeographed copy of address by Arthur L. Bergren, New York State Board of Equalization and Assessment.
have learned has been put into the form of methods and tables....The solution to the problem of real value and therefore of taxability lies in the adoption of standard rules and principles that constitute an appraisal method resulting in systematic equalized assessments."

"Systematic equalized assessments" - is there any such measure for Ware? Yes, Massachusetts is one of the states that have an index of "state equalized valuations." This is figured in accordance with the General Laws, Chapter 58, Sections 9 and 10, and is used in calculating distributions of state funds.

According to this index, Ware ranks 11th in valuation in its population group of 51 towns of from 5000-9999. Its financial status becomes clearer upon consideration of the following figures. Although Ware ranks 11th in valuation, it ranks - in its group of similar towns -

28th in amount of taxes per capita
30th in % net debt of valuation
40th in amount of school tax
46th in % of tax spent for schools
48th in school tax per capita

The same index of equalized valuation shows that Ware's equalized valuation per pupil in 1949-50 was $9,508, which

1/Morphet & Lindman, op. cit., p. 28.
2/Bulletin H3-11, Background Data for Comparing Towns in Respect to Payment of Adequate Salaries to Teachers, Massachusetts Teachers' Federation, September 25, 1950.
exceeded the corresponding figures for 78% of the 51 towns in its population group. Yet its school tax was $14.86, well below the median of $17.77 for similar communities and less than the school tax in 76.4% of the communities in its population group. And Ware's school tax was lower in the same year than in 46 of the 51 communities in its population group.

Yet Ware has had a cash surplus for years, and its debt is one of the lowest among towns in the state: its per capita debt in 1950 was $4: the average per capita debt for towns in the 7000 to 8000 population category was $18.

However, popular support of the schools was slight enough, when the School Committee in 1949 voted general salary increases to teachers, so that the annual town meeting did not appropriate the money therefor. This, although it brought about a suit by the Commonwealth against the town and undesirable notoriety, was not an unusual action for the town to take. As the following figures show, it had been the town meeting's pattern through the years to grant less - sometimes very slightly less, sometimes substantially less - for running the schools than the School Committee asked for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount Requested by School Committee</th>
<th>Amount Voted by Town</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>$92,000.00</td>
<td>$90,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>93,000.00</td>
<td>93,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>92,415.00</td>
<td>89,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>91,300.00</td>
<td>91,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>89,037.00</td>
<td>89,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>98,000.00</td>
<td>96,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>101,650.00</td>
<td>101,100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>123,307.40</td>
<td>122,587.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>132,940.00</td>
<td>129,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>154,000.00</td>
<td>141,050.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>169,510.00</td>
<td>157,710.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(It should be noted that the increasing size of the appropriations was during a period of steadily increasing prices generally.)

It is quite possible that there are elements in the financial situation in Ware that the writer has failed to take note of, since every town is different from every other town.

But when a town appears to have the capacity to pay more than it does for its schools but usually appropriates less than its School Committee has decided that the schools need, the quality of support for the schools is at least questionable and the relation of school to community and community to school should be examined.

2. Survey of Opinion in Ware

Is there dissatisfaction with the schools in Ware? Is the community poorly informed about the schools? Is the value of the public school's work questioned? If
school support is to be improved, the causes for the situation had to be discovered. It was believed that the best method of discovering these causes would be sampling opinion in Ware. If opinions about the schools could be gathered from a number of people in the town of Ware, then it might be determined whether the lack of strong support for the schools had its roots in some weaknesses in the school system, in some phase of the relationship between school and community, or in some other cause.

The groups selected for this sampling, as being in all probability good sources of pertinent information about community attitudes toward the schools, were three (a) former students of the schools (b) parents of children in school (c) leaders in the community.

Information from former students - graduates and drop-outs - was available from a survey made in 1950 by Mr. Charles L. Warner, then guidance director at Ware High School. In this survey questionnaires had been mailed to students of Ware High School who had left school during the years 1944-1949, and to the students graduating in the years 1945 to 1949. From the drop-outs information was solicited on the reasons for leaving school, things they considered of interest and value in school, and improvements they would suggest. The graduates were asked to list things in high school found to be of value after graduation, to
give suggestions for the improvement of the school, and to make any general remarks they wished to make.

A second group whose opinions were solicited consisted of the parents of children in school. This was done through an opinionnaire, a pamphlet called "Just a Second," published by the National School Service Institute of Chicago. The pamphlet was referred to in the January 1951 issue of The Nation's Schools and copies of it were obtained by writing to Mr. L. E. Parmenter, Executive Manager, National School Service Institute, Shop 307, Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois. The opinionnaire is intended to determine whether the parents of school children are satisfied with the school offerings, whether they would like some changes in the school, whether they feel that they are sufficiently informed, whether they believe in the value of good public schools.

The third group to be included in this study of public opinion consisted of community leaders. Fifteen leaders in Ware were selected for interview so that various types were represented - different occupations, racial stocks, religions, interests. The writer interviewed each of these leaders and sought from them information about the causes for the lack of school support in Ware and suggestions for the removal of the causes and the improvement of the school-community relations. The form prepared for the interview included specific questions about the
school program, the interpretation of the schools to the public, attitudes of school personnel, means of improvement of school-community relationships.

The results of these studies are given in the following pages.
A. Survey of former students.--

(1) Dropouts

Information about the causes for students leaving school and the opinions of such students about the school should be valuable in a study of school-community relations. Mr. Warner's questionnaire [appendix, page 145] was mailed to the 163 students of Ware High School who left school before graduation during the period September 1944 - June 1949. Fifty-six, or 35.6% of those to whom the questionnaire was sent, returned it. The information gathered from it and reported in table 8 covers the following points:

a. Reasons for leaving school

b. Things in school considered of interest and value

c. Suggested improvements.

Table 4 may be found on page 108.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Leaving</th>
<th>Things in School Considered of Interest or Value</th>
<th>Suggested Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Frequency</td>
<td>(2) Frequency Item</td>
<td>(3) Frequency Item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. No reason given.</td>
<td>17 No response</td>
<td>23 No suggestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>9 New teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Needed to earn money</td>
<td>13 Biology....</td>
<td>8 New trade school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Didn't like school - lost interest...</td>
<td>9 Science....</td>
<td>4 Less strictness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Nothing&quot;</td>
<td>4 More guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Education.</td>
<td>3 More money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wanted work</td>
<td>55 Drawing.</td>
<td>3 for sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Everything&quot;</td>
<td>3 New books...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wanted a subject impossible to take......</td>
<td>3 History....</td>
<td>2 New courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spelling.</td>
<td>2 New night classes...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Poor health</td>
<td>2 Assemblies.</td>
<td>1 High school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Couldn't play football.</td>
<td>1 Business Organization.</td>
<td>1 night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Didn't believe a diploma would help...</td>
<td>1 Civics....</td>
<td>1 Subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanical.</td>
<td>1 more useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Didn't like some teachers...</td>
<td>1 Art....</td>
<td>1 after school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Entered service.</td>
<td>1 Science....</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Couldn't keep up with age group...</td>
<td>1 Typing &amp; Bookkeeping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Low marks.......</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Had no reason....</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A study of Table 4 shows the following. Column 1 indicates the reasons given for leaving school. Seventeen of the respondents failed to give a reason. Eleven different ones were given by the others, the one occurring most frequently (13 out of 39 cases, or 33.3%) being the need to earn money. Nine respondents (23% of those giving a reason) listed a dislike for school and loss of interest in it. If we combine numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 it can be seen from Column 1, Table 8, that the school offerings failed to interest 25 of the 56 respondents; that is, 44.6% of them left school for that reason.

Column 2 lists the things in school considered of interest or value. Twenty-three or 41%, failed to list any item. Four more listed "nothing." It may be noted that a variety of different things appealed to different individuals, nearly every aspect of the program having been listed by at least one student.

Column 3 lists suggestions for improvements in the school. Forty respondents out of fifty-six, or 71%, made no suggestions. However, 16 suggestions for improvements were made.

It would seem that school-community relations might be improved by broadening the curriculum, to include experiences that would appeal to all those entering high-school. This would not only benefit the individuals but
such changes as are practicable would probably also improve community relations by doing a better job of meeting the needs of members of the community.

(2) Survey of Graduates

A questionnaire [appendix, page 146] was also mailed by Mr. Warner to the 209 students graduating in the years from 1945 to 1949 inclusive. 119, or 56.9%, of the questionnaires were returned. The information gathered from it covers the following points:

1. Things in high school found to be of value after graduation
2. Suggestions for improvement

This information is tabulated in Table 5.
Table 5. Suggestions of Graduates for the Improvement of Ware High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. More guidance.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Manual arts.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Grammar in business.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. New teachers.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. More difficult college prep course</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Biology laboratory.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Shorthand for everyone.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Typewriters enough.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Conversational classes in foreign language.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Cut out favoritism.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Expanded business courses.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Four year domestic science course</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. More modern school.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. More spelling.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Show relation of subjects to life.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Better equipped laboratory.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Course in manners.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. How to study should be taught.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Less control of outside activities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Longer recess.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. More talk - less book work.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. More visual aids.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. More social activities.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. New assembly hall and gym.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Night school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Reading comprehension course.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Spanish.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Teachers try to get along with students.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Wider variety of courses.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The things considered to be of value after graduation ranged from 1 mention for all college preparatory subjects, aptitude tests, athletics, civics, drawing, geography, learning how to study, office training, training in self-reliance, and the Washington trip; through 3 mentions for
"all subjects," guidance, history; 4 for extracurricular activities; 5 for biology and science; 6 for consumer education; 7 for chemistry and home economics; 8 for "none" and for Problems of Democracy; 9 for French, Latin, and Physics; to 38 for mathematics; 49 for business subjects, and 50 for English.

The comments made in the section "General Remarks" were "general background from compulsory courses good," "excellent English course," "Ware High is tops," "teachers poorly trained," and "religious discrimination."

This study shows 29 possible ways in which the school might be brought in line with wishes of individuals in the community.

Results of survey of graduates.-- From this survey of the opinion of former students about the school, suggestions may be gathered to be considered in getting good school-community relations. Since the survey of the drop-outs showed that the school failed to interest 44% of those who left school before graduation, ways of broadening the school curriculum should probably be explored. Combining suggestions for improvement given by the drop-outs with those given by the graduates, 40 items for possible school-improvements were gathered. This indicates that it might be worthwhile to explore the practicability of incorporating these expressed wishes of former graduates, now members of the community, into the school program. Since the school would be, to
whatever extent this might be done, that much more in harmony with desires or needs existing in the community, community relations should be thereby improved.

B. Questionnaire to Parents.-- The questionnaire used (previously referred to on page 105) is one prepared by the National School Service Institute of Chicago. It is entitled "Just a Second"/appendix, page 147/ and is referred to as an opinionnaire as well as a questionnaire. This pamphlet has been used in many communities, according to the 1953 Yearbook of School Administrators, to test local attitudes, 51,000 copies having been distributed in various large and small school districts. Copies of it were distributed to their parents by the children in the Ward schools through high-school home-room and elementary-school classroom teachers. Only the oldest child of a family received a copy. Of the 500 copies distributed, 154, or 20.8%, were returned. The writer believes that the relatively small number of those who returned it is explainable by the fact that the pamphlets were distributed only two days before school closed for the year and that more would have been received had they been distributed earlier. The late date for sending them out was necessitated because of difficulty in locating the address of the National School

Institute, the first request for copies having been returned by the Post Office. It was hoped that the responses would give some answer to the following questions.

(a) Are the parents of school children satisfied with the schools' offerings?
(b) If not, what changes do they want?
(c) Are they sufficiently informed about the schools?
(d) Do they believe in the value of good public schools?

The sections of the pamphlet pertinent to this study cover the following points.

1. Parts of the program parents do not want in the schools
2. What they would add to the school program
3. Whether they feel that they are sufficiently informed about the schools
4. Their ideas for improving the schools
5. Their attitude toward the economic value of the schools.
Table 6 is concerned with school offerings. It is prepared from the responses to questions on page 4 and page 7 of "Just a Second." "What Would You Do Away With?" and "Some People Object--"

Table 6. Changes in School Offerings Suggested by Parents of Children in School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take Away</th>
<th>Number out of 154 Respondents</th>
<th>Add</th>
<th>Number out of 154 Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Item</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Better playground.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>arrangements</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>More guidance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Exercise&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>More teachers for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>slow learners</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient History</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manual arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More intra-mural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sports and activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More creative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>activities e.g.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dramatics, art</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kindergarten</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More &quot;special</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>interest&quot; subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wider variety in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>choice of high-school subjects</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that approximately 20% of the 154 responding had suggestions for changes in the school program. It shows that no single listed aspect of the school program had more
than 5 respondents desiring its removal from the school program. Only fourteen respondents had suggestions for additions to the school offerings.

If some or all of the suggested changes in the school program could be effected, then the amount of satisfaction with the schools on the part of parents in the community would be increased and school-community relations improved to that degree.

Comments from parents in answer to the request on page 11 of the "Just a Second" pamphlet are given in Table 7. The question asked was, "And now let's hear about your pet ideas as to how the schools can be made to do an even better job."

Table 7. Comments of Parents of Children in School Showing Unfavorable and Favorable Attitudes toward Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Unfavorable Attitude</th>
<th>Favorable Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency (1)</td>
<td>Toward Frequency (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children should be allowed in buildings early in bad weather</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teaching good... 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger teachers needed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Good effect on pupils... 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More reading and writing needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>General 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should take better care of superior child...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers should consult with parents more...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling poor...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden change to &quot;heavy&quot; homework in seventh grade...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best work of schools is asking for money...</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total...</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Total 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Out of a total of 74 comments only 10, or 13.5%, were unfavorable. The other 64 reflect an attitude favorable to the schools - 86.4% of those who made comments. Characteristic remarks among those totaled in Column 4 were "teaching capably and understandably done," "teachers take personal interest in their pupils," "very good teachers," "3 R's well taught," "health education and care excellent," "teach citizenship well," "teach good manners." Others were "get new school buildings adequately staffed and equipped," "better school equipment," "new modern schools and equipment to bring out the best in our children."

The dissatisfaction indicated by some of the unfavorable comments might be taken care of by a public-relations-conscious staff or by a shift in emphasis in teaching, if after consideration, that seems desirable.

The small percentage of unfavorable comments seems to indicate that there is little basis for criticism of the schools; but since the respondents seem to represent, for the most part, the interested parents, and since even they have some unfavorable comments to make, consideration should certainly be given these suggestions, few as they are. This should help to increase satisfaction with the schools and thus improve community relations.
The question intended to discover whether the parents of school children feel well informed about the schools is on page 6 of the "Just a Second" questionnaire. It is "Are today's newspapers telling you what you want to know about your schools?" Responses are given in Table 8, below.

Table 8. Responses of Parents of Children in School Showing Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction with Amount of Information from Newspapers about the Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes...</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No...</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>38.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretty well...</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows that 89% of the parents responding felt that they were not receiving all the information they desire about the school.

The test of the parents' opinion as to the economic value of good schools was contained in the following questions, to be found on pages 7, 9, and 10 respectively of the questionnaire.

Do you think that teachers could do a better job if schools had more and better equipment and supplies?

Do you believe that good schools, attractive school buildings, and well-kept equipment and grounds help increase
the value of property in your community?

Do you think that if your town had even better schools it would sooner or later mean a better life for you and your family?

The responses to these questions are given in Table 9.

Table 9. Responses of Parents of Children in School Giving Opinions on the Economic Value of Good Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Schools Increase Value of Property</th>
<th>Schools Bring Better Economic Life</th>
<th>Bigger Investment in Equipment Improves Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>PerCent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from Table 9 that a very high per cent of the 154 respondents believe that good schools increase the value of property, bring a better economic life to themselves and their families, and secure better teaching for their children when properly equipped and supplied. In other words, an average of 87.7% believe in the economic value of good schools.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the questionnaire sent to the parents.

1. Most of the parents responding to the questionnaire are satisfied with the school offerings. There
were, however, some suggestions for improvement.

2. 86.4% of those who offered comments on "Pet Ideas" about the schools showed a favorable rather than an unfavorable attitude toward the schools. But there were some unfavorable comments.

3. The information they receive through newspapers about the schools is insufficient information, in the opinion of the majority.

4. The vast majority of the parents responding believe that good schools are worth while from the economic point of view.

These conclusions are evidence that among the parents there would probably be some enthusiastic support for the initiation of a better community-school relations program; that making use in the school program of the parents' ideas of what the schools ought to do should bring schools and community closer together; and that an almost crying need for the improvement of school-community relations is better information about the schools through the press.

C. Interviews with Community Leaders.-- Fifteen leaders in the community were interviewed \[\text{Appendix, page 148}\]. These were selected so that they represented various interests, occupations, racial stock, points-of-view. In each case the person interviewed was first guaranteed complete anonymity. He was then given an opportunity to talk in
answer to the general question "Why, in your opinion, have the Ware Schools lacked support?" Following this, he was asked specific questions about his opinion about the school program, the interpretation of the schools to the public, attitudes of school personnel, means of improvement of school-community relations, the return to the taxpayer on his investment in the schools, the quality of education in the Ware schools. A copy of the interview form is included in the appendix [page 145]. The results of these interviews are given in the following pages.

Table 10 lists some of the factors in the situation which these leaders in the community believed might be causes for the schools' not having the whole-hearted support of the community. Some of these were suggested by the interviewer, having been listed on the interview form; the ones marked with an asterisk in the table were ideas original with the persons interviewed.

Table 10 may be found on page 122.
Table 10. Elements in Situation Considered by Fifteen Community Leaders to Be Possible Causes for Lack of Support of Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Cause</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.  Poor interpretation of schools to public</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.  Not enough lay participation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.  *Rumors - &quot;Heard high school didn't train well for college,&quot; &quot;heard there was prejudice against a certain racial group,&quot; &quot;gossip, with children not successful in school, attack school&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.  *Make-up of population such that low value is placed on education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.  *Objection to tenure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.  *One wealthy influential family wants to keep taxes down</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.  *People in general dislike paying taxes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.  *&quot;Mill-owner complex&quot;--tendency of many citizens to want to do what is pleasing to &quot;the boss&quot;--in this case, not spend too much.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.  *Double burden on parochial-school supporters</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.  *Belief in prep schools (private)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.  Number of citizens not getting direct benefit from schools</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.  School policy too conservative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.  Parents dissatisfied with treatment of children--this feeling believed to exist to some extent among one racial group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.  *Lack of confidence in a few teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.  Attitude of teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.  Attitude of administrators</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.  Failure of schools to satisfy community needs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.  School policy too progressive</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A wide variety of ideas about possible causes for inadequate support of the schools was gathered from these interviews, indicating a complex situation. Table 10 shows, however, that the possible causes most frequently mentioned were poor interpretation of the schools to the public, and not enough
lay participation. Out of the 37 suggestions poor interpretation was mentioned 12 times, constituting 32.4% of the total. And "not enough lay participation" was given 7 mentions out of the 37, or 18.9%. No one interviewed selected from among the causes suggested as possible by the interviewer the ideas that attitudes of teachers or administrators, or failure of the schools to satisfy community needs were at the basis of inadequate school support.

Table 11 lists phases of the schools (ones suggested by the interviewer) which those interviewed considered as probably satisfactory or probably unsatisfactory. As the table shows, some of them reported themselves uncertain about a few of these.

Table 11 may be found on page 124.
Table 11. Phases of Present School Set-Up Considered to Be Either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory by Leaders in Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase of School Set-Up</th>
<th>Number of Respondents Considering It Satisfactory</th>
<th>Number of Respondents Considering It Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Number Saying &quot;No opinion&quot; or &quot;Don't know&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quality of education in War schools...</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Treatment of interviewee by school personnel.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Return on taxpayers' investment...</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Extent of school program...</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Amount of money spent on schools...</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a/Overbearing attitude of school board.
b/Believe more money should be spent.

Table 11 indicates that of the aspects of the schools offered for discussion, the ones considered by the greatest number as being probably satisfactory were the courtesy of the school personnel and the quality of education in the schools. 8 out of 15, or 53.3%, believed that the schools should have a more extensive program and should have more money spent on them.

Table 12 includes some of the previous data among suggestions for improvement - of the schools and/or school-community relations - thought to be valuable by those leaders who were interviewed. This table is on page 125.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Means Considered Good for Developing Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. More adult education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. More participation by teachers in community life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. More visits to schools by patrons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. Home visits by teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>f. Change in curricular offerings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>g. Community forums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. More participation by public in school planning</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Better presentation of school case on Town Hall floor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(concluded on next page)

a/One said "but utopian in Ware."

b/One said "on radio only."

c/This was original with interviewees.
Table 12. (Concluded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Means Considered Good for Developing Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Item
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Additions to school program</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>a. More adult education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Shop work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. More guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. Agriculture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 shows that 100% of those interviewed thought a closer relationship between citizens and school personnel would be desirable. More school news and more adult education were the most approved suggestions for closer relationship between citizens and school personnel and for better interpretation of the schools to the public.

From these interviews, the writer gathered many ideas about possible causes for the lack of whole-hearted support for the schools. There seems to be little doubt, if one considers the evidence offered in this study, that, for good school-community relations, more participation by lay people in school planning and better interpretation of the schools to the public are needed. Another factor, mentioned only once in the tables, but occurring occasionally in the talks, was the double taxation burden on the supporters
of parochial schools who must pay taxes for public schools.

Summary

The first part of this chapter has reported evidence that Ware could probably make a greater tax effort for its schools. The evidence presented is twofold: first, the "equalized valuation" figure used by the State of Massachusetts, which indicates that if real estate in the town were valued closer to its actual value, more money could be raised by taxes; second, a comparison of the town's financial support of its schools with that in communities comparable to Ware. (The writer notes that no town is exactly comparable to any other.) Section 2 of the chapter describes and gives the results of a survey of public opinion in Ware, which included a poll of former students of Ware High School, parents of children in the Ware schools, and leaders in the community. From this survey came ideas as to the possible causes for the lack of maximum school support and suggestions for bettering the school situation. Chief among the latter are more lay participation and better interpretation of the schools to the community.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary.-- It has been the purpose of this study to determine means of improving community-school relations in a small New England industrial community - Ware, Massachusetts. As indicated in Chapter I and Chapter IV there has been a lack of harmony between the schools of Ware and the community. The failure of large numbers of voters to turn out in support of the schools at town meetings and the long-standing tendency of the voters to cut school appropriations show this lack of harmony. Litigation on the action of the town in failing to appropriate money requested by the school committee to cover teacher salary increases has left wounds. But a healthy organism doesn't attack part of itself. In a community confident that the public schools are expressions of the community's will, the conditions described would not have existed. Court cases would have been unthinkable. These were acute symptoms of trouble, not the trouble itself. Such a situation demands improvement.

In order to discover, if possible, methods of bringing about an improvement in these school-community relations,
the writer followed these three procedures. First, he investigated the literature in the field of public relations to learn the bases of good school-community relations. Second, he investigated procedures and programs which had been found to be effective in other communities throughout the nation and in New England in gaining or maintaining support for the public schools by studying accounts in educational literature and in the literature of the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools of what other communities throughout the nation had done and by studying information gained from answers to a questionnaire sent to the superintendents of schools in twenty-eight small New England industrial communities recommended for good public relations. Third, the writer attempted to determine whether the town's financial condition would warrant spending more for school support; and to discover what the causes for the lack of support, moral and material, have been, for which the opinions of former students of the schools, parents of school children, and leaders in the community were solicited - the former two groups by questionnaire, the latter by personal interview.

Conclusions.-- Following are the conclusions drawn from the study described above. The study of the literature in the field led to these four conclusions. First, school-community relations include and go beyond "publicity" to the much broader field of continuous interpretation of the
schools to the community and the community to the schools, resulting ideally in a constant mutual interaction between the two. Second, the heart of any school-community relations program lies in educating the public will and in responding to that will. The problem therefore is essentially one of skill in human relationships, involving the use of all that is known about how human beings learn. Third, the application of this knowledge to a community-relations program indicates that the following characteristics are essential to its success: honesty; a two-way flow of ideas; a positive approach; the expression of information and ideas in understandable terms, often repeated; comprehensiveness; sensitiveness; allowing time enough for learning. Fourth, the agents involved in school-community relations are all members of the school-staff, and pupils, parents, and community groups. A most important recent development among community groups has been the rise and spread of the citizens' committees for the public schools, or lay participation groups.

The second procedure in this study - the investigations of community-relations procedures and programs that have been used with success elsewhere - led to the following conclusions. The citizens' committee, or lay participation group, which has as its purpose participation in efforts to improve the public schools, has been a highly effective instrument in communities throughout the nation, as well as in the small New England communities where it was reported
as having been tried. Various other means of bringing about school-community understanding and harmony have also been used with success in these New England communities; for example: Parent-Teachers Organizations, cultivation of good relations with the press, the use of school facilities by community groups. In addition, it may be concluded that good community relations exist where the parents know the effects on their children of what the schools are doing. Ranking first among the causes of dissatisfaction with the schools in the small New England industrial schools is the increase in taxes necessary to support the schools.

The third part of this investigation - the study of Ware - suggests the following conclusions. First, Ware is making considerable tax effort for its schools, which might be somewhat greater if there were complete harmony between community and school. There have recently been signs of the establishment of more harmonious relations; such as the town's choice in 1953 of a new school committeeman, its approval of the committee's 1952 and 1953 budget; a general lessening of tensions and antagonisms. The writer believes that to some degree the interviews done in connection with this study have contributed toward better relations: for example, some of these community leaders and one member of the school staff talked together about school problems. Also, the parents' consideration of the opinionnaire "Just a Second" may have had some healthful effect.
The second conclusion based on this part of the study is that dissatisfaction with the work of the schools does not appear to be a major cause of lack of support for the schools. The responses from former students, parents, and leaders in the community did not indicate any general feeling that the schools had not done a good job. This might mean either that the schools have done a good job, or that the study failed to include dissatisfied groups, or that the respondents were not all entirely frank. It is possible that some of those interviewed might have expressed more criticism of the achievement of the schools if their interviewer had not been a member of the school staff. Certainly satisfaction with the work of the schools outweighed dissatisfaction in this study.

The study indicates that the three major causes of lack of harmony are:

1. Lack of continuous, effective interpretation of the schools to the public;
2. Lack of a community sense of ownership of the schools and pride in that ownership;
3. The deeply-rooted feeling, amounting to a conviction, that property-owners in Ware are paying out enough money for education.

**Recommendations.**—Efforts should be made to remove these causes of separation between school and community. A start toward the removal of the first two could be made by:
1. Planning on the part of administrators for the development of understanding by the entire staff of their function as community-relations agents;

2. Planning for continuous publicity particularly about the achievements of pupils; (One good step in this direction has been taken by unusually successful Science Fairs for the past two years.) the record of graduates in college has been one for the community to be proud of: it has not been properly publicized;

3. The proper presentation of the schools' case on the Town Hall floor, emphasizing the needs of children;

4. Examination by school personnel of the suggestions made by the parents, former students, and leaders in the community to see whether some or all of them might be incorporated into the school program; this is the kind of partnership in planning that has been shown to be successful in other communities in bringing about close school-community relations;

5. The creation of a citizens' committee, a lay advisory group.

The experience of other communities throughout the nation and in communities of a population approximating Ware's, as reported in Chapter III, and the opinion of leaders in Ware all indicate the advisability of forming such a group. There have been formed in Ware in the past
at least two such groups, the Educational Council and the Ware Council for the Public Schools. The latter is still in existence. However, measured by the experience of the National Citizen's Commission for the Public Schools, after examining methods of organization and modes of procedure of some 1500 local county and state committees, these Ware organizations have not had the necessary basis for effective action. The Commission points out, as reported on pages 45-6 (Chapter III,) these three common denominators of all effective groups:

1. They are representative of the entire community.
2. They start with fact-finding to make certain their recommendations and actions are based on an objective evaluation of the problems.
3. They work cooperatively with the school authorities but preserve their independence of thought and action.1

On the first point, the handbook for citizens committees, entitled, *How Can We Help Get Better Schools?* declares:

"The entire success or failure of a citizens committee is decided when the members are chosen. If they really represent the whole community or state it is very difficult for a citizens committee to do wrong. If they don't, it's almost impossible for the group to do right."

The first problem in setting up the lay advisory group in Ware would be to get more representative membership.

"It is rarely a good idea," says Some Pointers for Citizens


2/Ibid., p. 66.
Committees, "for those who want to start a citizens' committee to begin by holding a mass meeting. A better method is to ask organizations and community leaders of all kinds to suggest individuals who might be interested."

The Ware Council for the Public Schools tried this method: letters were sent to all organizations by the group starting to organize the Council, asking that a representative be selected; but the attempt fell far short of getting wide representation. It would seem that the Ware situation requires a long period of persuasion, through personal contacts and proper interpretation of the schools, possibly, before the satisfactory groundwork will be laid for the formation of a citizens' committee.

This may well be considered the most important step of all, since it is basic to the success of any later action. If the committee is not representative of the entire town, it will, if experience is any guide, almost certainly fail. Time enough to lay the foundation well is essential. The guiding principle to be applied here is stated on page 27 (Chapter II): sufficient time must be allowed for the development of mutual understanding or for the establishment on firm ground of any needed change.

Theodore L. Reller, Professor of Education at the University of California, says: "In developing or expanding the role

1/Tbid., p. 66.
of citizens' committees, care must be taken in order that essential confidence, respect, and ability are built."

The second point considered by the National Citizens' Commission for the Public Schools, that a citizens committee's springboard for decisions and action must be facts - not rumor, gossip, or opinion - should present no stumbling-block to success if the membership is apprised of its importance. Many facts about the schools can be learned often by simple inquiry from school personnel. And within a year all the facts about the high school, at least, will be available to those interested. An evaluation of the school by using the *Evaluative Criteria*, prepared by the Cooperative Study of Secondary-School Standards, is already under way, under the guidance of a representative of Boston University. The work on it will be done during the school year 1953-1954, and the results known at the end of that year. A study of these results would be an excellent first project for the newly organized committee. Possibly the results might be widely distributed in town through various organizations, church groups, service organizations, staff members and others, as was done by the Community Council on Education of Orangeburg, South Carolina, with the report of the

1/*School Executive*, (January 1952), op. cit., p. 71.

survey done in that town.

The third essential for the success of a citizens' committee, cooperation with school authorities, rests with the membership. The original committee might be selected by the school board, as has been done in many cases - for example in Eugene, Oregon, a case reported on page 77 (Chapter III). It should be noted that the committee must, however, "...preserve its independence of thought and action."

To sum up, the citizens committee formed in Ware must be truly representative, must base its advice and action on facts, and must cooperate with the School Board.

It is the opinion of this writer that the best way to remove the third cause, the conviction that the tax-payer is too heavily burdened, is by lightening the load on property-tax payers in Ware and in towns similar to it through an increase of state aid to the public schools. The chief cause of dissatisfaction reported in Table 3, Chapter 3 was "increase of taxes necessary to support the public schools." And the double taxation burden on supporters of parochial schools, who must pay taxes for public schools has been noted (pages 126-7, Chapter IV) and should be taken into consideration.

Public School Finance Programs of the Forty-Eight States

1/School Executive, (January 1952), op. cit., p. 73.
"People across the nation are recognizing more clearly than ever before that it is impossible for any state to have a satisfactory program of education without a sound plan for financing the public schools. Defects in the finance plan tend to result either in deficiencies in public school services, or in inequities to tax payers, or both. . . . A large proportion of the states still distribute part of the funds for schools on bases, such as the school census, which for many years have been considered unsatisfactory. Such procedures, once incorporated in the laws, tend to be continued and result in many injustices. . . . The tax base for school support in a number of states and communities is still restricted largely to general property tax and is so narrow that the needs cannot be met.

During the past quarter of a century much has been learned about the principles, criteria, and procedures which should be observed in developing a satisfactory State program of public school finance. . . . Enough is now known about school finance that if this knowledge were properly applied, there could be greatly improved programs of financial support in every state and for practically every local school system. However, no state has yet applied all the knowledge which is available.

School support funds derived from state sources at present range from 6 per cent to 90 per cent. In general the states which provide very little money from State sources have a narrow tax base for the support of their schools. Schools in such states are not able to provide an adequate educational program with reasonable local tax effort. The range in the portion of the support derived from general property taxes is from less than 10 per cent in a few states to nearly 90 per cent in others."

It is significant that (according to Finance Programs of the Forty-Eight States) in Massachusetts 81.6% of school support is from local sources (79.9% from local

1/Morphet & Lindman, op. cit., p. 1.

2/Ibid., p. 84.
property taxes) and only 18.4% from the state. The New England states all depend heavily on local property taxes for support of their schools; also from this source comes 92.6% of the money spent on schools in New Hampshire, 80% in Rhode Island, 74% in Connecticut, 66.7% in Vermont, 65.6% in Maine.

Massachusetts could contribute more from state funds. More than half the school money in New York and California, for example, comes from the state, and in some states nearly 90%. Massachusetts ranks 11th among the states in assessed valuation per child five to seventeen years of age; and in spite of the imperfections in assessed valuation practices previously referred to in Chapter IV, these figures shed some light upon the relative ability of the states to assist their less wealthy communities in supporting their schools.

The Finance Programs of the Forty-Eight States also points out that

"...during recent years there has been much interest in the relation between total income payments to individuals in the various states as related to the total number of children five to seventeen years of age. This relationship is regarded as a measure of the State's ability to finance education for its children."

Massachusetts ranked 9th (1948 figures) among the 48 states in the average of income tax payments per child. Another type of comparison based on total income payments is

1/Ibid. p. 15.

2/Ibid. p. 15.
used frequently as a measure of state "effort" to support its public school system. This is the ratio of the total annual public school revenues in a state to the total annual income payments received by individuals in that state. Massachusetts ranked 42nd in this respect. If the state of Massachusetts, ranking 9th among the 48 states in average of income payments to individuals but 42nd in per cent of this income given to public school revenues, were to give more financial aid to small industrial communities such as Ware for support of their schools, one of the basic causes of community dissatisfaction with the schools would be removed.

Ware citizens should work for this plan: through the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the Massachusetts Teachers' Federation, and possibly the State Department of Education. There are other state and national organizations that have local chapters and are interested in education, through which the people of Ware might gain support for this idea: the National Association of Manufacturers has an Educational Advisory Council; the Chamber of Commerce promotes educational improvement; the State Parent-Teachers Organization could help; various clubs like the Lions' Club have official publications through which such ideas can be spread. Ware citizens might join with

1/ Ibid., p. 86.
such groups to make their problem known and to work with and through them for its solution, finally supporting it in the state legislature.
Mr. ----
Commissioner of Education
----, ----

Dear Mr. ----:

I am making a study of school-community relations in small industrial towns, those with populations of between 5000 and 15000. Would it be possible for you to send me the names of any towns of this size in your state which you consider have initiated and developed successful school-community relations programs?

I shall appreciate any help you can give me in this connection.

Very truly yours,

Everett J. Sullivan
Vice-Principal
Ware High School
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN RECOMMENDED COMMUNITIES

1. **Check** any of the following methods of securing public support that have been used successfully in your community:

   ( ) A planned program for continuous contact with community leaders
   ( ) A planned program for continuous interpretation of the schools to the public
   ( ) Parent-Teachers' organization
   ( ) Satisfactory reports to parents
   ( ) Training of all staff members in their job as public relations agents
   ( ) Reorganization of school program
   ( ) Use of school facilities by community groups
   ( ) Use of community facilities by the school for educational purposes
   ( ) Graphic superintendent's reports
   ( ) Cultivation of good relations with the press
   ( ) Adult education
   ( ) Campaign tactics on special issues
   ( ) Lay participation committee
   ( ) Any other (Please explain briefly on other side of paper.)

2. Check twice the items checked in Question 1 that you regard as most successful in increasing public satisfaction with the schools.

3. In your community, which of these have been (or are) sources of satisfaction on the part of the public? (Check)

   ( ) Scholastic achievement of pupils
   ( ) Achievement of pupils in extra-curricular activities
   ( ) Treatment by teachers and administrators of pupils in schools
   ( ) The guidance program
   ( ) Adequacy of the schools' offering
   ( ) Lunchroom arrangements
   ( ) Teacher attitudes toward public
   ( ) Activities of the health staff
   ( ) Driver education
   ( ) Kindergarten
   ( ) Adult education program
   ( ) Any other aspect of the school program (Please explain briefly on other side of paper.)

4. In your community, which have been the source of greatest dissatisfaction with the schools?

   ( ) Increase of taxes necessary to support the schools
   ( ) Teacher attitudes toward public
   ( ) Pupils' dissatisfaction with methods of teaching
   ( ) " " " " discipline
   ( ) " " " " school program
   ( ) Cutting of school services
   ( ) No pre-school education
   ( ) Unsatisfied desire for information about schools by public
   ( ) Parents' feeling that their children are not learning what they should be learning
   ( ) Any other (Please explain briefly on other side of paper.)
Mr. ----
Superintendent of Schools
----, ----

Dear Mr. ----:

In making a study of school public relations in New England industrial towns of the population size of ----, I have learned that your school-community relations are good. I would appreciate your checking and returning the enclosed questionnaire and adding any additional pertinent information about successful aspects of your program.

Very truly yours,

Everett J. Sullivan
Vice-Principal, Ware High School
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORMER STUDENTS OF THE
WARE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS

1950

Name:_________________________ Age:___  Year left school:____

Year of school completed: (Circle one) 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Position you are now in:____  Company:____  Town:____  State:___

Job description: (Check one)  Office work:___  Machine work:___
Hand work:___  Other work:____

Approximate pay:___  What was your first job upon leaving
school:___________

Course you took in high school: (Check one)
College Preparatory:___  Scientific:___
Commercial:___  General:____

Upon whose recommendation did you secure your first job:____

We are particularly anxious to determine the causes of
drop-outs from school. Your answers on this questionnaire
will be held in strict confidence. Would you indicate,
please:

(1). The reasons you had for leaving school:_____  

(2). The things in school which you found of interest
and value:_______________________

(3). Suggested improvements:___________________

(4). Any other remarks you feel may be of value to
the school Dept. will be kept in strict
confidence.__________________________
WARE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES' QUESTIONNAIRE

March 1950

Name: ________________________ Age: __________

Present Address: __________________ Married: __ Single: ___

Position at the present time: _____ Company: __________

Town: __________________________ State: ____________

Job description: (Check one) Office work: ___

Machine work: ___ Hand work: ___ Other work: ________

Approximate pay, hour or week: __________________

What was your first job upon graduation: ____________

Course you took in high school: (Check one) College Preparatory: ___ Scientific: ___ Commercial: ___ General: ___

Upon whose recommendation did you secure your first job?

__________________________________________

Would you indicate briefly the things in high school you found to be of value to you after graduation: ______

__________________________________________

Suggestions for improvement: ____________________________

Any other remarks you feel may be of value to the School Department will be kept in strict confidence: ___

__________________________________________
How would you do it...

if you had the job of planning the very best schooling for your boys and girls?*

You can help greatly by putting down your thinking right here in black and white. (We are asking you personally because you know how you want your children educated in order that they can do the important jobs of tomorrow.) It'll take only three minutes time with a pencil. Your opinions will do a lot in helping us tackle the biggest job in America today—planning for a peaceful, prosperous tomorrow. For all this help kindly accept the thanks of

The Public Schools

*The public schools are your schools. Tell us how you would like to have them teach your children.
Remember the

Good Old Days?

Here are a number of things common to the schools you went to in "the good old days."

- Slate
- Kerosene lamp
- Water bucket and tin cup
- Dunce cap
- Outdoor toilet
- Wood stove
- Hickory stick
- Lunch pail

Just check those which you would like to see used in today's schools.
Perhaps there are some things you don't exactly want taught in your schools. Check the ones you'd do away with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Leave it out of Grade School</th>
<th>Leave it out of High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect for rights of others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How to spend intelligently</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good manners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn a trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military training</td>
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<tr>
<td>The three &quot;R's&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>American history</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Art experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education for home and family living</td>
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<tr>
<td>An understanding of religion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to speak well</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health habits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn a foreign language</td>
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<td>Drive an automobile</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to be a good citizen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality development</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Do children write as well as you did at their age?

- Yes • • •  No • • •

Would you like to see more writing taught to children today?

- Yes • • •  No • • •
Reading is a subject of great importance.

Do you think children today read as well as you did when you were a child?

Yes • • • □

No • • □

Don’t know • • □

• • •

How much reading do children do on their own nowadays as compared with your reading as a youngster?

More • • □

As much • • □

Less • • □
What about a job?

These rapidly changing times . . .

Should schools prepare students for a definite job,
or
Should today's schools teach, in addition to the 3 "R's," such subjects as will help boys and girls fit into whatever job appeals and offers employment at the time they are ready for work?

Prepare for a specific job
Learn general skills for adjusting to the job that's available

* * *

News

In your opinion, are today's newspapers telling you what you want to know about your schools?

Yes [ ] No [ ] Pretty well [ ]
Some people object...

What do you think? A few complain that much of today's school work is a waste of time. Here are some of the things today's schools teach. Check the things that you wouldn't like to have your child know about.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Leave it out Grade School</th>
<th>Don't teach it in High School</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Safety education</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooking and sewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education for home and family living</td>
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<tr>
<td>School libraries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football &amp; basketball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional moving pictures</td>
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<td>Science experiments</td>
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<td>Machine shop</td>
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<td>How to buy intelligently</td>
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<td>Business arithmetic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion of controversial subjects</td>
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<td>Gym and swimming</td>
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<td>Dramatics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
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</table>

Help, Please

Do you think that teachers could do a better job of teaching if schools had more and better equipment and supplies?

Yes ... ☐

No ... ☐

Uncertain ... ☐
Your public schools are interested in teaching good health habits—correct exercise, adequate sleep, proper food, and good work habits. Schools aim to make sure that every child has a chance to develop good health and keep reasonably free from physical defects. *

Would you say that the schools your children attend should spend more on their program of health education?

Yes . . .

No . . .

Don’t care . . .

* The Army and Navy have found that rejections were highest in states where educational opportunities were poorest.
Question...

Now here is an especially important point on which we need your best judgment:

Do you believe that good schools, attractive school buildings, and well-kept equipment and grounds help increase the value of property in your community?

Yes______, No_________, Not sure_________.

Good Americans...

Do you think from what you see of your children's education today that they will probably take a more active interest in voting and possibly running for office than you have?

Yes______, No_________, Can't decide_________.

Do your children appear to be better informed in governmental affairs than the kids who were your playmates?

Yes [ ] No [ ] Doubtful [ ]
Now let's step over to the Department of Toeing the Mark for a moment.

What about the hickory stick and the dunce cap? Would you like to have your child thrashed or perhaps stood up before the class as "a dunce" when he is bad in school,
or

Would you prefer that your child be taught to take care of himself, that is, to learn responsibility and something regarding the rights of others?

I want the hickory stick
Let's develop self-discipline
Don't care

Does it pay?

It has been said that more schooling for the people of a community means better living for those people.

Do you think that if your town had even better schools it would sooner or later mean a better life for you and your family? In other words, does more learning usually mean more earning?

Yes  No  Can't decide
Will you be good enough to give us a hint as to what you feel your schools do best?

And now let's hear about your pet ideas as to how the schools can be made to do an even better job.
But what about you?

It will help a lot in our understanding of your thinking if you'll just take a second more and jot down a word or two about yourself.

Male   Female

Occupation (what do you do to earn a living)

Do you own property?

Yes   No

How many children?

Would you mind giving their ages?

Don't sign this unless you would like a copy to talk over with your friends.

Name

Street

City   Zone   State

Thanks a million.
PLANT FOR INTERVIEW WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS

1. Explanation of personal reason for interview: need for help in finding answers to some questions. Assurance of anonymity.

2. General question giving person interviewed a chance to answer "Why, in your opinion, have the Ware Schools lacked public support?"

3. Information wanted from interview: causes of dissatisfaction or indifference; suggestions for removal of causes and improvement of community-school relations.

4. Questions.

1. Do you feel that you and the public are sufficiently informed about the schools? 
   Yes_____No_____

2. If "No" to Question 1, what aspects of the schools should you like to know more about?
   School finance_____ 
   Achievement of pupils_____ 
   Equipment of schools_____ 
   School staff, organization, and personnel_____ 
   Program of the school_____ 
   Plans for betterment_____ 
   Philosophy of the schools_____ 
   Any other_____ 

3. Is our school program extensive enough? 
   (The elementary schools teach the traditional subjects: drawing; both instrumental and vocal music; physical training. There is no kindergarten, no sewing, no cooking, no gymnasium, no manual arts. The high school offers three courses of study: college, business, general. The high school has no auditorium, and no shop work. The children have the services of one school nurse, and physical examinations by a physician once a year.)

4. If "No" to Question 3, do you believe we should have 
   Kindergarten_____ 
   Shop work for boys_____ 
   Agriculture_____ 
   Adult education_____ 
   More guidance_____ 
   Any other_____ 

5. Should we have playgrounds located near the schools and maintained by the public? 
   Yes_____ No_____
6. Do you think non-school athletic teams should be permitted to use the high-school gymnasium?
   Yes ____ No ____

7. If "Yes" to Question 6, should a charge be made for the use of the building or should its use be free of cost?
   Charge ____ Free ____

8. In your contacts with school personnel have you received courteous treatment?
   Yes ____ No ____ No contact ____

9. If "No" to Question 8, which part of the school was responsible?
   Clerks ____ Teachers ____ Principal ____ Superintendent ____
   Any other ____

10. If "No" to Question 8, what was the nature of the discourtesy?
    Lack of consideration ____
    Refusal to listen ____
    Refusal to give time ____
    Overbearing or superior attitude ____
    Discourteous speech ____
    Any other ____

11. Do you believe that a closer relationship between citizens on the one hand and school personnel on the other would improve school-community relations?
    Yes ____ No ____

12. If "Yes" to Question 11, which of the following might, in your opinion, bring about this closer relationship?
    Visits by teachers to children's homes ____
    Visiting of schools by patrons ____
    Adult education programs ____
    More school news in the press and on the radio ____
    Changes in curricular offerings ____
    Community forums on educational problems ____
    More participation by teachers in community life ____

13. Do you believe that more participation by the
public in the school planning - of program, equipment, and evaluation of local public school work - might improve community-school relations?  
Yes  
No

14. Ware has had a school building problem for years. Many ways have been suggested for solving this problem. What do you believe is the best way of solving it?  
Regional high school  
One new elementary school  
Status quo  
Any other  
Don't know

15. Do you believe that Ware spends just about enough_ too much__ not enough__ on its schools?

16. If not enough (Question 15) can you suggest measures for getting more money?  
Better publicity about needs  
Different teacher attitudes  
Changes in school program  
More participation by the public in various aspects of school planning  
Any other

17. If too much (Question 15) can you suggest practicable economy measure?  
Cutting services, for example  
Coaching of athletics  
Work of the school nurse  
Household arts course  
Teaching of art  
Work in remedial reading  
Teaching of music (band)  
Teaching of music (vocal)  
Any other  
Reducing salaries  
Reducing numbers employed  
Administrators  
Teachers  
Janitors  
Office help

18. Do you think the taxpayer is getting sufficient return on his investment in the schools?  
Yes  
No

19. What causes would you assign for lack of community
support of its public schools?
Lack of participation by the community in school planning
Attitude of teachers
Attitude of school administrators
Failure of the schools to satisfy community needs
Number of citizens not getting any direct benefit from the schools
Poor interpretation of the schools to the public
School policies too conservative
School policies too progressive
Too many parents dissatisfied with treatment of children

20. Do you believe that the quality of education in the Ware public schools has been good enough to justify public support?
Yes ______ No ______ No opinion ______
BIBLIOGRAPHY


22. Morrison, J. Cayce (Chairman), *An Educational Program for Our Schools*, State Education Department, University of the State of New York, Albany, 1949.


