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REPORT

TO

JUDGE LOUIS M. WELSH

SUPERIOR COURT

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

BY

COURT APPOINTED TEAM

EXAMINING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

IN

MINORITY ISOLATED

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

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Dr. Richard Green

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1 April 1980

INTRODUCTION

The court-ordered examination of the 23 minority isolated schools was undertaken by Dr. Courtney Cazden, Professor of Education at Harvard University; Dr. Richard Green, West Area Superintendent of the Minneapolis Public Schools; and Joseph Rosen, formerly District Superintendent in the Chicago Public Schools and formerly Executive Director of the Illinois Task Force on Children out of School. The charge to the examiners was to "Monitor, analyze and evaluate the quality and methods of education in all minority isolated schools and recommend steps that should be undertaken to make certain that in all such schools, the quality of education is at a superior level and that all children are inspired to achieve..." Case #303800 - Superior Court of California - Charge to the Integration Task Force - 1979-80 School year.

In seeking ways to determine the quality of education in the 23 minority isolated schools, we felt that objective indicators could be attained from standardized achievement test scores, particularly in reading, and from pupil attendence percentages. Two academic achievement measures were available, the California Achievement Tests and The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills; and it was possible to make comparisons of the minority schools in relation to each other and to the total school district average.

Attendance percentages were much more difficult to secure. It took several weeks to obtain the figures from which attendance percentages were computed. This phenomenon of non-compilation of attendance percentages is a peculiarity of California Schools, despite the direct correlation between school success or failure and attendance.

In addition to examination of test scores and attendance figures we visited all 23 schools and talked to many people inside and outside the school system. During these visits and discussions, we sought evidence that the school system is aware that the quality of education is affected by multiple influences:

The Nature of the School Life

a. Curriculum relevancy
b. Teaching materials
c. Teaching methods
d. Pupil-teacher relationships
e. Pupil-pupil relationships
f. Racial and ethnic considerations
g. Principal's leadership
h. In-service and supervision of staff
i. Alternative programs

The Welfare of the Children and their Families

a. Economic problems
b. Physical and emotional health
c. Family demands
d. Pregnancy

Community and Parental Support

a. Prevalent attitudes about the quality of education
b. Reinforcement of work of schools by parents and community organizations and agencies
c. Interaction between schools and community agencies

The following visits and meetings were conducted, either individually or as a team:

November 1-3, 1979:

We met with Judge Louis Welsh and Chief Kollender, the chairman of the Integration Task Force, and other members of the Task Force. We also met with Superintendent Thomas Goodman and key members of his cabinet to clarify the purposes of the monitor team's examination.

November 26-30, 1979:

Rosen met with the Superintendent, Assistant and Deputy Superintendents, Directors of Divisions and with members of the Board of Education to discuss their aspirations for the minority schools. The meetings were also intended to determine the degree to which they believed that quality education in the minority schools was being attained. Rosen also met with the Plaintiffs in the case to explain our purpose and get their perspectives as to the quality of education in the minority schools.

December 26-27, 1979:

We met in Chicago to plan for a week of school visiting in San Diego in January. A questionnaire was written and submitted to Supt. Goodman with the request that it be filled out by the principals of each school we were to visit. A copy of the questionnaire is reproduced on the next page.

January 17-25, 1980:

The 23 minority-isolated schools, as well as four other schools, were visited for one half-day each individually by the examiners. Our intent was to derive a collective

School_____

Principal_____

QUESTIONNAIRE TO PRINCIPALS

Identify yourself and school when returning response to Central Office

1A. What are you especially proud of that contributes to the quality of education in your school?

1B. What do you perceive as a major problem that prevents you from achieving quality education in your school?

2. How would you characterize the academic philosophy and program in your school?

3A. What are the attendance figures for your school for the week of January 7, 1980?

3B. What are the achievement test scores for your school for fall 1979? (6th, 8th or 10th grade only)

3C. What were the mobility figures ("ins and outs") in your school for 1978-79?

4A. What support personnel and facilities are available to your school - both academic and social services?

4B. In what other staff development activities has your staff participated during 1979-80? What was the topic of the most recent one?

4C. What "Human Relations" activities (related to integration) has your staff attendend during 1979-80? What was the topic of the most recent one?

4D. How often do you hold staff meetings? What were the topics discussed at the most recent one?

5. What are the types of school/parent/community communications in your school? What was the topic at the most recent meeting you held with parents?

6. Please give us an approximate breakdown of how your time was spent for a one-week period since Christmas.

7A. How long have you been a principal?

7B. How long have you been a principal in this school?

7C. What was your position before becoming a principal?

7D. What was the process by which you were promoted?

SCHOOL VISITS

Please arrange itinerary according to the following plan:

Date	School	Driver
January 17	Balboa	Cazden
	Burbank	"
	Lincoln	Green
	O'Farrell	"
	*Gompers	Rosen
	Morse	"
January 18	Logan	Cazden
	Lowell	"
	Chollas	Green
	*Boone	"
	*San Diego	Rosen
	Memorial	"
January 21	Sherman	Cazden
	Mead	"
	Emerson	Rosen
	*Freese	"
January 22	Baker	Cazden
	Horton	"
	Fulton	Rosen
	*Johnson	"
January 23	Non-Isolated Magnet Elem.	Cazden
	Lee	"
	*Valencia Park	Rosen
	*Webster	"
January 24	Kennedy	"
	Knox	"
January 25	Stockton	"
	Paradise Hills	"

1. Visits will be for one-half day at each school with provision for the following
   a. Talk with principals during non-instructional time.
   b. Opportunity for unscheduled classroom visits.
   c. Meeting with teachers during teacher's free time or planning time.
   d. Meeting with parents of both schools each day, either in afternoon or evening for Cazden and Rosen and afternoon for Green.
2. Please provide transportation for Green and Rosen.
3. Please provide translator where needed.
4. Please provide absentee rate and reading and math scores per each ethnic group for * schools.
5. Room, grade, teacher organization for each school.

impression of the schools, to be supplemented by responses to the questionnaires which had been completed by all the principals and delivered to us before the visits began. The schedule of specific visit assignments appears on the page following the questionnaire. Meetings were arranged with teachers and parents in most of the schools. During this week, after school hours, we also met with Plaintiffs and the Integration Task Force.

February 11-15, 1980:

During this week meetings took place with student service staff members, including district counselors, school nurses, social concern counselors, and service agency representatives. Visits were made to alternative and career education schools; and to Chicano Federation and Urban League headquarters to meet with the leaders of those organizations. On Tuesday, February 11, when the schools were closed, Rosen visited eight children and family service agencies to gain their perspectives on the schools' use of the services of the various agencies.

All of the contacts with school personnel, agency staffs, and Plaintiffs were very cordial and helpful. Judge Welsh was very supportive and urged us to be forthright in our appraisals. We promised candor and we are most concerned that the recommendations that we make bear fruit in terms of enhanced pupil success.

Our report is submitted under four headings:

Leadership . . . . . p. 8

Instructional Program . . . . p. 15

Child Welfare Concerns . . . . p. 30

Minority-Isolated Schools
and the Community . . . . . p. 34

The recommendations included in each section are reprinted together as a summary at the end.

Courtney Cazden

Richard Green

Joseph Rosen

LEADERSHIP

Central to the process of providing a superior quality of education to the children in the minority isolated schools is insuring that the leadership of these schools is of the highest order. To that end, the following factors need to prevail:

1. The selection process must be capable of seeking and promoting the most promising staff members, picked with the greatest objectivity.
2. The leadership inservice program must fit the demands of the forthcoming tasks.
3. The internship program should provide the candidate with insights into administrative and supervisory perspectives that include acceptance of accountability for the performance of those who are to be led.
4. The greatest strengths and skills should be in the area of supervision of the instructional programs.

The level of educational leadership closest to instruction is that of the building principal. Recent research on school effectiveness, both in the United States and England, has documented the principal's critical role. (See article from New York Times, 12/26/79, appended to this report.) The selection of principals is especially critical in San Diego, because of their relative autonomy on the job.

This autonomy is described in a recent Rand Corporation report as "loose coupling" between the central administration and the local school staff. The Rand Corporation Report of May 1979, "An Exploratory Study of School District Adaptation", was distributed to the School Board Members with the statement that "The District comes across very favorably, especially when compared with four other school districts studied over a four-year period" (a letter by Superintendent Goodman, 9/24/74). This report deals with the relationship between the central administration and the schools and praises the San Diego District for:

> . . . the downward delegation of authority which can work because the district has created an organization culture that promotes a sense of responsibility, encourages risk-taking and rewards professionalism--in brief, a feeling of mutual trust.
>
> . . . Although San Diego has enormous diversity in its education programs, the variability in educational quality between schools and classrooms is remarkably low. In terms of classroom life, there is not a sharp disparity between inner city classrooms and classes in affluent suburbs. In this system where diversity is valued and where practitioners are treated as professionals and given the organization support to carry out the decisions that seem to be most appropriate for their particular school or classroom, staff are most free to make a difference.

We are concerned about this "loose coupling" form of organization because of its possible relationship to a complacency that we felt on the part of many school leaders. We do not know if "loose coupling" contributes to that complacency, but we believe it weakens the fight against it. The complacency was particularly evident in discussions of objective indices of school effectiveness in the 23 schools.

It is an undisputed fact that the academic skills that are major goals of education are grossly deficient in the minority schools in comparison with the total San Diego district. For example, in the 1977-78 California Assessment Program the Minority Schools' average percentages of items correct in reading at the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 12th grades were 19.48% to 13.57% less than the District's. The San Diego District had a 59th percentile median achievement at the 6th grade level on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, a national testing program, while the minority schools averaged 31st percentile, with a low of 24th percentile. The District was in the 58th percentile at the 8th grade level, while the three isolated junior high schools reached the 24th percentile. The District was in the 63rd percentile at the 10th grade level, while the isolated high schools reached only the 30.3rd percentile.

COMPARATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

SAN DIEGO DISTRICT VERSUS MINORITY ISOLATED SCHOOLS

1978 - Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills - Reading

	San Diego	Minority
6th Grade	59th Percentile	31st Percentile
8th Grade	58th Percentile	24th Percentile
10th Grade	63rd Percentile	30.3rd Percentile

The first two questions on our questionnaire to principals asked about problems in achieving quality education in each particular school. The following are quotes from some of the principals who indicate that quality education is being offered even in situations where achievement is well below district levels:

_____ School

91.5% Attendance
28th Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"Quality education is being provided but because of a lack of relevent cultural items on state and district tests, low scores result. Many children have limited cultural, social, linguistic experiences; mobility factor, absenteeism; home environment - lack of motivation or different values. Guidelines in various programs at school are often conflicting; lack of continuity in programs throughout the district."

_____ School

95.5% Attendance
45th Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"I perceive the instructional program at the _____ School as providing quality education, however, we the staff and parents, realize there are degrees of quality education. Consequently we continually work together in providing for the children the best possible educational experiences."

_____ School

94.7% Attendance
28th Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"We feel that _____ School is providing the opportunity for quality education for all students. We perceive no major problems."

_____ School

87.3% Attendance
18th Percentile Reading at 8th Grade

"_____ School has achieved a quality education program. Continued efforts need focus on maintaining, improving and expanding the following areas:

a. Continue positive emphasis and involvement of parents on student attendance, scholarship and citizenship improvement.

b. Continue and expand enthusiasm of ASB activities, grade level sponsored activities and school newspaper to foster student unity.

c. Continued expansion of media center and building a collection of library materials related to high school specialized and general curricular areas.

d. Continued recruitment of junior and senior high school students for magnet program."

_____ School 95.9% Attendance
34th Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"Not applicable. Students attending _____ School are receiving a quality education."

_____ School 94.6% Attendance
31st Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"One would have to assume from this question that we do not have quality education at _____ School. From my point of view, there is a quality education program at our school. I state this because of the way we are trying to meet the needs of children by the various programs outlined above. It is my opinion that the major problem that prevents children from learning at a faster and higher level at _____ is poverty. Poverty prevents much of pre-school learning that goes on in a natural way in a non-poverty family. Therefore poverty children do not come to school in kindergarten as ready for learning as non-poverty children. When children come to school at age five and have never seen the ocean or a cow, it is very difficult for me to feel that their readiness for school is at the same level as the readiness of children who have the opportunity to travel around the world, live on a farm, etc. Kindergarten entry test scores tend to bear out this thesis."

Six other principals were more realistic as to the quality of education but still often blamed their problems on student and parental faults rather than upon inadequate professionalism.

_____ School 95.4% Attendance
45th Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"A problem, though perhaps not major, is the mobility of student population which any large urban center has to live with."

_____ School 94.4% Attendance
37th Percentile Reading at 6th Grade

"Student transiency within the neighborhood is a negative. Transportation - When students arrive late it creates a problem."

_____ School 94.4% Attendance
37th Percentile Reading at 10th Grade

"A major problem is that the student population has changed ethnically and academically. Staff turnover is also high. The VEEP Program, instructional exchange and the career center leave enrollment uncertainties."

_____ School 92.9% Attendance
38th Percentile Reading at 10th Grade

"a. Laws that limit the flexibility of the principal's relationship with staff.

b. Complacency on the part of parents.

c. Poor attendance of students.

d. Lack of time for students and staff because of the proliferation of reports and programs over the past three years.

e. Lack of intrinsic motivation on the part of students.

f. The need to take a more critical look at selected research and its implications for education."

_____ School 89.7% Attendance
24th Percentile Reading at 8th Grade

"To maintain our system of innovative instructional programs requires a cooperative teaching approach. Whenever a new team member is needed that teacher must learn the system. For the past year we have lost an average of two teachers a year."

In their responses, principals too often lay the blame for poor achievement upon such factors as poverty, nature of the ethnic population, parental disinterest, pupils' lack of intrinsic motivation and limited experience. And one factor mentioned--poor attendance--is not seen as something they--the school staff--can change. If leaders are satisfied, or blame the victim for poor achievement, then a vigorous approach to the task of improving teaching and learning will be lacking.

Because of the "loose coupling" we are concerned about the influence being exerted, or not being exerted, by the central administration over the educational processes occurring in these school buildings. We assume that the questionnaires were discussed and reviewed with the school leaders who supervise the principals. Is the leadership above the principals equally satisfied with the quality of education in the minority schools? Are efforts being exerted by the Board of Education, and by the superintendent and his staff, to study causes of lack of pupil achievement and to implement new and effective practices in the schools and classrooms? In our view, the "loose coupling" characterizing the San Diego district has resulted in a "downward delegation of authority" (Rand Report, p. 49) that premits not only positive flexibility but negative laissez-faire that is not in the best interests of the students in these 23 schools.

We recognize that the principals of the schools we visited were sensitive and well-meaning and most often well-liked and respected by their colleagues, staff, pupils, and parents. However, we assert that the inadequate achievements of the pupils demand more vigorous instructional leadership.

San Diego selects leaders without the restricton of an examination. It also retains leaders without the constraints of tenure. Both procedures can prove a source of strength in the appointment of principals to minority-isolated schools.

Recommendation 1:

School principals play a critical role in achieving quality education. Inadequate achievements of pupils in the minority isolated schools demand more vigorous instructional leadership. Principals in these schools must see that whatever has to be done to raise student achievement will be undertaken. This may have to include overruling staff consensus on materials and methods of instruction that have not been effective in past use. It must include more attention to the supervision of instruction than to the playground. (Not always the case now, according to answers to our question #6.) And it must include the utilization of every home and community agency resource to overcome personal problems of pupils and their families.

Recommendation 2:

Principals and supporting leadership staff should be continuously evaluated in terms of their students' achievements. Retention in leadership positions at all levels should be contingent on the attainment of established goals. The leadership cannot accept failure, and, quoting from Court Memorandum Decision - Case #303800, July 27, 1979, "dedication and commitment has to flow from the top down."

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The heart of any school system is the instructional program--the curriculum as it is actually experienced by students hour after hour and day after day, and the learning outcomes that students achieve.

The strongest and most objective evidence of the quality of the instructional program in the 23 schools are the standardized achievement test scores in those schools as compared with the average for the district. The Table on page 17 summarizes reading test scores and pupil ethnic census data for the 23 minority isolated schools and San Diego High School. Note that the computation of the district average includes these 23 schools; the achievement gap between the students in these 23 schools and the rest of San Diego would appear even greater if the 23 were excluded from the San Diego average.

Even these numbers hide an important part of the problem to be solved. The reading scores are themselves averages for the entire student population in each school. differences in achievement among ethnic groups are hidden within each school average. The principal of one school included this more detailed information with our questionnaire. Here are the mean number of answers correct for the reading subtest of the 6th grade California Test of Basic Skills at just one school:

Hispanic	50.35
White	53.44
Black	45.56
Asian	67.42
School Average	50.54

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

MINORITY ISOLATED SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGES, 1977-78 READING SCORES, AND ETHNIC CENSUS PERCENTAGES

lementary chool	% Attendance[a]	6th Grade Reading Percentile[b]	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Alaskan/ Indian
reese	95.5	45	19.1	12.9	47.7	19.0	.2
ebster	95.4	45	5.0	44.1	50.7	.2	.0
onnson	95.1	34	7.1	26.6	65.4	.9	.0
ulton	94.7	28	3.2	23.7	71.2	1.9	.0
nollas	94.5	28	34.8	4.7	46.4	13.6	.5
alencia Park	94.4	37	6.7	28.2	62.9	2.2	.0
aker	94.3	22	30.4	10.4	57.8	1.4	.0
ennedy	93.4	27	15.4	1.6	81.9	1.1	.0
nox	94.2	24	5.5	9.9	77.2	7.4	.0
urbank	92.6	NA[c]	86.6	1.2	11.0	.9	.3
tockton	92.6	31	34.0	22.1	63.5	.2	.2
orton	92.4	19	22.2	12.2	62.9	1.7	.0
ead	92.3	NA[c]	39.1	2.5	41.3	17.7	.0
herman	92.0	18	84.8	5.9	7.1	2.1	.1
ogan	91.6	14	66.8	.8	31.5	.9	.0
alboa	91.5	18	78.9	5.0	11.4	4.4	.3
merson	91.5	28	59.0	1.7	39.2	.1	.0
Lowell Elementary	90.4	22	92.2	5.9	1.7	.2	.0
District	NA[c]	59	all minority: 40.4				

Junior High School	% Attendance	8th Grade Reading Percentile	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Indian
Memorial	89.71	30	68.4	5.8	24.8	.9	.1
Gompers	87.33	18	6.3	33.9	55.5	4.0	.3
O'Farrell	85.78	30	11.4	15.6	67.9	5.0	.1
District	NA[c]	58	all minority: 37.4				

Senior High School	% Attendance	10th Grade Reading Percentile	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Indian
San Diego	94.4	32	55.0	21.8	18.6	4.0	.1
Morse	92.8	38	15.6	17.9	52.0	14.3	.2
Lincoln	84.0	21	11.8	.5	85.3	2.3	.1
District	NA[c]	63	all minority: 34.2				

a - 45 day sample b - Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills c - not available

Such detailed information helps to pinpoint problems to be solved by the continued efforts of professional staff, parents and all available community resources.

Recommendation 3:

Achievement test scores by school, and within school by ethnicity, should be publicly available in an easily understood form, and should be utilized in planning for improved instruction at all levels of the school system.

Both instructional materials and instructional personnel are essential for the instructional program. In terms of quantity, we saw no evidence of a shortage of either materials or teachers in these 23 schools. On the contrary, both seemed available in abundance. With respect to materials, all the classrooms, reading and math labs, libraries or media centers that we visited seemed richly stocked. Specific shortages were sometimes mentioned--for instance, materials in languages other than English that are necessary for quality bilingual education. But on the whole, the quality of education in these schools does not seem to be seriously impeded by a lack of materials.

The same adequate provision seems to be true for personnel. By comparison with other school systems with which we are familiar, San Diego has an unusually large number of instructional personnel that are not regular classroom teachers. An independent research organization, Designs for Change in Chicago, carried out a study of staffing patterns in three school districts, of which San Diego was one. Of the three systems, San Diego had the highest ratio of students to teachers, but by far the lowest ratio of teachers to instructional support specialists. Each elementary classroom

has a teacher aide; there are guidance counselors in the elementary schools, Miller-Unruh reading teachers, library teachers and aides, compensatory education resource teachers, nurses, community aides, and more. For example, one school with 541 pupils had an aide in each class, nurse, health clerk, resource specialist, full-time counselor, community aide, project resource teacher, Miller-Unruh reading teacher, math lab and reading lab assistants. These personnel resources are remarkable and San Diego Public Schools (SDPS) deserve praise for aggresively seeking the funds that make them possible.

But the availability of such personnel resources brings a new problem to be solved: how to integrate these material and human resources into an effective instructional program for each and every individual student. Specific problems include:

a. Fragmentation of instructional efforts: Because the provision of these personnel come from different categories of funds, and have to be justified on separate grounds, they can easily become separate pockets of effort within the school program, rather than integrated in the service of children under the overall direction of the classroom teacher.

b. Continual interruptions of the basic teaching and learning process as children are "pulled out" for one or another special service.

c. Dilution of the classroom teacher's primary and fundamental responsibility for the successful education of

his/her students. Someone has to be held accountable for the instructional program for each child. This responsibility should rest with the child's classroom teacher. All other instructional resources--aides, remedial reading teachers, etc.--must be integrated under the direction of that teacher.

In some schools, mechanisms for this integration seem to exist. In one school, no child can be sent to the reading or math lab without an accompanying request by the classroom teacher for specific help. In another school, it was understood by the entire staff that responsibility for basic instruction rested with the classroom teacher; and reading and math lab staff were requested to let the principal know of any sign of abdication of that responsibility.

Recommendation 4:

In all schools, the staff under the leadership of the principal must seek more powerful mechanisms for overcoming fragmented resources, interruptions of instruction, and dilution of responsibility; and for integrating the entire school's resources into an effective program for each child.

Related to the use of instructional personnel is the extensive use of management systems for keeping track of where individual pupils are on "scope-and-sequence" lists of objectives in reading, language arts, and mathematics. The use of management systems is a prominent feature of American education today, and San Diego seems to be advanced in the use of such systems.

We are critical of their use only in so far as we saw evidence that testing of children's achievement on these list of objectives has taken the place of actual instruction. To put the problem bluntly, no one gains weight just by stepping on the scales. Yet in many schools, the adults--teachers, aides and resource teachers alike--were spending what should be valuable instructional time simply monitoring children's progress. This imbalance was especially prominent in some open-architecture schools, where teachers were afraid to teach because of the resulting noise, where only in the Distar classrooms was group instruction in evidence, and where 2 out of 3 small group instruction rooms remained empty at the time of our visit.

Recommendation 5:

Management systems should not be confused with instructional programs. Testing can be a valuable diagnostic aid. But the quality of instruction--the actual interaction between a caring and competent teacher and students--must be returned to its central place. In longer range terms, we urge attention by appropriate SDPS staff to the ideas on teaching and testing in the report of a conference sponsored by the National Institute of Education on "Testing, Teaching and Learning" (edited by Ralph Tyler and Sheldon White, October, 1979).

An important contribution to more effective instruction is the nature of ongoing supervision and in-service staff development. Two particular instructional programs seemed to us exemplary in this respect. One is DISTAR, used as a reading

program in all Follow Through classrooms in the primary grades and in some other classrooms in these 23 schools. Here, direct supervision is given by specially trained people based either within a school, within the district, or based at the University of Oregon. The second is the ESEA Title VII Bilingual Demonstration Project in three classrooms in each of five schools (Audubon, Encanto, Freese, Lee, and Paradise Hills). This is an exceptionally well-designed model of how to combine two languages to the mutual benefit of both Spanish- and English-language students. Additional resource persons are available to these 15 teachers--people who believe in this model and who know how to carry it out.

The important characteristic of both programs is that people especially trained in the use of these particular materials in this particular instructional program come into the classroom and work directly with the teachers and aides to improve the quality of instruction. We are not suggesting that DISTAR is the only effective way to teach reading, or that this Title VII program is the only effective model of bilingual education, but we do believe that this kind of intensive, high quality, focused help to the classroom teacher is essential to effective education.

Recommendation 6:

Intensive, high-quality, focused assistance directly to classroom teachers should be provided. Some money now spent for more diffuse in-service staff development may need to be shifted to make this more focused help possible.

While we cannot comment on all specific areas in the school program, several merit special mention: kindergarten, the oral communication program, homework, career and vocational, and alternative education programs. We end with questions about the relationship between quality education and integration.

KINDERGARTEN

In many school systems, kindergarten teachers bear the heavy load of teaching two entirely different groups of children--one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This is not the case in San Diego, and the system deserves credit for ending that practice. Here children still come for only half-a-day, but each teacher has teaching responsibility for only one session. During the "off" session, the teachers assist each other, prepare materials, etc. The only kindergarten children we heard of who have a full day program are those in Magnet Schools who are tied to the bus schedules of the older students. Given that San Diego is already paying Kindergarten teachers for a full day per class, we question whether the present half-day programs are the most effective use of space and personnel.

Recommendation 7:

Full day kindergartens should be established, at least as an option, at each of the 23 schools.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Judging from our discussion with Dr. Jesse Perry and his staff, from the curriculum materials we have seen, and from the "key teachers" we were able to visit, we believe the Oral Communication program initiated at the request of the Court is an

excellent addition to the San Diego instructional program. The important message that dialects must be judged by their appropriateness in particular situations seems to have been well learned--at least by those key teachers. But we are concerned at how quickly the program can be spread beyond these key teachers.

Recommendation 8:

The Oral Communication program should be supported and spread as quickly as possible.

HOMEWORK

In our talks with parents of the 23 schools, homework frequently came up for discussion. In one school where homework is regularly assigned, parents were very pleased about it. And in many schools where it is not assigned, parents complained about its absence. Sometimes they went further to say they had heard that homework was assigned in other parts of San Diego. "Our children have to work harder to catch up. Why aren't they given homework too?" Although the report from Great Britain discussed in the appended New York Times article is about high schools, the findings and comments of the authors fit San Diego as well. After pointing out that "schools which set homework frequently, and where there was some kind of check on whether staff did in fact set it, tended to have better outcomes than schools which made little use of homework," (109) the British authors go on to suggest:

> It may well be that in addition to its practical value in providing opportunities for the consolidation of the learning of the work introduced in school time, homework may also be of symbolic importance in emphasizing the school's concern for academic progress, and its expectation that the pupils have the ability and the self-discipline needed to work without direct supervision (Rutter, et al., 15,000 Hours, 1979, p. 110).

Recommendation 9:

We recommend that at each school, discussion be held between staff and parents about the value of homework so that a school-wide policy about homework can be established.

CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The San Diego Schools in general provide career programs in single career-oriented settings--Mission Day High School--Marketing, Graphics, Advertising and Management; Crawford--Business Activities; and Kearney--Automotive Skills. Wright Brothers has a more diverse cluster of occupations, and is the kind of program we believe should be expanded. In other cities, the most successful career education high schools are comprehensive in nature and build an aura of success by requiring minimal reading and mathematics levels, stressing attendance and scholarship maintenance. Close relations with business and industry are created to assure that saleable skills are being developed and that employment opportunities will be available.

Recommendation 10:

The fullest range of offerings in careers and vocational education should be available for those students whose interests and aptitudes lie in the direction of vocational education, and

for whom other schooling has little meaning. We advocate a survey of career and vocational needs of the San Diego community to determine how best to supply those needs. We recommend exploration of extensive liaison with specific industries for the training of skilled maintenance personnel as for vending machines, computers, etc.; and the expansion of comprehensive career education high schools.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Alternative programs are essential for students for whom the regular school setting, curriculum, time schedules and teacher and peer relationships do not work. Alternative programs are most often characterized by:

1. Less structured operation and setting.
2. Closer, sustained relationships between teachers and students.
3. Sufficient time for subject mastery.
4. Warm, reinforcing relationships among students.

We have high praise for the alternative programs that we visited. The Garfield and Twain Independent Learning Centers maintain flexibility for their students, all of whom have dropped out of regular school programs. Time schedules and selection of courses are based upon contracts that the students develop with the counselors. Both Garfield and Twain have parenting programs for pregnant girls and for student mothers. The Garfield Center also has a program called ORACLE which is a school without walls, and offers an independent contract study program.

The work is conducted in the students' homes, involves 100 students, including ten long-term suspension students. The staff is composed of two full-time teachers and 13 para-professionals who work four to six hours daily. The para-professionals must be senior or graduate university students who guide the ORACLE students in their work.

The Mira Mesa campus has both a regular high school, and an independent learning center that opened in November of 1979. The center is located in a far corner of the campus and does not relate to the main school. Also at Mira Mesa is a "High School Completion Program" which operates from 3:30 to 7:00 PM with one teacher and 22 students.

These are excellent alternatives to standard schooling, but none are located in the minority communities or aligned with minority schools.

Recommendation 11:

We urge expansion of the excellent alternative education programs in three directions:

a. Location of independent learning centers and satellites in minority communities.

b. Location of programs within community organizations in minority neighborhoods (e.g., Chicano Federation, Urban League, and youth clubs).

c. Deviation from the minority percentages in all alternative schools because the need for alternative education is greatest among minority students.

QUALITY EDUCATION AND INTEGRATION

Our charge was to advise on the quality of education in these 23 schools, not on the degree of integration. But quality and integration cannot be completely separated.

First, and perhaps easiest to change, there are opportunities for both integration and enhanced quality that are not taken advantage of. For instance, at San Diego High with only 19.8% of the total student body White, a creative writing class, non-selective in criteria for enrollment, was entirely White. Surely the experience of being in this class would be enhanced if the class included students from diverse cultural backgrounds--Black and Hispanic--with rich and different oral and literary traditions.

In the words of the LAU Remedies (U.S. Office of Civil Rights, Summer, 1975):

> Schools must develop strong incentives and encouragement for minority students to enroll in electives where minorities have not traditionally enrolled. In this regard, counselors, principals and teachers have a most important role. . . . The school district must see that all of its students are encouraged to fully participate and take advantage of all educational benefits.

Recommendation 12:

Each building principal has responsibility for uniting integration and quality education in ways that maximize both goals. At the secondary level, guidance personnel can help to bring this about--through couseling with individual students and actively recruiting them for otherwise segregated classes, and

through working with department chairpersons and the entire faculty on the ethnic composition of all classes in each school. At both the elementary and secondary level, serious consideration should be given to the selection of curriculum topics for which the diverse cultural background of students become themselves a positive curriculum resource.

In a few cases, our attention was called to situations in which integration efforts seemed temporarily to be working against quality education. One sensitive Bilingual Education teacher described the difficulty her Spanish-speaking students had in understanding the science lessons at their one-day-a-week Learning Center that were given wholly in English. While the Learning Center teacher was helpful in supplying the home teachers with material on forthcoming lessons, the technical nature of the science content was more than the bilingual teacher could prepare her children for. In another situation where children were exchanged on short-term visits of a few weeks at a time, the advantages of being in an integrated classroom were not fully realized because the two groups of children--home and visitor --were using different instructional materials and so were kept in self-contained reading and mathematics groups during basic instructional times of the day. Evidently there had not been time to plan a single, special curriculum that could meet the need of both students in a more integrated way.

Recommendation 13:

Efforts must continue toward uniting integration and quality education in each classroom. Admitting that integration is not "working" fully yet is the first step toward that goal. Only a complete commitment of everyone in the San Diego School System to solve the problems--big and little-can bring it about.

CHILD WELFARE CONCERNS

School personnel have long recognized that there are many factors that affect learning and achievement besides the actual instructional programs that are offered. The physical and emotional health of children and their families; having adequate clothing and shoes, particularly in view of today's high prices; family problems that make demands upon school children; the effects of pregnancy and child care--all effect the ability of children to attend and profit from school.

The San Diego system's Student Service Staff appears well aware of the problems that effect pupil learning and has developed procedures for attacking these problems. In addition a publication titled, "Guidance Services Agency Referral Bulletin" is distributed which lists external agencies available to help students and their families. There is no doubt that the Student Service Staff is well-organized and diligent, but we would like to call attention to these factors that work against delivery of best services to the students.

First and foremost, there is inadequate emphasis upon the regularity of pupil attendance. Educators at all levels of the San Diego school system spoke to us about the importance of finding ways to maximize children's "time-on-task." This is the 1980 way of saying that the more time children spend learning any subject, the more they learn. It is true that there is considerable educational research on the influence of "time-on-task" variables, but no one in San Diego seemed to take as seriously the fact that the difference between being in school versus being absent can make an even greater difference in "time-on-task" than the differences between one or another instructional environment. When children are not in school, they are missing the instruction for that percentage of their school year, and they are also not able to learn as much when they are in school because of what they have missed while absent.

School attendance and achievement have a direct relationship: Balboa, Logan, Horton, and Sherman averaged 8.13% of their pupils absent during a given period of time in the 1978-79 school year and had the lowest achievement scores of the minority isolated elementary schools. In the 6th grade Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills the District attained the 59th percentile in reading, while these four schools reached the 17th percentile as an average. The four best attended minority elementary schools, Freese, Johnson, Valencia Park, and Webster, averaged 4.9% daily absence and reached an average reading percentile of 40.45.

However, as with achievement test scores, variations in absence rates occur among the various minorities, the Black and Hispanic students having more absences than the Asians.

The causes of non-attendance must be diagnosed and the resources the schools do have, or can secure through other service agencies and community organizations, must be utilized. At the present time, schools do not attend to the percentages of absenteeism or attendance as a regular practice. (We worked for weeks to secure the attendance percentages of the minority schools and as yet do not have comparative figures for the total school district.) There are no specified attendance officers; the procedures for absentee follow-up is a report by teachers to clerks who phone homes and then report to guidance personnel. Guidance teachers teach guidance classes and their time is limited for home visits.

The District does not engage professional social workers to provide the in-depth investigation and follow-up often necessary to reduce absenteeism.

Moreover, directors of children and family service agencies were almost unanimous in reporting that their agencies are underutilized by school personnel. The sensitivities and vigor of principals and teachers vary in seeking external agency services and the spotty record of referrals to district counselors and to agencies needs closer examination. More specifically, the school district's use of external service agencies may be hampered because the referral of pupils to non-district agencies

requires "written consent of parent" prior to such release. Further, principals are required to refer requests for agency assistance to district guidance counselors, who then attempt to make contact with parents. It would seem that the gaps are great in the delivery of service by the appropriate agency or community organizations.

Recommendation 14:

In order to improve attendance in minority isolated schools, we recommend the following measures:

a. Emphasize improvement of attendance in minority isolated schools, with concern for those who do not attend regularly as well as for those who do: Monthly class and building pupil-attendance percentages should be assessed by teachers, guidance personnel, principals and involved central office personnel; the accountability of above persons for improvement of attendance should be defined; pupil attendance figures should be gathered by sex, race, and ethnicity for these can give indications for specific action; attendance percentages should be screened for variations among teachers and subjects and in high schools by class periods.

b. School leaders, classroom teachers and guidance teachers should meet with staffs of community organizations and children and family service agencies to plan coordinated action.

c. Professional social workers should be added to the permanent school staff for work with minority schools.

d. Attendance officers should be engaged who are free for follow-up of chronic absentees.

e. Attendance can be improved by motivational techniques, alteration of curriculum and time schedules, and by expansion of alternative schools and vocational education opportunities. Survey school retention programs for pregnant school-age girls to determine whether their needs are being met. Experience in other cities has shown that attendance is much better in vocational education schools and in alternative schools than in minority isolated high schools.

MINORITY ISOLATED SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The San Diego schools are essential institutions in a community seeking to improve its quality of life. How well each school serves the diversity of clients that come to its doors is important to all. How schools are viewed also plays an important part in continued public support for the schools, and in establishing and maintaining a strong San Diego community. "Good schools" reflect and build a healthy society. To permit some schools to be maintained as "poor schools" relegates their residents to a position of permanently lowered status. Minority isolated schools, while culturally different by the nature of their student body, must not be viewed as educationally inferior if the quest for improved quality of life is to be a mutually shared goal.

During our visits to San Diego, we interviewed parent, student, and community representatives to find out how the minority isolated schools are viewed. In addition, we talked with members of the Integration Task Force, and members of the school-based and district-based staff. Finally, we read reports, responses to questionnaires, and court reports. From these experiences, we conclude that the minority isolated schools are in fact considered "poor" schools, with negative social status.

Our notes from a visit to one school may be helpful:

_____ is a school of great academic challenge. It is located in a lower income area of the school district. The facility is comfortable and well kept. There is a heavy minority enrollment: majority Black with few Caucasion students. Student mobility, truancy, and absenteeism are often cited as causes of poor educational attainment.

The student walkout of 1969 is mentioned frequently by both students and parents as a symbolic turning point in the history of the school. Apparently this significant event represents the move to increase Black influence in the decision-making structure of the school.

The athletic program is often mentioned with pride. _____ has a rich tradition in athletic achievement even to the present, with a football championship in 1979.

We were told, however, that the athletic field lacks public bathroom facilities and parents have to go to the nearest gas station.

The desegregation plan has not led to any real changes at _____. Students say that very few Whites attended the _____ magnet, and that for all practical purposes, integration has never been a priority for anyone. Most individuals cite the "braindrain" effect on _____ when students choose other alternatives. There is some evidence that VEEP students return to _____ with the attitude that they were not welcomed elsewhere because they came from _____, and did not feel comfortable in the other setting.

The current principal has been at _____ for the last decade, in a number of positions. He has seen the school move from confrontation to stability. His goal is to have an educational program that motivates and meets the varied needs of his students. When asked to cite the strengths of his school, the principal suggests that the school now has a committed staff. But staff turnover is still a major source of instability reported by faculty, students, and parents. According to these reports, too many teachers start at _____, but stay only until they can transfer out.

Teachers appear supportive of the school while at the same time citing low cognitive skills of the students.

Teachers describe students at _____ as good when they are motivated. In order to address diversity, some steps are bing taken to bring about better coordination of curriculum. The English department, where the scope and sequence of courses are undergoing analysis, is one such example.

Student interviews at _____ were interesting. Young women thought that interest in scholarships was greater among them than among young men. Young men, they say, are influenced by athletics, peer group pressure, and "hanging out," which indicated that they did not have a serious attitude toward education. The news media and reputation of the _____ community leave much to be desired in the eyes of the students. They feel the slightest incident is blown out of proportion and _____is always portrayed as a "tough place to be from."

Parent representatives stressed the need for more standards, better teachers, and more positive reporting. _____ was described by one parent as having "paycheck teachers" who let students hang out and get by. Both students and parents complained that normal social activities, such as dances, are not being held for security reasons.

In addition to these notes on one school, often repeated comments at other minority isolated schools are of equal concern:

The San Diego desegregation plan is a mixture of voluntary programs, magnet experiences, learning clusters, career centers, and other related experiences. Student movement occurs, but not on a city-wide basis, and not equally into and out of Southeast San Diego.

Our schools cannot attract majority youngsters when they're so poor; and we lose our own better students who believe education is better over in the other (non-minority) schools.

The teachers do not really want to be here. When they get a chance to transfer out, they will be like the others who left before.

The teachers don't understand our kids.

There's better staffing and smaller class size in the integration programs that use our facilities than in the programs for our own kids.

Why aren't our kids learning to read?

Our students will not be competitive. An "A" grade here is not the same as an "A" somewhere else. Our kids are not prepared for college.

Students in these schools are not being adequately prepared for life.

Teachers lack training for bilingual education. There's bilingual treatment rather than bilingual education.

Someone has to start "selling" our schools.

Recommendation 15:

Minority isolated schools require new supporting relationships in order to overcome the present condition of low social status. Immediate steps can be taken to begin to turn the corner on making these schools better places to be.

a. Meetings of community-based organization, parents and school representatives should be convened to agree on responsibile relationships that can assist in the improvement of minority isolated schools. The objective should be "increasing academic and intellectual opportunities of minority isolated schools" through cooperative planning. The community must be encouraged to take responsibility for their schools.

b. Minority isolated schools must lose the label of unsafe places to be. They must be made to stand above conditions of oppression and offer hope for all who come to their doors. Parents, community, and the schools must stretch beyond their limits to insure that the school experience and environment is a safe, productive place for all school programs and after-school activities as well.

c. The physical environment of the minority isolated schools should be analysed to make sure that facilities are equal to or superior to those in other parts of San Diego. Equality of education cannot be a reality unless all facilities meet the same standards.

d. Steps should be taken to place the best possible professional staff in the minority isolated schools. Long term contract relationships that can reduce staff turnover should be explored with community support. ("Staff"

here means all contract personnel, including the principal.) Additional incentives should be made available to excellent staff who will make renewable five year commitments to one of these schools.

e. The very successful San Diego corporate community is affected by the image of the minority isolated schools. That corporate community must take a bold step forward in involvement and committment to these schools, directed at helping to transform these schools into strong academic centers that can provide San Diego with its human power in the years to come. Members of the corporate/business complex should be asked to adopt minority isolated schools as part of their social responsibility.

f. Financial and human resources should be advanced to improve the image of the minority isolated schools. Class size, materials and staffing patterns should be analyzed to provide advantages to these schools that don't exist elsewhere, so that new students will be attracted to them. Resources and programs should emphasize and enhance the citizenship, cultural, and civic strengths of each school community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO JUDGE LOUIS M. WELSH

FROM THE COURT APPOINTED TEAM

Leadership

(1) School principals play a critical role in achieving quality education. Inadequate achievements of pupils in the minority isolated schools demand more vigorous instructional leadership. Principals in these schools must see that whatever has to be done to raise student achievement will be undertaken. This may have to include overruling staff consensus on materials and methods of instruction that have not been effective in past use. It must include more attention to the supervision of instruction than to the playground. (Not always the case now, according to answers to our question #6.) And it must include the utilization of every home and community agency resource to overcome personal problems of pupils and their families.

(2) Principals and supporting leadership staff should be continuously evaluated in terms of their students' achievements. Retention in leadership positions at all levels should be contingent on the attainment of established goals. The leadership cannot accept failure, and, quoting from Court Memorandum Decision - Case #303800, July 27, 1979, "dedication and commitment has to flow from the top down."

Instructional Program

(3) Achievement test scores by school, and within school by ethnicity, should be publicly available in an easily understood form, and should be utilized in planning for improved instruction at all levels of the school system.

(4) In all schools, the staff under the leadership of the principal must seek more powerful mechanisms for overcoming fragmented resources, interruptions of instruction, and dilution of responsibility; and for integrating the entire school's resources into an effective program for each child.

(5) Management systems should not be confused with instructional programs. Testing can be a valuable diagnostic aid. But the quality of instruction--the actual interaction between a caring and competent teacher and students--must be returned to its central place. In longer range terms, we urge attention by appropriate San Diego Public Schools staff to the ideas on teaching and testing in the report of a conference sponsored by the National Institute of Education on Testing, Teaching, and Learning (edited by Ralph Tyler and Sheldon White, October, 1979).

(6) Intensive, high-quality, focused assistance directly to classroom teachers should be provided. Some money now spent for more diffuse in-service staff development may need to be shifted to make this more focused help possible.

(7) Full day kindergartens should be established, at least as an option, at each of the 23 schools.

(8) The Oral Communication program should be supported and spread as quickly as possible.

(9) We recommend that at each school, discussion be held between staff and parents about the value of homework so that a school-wide policy about homework can be establsihed.

(10) The fullest range of offerings in career and vocational education should be available for those students whose interests and aptitudes lie in the direction of vocational education, and for whom other schooling has little meaning. We advocate a survey of career and vocational needs of the San Diego Community to determine how best to supply those needs. We recommend exploration of extensive liaison with specific industries for the training of skilled maintenance personnel as for vending machines, computers, etc.; and the expansion of comprehensive career education high schools.

(11) We urge expansion of the excellent alternative education programs in three directions:

a. Location of independent learning centers and satellites in minority communities.

b. Location of programs within community organizations in minority neighborhoods (e.g., Chicano Federation, Urban League, and youth clubs).

c. Deviation from the minority percentages in all alternative schools because the need for alternative education is greatest among minority students.

(12) Each building principal has responsibility for uniting integration and quality education in ways that maximize both goals. At the secondary level, guidance personnel can help to bring this about--through counseling with individual students and actively recruiting them for otherwise segregated classes, and through working with department chairpersons and the entire faculty on the ethnic composition of all classes in each school. At both the elementary and secondary level, serious consideration should be given to the selection of curriculum topics for which the diverse cultural background of students become themselves a positive curriculum resource.

(13) Efforts must continue toward uniting integration and quality education in each classroom. Admitting that integration is not "working" fully yet is the first step toward that goal. Only a complete commitment of everyone in the San Diego School System to solve the problems--big and little--can bring it about.

Child Welfare Concerns

(14) In order to improve attendance in minority isolated schools, we recommend the following measures:

a. Emphasize improvement of attendance in minority isolated schools, with concern for those who do not attend regularly as well as for those who do: Monthly class and building pupil-attendance percentages should be assessed by teachers, guidance personnel, principals, and involved central office personnel; the accountability of above persons for improvement of attendance should be defined; pupil attendance figures should be gathered by sex, race, and ethnicity, for these can give indications for specific action; attendance percentages should be screened for variations among teachers and subjects and in high schools by class periods.

b. School leaders, classroom teachers, and guidance teachers should meet with staffs of community organizations and children and family service agencies to plan coordinated action.

c. Professional social workers should be added to the permanent school staff for work with minority schools.

d. Attendance officers should be engaged who are free for follow-up of chronic absentees.

e. Attendance can be improved by motivational techniques, alteration of curriculum and time schedules, and by expansion of alternative schools and vocational education opportunities. Survey school retention programs for pregnant school-age girls to determine whether their needs are being met. Experience in other cities has shown that attendance is much better in vocational education schools and in alternative schools than in minority isolated high schools.

Minority Isolated Schools and the Community

(15) Minority isolated schools require new supporting relationships in order to overcome the present condition of low social status. Immediate steps can be taken to begin to turn the corner on making these schools better places to be.

a. Meetings of community-based organizations, parents, and school representatives should be convened to agree on responsible relationships that can assist in the improvement of minority isolated schools. The objective should be "increasing academic and intellectual opportunities of minority isolated schools" through cooperative planning. The community must be encouraged to take responsibility for their schools.

b. Minority isolated schools must lose the label of unsafe places to be. They must be made to stand above conditions of oppression and offer hope for all who come to their doors. Parents, community, and the schools must stretch beyond their limits to insure that the school experience and environment is a safe, productive place for all school programs and after-school activities as well.

c. The physical environment of the minority isolated schools should be analysed to make sure that facilities are equal to or superior to those in other parts of San Diego. Equality of education cannot be a reality unless all facilities meet the same standards.

d. Steps should be taken to place the best possible professional staff in the minority isolated schools. Long term contract relationships that can reduce staff turnover should be explored with community support. ("Staff" here means all contract personnel, including the principal.) Additional incentives should be made available to excellent staff who will make renewable five year commitments to one of these schools.

e. The very successful San Diego corporate community is affected by the image of the minority isolated schools. That corporate community must take a bold step forward in involvement and commitment to these schools, directed at helping to transform these schools into strong academic centers that can provide San Diego with its human power in the years to come. Members of the corporate/business complex should be asked to adopt minority isolated schools as part of their social responsibility.

f. Financial and human resources should be advanced to improve the image of the minority isolated schools. CClass size, materials and staffing patterns should be analysed to provide advantages to these schools that don't exist elsewhere, so that new students will be attracted to them. Resources and programs should emphasize and enhance the citizenship, cultural, and civic strengths of each school community.

Courtney Cazden

Richard Green

Joseph Rosen

Studies Dispute View That Schools Cannot Overcome Effect of Poverty

12/26/79

By EDWARD B. FISKE

New studies of inner city public schools are challenging the widespread view — rooted in the 1966 Coleman report and other well-known social science research — that urban schools can do little to overcome the negative effects of poverty.

The new research suggests that if schools in slum areas are properly run,

First of two articles.

virtually all students, no matter how disadvantaged, can be taught to read, write and calculate at a level sufficient to function in American society.

"Students from middle class homes, with lots of books and parents who read to them, will always have a step up on students from homes where this does not occur," said Ronald Edmonds, assistant to the New York City School Chancellor for instruction in the public schools and a Harvard researcher. "But schools can no longer use students' disadvantaged background as an excuse for not teaching them the fundamentals."

The research has found that there are specific characteristics of successful schools — such as the right kind of leadership and testing practices — and some school systems, including New York City's, have begun systematic efforts to duplicate these characteristics in low-achievement schools.

But while the theory is growing in its application, it is not universally held and the debate goes on. Some scholars question whether the characteristics are effects — rather than causes — of schools' success, and others question whether it is

Continued on Page B12, Column 1

New York Times

12/26/79

Studies Dispute View of Limits on Inner City Schools

Continued From Page A1

possible to replicate the characteristics of successful schools at unsuccessful ones.

The new research has taken two new approaches.

First, scholars such as Mr. Edmonds, Michael Rutter of the University of London, George Weber, formerly of the Council for Basic Education, and Richard Murnane of Yale University, have identified dozens of inner city schools that, contrary to what the earlier research suggested was possible, are indeed effective in educating a broad range of students.

Second, they have tried to determine what characteristics made these schools different from others with similar students.

Characteristics of Success

In his own research, conducted with John Fredericksen of Harvard, Mr. Edmonds has determined the following to be characteristics of successful inner city schools:

¶Strong leadership by the principal. "A good principal will not try to administer the school from his office," he declared. "He will visit classes and respond to what he observes. He will involve the entire professional staff in a commitment to the school's mission of teaching all the kids in the building."

¶Clearly understood teaching objectives. "A school must care more about some instructional objectives than others," he said. "If you leave teachers free to decide for themselves what to emphasize and what not, you lose a sense of cohesion that benefits everyone in the building."

¶A school climate that is safe, orderly, attractive and serious and one that avoids the intrusion of security measures.

¶High expectations for all students. "You can't have high expectations for some kids and low for others," he said. "You have to expect everybody to profit from what is going on."

¶The use of standardized tests as a means of measuring progress and making plans for what to do next. "Despite their flaws, tests are the only way for poor parents to know how their children are progressing," he commented.

The New York Times

Bernard R. Gifford

"The challenges facing the public school system today are far more complex" than in previous times because students "are far poorer."

Mr. Edmonds noted that to be effective, all the characteristics must be present. "If any one characteristic slips," he said, "that jeopardizes a school's effectiveness."

Some scholars say that there are methodological limitations to this approach.

"Edmonds, Weber and all assume that what differentiates a good school is what makes it good," said Tommy Tomlinson of the National Institute of Education, which has supported the Edmonds research. "But you might also say that anything that gets kids to work harder on their work will do it. All the literature I know says the same thing: when you organize the schooling process so that everybody agrees on the goal, it works."

Mr. Edmonds acknowledged that the characteristics he cited could be effects rather than causes. "What we are claiming is that these schools as organizations have consistent and observable differences," he said.

Associated Press

James Coleman

"Schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context."

A Leadership Question

Another fundamental questi[illegible] whether it is possible to replica[illegible] characteristics of successful schoo[illegible] where. Michael Coben of the educati[illegible] stitute asked, for example, whether [illegible] ership was something that co[illegible] taught to principals. "It may have one to do with the conditions in the scho[illegible] such as whether the faculty wan[illegible] led — than with the training [illegible] pals," he observed.

The new research challenges a [illegible] list of findings by prominent social scientists such as James Coleman, Christopher Jencks and Daniel Patrick Moynihan that suggested that family and socioeconomic backgrounds were the main cause of poor academic performance among poor and minority group childre[illegible] Its research has been used as an argument against Federal and state programs to increase basic skills and against increased spending for schools at the local level.

Educators have also cited a socioeconomic status of students as an explanation for the low reading scores that characterize most inner city schools. In a report to the New York Board of Education three years ago criticizing budget cuts, for example, Bernard R. Gifford, then deputy scho[illegible] chancellor, argued that "the challenge facing the public school system today is far more complex" than in previous times because, in part, "our students are far poorer."

Pessimism about the capacity of inner city schools to educate students from disadvantaged backgrounds dates to the mid-1960's. After passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Congress commissioned James Coleman, then [illegible] Johns Hopkins University, along with [illegible] Campbell and others, to undertake an "Equal Educational Opportunity Survey."

New York City, Kansas City and Los Angeles that were effective in teaching reading, and concluded, "Their success shows that the failure in beginning reading typical of inner city schools is the fault not of the children or their background but of the schools."

¶The New York State Office of Education Performance Review published a study of two inner city public schools in New York City, one high-achieving and one low-achieving, and found that differences in student performance seemed to be attributable to factors under the schools' control.

¶Two years ago, W. B. Brookover and L. W. Lazotte used state assessment figures in Michigan for grades four and seven and found that differences in goals, expectations and leadership explained the performance of six improving and two declining schools.

¶Working in the New Haven schools and using data that matched students to individual classroom teachers over a period of time, Mr. Murnane concluded, "There are important differences in the amount of learning which takes place in different classrooms."

'Major Area of Influence'

Perhaps the most important study was one conducted in England by Michael Rutter, a professor at the University of London, which was published here last fall by Harvard University Press under the title "15,000 Hours." It compared students at 12 schools in poor neighborhoods over a four-year period and found vide variations in their performance depending on which schools they attended.

"Education cannot compensate for the inequalities of society," Mr. Rutter wrote. "Nevertheless, we do suggest that schools constitute one major area of influence, and one which is susceptible to change."

Having established that some inner city schools can be effective, many of these researchers then pursued the second line of inquiry: identifying what made these schools different.

One practical issue in implementing these findings is whether the traits that make some urban schools especially effective can be influenced that much by school boards. "We know that agreement on goals and high expectations are important," Mr. Cohen of the National Institute of Education said. "What we're not sure about is how to bring about agreement on goals and how to influence teacher expectations."

In New York City, the pilot program in which officials have begun trying to incorporate the characteristics of effective schools throughout the system makes the assumption that changes can be made at the policy-making level.

"School effects are more important than teacher effects," Mr. Edmonds said. "Reforming individual classroom teachers is not a very auspicious thing to do. What you want to focus on is schoolwide changes. Teachers are not effective enough to affect schools, but schoolwide changes can bring individual teachers along."

Mr. Murnane, who said he had not yet studied the Edmonds research, said he was chary about applying his own findings to the making of school policy. "We know that more learning goes on in some classrooms than others, but we don't know enough to build a school system," he declared. "If you're dealing with hybrid corn, you see which combination leads to the best output. But when you look at schools, you don't do controlled experiments. You look at what is there."

Tomorrow: New York City's pilot program to improve student achievement.

The New York Times / Paul Hosefros

Students in Brooklyn working in Spanish in a bilingual science class

The study, which represented the first large-scale application of social science research to education, found that the educational resources available to children from black and poor families were very nearly equal to those of white students from middle class families. The researchers also found that despite nearly equal resources, students from black and poor families performed at a significantly lower academic level than middle class whites.

The researchers concluded that the differences in academic achievement could be explained mainly by the backgrounds of the students and that differences in school resources had little effect on this achievement. As Mr. Coleman put it, "schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context."

A Series of Seminars

The Coleman study was widely criticized at the time on methodological grounds, and several dozen scholars took up the sociologist's invitation for others to analyze the data anew. Among them were Mr. Moynihan, who later became a Senator from New York, and Frederick Mosteller. The two men, both of whom were members of the Harvard faculty, organized a famous series of seminars on the report. In general, the new analyses confirmed the conclusions of the report.

In 1972 Mr. Jencks and another group of Harvard scholars used the Coleman computer tapes as the basis of "Inequality," an analysis of the interaction between education, income and social class. They found that "we cannot blame economic inequality on differences between schools since differences between schools seem to have very little effect on any measurable attribute of those who attend them."

The social policy consequences of this line of research were significant, for they suggested that any effort to put substantial amounts of money into the reform of schools would be futile.

In interviews, Mr. Coleman and Mr. Jencks said that their conclusions had sometimes been overstated by critics. "To report that schools do not make a difference is not to say that schools cannot make a difference," Mr. Jencks said.

In recent years other researchers — many of them unhappy with the political use to which the Coleman study and similar research have been put — have taken new approaches to the question of whether schools can make a difference with poor urban children. They have begun by criticizing the Coleman-Moynihan-Jencks line of research on three counts:

¶That they measured the wrong "resources." It is not the physical resources, such as books in the library, that matter, they say, but things like how teachers organize their classrooms. "The resources Coleman measured are important only at the extremes," Mr. Edmonds said.

¶That they lumped together data for entire schools. "There are far more variations among children in the same school than there are between schools," said Richard J. Murnane, another researcher from Yale.

¶That instead of measuring student performance over a period of time, such as an academic year, they used a "cross-sectional" method and took only one set of figures. "This means that they couldn't take account of what children brought with them," Mr. Murnane said.

In an interview, Mr. Coleman, now at the University of Chicago, agreed that all these criticisms had validity.

"I certainly agree that there may very well be certain kinds of things which differ systematically from one classroom to another or from one school to another that we did not measure," he said. "We took the best estimates of educators at the time about the important factors."

'Exceptions to the Rule'

He also acknowledged that the research would have been improved by organizing data by classrooms or subgroups rather than by entire schools and by comparing test scores over a period of time. He noted that in a major new study of 75,000 high school sophomores and seniors at 1,100 schools throughout the country, which he is co-directing for the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago, he and his colleagues have made adjustments on all three counts.

Having challenged the data base, the new researchers have also set out to challenge the conclusion that schools do not make a difference by finding effective urban schools that constitute "exceptions to the rule." In many cases, this was done by pairing effective urban schools with others in a similar socioeconomic situation. By thus controlling by backgrounds, they could demonstrate that the way a school was run made a difference in pupil performance.

Among the studies that have taken this approach are the following:

¶In 1971, in a study sponsored by the Council for Basic Education and partially financed by the Victoria Foundation, Mr. Weber identified four inner city schools in