

**A SURVEY OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES RELATIVE TO
THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AT CUMBERLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

BY

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A SURVEY OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES RELATIVE TO THE
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AT CUMBERLAND HIGH SCHOOL

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education

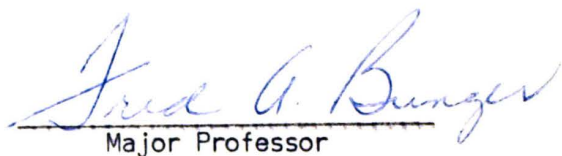
by
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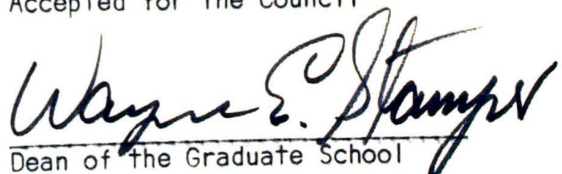

Dean of the Graduate School

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today's schools, having evolved from the traditional subject-centered or teacher-centered school to a community-involved, child-centered school, have become more aware of the attitudes, opinions, desires and wishes of the community of which it is a part. Partially due to modern media of communication, the schools are constantly made aware of opinions of segments of the community. Politicians, clergymen, civic groups, and other lay or professional groups many times express their opinions on such issues as sex education, school budgets, teacher strikes, discipline or even school policies.

Attitudes and opinions are extremely important to understand because they indicate what people might accept or reject, what is liked or disliked, or what is good or bad. Parents daily acquire attitudes and opinions of the school by various means but perhaps none so direct as those acquired from the emissaries of the school itself--the students.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to investigate the attitudes or opinions the parents of students at Cumberland High School possessed relative to the educational program at Cumberland High School. By undertaking such an investigation the writer would be trying to (1) provide a source of information to Cumberland's faculty and staff that could be used to gain a better insight and understanding about the

community; (2) indicate any deficiencies or strengths peculiar to the educational program at Cumberland; and (3) create an awareness in the minds of the faculty and staff of Cumberland relative to attitudes members of the community hold toward the school and its program.

Importance of the study. Prior to this time a survey had never been conducted relevant to determining parental attitudes of Cumberland High School students for the purpose of aiding the faculty and staff of Cumberland. It was further noted that no attempt of a formal nature had ever been made to gather data or discover just how the community felt about the school. Finally, the importance of this investigation should be realized by teachers as they attempt to understand the child and his environment; by the principal as he attempts to provide instructional leadership; by the custodial staff as they are concerned with maintaining clean, well-equipped schools; and also by the cafeteria staff as they attempt to meet the nutritional needs of the students. The results of this investigation could also prove valuable to those responsible for the curriculum development including supervisors and administrative personnel.

Assumptions. For purpose of clarity and in order to establish a framework for this investigation, the writer derived the following assumptions:

1. The survey questionnaire would be conscientiously and honestly filled out by the parents.
2. A representative number of questionnaires would be carried home by the students to the parents.

3. A representative number of questionnaires would be completed by the parents and returned to the investigator.

4. The questionnaire would be understood by practically all parents.

5. Each student and parent understood clearly the scope, intent, and purpose of the investigation.

6. The questionnaire would adequately depict parental attitudes.

Limitations of the study. This investigation was limited to attitudes of parents of Cumberland High School students and not all community members. The study was further limited to three general areas of concern: (1) attitudes about the curriculum, (2) attitudes about the teachers, and (3) attitudes about the facilities.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

For the purpose of clearer communication certain terms used in this study have been defined as follows:

Community - This term refers to that section of northwest Davidson County, Nashville, whose high school students are in the Cumberland attendance zone.

Parental attitudes - This term encompasses opinions, beliefs, judgments or conclusions the parents of Cumberland High School students have acquired relevant to its program.

Questionnaire - The questionnaire used in this investigation was a list of planned questions relating to the curriculum, teachers, and facilities at Cumberland High School.

III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A thorough search of literature in the libraries of George Peabody College, Belmont College, and Austin Peay State University was made to discover literature directly related or similar to this investigation. The Educational Index and the Readers Guide to Periodical Literature were consulted and many articles, under such headings as surveys, community surveys, attitudes, and parental and community attitudes were surveyed and consulted.

While related literature seemed to be very limited, one significant study was conducted in Nashville, Tennessee by the Metropolitan Nashville Council of Parent-Teachers Associations. About sixty-five per cent of the families with children in Metropolitan Public Schools responded to a parents' survey on school needs and reactions to present school programs. Findings from the survey indicated that:

1. Sixty-two per cent of those responding believed their children were getting adequate individual attention.

2. Eighty per cent felt the schools were doing a good job of preparing children for later responsibilities in life.

3. Eighty per cent of the respondents felt that kindergartens should be included in the public school program.

4. The most pressing needs indicated by the parents were for more teachers, more teaching materials, and the need for physical education instructors, especially on the elementary level.¹

¹Metropolitan Nashville Council of Parent-Teachers Associations, "Survey of Parents of Metro Public Schools," 1968. (Mimeographed.)

Lawrence Lowery, in his study of parental attitudes toward teachers, found that: (1) parents generally associate teachers with discipline and the manner in which they administer discipline; (2) teachers were generally thought of as women; and (3) pleasant experiences in school were related more to men teachers than to women.²

IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Construction of the questionnaire. The first questionnaire was submitted for consideration and approval to the writer's major advisor, at which time corrections, deletions, and improvements were made in order to provide for answers more diversified than "yes" and "no." The final questionnaire provided for answers to be made that gave an indication as to the degree the attitude or response was felt. An example might be that a response to a question would include four possible choices: (1) very much, (2) some, (3) little, or (4) none. The questionnaire was also expanded to include more specific items with emphasis placed on clarity.

Information on the questionnaire. The information on the questionnaire was designed to measure attitudes in three general areas: (1) attitudes about the curriculum, (2) attitudes about the teachers, and (3) attitudes about the facilities at Cumberland High School. Listed below are the major headings of the questions found on the questionnaire.

²Lawrence F. Lowery, "A Study of Parents' Attitudes Toward Teachers," Journal of Educational Research, 62:227-230, January, 1969.

1. Do you feel that teachers need your support?
2. Would you feel at ease talking to your child's teacher?
3. Where would you feel most comfortable talking to your child's teacher?
4. Do teachers communicate regularly with parents other than by report cards?
5. Do teachers encourage you to visit the school and discuss your child's progress?
6. What factors prevent you from visiting the school?
7. Describe your child's teachers.
8. Are there things your child should be learning that are not being taught?
9. Do you feel that the school is doing a good job in preparing your child for his responsibilities in life?
10. What are the most pressing needs of Cumberland High School?
11. Are the school grounds kept attractive and safe?
12. Are the school's facilities available for community use?
13. Are rooms well-lighted, clean, well-ventilated and properly heated?
14. Are rooms well-equipped to help children learn?
15. Is the school lunch program satisfactory?
16. Does the school provide adequately for your child's health?

Distribution of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to members of the investigator's classes as well as to members of three other teachers' classes. Prior to distribution the teachers

and students were properly oriented as to the meaning, purpose and reasons for the study being conducted. Participation in the survey was on a voluntary basis and no student was forced to take a questionnaire home. Provisions were made to avoid duplication of responses. Distribution of responses was as follows:

130 to senior English classes

100 to eighth grade social studies classes

100 to seventh grade social studies classes

20 to junior high basketball players

100 to algebra and higher mathematics classes

A total of 450 questionnaires was distributed. This number represented approximately one-half of the parents of Cumberland High School students. Instructions were given to return the questionnaires the following day.

The teachers who rendered assistance to the writer were selected because of their conscientiousness and willingness to help; and they taught a large segment of the student population.

Collection of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected in the various classes involved the day after distribution. One additional day was extended to accommodate any who may have forgotten to return their questionnaire. When final tabulations were made, a total of 135 questionnaires were returned. The response represented thirty per cent of the questionnaires that were distributed and eleven per cent of the total number of parents of Cumberland High School students.

Analysis of the data. The collected data were computed by individual responses and the findings were compiled according to percentage of responses on each item of the questionnaire. The number of responses on each item of the questionnaire was not included in this presentation.

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The remainder of the study was organized in the following manner:

Chapter II. SETTINGS AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY. This section included a description of the school, its objectives, a brief discussion of the community's recreational, social, religious, and economic life. This section also included a brief geographical description of the community.

Chapter III. PRESENTATIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA. This chapter was concerned with presenting graphically and in writing the data received from the survey.

Chapter IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY. This chapter included a summary of the data and conclusions based on the compiled data.

Bibliography. This section contained a list of sources of materials used in the preparation of this study.

Appendix. The appendix included a copy of the questionnaire used in the study.

CHAPTER II

SETTING AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Cumberland High School is located in Bordeaux, a small community in north Nashville, separated from the city proper by the Cumberland River. Prior to the consolidation of the city and county governments in 1964, the Cumberland River was the natural dividing line between the city and county for this section of the county. Cumberland High School was the first high school to be erected in the old Thirteenth District of the county. In 1920 Mrs. W. T. Pearson, fondly referred to as the "Mother of Cumberland," started what would later be called Cumberland High School, at the old Wade School. Mrs. Pearson and her thirteen pupils met for one year at the old Wade School. In 1921 the school was moved to the new grammar school in the Jordonia community and another teacher was added. For the next seven years Mrs. Pearson, and an increased faculty of three, met with the students in the basement of a church, Simpkins Chapel, in Jordonia.

In 1929 the school was situated on its present site, between the Clarksville Highway and Hydes Ferry Pike. It was named Cumberland. The school colors, purple and white, and the school mascot, the Indian, were chosen by the students and faculty. In 1934 the first addition was made and included a gymnasium, home economics, and agriculture departments. Few physical changes were made again until 1949 when the football field and bleachers were constructed. The football field was dedicated Evans Field in honor of Jerry Evans, who began teaching

agriculture and coaching at Cumberland High School in 1927 and later retired in 1957. In 1950 growth and an expanding curriculum necessitated construction of a new cafeteria and commercial and music departments. The growth was attributed to the addition of an eighth grade class. In 1951, with the addition of a seventh grade class, Cumberland became the first six-year high school in Davidson County. At this time a new agriculture and industrial arts building was erected on property adjacent to the existing school grounds. In 1952 another addition consisting of five new classrooms, a library, and a stage was constructed adjacent to the existing building. In 1957 a small frame house next to the school was purchased to house the art, special education, and driver training classes.³

The following additions have been made since 1957:

1. A new gym and cafeteria - 1961
2. New science departments - 1964
3. New home economics department - 1964
4. New art department - 1964
5. New offices and facilities for guidance staff - 1964
6. New music department and stage for the new gym - 1964
7. Additional classroom - 1964
8. Addition of two portable teaching stations - 1964
9. Addition of two more portable teaching stations - 1966
10. Addition of six portable teaching stations - 1968

³Cumberland High School Student Council, Cumberland High School Handbook, 1959-60, p. 4.

The recent growth of Cumberland High School can be attributed to the development of several large subdivisions: Bordeaux Hills, Trepard Heights, Enchanted Hills, Haynes Manor, and Buena Vista Estates. Many of the families have moved from the old city proper; some have been displaced due to urban renewal or highway construction. The result has been an increased enrollment each year. The present enrollment is slightly over 1,200 students and includes a staff of 51.

1. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES OF THE SCHOOL

The educational objectives of Cumberland High School reflect its philosophy and are concerned with its character, intellect, and personality in the development of the whole child. It is the purpose of Cumberland High School to help each pupil:

1. to acquire the tools of learning and to extend his knowledge of usable information;
2. to share, plan, and cooperate in purposeful experiences and activities;
3. to develop an appreciation and understanding of his cultural heritage;
4. to discover his abilities and possibilities through tests, measurements, and understandings; and
5. to learn the rights and responsibilities of a good citizen through participation in democratic procedures.¹

The educational objectives as stated by the Metropolitan Public Schools imply that the community, in attempting to provide quality education, will use its resources and knowledge to build a program of education in keeping with each child's potential that will:

¹
Ibid., p. 5.

1. Motivate him in developing and pursuing appropriate and realistic goals; thereby (a) helping him make life choices, vocationally and avocationally, (b) identifying his special talents and skills and fostering academic success in comparison to his abilities, and (c) providing a wide range of experiences for his growth.

2. Stimulate and develop his intellectual processes of curiosity of problem-solving, of critical and creative thinking, and promote his desire to continue to learn.

3. Provide him with the opportunity and motivation to master the basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be a healthy, useful, productive member of society. Involved in doing this would be (a) building effective skill in communication of ideas, (b) mastering and using effectively mathematical concepts, understandings, and skills, (c) developing an understanding of natural social, economic, political, historical, and physical causes and effects, (d) developing and maintaining occupational competence, (e) contributing and adapting to a changing social and economic environment, (f) guiding him to develop appreciation in music, art, drama, other areas of aesthetic interest, and (g) helping him to acquire and maintain a state of physical well being.

4. Help him to learn the role of citizenship through knowledge of the ideals and the development of the American culture; through practice in decision-making; through respect for cultures other than his own; and through accepting his ultimate responsibility for his own actions and welfare. This would include (a) learning through practice the roles of freedom and responsibility in self-discipline, (b) developing an ability to live interdependently with his fellow man, (c) developing a respect for moral and spiritual values, (d) developing respect for American ideals, and (e) developing a respect for law and order.

5. Foster a healthy and realistic understanding of himself, his relationships to others, and of ways to deal constructively with life's tensions.

6. Encourage him to develop pride in his own labors, a sense of responsibility for his work, and appreciation of quality in the performance of others, developing within him a positive attitude toward doing the best he can.²

II. RECREATIONAL LIFE

The nearness of the community to opportunities available in Nashville has tended to limit offerings in the community itself. The community has

²Public Schools of Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County, Know Your Schools, 1968-69, pp. 56-57.

a roller skating rink, a miniature golf course, and a drive-in theater. A municipal golf course is available to community residents just across the Cumberland River. In recent years, through a cooperative effort between the Board of Education, the school, and the Board of Parks and Recreation, the following recreational opportunities have been made available to community members.

1. The school gymnasium has been open three nights a week and all day on Saturday.
2. A baseball field has been provided for the high school team and the summer league teams.
3. Tennis courts are presently being constructed.
4. A summer recreation program is provided at the school.

Presently the Y.M.C.A. is constructing facilities, including a swimming pool, adjacent to the school property for community use. The school itself offers opportunities for participation in varsity athletic including: (1) junior high football, basketball, and track, and (2) senior high football, basketball, track, wrestling, tennis, and golf.

III. SOCIAL LIFE

The social life of the community is generally limited to participation in the Bordeaux Civic Club, the Civitan and Lions Club of Bordeaux, the D.A.R., the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, Farmer's Club, Farm Bureau, 4-H Club, Home Demonstration Club, Masonic organizations, and the Parent-Teachers Association. While social opportunities appear to be broad,

a survey conducted by a social studies class indicated that only a small percentage of the community members avail themselves to these opportunities.³

IV. RELIGIOUS LIFE

The community maintains eight churches: Baptist, Church of Christ, Methodist, Catholic, Nazarene, Church of God, Pentecostal, and Seventh Day Adventist. In addition, the Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists maintain nearby schools. Of 250 people surveyed in a community study it was found that a majority of the people attend church regularly at predominantly Protestant churches.⁴

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

Since the community represents an amalgamation of various occupational interests it could not be completely stereotyped as a white or blue collar area. From information available on students' information cards, it was found that the community consists of several professional people including doctors, lawyers, educators and ministers. The gamut then ran from semi-professional and craftsmen to semi-skilled or unskilled workers and farm laborers. Most of the people are employed outside of the immediate community of Nashville.

³Cumberland High School Social Studies Class, "Community Study," 1968. (Mimeographed.)

⁴Ibid.

VI. GEOGRAPHY OF THE COMMUNITY

For the most part the community is bounded by natural or political boundaries; on the south and west, by the Cumberland River and to the north, by the Cheatham County line. The boundary on the east and north-east is generally Steven's Lane, Clarksville Highway and Whites Creek Pike. Within these boundaries can be found, in addition to previously stated subdivisions, two small communities in the rural areas--Scottsboro and Jordonia--some large truck farms, small farms and rural dwellings. The immediate area surrounding the school consists of residential dwellings and small business concerns.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The data were presented in three sections. The first section dealt with parental attitudes relative to teachers at Cumberland High School. The second section dealt with parental attitudes relative to the curriculum and the third, with parental attitudes relative to the facilities of the school. A description of each item on the questionnaire was presented along with a table and brief discussion.

I. ATTITUDES CONCERNING TEACHERS

The first item on the questionnaire was an attempt to discover the attitudes of parents relative to the amount of support they felt teachers needed. The six subheadings under question one were specific areas of concern measuring the amount of support teachers needed as they attempted (a) to teach the child, (b) to encourage the child to complete homework assignments, (c) to encourage regular school attendance, (d) to help the child feel that the school is necessary and important, (e) to teach acceptable patterns of behavior, and (f) to discipline the child. Four possible responses were provided: very much, some, little, and none,

TABLE I
PARENTAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING SUPPORT OF TEACHERS

Support Needed By Teachers As They Attempt	Very Much %	Some %	Little %	None %	No Response %
(a) To teach the child	71.8	22.2	2.96	2.2	.7
(b) To encourage children to complete homework	75.5	17	2.2	2.2	2.96
(c) To encourage regular school attendance	76.3	8.9	4.4	8.1	2.2
(d) To help children feel that school is necessary and important	82.1	5.2	5.9	4.4	2.2
(e) To teach acceptable patterns of behavior	74.8	15.5	5.2	2.2	2.2
(f) To discipline the child	70.4	20	2.2	3.7	3.7

On each item under question one, at least seventy per cent of the parents felt that teachers needed "very much" support. The percentage of parents feeling that teachers needed "no" support ranged from eight per cent, on encouraging regular attendance, to two per cent on three other items. Approximately four per cent of the parents gave "no response" on at least one of the subheadings. This may have been a result of misunderstanding the question or possibly not knowing the teachers well enough to indicate conscientiously their attitudes about teachers. Those indicating teachers needed "little" or "no" support may have felt that teachers could do an adequate job without parental support.

The second question on the questionnaire was concerned with parental attitudes relative to talking to teachers about their children's (a) grades, (b) discipline, (c) problems and successes, and (d) home life. The responses provided were: very much at ease, at ease, uneasy, and very uneasy.

TABLE II
PARENTAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING TALKING TO TEACHERS

Talking To Teachers About	Very Much At Ease %	At Ease %	Uneasy %	Very Uneasy %	No Response %
(a) Grades	65.9	29.6	2.96	0	1.5
(b) Discipline	54	37.7	5.2	.7	2.2
(c) Problems and successes	63.7	32.6	.7	1.5	1.5
(d) Home life	52.6	31.8	4.4	5.9	5.2

Fifty-two to sixty-five per cent of the parents indicated they would feel very much at ease talking to the teachers about any of the subjects. Less than six per cent felt they were "uneasy" or "very uneasy." The most "very uneasy" responses were made on the subject, home life. This, however, represented only about six per cent of the parents. Conversely, the largest number of "no" responses, about five per cent, was on the subject, home life. Generally speaking, the parents indicated positive attitudes about talking to teachers.

Question three was an attempt to discover the comfort parents felt when talking to teachers (a) formally in the principal's office, (b) formally in the teacher's classroom during free periods, (c) informally at school, (d) informally in the community, (e) at P.T.A. meetings, (f) at ball games, (g) at concerts or plays, and (h) in the presence of the student. The possible responses were: very comfortable, comfortable, uncomfortable and very uncomfortable.

TABLE III

PARENTAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING COMFORT FELT IN TALKING
TO TEACHERS IN VARIOUS PLACES

Places	Very Comfort- able %	Comfort- able %	Un- comfort- able %	Very Un- comfort- able %	No Response %
(a) Formally in principal's office	27.4	47.4	10.4	2.2	12.6
(b) Formally in teacher's classroom	48.1	41.5	4.4	1.5	4.4
(c) Informally at school	21.5	26.6	26.6	15.5	13.3
(d) Informally in the community	19.3	22	23	20.7	14.8
(e) P.T.A. meetings	27.4	45.1	13.3	0	13.3
(f) Ball games	17	28.8	25.2	9.6	19.3
(g) At concerts and plays	14.8	22	31.8	11.1	20
(h) In presence of student	22	45.1	9.6	7.4	15.5

Somewhat contradictory to question two, where fifty to sixty per cent of the parents indicated they felt very much at ease talking to teachers, there was only one place where more than one-third of the parents indicated they felt very comfortable talking to teachers, that being formally in the teacher's classroom during a free period. The greatest number of responses was made under the response, comfortable. It was generally concluded that parents felt more comfortable talking to teachers in the school than at other places--formally rather than informally. The most uncomfortable and very uncomfortable responses were made under subheadings informally at school, informally in the community and at concerts and plays.

On question four an attempt was made to determine the frequency with which parents and teachers communicate other than by report cards. The means of communication listed on the questionnaire were (a) by home visits, (b) by phone calls, and (c) by written correspondence. The responses often, seldom, and never, were provided.

TABLE IV
FREQUENCY OF PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS

Means of Communication	Often %	Seldom %	Never %	No Response %
(a) By home visits	15	12.6	74.8	11.1
(b) By phone calls	5.2	26.6	56.2	12.6
(c) By written correspondence	11.1	45.9	35.5	8.1

Results indicated that eighty per cent of the parents seldom or never communicated with teachers in any of the above ways. This evidence conclusively indicated a weakness concerning parent-teacher communications at Cumberland High School. The fact that parents indicated a positive attitude concerning talking to teachers left little doubt that parents were receptive; thus, the causes for this condition of poor communication appeared to stem from teacher indifference.

On question five fifty-seven per cent of the parents indicated that teachers do not encourage parents to visit the school to discuss their children's progress. Thirty-nine per cent of the parents felt that teachers do encourage parental visits. Of those who indicated that teachers do encourage parental visits:

Nine visited the school one time;
Ten visited the school two times;
Eight visited the school three times;
Three visit the school four times;
Three visited the school five times;
Three visited the school eight times;
One visited the school ten times.

Since the question did not stipulate any certain period of time, the visits listed above may have taken place over a period of years.

Question six sought to identify factors which prevented parents from visiting the school. The six factors listed were (a) lack of transportation, (b) younger children at home, (c) inconvenience, (d) feeling that school visits are unnecessary, and (e) the child's feeling of embarrassment.

While this question was not directly related to attitudes relative to teachers, its effect on teacher-parent communications served as a basis for its inclusion.

TABLE V
FACTORS PREVENTING PARENTS FROM VISITING THE SCHOOL

Factors	%
(a) Lack of transportation	14.1
(b) Younger children at home	15.5
(c) Inconvenience	67.5
(d) Feeling that school visits are unnecessary	10.4
(e) Child's feeling of embarrassment	5.2
No response	33.3

The most frequent response indicated was inconvenience. Several of the parents indicated that work was a factor preventing them from visiting the school. Unfortunately, work was not a response included on the questionnaire. The fact that one-third of the parents had not responded to this question left implications that perhaps there were other factors preventing parents from visiting the school.

On question seven the parents were asked to describe the teachers according to the following qualities: (a) ability to teach, (b) skill in discipline, (c) personalities, (d) like for children, (e) participation in community life, (f) maintain good moral character, and (g) dedication to teaching. The responses offered relative to the qualities the teachers possessed were: very much, some, little, and none.

TABLE VI
PARENTAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING CERTAIN TEACHER QUALITIES

Qualities	Very Much %	Some %	Little %	None %	No Response %
(a) Ability to teach	50.4	29.6	1.5	0	18.5
(b) Skill in discipline	30.4	34.8	11.1	1.5	22.2
(c) Good personalities	37.7	32.6	5.2	1.5	29.9
(d) Like children	37.7	34.8	.7	2.2	24.4
(e) Participation in community life	23.7	28.1	10.4	1.5	35.5
(f) Good moral character	40	25.9	4.4	0	29.5
(g) Dedication to teaching	40	31.8	4.4	0	23.6

Many parents did not respond to this question because they felt they were not acquainted well enough with the teachers to adequately

express an opinion. Most of the parents, however, rated the teachers favorably on the qualities. This indicated that parents generally had positive attitudes about teachers; at least on the qualities listed.

II. ATTITUDES CONCERNING THE CURRICULUM

When asked, on question eight, if there were things the child should be learning that are not presently being taught, forty per cent of the parents indicated that there were some things that the child should be learning that were not being taught. The parents were provided four responses: many, some, few, and none. The response was about equally divided between those who felt there were "many" and "some" things and those who felt that there were "few" or "no" things. Less than ten per cent of the parents felt that there were "many" things that should be taught. Implications were that the parents had mixed opinions as to adequacy of the curriculum. The percentage of responses to question eight, "Are there things your child should be learning that are not being taught?" was as follows:

<u>Many</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Few</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No Response</u>
7.4%	40%	21.5%	20%	11.1%

Question nine sought to discover the feelings of the parents as to the adequacy of the job the school was doing as it prepared children for their responsibilities in life. The responses were: very good, good, fair, and poor. The results indicated:

<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>No Response</u>
22%	44.4%	21.5%	1.5%	2.96%

The majority of the parents felt that the school was doing a "good" and "very good" job as it attempted to prepare students for their responsibilities in life. The number of people indicating that the school had done a "very good" job was about the same as those indicating the school had done a "fair" job. Less than two per cent of the parents felt the school had done a "poor" job.

On question ten the parents were asked to check items on the questionnaire that represented Cumberland High School's most pressing needs. There was no limit as to the number of responses the parents could mark. The results were given in number of responses rather than percentages.

TABLE VII
CUMBERLAND HIGH SCHOOL'S MOST PRESSING NEEDS

Needs	Number of Responses
Driver Education	
Guidance	54
Social	
Vocational	27
Disciplinary	23
Personal	33
Special Education (for)	21
Gifted	
Mentally retarded	28
Physically handicapped	27
Remedial Classes for Slow Learners	20
New Teaching Programs	41
Team teaching	
Independent study	17
Flexible scheduling	25
More and Better Teaching Materials	28
Better Teachers	61
Teacher Aides	27
Smaller Classes	30
Vocational Education	69
Metal shop	
Carpentry	23
Plumbing	23
Printing	21
Cosmetology	22
Electronics	33
Business	36
Other	15
Foreign language	
Sex education	1
Swimming	1
Art	1

The three most pressing needs of Cumberland High School, as indicated by the parents were (1) smaller classes, (2) more and better teaching material, and (3) driver education.

The number of responses on these three items ranged from fifty-four to sixty-nine. With the exception of the three most pressing needs, cosmetology, and remedial classes for slow learners, no item listed received more than thirty responses.

III. PARENTAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING FACILITIES

Question eleven was an attempt to discover the opinions parents held concerning the safety and attractiveness of the school grounds. The four possible responses were: always, only during the school year, seldom, and never. The results were:

<u>Always</u>	<u>Only During School Year</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No Response</u>
51.9%	17%	13.3%	2.96%	15.5%

It was interesting to note the diversification of responses. Fifty-one per cent of the parents indicated that the school grounds were always kept attractive and safe and sixteen per cent of the parent indicated that the school grounds were seldom or never safe and attractive.

On question twelve the parents were asked to indicate whether the facilities of the school were available for (a) recreation, (b) community meetings, (c) civic groups, and (d) church groups. The possible responses offered were: always, generally, seldom, and never.

TABLE VIII

PARENTAL OPINIONS CONCERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF
SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY USE

Uses	Always %	Generally %	Seldom %	Never %	No Response %
(a) Recreation	15.5	54.8	6.6	1.5	21.4
(b) Community meet- ings	6.6	28.8	17.03	9.6	43.7
(c) Civic groups	4.4	35.5	15.5	9.6	44
(d) Church groups	.7	17.03	14.1	20.7	48.1

The large number of "no" responses on question twelve was probably well-justified since this question tended to be a test of knowledge rather than opinion. The large number of "no" responses indicated that parents were not familiar with the school or knowledgeable as to its use. Obviously, the parents were aware of the community recreation offered at the school, since fifty-five per cent of the parents indicated that the school was generally available for recreation.

On question thirteen the parents were asked, "Are rooms clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated and properly heated?" The possible responses were: always, generally, seldom, and never. The results were:

<u>Always</u>	<u>Generally</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No Response</u>
17%	56.2%	8.1%	2.96%	17.03%

The majority of the parents reacted favorably by indicating the rooms were "always" or "generally" clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated, and properly heated.

Question fourteen asked, "Are rooms well-equipped to help children learn?" The possible responses were: always, generally, seldom, and never. The results indicated:

<u>Always</u>	<u>Generally</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No Response</u>
15.5%	46.6%	11.1%	3.7%	20%

A majority of the parents reacted positively to this question. Almost fifty per cent of the parents indicated that the rooms were "generally" well-equipped to help children learn.

Question fifteen asked, "Is the school lunch program satisfactory?" The three subheadings under question fifteen were: (a) Do children like to eat there? (b) Are prices reasonable? and (c) Is the food selection adequate? The possible responses were: always, generally, seldom, and never.

TABLE IX

PARENTAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING THE ADEQUACY OF THE
SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Questions	Always %	Generally %	Seldom %	Never %	No Response %
(a) Do children like to eat there?	15.5	31.8	21.5	23.7	7.4
(b) Are prices reasonable?	23.7	48.1	8.9	9.6	9.6
(c) Is food selection adequate?	8.9	38.5	25.2	13.3	12.6

Most of the parents indicated the prices were reasonable. The responses were about equal between those indicating that their children "always" or "generally" like to eat there and those indicating that their children "seldom" or "never" liked to eat there. The percentage of parents responding positively concerning the adequacy of food was the same as those indicating that their children liked to eat there.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

1. Seventy to eighty-two per cent of the parents of Cumberland High School students indicated that teachers needed very much support as they dealt with children.

2. Fifty-two to sixty-five per cent of the parents indicated they would feel very much at ease talking to their children's teacher.

3. Parents generally felt more comfortable talking to teachers formally in the school than informally in the school or community.

4. Most Cumberland High School teachers seldom or never communicate with parents other than by report cards.

5. The majority of teachers do not encourage the parents to visit the school.

6. About one-fourth of the parents indicated they had visited the school.

7. The most significant factor preventing parents from visiting the school was inconvenience.

8. Teachers generally possessed good qualities.

9. Forty per cent of the parents felt there were some things the children should be learning that they were not being taught.

10. A majority of the parents felt the school was doing an adequate job in preparing children for life's responsibilities.

11. The most pressing needs of Cumberland High School were smaller classes, more and better teaching materials, and driver education.
12. Sixty-nine per cent of the parents felt the school grounds were kept attractive and safe.
13. The facilities of the school were used by the community more for recreation than any other purpose.
14. Prices charged for school lunches were reasonable.
15. Positive and negative responses as to the adequacy of the food selection was about equal.
16. An equal number of students liked and disliked eating in the school lunchroom.

II. CONCLUSIONS

1. The parents of Cumberland High School students generally had positive attitudes about teachers and exhibited a willingness to support teachers.
2. Parents generally did not have anxieties or fears about talking to teachers in school, but had reservations about talking to teachers outside the school.
3. The extent to which the school offered its facilities to the community was limited.
4. Parents were generally satisfied with the school.
5. Teachers did not generally assume responsibilities for improving teacher-parent communications.

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APPENDIX

A SURVEY OF PARENTS OF CUMBERLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Please answer the following questions by placing a check mark under your response:

	VERY MUCH	SOME	LITTLE	NONE
1. Do you feel that teachers need your support	_____	_____	_____	_____
(a) as they attempt to teach your child?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(b) to encourage your child to complete homework?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(c) to encourage regular school attendance?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(d) to help your child feel that school is necessary and important?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(e) to teach acceptable patterns of behavior?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(f) when your child needs to be disciplined?	_____	_____	_____	_____

	VERY MUCH AT EASE	AT EASE	UNEASY	VERY UNEASY
2. Would you feel at ease talking to your child's teachers				
(a) about grades?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(b) about discipline?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(c) about problems and successes?	_____	_____	_____	_____
(d) about home life?	_____	_____	_____	_____

VERY COM- TABLE	COM- TABLE	UN- COM- TABLE	VERY UNCOM- FORTABLE
-----------------------	---------------	----------------------	----------------------------

3. Where would you feel most comfortable talking to your child's teacher?

(a) formally in the principal's office

(b) formally in the teacher's classroom during free period

(c) informally at school (in the halls, cafeteria, etc.)

(d) informally in the community (at the grocery, on the street, etc.)

(e) at P. T. A. meetings

(f) at ball games

(g) at concerts, plays, etc.

(h) in presence of student

4. Do teachers communicate regularly with parents other than by report cards?

OFTEN

SELDOM

NEVER

(a) by home visits

(b) by phone calls

(c) by written correspondence

5. Do teachers encourage you to visit the school and discuss your child's progress?

YES

NO

If YES, how many times have you visited the school?

6. Which, if any, of the following factors prevent you from visiting the school?

(a) lack of transportation

(b) younger children at home

(c) inconvenience

(d) feeling that school visits are unnecessary

(e) child's feeling of embarrassment

7. Describe your child's teachers as to the following qualities. Please react to your child's teachers as a group.
- | | VERY MUCH | SOME | LITTLE | NONE |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| (a) have ability to teach | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (b) have skill in discipline | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (c) have good personalities | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (d) like children | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (e) participate in community life | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (f) have good moral character | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (g) indicate a dedication to teaching | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
8. Are there things your child should be learning that are not being taught?
- | | MANY | SOME | FEW | NONE |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
9. Do you feel that the school is doing a good job in preparing your child for his responsibility in life?
- | | VERY GOOD | GOOD | FAIR | POOR |
|--|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
10. What are the most pressing needs of Cumberland High School? Please check your indicated response.
- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) driver education | _____ |
| (b) guidance | _____ |
| social | _____ |
| vocational | _____ |
| disciplinary | _____ |
| personal | _____ |
| (c) special education | _____ |
| for gifted | _____ |
| for mentally retarded | _____ |
| for physically handicapped | _____ |
| (d) remedial classes for slow learners | _____ |

- (e) new teaching programs
 team teaching
 independent study
 flexible scheduling

(f) more and better teaching materials

(g) better teachers

(h) adding teacher aides

(i) smaller classes

(j) vocational education

 metal shop

 carpentry

 plumbing

 printing

 cosmetology

 electronics

 business

 others (please list)

- | | ALWAYS | ONLY DURING
SCHOOL YEAR | SELDOM | NEVER |
|--|--------|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| 11. Are the school grounds kept attractive and safe? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Are school's facilities available for community use? | ALWAYS | GENERALLY | SELDOM | NEVER |
| (a) for recreation | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (b) for community meetings | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (c) for civic groups | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (d) for church groups | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Are rooms clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated, and properly heated? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

- | | ALWAYS | GENERALLY | SELDOM | NEVER |
|---|--------|-----------|--------|-------|
| 14. Are rooms well-equipped to help children learn? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 15. Is the school lunch program satisfactory? | | | | |
| (a) Do children like to eat there? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (b) Are prices reasonable? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| (c) Is food selection adequate? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS WILL BE APPRECIATED
