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Wilmette Junior High School Study
Preliminary Report
Executive Summary

In December, 1986, the Wilmette Board of Education (District 39) contracted with Howard Johnston, University of Cincinnati, to conduct a three year study of the Wilmette Junior High School. This study was to be conducted in conjunction with the National Association of Secondary School Principals' Council on Middle Level Education, of which Dr. Johnston is a member. The contract is subject to annual review, and provides for the presentation of an annual report to the Board of Education by the principal investigator or his designee.

Purpose:

This preliminary report presents an overview of project activities thus far, an agenda for future activity, preliminary conclusions in areas identified for study, and preliminary recommendations for further study.

Study Activities:

At the time that the proposal for the study was presented to the Board of Education (12/15/86), Dr. Johnston and a colleague, Dr. Joel Milgram, University of Cincinnati, conducted a two-day site visit at the school. During this visit, they interviewed administrators, students and a sample of teachers. They also conducted informal observations of the facilities, the program and the instruction being delivered. At an after-school meeting with faculty, the investigators explained the nature of the study and sought suggestions for both the content and methods to be used.

On December 16, the investigators spent another day in the school, conducting additional interviews and observations in order to identify the parameters of the study and to begin to construct data collection instruments (surveys, observation forms, etc.) suitable to the setting.

A second visit by Dr. Milgram took place on February 19, 1987. During that visit, Dr. Milgram observed classes, interviewed 30 students, 9 teachers, and the school principal. The interviews focussed upon the psychological, social and emotional climate of the school, and the academic demands and expectations placed upon students.

A third visit to the school occurred on April 9 and 10, 1987, when the principal investigator and two associates (P. Leedom and S. Doyen) conducted shadow studies of 6, 7, and 8th grade students, observed classes to identify instructional practices, interviewed students and community people (non-parents and parents) and examined school facilities. In addition, one of

the associates conducted a survey and analysis of the library facilities, their availability, and their use in the support of instruction.

A final visit to the school occurred on May 28 and 29, 1987, when the principal investigator spent two days interviewing 24 teachers, 14 parents, and 21 students (informal). Informal interviews were also conducted with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Building Principal.

Preliminary Findings

Achievement: Inspection of achievement data indicates that WJHS students set enviable standards of achievement as measured by standardized tests (ITBS) and regional tests (New Trier Placement Tests). In virtually every case, individual student scores are at or well above both national and regional averages, and aggregate student performance on nationally normed tests places the district in the very highest achievement percentiles.

Future study will be designed to "track" the performance of WJHS students as they enter New Trier High School, and to identify areas of major strength and potential need in the achievement trends of the JHS student population.

Instruction: Classroom instruction in WJHS, while varying from teacher to teacher, is generally of high quality. On four dimensions of instruction (Individualization, Cognitive Demand, Freedom, and Time on Task), the instructional norms for the school are well within acceptable ranges.

Individualization is fairly low, with students generally working on the same materials and assignments, with some flexibility given to time requirements.

Cognitive demand is moderate, with the emphasis being upon application and analysis of information. This is a strong feature of the instruction at WJHS, as little rote memorization or simple recall activity (or unmonitored seatwork) was in evidence.

Freedom is moderate to low. Most classroom decisions are made by the teacher, especially those that relate to instruction and curriculum. Students, however, are permitted considerable latitude in procedural matters (such as getting materials, working in groups, etc.). The classrooms appear fairly relaxed; however, decision-making is clearly in the hands of the teacher.

On-task activity is very high. Little time is wasted in class and conscious effort is made to devote the entire period to instruction. In fact, a separate analysis indicated that as much as 86% of available time was actually spent on direct instruction, indirect instruction, or managing instruction. Little time (less than 12%) was spent on discipline or classroom management or completely off-task. These findings are much above national norms.

Future study will focus on specific instructional procedures outside of the classroom; notably homework policies and practices, grading practices, and parent roles in instruction and tutoring. Some additional attention will be given to the differentiation of instruction provided in various subject areas.

(See attached material on Dimensions of Instruction)

Social-Emotional Climate (Student):

Students were, for the most part, self-assured, polite and diligently involved in their classes. The 6th graders were, in particular, extremely enthusiastic and optimistic about their future at WJHS. They were excited about the increased opportunities, both academic and extracurricular, available to them. Without exception, every child indicated that he or she liked "all," "most," or "all but one", of his or her teachers. Generally, students did not dislike teachers because of the amount of work the teachers gave. Students reported getting mixed messages about their future in high school and college. Some reported that teachers indicated specific concerns about the importance of their preparations in junior high school, others told them to relax a bit and enjoy their junior high years. (The students also reported getting the same mixed messages from parents.)

Popularity and acceptance by peers was one of the primary concerns, which is no different from any junior high, but at WJHS, where economic status is relatively homogenous, the peer group seemed to afford considerable status to grades and academic standing. On the surface, this looks desirable -- the peer group reinforces community norms. On the other hand, it puts the lower performing student not only at an academic disadvantage, but a social disadvantage also. Furthermore, the pressure to achieve is increased on all students, because the pressure comes not only from home and school, but from the peer group as well. Such pressure has the potential for being dangerous to adolescent adjustment.

Generally, students felt that they were treated kindly and well by the adults in the building, and that they had access to competent adult advice whenever they needed it. Most students could name at least one person to whom they could go if they wanted to discuss a problem.

Future study will focus upon examining the effects of academic pressures on students and the extent to which a three year school organization can facilitate the earning of status by students in the school.

Organization:

Organization into grade level teams facilitates the discussion of individual students and their learning, and allows for group conferences with parents. The extent of curricular integration which occurs across subjects varies widely from team to team. In fact, wide variances occur in the ways teams actually organize themselves and conduct their affairs. Some meet regularly, some do not. Some plan for team-wide activities, others do not. Preliminary observations indicate that it is difficult to form any generalizations about teams at this point.

There is some perception that departmental communication is not enhanced by teaming. Others indicate that teaming keeps them isolated from other teachers at different grade levels, thereby interfering with vertical curriculum integration. However, few individuals believed that there was actually less vertical integration taking place now. There seemed to be a belief that vertical integration was never a particularly strong part of the curriculum.

Finally, some non-team teachers (special education, elective areas, etc.) felt isolated from the teams, and believed that they were not as effective as they might be in contributing to the total academic development of students they serve.

Future study will focus on the ways in which teams conduct their affairs and the relative effectiveness of these approaches. Also, attention will be given to the way in which non-team teachers are integrated into the operations of the core academic team.

Curriculum:

No detailed assessment of the curriculum was planned during this first year of the study. However, issues raised include the nature of foreign language programming at the 6th grade level and the ways in which the foreign language program fits, generally, with the high school programs the students enter; the extent to which curricula is modified to fit the needs of more or less able students, particularly those in special education; the appropriateness of some topics and types of study for all students at a given grade level; the balance in demands and expectations across subject areas; and the role of electives in the the students' junior high experience.

Future study will include visits by curriculum specialists in each of the areas, during which course content, curriculum sequences, and learning materials will be evaluated. A panel of these specialists will also offer observations about the integration

of curricula across subject areas and grade levels. In addition, attention will be given to differentiation and individualization of curriculum.

Organizational Climate:

This is the most complex area encountered in this first year of study, due to the varying perceptions of the events which preceded the reorganization of the junior high school. However, it is important to note that this divergence is typical following an organizational change. Despite the fact that turmoil is usually present, it is virtually impossible to predict, exactly, what form it will take. Thus, the focus of future study should be upon appropriate institutional responses to organizational climate problems.

First, the faculty seems to be quite cohesive on most major academic and instructional principles. They have cooperated with one another, and have worked to minimize the effects of perceived space problems on the program and on instruction.

Second, it is difficult to disaggregate the effects of dissatisfaction over space from other issues, such as the effects of recent reorganization (independent of space), the district's sense of competitiveness with neighboring districts, and the quality of communication that occurs in the district.

Complicating all of this is the normal high level of parental involvement found in communities like Wilmette, and the (not unhealthy) tensions thus created which normally act as a series of checks and balances to assure quality education. This desirable outcome requires that communication between the community and the school district remain at a very high level. As changes have occurred in the district, sometimes these communications patterns have been disrupted, undermining the normal trust levels necessary among all stakeholders.

Finally, the precise nature of these communication patterns, and the primary actors in them, are often difficult to ascertain. There is a good deal of attribution occurring (not unusual in the first year of transition) which makes the effective resolution of problems quite difficult. Until there is a concerted effort to focus energy on problem resolution, the organizational climate and communications issues are likely to remain quite clouded.

Future study will focus on an indepth analysis of communications in the district, with particular attention given to the organizational impediments and facilitators of productive communication.

School-Community Relations:

Aside from the issues noted above, there are specific concerns over the amount and nature of parental involvement in the schools. Some parents are uneasy about how much involvement

in their child's education is permitted before it is viewed as meddlesome. Some teachers are concerned about the amount of direct parental involvement in academic work.

Another issue is the unequal and uneven quality of teacher-parent communications. This covers not only informal communications of student progress, but formal parent-teacher conferences as well. Both parents and teachers often felt that the conferences were "blame" sessions, rather than collegial attempts to resolve specific problems. Expectations and procedures for parent conferences are unclear.

Future study will address the specific nature of school-community relations, particularly the ways in which the school communicates with the community and the manner in which parent conferences can be improved.

Facilities:

There is wide agreement that the junior high school is overcrowded. Virtually every teacher, parent and student indicated that they felt the effects of crowding. Specific consequences, other than the general congestion during class changes, include the lack of teacher (and consultant) workspace, the inability to leave materials "set up" for subsequent classes because of the need to share rooms, and the difficulties presented by having no personal space in which to meet students or have small group meetings. At present, only the cafeteria is available for non-instructional purposes during the periods when no lunch is scheduled.

At the same time, the facilities at WJHS are generally more adequate than those of most junior high schools. While Physical Education would benefit from another teaching station (and relieve some pressure on the classroom facilities), and some other specialized facilities are heavily taxed, the available space is at or slightly above the norm for junior high schools.

This is not to say that a problem does not exist. The space conditions at WJHS are below traditional district norms, the ones that people use to assess new situations. Because of this condition, it is reasonable to state that a space problem exists because people believe it exists. If they believe it exists, it will affect their attitudes and behavior. Teachers will find it more difficult to meet with students for special help; it will be more difficult to use media equipment that cannot be easily transported; PE classes will be too large for individualized instruction. In short, it is the perception of a problem that will affect performance, not necessarily any objective information on whether a problem exists or not.

Finally, it is unclear whether there is a space problem per se or if limited space interacts with the existing schedule to make the "space" problem seem worse. Careful study of the schedule needs to occur immediately to determine if any short-term space solutions can be arranged.

Future study will examine the extent to which the perceived space problem actually affects the school's program. Attention will also be given to the ways in which the school's schedule may interact with the space problem to make both problems larger than necessary (or tolerable).

General Conclusion

Wilmette Junior High is a good school. On the most important measures... achievement, student satisfaction and instructional quality...it scores high. The observations made in this report (and the one which will follow) are directed toward "fine tuning" an already excellent school. In fact, virtually every conversation with a teacher or parent was preceded with the comment, "I think this is an excellent school; my only concern is..."

Perhaps the ultimate measure of a school's success is whether a visitor would want to put his or her own children in it. Each of the site visitors reached the same conclusion in that respect: we would all be delighted to have our children attend Wilmette Junior High School.

ADDENDUM TO EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This addendum is based on information which was received in the form of survey results after the June 1, 1987 presentation of the executive summary to the Board of Education. Nothing in the results of the survey substantively changes the original report. However, in several areas, more specific information has become available.

Achievement.

The early conclusions pointed out the strong performance of Wilmette students when viewed against national norms. Recent data indicates that this performance is even more admirable when viewed against the norms established for incoming New Trier students. In other words, WJHS students perform very well even when compared with other North Shore communities that send their children to New Trier.

Instruction.

While the quality of instruction remains high, students feel they would benefit from more variety. The standard practice of lecture-seatwork-test, when repeated as the normal routine in several classes, can become very tedious for students. They report that even though they like their subjects (the content they study), they tend to find school work boring.

School-Community Relations.

Despite the issues raised in the executive summary, the parent survey suggests that parents find the school responsive to them and their concerns. They do not believe that teachers avoid contact with them, and they believe they can influence not only their child's experience in the school, but more generalized school practices as well.~R

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations, based on limited data collection over three months, should be viewed as very tentative and preliminary. They supplement the recommendations for future study made in the executive summary.

1. Take immediate steps to adjust the schedule and provide a short-term solution to the space problem perceived by people in the school. This will permit the school (and this study) to focus on other issues which are now clouded by the space limitations.
2. Examine current and projected demographics for the junior high school to determine if a more permanent solution to the space problem is needed. (Or a more enduring temporary solution, such as portable classrooms for special function rooms: teacher's lounge, work room, etc.)
3. Begin staff development efforts to increase the amount of individualization of instruction within group settings. Create several "building experts" who can train and assist colleagues in techniques for individualization that do not place unreasonable burdens on the teaching staff. The purpose of this is not to create isolated curricula for each child, but to adjust instruction for students who do not respond to traditional methods.
4. Encourage more active learning experiences that are directed toward teaching higher order thinking skills. Try to increase the range of cognitive demands placed on students, including synthesis and evaluation tasks.
5. Agree upon several basic practices for teams so that some form of minimal team cooperation is assured. Such things as the frequency of meetings, development of agendas to assure horizontal integration of curriculum, and planned team-building activities might form the basis for such initial agreements on procedure.
6. Attempt to integrate special area teachers into the team structure. A special area team might be created, with each member also serving as a representative to a core academic team. This way, at least minimal representation of the special teachers' interests will be assured, and special area teachers can better support the instruction being provided in the core areas. (Special area teachers might attend team meetings on a regular but relatively infrequent basis, such as once every week or two.)
7. Give special attention to the foreign language program and the way in which it is integrated with the programs WJHS

feeds. Encourage foreign language teachers to spend a day at least once each year at the receiving schools so they can keep track of the kinds of programs their students will enter. In fact, a teacher exchange program with New Trier might benefit both the sending and the receiving schools in the case of foreign language, where sequence is of vital importance.

8. Establish basic expectations for students within each team or department (including homework, grading standards, and workload). Existing practices are quite variable, and strike both the students and some parents as inherently unfair.
9. Conduct staff-development on effective parent-teacher conferences and other forms of communication with the home. The amount and quality of such experiences vary widely in the school, and parents find the disparities disturbing. Further, teachers sometimes find themselves engaged in very unproductive and inefficient encounters with parents because the original goals of the session are not clear and the respective roles of the teacher and parent in the intervention being discussed for the child are not well defined.

ACHIEVEMENT

Student achievement, as measured by standardized tests, is enviable by almost any standard. But even by the most rigorous standards, those which compare Wilmette students with others from the North Shore upon entrance into New Trier High School, these students perform consistently well.

The table below shows achievement data from the Iowa Silent Reading Test (ISRT), the School and College Achievement Test (SCAT) and the New Trier Math Placement Test (NTMath). These data are given for three classes, the New Trier classes of 1989, 1990 and 1991. (These classes left the 8th grade at WJHS in Spring 1985, 1986 and 1987, respectively). All scores are reported in stanines. SCAT and NTMATH scores are based on the norms established for students entering New Trier, ISRT scores are based on national norms for affluent districts.

WJHS GRAD	NT GRAD	ISRT		SCATVRB		SCATQNT		NTMATH	
		Bo	Gl	Bo	Gl	Bo	Gl	Bo	Gl
1985	1989	4.92	5.00	5.18	5.19	5.49	5.00	5.35	5.27
1986	1990	4.90	5.21	5.00	5.10	5.06	4.62	5.16	5.21
1987	1991	5.00	5.15	4.97	5.27	5.08	5.03	4.94	5.15

The ISRT score is the Total score, a combined Vocabulary and Comprehension Measure. SCAT scores are reported by subtest, the verbal portion (SCATVRB) and the quantitative section (SCATQNT). Scores are reported separately for boys and girls. Special education students are not included in these figures, and the NTMATH scores for all students (including those without algebra in WJHS) are used.

In every case, WJHS students are at or above the mean for other students entering New Trier or for students from communities similar to Wilmette. In only one case does a group mean fall far enough below the school mean to be considered significant (Girls SCATQNT scores, 1986/1990). In several cases, the group means are substantially higher than the average for the total population (Girls ISRT for 1990 and 1991; Boys SCATVRB for 1989; Girls SCATVRB for all years; Boys SCATQNT for 1989; Boys NTMATH for 1989 and 1990; and Girls NTMATH for all years). All other yearly variations are well within normal, expected ranges for this age group.

Further analysis will be forthcoming as scores on additional classes become available, but one trend is worthy of some note. Inspection of variance estimates suggests that the students are more homogenous on verbal measures than they are on

quantitative measures. In other words, they are more alike in their ability to read, write and speak than in their ability to understand and perform mathematical operations. This reflects the highly verbal homes from which the children come, the early and successful emphasis upon reading, speaking and writing in the elementary grades, and the emphasis placed upon verbal skills (especially reading and writing) throughout the junior high curriculum. Because of the specialized nature of mathematics, it is taught as a relatively isolated subject (although there is some attention given to it in science); thus, it doesn't have the same high profile in the school that verbal skill does. The result is that mathematics achievement, while very strong, is more variable than the other achievement measures.

It is also important to note that the girls from WJHS defy the national trend toward achievement decline in mathematics at the junior high level. The performance of girls in mathematics remains very strong on both measures (SCATQNT and NTMATH).

The school has created an strong record of achievement even when measured against the most demanding norms available -- other communities like Wilmette. The reasons for this are found in the strong emphasis upon academic subjects in the curriculum, the strong support for achievement found in the home, and the business-like atmosphere maintained by teachers and administrators in the school. It does what schools are supposed to do: make students smarter.

STAFF AND PARENT ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL

In order to determine staff and parent attitudes toward the school, two parallel instruments were created. This permitted both the description of attitudes for each group, and the comparison of attitudes across groups.

Each instrument was comprised of several scales: Satisfaction with the School, Home-School Relations, Activity Programs, Academic Program, Teaching, School Climate, and Support Services. The items comprising each factor are listed below each survey.

SATISFACTION.

Tch Srvy Par Srvy

In general, my experience with
this school has been a good one.

1

1

I have poor communication with the teachers
at this school.

10

I have poor communication with the staff at
this school.

9

HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS.

The teachers and principal of this school are
open to suggestions from parents.

11

12

Most teachers don't want to be bothered by
parents coming to see them.

19

20

I can do little to improve the schools.

18

If I disagree with the prin. there is little
I can do.

30

ACTIVITY PROGRAM.

The extracurric program in this school is
sufficient...

2

2

There should be more opportunity to participate
in organized, competit sports...

3

Sports and games take up too much time in school.

20

21

Students often speak of participation in after-
school activities.

23

I am satisfied with the extracurric activities
offered at this school.

24

ACADEMIC PROGRAM.	Tchr	Far
This school offers a broad range of educational opportunities.	3	4
Most instr programs in this school offer useful knowledge or develop useful skills.	4	5
This school does an adequate job of preparing students for the next grade level or school.	5	6
This school does excellent job of helping students to discover and develop creative abilities	6	7
Students work with current materials and modern equipment in this school.	12	
The curriculum is doing an adequate job of meeting the needs of students.	14	15
Students have access to variety of resource materials.	15	
Students are given too much homework.	16	
What we/they teach students is out of date.	18	19
Not enough time is spent on the basic skills.	22	23
TEACHERS AND TEACHING		
Teachers are clear about expectations	7	8
Best way to improve schools is to train teach better.		25
Teachers who are friendly cannot control students.		26
CLIMATE		
This school puts too much pressure on students.	8	9
Grading is of value because of the competition it creates among students.	13	14
Students are excited about and discuss school activities in school.	17	
Teachers have too little freedom on matters such as curric, textbooks, discipline.		13

SUPPORT SERVICES.	Tchr	Par
Students with emotional or behavioral problems get little help at this school.	10	11
Students can get special help when they need it.	21	

DATA SUMMARY

Listed below are the mean responses for each group on each factor. Factor scores were created by aggregating responses to each item associated with each factor, and computing a mean score for each factor. Group means are based on the responses to each item comprising the factor for that group; comparisons are based only on those items which appeared in parallel form on both surveys. Lower scores indicate more agreement with the statements on the instruments, and generally more favorable attitudes.

Factor	Parents	Teachers	Combined
n equals	83	55	138
Satisfaction	2.28	2.42	2.34
Home-School Relat	2.76 *	2.52	2.66
Activity Program	2.58	2.66	2.61
Program	2.23	2.14	2.19
Teachers/Teaching	2.57 *	1.73	2.32
School Climate	2.92 *	2.74	2.81
Support Services	3.03 *	2.60	2.84

* indicates significant difference between responses of parent group and teacher group ($\alpha = .05$).

DISCUSSION

Both teachers and parents are generally satisfied with the school, although both indicate that the communication between home and school (parent item 10) and among the staff (teacher item 9) could be improved. Aside from that, both parents and

1.52, respectively) with the school. There is no statistically significant difference between the levels of satisfaction reported by parents and that reported by teachers.

Parents are also reasonably satisfied with their ability to influence the school program. They tend to agree with the statement that "teachers and the principal are open to suggestions" from parents (mean of 2.32) and disagree with the statement that "I can do little to improve the school (2.86)," or "Most teachers don't want to be bothered by parents coming to see them (2.92)." Teachers, however, differ from these responses somewhat, but only to agree more strongly with the statement about the school's openness to parent suggestions. Their score on teacher receptivity to parent visits (2.93) is almost identical to the parent score.

Both teachers and parents are satisfied with the activity program, feeling that it provides sufficient variety, gives adequate opportunities for participation, and exists in appropriate perspective when viewed against the academic program.

The academic program is an item of considerable satisfaction for both parents and teachers. They believe that the curriculum meets the needs of children, that students are prepared for the next levels of schooling, that basic skills receive adequate attention, that creative abilities are addressed and developed, and that the range of curriculum offerings is appropriately diverse for this school population and this community. Most important, both groups feel that the information and skills covered in the program are useful.

There is a difference between teachers and parents in their assessments of the clarity with which teachers establish expectations for assignments and exams. Both agree that "teachers are clear about what they expect in assignments and tests," but parents are not quite as strong in that assessment (2.25) as are teachers (1.73). It is, however, a difference in degree, not in kind.

Both teachers and parents agree that grades should not be used to create competition, and that students are not placed under too much pressure at WJHS. Parents also feel that teachers have enough freedom to make decisions about curriculum and discipline. Teachers find that children are often enthusiastic about and discuss school activities informally in school. In general, the climate of the school is perceived as healthy and productive.

Parents and teachers do differ on their assessment of the amount of special help available to students and on the delivery of services to special education students, but, once again, it is a difference in magnitude, not direction. Both disagree strongly with the statement "students who have emotional or behavioral problems or special learning problems get very little help at this school." Teachers feel that students "are able to get special help when they need it."

One important observation about these data is necessary. While the means indicate considerable agreement between teachers and parents on most of the school issues included on the

instrument, examination of the variance (standard deviation) for each item suggests that these opinions are relatively homogenous within each group. In most cases, the standard deviation is equal to less than one Likert scale value, and it's usually much less than that. In other words, not only are people pretty satisfied with conditions in the school, the satisfaction is fairly wide-spread among most of the respondents. Some of this outcome may be attributed to a response bias (i. e., people who like the school are more likely to return surveys), but these findings confirm the interview results as well. Satisfaction is pretty high. There are specific problems that need attention, but both the parents and the teachers think the school is essentially sound. In its most important dimension, the academic program, both parents and teachers are pleased with the school. That is the most essential indicator of the institution's overall health.

STAFF ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL

18

School WTHSDate June, 1987Grades in which most classes are taught: (6)(7)(8) (please circle) (21)(22)(23)(24)
Your Sex ☐ M ☐ F
28% 66%

We are interested in getting staff opinions about schools in which they work. The information obtained will be used to help us make decisions which will evaluate and compare the learning climate as we move to middle schools. As you will notice, your name is not to be written on this form, so please be completely frank with your answers. For each statement, circle the letter at the left which corresponds with your feelings. Thank you very much for your help.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	SA	A	D	SD	
(1.52)	<u>1</u>				1. In general, my experience with this school has been a good one.
(2.18)		<u>2</u>			2. The extracurricular program at this school has sufficient variety, scope, and quality.
(1.57)					3. This school offers a broad range and variety of educational opportunities.
(1.53)					4. Most instructional programs at this school offer useful knowledge or develop useful skills.
(1.55)					5. I feel that this school does an adequate job in preparing students for the advanced work at the next grade or school.
(1.68)					6. This school does an excellent job in helping students discover and develop their creative abilities.
(1.73)					7. Teachers at this school are clear about what they expect in assignments and tests.
(3.00)					8. I believe that this school puts too much pressure on the students.
(3.33)					9. I have poor communication with the staff at this school.
(3.51)					10. I feel that students who have emotional or behavioral problems or special learning problems get very little help at this school.
(2.09)					11. The teachers and principal at this school are open to suggestions put forth by the parents.
(1.80)					12. Students work with current materials and modern equipment in school.
(2.92)					13. Grading is of value because of the competition which it creates among students.
(1.84)					14. I feel that the curriculum at this school is doing an adequate job of meeting the needs of the students.
(1.70)					15. Students have access to a variety of resource materials in school.
(3.04)					16. Students are given too much homework.
(2.25)					17. Students are excited about and discuss school activities in school.
(3.41)					18. What we teach students is out-of-date.
(2.93)					19. Most teachers do not want to be bothered by parents coming in to see them.
(3.35)					20. Sports and games take up too much time in the schools.

Strongly
Agree
SA

Agree
A

Disagree
D

Strongly
Disagree
SD

19

- (1.72) SA A D SD 21. Students can get special help when they need it.
- (3.16) SA A D SD 22. Not enough time is spent learning the basic academic skills.
- (2.48) SA A D SD 23. Students often speak of participation in after-school activities.
- (2.5) SA A D SD 24. I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities for students offered at this school.

PARENT ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL

20

School WJHS Date JUNE, 1987
 Student's Grade $\frac{6}{34}$ $\frac{7}{24}$ $\frac{8}{29}$ Student's Sex $\frac{M}{52\%}$ $\frac{F}{45\%}$

We are interested in getting parents' opinions about schools which their children attend. The information obtained will be used to help us make decisions which will improve the learning climate of your child's school. As you will notice, your name is not to be written on this form, so please be completely frank with your answers. The information asked for at the top of this form will help us determine if there are any differences of opinion between parents who have either boys or girls in the school or who have children at different grade levels. If you have more than one child at any one school, fill out only one form. If you have children at more than one school, please fill out one form for each school. For each statement, circle the letter at the left which corresponds with your feelings. Thank you very much for your help.

(1)
STRONGLY
AGREE
A

(2)
AGREE
B

(3)
DISAGREE
C

(4)
STRONGLY
DISAGREE
D

- (1.73) A B C D 1. In general, my experience with this school has been a good one.
- (2.26) A B C D 2. The extracurricular program at this school has sufficient variety, scope, and quality.
- (2.25) A B C D 3. I feel that there should be more opportunity to participate in organized, competitive sports at this school.
- (1.65) A B C D 4. This school offers a broad range and variety of educational opportunities.
- (1.81) A B C D 5. Most instructional programs at this school offer really useful knowledge or develop useful skills.
- (1.91) A B C D 6. I feel that this school does an adequate job in preparing students for upper level high school work.
- (2.19) A B C D 7. This school does an excellent job in helping students discover and develop their creative abilities.
- (2.25) A B C D 8. Teachers at this school are clear about what they expect in assignments and tests.
- (2.97) A B C D 9. I believe that this school puts too much pressure on the students.
- (2.84) A B C D 10. I have poor communication with the teachers at this school.
- (3.03) A B C D 11. I feel that students who have emotional or behavioral problems or special learning problems get very little help at this school.

STRONGLY
AGREE
A

AGREE
B

DISAGREE
C

STRONGLY
DISAGREE
D

- (2.32) A B C D 12. The teachers and principal at this school are open to suggestions put forth by the parents.
- (2.91) A B C D 13. Teachers at this school have too little freedom in such matters as textbook selection, curriculum, and discipline.
- (2.82) A B C D 14. Grading is of value because of the competition which it creates among students.
- (2.06) A B C D 15. I feel that the curriculum at this school is doing an adequate job of meeting the needs of my child (or children).
- (1.56) A B C D 16. The best way that poor people can get ahead in life is to get a good education.
- (2.40) A B C D 17. Most teachers probably like quiet children better than active ones.
- (2.86) A B C D 18. I can do very little to improve the schools.
- (3.30) A B C D 19. What they teach students is out-of-date.
- (2.92) A B C D 20. Most teachers do not want to be bothered by parents coming in to see them.
- (3.22) A B C D 21. Sports and games take up too much time in the schools.
- (3.01) A B C D 22. Students "cut up" so much that teachers can't teach.
- (2.72) A B C D 23. Not enough time is spent learning the basic academic skills.
- (2.14) A B C D 24. The law should be changed so that boys and girls would have to stay in school until they complete high school.
- (2.11) A B C D 25. The best way to improve the schools is to train teachers better.
- (3.32) A B C D 26. Teachers who are very friendly are not able to control the children.
- (3.85) A B C D 27. When children do not work hard in school, the parents are to blame.
- (1.91) A B C D 28. Most kids who can do the work are able to get to college if they really want to.
- (3.04) A B C D 29. Most children have to be made to learn.
- (2.22) A B C D 30. If I disagree with the school principal, there is very little that I can do.

Wilmette Junior High School Library Report

The following report is divided into four major sections: Organization, Instructional Program, Collection Development and Maintenance, and Utilization. Each major area is subdivided into Description, Impressions, and Suggestions for Consideration.

I. Organization

A. Physical Organization of Facilities

1. Description

The Resources Center is essentially three areas: the first room off the main entrance contains the students' circulating book collection, the charge desk and staff office. A center area contains student seating, one bookcase (3 shelves) of professional materials for teachers, vertical file cabinets, and curriculum materials on display for adoption.

A third area houses the AV software collection: 3 high shelving units with kits and numerous shelves along the end wall with 8mm film loops. In a corner of this third area is the reference collection, consisting mostly of current sets of encyclopedias (8 sets, copyright dates from 81 to 86). This third room also contains seating at several tables.

Windows that open onto a courtyard make up one wall of the Resource Center. In the middle room are 2 conference rooms, which have been turned into office space for the math teachers. Pieces of equipment lean against carrels and walls.

2. Impressions

The library is very cluttered-looking. Pat expressed this as one of her biggest frustrations this year. Lack of space and the removal of the conference rooms from the library's use have left no room for storage of equipment or software.

The potential open feeling that could exist from the windows and courtyard is cut off by the high shelving. The AV shelving in the 3rd room blocks the entire bank of windows. The shelving in the first room is so high and the lighting so poor that it is hard to read some of the book titles on the spines. There is little seating in this room, and few displays of books, although some student work is displayed on walls.

3. Suggestions for consideration

The librarian expressed frustration over the difficulties of supervising such a spread-out place. She said that theft is becoming more of a problem due to lack of supervision and the many entrances. Re-arrangement of the current facilities according to function may help, specifically:

1. lower the center, free-standing shelving in the first room. If this eliminates needed book space, make this a "reading room" with only the fiction collection and student seating, both tables and couches that are spread throughout the center.
2. make the center room the primary "research room" for students. Move the non-fiction collection, and the reference collection here. (The reference collection currently is as far away from the card catalog as it can get. By being around the corner, it is totally out-of-view of the staff.)
3. Move the card catalog to a central position between these two rooms. Students will then have all their non-fiction book and reference collection items in one spot. The current periodical shelves are between the 2nd and 3rd rooms, and could remain there.
4. Should the Discovery Center need more access to the reference books, split the encyclopedia sets and leave half where they are.
5. Lower the AV shelving in the 3rd area to expose both the windows and the entrance onto the hallway, which is now out of view of the staff. Since space is so tight, weed the collection and move remaining items to lower shelves and into the corner area where the reference collection is now, or consider moveable shelving.
6. Return the conference rooms to the library for student and faculty small-group work.
7. Consider eliminating the professional collection. It is extremely small, and titles are outdated. A central professional library at central office may combine resources more efficiently. Curriculum guides should remain in the library, with the elementary ones added, as well as those from the high schools which students at Wilmette will attend.

B. Personnel Organization

1. Description

One professional and 1 1/2 paraprofessionals staff the main library (exclusive of the Discovery Center). A few

volunteers provide help with shelving and typing. Both paraprofessionals are certified teachers. Pat expressed frustration over inadequate staffing to provide the programs needed and wanted by the staff and students.

The staff is centered near the entrance of the first main library area, where a windowed workroom provides some visibility onto the floor. The circulation desk is outside the workroom and the library's computer sits behind the circulation desk.

2. Impressions

From Pat's descriptions of duties, the paraprofessionals are not being used as effectively as they could be. With additional supervision and individual student help needed, the skills of these trained teachers should be utilized. One aide spends much of her time typing up tables of content of magazines that are not indexed in Abridged Readers Guide, when perhaps she could work more with the kids and free Pat for more professional duties.

3. Suggestions to consider

1. Establish a check-out table at a central place, perhaps near the card catalog. Teach students to check out their own books, freeing a library staff member from having to remain at the desk.

2. Prioritize all the duties now performed by the support staff. Some may be unnecessary or could be streamlined. For instance, if some type of access to un-indexed magazines is considered crucial, consider: Buying the complete Unabridged Readers Guide, checking with each individual publisher to see if an index is compiled for that title, xeroxing the contents if necessary.

II. Instructional program

A. Description

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The main 3-year instructional emphasis is on the use of the Abridged Readers Guide. No formal library instruction exists per se. Learning Center objectives are written into the Language Arts curriculum for elementary and junior high. Pat said she provides instruction in special materials as needed by students as they are working on projects. Often reading teachers may assign "treasure hunt" exercises which involve using the library.

At the end of the 8th grade, students have a combined social studies-language arts term paper. Other mini-papers or projects are introduced at 6th and 7th grades. At the request of faculty, Pat may introduce books on a given topic for a book report. She said she does little book-talking to introduce new books, and no reading to the special education classes (5). This year, the special ed classes have had a regular library time and a job-interview project in the library.

B. Impressions

The lack of time to work with students was one of Pat's biggest expressed frustrations. She feels the need to do more instructionally, but because of lack of time, and the administrative activities that have to be done daily, instruction often is neglected.

She said she wished she had time to run special seminars with the students on various topics.

C. Suggestions for consideration

1. as suggested above, allowing the aides to assume more supervisory and one-on-one help would free Pat for small-group instruction.
2. focusing for three years on the use of Readers' Guide is limiting for the library staff. Perhaps extending this into the use of indexes in general would allow for exploring the special reference titles: indexes to Current Biography, National Geographic, and many other special tools could be taught. A natural tie-in would be computer-indexing based on computer databases which the students could develop from their reading. As telecommunications is being considered for next year, students could be exposed to basic indexing principles before going "online."
3. scheduled book-talks that would introduce students to good reading and literature beyond the requirements of book reports could be presented weekly to classes. Pat expressed

the hope of getting to know the kids better--sharing books may be a good start.

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4. attendance at grade and/or department meetings. Pat said she hoped to attend next year to keep in touch with faculty and their assignments.

5. monthly meetings with district librarians may need to be expanded to the high school librarians. Pat said several times that she wasn't sure what was being done at New Trier in certain areas. Communication may help guide the junior high instructional program.

6. extended time in the summer would give the library staff time to catch up and plan for the next year

III. Collection development and maintenance

A. Description

The technical processing is done centrally for the district including the typing of orders, cataloging and processing of books and Av software. Equipment is repaired through the central office and a computer software collection is maintained there also.

A specific written collection development policy does not exist for WJHS. Pat order items as requested from faculty and maintains a "wish box" for both students and staff. She maintains a balance across the curriculum, spending some money in each area each year. Some years a written request for suggestions has gone out to faculty.

The district budget is \$7.00 per pupil, supplemented with federal funds and special gifts from the PTA. Pat spends federal money on the reference collection. Her budget is stretched even farther by having to buy computer software.

The collection is inventoried on a rotating basis, 1/3 each year. Weeding is done during spring inventory.

The students' circulating book collection contained both easy-to-read and difficult books. Books on women's studies, different religious and ethnic groups were up-to-date. The titles on space, a part of the science collection, were dated.

B. Impressions

The atmosphere does not seem to support pleasure reading. Although the collection is adequate, 16,000, there are few current paperbacks (a few are shelved at the opposite end of the library, completely removed from the remainder of the collection). Since inventory was being done, perhaps displays of popular fiction or award-winning titles had been re-shelved.

Circulation is very low (see attached monthly reports). In February, 1987, only 538 books were checked out to students and in March, 1987, only 592. One way of looking at this is that 200-300 students fail to check out even one book a month. Pat said that students did use the public library and had money to buy their own books.

The reference collection is weak. It relies heavily on encyclopedias, and many standard single-volume special titles were missing (Who Was When; Readers' Encyclopedia; handbooks of coin and stamp collecting, etc.). Current Biography ended in 1983 and only one volume of Something about the Author (biographies of authors for young people) was on the shelf. Back issues of almanacs were missing (Pat said they had been taken) and there was only one atlas with

current census figures, a too-small 9x12 inches. No atlas stands were around that I saw.

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C. Suggestions for consideration

1. allocate a certain part of the budget to the reference collection for the next 5 years and concentrate on areas that are of special interest to students and which may help students as they move into high school. Special reference books could then become an additional focus of the instructional program and learning to use their indexes could be integrated with the periodical indexes.

2. although the periodical collection is exceptionally good, a substantial part of the budget (\$1500) is spent on this segment of the collection. Pat expressed the concern over rising costs for all materials, so perhaps the periodical collection could be cut back, eliminating those titles that are not indexed, thus saving both money and the time now spent typing up tables of content.

A. Description

Students access the library through their regularly-scheduled reading classes once a week. They may also come with teachers as a class to work on special projects or may be sent on a pass for part or all of a period. The library is staffed by one of the paraprofessionals from 8:00 am until 4:30 each day, so students have access before and after school.

Unfortunately, most classes that were scheduled to visit the library during my observation time were cancelled due to movies, special programs, and other pre-vacation activities. I regret not having the opportunity to view a "typical" day or talk with students and teachers using the center.

B. Impressions

The attempt is made to make the center accessible to students and teachers, during, before, and after the school day. Students who were in the center seemed at ease and talked comfortably to the library staff.

MONTHLY REPORT - RESOURCE CENTERS - DISCOVERY CENTER

School: WJHSLibrarian: BraunWeek of: February 1987 to:

Description of Services		WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4+	MONTHLY TOTAL
<u>PUPILS</u> Classes-scheduled: instruction, book selection, story/AV, other. Minimum 20 - 30 min. (#of classes)		2/2 - 2/5	2/9 - 2/11	2/16 - 2/20	2/23 - 2/26	
		67	81	69	52	26
Classes-non-scheduled: reference, other. By special arrangement. (Count group of 1/2 class here)			2			2
Small groups: research, educational games, enrichment, other. (2 or more in group) Ind. projects	Grp. Indiv.	353	186	183	175	5
<u>STAFF</u> Conferences. (Planning instruction or units of work with teachers)		36		21		57
Gathering materials. (Per teacher requests, not amount of materials) General curriculum development.		7				7
AV Equipment maintenance. (Request for service. Does not include repairs sent to IMC)		2		9		11
<u>COMMUNITY, OTHERS</u> Volunteers: Great Books, extended enrichment*, tutoring, other. *Without special teacher. (Use of facility counted only when librarian is involved directly)		4	3	3	3	13
Visitation to the Resource Center: parents, professionals, other. Open houses counted singly) "C" slash in box=parent conference.						
<u>CIRCULATION OF MATERIALS</u> Periodicals checked out in individual schools		145	20	101	57	323
book - pupils		236	99	115	88	538
on-book - Pupils		37	27	21	28	113
book - staff		60	10	30	11	111
on-book - staff		6	4	16	3	29

MONTHLY REPORT - RESOURCE CENTERS - DISCOVERY CENTER

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March 1987

School: WJHSLibrarian: BROWN

Week of: _____ to: _____

Description of Services		WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4+	MONTH TOTAL
<u>PUPILS</u>	3/3-3/6	3/7-3/13	3/16-3/20	3/23-3/25	3/30-3/31	
Classes-scheduled: instruction, book selection, story/A", other. Minimum 20 - 30 min. (# of classes)	45	47	68	33	25	21
Classes-non-scheduled: reference, other. By special arrangement. (Count group of 1/2 class here)						
Small groups: research, educational games, enrichment, other. (2 or more in group) Ind. projects	Grp. 185 Indiv.	227	257	176	127	9
<u>0 STAFF</u>						
Conferences. (Planning instruction or units of work with teachers)	31	58		13	7	10
Gathering materials. (Per teacher requests, not amount of materials) General curriculum development.	5	2		1		8
AV Equipment maintenance. (Request for service. Does not include repairs sent to IMC)	4	1		2	2	9
<u>0 COMMUNITY, OTHERS</u>						
Volunteers: Great Books, extended enrichment*, tutoring, other. *Without special teacher. (Use of facility counted only when librarian is involved directly)	2	3	2	3	2	12
Visitation to the Resource Center: parents, professionals, other. (Open houses counted singly) "C" below slash in box=parent conference.						
<u>CIRCULATION OF MATERIALS/Periodicals</u>	5	16	43	13	20	97
As checked out in individual schools						
Book - pupils	131	139	153	77	92	592
Non-book - Pupils	4	2	12	2	2	23
Book - staff	5	60	1	4	2	72
Non-book - staff	3	10	14	5	2	34

WILMETTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DISTRICT 39, COOK COUNTY

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615 LOCUST ROAD WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091 312 256-2450

JOB DESCRIPTION

WORKING COPY

JOB TITLE: Resource Center Teacher

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES: The primary responsibilities of the resource center teacher are administrative, instructional, consultive, and professional for the Library/Media program.

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Building Principal.

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS: Assistant Superintendent and Coordinator of Media.

ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Administrative Responsibilities:

A. Provide and maintain a balanced collection of materials and equipment by:

1. Reading professional journals.
2. Conferring with staff regarding needs and previewing materials
3. Inventorying materials and equipment.
4. Planning the expenditure of funds with building principal.
5. Previewing prospective acquisitions.
6. Selecting and acquiring materials.
7. Coordinating and scheduling of programs.

B. Circulate materials and equipment.

C. Provide an organized and pleasant atmosphere in accordance with established standards.

D. Video tape programs from the New Trier Television Cooperative.

E. Supervise personnel.

2. Instructional Responsibilities:

A. To the staff.

1. Orientation to the Resource Center.

- a. To acquaint to staff with the physical facilities.
- b. To explain programs and services.
- c. To explain procedures.
- d. To inform the staff of other educational facilities within the district and community.

2. In-service.

- a. To instruct in care and use of audio visual/media equipment.
- b. To suggest materials and compile bibliographies.
- c. To provide special collections.
- d. To design and help in production of instructional materials.
- e. To inform the staff of the resources available by exhibits and displays.
- f. To arrange for previewing sessions.
- g. To provide media instruction in the classroom.
- h. To facilitate and implement classroom programs.

B. To the student.

- 1. Resource Center orientation.
- 2. Care and use of audio visual/media equipment.
- 3. Individualized library and research skills.
- 4. Literary appreciation.
- 5. Critical evaluation of materials.
- 6. Reading guidance.
- 7. Seminars and workshops.
- 8. Discipline.
- 9. Fostering independent study skills.
- 10. Individualized instruction.
- 11. Service to the child who needs more individual attention than can be provided in the classroom and who will profit from such an experience.

3. Consultant Responsibilities:

A. To the staff.

- 1. Consultation regarding materials and audio visual/media equipment.
- 2. Consultation on specific programs.
- 3. Communication of progress, problems, and achievement of students.
- 4. Participation in curriculum planning.
- 5. Consultation on use of facilities.

B. To the community.

- 1. Confer with parents at Open House or by request.
- 2. Cooperate with the P.T.A., Volunteer Pool, and Student Enrichment Programs.
- 3. Cooperate with the Public Libraries.
- 4. Participate in Open House and other school functions.
- 5. Offer services to community organizations where appropriate.

4. Personal and Professional Responsibilities:

- A. Maintain ethical relationships with co-workers.
- B. Participate actively in professional organizations.
- C. Read professional journals and periodicals.
- D. Attend professional meetings, conferences and appropriate visitations.
- E. Maintain professional conduct and appearance.
- F. Honor confidentiality of knowledge regarding students and teachers.
- G. Maintain rapport with the total school community.
- H. Practice impartiality toward the total school community.
- I. Continue personal educational growth by remaining receptive to new ideas and pursuing further knowledge in all related fields.
- J. Accept responsibilities toward others in our field.

5. Perform other duties and assume other responsibilities that may be assigned by the Assistant Superintendent in agreement with the building principal in compliance with current teachers' contract.

STUDENT ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL

Student attitude is not closely connected with actual achievement, but it does predict a student's inclination to approach or avoid a particular attitude object. Therefore, attitude toward school and school subjects is important, for it helps to predict future elective behavior among students, not only in later school experiences, but in later life as well. In other words, a student who has negative attitudes toward school may do quite well while required to attend, but may avoid formal education in later life.

In order to survey student attitudes, an instrument was created which measures general attitudes toward education as well as specific attitudes toward school practices and personnel. The results of this survey are presented on the last two pages of this section. The responses indicate the mean response for each grade level to each item. These means show the placement of the group's attitude on the following scale:

Strong Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strong Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

Thus, a lower score indicates more agreement with the item.

A total of 247 students were surveyed, 80 sixth graders, 82 seventh graders, and 85 eighth graders. All responses were included in the analysis.

SUMMARY

All groups agree, substantially, with the following statements (mean of 2.8 or less):

6. I like my teachers.
9. I like most of my school subjects.
11. Most teachers like me.
13. I feel happy in this school.
14. There is too much work in school.
18. I will be glad when I don't have to go to school anymore.
19. I care about my school work.
25. I am proud of my school.
26. I go to school because I have to.
28. When I need help, I like my teacher to help me.
32. Most schoolwork is boring.
39. Lunch is the best thing about school.
40. Most teachers are hard to please.
41. It is important to go to school.
45. Most of the teachers here are friendly.

All groups disagree, substantially, with the following statements (mean of 3.2 or greater):

1. I am happy when the school day begins.
2. I learn nothing important in school.
4. There should be no such thing as school.
5. School work is interesting to me.
8. Everything about school is boring.
10. Most of the things we do in school are fun.
16. I look forward to going to school.
17. None of my teachers really listen to me.
21. Most teachers don't like kids.
22. I miss school in the summer.
24. I see no use for what we study in school.
27. I like to work in school.
29. School is awful.
31. I feel good when my teacher is close by.
33. I tell my friends that I like school.
36. If I were a teacher, I would want to be like the teachers I have.
37. If I had my choice, I would not go to this school.
42. Going to school is a waste of time.
43. I like to read my school books at home.
46. I like to do my math problems.

All groups are fundamentally unsure or undecided about the following statements:

3. Teachers are fair.
7. I feel good in school.
12. I wish I had different teachers.
15. I like the way my teachers teach their classes.
23. School is fun most of the time.
30. My teachers are usually happy.
35. It is fun to learn.
44. This is the best school year I have ever had.

Developmental differences among the groups are reflected in the following responses:

Sixth graders agreed that "Physical education is one of the things I like best about school," while seventh graders were undecided about it, and eighth graders disagreed with the statement quite strongly.

Eighth graders were more inclined to agree with the statement, "I hate to read my school books," than either sixth or seventh graders.

Eighth graders tended to agree with the statement, "I would like to have my teachers as my friends," while sixth graders are undecided about the statement, and seventh graders reject it quite strongly.

DISCUSSION

Students clearly value education and the learning in which they are engaged. They accept statements such as, "It is important to go to school," and reject indictments such as, "Going to school is a waste of time," or "I see no use for what we study in school." This responses indicates very clearly a general value set that is profoundly evident in the Wilmette community, one which is reinforced both in school and at home.

At the same time, however, students do not value very highly some of the actual school experiences they have. They tend to characterize their school work as boring, too burdensome, not fun, and difficult. While some of this attitude can probably be attributed to adolescent angst, some also results from the fact that students perceive much of their schoolwork as drudgery. Therefore, students can agree with the statement, "I like most of my school subjects," and, at the same time, be unsure that "it is fun to learn." In short, students seem to have generally positive attitudes toward the school because of a general value set, not because they are especially fond of the specific academic experiences they have there.

The students are also clear about the fact that they like their teachers and believe that their teachers like them. They agree with the specific statement, "I like my teachers," and with others such as, "Most of the teachers here are friendly." At the same time, however, they find their teachers demanding and they do not always approve of the way their teachers conduct their classes. They are uncertain about whether or not, "teachers are fair," or if they like the way "my teachers teach their classes." Generally, they disagree with the statement, "If I were a teacher, I would want to be like the teachers I have." Much of this response comes from a natural tendency in all of us to be "armchair quarterbacks," and critique professional performance from the safety of the sidelines, but some of the attitude also results from what the students consider to be essentially uninteresting school tasks.

A curious outcome is worthy of special note. Students did not know if their teachers were happy. That is a matter of some interest because it invites several possible explanations, all of them unpleasant. First is that the teachers are unhappy and only partly successful at concealing it; second, that teachers are happy and are unsuccessful at showing it; third, that students had not thought about whether teachers were happy or not until the moment they were asked the question. In any case, students seem to be unaware of teacher enthusiasm (a great deal of which I detected in my conversations with people in the school), partly because they may not be taught to look for it, and partly because teachers are not showing it sufficiently to the students. It seems, as a minimum, that one thing we hope for students to learn

in school is an enthusiasm for their work, and one of the best ways to learn that is to see models of enthusiastic workers.

Specific observations are also warranted here. As children grow older, they become more conscious of their bodies. Therefore, eighth graders dislike physical education, while sixth graders still see it as essentially a recreational opportunity. Eighth graders also tend to evaluate their teachers more favorably, partly because they can identify more closely with adults, partly because they are accustomed to the school setting and the people in it, and partly because they are a bit anxious about going off to uncharted territory next year at New Trier.

To summarize, the students at WJHS have favorable attitudes toward schooling and they value achievement. At the same time, they are critical of specific school practices, some of which they perceive as boring and uninteresting.

They like their teachers, but would like to see some changes in teaching approach. They feel that their teachers like them, and that they are interested in children and teaching. Although they are not sure if teachers are always fair (no adolescent is ever sure if adults are fair) and they find their teachers demanding, they are proud of their school and would not want to attend a different one. They feel secure here.

All in all, the students like WJHS and, as long as they have to be in school at all, would rather be here than somewhere else.

School WTHSDate JUNE, 1987Sex _____ Grade 6-7-8

Directions: These questions are different from the kind we usually ask in school. We are interested in how you feel about certain things in school. There are no right or wrong answers because everyone has different opinions. Answer whether or not each statement is true for you. For example, suppose the statement said, "I like ice cream." If you really like ice cream, you would circle A, STRONGLY AGREE. If you liked ice cream OK, you would circle B for AGREE...and so on... Be sure to answer every question.

GRADE 6 7 8			STRONGLY AGREE A	AGREE B	NOT SURE C	DISAGREE D	STRONGLY DISAGREE E
3.5	3.2	3.6	A B C D E				1. I am happy when the school day begins.
4.2	4.2	3.9	A B C D E				2. I learn nothing important in school.
3.1	3.1	3.0	A B C D E				3. Teachers are fair.
3.8	3.9	3.9	A B C D E				4. There should be no such thing as school.
3.3	3.3	3.3	A B C D E				5. School work is interesting to me.
2.8	2.8	2.4	A B C D E				6. I like my teachers.
3.0	3.1	2.8	A B C D E				7. I feel good in school.
3.8	3.4	3.6	A B C D E				8. Everything about school is boring.
2.6	2.5	2.8	A B C D E				9. I like most of my school subjects.
3.2	3.5	3.5	A B C D E				10. Most of the things we do in school are fun.
2.8	2.6	2.2	A B C D E				11. Most teachers like me.
3.1	2.9	3.6	A B C D E				12. I wish I had different teachers.
2.7	2.7	2.7	A B C D E				13. I feel happy in this school.
2.5	2.6	2.4	A B C D E				14. There is too much work in school.
3.0	2.8	2.9	A B C D E				15. I like the way my teachers teach their classes.
3.7	3.5	3.6	A B C D E				16. I look forward to going to school.
3.6	3.5	3.4	A B C D E				17. None of my teachers really listen to me.
1.9	2.0	1.8	A B C D E				18. I will be glad when I don't have to go to school anymore.
2.0	2.1	1.9	A B C D E				19. I care about my school work.
2.9	3.4	2.7	A B C D E				20. I would like to have my teachers as friends.
3.8	3.7	3.8	A B C D E				21. Most teachers don't like kids.
4.3	4.2	4.2	A B C D E				22. I miss school in the summer.
3.2	3.1	3.1	A B C D E				23. School is fun most of the time.
3.7	3.8	3.6	A B C D E				24. I see no use for what we study in school.
2.3	2.4	2.7	A B C D E				25. I am proud of my school.
2.3	2.3	2.3	A B C D E				26. I go to school because I have to.

6	7	8	
3.3	3.3	3.5	A B C D E . 27. I like to work in school.
2.3	2.6	2.3	A B C D E . 28. When I need help, I like my teacher to help me.
3.3	3.3	3.2	A B C D E . 29. School is awful.
3.0	3.1	2.7	A B C D E . 30. My teachers are usually happy.
3.6	3.8	3.6	A B C D E . 31. I feel good when my teacher is close by.
2.8	2.5	2.5	A B C D E . 32. Most schoolwork is boring.
3.8	3.9	3.8	A B C D E . 33. I tell my friends that I like school.
2.8	2.9	2.6	A B C D E . 34. I hate to read school books..
2.9	2.8	2.9	A B C D E . 35. It is fun to learn.
3.3	3.5	3.1	A B C D E . 36. If I were a teacher, I would want to be like the teachers I have
3.7	3.8	3.5	A B C D E . 37. If I had my choice, I would not go to this school.
2.4	2.9	3.3	A B C D E . 38. Physical education is one of the things I like best about school.
1.9	2.3	2.2	A B C D E . 39. Lunch is the best thing about school.
2.5	2.5	2.7	A B C D E . 40. Most teachers are hard to please.
1.8	1.7	1.8	A B C D E . 41. It is important to go to school.
3.8	3.9	3.8	A B C D E . 42. Going to school is a waste of time.
3.5	3.5	4.0	A B C D E . 43. I like to read my school books at home.
2.9	3.1	2.7	A B C D E . 44. This is the best school year I have ever had.
2.6	2.6	2.8	A B C D E . 45. Most of the teachers here are friendly.
3.2	3.3	4.0	A B C D E . 46. I like to do my math problems.

INSTRUCTION

Instruction in 14 classrooms was observed, using a series of four rating scales which describe classroom practices and conditions. These four scales are: Individualization, Cognitive Demand, Freedom, and On-Task activity. The findings on these scales were confirmed by shadow-studies.

Individualization.

Individualization is low. Most students work on the same assignments and classroom tasks at the same time. Some variation in time allowed for completion is evident, but the large bulk of instruction is delivered to the group. Teacher assistance is generally available during classwork, and teachers are careful about monitoring student independent work.

There is a heavy reliance on, both lecture and seatwork to achieve many learning objectives. Students are given information which they then must use to complete a task, most often by themselves. There was some evidence of group work, but individual work is clearly the norm.

This condition results largely because of the perceived homogeneity of ability in classes. Teachers feel that the students in any given group are generally able to complete class work, therefore, they feel that large group instruction is efficient and effective. For the large majority of students, this is true; however, other students, particularly less able ones, may be lost in the methods commonly in use. This is especially difficult for learning disabled students who may be mainstreamed into regular classrooms.

Cognitive Demand.

Cognitive demand is moderate. This means that students are normally engaged in Comprehension, Application and Analysis tasks. They are required to remember information, translate it into their own words, apply it to situations similar to the ones in which the information was presented, solve problems in standard ways, and apply rules and procedures to specific situations. Occasionally, they must dismantle complex ideas or concepts to understand their parts, relate new material to older learning, and understand how information is organized and used.

Less emphasis is placed upon the solution of novel problems, the development of new ways of understanding old information, or on creative and divergent thinking. Students are not often asked to make judgments about material and information, establish criteria for evaluating an idea or event, or weigh values, alternatives and competing theories used to explain a complex set of phenomena.

The "standardness" of content and the approach to problems may be one of the reasons that students find many of their

learning tasks "boring." There is often a lack of novelty in the material used and the manner in which it is presented.

Freedom.

Freedom is relatively low to moderate. This means that students engage in classroom activities that are designed by the teacher, although they have some freedom in expressing themselves verbally, conversing with their classmates during seatwork, and in taking care of routine tasks (sharpening pencils, etc.) Classroom atmospheres are relaxed, but the teacher is clearly in control.

This seems to be a good atmosphere for a junior high school; business-like but relaxed.

On-Task Activity.

On Task Activity is the highest observed by any of the investigators. While the normal amount of time devoted to instruction in most junior highs is about 50%, at WJHS the amount is closer to 85%! This can be attributed to several features of the school environment: well-behaved and motivated students, teachers who are clearly in control of the class, and well-structured learning tasks.

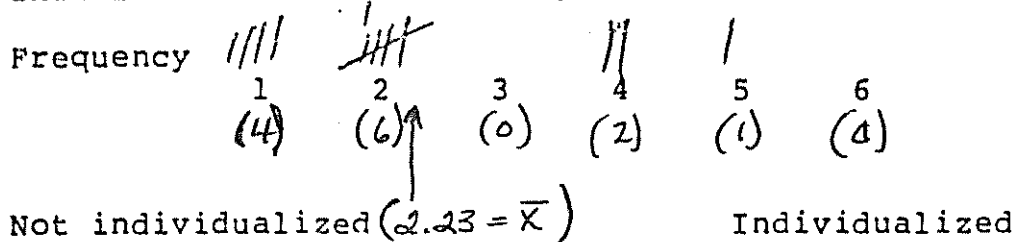
Individualization

This dimension refers to the degree to which the teacher provides students with different levels of work that are suited to their particular needs, interests, and abilities, and to the amount of individual assistance provided.

The teacher whose classroom is individualized shows an awareness of individual differences. He makes different plans for different achievement levels. This teacher makes use of special talents and interests of students in planning activities. Different students or groups of students are working on different assignments.

The teacher whose classroom is not individualized uses the entire class or large groups as the primary instructional unit. He displays little awareness of individual abilities or interests. All students generally work on the same assignment for the same period of time. No provisions are made for students at different achievement levels. Many students experience stress due to time pressure.

Rate the instruction in this classroom on an individualization continuum.



1. All students use the same materials and work on identical assignments. Time allowed to complete assignments is the same for everyone.
2. All students use the same materials and work on identical assignments, but some individual assistance is available and time requirements are somewhat flexible.
3. For teaching basic skills, pupils are grouped according to achievement level. The same materials are used by all groups, but each group works at a different pace. One group may be far ahead of another.
4. For teaching basic skills, pupils are grouped according to achievement level, but each group receives different assignments and materials based on the needs of the group. The pace varies between groups.
5. For teaching basic skills, pupils are grouped according to achievement level. Groups work with different materials and individuals within groups receive supplementary enrichment or remedial materials as needed.

6. Each student works at his own pace on individual and group assignments designed to meet the needs of each individual student. Assistance is available to individuals and groups to aid students in accomplishing their assignments.

Cognitive Demand

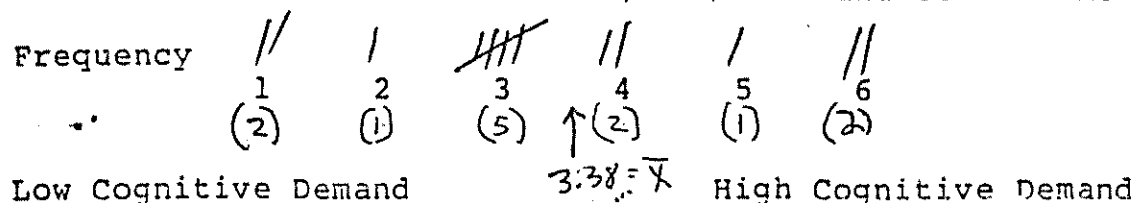
This dimension refers to the level of intellectual activity that the teacher expects from the student.

The teacher who makes a low cognitive demand asks students to remember, recall, or recognize facts or ideas. The student is expected to store certain information in his mind and remember it later.

The teacher who makes a high cognitive demand asks students to understand, comprehend, solve problems, or evaluate.

The rating for cognitive demand should indicate the highest level of intellectual activity that the teacher emphasizes.

Rate this teacher on a cognitive demand continuum.



1. Knowledge: The teacher emphasizes coverage and retention of material. Students are expected to recall specific bits and pieces of information, events, actions, or materials previously discussed or read.
2. Comprehension: The teacher asks students to explain or summarize information in their own words rather than recalling the words of the text.
3. Application: The teacher leads students to transfer information, concepts or rules by applying them to specific problems and situations.
4. Analysis: The teacher leads students to identify separate parts of complex ideas and to relate them to other material. The intent is to clarify information and to indicate how the ideas are organized.
5. Synthesis: The teacher leads students to combine and integrate information to form new ideas or new ways of understanding old information. The student is encouraged to manipulate materials and pieces of information to develop new arrangements on his own.
6. Evaluation: The teacher encourages students to make judgments of material and information through a process which requires students to weigh values and alternatives.

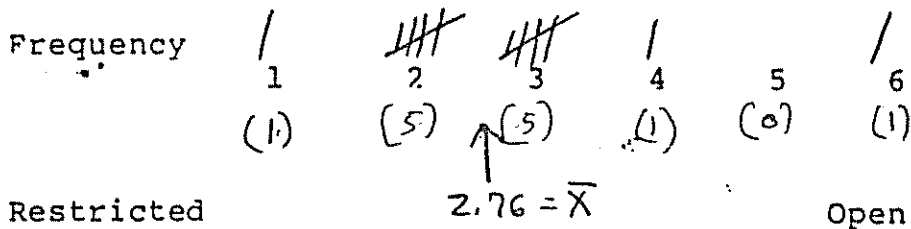
Freedom

This dimension refers to the degree to which the teacher provides arrangements which facilitate independence and individual freedom.

A classroom that is open provides an atmosphere in which students move about freely and interact freely. Few teacher-dictated restraints are placed on student behavior. The student is given maximum responsibility for deciding what and when to study. Students are given verbal freedom in expressing their opinions and are permitted to question or challenge the teacher.

A restricted atmosphere is one in which the students are not given any verbal or physical freedom within the classroom. The teacher is the one who determines what activities will take place and when. The teacher makes most of the decisions. Conformity to rules is highly valued.

Rate this classroom on a freedom continuum.



1. In the restricted classroom, student behavior is strictly controlled by the teacher. The students look to the teacher to direct their every move and may frequently turn to the teacher to ask, "What should I do next?" There are an abundance of rules. Students must ask permission to perform routine tasks such as going to the restroom, sharpening pencils, getting supplies, etc. The student is not allowed to express his own opinions nor to question the teacher's point of view.
2. Classroom activities and decisions are structured and dominated by the teacher. If students are allowed to make decisions, they concern matters of minor importance to the teacher. Students are not given the opportunity to diverge from the given assignments. The teacher accepts only expressions of attitudes compatible with her own. Obedience to rules is expected. The classroom appears to be "in order."
3. Classroom activities are structured by the teacher, but pupils have some verbal freedom of expression and physical freedom of movement. The students may even be seen walking freely about the classroom, talking to each other or to the teacher. The atmosphere may seem very relaxed. However, the teacher is clearly in charge of decision-making.

4. The teacher sometimes presents opportunities for the students to make major decisions in the academic domain, but the choices are usually limited to such things as selecting a topic, choosing a story, opting for the even or odd problems, or selecting optional problems. The teacher does not refrain from taking the lead if there is a full or lag in student response. The decision-making roles regarding class rules and leisure-time activities are shared between the teacher and the students.
5. The students are consistently offered freedom of choice in the academic domain, but the teacher sets definite limits. For example, the content area for study may be specified in terms of time spent, but the student is allowed to choose what to do from predetermined list of activities, or how long to spend on a given assignment, or the order in which he prefers to perform activities. There is limited reference to rules. Rather, the emphasis is on student awareness of the appropriateness of his own behavior. Students are free to express opinions.
6. In an open classroom, the teacher provides freedom of choice not only in terms of when and how long to study, but also in terms of subject matter, and method of inquiry. There are learning centers around the room and students are free to move from one activity to another or to create their own learning experiences. There is a noticeable lack of specific assignments or direction giving. The teacher functions primarily as an information resource or sounding board. There may be considerable cooperation and conversation between students. Students are given individual responsibility for their behavior. There is little reference to rules. Free expression of ideas prevails and students are free to challenge the teacher's ideas.

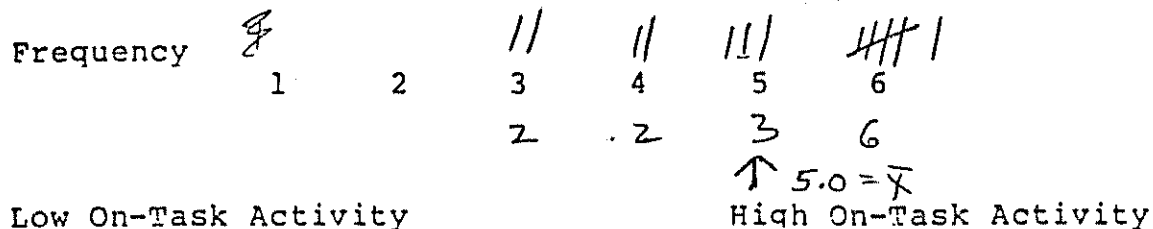
On-Task Activity

This dimension refers to the amount of activity that is directed toward the accomplishment of instructional objectives.

In a classroom with high on-task activity, the students are actively engaged in learning activities. Students appear to be accomplishing instructional goals.

In a classroom with low on-task activity, most of the students are not engaged in learning activities. There are many instances of day-dreaming and/or disruptive behavior and "goofing-off." Time is not effectively utilized and there is little evidence of productive behavior.

Rate this classroom on an on-task activity continuum.



1. In this classroom, there is constant aimless activity., disruption, rowdiness, and/or "goofing-off." Little if any task accomplishment is evident. Attempts by the teacher to get students to return to learning activities are generally ineffective.
2. In this classroom, a considerable degree of inattention is exhibited. Most of the students are not involved in the assignment or lesson. There is much commotion and chatter, or quiet behavior such as wandering, doodling or day-dreaming, little of which is related to the task.
3. In this classroom, some students are busy working on the lesson, but many direct their attention elsewhere. Task related behavior may be evident at the start of the lesson but attention does not last and restlessness or day-dreaming results.
4. In this classroom, many students are participating in the learning activities. Some temporary off-task behavior may be exhibited by a few students, but attention is quickly restored.
5. In this classroom, a majority of students are engaged in the learning activities. There are a few students who are searching for "something to do," but the class is work-oriented most of the time.

6. In this work-oriented classroom, all students are engaged in the learning activities. Whether they are working in a group or individually, students are actively involved in the task. A high degree of accomplishment is evident.

SURVEY ON COUNSELING/SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

The purpose of this survey was to assess the extent to which teachers utilize support services and the changes they might make in the program. This instrument was included as part of the staff attitude survey. The number of teachers responding was 56.

A summary of all data collected on this instrument is presented on the final page of this section.

DISCUSSION

Virtually all of the teachers indicated that they had consulted with a school counselor/social worker regarding a particular student. The number of times ranged from one to over 40, with a large number of teachers indicating "several" or "many" contacts. This indicates that the service is visible and perceived as helpful, since most teachers made more than one contact with it, suggesting that their initial contacts were rewarding and productive.

Nearly three-fourths of the teachers also provided counseling to students during the school year. The modal response (most often given) was that teachers counseled 1-10 students on the same number of occasions, indicating that most of this counseling seems to be of the single-contact variety. This is most indicative of the type of contact initiated by students, rather than by teachers. Pending further study, it suggests that teachers are responsive to student requests for counseling, but may not follow-up those conversations with an additional contact. Another explanation may be that teachers, after this first contact, refer the student to a counselor/social worker. Their response to question 27 indicates that nearly 2/3 of teachers did make such referrals, presumably after an initial discussion of the problem with the student.

A large number of teachers (65%) report that they have contacted parents this year to offer information or advice of a counseling nature for their children. The frequency, again, is in the 1-10 range.

Slightly more than two-thirds of the teachers said that they have been helped personally by a counselor in dealing with a student concern. This high rate is consistent with the earlier figures on the number of consultations reported in question 1. Virtually all of the teachers know the counselors who work with their students.

Counselors should probably have more time to work with teachers on student matters. Because the counseling program has not yet received close attention in this study, it is still possible to examine the events and conditions that may impede counselors from having more time to work with teachers.

In the school, counselors are seen by teachers as having the primary counseling responsibility, but they are followed closely by special service personnel (85.7%), teachers (73.2%), administrators (62.5%) and parents (44.6%). Other students (26.8%) and other school staff (secretaries, 17.9%; custodians, 17.9%) are not seen as having a strong role in providing guidance assistance.

STAFF SURVEY ON COUNSELING/SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	
— NR	96.7 Yes	3.8 No	25. Did you consult with a school counselor/social worker this year regarding student matters? If yes, how many times? $\frac{1-10=31}{11-20=2}$ 31-40=2 "SEVERAL, OFTEN, MANY" = 9
— NR	73.1 Yes	26.9 No	26. Did you personally provide counseling to students this year? If yes, how many times? <u>Mode: 1-10</u> How many different students? <u>Mode: 1-10</u>
— NR	65.8 Yes	34.7 No	27. Have you referred students to their counselors this year? If "yes" how many times? <u>Mode: 1-10</u> How many different students? <u>Mode: 1-10</u>
10.7 NR	69.6 Yes	19.6 No	28. Have you personally been assisted by a counselor in dealing with student concerns?
— NR	91.1 Yes	1.8 No	29. Do you know the counselor(s) who work with your students?
16.1 NR	64.3 Yes	19.6 No	30. Should counselors have more time to work closely with classroom teachers on student matters?
— NR	65.4 Yes	34.6 No	31. Have you personally contacted parents this year to offer information or advice of a counseling nature for their children? If "yes" how many times? <u>Mode: 1-10</u> How many different students? <u>Mode: 1-10</u>
			32. In your opinion, which of the following "school" people could properly provide some counseling/guidance assistance? (Please check.)
	<u>YES %</u>		
	73.2	<input type="checkbox"/> classroom teacher	44.6 <input type="checkbox"/> parent
	89.3	<input type="checkbox"/> counselor	17.9 <input type="checkbox"/> secretary
	62.5	<input type="checkbox"/> administrator	17.9 <input type="checkbox"/> custodian
	26.8	<input type="checkbox"/> other students	14.3 <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify)
	85.7	<input type="checkbox"/> special services personnel	

Comments:

SHADOW STUDIES

Shadow studies are conducted in an attempt by the researcher to experience the school day as the student experiences it. In this study, three students were "shadowed," one from each grade. Their schedules were selected at random from the roster at each grade level, and a trained observer followed the student's schedule for an entire day. During the day the observer noted, at 5 minute intervals, everything that occurred to the student. He or she also kept a running account of the environmental conditions that existed, and any impressions that occurred to him or her. At the end of the day, the student is interviewed to confirm the impressions of the observer.

The analyses that follow are called "thick descriptions." They report, in considerable detail, what transpired during the day. The conclusions and observations to be drawn from these analyses are useful, primarily, for the interpretation of other kinds of data: instructional rating scales, classroom observations, interviews, and surveys. Therefore, the conclusions from this analysis are woven throughout the other sections of this report.

ANALYSIS

Part I What Did Observers Tell Us About These Seventh and Sixth Graders?

1. How were the students grouped during the day? On what basis? In terms of homogeneous/heterogeneous ability grouping, the classes were not broken up into groups but were taught as a whole class. The classes represented the community which is pretty homogeneous. Most of the students were caucasian with an occasional oriental. The observer noted one child who was half black, half white. Most classes were small with a median enrollment of 21 students:

Thursday, Seventh Grade

PERIOD	BOYS(White/other)	GIRLS	TOTAL
1	9	5	14
2	60+	0	60+
3	8/1	12	21
4	Lunch		
5	9	11	20
6.	11	10	21
7	Went to the Play		20 about
8	-	-	23
9	16	16	32

Friday, Sixth Grade

PERIOD	BOYS (White/other)	GIRLS	TOTAL
1	8/1	15	24
2	6	13	19
3	6	13	19
4	6	18	24
6	7	7	14 about
7	11	16	27

The observer noted that there were at least four sections of every class, but he did not know upon what basis the students were selected for each section. He guessed that the sections were probably equal as they were in competition with each other. And it would not have made good educational sense to compete a significantly more academically able section against a significantly less academically able section.

2. What kinds of social encounters did the students have during the day? The following are all quotations from the observer's field notes:

The teacher provides an emotionally warm and accepting atmosphere.

In the hallways the students talk together--appear friendly, courteous, and respectful.

On the soccer field students appeared polite, friendly, and respectful despite competing in a game...Students visit and talk while playing.

Students visit with each other in classes.

Students accept and applaud each other's contributions.
Example: "Carl read his story to the class. Don gives him a pat on the back and tells him 'That was a good job!'"

Lunch. Students sit four to a table--usually boys with boys and girls with girls--they visit and talk while eating, and some get up together and go outside and play. Despite the talking, the lunchroom is not noisy.

I observed boys and girls playing games together e.g. softball. I do not recall seeing girls and boys 'pairing off' or 'going steady' with one another.

Students appear quite capable of managing their activities without adult supervision.

I hear no arguing...over anything...rules etc.

Lots of socializing going on.

A girl shares with her class a doll she made from a paper bag to illustrate a story she had written. The other students were very respectful and accepting.

Students are encouraged by the teachers and principal to show appreciation and gratitude when someone makes a contribution.

Students help each other e.g. loaning pens, sharing desks.

Throughout the day I have observed teachers encouraging students to do their best, and complimenting their work with responses like "Excellent!"

Audience was very well behaved.

Observation about teacher and student conversations which applies to most of the two days: they appear to be 'adult to adult' to use Transactional Analysis terminology, instead of 'parent to child'...talking down to..

3. In what skill areas did the students receive direct instruction and, how much time was spent on this skill instruction?

Thursday Seventh Grade:

Period 1	Math	Detailed homework review 15 min.	
		Direct instruction in new work	16 min.
Period 2	Gym		
Period 3	Lang. Arts.	Writing Obituaries.	14 min.
Period 4	Lunch		
Period 5	Reading		16 min.
Period 6	Social Studies.		14 minutes.
Period 7	Play		
Period 8	Science	Movie	
Period 9	Music		30 minutes.

Friday Sixth Grade

Period 1	Science	Film Strips.	28 minutes.
Period 2	Language Arts		40 min.
Period 3	Social Studies	Grades, Quizzes, Trivia Contest	
Period 4	Speech/Drama	Play Reading	30 minutes.
Period 5	Lunch		
Period 6	Discovery Center		5 min.
Period 7	Language Arts	Armor Art Proj.	40 minutes.

4. To whom did students talk? Under what circumstances?

- a) Other students in class, short whisperings without formal sanctions.
- b) Other students in class, long conversations--working on projects, with formal sanctions.
- c) Other students while passing in the hallways.
- d) Other students at lunch.
- e) Other students on the playground.
- f) Other students before and after school on the busses.
- g) Teachers during formal transactions e.g. homework, academic questions.
- h) Teachers during social, personal conversations.
- i) Visitors/Observers out of curiosity and courtesy.

5. Who talked to the students during the day? Under what circumstances?

- a) Other students in response to #4 situations.
- b) Teachers during formal instruction.
- c) Teachers during moments of social control.
- d) Teachers during personal conversations.
- e) Principal in carry out formal duties e.g. announcements in the auditorium, hallways, and classrooms, and while debarking and embarking the school buses.
- f) Cooks to quiet a few students in the lunch line.
- g) Observer to interview, to return a courtesy, and to respond briefly to curious questions.

6. Were students provided with a chance to explore new topics or subjects? What were some of these exploratory activities? How were these opportunities provided--in the regular curriculum, or by special course or programs?

Period 3 Language Arts. Students could choose anything they wanted upon which to write an obituary.

Period 4 Lunch. Students were free to use their lunch and recess time any way they wanted.

Period 5 Reading. Students had to do a 'commercial' about their favorite book, but they could choose the books, and do the 'commercial' any way they wanted--video tape, skits, audio tapes & mime, etc.

Period 6 Social Studies. Students could contribute ideas and current events to the class discussion on the U.S. Congress.

Period 6 Play. It appeared that the students may have had input into the skits that were presented.

Period 6 Discovery Center. Students had a lot of latitude in writing their own computer programs.

Period 7 Language Arts Art Projects in Armor. Students could choose anything they wanted.

7. To what extent was the content studied during the day related to student interests, the current state of knowledge in the subject area, and the world outside of school?

Scale: 1 = Highly related, 3 = Moderately related, 5 = Not related.

Thursday Seventh Grade

Period	Topic	Student Interests	Current State	World Outside
1	Math	2	1	1
2	Gym	2	3	2
3	Lang. A.	3	2	3
5	Reading	1	1	1
6	Soc. Std.	2	2	2
7	Play	1	2	1
8	Science	2	2	1
9	Music	1	2	2

Friday Sixth Grade

1	Science	3	1	1
2	Lang. A.	2	2	3

3	Soc. Std. 2	3	3
4	Speech/Dra 2	3	4
6	Discovery 1	2	2
7	Lang. A. 2	3	4

8. What kinds of instructional models and approaches seemed to predominate? Was student learning style considered in instructional arrangements and choice of methods?

The predominant instructional model was an information processing one, with lecture, question and answer discussions, followed by individual work assignments. The classes were taught as a whole unit. Student learning style was accommodated when students were working on their own projects. The primary modes of input were: auditory--teacher's verbal instructions, and visual--textbooks and chalkboard. Several classes augmented the lessons with audiovisual aids: films, film strips, and video.

9. What kinds of physical surroundings seemed to predominate? How were classes arranged?

The classrooms appeared to be well maintained:

The floors, mostly tile, some carpeting, were clean and attractive.

The walls appeared to be freshly painted with quiet light blue on three walls, with a splash of dark blue around the window wall.

The ceilings were white acoustical tile in good condition, with three rows of seven florescent lights each. All rooms were adequately lighted.

The bulletin boards in every room were attractive, well planned, and appropriate for the subjects being studied.

In some rooms student work was displayed on the walls and/or tables. The Greek and Egyptian art works were so well done--they appeared to be commercially made.

In some rooms, plants added to the ambience.

Temperatures and air circulation were comfortable; occasionally a window was open for fresh air.

The desks and chairs, in general, were attractive and in good condition. Only a few showed evidence of students writing on them.

The only physical problem noted was noise coming through an accordion partition from one class to the next;

but only the observer appeared to notice the noise--the class stayed on task.

The hallways were equally well maintained, well lighted, clean, and with yellow lockers looking like they were freshly painted.

The boy's bathroom was attractive, reasonably maintained, and had NO urine smell!! The observer noted two paper towels on the floor, two unflushed commodes, one coke can and one paper towel in the urinals, but commented it was "Not bad for a junior high school bathroom!"

The cafeteria was clean, neat, and attractive. The observer noted that when most of the students had left after eating, "...90% of the tables were clean, and 97% of the floor was clean...highly unusual for any school cafeteria!"

The playground was clean, neat, well maintained, attractive, pleasant, and adequate to accommodate the large numbers of students who used it during the lunch time recess.

Classroom arrangements. If a classroom had desks, then they were arranged in 'audience' fashion with desks in rows and columns facing the front of the room. If a classroom had tables, then they were arranged in an open rectangle where students could face in any direction that was needed.

10. How did school time seem to be spent?

On task means the time was used for academic learning and other legitimate curricular tasks.

Thursday Seventh Grade

Period 1 Math 40/40 minutes on task.
 Period 2 Gym 30/30 minutes on task. (10 min. for changing.)
 Period 3 Language Arts 35/40 minutes on task.
 Period 5 Reading 35/40 minutes on task.
 Period 6 Social Studies 40/40 minutes on task.
 Period 7 Play 35/40 minutes on task.
 Period 8 Science Movie 35/40 minutes on task.
 Period 9 Music 40/40 minutes on task.

Friday Sixth Grade

Period 1 Science Grades, film strips, discussion 33/40.
 Period 2 Language Arts 35/40 minutes on task.
 Period 3 Social Studies Grades, quizzes, grading of quizzes, trivia contest, 35/40 minutes on task.
 Period 4 Speech/Drama 40/40 minutes on task.

Period 6 Discovery Center Individualized 35/40 on task.
 Period 7 Language Arts Armor Art Project 40/40 minutes on task.

11. Describe the school climate that seemed to predominate.

The climate was business-like, warm, friendly, courteous, encouraging, supportive, a little competitive--class against class, person against self, not too much classmate against classmate--and respectful.

The observer noted the following:

8:51 Teacher keeps a lively discussion going, compliments the students.

8:59 It appears the students are free to move around the room, and go to the bathroom without verbal permission. This allows for no disruption of the main lesson. The students appear very responsible for their own behavior...students are very attentive.

9:01 Teacher appears to have a good working relationship with her students.

9:04 T, "C'mon kids, THINK, THINK, THINK!"

9:15 Teacher has a nice, clear, firm voice...keeps the students involved and participating. Teacher makes good use of her facial expressions and hand gestures.

9:20 Teacher, "Race the clock: see how many you can get done!"

9:25 Teacher gives a lot of encouragement to the students. Students work right up to the final bell. Teacher compliments the students on their class work.

Hallway. The students WALK in the halls, talk, but not too noisily, are friendly and respectful toward each other.

9:52 Students appear to be capable of managing their own game without adult control and intervention.

9:54 Students seem to be in the game more for good fun, than for 'bloodthirsty' competition...

11:14 Outside. A boy with braces walks by me and says "Hi!" and waves his hand...

11:32 I hear no arguing--over anything...rules, etc.

11:36 A softball game--girls and boys playing well together..lots of sharing, cooperation, and cheering.

11:39 Bell rings--the playground clears in 83 seconds!

12:00 Students listen to each other.

12:28 Teacher: "Ladies and Gentlemen--your attention, please...Thank you!"

12:35 The whole interchange (students coming in late because of another teacher's test) was courteous and respectful.

12:42 I am impressed that the Principal does not disturb classes by blaring announcements over the loud speaker, or distracting teachers with intercom traffic.

12:47 Teacher to a noisy student in the hall: "Sir, you are bothering my class...(pauses to get a response)...Thank you!"

12:49 All the class is very quiet--working hard. Teacher circulates--helps students--answers questions, encourages them.

12:57 I do not recall hearing any teacher using derogatory or negative language toward the students!!

14:58 The staff morale appears to be very high.

15:10 I note an absence of classroom management measures--because they are not needed.

15:19 The teacher uses humor effectively. The teacher appears to really care about her students. She has very clear behavior expectations.

12. In what kind of physical activity did the students engage?

- a) Walking to and from classes.
- b) Moving around in the classroom when it was essential.
- c) Soccer during the gym period.
- d) Softball, basketball, running, jumping etc., during the noon recess.
- e) dancing and singing in the play.

Part II

CONCLUSIONS

A. Curriculum Content.

*1. The curriculum content is of high quality and appropriate to the needs of the learners.

*2. The curriculum content contains materials relating important social concerns to the classroom e.g. eating disorders.

*3. The curriculum content is rich in substance, wide in range, and allows for some student choices.

B. Teaching Arrangements.

*1. The teaching arrangements are departmentalized. The students are on a nine period, forty minutes each, day. The students change classrooms and teachers for each subject.

*2. The sixth grade classes are generally clustered together, so the students only walk a few feet between classes.

*3. With a few exceptions, the teachers teach in contained classrooms as opposed to sharing an open pod area.

C. Instruction and Teaching Methods

*1. The lecture, question and answer discussion, and directed student assignments, were the most common instructional methods.

*2. Student Learning Style was accommodated only during student projects.

*3. Classes were taught as a single unit.

D. Teacher-Student Interaction

*1. The teacher-student interactions are of admirably high quality.

*2. The teachers are polite, courteous, and respectful when speaking to students.

*3. The teachers appear to really care about their students, and provide an emotionally warm and accepting atmosphere in their classrooms.

E. Student-Student Interaction

*1. Student-student interactions are of admirably high quality.

*2. The students are polite, courteous, and respectful when speaking to other students, or adults.

*3. The students appear to be neutral or positive toward each other. No negative incidents were seen or reported.

F. Physical Environment

*1. The physical environment appears to be very well cared for, not only by the maintenance and custodial staff, but by the students and teachers as well.

*82. The physical environment is attractive, pleasant, and abundantly adequate for the students it serves.

*3. The physical environment is conducive to attitudes toward high academic learning, and positive social-emotional relationships.

G. Advising and Counseling

No incidents of advising or counseling were reported.

H. Opportunities for Social Skill Learning

1. Because high quality social skills are the strongly established norm, new students, and faculty, have frequent models and feedback to learn from, and are acculturated quickly.

2. Most classes encourage the students to work together on small group projects--learning and reinforcing the skills of leadership, organization, cooperation, and team work.

*3. The principal, teachers, and many students encourage recognition, appreciation, and gratitude when students or adults make a presentation or contribution.

I. Teacher and Student Use of Class Time.

*1. Part I, number 10 indicates that most teachers use over 90% of class time for time on task, and that a few teachers use 100%.

*2. Reports of student activity in the classroom indicate that the vast majority of students do use class time well, for class assignments, attending to instruction, or homework.

*3. Reports of student activity in the hallways and on the playfield indicate that the students are very business-like and efficient in their use of time between classes.

J. School Learning Climate

*1. The school learning climate is outstanding!

2. There appears to be a strong, mutually supportive and cooperative working relationship between the school, and the parents and community, which is invaluable to maintaining such a positive climate.

3. All of the activities and interactions during the school day appear to promote excellence in academic learning and in social development. Competition, which is officially promoted, and could be a serious problem if mishandled, appears to be used appropriately, and does not interfere with an emotionally accepting climate for all students.

Part III Final Conclusion

The citizens, parents, school staff, and students of Wilmette are most fortunate that with working together, they have created a school which most school districts only dream about but never realize.

INTERVIEWS

1. Assume that a new kid moved next door and would be your schoolmate. What are three good things about this school that you would tell him or her?

"Carl" (a seventh grade boy): (1) "Good teachers, (2) classes are good, and (3) lunches are good."

"Ann" (a sixth grade girl): (1) "You have a lot of responsibility...you have to take care of yourself more." O: "And you like that?" Ann, "Yes." (2) The junior high is bigger than the elementary school." O: "And you like that?" "Yes". (3) The school day is longer....I don't think it should be."

"Sara" (a sixth grade girl): (1) "The teachers are really nice. (2) Most of the classes are really fun. (3) I like it."

2. What are three things about this school that you would change, if you could?

"Carl": "I don't know--nothing."

"Ann": (1) "Shorter school day, (2) less periods--maybe 6 or 7. (3) I can't think of anything else."

"Sara": (1) "Longer lunch period--more time outside with my friends. (2) To have more control over the classes that I take--we get to choose only the foreign language, which is coupled with keyboarding, or typing, or computers. (3) Not to do homework on Fridays or long weekends." O: "How much homework do you do per night?" Sara, "It depends. If I know how to do it, it takes one to two hours; if I don't know, then two to three hours." O: "If you have trouble with homework, who helps you?" Sara, "My older brother, my Mom, or my Dad."

3. How do you feel, in general, about your teachers?

"Carl": "I think they are good--they seem well educated."

"Ann": "I like most of my teachers, some I don't like." O: "The ones you don't like--can you put your finger on anything?" Ann: "No, its just a feeling."

"Sara": "I like most of them. I think they are good teachers."

4. Is there a person in this school that you would readily turn to for help on a personal problem?

Carl: "Probably (pause) my big brother who is in the eighth grade." O: "I meant an adult in the school." Carl: "Mr.---, my gym teacher. He lives on our street, my family has known him for a long time. I have known him since I was three."

Ann: "Mrs.-----, my homeroom teacher. I have a good relationship with her."

Sara: "I don't know, can I come back to this later?" "Yes." Later, "My homeroom teacher, Mrs.-----."

5. How do you feel about the way students treat one another?

Carl: "Well I think it's not that bad--I have not seen or heard of any kid tearing down or hurting another kid."

Ann: "Most of the students are pretty nice to each other. Mostly boys do not treat us very nice." O: "What do the boys do?" Ann: "Mostly play pranks on us." O: "Can you give me an example?" Ann: "I can't think of any right now."

Sara: "Well, most of the time they are nice to others, sometimes they are not." O: "How are they not?" Sara, "They interfere in our games...they never do anything really terrible, but it is annoying." O: "How do you see 6th graders getting along with 7th and 8th graders?" Sara, "They are fine to me. But I think they bother some of the others (6th graders)."

6. How do you feel, in general, about your classes? Do they challenge you?

Carl: "Yeah, I think the classes challenge me...I have pretty much homework--it's not easy...but the assignments are do-able." O: "When you have problems, who helps you?" Carl, "My mom--she's an English teacher at ---, and my dad, he's a ----teacher at ---. He's very creative."

Ann: "They teach you in a fun way."

Sara: "They are not easy, but they are not that hard either."

7. Do you have opportunities to help make decisions about what goes on in the class?

Carl: "Um, I don't know,...I don't...the teachers have everything under control...I don't want to change anything."

Ann: "Yeah, sometimes--in reading we can choose books. We can choose our foreign language. In 7th & 8th grade you get to choose your electives."

Sara: "Class discussions, book reports."