

Perceptions of educational quality in Iowa high schools
following reorganization or whole-grade sharing

by

Jyll Johnson Miner

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"When you lose your local school, you lose the center of the community."

-proverbial saying

For over three decades, American public secondary schools have become progressively larger. High school seniors once typically attended a school of 400 or fewer students. The majority of today's seniors graduate from a school with over 500 students (Fowler, 1992).

Statistics reveal the tremendous rate of school consolidations. Ravitch (1984) reported that total enrollment in elementary and secondary schools nearly doubled from 1945 to 1980. During this time period, the enrollment increased from 23 million to 40 million, and the number of schools dropped from 185,000 to under 86,000. By 1987 this number had dropped to 15,577 (Synder, 1988). In 1981 the U.S. Department of Education stated there was a general decline, not an increase, in the number of schoolage children over the past decade. Because of this decline many schools have closed.

Related to these statistics is the fact that agricultural communities under 2,500 in the United States lost 8 percent of their population between 1980-1990 (Johnson, 1991). This fact is especially a concern for small rural communities in Iowa.

Estimates place the number of schools closed since 1959 at approximately 29,000 nationwide (U.S. Department of Education, 1981). To date, most closings have been predominantly at the elementary level.

However, the number of high school students in the 1990s is expected to decline rapidly, thus fewer high schools will be needed.

Since the time the first school was created in 1830 in Lee County while Iowa was still an unorganized part of the Michigan Territory, Iowans have valued the quality of education provided to their children. By the time Iowa was organized as the Iowa Territory in 1838, over 40 log schoolhouses were in operation in the eastern part of the Territory. Historians have identified eight distinct periods of Iowa school organization since that time (Ghan, 1990).

Periods of Iowa School Organization

During 1830-1858, schools were created as a result of individual community initiative and desire, but within no general legal framework. Therefore, this time period is known as the Unorganized Period. Legislation by the Territorial Government, as well as the State Legislature after 1846, permitted various approaches to financing and organizing. At the time of statehood in 1846, 416 schools were operating in Iowa.

The Township Period from 1858-1872 was the next stage of school development. The township was established as the legal entity for organizing school districts. The laws of this period permitted the creation of an unlimited number of schools within an area, but specified the township as the legal area for taxing and organizing for public education.

The third time period was entitled Sub-districting and began in 1872 and ended in 1900. Legislation in 1872 permitted the subdivision of townships for school districts. This legislation resulted in the immediate and

chaotic fragmentation of the township school system. During this period legislation also permitted the creation of county high schools. Only one high school is known to have been created in Iowa: in 1875, Guthrie County created a county high school. It operated at Panora for a number of years serving the high school educational needs of all students in Guthrie County. During this time period, Iowa educators introduced the concept of an administrative district with multiple attendance centers.

The Consolidated School Movement from 1900-1922 was the fourth time period. The first transportation laws were enacted in 1897, permitting transportation payments from school contingency funds when a savings in expenses could be realized. Though considerable interest was evident throughout the state in the consolidation movement, few new districts were created prior to 1906. During the next fourteen years, school districts which had been created on a township basis and in subdivided townships joined with small towns and villages across the state. The creation of this type and size district was consistent with the modes of transportation and communication for this period.

The Organizational Stability Period in 1922-1953 was period five. During this period, the pattern of school organization remained almost constant. In 1922, there were 4,639 legally organized school districts. In 1953, 4,558 school districts were still in existence. In addition to the sagging agricultural economy of the 1920s and the onset of the depression of the 1930s, other factors impeded organizational change. During this thirty-year period, problems of transportation and cost of operations appear to have been

the prime deterrents to creating larger school districts. The concept of a maximum travel distance to and from school continued to be 2-3 miles.

Period six was the Community School Movement from 1953-1965. The state's policy was to encourage the reorganization of school districts into economically efficient units for economical and efficient purposes to ensure equal educational opportunity to all children in the state. The reduction of both high school and non-high school districts was sizable and consistent; however, it required ten years and additional legislation. By 1965, only 1,056 school districts were legally constituted. This was a decline of 3,502 school districts since the 1952-53 school year.

The seventh period, Enrollment Decline Period, began with the 1966-67 school year. From 1966-67 through 1984-85, reorganizations were taking place at an average of about one a year. During that time period only 17 reorganizations were passed by voters. The entire period was characterized by enrollment losses in virtually all districts. The peak number of students in Iowa was 658,602 in 1969-70, but had decreased to 478,026 by September 1989. During the same time, the number of small school districts rapidly increased.

The Restructuring Period began suddenly in 1985 and was not expected. In 1985-86, whole-grade sharing arrangements increased from four districts to ten districts. The number increased to 84 by 1989. Currently, Iowa is still in the Restructuring Period. There are 431 current school districts. Since 1965, this represents a decline of 625 school districts. The state will continue to experience different changes in sizes of communities and school enrollments, thus more periods of school reorganization will occur in the future.

School Size

Although a 1964 Kansas study showed that small schools in some respects were superior to larger ones, Conant's 1967 study emphasized the virtues of comprehensive or larger school size. Recent research has reported that smaller elementary schools may be related to student achievement. However, school size research for the secondary level has been largely overlooked (Fowler, 1992).

Fowler's (1992) review examined the effects of secondary school size on outcomes such as student attitudes, achievement, voluntary participation, and the enduring effects of education. The review, however, omitted the rural school consolidation, optimum school size, and optimum per-pupil expenditure literature.

The ongoing debate about optimum school size has never attained the magnitude or intensity of other national debates on public education. However, this does not diminish the fact that educators and researchers cannot agree on what constitutes the appropriate size for K-12 public schools. Those who prefer a larger school size emphasize the advantages of economy of scale, broad curriculum offerings, expanded extracurricular activities, and faculty/staff depth. Those who prefer a smaller school size state that the quality of education and academic achievement are attained most effectively in schools of modest size that have strong ties with the community and parents.

In summary, many small towns are facing the prospect of losing their school or entering into school sharing arrangements. Community leaders,

school boards, educators, parents, and students want to know the likely consequences if their school closes or sharing programs begin.

Statement of the Problem

With more Iowa schools finding themselves in the position of declining student enrollments, there is a need to determine the impact of school closing on parents' perceptions of the quality of education provided to students after school closings. Districts considering reorganization want guarantees they will not lose local control and the opportunity to be directly involved in children's education (Woodward, 1986). There are many unanswered questions and misconceptions because of the lack of information relating to school reorganization and consolidation.

Purpose of the Study

The average elementary school size has increased fivefold, from less than 100 students to 550 students, and the average secondary school increased to 1,000 students. By the 1987-88 school year, 35.6% of schools with 12th grade students had enrollments of 750 students or more, and more than 50% had enrollments of 500 or more students (Guthrie, 1979). Consolidation was seen as the obvious answer to the plight of small schools that could not attract specialized teachers nor offer sufficient numbers of courses. After enrollment peaked in 1970, consolidation was a mechanism used by many districts for reducing school costs.

The major purpose of this exploratory study was to determine the impact of school closing on the parents' perceptions about the quality of education provided to students. Personal information about each participant was gathered along with the Parent Opinion Inventory. These surveys were distributed to Iowa communities that had experienced school closings so that perceptions of the quality of education provided to students could be determined. Three different groups of parents were surveyed. The first group was composed of parents that had not experienced whole-grade sharing or restructuring at their high school. The second group was made up of parents of students from high schools that had participated in restructuring or whole-grade sharing within the last one to three years. The third group was made up of the parents of children from schools in communities where schools had restructured or whole-grade shared from four to ten years previously.

Research Questions

The study's research questions are:

1. What are the parents' perceptions about the quality of education provided to their children if no restructuring of any form had occurred at their high school?
2. What are the parents' perceptions about the quality of education provided to their children after being involved in some form of restructuring at the high school level within the last one to three years?

3. What are the parents' perceptions about the quality of education provided to their children after being involved in some form of restructuring at the high school level within the last four to ten years?
4. What were the differences in perceptions between the three groups of parents about the quality of education provided to their children?

Assumptions of the Study

1. Each participant in the study was a parent of a high school senior student.
2. Each participant in the study had some knowledge of the school district in which their child attends school.
3. The instrument used in the study for collecting data was valid and reliable.
4. The methods used for collecting and analyzing data were appropriate for this study.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study included the following:

1. The study only questioned the parents of seniors attending high school in Iowa.
2. The respondents were all parents in Iowa.
3. Parents were not randomly selected, rather they were parents of high school seniors who were asked to respond to the questionnaire used in this study.

Definitions of Terms

School Consolidation: The practice of combining two or more schools for educational or economic benefits. Consolidation can offer an expanded curriculum and a more prominent identity in the community while reducing costs through economy of scale.

Whole-Grade Sharing: A form of restructuring that allows two or more school boards to put their districts together by contract. High schools are usually combined, even if other buildings are not.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The number of schools decreased from approximately 262,000 to 91,000 over the same period (1930 to 1972), an approximate threefold reduction. The overwhelming proportion of the decrease in schools is accounted for by the elimination of one-teacher schools. (Guthrie, 1979, p. 18)

The historical trend toward ever larger organizational units for schooling has been described by Guthrie as a result of arguments for economic efficiency, fiscal equity, and the provision of enhanced educational benefits for students. This review discusses the literature related to the role of change, the perceptions of those involved in schools closings, and the relationship between these two concepts.

Change

Change in education is unavoidable (Lortie, 1975). When learning to be proficient at something new, initial anxiety should be expected. However, also to be expected are experiences of success and failure, incremental skill development, and, eventually, conceptual clarity and ownership (Fullan, 1985). "Change is a process, not an event" is a simple but powerful phrase that states change happens over a period of time to transform individuals and situations (Hall & Loucks, 1976). When the issue of school restructuring enters a community, those involved need to be coached on that idea. Change

is a process not an event and it takes time. Research states that studies need to go beyond theories of change (what factors explain change) to theories of changing (how change occurs, and how to use this new knowledge) (Fullan 1985). Particularly, participants in school restructuring need to know how to use new knowledge. Fullan also addresses the charm of change. It is at once simple and complex, and therein lies its fascination. Implementing plans for change are problematic because change concerns the simplicity-complexity paradox. On the one hand, examples of successful improvement make sense. On the other hand, the intrinsic dilemmas in the change process make successful change a highly complex and subtle process.

Berman (1981) and Huberman and Crandall (1982) describe change in three broad areas. The first area is initiation which includes mobilization, adoption of decisions, and development. Implementation is the second area that includes invoking change into practice. Building in the innovation is the third area which is also referred to as institutionalization. Schools entering into restructuring need to keep these three transition periods as part of their long-term goal planning. A well developed plan for change will make change a process, not an event.

The literature stresses that strategies for the future should be based on collective professional development. These strategies should take place within the school rather than on individualistic professional autonomy or its opposite, excessive dependence, which have characterized school change in the past. All concerned members of the school community need to be welcomed as participants in the restructuring process.

Average Size

Based on a nationally representative sample of schools and their staff conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 1987-88, Bobbitt and others (1992) were able to estimate the characteristics of American public schools. They estimated that in the school year 1987-88, 39.9 million students attended 78,561 public schools. The public secondary school component (excluding combined elementary/secondary schools) included 19,314 schools enrolling 14.4 million secondary school students.

If secondary public schools were identified by urbanicity (urban, suburban, rural), the vast majority, 61.4% or 11,856, could be described as rural-small city schools. Urban schools were the second most common (20.4%, 3,934), and suburban the least frequent (18.2%, 3,524).

The average size of public secondary schools in these categories was also estimated by Bobbitt. Public urban high schools averaged 1,097 students, while suburban high schools averaged 1,027 students, and rural-small city high schools averaged 543 students.

Bobbitt also examined the number of schools whose size was greater than 750. Over a quarter (26.9%) of all urban schools fall into the size category above 750 students, as do a quarter (25.8%) of all suburban schools. Only a tenth (10.1%) of all rural schools are larger than 750 (Bobbitt, 1992).

One researcher to empirically investigate secondary school size and curriculum comprehensiveness was Monk (1987).

Even if large schools take advantage of available scale economies, they may do so in a variety of ways. For example, large schools may differ from small schools only in terms of

average class size and the number of sections offered of a given set of courses. Alternatively, large schools may attempt to take advantage of returns to specialization by offering additional courses that contribute to the breadth and depth of the curriculum. (Monk, 1987, p. 137)

Monk (1987) found that "the number of different courses continues to increase with enrollment throughout the range of school sizes", rather than finding a plateau at a certain size (p. 139). Examining the breadth (the count of the number of subject areas covered) and the depth (the average number of courses in a subject area), Monk found a ceiling on breadth at 1500 students in grades 9 - 12, or, in other words, in districts with enrollments above 1500, the average number of subject areas offered did not increase. Depth, on the other hand, increased with enrollment.

In order to understand this phenomenon, Monk intensively examined English, foreign language, mathematics, and science course offerings and concluded that the difference in diversity of course offerings within a subject area for large and small high schools was not large. Monk also found that courses in large high schools were not always advanced and very specialized, but often were introductory in nature. Surprisingly, Monk found that only a small percentage of students in larger high schools enrolled in additional classes not available in small high schools.

In conclusion, Monk found that large high school size did not guarantee advanced course offerings; rather, larger high schools offered more introductory courses. In addition, few students took advantage of the additional courses offered in the large schools. Depth did increase for schools with enrollments above 400 students. However, increases in enrollments

made little difference in offering teachers the opportunity to teach more specialized classes.

The issue of the beneficial effects of school size was discussed by Barker and Gump (1964) and Conant (1967). They first compared eastern Kansas high school students who were juniors in four schools of 83 to 151 students with those in a high school of 2,287 students. Subscales investigated were student participation in school activities, student satisfaction, number of classes taken, and community employment and participation in social organizations, but not student achievement. Barker and Gump concluded that small schools were superior to large schools for all attributes they examined.

Three years later, in a study by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Carnegie Corporation, Conant, then president of Harvard, examined questionnaires from 2,024 schools of medium size (enrollments of 750-1,999) with approximately one-third of the students in the United States (Conant, 1967). Conant specifically omitted schools from which either less than 25% or more than 75% of the graduates attended college. This procedure only omitted 24% of the public high schools with a 12th grade. The response rate from the 2,024 questionnaires was about one-third. Although Conant found that size affected only the school's ability to offer a wide program of foreign languages and its ability to offer advance placement classes, he concluded that larger was superior. Conant defined comprehensive schools "as comprising schools of medium size (enrollment between 750 and 2,000)" (p. 11). McGuire (1989) noted that the notion of the comprehensive school, as a result of Conant's study, was that "larger schools

can offer more comprehensive instructional programs of greater quality at lower costs than smaller schools."

Although both arguments are curiously suspect by today's standards for quantitative research, they were persuasive and well-received by the educational community. Regardless of which group may have made the most successful argument, for the next thirty years there was a great decline in the numbers of small schools, and the average size of schools increased.

On the average, the literature shows that an effective size for a small elementary school is in the range of 300-400 students and that 400-800 students is appropriate for a secondary school (Williams, 1990). Williams also pointed out the statistical data indicated that if small schools are defined as having less than 500 students, then approximately 62% of schools could be classified as small. Such schools educate about 34% of today's students.

Issues

In 1973, Mullins identified most of the arguments for and against school district consolidation that continue to be debated today.

Proconsolidation arguments tend to be focused on economic matters and operating efficiently.

Key issues for consolidation are:

- a) reducing administration staff,
- b) increasing utilization of facilities and teachers,
- c) saving through bulk purchases and combined busing costs,

- d) offering a wider range of programs in all areas of instruction at lesser cost,
- e) eliminating confusion created by separate elementary and secondary districts,
- f) providing curriculum continuity for K through 12 and
- g) responsiveness to financial court battles.

Consolidation of schools has both curricular and financial advantages. First, consolidation often enables consolidated schools to share courses and facilities. Sharing results in a more varied curriculum because fewer classes are dropped due to low enrollment. Expenditures for capital improvements and basic maintenance are reduced because there is no need to upgrade or maintain duplicate facilities.

Consolidation often means fewer teachers. Consolidated schools, moreover, do not normally employ as many administrative personnel.

Consolidation of schools can also produce psychological benefits. When combined, schools often gain a confidence and an identity in the community they did not have previously. Sports programs and extracurricular activities flourish in consolidated schools (Kay, 1982).

Anticonsolidation arguments according to Mullen, include:

- a) bigger is not necessarily better,
- b) large districts can become large educational structures,
- c) monetary savings can be wiped out by bureaucracies with their attendant red tape and inefficiency,
- d) two or more inefficient districts do not necessarily combine into one efficient district,

- e) small classes mean more individual attention to students,
- f) local control is lost,
- g) domination of an entire district by a more populous or politically powerful portion of it,
- h) generation of feuds between town and country,
- i) one school board is not necessarily better than two and,
- j) busing problems.

Some educators (Beckner & O'Neal, 1980) stress the benefits of small schools and question the effectiveness of school consolidation. They suggest that small schools are able to perform functions that are impossible in larger schools. Small schools usually provide closer relationships between faculty and administration, a smaller teacher-pupil ratio, and an enhanced potential for individualized instruction.

According to Kay (1982), a leading research analyst in the school consolidation field, a school system "considering consolidation ought to investigate the nature, extent, and strength of other community institutions and social service agencies serving any community facing possible loss of its schools" (p. 9). In places where the school is the sole source of community services, loss of the school would be greatly felt. School officials, in such cases, should be reluctant to consolidate. Conversely, communities with strong networks of organizations and facilities are better equipped to withstand consolidation.

Concerns for economic efficiency and school size must not outweigh the effect of school consolidation on the community. Only by granting equal importance to all the major factions can decision-makers ensure that "narrow

concerns about formal schooling do not unconsciously override broader educational concerns and the general well being of the community to which those broader educational concerns are intimately connected" (Kay, 1982, p. 10).

Ebmeier Study

Ebmeier conducted a report in 1986 on the effects of closing Wheaton Warrenville High School in a large Chicago suburb. Data showed that the school closure did not have any measurable impact on student's grades or on achievement as measured by standardized tests, nor did it affect students' attitudes such as self-concept.

Parent attitudes, however, reflected many negative perceptions of the school closure's effect on the school community and on the academic achievement of the students. These negative opinions were partly attributed to parents' lack of access to factual data, to the degree of controversy reported by the press, and to the perceptions of what the parents believed to be the community consensus.

Ebmeier (1986) used the nationally published instrument, the Parent Opinion Inventory (Part A), developed by the National Study of School Evaluations. Ebmeier's study included parents of students from all grade levels. The Chicago study included 374 responses from parents of high school students. The study consisted of closed-ended Likert-type questions organized around eleven themes. Included in the eleven themes from Ebmeier's study were seven subscales that this present study chose to target. The seven themes include parent-school relations, instructional outcomes, school

problems, program factors, student activities, support services, and general psychological climate of the school. (These themes are described in more detail below.)

Respondents were a cross-section of elementary, middle school, and high school parents. Every sixth parent was selected from an alphabetized student list starting at a random point. The actual sample selected at each school was proportional to the number of students attending each school. Therefore, the selected sample was considered representative of the parents of the district as a whole.

The averages for each question from former Monroe and Wheaton Warrenville high school parents were less positive than the other schools. Parents of high school students had the most negative feelings followed by middle school parents. The magnitude of the difference was greater from parents of high school students who had transferred. They reported significantly more negative feelings to almost all categories of questions than the parents of non-transferred students. This was in sharp contrast to parents of elementary students, where few significant differences existed between the responses of transferred and non-transferred parents.

One interesting aspect of the study was the comparison of parents' opinions regarding the effect of reorganization on grades and academic achievement of their children with the actual grades obtained that same year. Although parents felt their children were receiving lower marks, in actuality the grades were the same or slightly higher than the previous year.

To summarize Ebmeier's findings, it appears that school closures have little effect on student achievement or internal personality characteristics.

The extent people believed school closures had a damaging effect on the school community as a whole was another issue. Survey respondents reflected what they believed to be the community consensus. The more difficult and divisive the school closure the more negative was the overall responses.

Concerns

Moray (1985) reviewed the literature on school consolidation with attention to the fact that consolidation now faces elementary schools as well as junior and senior high schools. The shift in school-neighborhood alliances may leave deep scars in school-community relations, or it may provide an opportunity for the lay public and educators to work together in a cooperative venture to maintain and perhaps even raise the quality of educational programs in their district. The experience of school districts that have consolidated indicated that the keys to success were planning, communication, and community involvement.

A major concern of parents is the loss of involvement in their local school. A report of the American Association of School Administrators (1974) reveals the concerns parents have for their children:

- Does the new school offer a comparable or better educational system?
- Will the "already-there" students be favored by the teachers and the principal?
- Does the new school offer after-class activity programs; if so, is there a late bus?

Cleveland (1980), former Executive Director of the Alexandria (Virginia) Education Association, sums up consolidation by saying,

School consolidation is not a numbers game; it is a persons game. It has lasting effects on the lives of students, parents, community members, school board members, administrators, and teachers. In the final analysis, consolidation means change.

How teachers cope with consolidation is closely related to how each, as an individual, copes with change. Some see a challenge; others, see a threat. In different ways, each will help students learn one of the most important lessons of their lives: how they, too, can cope with a constantly changing world (p. 47).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Little information was found about the current status of school restructuring in Iowa. Thus, this descriptive exploratory research study was designed to determine information about school restructuring in Iowa high schools. This chapter describes the methodology used to conduct this research study. The summary of the research methodology includes sections on a description of the sample, the selection of Part A of the Parent Opinion Inventory, the development of Part B of the Parent Opinion Survey, the research procedure, the limitations, and the data analysis.

Selection of the Instrument for Part A

The Parent Opinion Inventory (POI), developed by the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE), was selected for this exploratory study to assess and analyze the opinions of parents. Since 1933, the NSSE has provided materials to assist schools in evaluating effectiveness. The Parent Opinion Inventory (POI) was developed to accomplish three goals:

1. Assess parents' opinions in reference to their school and its programs.
2. Provide parents an opportunity to make specific recommendations for improvement.

3. Provide valuable data for school personnel in the decision-making process relative to program development, policy formulation, administrative organization, faculty development, and community relations.

Part A of the Parent Opinion Inventory (POI) consists of 51 Likert scale items covering a broad spectrum of school operations. The POI is in Appendix A. These items were designed to gain a considerable amount of information about the school, as economically as possible. The intent was to provide the opinions of parents about how the school is meeting the needs of the students.

Parent responses from Part A of the POI were used to determine information about: (1) attitude toward parent-school relations (POI-R), (2) instructional outcomes (POI-I), (3) school problems (POI-P), (4) program factors (POI-F), (5) student activities (POI-A), (6) support services (POI-S), and (7) psychosocial climate (POI-C).

The first of the seven attitude variables examined in this exploratory study was parent-school relations (POI-R). Participants were asked questions about the different aspects of their relationship as parents with the school and how they felt about that relationship. Several themes were apparent in this subscale. Communication between parents and the school about students and about decisions affecting the school were components of several questions in this area. Also, parental involvement was surveyed. (Were parents involved and made to feel they were welcome?) In conjunction with

both of the above themes, parents were also questioned about the availability of the school staff. The term parent-school relations means how the parents and the school related to each other. In this subscale, the questions were directed at that relationship concept.

The instructional outcomes (POI-I) subscale was the second variable studied. Parents were asked to respond to questions concerning the way the school prepares students. A series of questions asked if the school was doing a good job teaching the basic instructional areas, such as language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and physical and mental health. The POI-I subscale also asked participants if they believed the school program was doing a good job helping students to get along with others, understand their moral and ethical responsibilities, and adequately preparing students to continue their education at more advanced levels. Another aspect of this subscale surveyed parents about whether the school was helping students cope with a rapidly changing society and helping them understand world problems. The general theme of the instructional outcomes subscale was to determine if parents thought students were learning all they could from their school experiences and if they were prepared to enter the "real world" after graduation.

The third subscale defined in this study was school problems (POI-P). Parents were questioned about general problems at the school and if they felt they were serious. Such problems included students' use of alcohol and drugs, vandalism, outsiders that may pose a threat, and student absenteeism. To correlate with such problems, parents were surveyed about whether they thought lack of discipline was a serious problem at their school.

The subscale that asked parents about the total educational program was the program factors subscale (POI-F). Questions grouped into this subscale asked parents if students had a sufficient amount of homework to promote achievement and if the marks on assignments and course grades received the right amount of emphasis. Questions also asked parents if teachers were competent and if the total variety of instructional topics was adequate. These factors corresponded to the total academic package offered to the student.

The student activities subscale (POI-A) asked parents about the activities program. Is the program sufficient to meet the needs of all students? Is participation in the activities program an important aspect of the students' total educational experience? Parents were asked if the role and emphasis on the athletics program was adequate. Also, participants were questioned if they felt some students did not participate because of the expense. Parents were asked if appropriate emphasis was placed on social development. The student activities subscale was created to ask parents about the activity programs offered to their children.

Parents were asked about their attitudes towards the support services provided to their children. These questions were analyzed in the support services (POI-S) subscale. Parents were asked if the counseling and guidance program, health services, to-and-from transportation services, and the lunch program were adequate to meet the needs of the students. Also in this subscale, parents were questioned about the facilities and if they were well maintained. The support services (POI-S) subscale's questions covered a broad area of the different support services students encounter daily.

The seventh and last subscale in this study was the psychosocial climate scale (POI-C). Parents were asked if they felt students had good morale and if they felt the teachers were concerned about them. This subscale sought to find out if parents and students had a good working relationship and if students were motivated to do their best. In addition, parents were asked about the school's rules and regulations affecting students. (Were they reasonable?) The general theme of this last subscale was the respect that students showed each other, and their teachers and parents.

The Development of The Parent Opinion Survey (POS) for Part B

The Parent Opinion Survey Part B was developed by a committee made up of an Iowa State University professor, one research associate, and two graduate students from the Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE). Part B supplemented the standardized instrument in Part A for this exploratory study. There were two major purposes of Part B: obtain demographic information about the respondents; and pinpoint specific questions the committee wanted to address related to the closing of high schools.

The questions on the first half of Part B were made up of Likert-type items. Participants were asked to answer in terms of how they thought changes had affected their school or community. Parents who had no restructuring in their communities were asked how they thought their school or community would react if restructuring occurred in the future. Areas investigated were the overall quality of the school, student

achievement, choice of courses, accessibility to technology (such as computers), choice of extracurricular activities, student participation in extracurricular activities and student attitudes about school.

Respondents also answered questions that provided demographic information such as how many miles they lived from their school, whether they lived within the city limits or in a rural area, and how many children they had enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire

Attention must be given to determining the validity of the instrument used for a research study (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1985). One method to assess content validity of an instrument is to have experts or professionals familiar with the purpose of the survey examine the items to determine whether they measure what they are supposed to measure. As indicated earlier, the National Study of School Evaluation created the Parent Opinion Inventory.

Previous editions of the POI had been successfully utilized for many years. In the development process for the 1988 edition, the inventory was presented to a committee of students, teachers, and counselors for review. Their instructions were to delete obsolete items; to develop new items to cover areas of omission; and to alter the vocabulary of items where terms were unclear, lacked focus or were not widely used. The inventory was then submitted to a board of professional educators for suggestions and

restructuring. The work of this committee resulted in a revised inventory. This study on school consolidation used the 1988 revised edition of the POI.

This inventory was field tested in three schools widely separated geographically. One hundred and fifty-six parents were involved in the field test and responded to the inventory. Field test data for the POI yielded an alpha reliability of .94 for the full scale with a median reliability for the subscales of .74 (National Study of School Evaluation, 1988).

No reliability information was collected for the POS because no analyses were conducted using the data collected for the POS. Answers to POS questions were analyzed only with descriptive analysis.

Community Selection

Two primary criteria were used in determining the 25 communities: length of time since the high school attendance center closed, and configuration based on the sizes of the partner districts. First, the districts were grouped according to the year the school attendance center ceased operation, either through whole-grade sharing or reorganization. Two categories were chosen to allow for assessing the impact of the school closing over time. Attendance centers that had ceased operation within the last three years were categorized as recent closings. Those that had ceased operation four to ten years ago were categorized as long-term closings. Districts that were reorganized prior to 1981 were not included in the list of possible sites. The year the high school attendance center dissolved was determined from information contained in the Iowa Department of Education Reorganization Series XIX-1991.

In addition to the categorization of recent or long-term closing, schools were grouped by configuration of the reorganization or grade sharing arrangement. Configuration was defined as pairs of districts of proportionate size and pairs of disproportionate size. Disproportionate size was defined as one school district having more than three times the student enrollment level of the partner district. The Iowa Educational Directory: 1991-1992 School Year provided enrollment data. For districts that had reorganized prior to 1991, the directory contained information on total enrollment for the combined districts. For those cases, disproportionate size was defined as one community having a population at least three times larger than the partner community. A 1991 Iowa map was used to determine community populations.

In general, districts of proportionate size had two-way sharing agreements with one district receiving high school students and the partner district receiving middle school or elementary students. Districts of disproportionate size tended to have agreements with the larger district receiving the high school students but sending no students to the partner district. For the purposes of this study, sender and receiver districts were defined by the location of the high school attendance center.

The reorganized districts, and districts with whole-grade sharing agreements were classified as follows:

1. School districts of proportionate size with whole-grade sharing agreements or reorganized within the last three years.

2. School districts of disproportionate size with whole-grade sharing agreements or reorganized within the last three years.
3. School districts of proportionate size with whole-grade sharing agreements or reorganized four to ten years ago.
4. School districts of disproportionate size with whole-grade sharing agreements or reorganized four to ten years ago.

Based on these criteria, ten paired districts were selected from the "recent" group, six of proportionate size and four of disproportionate size. Ten paired districts were also selected from the "four to ten-year" group (long term group), six of proportionate size and four of disproportionate size.

In the "recent" group, four paired districts with whole-grade sharing agreements or had reorganized in 1991-1992 were selected. Three paired districts were selected from the 1990-1991 and 1989-1990 academic years. In the long-term group, three paired districts each from the 1988-1989 and 1987-1988 academic years were selected, as were four paired districts with whole-grade sharing agreements or reorganized prior to or during the 1986-1987 academic year. Attempts were made to ensure representation from across the state. Communities were selected as a representative sample by location within the state, size of school, and Area Education Agencies (AEA).

The AEAs replaced the county school boards in the late 1960s. The 15 AEAs are distributed throughout the state and are able to provide comprehensive special education, media, and educational services. Often, AEA consultants are sought for their advice concerning possible restructuring in school districts.

The preliminary list of selection sites can be found in Appendix C. The year the districts began whole-grade sharing, year of reorganization, district populations, and enrollment levels, AEA, and location of the current high school are included. Also included in Appendix B is the list of sites.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Parent responses from the Parent Opinion Inventory (POI) were used to determine information about: (1) attitude toward parent-school relations, (2) instructional outcomes, (3) school problems, (4) program factors, (5) student activities, (6) support services, and (7) psychosocial climate. The Parent Opinion Survey Part B supplemented the POI and was used for two major purposes. The first purpose was to obtain demographic information about the respondents. The second was to pinpoint specific questions related to the closing of high schools. In this chapter, an analysis of the data gathered is presented. Tests used included an analysis of variance and the scheffe's test.

Description of the Respondents

For this exploratory study, information was gathered about the respondents' demographic characteristics from the Parent Opinion Survey. Of the 364 parents who responded to the survey, 73.1% were female and 23.1% were male. (Of the 364 parents, 3.8% left this question blank) Most of the respondents (42.6%) were high school graduates. Sixteen percent (16.5%) were also college graduates, while twenty-five percent (25.8%) had some college. Forty-six percent of the respondents (46.2%) had lived in the same community for over twenty years, and thirty-three percent (33.5%) had lived there between eleven to twenty years. More than fifty percent (51.6%) of the respondents lived within the city limits and only forty-five percent (45.9%)

lived in a rural area. Thirty-three percent (33.0%) had at least two children of school age, thirty-one percent (31.6%) had one child of school age, and twenty-one percent (21.2%) had three children of school age. Sixty percent (62.4%) of the respondents had not attended school in the community in which they now lived, while thirty percent (34.9%) had.

The high school enrollments and per pupil costs from parents' schools were also examined. Parents from districts that had never restructured had an average high school enrollment of 454 students. Their cost per pupil average was \$4491. Parents from districts that had restructured in the past one to three years had an average high school enrollment of 524 students and a per pupil cost average of \$4532. Parents from districts that had been involved in restructuring four to ten years ago had an average high school enrollment of 597 students and a per pupil cost of \$4865.

A total of 364 surveys were returned (Table 1). Of these 364, 66 (18.1%) were respondents from never restructured districts (group 1). There were 141 (38.7%) respondents from schools that had been involved with restructuring the past one to three years (group 2), and 157 (43.1%) respondents from districts that had been involved with restructuring the past four to ten years (group 3).

In summary, the participants in this exploratory research study were predominantly female high school graduates who had lived in the same community for the past twenty years or longer. The majority of the respondents also had one or two children of school age and the majority of the respondents had not attended school where they currently lived.

Table 1. Number of responding parents from schools

| <u>Group 1: Never restructured schools</u> | | | |
|--|-------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| | <u>Sent</u> | <u>Returned</u> | <u>Return rate</u> |
| A * | 37 | 9 | 24.3% |
| B | 40 | 16 | 40.0% |
| C | 65 | 14 | 21.5% |
| D | 53 | 8 | 15.1% |
| E | 35 | 12 | 34.3% |
| F | 22 | 7 | 31.8% |
| TOTAL | 252 | 66 | 26% |
| <u>Group 2: Restructured 1 - 3 years</u> | | | |
| G | 60 | 14 | 23.3% |
| H | 67 | 22 | 32.8% |
| I | 52 | 16 | 30.8% |
| J | 66 | 26 | 39.4% |
| K | 39 | 15 | 38.5% |
| L | 52 | 15 | 28.8% |
| M | 44 | 19 | 43.2% |
| N | 26 | 9 | 34.6% |
| O | 50 | 5 | 10% |
| TOTAL | 456 | 141 | 31% |
| <u>Group 3: Restructured 4-10 years</u> | | | |
| P | 105 | 26 | 24.8% |
| Q | 53 | 13 | 24.5% |
| R | 50 | 17 | 34.0% |
| S | 36 | 9 | 25.0% |
| T | 75 | 15 | 20.0% |
| U | 151 | 22 | 14.6% |
| V | 35 | 27 | 31.8% |
| X | 28 | 2 | 7.1% |
| Y | 21 | 6 | 28.6% |
| TOTAL | 639 | 157 | 25% |
| GRAND TOTAL OF RESPONDENTS | 364 | | |

* = letters equal the 25 different schools involved

Understanding the Data

Respondents were separated into three groups. Respondents from the first group were in communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind (group 1). Respondents from the second group lived in communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years (group 2). Respondents from group three's schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously (group 3).

In order to analyze the opinions of the respondents, each of the statements in the POI was assigned a numerical value. The Likert scale for the POI was as follows: strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, undecided = 3, disagree = 2 and strongly disagree = 1. (The higher the mean response, the more positive the answer was.)

It was clear that respondents to the POI and the Parent Opinion Survey (POS) were generally positive in nature. Most mean scores on the POI were in the 3 range. For the seven subscales on the POI, significant differences were determined between the three groups. The majority of respondents on the Parent Opinion Survey felt the restructuring had not changed their schools, or if it had it was a slight improvement on the specific questions listed on the Parent Opinion Survey.

Subscales

Parent-school relations (POI-R)

POI-R respondents were asked about their attitudes toward parent-school relations. There was a considerable difference in attitudes for the subscale between group one (never) and group two (1-3 yrs), and group one (never) and group three (4-10 yrs). There was no significant difference between group two (1-3 yrs) and group three (4-10 yrs; Table 2). As stated earlier, this attitude variable referred to parents' perceptions of the quality of the relationship between the parents and the school.

Group one's (never) mean response was 3.91, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.57 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was 3.54. Therefore, parents from schools which had no form of restructuring had a more positive attitude about their relationship with the school than did parents from schools that had some form of restructuring in the past.

Instructional outcomes (POI-O)

When surveyed about the next attitude variable, instructional outcomes, there was a significant difference between group one (never) and group three (4-10 yrs) (Table 3). As stated before, instructional outcomes refers perceptions of the academic preparation of students. Group one's (never) mean response was 3.68, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.50, while group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was 3.34. Parents whose children attended schools where restructuring occurred four to ten years ago did not have as positive an attitude about the POI-O as did the group of parents from schools where no restructuring had occurred.

School problems (POI-P)

For the POI-P subscale, school problems, there were significant differences between group one (never) and the other two groups. Group one's (never) average was 3.66, group two's (1-3 yrs) average was 3.50 and group three's (4-10 yrs) average was 3.22 (Table 4). As explained earlier, the questions from this subscale reflected perceptions about school problems. These respondents generally agreed with this concept, but to varying degrees. Parents from the schools that had restructured four to ten years ago held the least positive attitude toward these types of questions.

Program factors (POI-F)

When parents answered the questions about program factors, all three groups reported a higher mean average than for other subscales. There were considerable differences between group one (never) and the other two groups. Group one's (never) mean average was 3.81, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean average was 3.67, and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean average was 3.47 (Table 5). Parents from districts that had no form of restructuring had the most positive attitudes about program factors. Program factors refers to the total educational experience the student was offered. Again, parents from schools that restructured four to ten years ago had the least positive attitudes.

Student activities (POI-A)

POI-A respondents were surveyed about student activities. The three groups scores fell into their usual patterns. Parents from schools that had encountered no restructuring had the most positive attitudes towards student (mean score of 3.72 Table 6). However, group two (1-3 yrs) was not significantly different from group one (never) with a mean score of 3.57. The

Table 2. Analysis of variance test - attitude toward parent/school relations subscale (POI-R).

| A. Descriptive statistics | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|--|
| | Mean ^a | Standard Deviation | Number | |
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.91 | .59 | 66 | |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.57 | .65 | 139 | |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 3.54 | .69 | 157 | |

| B. Analysis of variance | | | | |
|-------------------------|------|--------|------|---------|
| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
| Between | 2 | 7.08 | 3.54 | 8.04 |
| Within | 359 | 157.93 | .44 | p=.0004 |
| Total | 361 | 165.01 | | |

Note: Results of scheffe's test show significant differences between group one and group two and group one and group three

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

1-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

4-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

Table 3. Analysis of variance test - attitude toward instructional outcomes subscale (POI-O).

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------|---------|
| A. Descriptive statistics | | | | |
| | Mean ^a | Standard deviation | | Number |
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.68 | .52 | | 66 |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.50 | .49 | | 139 |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 3.34 | .66 | | 157 |
| B. Analysis of variance | | | | |
| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
| Between | 2 | 5.66 | 2.83 | 8.44 |
| Within | 359 | 120.46 | .33 | p=.0003 |
| Total | 361 | 126.13 | | |

Note: Results of a scheffe's test show a significant difference between group one and group three

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

1-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

4-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

Table 4. Analysis of variance test - attitudes toward school problems subscale (POI-P)

| A. Descriptive statistics | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|--|
| | Mean ^a | Standard deviation | Number | |
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.66 | .63 | 66 | |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.50 | .60 | 139 | |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 3.22 | .73 | 156 | |

| B. Analysis of variance | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------|--------|------|---------|
| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
| Between | 2 | 10.81 | 5.40 | 12.02 |
| Within | 358 | 160.89 | .44 | p=.0001 |
| Total | 360 | 171.71 | | |

Note: Results of a scheffe's test show significant differences between group one and group three and between group two and group three

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

1-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

4-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

Table 5. Analysis of variance test - attitude toward program factors subscale (POI-F).

A. Descriptive statistics

| | Mean ^a | Standard deviation | Number |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.81 | .49 | 66 |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.67 | .49 | 139 |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 3.47 | .60 | 157 |

B. Analysis of variance

| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
|---------|------|--------|------|---------|
| Between | 2 | 6.15 | 3.07 | 10.27 |
| Within | 359 | 107.47 | .29 | p=.0001 |
| Total | 361 | 113.62 | | |

Note: Results of a scheffe's test shows significant differences between group one and group three and between group two and group three

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

Table 6. Analysis of variance test - attitudes toward student activities subscale (POI-A).

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|
| A. Descriptive statistics | | | | |
| | Mean ^a | Standard deviation | Number | |
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.72 | .65 | 66 | |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.57 | .49 | 139 | |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 3.43 | .61 | 157 | |
| B. Analysis of variance | | | | |
| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
| Between | 2 | 4.00 | 2.00 | 5.89 |
| Within | 359 | 121.98 | .33 | p=.003 |
| Total | 361 | 125.99 | | |

Note: Results of a scheffe's test show a significant difference between group one and group three.

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

1-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

4-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

only significant difference was between group one (never) and group three (4-10 yrs). Group three's (4-10 yrs) mean score was 3.43.

As described previously, respondents to this subscale answered questions referring to student participation in school activities. POI-A respondents from schools that were involved in restructuring four to ten years ago did not have as positive an attitude as did the other two groups.

Support services (POI-S)

Similar results were found when respondents were surveyed about their school's support services. Group three (4-10 yrs) had significantly lower attitudes than the other two groups. Group one's (never) mean response was 3.80, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.64 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was a 2.42 (Table 7). This represents the greatest of differences between group three and the other two groups. POI-S respondents whose schools restructured four to ten years ago were relatively negative about the support services provided to their students.

Psychosocial climate (POI-C)

The last subscale addressed was psychosocial climate. Again, group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response (3.50) (Table 8) was significantly less positive than the mean response of group one (never) (3.91) and group two (1-3 yrs) (3.69). As stated earlier, POI-C questions addressed parents' perceptions about the morale of the students and staff. POI-C respondents from schools that restructured four to ten years ago reported less positively about the psychosocial climate of their schools than did the other two groups.

In summary, for each of the seven subscales addressed in this exploratory research study, respondents from schools that had never

restructured expressed the most positive opinions. The mean average for each group in each subscale fell in the 3 range, except for the support service subscale.

Table 7. Analysis of variance test - attitude toward support services subscale (POI-S).

| A. Descriptive statistics | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|--|
| | Mean ^a | Standard deviation | Number | |
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.80 | .45 | 66 | |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.64 | .48 | 139 | |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 2.42 | 1.75 | 157 | |

| B. Analysis of variance | | | | |
|-------------------------|------|--------|-------|---------|
| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
| Between | 2 | 143.67 | 71.83 | 49.16 |
| Within | 359 | 524.59 | 1.46 | p=.0001 |
| Total | 361 | 668.26 | | |

Note: Results of a scheffe' test shows significant differences between group one and group three and group two and group three.

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

1-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

4-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

Table 8. Analysis of variance test - attitude toward psychosocial climate subscale (POI-C).

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|---------|
| A. Descriptive statistics | | | | |
| | Mean ^a | Standard deviation | Number | |
| Grp. 1 (never) | 3.91 | .62 | 66 | |
| Grp. 2 (1-3 yrs) | 3.69 | .58 | 139 | |
| Grp. 3 (4-10 yrs) | 3.50 | .71 | 157 | |
| B. Analysis of variance | | | | |
| Source | d.f. | SS | MS | F |
| Between | 2 | 8.57 | 4.28 | 10.12 |
| Within | 359 | 151.97 | .42 | p=.0001 |
| Total | 361 | 160.55 | | |

Note: Results of a scheffe's test show significant differences between group one and group three and group two and group three.

a: Possible Range 1 - 5 with higher scores indicating a more positive attitude

never: respondents from communities whose schools had never been involved in restructuring of any kind

1-3 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved with some form of restructuring during the past one to three years

4-10 yrs: respondents from communities whose schools had been involved in some form of restructuring four to ten years previously

Additional Questions About Schools

The Parent Opinion Survey (POS) examined the effects of school restructuring on Iowa schools. Parents were also asked to answer questions about their schools. The seven questions included: overall quality of the school, student achievement, choice of courses, accessibility to technology, choice of extracurricular activities, student participation in extracurricular activities, and student attitudes about school. Parents used a Likert scale to evaluate these questions also. The Parent Opinion Survey's Likert scale was the opposite of the POI's Likert scale. The lower a number the more positive the response. (much better = 1, slightly better = 2, no change = 3, slightly worse = 4, much worse = 5) Since these questions were single items, no tests of inference were considered appropriate. The mean scores of the three groups were reported for comparison purposes only (Table 9).

Quality

Parents from all three groups felt the overall quality of their schools had not changed. Group one's (never) mean response was 3.11, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.5 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was 3.61. Therefore, parents from schools which had no form of restructuring had the most positive attitudes (lowest mean score). Having experienced restructuring of some kind, group two (1-3 yrs) and group three (4-10 yrs) felt restructuring had not changed the overall quality of the school.

Student achievement

When surveyed about student achievement, group three (4-10 yrs) held the highest (least positive) mean score at 3.46. Group one's (never)

mean response was 3.06 and group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.38. Parents whose children attended schools where restructuring occurred four to ten years ago did not have as positive an attitude about student achievement as did the group of parents from schools where no restructuring had occurred.

Choice of courses

Group one's (never) mean average was 3.79, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean average was 3.75 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean average was 3.75. The three groups did not feel as positive.

Accessibility to technology

Parents were surveyed about the accessibility their children had to technology, specifically computers. Parents from schools that had encountered no restructuring (group 1) had the lowest mean score (more positive) of 3.22. Group two (1-3yrs) had a mean response of 3.52 and group three (4-10 yrs) had a mean response of 3.78. Respondents from schools that were involved in restructuring four to ten years ago did not have as positive an attitude as did the other two groups when surveyed about accessibility to technology.

Choice of extracurricular activities

Similar results were found when respondents were surveyed about the choice of extracurricular activities. Group one's (never) mean response was 3.33 and again the lowest of the three (more positive). Group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.35 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was 3.64. Parents whose schools restructured four to ten years ago felt more negative about the choice of extracurricular activities.

Student participation in extracurricular activities

For the question that asked about student participation in extracurricular activities group one's (never) mean response was 2.74, group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.18 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was 3.30. Respondents whose schools had never restructured had the most positive mean response to this question, while respondents from schools that had restructured 4-10 years ago felt more negative than the other two groups.

Attitude of students about the school

Group one (never) again had a lower mean response (more positive) than the other two groups when surveyed about their perceptions of the attitudes of students about school. Group one's (never) mean response was 2.74. Group two's (1-3 yrs) mean response was 3.31 and group three's (4-10 yrs) mean response was 3.24. The respondents fell into their usual pattern on this question also. Parents from schools that had never restructured felt their students held slightly better attitudes about school, while parents from schools that had restructured 4 - 10 years ago felt more negative.

In summary, for each of the seven questions, respondents from schools that had never restructured expressed the most positive opinions. These results were supportive of the results from the POI.

Group 1:

Never Restructured

| | quality of education | student achievement | choice of courses | accessibility to technology | choice of extracurr. | student part. extracurr. | attitude of students |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mean ^a | 3.11* | 3.06 | 3.79 | 3.22 | 3.33 | 2.74 | 2.74 |
| Stand. Deviation Number | 1.03 59 | .81 58 | .66 59 | .96 59 | 1.10 59 | 1.19 59 | .97 59 |

Group 2:

Restruct. 1-3 yrs

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Mean ^a | 3.5 | 3.38 | 3.75 | 3.52 | 3.35 | 3.18 | 3.31 |
| Stand. Deviation Number | 1.00 138 | .84 138 | .79 138 | .89 138 | .8 138 | 1.01 138 | .99 138 |

Group 3:

Restruct. 4-10 yrs

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Mean ^a | 3.61 | 3.46 | 3.75* | 3.78 | 3.64 | 3.30 | 3.24 |
| Stand. Deviation Number | 1.02 149 | .81 150 | .92 149 | .98 150 | .85 150 | 1.00 150 | 1.00 150 |

* = lower numbers indicate more positive attitudes
a = possible range 1 - 5

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with a brief summary of the study. The summary is followed by a discussion of the results. Ebmeier's results are compared to this study's results, and finally the relationship of change and restructuring is discussed. Such discussions may help communities that may in the future undergo restructuring of some form.

For decades, American secondary schools have become progressively larger. In the 1930s, high schools typically had enrollments of 400 students or less. Today, the majority of high schools have over 500 students (Fowler, 1992).

School consolidations have occurred at a rapid rate. Ravitch (1984) reported that from 1945 to 1980, total enrollment in elementary and secondary schools nearly doubled. However, while enrollment increased, the number of schools dropped from 185,000 to under 86,000. By 1987, this number had dropped to 15,577 (Snyder, 1988). There was a general decline, not an increase, in the number of schoolaged children over the last decade. Because of this decline, many schools have closed.

Most closings have been predominantly at the elementary level. However, the number of high school students in the 1990s is also expected to decline rapidly. Fowler (1992) reported that smaller elementary schools are beneficial to student achievement, but school size research for the secondary level has been less clear.

The major purpose of this exploratory study was to determine the perceptions of parents about the impact of school closings on the quality of education provided to students. This was accomplished by evaluating the 364 parent surveys that were returned. For both the Parent Opinion Inventory and the supplemental Parent Opinion Survey used in this study, parents from schools that had never restructured expressed more positive attitudes about the quality of education their children were receiving than did the parents from districts that had restructured.

When reviewing the results from this exploratory study, it must be noted the 364 returned surveys represent 27% of the total surveys sent out. These reflect the opinions of parents from 25 Iowa school districts. These 25 districts represent 6% of Iowa school districts. Therefore, results from both the POI and Parent Opinion Survey were interpreted with caution.

The seven subscales addressed by the Parent Opinion Inventory were: (1) parent-school relations, (2) instructional outcomes, (3) school problems, (4) program factors, (5) student activities, (6) support services, and (7) psychosocial climate.

The Parent Opinion Inventory (Part A) was used to assess the seven major areas of concern regarding school consolidation. Part A of the Parent Opinion Inventory was made up of 51 Likert items covering a broad spectrum of school operations. These items were designed to gain a considerable amount of information about the school, as economically as possible. The intent of the researcher who developed the Parent Opinion Inventory was to provide school personnel with the opinions of parents about how the school was meeting the needs of students. The intent was not to compare one

school with another, but to point out strengths and limitations with a view toward improvement.

Parent-school relations (POI-R) questions asked parents about their relationship with the school and how they feel about that relationship. Communication, involvement, and staff availability were the key issues addressed in these questions of this subscale. Instructional outcome (POI-I) questions surveyed parents about how they felt the school was preparing their children academically and socially for a changing world. The subscale of school problems (POI-P) questioned parents about general problems at school and if they thought such problems were of a serious nature. Such problems included drug and alcohol use, vandalism, and absenteeism. The subscale that questioned parents about the total educational program was the program factors (POI-F) subscale.

Questions referred to academic preparation, teacher competency and variety of instructional topics. Parents were questioned about the activities program (POI-A) in the next subscale. (Is the program sufficient to meet the needs of all students?) The support services (POI-S) subscale questioned respondents about their attitudes towards the support services their children are receiving. Such services included the counseling and guidance, health, to-and-from transportation, and lunch programs. The last subscale investigated was psychosocial climate (POI-C). In general parents were asked about student morale and teacher concern for students in this area.

On the POI the mean for each group in each subscale was in the 3 range, except support services. Group three (4-10 yrs) held significantly less positive attitudes in two subscales on the POI, support services and

psychosocial climate, than did the other two groups. Generally, the parents in all three groups on the POI felt slightly positive about the quality of education their children were receiving with mean scores above three

The Parent Opinion Survey Part B supplemented the standardized instrument in Part A. Part B of the Parent Opinion Survey had two major purposes: to obtain demographic information about the respondents and to pinpoint specific questions the committee wanted to address related to the closing of high schools. These specific questions were: the overall quality of the school, student achievement, choice of courses, student achievement, choice of courses, accessibility to technology, choice of extracurricular activities, student participation in extracurricular activities and student attitudes about school.

Part B of the Parent Opinion Survey's results were similar when compared to the results from the Parent Opinion Inventory. Parents from districts where no restructuring had ever occurred had more favorable attitudes towards the school. Parents from districts that had been involved with restructuring four to ten years ago were the least satisfied group of the three groups.

There were 1,347 POI surveys distributed to parents of Iowa high school seniors for this exploratory study. Parents received the surveys in one of three ways. The first method of distribution was direct mailing to parents. Schools prepared mailing labels for the stamped envelopes provided by the researcher. Schools then mailed the POI surveys. The second method of distribution was to give the parents the surveys at parent-teacher conferences in the Fall of 1992. The third method of distribution was to pass the surveys

out at school. The students then took the surveys home to their parents. In all three cases, there was only one survey sent to each home. In all three possible distribution methods a self-addressed stamped envelope was included to encourage a higher return rate. Schools determined which method of distribution they wanted to use.

A total of 364 surveys were returned. Of these 364, 66 were respondents from never restructured districts (group 1), 141 were respondents from districts involved with restructuring the past one to three years (group 2), and 157 were respondents from districts that had been involved with restructuring the past four to ten years (group 3). Results were analyzed using analysis of variance and scheffe's tests.

Ebmeier's study was examined in Chapter II and had many of the same conclusions as this study. Parents from schools that had not experienced restructuring held more positive feelings towards their schools. Ebmeier found the parents of high school students to have the most negative overall feelings about school restructuring followed by middle school parents. The magnitude of the difference was greater for parents of high school students who have been transferred or whose schools had closed. These parents reported significantly more negative feelings to almost all categories of questions than did the parents of non-transferred students.

In this exploratory study, it was clearly evident that parents from Iowa schools that had not been involved with restructuring were more positive in all categories. Parents in the other two groups were less positive, with the long-term restructuring parents the least positive.

Our world is constantly changing, therefore, changes in education happen daily and are unavoidable, (Lortie, 1975). Hall and Loucks' (1976) concept that "change is a process not an event," puts forth the idea that change is transformation over a period of time. Research from Fullan (1985) stated that studies need to go beyond factors that explain change to how change occurs and then how to use this new knowledge. Members of communities encountering restructuring in their schools must understand these concepts in order to be capable of successfully implementing restructuring in their communities.

Restructuring, like other changes, is a process not an event. In order to be successful those involved must pass through stages. Berman (1981), Huberman and Crandall (1982) described three such stages. The first stage is initiation which includes adoption of decisions and development. Implementation is the second area which includes invoking change into practice. The third area is institutionalization and builds upon the second area. These stages must also be based on collective professional development. Everyone who will be affected should be involved alongside the professionals.

The cause for the interest in restructuring has largely to do with the demographics in the state. Some legislative activity has helped provide incentives, but these measures are not driving the movement (Ghan, 1990).

The demographics that are changing are the shifting population from rural areas and small towns to larger municipalities and metropolitan areas. The farms are still growing larger, and business and mercantile activities are continuing to concentrate in the more populated areas. One of the many

population facts that supports these conclusions is the decline in Iowa birthrate. There were 9,727 fewer Iowa births in 1988 than in 1980.

The new standards that went into effect in 1989 seemed to encourage districts to study their programs and examine their options. The assertion that new standards forced change is less fact than it is a reaction against the standards. Some very small schools are still meeting the minimum standards without any form of restructuring.

According to Ghan, the real impetus for restructuring has been the desire for improved educational programs, particularly at the high school and middle school levels. Restructuring appears to be guided by actions of local school boards with some incentives from the legislature.

The key criterion for predicting the impact of school restructuring on the number of school districts is the long-term stability element. When the Department of Education studies a restructuring issue, it first locates barriers. In other words, nearby state boundaries, natural barriers, such as rivers, and dominant communities are identified.

This study suggests that parents of students from schools that had never restructured had the most positive attitudes about their schools as compared to parents from schools where restructuring had occurred 3-5 or 4-10 years previously. Interestingly, attitudes toward school, as measured by the seven subscales of the POI and the seven factors of the Parent Opinion Survey, did not seem to improve over time. Rather, parents from schools that had restructured 4-10 years prior to this study tended to respond more negatively than did parents from schools that had restructured 1-3 years previously.

Cleveland (1980) argued that consolidation was not a numbers game, but rather a persons game. It does have lasting effects on all that are involved. How an individual copes with any kind of change is directly related to how an individual will deal with consolidation. Our world is constantly changing and we must have our students and the school community ready for that world of change. If students and the school community are ready to deal with it, they then can also cope with it. In the final analysis, consolidation or any form of restructuring means change.

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Finally, I wish to dedicate this work to my deceased grandparents who valued the opportunity to obtain an education, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shields and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Johnson. Their memories have been inspirational to me throughout my academic career at Iowa State University.

APPENDIX A: PARENT SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

ADMINISTRATOR'S MANUAL

Parent Opinion Inventory

Revised Edition



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NATIONAL STUDY OF SCHOOL EVALUATION

5201 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia 22041



PARENT OPINION INVENTORY

PART A

The purpose of this survey is to assist in learning more about our school's instructional program. Your opinions and attitudes are of vital importance to this assessment.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. The answers you give will be completely confidential. Do not sign your name or identify yourself in any way.

Remember that your opinions and attitudes will assist school personnel in making better decisions regarding improvement in the school.

Directions

The following statements describe a wide variety of conditions related to the operation of our schools. We want to know to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement. Therefore, indicate your opinion by marking each statement as follows:

Circle the SA if you **STRONGLY AGREE** with the statement

A if you **AGREE** but not strongly

U if you are **UNDECIDED**

D if you **DISAGREE**

SD if you **STRONGLY DISAGREE**

(NOTE: If you have been given an answer sheet, make these marks as described on the answer sheet; if not, you may mark the letters to the right of the statement.)

Example: Our community is proud of its schools. SA A U D SD

In this case the parent **AGREES** with the statement, but not strongly, so A was circled.

Turn to the next page and begin.

The Parent Opinion Inventory, Part A, is packaged separately and may be purchased in quantity from the National Study of School Evaluation.

NATIONAL STUDY OF SCHOOL EVALUATION

5201 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia 22041

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PARENT OPINION INVENTORY

PART A

Circle the SA if you STRONGLY AGREE with the statement

A if you AGREE but not strongly

U if you are UNDECIDED

D if you DISAGREE

SD if you STRONGLY DISAGREE

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| <p>1. Students show respect for each other.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>15. Our school is doing a good job in teaching social studies (history, geography, government, etc.).</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>2. The students and teachers have a good working relationship with each other.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>16. The curriculum adequately prepares students planning to continue their education to more advanced levels.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>3. Reports concerning our students' progress are adequate.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>17. Students have sufficient amounts of homework to promote achievement in their courses.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>4. Parents are informed of educational policies.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>18. Discipline is not a serious problem in our school.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>5. The concerns of parents are reflected in decisions affecting our school.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>19. Students' use of alcohol and or drugs in our school is not a serious problem.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>6. Our community is actively involved in all aspects of school operations.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>20. Vandalism is a serious problem at our school.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>7. Our school is helping students to cope with a rapidly changing society.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>21. Outsiders (e.g., unenrolled teens, peddlers, etc.) do not pose a threat to students in our school.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>8. Our school is not helping students to understand world problems.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>22. Student absenteeism is not a problem at our school.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>9. Our school is doing a good job in teaching students the language arts (reading, writing, grammar, etc.).</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>23. In virtually all of their coursework students see a relationship between what they are studying and their everyday lives.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>10. Our school is doing a good job in teaching students mathematics.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>24. The total educational program offered to students is of high quality.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>11. Our school is doing a good job in teaching students the sciences.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>25. Our students are seldom motivated to do their best work.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>12. Our school is doing a good job of helping students understand their moral and ethical responsibilities.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>26. In general, our teachers are competent.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>13. Our school's program helps students to understand and get along with other people.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>27. For the most part, I am satisfied with our school.</p> | SA A U D SD |
| <p>14. Health classes include adequate attention to both mental health and physical health.</p> | SA A U D SD | <p>28. Marks on assignments and course grades receive the right amount of emphasis.</p> | SA A U D SD |

Circle the SA if you STRONGLY AGREE with the statement
 A if you AGREE but not strongly
 U if you are UNDECIDED
 D if you DISAGREE
 SD if you STRONGLY DISAGREE

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|-------------|
| 29. The total variety of instructional topics is adequate. | SA A U D SD | 40. The lunch program is appropriate for our students' needs. | SA A U D SD |
| 30. The amount of educational change (introduction of new materials and methods of teaching) is about right. | SA A U D SD | 41. Our school is well maintained (clean, repaired, supplied, etc.). | SA A U D SD |
| 31. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the social development of students. | SA A U D SD | 42. The morale of students is good. | SA A U D SD |
| 32. The activities program (clubs, drama, etc.) is sufficient to meet the needs of students. | SA A U D SD | 43. It is easy to get an appointment to see a teacher. | SA A U D SD |
| 33. Students' participation in school activities is an important aspect of their education at our school. | SA A U D SD | 44. It is easy to get an appointment with the administrators. | SA A U D SD |
| 34. The role of, and emphasis on, the athletics program is about right. | SA A U D SD | 45. Teachers are concerned about my son/daughter as an individual. | SA A U D SD |
| 35. The expenses involved in school activities (e.g., costumes, instruments, insurance, etc.) are keeping some students from participation. | SA A U D SD | 46. School rules and regulations affecting students are reasonable. | SA A U D SD |
| 36. Services provided by our counseling and guidance program are adequate for my son's/daughter's needs. | SA A U D SD | 47. Building facilities (work space, furnishings, etc.) are adequate to support the instructional program. | SA A U D SD |
| 37. Health services at school are adequate. | SA A U D SD | 48. School personnel involve community services (e.g., welfare, mental health, law enforcement) to help meet students' needs. | SA A U D SD |
| 38. The media center (library of books, audiovisual tapes, etc.) plays a central role in learning. | SA A U D SD | 49. The school's programs adequately meet the needs of special students (learning disabled, gifted, etc.). | SA A U D SD |
| 39. The basic to-and-from school transportation services meet the needs of students. | SA A U D SD | 50. The school's priorities for expenditures of funds are appropriate. | SA A U D SD |
| | | 51. All things considered, students are learning about all they can from their school experiences. | SA A U D SD |

**Parent Opinion Survey
Part B**

We would like your opinions about the effects of whole grade sharing or reorganization on Iowa schools.

If your school has been involved in reorganization with another district or is whole grade sharing with another school, please rate the following factors in terms of **how you think these changes have affected your school or community.**

If your school has not been involved in reorganization or whole grade sharing, please indicate how **you think your school or community would be affected.**

Please circle your responses, using the following scale:

A=Much Better

B=Slightly Better

C=No Change

D=Slightly Worse

E=Much Worse

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 52. | Overall quality of your school | A | B | C | D | E |
| 53. | Student achievement | A | B | C | D | E |
| 54. | Choice of courses | A | B | C | D | E |
| 55. | Accessibility to technology, such as computers | A | B | C | D | E |
| 56. | Choice of extracurricular activities | A | B | C | D | E |
| 57. | Student participation in extracurricular activities | A | B | C | D | E |
| 58. | Attitude of students about the school | A | B | C | D | E |
| 59. | Attitude of parents about the school | A | B | C | D | E |
| 60. | Attitude of teachers about the school | A | B | C | D | E |
| 61. | Attitude of district residents about the school | A | B | C | D | E |
| 62. | Community involvement in school activities | A | B | | | |
| 63. | Sense of community pride | A | B | | | |
| 64. | Relationship between the communities involved | A | B | C | D | E |
| 65. | Representation of community views on school board | A | B | C | D | E |
| 66. | Utilization of available money for educational programs | A | B | C | D | E |
| 67. | Transportation services (busing) | A | B | C | D | E |
| 68. | Business activity in the community | A | B | C | D | E |

NOT ANALYZED

For the following questions, please write in your answer or check the appropriate response.

69. Name of community in which you live _____

70. What is the last grade you completed in school? _____

OVER----> Please complete the questions on the back.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>71. Number of children in kindergarten through 12th grade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4 or more</p> | <p>72. How long have you lived in this community?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> less than 1 year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4-10 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> over 20 years</p> |
| <p>73. Did you attend high school in the community where you live now?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>74. Where do you consider yourself to live?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> within the city limits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> rural</p> |
| <p>75. How many miles do you live from the high school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0-3 miles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4-10 miles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 miles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 21-30 miles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> more than 30 miles</p> | <p>76. Yearly gross household income</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> under \$10,000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000-19,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000-34,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000-49,999</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 or more</p> |
| <p>77. Has your child changed high schools because of reorganization or whole grade sharing?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>78. Gender</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Male</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> |

If you would like to write any comments concerning the effect that reorganization or whole grade sharing has had on you, or how you think it would affect you, please do so below.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses are very important to the study.

Please fold both parts of your survey, put them in the postage-paid envelope, and drop it in a mailbox.

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITIES

SCHOOL DISTRICTS SELECTED FOR STUDY

GROUP I (Never)

| AEA | Sender District | County | Pop/Enroll | Cost |
|----------|-----------------|-------------|------------|--------|
| 14 | Greenfield | Adair | 3034/548 | \$4047 |
| 16 | West Burlington | Des Moines | 3939/484 | \$4294 |
| 4 | Sioux Center | Sioux | 5882/851 | \$4290 |
| 9 | Bennett | Cedar | 1359/313 | \$4799 |
| 2 | Ventura | Cerro Gordo | 1484/302 | \$4933 |
| 15 | Russell | Lucas | 1182/228 | \$4583 |
| Average: | | | 454 | \$4491 |

GROUP II (1-3 Years)

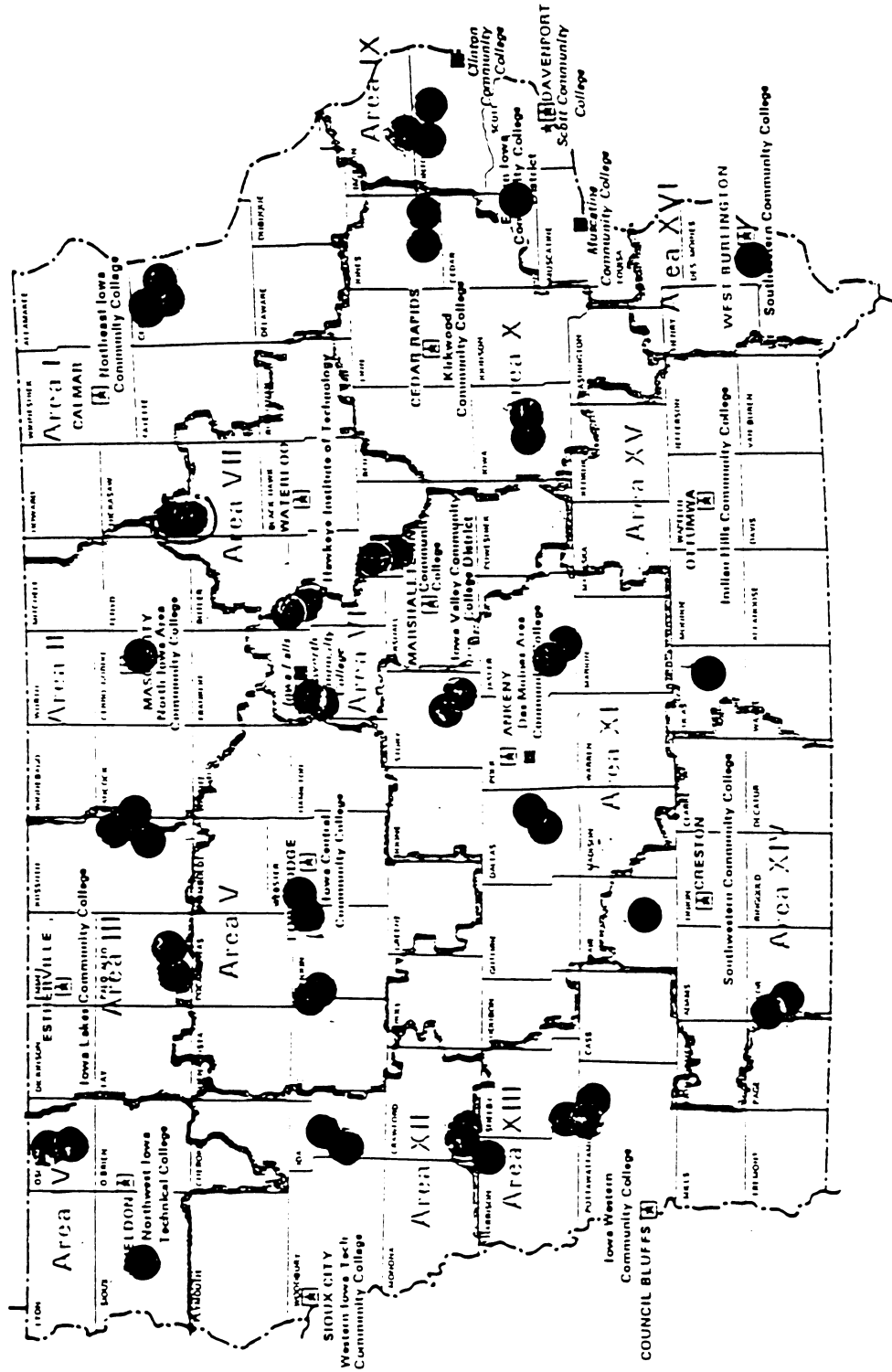
| AEA | Sender District | County | Pop/Enroll | Cost | Receiver Dist | County | Pop/Enroll | Cost | High School | Yr Share/Merge | Ways |
|----------|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------|------------|--------|-----------------|----------------|--------|
| 7 | Aplington | Butler | 1703/408 | \$4021 | Parkersburg | Butler | 2716/543 | \$4482 | Parkersburg | 92-93/ no | 2-way |
| 7 | Willow (Quinby, Washta) | Cherokee | 1373/267 | \$4926 (Correctionville, Cushing) | Eastwood | Woodbury | 1980/386 | \$4706 | Correctionville | 92-93/ no | 2-way |
| 7 | Plainfield | Bremer | 1383/295 | \$4222 | Nashua | Chickasaw | 2819/560 | \$4579 | Nashua | 92-93/ no | 2-way |
| 12 | Battle Creek | Ida | 1302/290 | \$4615 | Ida Grove | Ida | 3279/663 | \$4259 | Ida Grove | 92-93/ no | 2-way* |
| 1 | Mar-Mac (MacGregor, Marquette) | Clayton | 1852/289 | \$5018 | M-F-I (Monona, Farmersville, Luana) | Clayton | 3637/759 | \$3980 | Monona | 92-93/ no | 2-way* |
| 3 | Mallard | Palo Alto | 846/216 | \$4621 | West Bend (West Bend, Rodman) | Palo Alto | 2056/294 | \$5080 | West Bend | 91-92/ no | 2-way |
| 13 | Shelby (Shelby, Tenant) | Shelby | 1464/226 | \$5410 | Hancock-Avoca | Pottawattanie | 2586/478 | \$4353 | Avoca | 91-92/ no | 2-way |
| 10 | Oxford Junction | Jones | 943/209 | \$5556 | Olin | Jones | 1344/300 | \$5127 | Olin | 90-91/ no | 2-way |
| 10 | Anana (Middle, Amana) | Iowa | 1297/192 | \$6557 | Clear Creek (Tiffin, Oxford, Cosgrove) | Johnson | 4183/740 | \$4228 | Tiffin | 90-91/ no | 2-way* |
| Average: | | | | | | Average: | 524 | \$4532 | | | |

GROUP III (4-10 years)

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|----------|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| 14 | New Market | Taylor | 1207/213 | \$4738 | Clarinda | Page | 6092/1087 | \$4110 | Clarinda | 89-90/ no | 1-way* |
| 12 | Dow City-Arion | Crawford | 1435/296 | \$4849 | Dunlap | Harrison | 1806/379 | \$5034 | Dunlap | 89-90/ no | 2-way |
| 7 | Gladbrook | Tama | 1741/302 | \$4612 | Reinbeck | Grundy | 2489/405 | \$5039 | Reinbeck | 88-89 / no | 2-way |
| 6 | Radcliffe | Hardin | 1453/299 | \$5114 | Hubbard | Hardin | 1395/266 | \$4800 | Hubbard | 88-89/ no | 2-way |
| 11 | Prairie City | Jasper | 1278 a | \$5491 | Monroe | Jasper | 1875 a | \$5491 | Monroe | 88-89/ 91-92 | 2-way |
| 9 | Delwood (Delmar, Elwood) | Clinton | 1384/274 | \$4506 (Maquoketa, Baldwin) | Maquoketa | Jackson | 9806/1614 | \$4538 | Maquoketa | 87-88/ no | 1-way* |
| 6 | Steamboat Rock | Hardin | 657/123 | \$5602 | Wellsburg | Grundy | 164/242 | \$5027 | Wellsburg | 86-87/ 92-93 | 2-way |
| 4 | Ocheyedan | Osceola | 599 a | \$4266 | Sibley | Osceola | 3051 a | \$4266 | Sibley | no / 85-86 | NA |
| 11 | Collins | Story | 451 a | \$3912 | Maxwell | Story | 783 a | \$3912 | Maxwell | no / 83-84 | NA |
| 2/3 | LuVerne | Kossuth | 806/133 | \$5935 | Corwith- Wesley | Hancock | 1453/186 | \$6439 | Corwith | 80-81/ no | 2-way |
| Average: | | | | | | | 597 | \$4865 | | | |

* = Districts of disproportionate size (one district three times or more the size of the other)

a = Individual school district enrollments not found in the Iowa Educational Directory, 1991-92 School Year.



**SCHOOL CLOSING STUDY
POSSIBLE SCHOOL SELECTIONS**

| AEA | District 1 | District 2 | High School | New Name | Year Shared | Year Res |
|-----|------------|------------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|
|-----|------------|------------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|

Independent to Independent - Comparable Size

| | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------|------|
| 5 | Mallard | West Bend | West Bend | | 1991-92 | |
| 10 | Oxford Jct. | Olin | Olin | | 1990-91 | |
| 5 | Palmer | Pomeroy | Pomeroy | | 1989-90 | |
| 4 | Little Rock | George | George | | 1989-90 | |
| 2 | Kanawha | Britt | Britt | | 1989-90 | |
| 5 | Lytton | Rockwell City | Rockwell City | | 1989-90 | |
| 10 | Urbana | Center Point | Center Point | | 1989-90 | |
| 6 | Gladbrook | Reinbeck | Reinbeck | | 1988-89 | |
| 6 | Radcliffe | Hubbard | Hubbard | | 1988-89 | |
| 4 | Lohrville | Lake City | Lake City | | 1988-89 | |
| 11 | Monroe | Prairie City | Monroe | PCM | 1987-88 | 1991 |
| 6 | Green Mt | Garwin | Garwin | GMG | 1987-88 | 1992 |
| 3 | Arnolds Park | Milford | Milford | Okoboji | 1987-88 | 1988 |
| 6 | Steamboat Rock | Wellsburg | Wellsburg | Weils..Stmbt... | 1986-87 | 1992 |
| 11 | Bayard | Coon Rapids | Coon Rapids | Coon R..-Bay.. | 1986-87 | 1988 |
| 9 | Calamus | Wheatland | Wheatland | Calam..Wheat.. | 1985-86 | 1990 |
| 4 | Sibley | Ocheyedan | Sibley | Sibley-Ochey.. | | 1985 |
| 11 | Colfax | Mingo | Colfax | Colfax-Mingo | | 1985 |
| 3 | Ruthven | Ayrshire | Ruthven | Ruthven-Ayr.. | | 1983 |
| 11 | Collins | Maxwell | Maxwell | Collins-Maxwell | | 1983 |
| 12 | Akron | Westfield | Akron | Akron-Westfield | | 1981 |
| 12 | Galva | Holstein | Holstein | Gaiva-Holstein | | 1980 |

Independent to Independent - Disproportional Size

| | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------|
| 2 | Klemme | Belmond | Belmond | | 1990-91 | |
| 2 | Dumont | Hampton | Hampton | | 1989-90 | |
| 3 | Burt | Algona | Algona | | 1988-89, 1991-92 | |
| 5 | Stratford | Webster City | Webster City | | 1987-88 | |
| 5 | Scranton | Jefferson | Jefferson | Jeff..-Scranton | 1987-88 | 1992 |
| 5 | Goldfield | Clarion | Clarion | | 1986-87 | |
| 11 | Grand | Ogden | Ogden | | 1985-86 | |
| 6 | New Providence | Eldora | Eldora | Eldora-New P.. | | 1980 |

Merged to Merged

| | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|---------|------|
| 11 | Central Dallas | Adel-DeSotto | Adel | | 1990-91 | |
| 4 | Floyd Valley | Maurice-Orange City | Orange City | | 1990-91 | |
| 6 | SEMCO | LDF | LeGrand | East Marshall | 1989-90 | 1992 |
| 5 | Cedar Valley | Prairie | Gowrie | | 1989-90 | |
| 2 | Messervy-Thornton | Sheffield-Chapin | Sheffield | | 1988-89 | |
| 6 | Union-Whitten | B-C-L | Conrad | BCL-UW | 1986-87 | 1992 |
| 11 | Panora-Linden | Y-J-B | Panora | Panorama | | 1989 |

| AEA | District 1 | District 2 | High School | Name | Year Shared | Year Restruc. |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Independent To Merged</i> | | | | | | |
| 5 | Wall Lake | Lake View-Auburn | Lake View | | 1991-92 | |
| 10 | Norway | Benton | Van Horne | | 1991-92 | |
| | | (Atkins/Keystone?VanHorne) | | | | |
| 13 | Shelby | Hancock-Avoca | Avoca | | 1991-92 | |
| 10 | Shellburg | Vinton | Vinton | | 1989-90 | |
| | | (Merged with Garrison - 1969) | | | | |
| 5 | Schaller | Crestland | Early | | 1989-90 | |
| 5 | Fonda | Newell-Providence | Newell | | 1989-90 | |
| 9 | Lost Nation | Midland | Wyoming | | 1988-89 | |
| 5 | Dayton | Central Webster | Burnside | SE Webster | 1986-87 | 1991 |
| 1 | Fayette | North Fayette | West Union | N. Fayette | | 1984 |
| 2/3 | Luverne | Corwith-Wesley | Corwith | | 1980-81 | |
| <i>Merged to Independent</i> | | | | | | |
| 3 | Clay Central | Everly | Everly | | 1990-91 | |
| 5 | NW Webster | Manson | Manson | | 1990-91 | |
| 12 | Dow City-Arion | Dunlap | Dunlap | | 1989-90 | |
| 4 | Meriden-Cleghorn | Marcus | Marcus | | 1988-89 | |
| 7 | Dysart-Geneseo | LaPorte City | LaPorte City | | 1988-89 | |
| 9 | Delwood | Maquoketa | Maquoketa | | 1987-88 | |
| | (Delmar-Elwood) | | | | | |
| 13 | Irwin | Manilla | Manilla | IKM | 1987-88 | 1992 |
| | (Irwin-Kirkman) | | | | | |
| 11 | Nesco | Colo | Colo | Colo-Nesco | 1987-88 | 1991 |
| 5 | Boone Valley | Humboldt | Humboldt | | 1987-88 | 1988 |
| <i>Fractured</i> | | | | | | |
| 15 | Hedrick | Pekin/ Fremont/ Eddyville/ Ottumwa | | | 1991-92 | |
| 14 | Prescott | Corning/ Lenox/ Creston/ | | | | |
| | | Orient-Macksburg/ Bridgewater-Fontanelle | | | 1991-92 | |
| 16 | Morning Sun | Wapella/ Winfield-Mt. Union | | | 1990-91 | |
| 14 | Clearfield | Diagonal/ Lenox/ Mt. Ayr | | | 1986-87 | |
| <i>Mixed</i> | | | | | | |
| 2/3 | Buffalo Center | Rake (merged in 1978) | Shared with Lakota/ Thompson/ Titonka | (1987-88) | | |
| | Buffalo Center-Rake-Lakota | (merged in 1992) | | | | |
| | High School in Buffalo Center | | | | | |
| 15 | Eddyville | Shared with Fremont (1988-89) | Shared with Blakesburg | (1991-92) | | |
| | High School in Eddyville | | | | | |
| 4 | Hartley-Melvin | (merged in 1981) | Shared with Sanborn | (1988-89) | Merged in 1991 | |
| | High School at Hartley | | | | | |
| 4 | Paullina | Shared with Primghar (1989-90) | Shared with Sutherland | (1990-91) | | |
| | High School at Paullina | | | | | |
| 3 | Sioux Rapids-Rembrandt | (merged 1979) | Shared with Sioux Valley | (Peterson/Linn Grove) | 1990-91 | |
| | High School at Sioux Rapids | | | | | |
| 5 | Pocahontas | Shared with Havelock-Plover (merged earlier) in 1986-87 | Merged in 1989 | | | |
| | Pocahontas Area | Shared with Rolfe 1990-91 | | | | |
| | High School in Pocahontas | | | | | |

SCHOOL CLOSING STUDY
Schools Deleted from Selection Process

School Districts Involved in Multiple Sharing Agreements

AEA Districts Sharing

| | | | |
|-----|---|----|--|
| 2/3 | Buffalo Center-Rake-Lakota Titonka Thompson | 3 | Burt Algona (Whittemore, Fenton) Senral (Seneca, Lone Rock) |
| 14 | Clearfield Diagonal Lenox (Sharpsburg) Mt. Ayr (Beaconsfield, Benton Twp, Clinton, Delphos, Ellston, Maloy, Tingley, Redding) | 14 | Prescott Creston (Cromwell, Kent) Corning (Brooks, Carbon) Lenox (Sharpsburg) Orient-Macksburg (Nevin, Zion) Bridgewater-Fontanelle |
| 10 | Deep River-Millersburg Montezuma English Valleys (Kinross, Webster, North English, South English) | 4 | Sutherland (Calumet, Gaza) Paullina Primghar |
| 16 | Morning Sun Wapello (Oakville) Winfield-Mt. Union (Wyman) | 15 | Blakesburg Eddyville (Cedar, Kirkville) Fremont |
| 11 | United (Jordan, Napier, Luther) Gilbert Boone | 14 | Grand Valley Lamoni Decatur Mt. Ayr |

Districts Dissolved

AEA Districts Involved

| | | | |
|---|--|----|---|
| 5 | Boone Valley dissolved into Humboldt (Rutland) Clarion | 15 | Hedrick dissolved into Ottumwa Pekin Fremont |
|---|--|----|---|

*Districts Involved in More Than One Reorganization /Grade Sharing Agreement
Since 1980*

AEA Districts Involved

| | | | |
|----|---|---|--|
| 5 | Pocahontas Havelock-Plover Gilmore City-Bradgate (Pioneer) Twin Rivers (Bode, Ottosen, Livermore) Rolfe | 3 | Sioux Rapids-Rembrandt Sioux Valley |
| 11 | Yale-Jamaica-Bagley Panora-Linden | 4 | Hartley-Melvin Sanborn |

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