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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the political aspects of administrative decision-making concerns the sanctioning or prohibiting of corporal punishment in schools in general and the action taken when teachers who use corporal punishment come under attack. The data, derived from the author's participant observation in the Detroit Public Schools, indicate that (1) corporal punishment has been an accepted and practiced control mechanism in many schools; (2) most large school systems have a machinery for protecting teachers who may be jeopardized because they have administered physical punishment; and (3) parents filing civil suits have found that both teachers and administrators have liability insurance and are represented in court by attorneys for their professional organizations. Where corporal punishment is sanctioned, educators are shielded effectively even when overzealous, ill-advised, or sadistic. The removal of that shield, the primary target in any political effort to bar corporal punishment, is the concern of the remainder of the paper. (Author/MLF)

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TO PUNISH OR NOT TO PUNISH: THE ADMINISTRATOR'S DILEMMA

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This paper is devoted to an analysis of case illustrations which hopefully can throw light on the political aspects of administrative decision making with respect to the sanctioning or prohibiting of corporal punishment in schools in general and with action taken when teachers who use corporal punishment come under attack. Much of the data represent participant observation when the author was Associate Superintendent for Child Accounting and Adjustment in the Detroit Public Schools.

The problems of the administrator tend to revolve around three issues: (1) the development of policy, (2) implementation of that policy, and (3) stance toward violators of policy. Although in some schools, the top administrator is involved in giving corporal punishment officials above the principalship or headmastership rarely do so.

The issues surrounding corporal punishment are political because of the basic nature of the situation: the inflicting of pain as part of role behavior which is sanctioned by investing the inflictor with immunity from liability or retaliation. In essence corporal punishment is an assault. Regardless of whether or not verbal criticism or sarcasm may be psychologically more devastating, the fact is that speech is a protected freedom; assaults except where specifically sanctioned are prohibited.

It may help to give perspective to the issues and the debates if we recognize that historically the privilege of inflicting pain, at least in Western cultures, has been a highly prized and widely exercised privilege. Witnessing pain being inflicted has been and still is a feature of spectacles which are regarded as entertaining. Over the centuries since the Roman

circuses, by a series of political actions, the privilege of inflicting pain without fear of reprisal has been progressively circumscribed. No longer may husbands with impunity beat their wives, naval officers flog seamen, and church wardens knock the noggins of slumbering worshippers. Even the right of parents to commit mayhem is invaded by legislation against child abuse. One of the few remaining areas where authority carries with it an option to use pain is within schools! Inevitably that situation is bound to be questioned.

Lest you think that the above discussion is overstated, it should be known that in most large school systems there is machinery for protecting teachers who may be jeopardized because they have administered physical punishment. Sooner or later in all large school systems some parents will feel that some teachers have gone too far in their use of corporal punishment and want to see sanctions applied against the offending teacher. Usually the building administrator is expected to placate the complainants. In larger school systems if they are not satisfied and want something drastic to be done, any appeal they may make to higher authority will be investigated. Often, and this has been the case in Detroit, the investigation is conducted by the attendance department, which in turn is expected to mollify the complainants. Privately, of course, there may be expressions of displeasure and the teacher may be clearly informed there should be no repetitions, but almost never will there be a suspension, much less a dismissal. If the parents remain adamant they may finally make their complaint to the police or the prosecuting attorney. At this point the political nature of protection becomes clearcut. In the larger cities, one or more

of the assistant prosecutors usually specializes in school cases, which mostly are those which involve enforcement of compulsory education laws, in which activity he works closely with the school system's attendance department. It is to this person that the parents will be referred. His modus operandi is not too dissimilar to that which many women rape victims have experienced: he sympathizes with the complainant but so emphasizes the problems and unpleasantness of prosecution that they are quite likely to drop the case.

Even though there have been instances of what could be characterized as brutality, in the past decade the Prosecutor's Office in Detroit has not issued a warrant against any teacher for acts against pupils or students. Knowing this parents have taken the route of filing civil suits for damages. When they do so they find that both teachers and administrators have liability insurance and in court will be represented by the attorneys for their professional organizations. In short, then, where corporal punishment is sanctioned, educators are shielded quite effectively even when overzealous, ill-advised, or sadistic. It is the removal of that shield which is the primary target in any political effort to bar corporal punishment, the issue which will be the concern of the remainder of this paper.

In the Detroit public schools, as has been true for most large systems, the issue of corporal punishment was and still is a highly emotionalized debate. Over the years the chief visible protagonists, as seems to be the tradition, have been the president of the teacher's union and spokesmen for the American Civil Liberties Union. The position taken follows a familiar pattern. The President of the Detroit Federation of Teachers while

deploring use of any form of violence in schools insisted that the Board of Education provide sufficient clinical and rehabilitative services so that teachers would not have any disruptive children in classes who could be controlled only by physical means. The spokesman for the A.C.L.U., a social worker (David Wineman) noted for his work with highly disturbed children, regarded corporal punishment as such to be dehumanizing.

In the later 1960's a number of episodes occurred which for a while promised to offer a resolution for what appeared to be an endlessly inconclusive conflict. The first episode was the transfer, for desegregation purposes, of a black teacher from an inner city school where corporal punishment was, if anything, encouraged to a school in an affluent neighborhood which happened to have in it a high concentration of psychiatrists and their families. They objected to her use of corporal punishment. She raised the question of discrimination. Both administrators and union officials suffered all sorts of cognitive dissonance in dealing with that problem and hoped it was not the forerunner of an epidemic.

A second episode, known only to a few leaders, had to do with a rapidly rising number of assaults against teachers. The union quite naturally wanted more protection for teachers. Their contract with the school administration required automatic suspension of any child who assaulted a teacher. This provision, although honored, was insufficient. Further to protect teachers, conversations were held with the judge of the Juvenile Court. He saw the danger to schools if teachers were intimidated and issued orders that any boy or girl accused of assaulting a teacher would be held in detention pending the hearing of the case. He attached a proviso; if the

teacher had made the initial physical move in the confrontation, he would weigh a defense based on self-protection.

The third episode involved a court case. A teacher of a class for socially maladjusted boys had installed what he considered a democratic system of discipline. He had jury trials of offenders in his room and let the class vote on the penalty. The boys prided themselves on being able "to dish it out and take it." On one occasion they voted to dispense twenty-five blows with a paddle. The parents took photographs of the bruises, and armed with these sued for damages. The teacher was exonerated due to a technicality; the photographs being in black and white rather than in color, their validity as evidence was successfully called into question. The Union officers and attorneys who had had to sit through the trial came to the conclusion that it was only a matter of time before they would lose a significant case.

At about the same time the Michigan Branch of the American Civil Liberties Unions, with federal funds, had established a project on the rights of children. It developed a position paper urging the Board of Education to definitively prohibit corporal punishment. They had hit upon a position which opened the door to a possible negotiation with the teachers' union. They made a distinction between corporal punishment and restraint; the latter which would be sanctioned permitted the use of physical force to prevent a child from injuring himself or other people. There obviously were problems of language to be worked out, but that is a familiar stage in the final phases of negotiation.

The A.C.L.U. having made its move by an official petition, the response

was the standard one of having the school administration create a committee to hear the petition and make recommendations. This would allow the needed opportunity not merely to examine arguments and work out "language," but of assessing the balance of forces. Adding to the propitiousness of the situation was the fact that both the attorney for the Board of Education and several members of the Board were active members of the American Civil Liberties Union, as had been the Superintendent. All indicated that they would be delighted if there could be a resolution of issues without a collision with the Union.

The hearing, itself, produced some surprises. The principal question raised was whether or not, of all the issues confronting the school system, this was the most important. Implicit was a seeming issue of priorities. If there were such a thing as a hierarchy of harmful experiences suffered by children in a large school system in the 1960's (and 1970's) where did the pain inflicted by teachers stand in that hierarchy?

Subsequent private conversations revealed two aspects to the political issue which had previously been masked by the more newsworthy debate between the Union and the A.C.L.U. One of these was the role of athletics in the career lines of many school administrators, and especially those whose origins had been in underprivileged ethnic groups. In previous periods when discrimination had barred many from higher educational opportunity, those who were willing and able to be participants in the transactions in pain which are inherent to body contact sports had been able to obtain athletic scholarships. In cold fact, approximately seventy per cent of the school superintendents in Michigan are what, in the slang expression, are former

jocks. In their own lives the pain they had endured had not been such a bad thing.

In other cases, those who had been particularly active in the civil rights struggles had had to rely on many occasions on their own physical courage. One key member of the committee, in order to produce evidence of police brutality, had during a racially toned police dragnet operation sat in an unlighted car in an area through which police were sweeping; in fact, he had been able to use himself as bait. To him the day after day failure of schools to build self respect in children was much more devastating than any physical beating.

Despite the verbal hazing by which the A.C.L.U. delegation was greeted, the elements for a momentary compromise were at hand. The distinction between restraint and punishment being accepted, the Board declared itself as opposed to corporal punishment and ordered each school staff to work out a discipline policy.

This last move was obscured by the excitement of decentralizing the school system with the expectation of increasing community control. Regional boards of education were created. One of these banned corporal punishment; in that region principals, worried about community pressure, were no longer able to shield teachers from complaints. In the remainder of the city, while some schools also outlawed corporal punishment, others seized on the wording of the compromise to authorize its use. Meanwhile, the level of violence in Detroit, including its schools, continued to rise. Teachers, as represented by their union, pressed for unequivocal permission to be allowed corporal punishment once again. In one of the trade-offs to resolve

a strike, the school system's negotiators accepted such a clause. As of this date, any knowledgeable person could take you to schools in Detroit where corporal punishment is routine, or, in contrast, to other schools in similar neighborhoods where it is never used.

The present status is a wry commentary on what has gone before. The Board of Education, in preparation for the next round of negotiations, has ordered its negotiators to put on the bargaining table a clause barring corporal punishment. By an odd quirk of fate, its chief negotiator was President of the Michigan Branch of the American Civil Liberties Union when it took its initial stand on corporal punishment. The old antagonists are again in the spotlight. The political question now resolves into this: In the give and take of bargaining what that it values will the Board surrender to the Teachers' Union as a price for their agreement to abandon corporal punishment? What that it values will the Union surrender to the Board for the right to continue its use?

Guessing at outcomes of negotiations is hazardous. Meanwhile, community pressures on schools have gained potency by provisions under which principals are periodically evaluated by processes which include community input. Teachers who use corporal punishment cannot count on being shielded by principals who are loathe to antagonize parents. There are, of course, some community representatives who use corporal punishment in their own homes and applaud its use in schools. In an increasing number the de facto racial discrimination in its use rankles and they want their children treated exactly as are children in more affluent neighborhoods. The fact is that there are numerous inner city schools where children and teachers thrive without beatings, strappings or rappings.

At the present time this speaker is engaged in the education of teachers at Wayne State University. Our contribution to the long range solution is to place our students and student teachers only in schools where capable teachers day after day provide incentives for children to learn and who guide them quite satisfactorily without resort to paddles, straps or other instruments of pain. In the long run we expect that to do the trick.

had been derived from position papers written about probable future conditions in the State by experts in a number of areas of concern (Schabacker et al, 1970). A questionnaire designed to elicit a judgment about each of the 86 goals on a six-interval scale of importance was presented to each participant on three successive rounds. Importance was considered in terms of preparing young people to live in the Atlanta of the future. In the first study, involving professional, technical, managerial, and community leaders, each respondent was interviewed personally once a week for three weeks. In the study involving students, the questionnaire was group-administered every two weeks over the three rounds. In the educator study, the questionnaire was handled in a variety of ways, all documented, from group administration to participant self-administration. What participants did in each of the three rounds in evaluating goals is described below:

Round One: To establish a future-oriented frame of reference in making judgments about the relative importance of goals, each participant was asked to read a short essay containing abstracts of the position papers that were used in the derivation of the goals. In responding to the questionnaire, each participant judged the relative importance of each of the goals in the questionnaire and then wrote down any additional goals that he felt were very important and should be included.

Round Two: Each participant was given an opportunity to again read the essay containing the abstracts of the position papers about the future of Georgia if he so desired. Each participant responded to the same questionnaire as in the first round, but with a difference. For each goal, the response category that was selected by the most participants in the first round — the modal response — was encircled. Participants were asked to write in a "comments column" in the questionnaire their reasons for judging any particular goal to be either more important or less impor-

tant than the modal response. Additional goals suggested in Round 1 were submitted to participants in an additional goals questionnaire that required judgments on the same scale of importance as that used with the initial 86 goals.

Round Three: Each participant was again given an opportunity to review the essay containing the abstracts of position papers about the future of Georgia if he so desired. The questionnaire used in the third round was the same as that used in the first two rounds, with appropriate response categories encircled to indicate the modal responses made in the second round. To further aid participants in making their final judgments, a summary of comments about each goal was presented with the questionnaire. This summary contained reasons given in Round 2 for judging each goal to be more important or less important than the modal response. An additional goals questionnaire was administered in Round 3 also.

Results and Conclusions. Analysis of data depended heavily upon nonparametric methods. For a general discussion of the techniques employed here, see Siegel (1956). Though similar analyses were performed on the additional goals, the results reported here are based on only the initial set of goals.

The goals were rank ordered on the basis of the mean importance of each goal as seen by community leaders, by educators, and by students respectively. An overall ranking was computed by taking the mean importance rating across the three panels of respondents for each goal and then ranking these.

Each of the three panels of respondents—community leaders, educators, and students—was further broken down into four groups: white males, black males, white females, and black females. The goals were then further rank ordered on the basis of the perceived mean importance of each goal for each of these groups within the three panels.

In ranking 86 goals on the basis of mean importance registered on a six-interval scale, the reliability of the ranking is a fundamental question. To determine reliability, each of the three panels was randomly divided into halves; and the goals were ranked separately for each half. The Spearman rank correlation technique was employed to determine the correlation in ranking between the halves of each group of participants. The resulting coefficients, computed for all three rounds, ranged from .96 to .99.

A similar technique was employed to determine the reliability of the rankings by race and sex. Table 1 shows the coefficients for educators and students. The Delphi study of community leaders and the analysis of the

resulting data were conducted about five months earlier than that of educators and students, and the reliability of rankings by race and sex for community leaders was not computed.

It can be seen that the ranking of goals by race and sex tended to be highly reliable. Of the 24 coefficients reported, only one is below .90 (.84). Table 2 shows the size of each group in each panel.

To test for general convergence within each of the three Delphi panels, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test was used to determine whether the S. D.s became smaller from Round 1 to Round 2 to Round 3. It was found unequivocally that convergence did occur on Round 2 for all three panels. The signed difference between the standard deviation of Round 1 judgments and that of Round 2 judgments for each goal was positive in every case for each panel.

On Round 3, however, only the community leader panel showed general convergence. Both the student and educator panels showed considerable divergence. For the community leaders, the signed difference between the standard deviation of Round 2 judgments and that of Round 3 judgments for each goal was positive in 82 of the 86 cases. For educators, this difference was negative in 66 of the 86 cases; and for students, it was negative in 70 of the 86 cases. The overall movement from Round 1 to Round 3 for all three panels was nevertheless convergence. Divergence among students and educators on Round 3 will be considered in the discussion section of this paper.

Convergence among groups defined in terms of race and sex within each Delphi panel was brought into focus by computing a Spearman rank correlation coefficient (ρ) for each pair of groups within a panel for each round. Uhl (1971) used a similar technique in his investigation of the extent of

agreement among groups in a goal-setting Delphi study. Convergence among groups did occur, demonstrated by the fact that, of the 18 possible pairings of groups within the three panels on Round 2, 16 of them showed an increase in the correlation coefficient compared to Round 1, as shown in Table 3, and this occurred in spite of the relatively high level of agreement among groups at the outset. On Round 1 the average coefficient across all pairs was .88, as compared to .93 on Round 2.

There was no indication of further movement toward agreement among groups generally on Round 3. In fact, 7 of the 18 groups showed slight reductions in the magnitude of the Spearman rho, whereas 6 groups showed slight increases, and 5 showed no change at all.

For all three panels, community leaders, educators, and students, the groups that tended to have the highest initial agreement, on Round 1, were the male and female groups of the same race, both black and white. The groups that tended to show the lowest level of agreement initially were black females with white males or females. Five of these six pairings (across the three panels) were initially as low as or lower than any other pair within the particular panel. All six of these pairings showing low initial agreement showed an increase in agreement across rounds.

In general, the educator panel showed higher initial agreement among groups and higher final agreement than did the other panels, perhaps due to the relatively greater commonality of orientation toward education that one would expect to find among educators as opposed to noneducators.

To determine the degree of agreement among the three panels as a whole over rounds, the Spearman rank order correlation technique was again used. Table 4 shows these results. It may be seen that there was high initial agreement between the community leaders and educators and that the students

tended to be somewhat different from either of them. The general pattern of correlation coefficients shows clearly that inter-panel agreement declined on the second round, with a slight increase again on the third round. This finding will be considered in the discussion section of the paper.

The rank ordering of goals on the basis of third-round judgments for each group within each panel and for each panel as a whole was examined in order to identify the particular goals representing the most critical or the most socially significant areas of disagreement among groups. The relative social significance of disagreement was assumed to be a function of both the extent of disagreement and the relative importance of the goal at the heart of the disagreement. Extent of disagreement was operationally defined as the S. D. of the ranks assigned to a goal by the 12 groups within the three panels. A further index of disagreement examined was the range of the ranks assigned to a particular goal. As a measure of the relative importance of a given goal, the overall rank was used.

Table 5 presents the ranks for each goal, group by group, and Table 6 presents the S. D. of ranks, the range of the ranks, and the minimum and maximum ranks for each goal. To identify areas of critical disagreement, these two tables may be used conjunctively, Table 6 to identify the goals to be examined, and Table 5 to examine the actual ranks, group by group.

For example, the first goal in Table 5, "is able to listen, speak, read, and write," shows a pattern of ranks that may warrant examination because the goal is the most important one overall. Table 6 indicates that the S. D. of the ranks is 4.812, and that the ranks vary from 1 to 14. A closer look at Table 5 shows that five of the groups—all five being groups in the educator and community leader panels—gave a rank of 1 to the goal.

Three other groups gave this goal a rank of 2 or 3. Therefore, eight of the groups were in fairly close agreement that this goal is of top importance. However, two groups, both black and white female students, gave this goal a rank of 14. The two remaining groups, white male students and educators, gave the goal a rank of 5 and 6 respectively. These differences were primarily between panels and between the sexes.

It may be instructive to determine what black and white female students considered to be the most important goals. For black female students, the top-ranked goal was, "is able to maintain individual integrity in group relationships." This goal, it may be seen, was the second-ranked goal for the student panel as a whole, whereas it was ranked 20th by educators and 28th by community leaders. For white female students, two goals tied for the top rank. They are, "supports the free and voluntary exercise of religious choice," and, "understands freedom as the right to make choices within the framework of concern for the general welfare." The key concept in these two goals is freedom of choice.

Another example of a goal that would seem to warrant close examination along these lines is, "understands and accepts the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship." Community leaders ranked it 9th, as compared to a rank of 22 for educators, and a relatively low rank of 42 for students. The pattern of differences in ranking this goal has apparent implications for all three variables, panel, race, and sex. It may be seen in Table 6 that the S.D. among ranks for this goal is a relatively large 13.504, and the range is from a high of 1 to a low of 44. Within panels, the white female community leaders ranked this goal 1, as compared to 15 for black females. Among educators, there is the suggestion of a sex-related pattern of rankings, with both black and white males having given this goal a higher ranking than either the black or white female groups did. Among students both black males and females

ranked the goal lower than white males or females did. However, the greatest differences in regard to this goal were between panels.

An example of a goal for which the greatest differences were between groups within panels, rather than between the panels themselves, is the goal, "knows how and where to seek employment and is able to apply for a job and participate in a job interview." This goal was ranked 20th by community leaders, 15th by educators, and 16th by students. However, within both the student and educator panels respectively, it can be seen that there were considerable differences between the races, with both black and white females having ranked the goal considerably higher than did the white male and female groups. In fact, for the black male students, this was the number one goal. There is only the barest hint of a difference among groups in the community leader panel.

Discussion. There was definitely convergence among groups defined in terms of race and sex within each panel. Considering the relatively high initial agreement among the groups, it is impressive that any detectable convergence occurred. That convergence between groups did occur is testimony to the power of the Delphi technique in producing movement toward consensus, utilizing as it does the tendency toward cognitive balance. This tendency has been well documented as a powerful force in human behavior.

What happened on Round 3 is of considerable interest. Looking at each panel as a whole, there was evidence of movement away from convergence in the educator and student panels. This finding is different from that reported by Cyphert and Gant (1970) and that reported by Uhl (1971). Cyphert and Gant found that movement on the last questionnaire of their study, which corresponded to Round 3 of the present investigation, was about equally divided between movement toward consensus and movement away from consensus, or in effect, no overall convergence at all. Uhl found that convergence did occur on Round 3, though it was not as marked as that on Round 2.

A possible explanation for this tendency to diverge on Round 3 lies in the fact that this was the round on which a summary of dissenting opinions expressed on Round 2 was provided to each participant. It may be assumed that a summary of dissenting opinions would not encourage further convergence, but would in fact have the opposite effect, providing reinforcement for a divergent response. This finding is particularly interesting in view of that reported by Sweigert and Schabacker (1974) regarding the inhibiting of convergence through feedback of each participant's own responses. Apparently the feedback of dissenting opinions, whether one's own or those of other

members of the panel, has an inhibiting effect on convergence. It would appear that the stronger effect in this connection is produced by exposure to the dissenting opinions of others. Both of the two studies previously cited also included a summary of dissenting or minority opinions as feedback to participants on the final round, but without the divergence effect found in the present study, though Cyphert and Gant had hypothesized the occurrence of such an effect.

A related finding of interest was that agreement among the three panels as a whole decreased on Round 2, as compared to Round 1, and tended to increase again on Round 3. In seeking an explanation for this finding, it should be kept in mind that the three panels constituted groups completely independent of one another. Members of each panel received feedback on the results of their own previous responses as a group, but did not receive feedback on the responses of the other panels. Consequently, it may very likely have been the case that as the members of each panel converged among themselves, one result was a slight reduction in the level of agreement across the panels. Further, it may have been the case that as the tendency to diverge occurred on Round 3, the level of agreement among the panels tended to increase slightly again. The changes in level of agreement over rounds was very small, but the pattern is consistent.

In examining the ranks assigned to particular goals by the groups within each panel, it should be kept in mind that there is definitely an element of judgment involved in identifying goals over which disagreement may be socially significant. The intent in this paper is to present a set of quantitative indices for social significance and to illustrate how these indices may be used. As pointed out in the previous section, the more important in general

a goal is perceived to be and the greater the variability among groups in perceiving its importance, the greater is the social significance of the disagreement about its importance and, consequently, the greater is the need to resolve the disagreement in setting policy.

In the previous section, measures of the social significance of disagreement were provided for each goal examined in this study, and examples of different patterns of disagreement were presented. Since the groups were defined in terms of race, sex and overall panel, a pattern of disagreement might involve any one or any combination of these variables.

A question might be raised as to why the rank ordering of goals was used rather than the actual mean ratings of importance on which the rank ordering was based. Ranks were used because the interest was in the relative importance given to a particular goal by a group, not in the specific point on the importance scale constituting the arithmetic average of perceptions. A rank ordering is of genuine practical significance because goals compete with one another for resources being allocated by a school system. Further, a rank ordering provides a kind of standard score, if you will, that tends to eliminate differences among groups in the use of scale points, i.e., where one group tends to give higher ratings generally than does another group.

It should be kept in mind, of course, that use of a scale of importance such as this possibly has both "floor" and "ceiling" effects built into it. The top and bottom-ranked goals tended to have less variability in perceived importance than did the middle-ranked goals because there was less room to vary at the top and bottom than there was in the middle. This may be readily seen in Table 6. The floor and ceiling effects, if kept in mind, should not

pose a serious problem in using the indices. A six-interval scale is approaching the limit that can be used effectively in this type of measurement. (See Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum, 1958.) Further, it may be contended that "true" variability in responses may tend to decrease somewhat at either end of a scale because the most important and the least important are generally easier to identify than are things of only average importance. The middle range is a kind of nebulous area where discriminations tend to be more difficult to make. Table 6 shows, however, that in spite of generally smaller S.D.'s at either end of the rank ordering, differences in S.D. between goals that are adjacent to each other in the ranking are frequently pronounced. These are the differences in variability that are worth examining.

A question might be raised as to whether or not an examination of 86 goals in a rank ordering may not risk capitalization on chance. In other words, how much confidence may one have that a pattern of rankings across groups is meaningful, and not just a random occurrence. The answer to this question lies in the stability of the rankings. The reliability coefficients for the rankings, shown in Table 1, indicate that the rank ordering by groups was highly stable, making it generally unlikely that large differences in ranking a goal across groups were due to chance. Ten of the twelve groups had N's of very respectable size. Only the black and white female groups in the community leader panel had N's that were small enough to be bothersome. It perhaps should be stressed that the pattern of differences in ranking is of considerably more interest and importance than a single difference between any two groups. A pattern is much less likely to be the result of chance than is a single difference.

Perhaps one final question should be considered. Once a goal is identified as having a socially significant level of disagreement among groups regarding its relative importance, what should be done with it? One reasonable approach would be to attempt to clarify the basis for the disagreement, perhaps through in-depth interviewing of selected panel members whose judgments reflect the different points of view, or perhaps through holding a meeting of selected panel members to discuss the nature of the disagreement.

It is possible that the disagreement might be the result of different interpretations of the goal statement, so that the resolution would be to develop a common understanding of what the goal statement means and possibly to generate new statements reflecting alternative interpretations. It is also possible that the disagreement is a genuine one, not merely differences in interpretation. Once the nature of the disagreement is understood, a decision can be made as to whether the goal needs to be restated, or split into more than one statement, or thrown out altogether, or dealt with in terms of its relevance to only part of the community, i.e., pluralistic sets of goals for a pluralistic community.

Summary. In establishing educational goals through the Delphi technique, three studies were conducted involving panels of community leaders, educators, and high school students respectively in metropolitan Atlanta. Convergence in perception of goals was examined within each panel as a whole and among groups defined in terms of race and sex within panels. It was found that both individual and group perceptions generally tended to converge. Convergence among groups was particularly impressive because of the relatively high level of initial agreement among them. An additional finding of interest was the tendency for divergence on the third round among students and educators. Indices for identifying goals that reflect socially significant areas of disagreement were presented.

Importance of the Study. There has been increasing interest in the use of the Delphi technique in educational goal-setting. If it is assumed that use of the Delphi technique in educational goal-setting should involve large numbers of persons from a wide variety of backgrounds as participants, and if it is further assumed that convergence among different groups of persons participating in a Delphi study is important, then the question of whether or not convergence among different groups of persons does in fact occur is a highly significant one. In the present study, groups were defined in part in terms of race and sex. As integration is achieved in school systems, the question of the extent of agreement among groups from different racial backgrounds as to what educational goals are important is of great concern in setting policy. Further, with the changing conceptions of sex roles in our society, differences between males and females in the perception of the relative importance of goals are of considerable importance.

Even when there is relatively high agreement among groups, examination of specific areas where relative disagreement may exist can be very useful. Where there is disagreement on a goal that is considered to be very important by one or more groups, there is a need for further analysis to determine the causes of disagreement. This kind of investigation may develop information that has considerable relevance to policy setting within a school system.

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TABLE 1

RELIABILITY OF THE RANKINGS OF GOALS IN EACH ROUND
BY RACE AND SEX, SHOWN FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Group	Spearman Rank Correlation		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Educators			
White Males	.91	.97	.96
Black Males	.93	.92	.93
Black Females	.96	.96	.95
White Females	.94	.94	.97
Students			
White Males	.91	.94	.96
Black Males	.92	.94	.96
Black Females	.95	.97	.94
White Females	.84	.94	.91

NOTE: In determining the reliability of the rankings, each group of participants was randomly divided into halves, and a ranking of goals was developed for each half. The correlation between the rankings for the halves was then computed for each group.

TABLE 2

THE SIZE OF EACH GROUP IN EACH DELPHI PANEL

Group	N
Community Leaders	
White Males	153
Black Males	83
White Females	22
Black Females	17
Total	275
Students	
White Males	57
Black Males	124
White Females	53
Black Females	135
Total	369
Educators	
White Males	82
Black Males	98
White Females	111
Black Females	138
Total	429

TABLE 3

CORRELATIONS AMONG GROUPS DEFINED BY RACE AND SEX
 WITHIN EACH DELPHI PANEL IN RANKING THE
 GOALS FOR EDUCATION ON EACH ROUND

Pairs of Groups	Spearman Rank Correlation		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Community Leaders			
White Males and Black Males	.87	.91	.91
White Males and White Females	.92	.95	.95
White Males and Black Females	.78	.89	.87
Black Males and Black Females	.89	.92	.94
Black Males and White Females	.88	.95	.93
Black Females and White Females	.80	.90	.88
Educators			
White Males and Black Males	.87	.93	.94
White Males and White Females	.96	.95	.96
White Males and Black Females	.87	.94	.94
Black Males and Black Females	.95	.98	.96
Black Males and White Females	.88	.95	.95
Black Females and White Females	.90	.93	.96
Students			
White Males and Black Males	.85	.93	.91
White Males and White Females	.94	.95	.96
White Males and Black Females	.83	.60	.91
Black Males and Black Females	.96	.98	.97
Black Males and White Females	.85	.95	.91
Black Females and White Females	.85	.93	.93

TABLE 4

CORRELATIONS AMONG THE THREE DELPHI PANELS IN RANKING
THE GOALS FOR EDUCATION ON EACH ROUND

Pairs of Groups	Spearman Rank Correlation		
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Community Leaders and Educators	.94	.90	.92
Community Leaders and Students	.81	.77	.80
Educators and Students	.83	.79	.82

TABLE 5

RANKING OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS ACCORDING TO PERCEIVED RELATIVE IMPORTANCE, SHOWN BY RACE AND SEX WITHIN EACH DELPHI SAMPLE

Statement of Goal	Students				Overall Rank	Educators				Overall Rank	Community Leaders				Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		
The individual. . .					7					1					1	
is able to listen, speak, read, and write	3	14	5	14		2	1	6	1		1	1	1	3		
recognizes that every man has the right to participate freely in society so long as the rights of others are not violated	2	3	6	3	1	1	12	6	2	3	7	2	2	5		2
understands and respects himself - his abilities, interests, values, aspirations, limitations	7	18	6	26	14	7	4	13	15	7	2	6	3	1		3
has the skills necessary for further study or for entry directly into the world of work	11	2	16	6	3	9	7	20	16	11	8	2	6	7		4
has concern for his fellow man	17	17	3	8	12	10	2	9	7	5	5	7	8	11		5
is able to set personal goals	7	3	14	3	5	5	13	15	8	8	6	2	9	8		6
has the desire to preserve the rights and property of others	31	21	9	21	21	2	3	2	4	2	12	11	5	8		7
supports the free and voluntary exercise of religious choice	7	15	6	1	6	17	9	10	22	14	9	7	12	6		8
is able to communicate feelings, ideas and information	10	13	18	17	13	28	19	22	8	18	15	14	14	11		9
understands and accepts the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship	44	42	26	30	42	13	25	14	26	22	9	15	7	1		10

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students				Overall Rank	Educators				Overall Rank	Community Leaders				Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		
The individual . . .																
is committed to the values expressed in The Bill of Rights	41	43	39	20	41	17	30	3	27	23	4	10	10	14	10	11
recognizes that work is necessary and desirable	27	36	42	41	37	25	29	22	31	28	11	5	11	10	11	12
understands and accepts the relationship of rights to responsibilities	47	46	45	42	46	5	10	1	4	4	3	9	4	4	4	13
takes pride in workmanship and accomplishment	38	22	18	31	34	10	20	18	2	10	19	25	15	16	15	14
understands and accepts the necessity and desirability of avoiding discrimination in employment practices	6	3	3	14	4	8	13	37	28	25	13	12	31	25	17	15
possesses the attitudes and personal values that enable him to overcome adversity	15	10	18	5	10	28	15	11	20	16	22	21	18	24	18	16
is able to maintain individual integrity in group relationships	5	1	9	9	2	31	15	24	10	20	30	39	24	23	28	17
understands freedom as the right to make choices within the framework of concern for the general welfare	24	12	22	1	15	17	17	15	12	13	29	39	19	16	20	18
understands the effects of drugs, alcohol and tobacco	21	7	12	6	10	15	18	30	18	21	36	18	20	19	23	19
knows how and where to seek employment and is able to apply for a job and participate in a job interview	1	2	36	37	16	4	5	28	19	15	20	26	25	28	20	20

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students				Educators				Community Leaders				General Overall Rank		
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F	Black M	Black F	White M	White F	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Overall Rank	
The individual. . .															
has the knowledge and skills for managing personal finances	12	20	31	28	28	7	24	17	19	22	18	23	27	19	21
desires to acquire and maintain a health-ful natural and physical environment	24	30	2	9	21	24	6	10	12	27	37	21	30	26	22
considers public office to be a public trust	24	33	16	26	35	41	27	36	37	22	16	16	26	16	23
practices responsible behavior when using private and public facilities	30	32	24	21	22	5	3	4	6	37	38	17	15	23	24
has set a tentative occupational or career goal and possesses an educational training plan to achieve it	4	11	30	36	25	27	33	37	33	18	13	37	34	32	25
possesses the attitudes and skills to pursue learning as a life-long process	35	30	18	21	22	32	24	25	27	17	34	33	20	27	26
has a personal philosophy of life	16	27	34	14	33	20	34	35	30	32	31	36	22	36	27
respects and cares for the property of his employer and fellow workers	50	47	46	47	13	11	5	14	9	14	18	13	13	14	28
is able to adjust to changing human relationships brought about by geographic and social mobility	12	27	15	28	24	23	21	22	24	38	34	39	34	39	29
is able to function as a follower, a co-worker and a leader in work	22	25	29	39	37	33	38	40	38	28	26	28	41	33	30
understands and is committed to the processes and purposes of law	34	37	33	31	35	35	11	31	31	40	41	21	28	35	31

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students				Overall Rank	Educators				Overall Rank	Community Leaders				Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		
The individual. . .																
desires to improve the quality of life in the community	27	26	31	31	28	43	43	43	43	43	16	26	34	16	25	32
understands and exercises the citizen's role in the decision-making processes of government and politics	36	34	22	17	32	44	44	41	42	44	21	16	29	34	38	33
is willing to live in a racially integrated society	36	26	44	45	39	40	35	42	34	40	34	26	38	39	38	34
knows how, when and where to secure medical services	12	6	28	9	9	12	28	36	31	29	42	34	53	50	46	35
values and seeks sound mental and physical health through good nutrition	20	19	36	38	26	17	31	30	38	36	43	43	44	43	42	36
knows how and where to obtain additional training and education	50	50	52	49	50	15	25	29	22	26	22	21	27	20	22	37
is able to understand and tolerate dissent	17	9	9	9	8	48	46	46	49	47	31	31	30	34	34	38
is able to adjust to changing jobs and job requirements	52	49	48	48	49	25	20	18	12	17	32	30	35	30	37	39
is able to secure information for a wide variety of sources, to analyze, to synthesize, to draw conclusions and to make decisions	48	48	47	51	48	33	35	35	28	34	26	21	32	30	31	40
knows and practices socially acceptable behavior	43	39	32	34	40	38	40	39	39	39	47	68	41	42	41	41
knows and understands that the quality of man's life depends upon the harmony he achieves with his natural environment	38	24	25	25	35	32	34	30	30	32	59	49	45	57	50	42

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students				Overall Rank	Educators				Overall Rank	Community Leaders				Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		
The individual. . .	28	41	1	17	26	39	42	17	21	35	72	47	43	54	43	
values and demands the conservation and proper utilization of land and other natural resources	39	40	51	46	42	41	38	40	41	41	41	45	57	49	44	
possesses knowledge, understanding and appreciation of his heritage	29	23	35	24	31	47	47	52	52	49	54	60	71	60	45	
knows how to secure and use community services	32	35	43	40	38	54	51	53	54	53	44	46	64	55	46	
understands the functions of public education in our society and how it is administered	49	54	48	53	52	45	45	44	45	45	46	49	43	43	47	
understands the emotional and social aspects of human sexuality	17	16	39	35	23	42	39	45	44	42	81	81	85	81	48	
knows and understands workmen's compensation, social security, retirement systems, employment insurance and other employee benefits	60	59	57	69	60	46	47	49	47	46	35	21	26	30	49	
is able to make responsible decisions regarding the use of time	39	23	12	9	24	70	71	62	62	64	49	46	42	44	50	
is committed to the concept of accountability for the use of public resources	53	52	54	50	53	50	50	47	57	52	51	74	45	47	51	
recognizes the influence of the family and religious and community organizations in shaping values in a changing society																

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students			Overall Rank	Educators			Overall Rank	Community Leaders			Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White		Black M	Black F	White		Black M	Black F	White		
The individual. . .	45	44	44	45	58	59	59	59	71	74	55	64	52
understands how technology can alter the natural and physical environment	56	55	54	55	53	48	46	50	55	61	48	48	53
is able to identify common goals and cooperate with others in their attainment	72	69	73	69	52	55	55	56	39	31	40	40	54
possesses the ability and desire to use the learning resources of the community	42	45	42	44	61	60	64	62	67	61	63	65	55
appreciates the beauty of nature	59	56	61	59	49	49	51	48	51	61	57	52	56
has the knowledge and skills to be successful in meeting his needs as a consumer of goods and services	46	51	55	51	73	75	67	69	45	42	51	45	57
recognizes and values creativity as a basic human need	68	64	74	70	51	54	49	52	70	71	49	56	58
understands human biological processes and functions	65	63	66	65	57	51	56	54	62	61	65	66	59
is familiar with a wide variety of occupational fields	65	70	62	68	56	56	57	57	60	49	60	42	60
understands the capacity of man to adjust to social and technological change	74	75	65	73	55	57	54	55	58	57	68	61	61
is able to act alone or to participate with others in recreational and leisure time activities													

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students				Overall Rank	Educators				Overall Rank	Community Leaders				Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Black M	Black F	White M	White F		
The individual. . .																
understands the social, economic, and political implications of population growth	54	53	53	52	54	69	62	66	58	60	80	61	59	73	73	62
has a knowledge and understanding of current political issues	75	76	61	58	71	59	58	58	59	58	50	68	56	60	53	63
participates in recreational activities that can provide physical fitness throughout life	57	60	55	59	57	60	68	60	66	63	74	68	62	68	71	64
understands the judicial system	58	57	58	56	58	70	66	70	70	71	51	49	65	61	57	65
knows and understands the concepts of taxation	55	58	59	56	56	62	70	70	68	68	67	46	74	68	72	66
understands the structure and functions of local, state and national governments	67	68	64	60	64	68	68	68	65	67	48	57	52	54	51	67
appreciates the value of the occupations of others	61	67	72	73	67	66	61	65	60	61	72	57	53	50	58	68
respects the offices of appointed and elected officials	68	71	60	64	66	67	67	62	69	66	75	79	50	48	59	69
understands and values the functions, relationships and responsibilities of labor and management in a free society	63	65	62	66	63	79	76	75	77	76	64	71	58	61	63	70
has the ability and desire to participate in community service activities	62	62	65	71	62	70	78	80	79	78	56	49	75	67	67	71
has knowledge and understanding of mathematics	63	61	68	71	61	63	63	77	71	70	66	44	77	72	76	72

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students				Educators				Community Leaders				General Overall Rank		
	Black M	Black F	White M	White F	Black M	Black F	White M	White F	Black M	Black F	White M	White F		Overall Rank	
The individual. . .															
is able to make constructive use of leisure time in some avocational activity	77	66	74	78	63	72	61	64	65	60	61	76	54	70	73
is able to identify desirable social and technological changes	76	72	65	69	77	74	69	73	75	64	49	61	73	69	74
understands the techniques to control social and technological change	71	73	69	68	81	77	84	76	79	78	77	80	76	80	75
has knowledge of the principle economic, social and political systems of the world	70	74	75	75	84	83	81	81	82	79	74	78	76	79	76
understands and appreciates the contributions of social, religious and national groups to our culture	78	61	78	77	78	64	70	72	72	63	61	79	73	78	77
is aware of the social, economic and political implications of technology	80	81	81	80	75	79	76	78	77	67	49	69	79	74	78
understands the impact of science and technology on jobs and job requirements	82	83	82	82	63	64	74	74	73	77	56	67	78	75	79
has an understanding and appreciation of the role of science in our society	81	80	84	81	73	73	73	74	74	76	80	73	81	77	80
seeks opportunities to participate in governmental processes	84	82	80	83	82	81	78	82	80	57	71	72	69	68	81
has knowledge, skills and a desire for life-long growth in arts areas of his choice	73	77	77	76	79	85	81	85	85	82	86	82	82	83	82

TABLE 5 - CONTINUED

Statement of Goal	Students			Overall Rank	Educators			Overall Rank	Community Leaders			Overall Rank	General Overall Rank
	Black M	Black F	White M F		Black M	Black F	White M F		Black M	Black F	White M F		
The individual. . .	79	79	78 79	79	85	80	81 80	82	83	83	81 84	84	83
has a knowledge and understanding of international relations	83	84	85 85	85	76	82	85 83	81	86	82	86 86	86	84
possesses knowledge and understanding of production, distribution and consumption of agricultural and industrial products	86	86	86 86	86	82	84	79 84	84	84	83	83 80	82	85
uses one or more of the arts or crafts in recreational and leisure time activities	85	85	83 84	84	86	86	86 86	86	85	83	84 83	85	86
possesses a knowledge of and interest in science													

TABLE 6

INDICES OF THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DISAGREEMENT
REGARDING THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF GOALS

Overall Rank of Goal	S.D. of Ranks Across Groups	Range of Ranks Across Groups	Minimum/ Maximum Ranks	Overall Rank of Goal	S.D. of Ranks Across Groups	Range of Ranks Across Groups	Minimum/ Maximum Ranks
1	4.812	13	1/14	23	8.383	25	16/41
2	3.137	11	1/12	24	12.346	35	3/38
3	7.520	25	1/26	25	11.325	33	4/37
4	5.622	18	2/20	26	6.557	18	17/35
5	4.697	15	2/17	27	7.837	22	14/36
6	4.372	13	2/15	28	17.441	45	5/50
7	9.166	29	2/31	29	8.607	27	12/39
8	5.680	21	1/22	30	6.617	19	22/41
9	5.529	20	8/28	31	8.361	30	11/41
10	13.504	43	1/44	32	10.365	27	16/43
11	14.280	40	3/43	33	10.456	28	16/44
12	12.576	37	5/42	34	6.142	19	26/45
13	19.874	46	1/47	35	15.866	47	6/53
14	9.269	36	2/38	36	10.050	27	17/44
15	11.405	34	3/37	37	14.057	37	15/52
16	6.454	23	5/28	38	15.687	40	9/49
17	11.842	38	1/39	39	13.444	40	12/52
18	9.472	38	1/39	40	9.935	30	21/51
19	8.478	30	6/36	41	9.114	36	32/68
20	12.505	36	1/37	42	11.840	35	24/59
21	7.064	24	7/31	43	22.401	77	1/78
22	10.925	35	2/37	44	9.218	31	38/69

TABLE 6 (CONTINUED)

Overall Rank of Goal	S.D. of Ranks Across Groups	Range of Ranks Across Groups	Minimum/Maximum Ranks	Overall Rank of Goal	S.D. of Ranks Across Groups	Range of Ranks Across Groups	Minimum/Maximum Ranks
45	15.084	48	23/71	66	8.137	28	46/74
46	9.839	32	32/64	67	7.192	20	48/68
47	3.668	11	43/54	68	7.465	23	50/73
48	25.588	69	16/85	69	9.115	31	48/79
49	14.848	48	21/69	70	7.154	21	58/79
50	20.922	62	9/71	71	9.600	31	49/80
51	7.375	29	45/74	72	8.876	33	44/77
52	11.472	33	41/74	73	7.930	24	54/78
53	4.252	15	46/61	74	7.868	28	49/77
54	14.145	42	31/73	75	4.840	16	68/84
55	10.961	31	36/67	76	4.210	14	70/84
56	6.083	18	47/65	77	7.171	18	61/79
57	12.255	36	39/75	78	9.229	32	49/81
58	10.255	27	49/76	79	8.990	27	56/83
59	6.052	20	50/70	80	4.122	11	73/84
60	6.849	22	49/71	81	8.035	27	57/84
61	8.028	24	51/75	82	4.055	13	73/86
62	8.845	28	52/80	83	2.256	7	78/85
63	7.681	26	50/76	84	2.811	10	76/86
64	5.632	19	55/74	85	2.353	7	79/86
65	7.305	21	49/70	86	1.231	3	83/86