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ABSTRACT
                  The effective schools movement, a program which
involves school staff in diagnosis of problems, decisions on
correcting them, research on the effectiveness of various
alternatives, and training and assistance with improvement efforts,
has focused, up until now, on elementary schools. The feasibility of
transferring these programs to high schools is examined. It is
pointed out that, since the research base for the programs derives
from studies of minority urban elementary schools, the school
characteristics identified are not typical of the average high
school; also, because the research base emphasizes achievement at the
elementary level, many other goals that are typical of high schools
are not addressed. A discussion of the differences between high
schools and elementary schools considers: (1) diversity of high
school academic and social objectives; (2) large size of high
schools; (3) organizational complexity; (4) subject-oriented faculty;
(5) frequent movement of students from class to class; (6) tracking
of students; (7) complex administrative role of the principal; (8)
faculty resistance; (9) student goals and attitudes toward school;
and (10) parent and community attitudes toward school
responsibilities. (JD)

Review of Effective·Schools Programs

Volume III: Effective Schools Programs in High Schools:
Implications for Policy, Practice and Research

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Final Report to the National Commission on Excellence in Education

2

INTRODUCTION

During the past five years, efforts to improve public education have increasingly come to foucs on what are known as "effective schools" programs. These programs have attracted considerable public and professional attention. Effective schools policies and programs have been developed by many state and local education agencies, and the programs have become a popular topic for education news stories and professional publications. More recently, lively debate has generated questions about their merits and the research base on which the programs rest. In some quarters, the effective schools movement may be controversial, but it is a major national phenomenon in public education and a new approach to school reform.

This report is the third in a series of three which deals with effective schools programs. The series was prepared for the National Commission on Excellence in Education to provide a review of the literature available on effective schools programs as it pertains to secondary education (Volume I) and to survey the extent of program adoption, particularly at the high school level (Volume II). Volume II was concerned with the approximate number of such programs, where and when they originated, what their impact thus far seems to be. Volume III of the series continues this discussion of effective schools programs by setting the movement in recent historical context and by drawing attention to those features of public high schools which distinguish them from elementary schools, on which most of the effective schools research was based. But whereas Volumes I and II of this series were derived from research on effective schools and programs, Volume III is more speculative. It considers the extent to which effective schools programs can be transferred from elementary schools to high schools, and suggests that attention to the differences might produce more successful high school programs.

The report is intended to serve as a discussion paper for state and local education agencies and other developers planning or implementing effective schools programs at the secondary level. With the other volumes in this series, it is intended to provide the Commission and other interested parties with an overview of the effective schools movement, its origins and evolution in the recent history of school reform, an assessment of the research on which the movement rests, and implications of what has been learned for policy, practice and research.

SCHOOL REFORM AND THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS MOVEMENT

Efforts to improve public schools and teaching practice are almost as old as the schools themselves, but in the past twenty years, such efforts have expanded and changed considerably. Prior to the late 1950's and early 1960's, most education improvement efforts focused on reorganizing schools and improving their educational resources. Smaller, age-graded classes, better materials and improved facilities were expected to improve work conditions and produce better instruction. To improve the quality of teaching, educators tried to attract better qualified people to the teaching force. Improve teacher training programs. upgraded credential requirements and enhanced status and work conditions were sought to professionalize the work and increase its appeal. These approaches to school improvement dominated reform efforts for more than one hundred years The notion was that improved inputs would produce better outputs, but little attention was paid to how the inputs were utilized in schools and how they influenced student and teacher performance.

With the launching of Sputnik and the growing federal interest in the inequalities suffered by poor and minority students, the federal government's interest in education took a new turn and its investment in education increased

substantially. Federal officials believed that by intervening early in the lives of poor children through school desegregation and compensatory education programs, it could improve educational opportunity for poor children, and eventually their adult opportunities would increase as well.

But although the federal government had a keen interest in influencing local schools to improve, it had few resources available to attract their cooperation. It was constitutionally limited in authority to intervene directly, and although federal money was a much bigger carrot than in the past, it was still a modest contribution to the total expenditure of local agencies. Thus, with authority and money in short supply, the government turned to persuasion to bring about local change. The chief means of this persuasion was to be the knowledge and products of a new education research and development enterprise. Federal officials believed that if the new education knowledge and products were proven to be effective, local adoption and school improvement would naturally follow.

The next twenty years, roughly the decades of 1960 and 1970, saw much federally-sponsored creative and productive activity directed toward school improvement. But during this time, ideas about how to foster improvement changed considerably. Initially many thought that if effective programs-- programs which could improve student achievement--could be developed or dis- e v ou, alidated, and disseminated, districts would quickly adopt them. But when evaluation studies indicated that improvements had not materialized, new resources were directed toward encouraging more wide-spread dissemination, and research interest focused on issues of implementation. Perhaps teachers were unfamiliar with the techniques proposed by the new programs, needed help in implementation, or were allergic to an improvement introduced from the top down.

Implementation studies were undertaken, and soon indicated that in order to achieve the desired results, school staff needed to be involved in planning for school improvement efforts. The success of these efforts ultimately depended on staff commitment, and this could be built by including them in the planning process, providing needed assistance, and convincing them by means of program evaluations and research studies that teaching quality and school climate could be improved in their institutions. With the publication of information on the processes required to help new programs take root in schools, the popularity of top down reforms faded. It was replaced by the notion that schools should generate their own improvement activities, and select programs that were most suitable for their school needs. Many educators came to believe that rather than thrusting new programs on the schools from above, schools should enter a problem-solving process, decide which available programs might solve their identified problems, and fine-tune those programs to make them suitable for local settings. Schools might be encouraged by district or state officials to undertake improvements, but since schools had needs and minds of their own, the final design and implementation of improvement practices should be left to the school's descretion.

This evolution in thought about how to bring about school improvement is captured in the current Effective Schools movement. It aims to improve schools not by introducing particular, well-specified program packages, but by initiating a process which builds staff commitment by involving them in the diagnosis of school problems, decisions about how to correct the problems, research on the effectiveness of various alternatives, and training and assistance with their improvement efforts. Effective schools programs build on what has been learned about school improvement over the past twenty years. They acknowledge the ultimate authority and control of local actors in school improvement, and strive to build staff commitment without imposing specific new programs from above.

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS PROGRAMS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

The effective schools movement had its origin in elementary schools, but programs developed for that·level are now moving up to high schools. As reported in Volume II of this series, we identified 39 research-based effective school programs operating in 875 school districts and 2,378 individual schools. Of these, 367 were middle or junior high schools and 345 senior high schools, or 40 percent of the schools in the sample. We cautioned that these figures might be conservative, since our survey was not comprehensive and did not include many local development efforts. But we also pointed out that where programs were adopted for use district-wide, implementation was reportedly more difficult in high schools and often was initiated later than in lower schools. Thus our figures may reflect the number of high school adoptions, but they tell us less about the amount of implementation activity going on at the secondary level.

Efforts to plan and implement high school programs appear to have proceeded on the assumption 1) that differences between the two school levels are of modest importance and 2) that because the programs are more concerned with school processes than with curriculum innovations or specific new teaching techniques, they are generic and can be used at any school level. But while it may be true that the process is the main message in effective schools programs, our conversations with program developers indicate that implementing the process is slower, more complex, and fraught with difficulties in secondary schools. Issues which center on the context and organizational structure and the diverse goals of high schools, and on faculty, student, and parent/community considerations merge to form the image of a highly complex social organization--one which places different demands on

7

implementation at the high school level. Yet the programs which have been developed for high schools do not appear to differ in essential design from those at the elementary level. High school program goals may place a greater emphasis on improved student attendance and behavior, and occasionally departments rather than entire schools are the unit of analysis for improvement. But for the most part high schools and elementary schools use the same designs and approaches.

A "typical" effective schools program is hard to describe since they vary in their details as we noted in Volume II. Nevertheless, in order to give the uninitiated reader some flavor of what the programs usually seem to include, we will try to sketch their broad outlines. Our intention is to provide a general program portrait, followed by two specific examples, to set the stage for our later discussion of high schools and the particular challenges they present for developing programs that will succeed at that level

Effective schools programs almost always begin with the selection of a school-wide planning team which consists of administrators, teachers, and parent representatives. This team, and sometimes the entire teaching staff, are introduced to information and research on effective schools in an awareness conference which may last from one to several days. Sometimes the presentations are made by district staff, but some districts obtain the help of major figures in the movement, such as Ron Edmonds, to help launch the programs. Armed with information on the characteristics of effective schools and instruments for identifying the degree to which they are present in the school, the teams next conduct school-wide studies or enlist the help of external site visit teams to do it for them. These studies or surveys

measure such things as school climate; the principal's effectiveness as an
instructional leader; consensus on instructional goals; teacher expectations
for student learning; and the use of student test results for practice im-
provement. Data are reported to the entire school staff, and based on it,
the team establishes school-wide objectives targeted for improvement. Fre-
quently task forces are then convened to develop implementation plans for
each of the targeted improvements. Then comes the implementation of the
plans.

At this point in the process, more program variation begins to appear
and implementation steps may be unclear or flexible. Some programs urge
schools to develop their own improvement goals and plans, while others urge
schools to adopt the entire platform of effective schools characteristics
and to begin work on all simultaneously. Some districts introduce intensive,
focused training sessions for principals on instructional leadership or for
teachers on effective classroom management practices. National experts in
these areas of practice are sometimes called in to run workshops, and the
process may involve repeated classroom observations of teachers, and in-
dividual consultation over time on their management or instructional problems.
Other districts take a less aggressive approach and do little more than urge
teachers to take advantage of available district in-service assistance.
Programs vary considerably in the degree to which they rely on outside experts
vs. district in-service staff; in the amount and intensity of staff training
in new practices; and in the availability and aggressiveness of follow-up
observation and consultation with school staff. Districts also vary in the
variety of school data they gather and use, and whether they try to use it
for improvement or as benchmarks of progress. Some districts have somewhat

fluid plans for implementation; many seem to take their cue from individual school's receptiveness to the program.

Let us provide two examples of high school programs to illustrate how programs differ. Program A aims to improve teaching, student achievement, and behavior by developing better leadership skills in administrators at the school, district, and sometimes state level. At the building level, a leadership team is convened consisting of the principal, department chairs, teachers, and central office staff responsible for secondary schools. This team reviews existing student achievement data, and collects school-wide data on disciplinary incidents and perceptions of student behavior. The team is then introduced to the research on effective schools, and asked to come to a consensus about department performance in: leadership, curriculum, school climate, teaching, and assessment. Next, the team collects community perceptions of each department, and reviews district policies relevant to any improvement plans. Then, based on these policies, perceptions, and student achievement and behavior data, the team develops a school-wide management plan which includes an implementation strategy and a program monitoring system. The program includes focused training, but it is reserved exclusively for principals and deals with effective instructional leadership. Faculty involvement in the program consists of an introduction to the effective schools research through an awareness session, but they do not receive training or in-service help on practice improvement. Rather, the principal newly trained in instructional leadership provides needed help to department chairpeople, who in turn assist their department staff. This program has been designed by its developer for packaging and broad scale dissemination, and as such does not involve training or assistance from non-district staff. According

to its developers, the program is relatively inexpensive to implement.

Program B was developed as a modified version of an elementary school effort designed to change the school's management structure. It focuses much attention on principal change, but does involve the entire faculty. The process begins with the selection of a representative program coordinating committee which administers a climate instrument throughout the school to assess attitudes and expectations in the five key areas of effective schools. The data are analyzed and compared to a data base which includes information from other district high schools. The school faculty are then assigned at random to small groups for data feedback, to diagnose organizational issues, and to identify problems. Next another instrument--an academic matrix--is used to determine levels of student academic attainment: minimal attainment, proficiency, and excellence. The faculty reconvenes to analyze the aggregated matrix results in terms of curriculum and instructional issues, and form "issues groups" on both a school-wide and departmental basis. Coordinating council members and some department heads are trained in group facilitation, so that they will be able to lead work on each issue. Groups tackle the problems one at a time, and using data obtained on each issue, generate solutions and prepare recommendations for the coordinating council. The council develops a comprehensive improvement plan, prepares an implementation approach and initiates the plan. The expected results of this effective schools programs are not only improvement in the five areas, but an increased problem solving capability institutionalized throughout the school. This program is extremely labor intensive, but it holds external assistance to a minimum by relying almost exclusively on the work of school faculty. It differs from its elementary school version by differentiating groups and

issues to reflect the greater complexity of high school organizations.

Although most program descriptions are quite specific about the assessment and planning phases, implementation steps for later phases are often left unclear, and some difficult issues are sidestepped. For example, programs rarely specify how schools identify teachers who need assistance, win their genuine cooperation, and provide the assistance which they will find useful to improve their practice. Program designs do not indicate how the results of a years-end retesting of students will be used to influence the next year's operation of the program. This data may provide evidence of student learning progress or the lack of it, but program designs do not indicate whether and how student test results will have operational impact on programs over and above the informational purposes it serves. In addition, program designs do not address institutionalization. Steps to ensure that the programs will not be diluted or vanish within a few years are overlooked in most program materials.

Questions also arise about the implementation of efforts to develop other effective schools' characteristics. For example, little is said about how "a pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus" is instilled in school faculties. We assume that the issue here is not a knowledge of the school's curriculum but the faculty's agreement that the identified focus is appropriate and consistent with their values, and that they know how to implement it successfully. How is this accomplished? In a similar manner, we wonder what teacher behavior conveys high expectations for students, and how teachers acquire this behavior if it is not part of their natural teaching style. And how are teachers' expectations for students raised, if after teaching for several years, they have concluded that some students

have little real interest in learning? What training or information alters
expectations derived from experience, even if such expectations are in fact
invalid? These are critical issues in the implementation of effective
schools programs at all school levels, but the available program descriptions
do not address them.

This leads to the observation that many effective schools programs are
in good measure process reforms which are driven by the persuasiveness of
the research on effective schools. This description is not meant to discount
the programs or to suggest that they will not lead to real improvement.
Indeed, a major lesson of the past 20 years' research in education is on
the central role that process plays in the ultimate effectiveness of new
programs. These are process reforms in that they strive to capture the
interest and imagination of school faculties, to revitalize those who are
demoralized and to generate enthusiasm for joint work on common goals.
Because they are not like the top-down reforms of recent vintage, but instead
are bottom-up, jointly planned ventures, their success depends on shared
perceptions and well-orchestrated collective activity. Their primary thrust
is to initiate a process of school-wide self-scrutiny. This process is
focused by research which is used to develop a consensus about prevailing
school characteristics and conditions. Once agreement has been reached,
the implementation plans for altering conditions are not well-specified
because effective schools programs reflect the belief that school change
ultimately depends on persuasion. Faculties must develop belief in and
commitment to change. They must agree that they and others in the school
need improvement.

The main instrument for this persausion is the research on effective

schools and teaching practices. The awareness sessions that introduce administrators and teachers ro research findings are intended to persuade individuals to work to alter their practices, to develop high expectations, and to take advantage of assistance. The research is used as a vehicle to convince staff that by working together on joint goals, they can make the school more effective. Persuasion is the most difficult part of the effective school process, but it is the part on which the success of the effort ultimately depends.

The effective schools research base is thus a central and crucial element in all effective schools programs. It serves as a catalyst for the improvement process by providing a framework against which schools can assess their own performance. But the data base is less persuasive as a device for convincing high school staff that the process will work at that school level. One problem is that the effective schools research is derived from studies of elementary schools, and it is not clear whether the characteristics of effective elementary schools match those of effective secondary schools. The work of Rutter et al. is of some use, but it was conducted in British high schools and did not use achievement as the chief criterion of effectiveness Studies of effective American high schools have yet to be conducted. A second problem with the research base is that it emphasizes achievement as the criterion of effectiveness, ignoring too many other goals which are equally important in high schools. Rutter used a range of outcomes in identifying effective schools--discipline, vandalism, and attendance as well as achievement--and this makes his study more relevant for high schools than other studies. But fewer than half (13 out of 30) of the high school programs identified in our survey developed their programs with reference to Rutter's

work. American studies of elementary schools have influenced the development of high school programs to a greater degree than this study of British high schools.

A third weakness of the effective schools research base as a guide for developing high school programs is the fact that it was derived from studies of predominantly minority, urban schools, not schools which are average or typical And yet as we reported in Volume II, effective schools programs are being implemented everywhere: 69 percent of the programs are operating in rural districts; 16 percent in suburban districts; 12 percent in medium-sized cities; and 4 percent in large cities. These figures reveal a considerable amount of program activity going on in schools which are not comparable to those in which the effective schools research was conducted. Noncomparability of school level and community-school demographic characteristics weakens the authority of the research base for guiding high school program development.

The research base raises several other questions, some concerned with methodology and some with its usefulness as a program development guide. These have been discussed in some detail in Volume I of this series. But as we also pointed out, the research has great appeal because of its face validity, its pragmatic, non-theoretical angle of vision, and its concern with issues which are central to management and practice in all schools. It would be hard to find a high school disinterested in its performance, and in that sense, the research base focuses on issues which are universal. This may explain why it is being used as a basis for high school programs. In the absense of research on American high schools, but with growing concerns about basic skills and student behavior (which is often what is meant

by school climate), high schools have turned to the most credible work on effective schools which is available. It focuses on issues which make sense to school people, and in the absence of good reasons not to use it, and the presence of more applicable research, it provides a starting point for work in high schools.

HIGH SCHOOL FEATURES AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

The remainder of this report discusses the features which differentiate upper schools from elementary schools and which may influence the success of effective schools programs in junior high, middle or high schools. As we noted earlier, this analysis is more suggestive than conclusive, since implementation studies have yet to be conducted on high school programs. But with growing numbers of state and local agencies developing high school initiatives or transferring elementary programs to upper schools, it may be useful to draw attention to those aspects of high schools which suggest design modifications or new approaches for secondary programs. These observations draw on our knowledge of high schools, research on how they are organzied and operate as well as on comments of program developers who have implemented programs at the secondary level.

Definitions of Effectiveness

Since the publication of the Cardinal Principles, high schools have sought to achieve a varied lot of goals. In addition to teaching fundamental literacy skills, high schools have tried to teach critical thinking and the skills of self-discovery, to impart a general knowledge of the world and our culture, to encourage wholesome physical and mental development, and to instruct students in proper behavior if not good manners. High schools also strive to prepare some students for college, some for work, all for informed

citizenship, and in recent years, wise consumerism and suitable career choice. High schools have long lists of goals and objectives, and over time, the list has lengthened. The course guide and student handbook of a large comprehensive high school is a telling mirror of school goals reflected in the great diversity of course offerings, and the long lists of rules and responsibilities delineated for students.

Given this diversity of high school objectives, describing a school's effectiveness in terms of one single measure--student achievement--provides an artifically narrow view of the high schools' mission. While all parents and staff are concerned that students learn to read and calculate, all parents and staff do not agree that the schools energy and resources should concentrate on these to the detriment of work-related skills or personal and social development.

A recent analysis of data from John Goodlad's A Study of Schooling is revealing on this point: of the more than 1,000 teachers, 9,000 parents and 11,000 students surveyed at the junior and senior high school levels, more than 50 percent did not see intellectual development as the desired primary function of secondary education. They reported the social, personal, and vocational purposes of high schools to be more important. (Sirotnik, K., "What You See Is What You Get," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 53, No. 1, February 1983).

Furthermore, high schools vary in the degree to which a focus for student achievement is in fact a real necessity. In schools where most students perform below national norms the focus on achievement may be well placed. But at least half of all high school students are in the upper half in achievement, and for these students in particular, other goals increase in importance

relative to achievement gains. But even schools with a majority of students below national norms serve many students who are above average, and both groups of students have a broad range of needs which schools must meet. Since academically well-performing high schools are adopting effective schools programs and all academically weak schools have some well-performing students, it seems particularly critical that high school programs broaden their definitions of effectiveness.

Program developers indicate that definitions of effectiveness have been expanded to include student behavior and attendance rates. But as yet no definition of effectiveness in these domains has been put forward as clearly as definitions in the domain of achievement (Sirotnik, op. cit.). Edmonds (Arlie House, 1982) defined effectiveness as "a highly circumscribed, quantitative measure "by recording annual increases in proportionate mastery in the lowest social class." While some might quarrel with this definition and its measurement, a similar definition in other aspects of school would provide a useful benchmark for assessing effectiveness in these areas.

Organizational Considerations

Size is one obvious high school characteristic which distinguishes them from elementary schools. At the most simple level of analysis, the size of high schools complicates program implementation because of the number of people who must be involved in the process. For example, more faculty schedules must be accommodated to schedule awareness sessions or training programs than in lower schools where most teaching schedules are the same And the number of people to be surveyed for school-wide data collection requires a longer timeframe for data collection and analysis. Furthermore, the number of faculty, administrators, counselors and parents needed for a

steering committee representative of different constituencies will be quite
large. This complicates decision-making and makes greater demands on school
administrators' time and attention--at precisely the time they should be
attending to instruction. Size is also likely to increase program costs:
more release time must be purchased, more training and technical assistance
provided, more data collected and analyzed.

The organizational complexity of high schools and their departmental
structure also raise implementation issues. The subdivision of the school
into departments, skill areas and ancillary functions such as counseling and
social services encourages splintered school goals and interests, which may
conflict. For example, conflicts are quite common in high schools between
faculty and counseling staff. Counselors (and administrators) are much con-
cerned with students' systematic accumulation of credits for graduation,
while teachers plagued by high absentee rates in their classes crack down
by failing students and denying credit.. Schools, of course, have policies
on attendance, but the pressure to graduate students encourages relaxed
enforcement, particularly in urban schools where school and class truancy
flourishes. Similarly, teachers are persistently dismayed at counselors'
ease in permitting students to change courses or sections in mid-term. It
disrupts instruction even as, from the counselor's point of view, it keeps
students in school and earning credit by accommodating to their requests.

Conflicts also develop over departmental interests, particularly as
these are affected by the master schedule. A majority of seniors and many
juniors in high schools hold jobs and are permitted to leave after required
classes in the late morning. They often arrange their course schedules to
accommodate to work schedules, and many students will not select classes

held in the afternoon. Which classes are most essential, and which depart-
mental electives are scheduled for mornings and which for afternoons is a
big issue in some schools. Is an English elective more important than art?
Arguments over scheduling, particularly, thrive in large high schools where
the master schedule is long and complex. These examples illustrate goal and
procedural conflicts in high schools--conflicts which vary in intensity from
school to school, but which are persistent tensions in the system. Learning
to manage such tensions may be an important by-product of collaborative
processes but the process will first magnify the tension. Issues which are
usually beneath the surface will inevitably rise as groups strive to reach
consensus in the face of conflicting objectives. Conflict must be anticipated
and managed in high school program implementation.

One approach to dealing with issues which arise from school size and
complexity is to focus improvement efforts on smaller school units, such as
departments. Some high school programs are trying this as a more manage-
able alternative to tackling the whole school as the unit of improvement.
But at some point, each units' work must be reconciled to enable common goals
to emerge. A pyramiding approach to building school goals from the goals
of individual units may permit more goal variation with the school even while
it facilitates more universal objectives. But the difficulty of introducing
bottom-up reform in large, complex settings whose working units are affected
by the work requirements of others is well known to students of organizations.
The challenge to effective schools programs in these settings will be to
avoid the time-consuming and demoralizing struggle for agreement which sank
many innovative school efforts which were built on theories of collaboration
in the early 1970's.

An effort to designate basic skills instruction as the top priority
goal may be more difficult in high schools where teachers have stronger
allegiances to subject matter and skill areas than in elementary schools.
Some departments such as vocational education do not consider the teaching
of basic skills to be a major purpose of their work, nor is it a particular
interest although they acknowledge its importance. But even in academic
departments, many teachers are more concerned with teaching their curriculum
or subject area than providing remedial instruction in skills they feel
were the responsibility of elementary school teachers. Even in literature
or history classes which lend themselves to developing reading and writing
skills, many high school teachers have retreated to easier texts and less
required writing. As students seem less willing and able to write and more
reluctant to try, teachers make fewer writing demands and eliminate essay
questions from their tests. Basic skill instruction is the central activity
in remedial or ESL classes. But elsewhere many teachers are uninterested.
feel they lack the necessary skills, or simply disagree that basic skills
is an appropriate focus for high school work. This is in sharp contrast to
elementary schools, where reading, writing and counting are the most important
instructional task and all teachers know how to teach those things. In a
sense, the curriculum is the vehicle for basic skills instruction in elementary
schools, while in high schools, the curriculum is the vehicle for teaching
content

The organization of high schools also militates against a pervasive
basic skills focus in its system of moving students from class to class at
frequent intervals. Teachers are less familiar with the skills of individual
students than in elementary grades because they work with each student

fewer hours and have many more students to teach. Most high school teachers meet between 120 and 175 students each day. They know which students are academically weak and which are strong, but they have little knowledge of particular strengths and weaknesses. Unlike elementary teachers, those in the upper grades do not receive diagnostic information at the individual student level, nor could they easily deal with it if they did.

Student movement from class to class also affects issues of school climate in that it creates more opportunities for students to fight, ditch school or classes, or otherwise misbehave. Tight student management is easier in elementary schools, where students stay in one place for most of the day and have fewer opportunities to evade adult supervision. And students are also less disruptive and problematic when they are younger and in settings where they are known. The movement of students around high schools and the number each teacher meets daily creates a situation in which many students are anonymous and feel less obligation to abide by rules of social conduct.

The organization of high schools is also characterized by the <u>tracking or grouping of students by ability</u>. Different tracks require different amounts of work from students, set up different expectations, teach different kinds of content and often employ different teaching strategies. The implications of this arrangement for developing effective secondary schools is that the divisions between the upper and lower tracks will deepen as attention in lower tracks focuses on improved achievement. As we noted earlier, effective schools programs strive to raise the achievement of the lowest performing students to that of average students in the school. In high schools, this suggests a strict basic skills curriculum for the poorest students while others pursue more diverse objectives. But the result of

this might be a more sharply defined tracking pattern than now exists, where there is considerable mixing of students between the two extremes of ability or performance. One implication is that many students now in heterogeneous classes would be segregated in a concentrated pursuit of improved achievement. They would receive an education more narrowly focused in content, expectations, and teaching strategies. Such a division would have profound consequences for the traditional function of high schools as social melting pots.

Effective schools programs focus much attention on the preparation of principals to assume instructional leadership roles. Instructional leadership involves many responsibilities, but effective schools programs are particularly concerned to involve principals in issues of curriculum, teacher evaluation and assistance, and review for permanent appointment. The principal is to set the tone of the school and oversee the effective implementation of its curriculum. This leadership role is suitable in elementary schools where by comparison to high schools the curriculum is limited, course content is not complex, requiring special knowledge and skill, and the faculty is small. Nor do elementary school principals have large non-instructional departments and a range of extra-curricular activities to oversee.

But high school principals manage a more complex enterprise, which is more diverse internally, and involves contact with a greater number of external constituencies: employers, colleges, social service agencies, and other schools. Their management responsibilities preclude serious and sustained attention to curriculum and instruction, but even in smaller communities where demands are fewer, principals are often not qualified to judge on instructional issues. Unlike most elementary school principals.

who once taught at that level, high school principals as teachers did not
teach in all subject areas. The high school curriculum and teaching
strategies vary considerably both within and between departments. Yet
decisions about instructional competence requires not only familiarity with
each curriculum and the ability to judge whether students are engaged; it
involves knowing the subject well enough to know if the content is accurately
presented, the lesson is at the appropriate level of challenge, and the
instructional focus of the lesson is well placed. Furthermore, high school
principals, in order to fulfill the instructional leadership role effectively,
must be prepared to make such judgments across many departments, many courses
and course levels within departments, and across many different teachers who
use different pedagogical approaches. Instructional leadership in this
sense of the term seems particularly inappropriate and unwieldly at the high
school level, an observation which has led some program developers to suggest
modifications. Some propose using department chairpersons in this capacity,
which seems sensible if they are selected on the basis of competence rather
than willingness to take the job. But the latter is often the case in high
schools, where salary stipends have been eliminated for department chairs,
reducing the job to an undesirable responsibility circulated among depart-
ment members. Introducing instructional leadership to high schools may
work best by preparing department chairpeople for the role. But it would
require restoring merit to decisions about chair appointments and incentives
to make such appointments attractive.

A further observation about principal leadership in high schools is
that many districts rotate principals from school to school every few years
to avoid the building of feifdoms and to accommodate promotions up. The

brief tenure of principals in high schools with stable faculty who know
they will outlast the principal makes the exercise of formal authority
difficult and weakens the potential for informal authority to develop.
Principal mobility is an obstacle to developing leadership, particularly
in schools where the systemic change of effective schools programs is being
introduced.

A final observation about high school organizations is that any changes
introduced to the system, including effective schools programs, must be
designed and managed such as to support a central objective: attracting and
holding students' interest so that they will come to school regularly and
remain for a diploma. Wide-scale school and class truancy and dropping-out
are not big problems for elementary schools, which accommodate a more com-
pliant clientele. Young children may react disagreeably to new school
policies or programs, but still they come to school. High schools face a
more serious challenge from students in this regard, and effective schools
programs which propose to tighten standards and require basic skills tracks
for some must be prepared to deal with the migratory impulses of displeased
students. Many students mostly come to school because it is fun, does not
demand much, and provides great latitude in course selection. Reorganizing
the institution while maintaining its student appeal will be a major challenge
in creating effective schools programs for high schools.

Faculty Considerations

Enlisting the enthusiasm, commitment and involvement of school faculties
is necessary for effective schools programs at any school level. At the
very least, these bottom-up reforms depend on staff willingness to suspend
judgment and cooperate; preferably they depend on determination to learn

new skills and enter into collaborative activities. In particular, effective school programs try to inspire the faculty to act on the school's newly defined instructional focus; enforce the rules to maintain a safe climate; develop high expectations of students; and use student achievement to evaluate their teaching. The programs propose major changes in teacher behavior and attitude at all school levels, but the changes may be particularly profound for high school teachers.

In the previous section we discussed the subject matter specialization as a barrier to working on students basic skills. This issue comes up again in considering how to develop faculty commitment to work on school-wide goals. In viewing themselves as subject matter specialists, even long-time faculty members frequently have less allegiance to their schools than to their disciplines. A parallel might be drawn with college faculties who are not disinterested in university affairs, but who first and foremost consider themselves to be members of their disciplinary group. Their major energies go into their work, but most of it is subject-oriented work rather than work on university-wide issues. Similarly, many high school teachers find greatest satisfaction in teaching their subjects, not working on school goals which may be unrelated. Collaborative activities which cut across disciplines, awareness sessions on effective schools research and in-service sessions on classroom management or test-use may be resisted for this reason. Many high school teachers are impatient with training which does not deal with how to teach the curriculum in their subject area (Neufeld, Farrar, Cohen, forthcoming); and this may increase with years of experience. High school teachers at work in 1979 had eleven years as the median years of experience, as contrasted with seven years in 1966 (Schlechty and Vance,

"Recruitment, Selection and Retention: The Shape of the Teaching Force,"
Arlie House, 1982), and in 1983, this figure is likely higher. We do not
know of research on this issue, but our work with high school teachers
suggests that with experience, they resolve or learn to manage their class-
room difficulties, and those who don't find other work. This does not
suggest that all teachers are perfect; rather, many have come to terms with
teaching problems and do not perceive the need for training. They are most
interested in collaboration which is focused on their curriculum and how
to improve the way they teach it.

Effective schools programs must also contend with greater teacher
resistance at the high school level. Program developers who have worked
in high schools reported greater faculty cynicism and inertia than in
elementary schools, and a stronger feeling that the process would produce
few school changes (Volume II). Tougher, more active union leadership in
high schools reinforces resistance, and bargaining over terms, conditions,
and trade-offs for faculty participation is more pronounced in secondary
schools. This resistance may be the fruit born by failed past efforts to
change high schools, which discourage faculty from jumping on new band-
wagons. It may also arise from skepticism that the effective schools
research-base is a dependable guide to high school improvement. The per-
suasive force of the research may be too weak to convince high school teachers
to give change another try. It may also be that effective schools programs
propose changes which are dramatically different from the way that high
schools are currently organized and teaching work performed. The proposed
changes may seem unrealistically ambitious and naive to teachers who entered
the profession in the heady reform years of the 1960's and saw their own

reform dreams fail to reach fruition.

Indeed, effective schools reforms do propose changes which are far more dramatic for high schools than elementary schools. First, they seek to tighten links between loosely connected departments and sub-units through greater faculty collaboration and interchange. But collaboration is a rare commodity in high schools. It occurs in modest amounts between department members who only rarely have formal contact with other departments. For example, teachers of math and history work with material which is unrelated in content and teaching strategies. In addition, student anonymity is so pervasive that teachers rarely have occasion to share concerns about individual students. Furthermore, there are few issues which require decision-making between departments and the few decisions which require faculty involvement are made on a school-wide basis. High schools have few substantive needs for faculty collaboration, and as a result their contacts with one another are largely informal and serendipitous. The situation in elementary schools is quite different where all teachers at grade level teach the same cur-riculum, and throughout the school, all teach sequential skills in reading, writing, counting, etc. Greater intellectual and pedagogical similarities are found in elementary schools, and several teachers may share a year-long working knowledge of a student with other teachers. These provide a foundation on which to build new formal and informal working relationships. Effective schools programs can build on established collaboration in the lower grades but in high schools must first establish contact between people whose specialities and interests have kept them apart.

Second, effective schools programs propose more dramatic changes in high schools than elementary schools in their teaching strategies and

classroom management techniques. Developers report that high school teachers use more traditional methods in both areas, either because they have not been much exposed to innovative practices developed over the last decade, or because they have not found them useful. Whatever the reason--and it would be important to know which is the case--high school teachers have to learn major new approaches rather than fine-tuning what have become familiar practices. For example, recent innovations such as mastery learning have either been adapted as a piece or have influenced instructional patterns in many elementary schools. But these are notably absent in observations of high school classes which are not remedial. High school teachers lecture, less frequently hold class discussions, and even less frequently, subdivide the class and teach small groups. Lectures and desk-work are the two main secondary school teaching strategies, as they have been for decades. Changing these involves not only changing practice, but changing conceptions of appropriate practice and intervening in traditional beliefs.

Teacher opposition to the notion that school quality and teaching practice can be measured by student test results is another sticky issue for high school programs. Elementary school teachers don't like this either, but high school teachers are particularly wary that teaching competence will be judged on the basis of test scores on students whom they have seen only four hours each week for sixteen weeks. They argue that this is insufficient time to have much affect on test scores, whether they rise or fall, and that it is not possible to know what aspect of a students course schedule was responsible for gains or losses. Whether as individuals who are uncertain about the influences of their teaching on test results, or collectively as a group who don't teach skills which would influence achievement, teachers

as programs lead to tighter rules and procedures to create a more orderly climate, schools must consider the effect of more stringent enforcement on suspension, truancy and drop-out rates. They must also prepare for possible civil rights sanctions if minority students are over-represented among those who are penalized or leave school. The number of recent court cases on the over-representation of minorities in urban school suspension and drop-out rates has fostered a more cautious approach to sanctions for all students. Are high schools now prepared to tighten up in view of the reasons why enforcement was relaxed in the first place?

Repeated punishment and dropping out are highly correlated, so if more students are punished for violating rules, more should leave school. And if rules are tightened, how can students be convinced to violate tighter rules at least no more frequently than they did before? This suggests that without some creative anticipation of the problem, as rules are tightened and enforced to improve school climate, suspension and drop-out rates will rise.

A similar question applies to failures. If class attendance and home-work completion are linked to grades and credits as a means of improving achievement, it is possible that failure rates--and thus drop-out rates-- will rise. Calling home is one successful approach for getting students to school each day, but truancy from individual classes is a big problem in its own right. Can schools support the effort required to call home about both kinds of truancy? How will effective school programs respond to increased failures and truancy as standards are tightened? And will communities and district offices, which have traditionally judged schools on their ability to contain these problems, be sympathetic if the rates

reject judgments about quality on that basis (Cohen, Farrar, Neufeld, forth-coming). We also mentioned earlier that the majority of high school teachers do not view improved achievement as the central purpose of secondary education. Social, personal, and vocational goals are more important in their view, and progress in these areas is not reflected in test results (Sirotnik, op. cit.).

High school teachers are also wary of effective schools proposals to use achievement as a basis for program evaluation. Achievement is weakened by excessive absenteeism or truancy, and is uncertainly effected by various environmental enticements such as work, with which high school teachers must compete. Education's great uncertainty about the relative influence of various school and environmental factors on achievement makes it a question-able measure of program effectiveness. This particularly concerns teachers who worry that a focus on achievement will encourage them to teach to the test. Many high school goals--personal, social, vocational--are not reflected in test results. Neither are writing and critical thinking skills, which many teachers would like more time to develop. In summary, high school teachers have many sound reasons for rejecting achievement as a measure of program effectiveness, and effective schools programs that advance this claim dis-courage staff support. Some developers have responded by including measures of vandalism, absenteeism, drop-outs and the like. But the level at which these factors differentiate effective from ineffective high schools has not been determined.

Student Considerations

Students' reactions to effective high school programs are the biggest mystery in the equation, but it is doubtful that they will accommodate to some of the proposed changes as willingly as elementary students do. First,

increase? What incentives can schools provide students to discourage dropping out as standards rise?

These are important considerations in the implementation of effective schools programs in high schools. Older students preferences and expectations must be taken into account in program planning because unlike elementary students, they are able to express their displeasure or resistance by not attending. School is not central in the lives of many students, who are more involved in work or other interests, although the unavailability of work for inner-city youth may increase school's attractiveness. However, this is not the experience of some city schools, where drop-out rates approach 50 percent. Many high school students want to be in school, but they don't necessarily want to learn what schools have to teach. They are willing to attend because school is fun, a pleasant place to be with friends, and involves few hassles. Many students have become uninterested in formal learning by the time they reach high school, and schools retain them by offering a wide variety of programs and curricula, many interesting or perhaps relevant, but which make few real demands for student performance. Effective schools programs may reverse this pattern by building student commitment and interest even as standards rise. But the task will not be easy. Students who find the improvement process un-platable may be truant or may drop out, and they may also transfer to other district schools. Particularly in many urban districts, students are free to move from school to school as they see fit, and many students exercise this option. Student mobility is a major issue in many districts, and if mobility increases as a result of effective schools programs, it will not improve their standing with counselors and teachers.

Student reactions must also be considered in designing policies to

improve order and school climate. The most effective way to build student commitment to the school is to increase their personal contact with school adults as a way to reduce feelings of alienation and anomie. But building relationships requires people to jointly deal with both pleasant and unpleasant situations, to engage over all matters that arise. And high school teachers today are reluctant to become involved with threatening events: student misbehavior, vandalism or fights. Teachers are more inclined for safety reasons to refer problems to security guards or administrators, and in some schools, do so with good reasons. Student violence against teachers is overstated as a fact of life in high schools, but the fact is that some students are threatening and some fight back. Students are less submissive and more challenging than they used to be, and it may be difficult as both a faculty and union issue to persuade teachers to become involved in disciplinary issues. But building student commitment may also be difficult if teachers do not wish to share this responsibility, even if they do so with good reason.

This raises a larger issue of how programs can build student commitment when so many are anonymous in large high schools. Some students prefer to be unknown to school adults, but some have little choice because they are not charming or bright, good or bad enough to attract adult attention. Some students are unknown because they are not special. These students receive very little personal attention in large high schools, yet it is difficult to know how they can become engaged in working toward school goals without it. One response to this situation may be to diversify adult roles, perhaps adding counselors whose job is to try to build relationships with students. But this remedy has obvious disadvantages in times of declining school

budgets and teacher riffings. Nevertheless, creative responses to this problem must be a central feature of designs for effective high school programs.

Parent/Community Considerations

Parents and community members are often less involved in high school than elementary school issues, perhaps because older students are approaching adulthood and are pressured to be more able to act in their own interests than are younger children. Yet in good measure, the ability of faculty and administrators to raise standards, make the school more safe and orderly, and improve attendance depends on support and some participation from adults outside the school. Ultimately, these cannot be accomplished without parent and the community approval. As we mentioned earlier, communities traditionally judge schools by their ability to keep drop-out rates down and students in school to graduation. If academic standards and school rules are tightened as a result of effective schools programs, will the community support schools in face of the possible consequences? Are communities prepared to judge schools by achievement rather than by attendance and other traditional goals? Recent experience with community controversies over social promotion in high school and the survey of high school parents on goals they hold for the school suggest that this may be an issue in some places. Developers may find it particularly important to diversify the goals of effective high schools to include those which parents and the community think are important in order to win their endorsement for changes which some will find unsettling.

But parent participation as well as endorsement is needed for high school programs, and this is not accomplished easily. Many parents have less control over their children and are less able to exercise adult authority than at

the elementary school level. Some parents are less concerned about older children, but many more are uncertain about how to deal with older children who have misbehaved or failed and who are also a source of trouble at home. Uncertainty rather than disinterest may more accurately explain the apparent lack of parental involvement in the lives of some children, but in either case, parents typically respond by asking the school to deal with their children's problems.

Other parents do not become involved in school issues because their lives are complicated or strained or perhaps involve several jobs or no job, which may be worse. They do not have the time or energy to provide support at home for new homework policies or attendance rules. These and many other parents want their children to attend school and achieve, and they do not want school problems to become problems at home. They want to maintain comfortable relationships with their older children, and if problems arise at school, they want them to be handled there. This may help to explain why parents are uninterested in issues of high school and teaching quality. They want both to be good, but rather than examining these school matters closely, they prefer to use their own children's school experiences and academic performance as measures of school performance. Their concerns about curriculum and instruction fade in the face of their children's decent academic records and the absence of calls home. Parents are concerned about their children's futures, whether they include college or work. and these concerns exert a subtle influence on schools and teachers to relax student rules and permit grades to be maintained at a respectable level. Their concerns encourage schools in the direction of grade inflation, tolerance of misbehavior, and a relaxation of academic demands and requirements. These parental

interests in high school education suggest that effective schools programs may need to develop strategies to counter parental resistance to new policies, and to find more effective ways to involve parents or others who are willing to assume responsibilities which ideally are carried out at home.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The preceeding discussion of effective schools programs and high schools is intended to provide a point of departure for discussions on the design and implementation of secondary programs. As such, it raises more questions than it answers, although we have suggested some lines of inquiry that may warrant closer scrutiny. The most obvious lesson that emerges from our observations about high school programs is that while there is much effective schools activity at that level, the paucity of research and information available on high school programs permits only broad recommendations for future action. With that in mind, we suggest that our work on effective schools programs contains the following implications.

Implications for Policy

1. The establishment of a clearing house at the regional or national level would facilitate the dissemination of information and materials on effective high school programs. At present, program information is scattered and difficult to locate, particularly on local development efforts.

2. The National Diffusion Network might be considered as a vehicle for disseminating vigorous high school programs, particularly since effective schools programs are complicated, demanding, and require initial and on-going technical support.

3. Federal support might be directed to the redesign and development of prototype high school programs, or to the preparation of documentation

on the implementation of well-conceived program plans.

4. State education agencies and intermediate units are in the most
critical position for giving visibility to effective schools programs and
encouraging regional adoptions. Support might be directed toward encouraging
them in this role.

5. Implementation research to learn more about the problem, possibilities
and accomplishments of secondary school programs is needed. It should take
the form of realistic, close-up views of program activities.

6. Much of the initial development of effective schools programs has
been undertaken by large, urban districts. Federal and state agencies should
provide some public acknowledgement of their ground-breaking work to encourage
similar local initiatives.

Implications for Practice

1. Recognition and clarification of the diverse goals of high schools
would facilitate considerably the design and implementation of effective
schools programs. At present, goals are either too abstract or unclear
to provide much guidance for development.

2. Many aspects of high schools make elementary school programs un-
suitable for use at that level. Developers should undertake more adaptation
and experimentation of programs for high school use.

3. High schools which are large may have greater program success if
they use departments or other sub-units in the school as the unit of analysis
rather than taking a school-wide approach. Developing departmental goals
as a prior step to seeking school-wide consensus on institutional objectives
may be one way to begin this critical activity.

4. Curricular innovation and assessment are important but often

overlooked activities in high school program design, They need to be given much greater emphasis than seems to be the case at present.

5. Because of high school size, faculty and staff task forces need to assume a bigger role in implementation and planning. The nature of that role and its responsibilities needs greater clarification in order to avoid staff confusion about time commitments and role demands.

6. The nature of front-end and on-going training and technical assistance to accompany implementation needs to be more clearly specified. Schools may vary in the amounts of assistance they need, but assistance plans should be sufficiently flexible to permit help when the need arises.

7 A school's readiness to undertake an effective schools program should be diagnosed as a pre-step to program planning. The conditions of readiness need to be defined as well as the steps which might be taken to improve a school's readiness to begin.

8. More sharing and collaboration is needed between developers and between developers and users of high school programs. Networking will increase the information flow and stimulate more creative design and planning work.

9. Improved teaching practice is one important aim of effective schools programs. Practitioners need to carefully assess the effect of various practice improvement activities, such as instructional management systems, for example, on both the curriculum and classroom practices.

10. The weakest link in the chain of activities which comprise effective schools programs is that which concerns executing the steering committee or task force plans for improvement. Greater precision on how the plans will be put into practice is needed, as well as information on

38

what the plan requires in the way of time, assistance, etc.

11. Many state and local agencies have mandated effective schools programs. When programs have been mandated, agencies must be prepared to support school efforts with training, technical assistance and other needed help.

12. If effective schools programs are to be institutionalized rather than ephemeral innovations, greater attention must be directed toward planning for program permanency.

Implications for Research

1. Qualitative implementation research and the development of case studies are needed to determine how the programs operate and their consequences for students, teachers and schools. This information will aid future program design, development and assessment efforts.

2. The documentation of local implementation activities will help to generate a data base which will provide guidance and assistance to other local developers.

3. More systematic research on the characteristics of effective high schools is needed. At this point we know little about whether the characteristics which are claimed to make the programs effective are in fact the source of high school effectiveness.

4. Technical assistance is needed to support the implementation process, but more information is needed on the role which change agents should assume in assisting schools.

5. The research base on effective schools plays a critical role in developing staff support and commitment. A research base which deals with the characteristics of effective high schools is needed both to increase

the legitimacy of program efforts and to assist with their design and

development.