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ABSTRACT

The Carnegie Foundation recently completed a comprehensive survey of more than 20,000 teachers in all 50 states about their involvement in shaping classroom and school policy. The report consists of a brief introductory analysis of the survey by foundation president Ernest L. Boyer, followed by 10 tables presenting, for each state, the percentages of teachers who report being "involved" or "not very involved" in decisions on 10 dimensions of classroom and school policy: choosing textbooks and instructional materials, shaping the curriculum, setting standards for student behavior, tracking students into special classes, designing staff development and in-service programs, setting promotion and retention policies, deciding school budgets, evaluating teacher performance, selecting new teachers, and selecting new administrators. Teacher involvement in decision-making varies widely from state to state. For example, 93 percent of Vermont teachers say they are involved in choosing textbooks, whereas 61 percent of Maryland teachers so indicated. Participation in budget decisions ranges from 57 percent in Hawaii to 8 percent in North Dakota. In his analysis, Boyer recommends more teacher involvement in many decisions that effect them and their students, as well as measuring progress against each school's own performance in preceding years. (LMS)

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TEACHER INVOLVEMENT IN DECISIONMAKING: A STATE-BY-STATE PROFILE

September 1988

THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING

SCHOOL CONTROL: STRIKING THE BALANCE

by Ernest L. Boyer

America's school reform movement is at a crossroads. During the past five years academic requirements have been tightened, standards have been raised, but most of the mandates for reform have been imposed, top-down, and we're beginning to discover that outside regulation has its limits. Education is a human enterprise, with teachers and students interacting with each other. There is just so much that can be accomplished by directives from above.

Tight state control promises accountability, but we cannot achieve excellence if all schools are required to meet rigidly controlled mandates that deny the individual differences of students and suppress the creativity of teachers. In the next phase of school renewal, educational leadership must be school-based.

Still, a note of caution must be struck. Granting more autonomy to schools is crucial. Such a move strengthens community participation and inspires dignity and creativity among teachers. But we cannot advocate more freedom for schools without asking "freedom to what end?"

This nation has always been ambivalent about how our public schools should be governed. On the one hand, we want local control; on the other, we want national results and we have never satisfactorily found a way to mediate the two. If the current reform movement is to succeed, we must find a middle ground.

The Carnegie Foundation recently completed the most comprehensive survey ever conducted on the conditions of teaching. We heard from more than 20,000 teachers in all 50 states about their involvement in shaping classroom and school policy. The results are not encouraging.

Teachers, we found, are not sufficiently involved in making critical decisions. They have little influence over education procedures. While most teachers help choose textbooks and shape curriculum, the majority do not help select teachers and administrators at their schools, nor are they asked to participate in such crucial matters as teacher evaluation, staff development, budget, student placement, promotion and retention policies, and standards of student conduct.

Further, teacher involvement varies dramatically from one state to another. In choosing textbooks, for example, 93 percent of teachers in Vermont say they are involved; in Maryland it's 61 percent. Participation in budget matters ranges from 57 percent in Hawaii to 8 percent in North Dakota.

Whatever is wrong with America's public schools cannot be fixed without the help of those inside the classroom. Yet in most states, teachers have been front-row spectators in a reform movement in which the signals are being called by governors, legislators, state education officials—those who are far removed from the field of action.

At the same time, schools need state and national advocates and they must be held clearly accountable for their work. Indeed, the initiative for school reform came largely from public officials, corporate leaders and concerned citizens who care deeply about the future of the nation. The movement has been sustained by these influential voices, and by the media that has constructively called for increased support for public education.

Further, we cannot ignore the fact that American schooling is a *national* concern. Students frequently move from one district to another and the future of education in one region of the country surely will affect the civic and economic future of us all. In the debate about school control we need state *and* local leadership as well.

Thus, while pushing for school-based reform, educators must define clear goals and develop procedures by which schools can demonstrate, at regular intervals, the effectiveness of their programs. Such evaluation should include the language proficiency of all students, a report on the books they read, and an assessment of the general knowledge of students in such fields as history, geography, science, math, literature and the arts.

School climate also should be measured. Are students, for example, organized into small units so that everyone is known by name? Is there, at the school, an aggressive retention program and are daily attendance and graduation rates improving? And does the school have a professional renewal plan for every teacher?

A school report card, however defined, should be submitted to district and state officials. Such reports should be accompanied by an overall evaluation prepared by the principal, teachers and parents who identify improvements as well as problems. A judgment of progress, or lack of progress, should be made—not against some arbitrary standard—but against the school's own performance in preceding years. Further, when the report card is submitted, the school should set priorities for the coming year.

In the United States with its more than 15,000 school districts, there cannot be a single national plan for improvement administered from afar through unilateral mandates. However, if excellence is to be achieved and public confidence sustained, the local school must be answerable to the public for the performance of its students. But once again, it needs more freedom and more flexibility to do the job. In the end, American education must find a way to blend local control with national results.

Above all, teachers must be full partners in the process. If we fail to give them more authority and a sense of their importance—as well as their responsibilities—we will have failed today's dedicated teachers and be unable to attract a new generation of outstanding young people to serve in the classrooms of the nation. And by that failure, we will have limited tragically the educational possibilities of our children.

TABLE 1 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: CHOOSING TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	78%	21%
Alabama.....	71	29
Alaska.....	79	21
Arizona.....	78	22
Arkansas.....	88	12
California.....	74	26
Colorado.....	83	17
Connecticut.....	73	27
Delaware.....	84	16
Florida.....	64	36
Georgia.....	74	26
Hawaii.....	91	9
Idaho.....	83	17
Illinois.....	86	14
Indiana.....	90	10
Iowa.....	90	10
Kansas.....	90	10
Kentucky.....	85	15
Louisiana.....	63	37
Maine.....	89	11
Maryland.....	61	39
Massachusetts.....	76	24
Michigan.....	87	13
Minnesota.....	88	12
Mississippi.....	81	19
Missouri.....	85	15
Montana.....	90	10
Nebraska.....	87	13
Nevada.....	73	27
New Hampshire.....	79	21
New Jersey.....	73	27
New Mexico.....	88	12
New York.....	78	22
North Carolina.....	76	24
North Dakota.....	92	8
Ohio.....	84	16
Oklahoma.....	92	8
Oregon.....	87	13
Pennsylvania.....	84	16
Rhode Island.....	68	32
South Carolina.....	87	13
South Dakota.....	90	10
Tennessee.....	71	29
Texas.....	78	22
Utah.....	78	24
Vermont.....	93	7
Virginia.....	82	18
Washington.....	78	22
West Virginia.....	87	13
Wisconsin.....	87	13
Wyoming.....	89	11
RANGE:		
High (Vermont)	93	7
Low (Maryland)	61	39

TABLE 2 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: SHAPING THE CURRICULUM

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS.....	63%	37%
Alabama.....	51	49
Alaska.....	68	32
Arizona.....	61	39
Arkansas.....	51	49
California.....	62	38
Colorado.....	70	30
Connecticut.....	68	32
Delaware.....	71	29
Florida.....	42	58
Georgia.....	54	46
Hawaii.....	69	31
Idaho.....	67	33
Illinois.....	62	38
Indiana.....	71	29
Iowa.....	75	25
Kansas.....	78	24
Kentucky.....	64	36
Louisiana.....	40	60
Maine.....	82	18
Maryland.....	44	56
Massachusetts.....	71	29
Michigan.....	68	34
Minnesota.....	79	21
Mississippi.....	59	41
Missouri.....	69	31
Montana.....	78	22
Nebraska.....	75	25
Nevada.....	46	54
New Hampshire.....	78	24
New Jersey.....	68	34
New Mexico.....	67	33
New York.....	62	38
North Carolina.....	53	47
North Dakota.....	71	29
Ohio.....	70	30
Oklahoma.....	62	38
Oregon.....	72	28
Pennsylvania.....	74	26
Rhode Island.....	70	30
South Carolina.....	61	39
South Dakota.....	78	24
Tennessee.....	55	45
Texas.....	62	38
Utah.....	63	37
Vermont.....	85	15
Virginia.....	61	39
Washington.....	68	32
West Virginia.....	43	57
Wisconsin.....	77	23
Wyoming.....	81	19
RANGE:		
High (Vermont)	85	15
Low (Louisiana)	40	60

TABLE 3 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: SETTING STANDARDS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	47%	53%
Alabama.....	47	53
Alaska.....	59	41
Arizona.....	60	40
Arkansas.....	47	53
California.....	64	36
Colorado.....	59	41
Connecticut.....	47	53
Delaware.....	39	61
Florida.....	37	63
Georgia.....	41	59
Hawaii.....	54	46
Idaho.....	53	47
Illinois.....	46	54
Indiana.....	38	62
Iowa.....	45	55
Kansas.....	51	49
Kentucky.....	46	54
Louisiana.....	45	55
Maine.....	63	37
Maryland.....	51	49
Massachusetts.....	40	60
Michigan.....	51	49
Minnesota.....	57	43
Mississippi.....	56	44
Missouri.....	47	53
Montana.....	51	49
Nebraska.....	48	52
Nevada.....	44	56
New Hampshire.....	52	48
New Jersey.....	37	63
New Mexico.....	43	57
New York.....	43	57
North Carolina.....	49	51
North Dakota.....	48	52
Ohio.....	40	60
Oklahoma.....	40	60
Oregon.....	68	32
Pennsylvania.....	39	61
Rhode Island.....	37	63
South Carolina.....	51	49
South Dakota.....	50	50
Tennessee.....	47	53
Texas.....	43	57
Utah.....	59	41
Vermont.....	60	40
Virginia.....	41	59
Washington.....	64	36
West Virginia.....	52	48
Wisconsin.....	48	52
Wyoming.....	63	37
RANGE:		
High	(Oregon)	68
Low	(Florida, New Jersey, and Rhode Island)	37

TABLE 4 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: DECIDING WHETHER STUDENTS ARE TRACKED INTO SPECIAL CLASSES

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	45%	55%
Alabama.....	47	53
Alaska.....	55	45
Arizona.....	47	53
Arkansas.....	44	56
California.....	40	60
Colorado.....	55	45
Connecticut.....	47	53
Delaware.....	40	60
Florida.....	39	61
Georgia.....	52	48
Hawaii.....	53	47
Idaho.....	48	52
Illinois.....	45	55
Indiana.....	45	55
Iowa.....	48	52
Kansas.....	46	54
Kentucky.....	53	47
Louisiana.....	36	64
Maine.....	60	40
Maryland.....	44	56
Massachusetts.....	46	54
Michigan.....	42	58
Minnesota.....	63	37
Mississippi.....	50	50
Missouri.....	42	58
Montana.....	55	45
Nebraska.....	54	46
Nevada.....	38	62
New Hampshire.....	56	44
New Jersey.....	40	60
New Mexico.....	43	57
New York.....	44	56
North Carolina.....	43	57
North Dakota.....	48	52
Ohio.....	40	60
Oklahoma.....	46	54
Oregon.....	56	44
Pennsylvania.....	38	62
Rhode Island.....	40	60
South Carolina.....	46	54
South Dakota.....	55	45
Tennessee.....	45	55
Texas.....	42	58
Utah.....	46	54
Vermont.....	56	44
Virginia.....	41	59
Washington.....	53	47
West Virginia.....	39	61
Wisconsin.....	51	49
Wyoming.....	57	43
RANGE:		
High (Minnesota)	63	37
Low (Louisiana)	36	64

TABLE 5 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: DESIGNING STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	43%	57%
Alabama.....	45	55
Alaska.....	53	47
Arizona.....	40	60
Arkansas.....	41	59
California.....	51	49
Colorado.....	43	57
Connecticut.....	61	39
Delaware.....	40	60
Florida.....	43	57
Georgia.....	37	63
Hawaii.....	32	68
Idaho.....	46	54
Illinois.....	45	55
Indiana.....	38	62
Iowa.....	41	59
Kansas.....	54	46
Kentucky.....	52	48
Louisiana.....	36	64
Maine.....	62	38
Maryland.....	40	60
Massachusetts.....	39	61
Michigan.....	55	45
Minnesota.....	48	52
Mississippi.....	54	46
Missouri.....	33	67
Montana.....	46	54
Nebraska.....	43	57
Nevada.....	31	69
New Hampshire.....	61	39
New Jersey.....	54	46
New Mexico.....	34	66
New York.....	38	62
North Carolina.....	42	58
North Dakota.....	37	63
Ohio.....	46	54
Oklahoma.....	82	18
Oregon.....	38	62
Pennsylvania.....	34	66
Rhode Island.....	30	70
South Carolina.....	49	51
South Dakota.....	53	47
Tennessee.....	51	49
Texas.....	33	67
Utah.....	37	63
Vermont.....	50	50
Virginia.....	34	66
Washington.....	48	52
West Virginia.....	38	62
Wisconsin.....	57	43
Wyoming.....	36	64
RANGE:		
High (Oklahoma)	82	18
Low (Rhode Island)	30	70

**TABLE 6 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: SETTING PROMOTION
AND RETENTION POLICIES**

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	34%	66%
Alabama.....	38	62
Alaska.....	45	55
Arizona.....	43	57
Arkansas.....	39	61
California.....	41	59
Colorado.....	38	62
Connecticut.....	33	67
Delaware.....	30	70
Florida.....	21	79
Georgia.....	35	65
Hawaii.....	37	63
Idaho.....	34	66
Illinois.....	39	61
Indiana.....	35	65
Iowa.....	37	63
Kansas.....	37	63
Kentucky.....	45	55
Louisiana.....	27	73
Maine.....	47	53
Maryland.....	24	76
Massachusetts.....	29	71
Michigan.....	41	59
Minnesota.....	45	55
Mississippi.....	36	64
Missouri.....	35	65
Montana.....	44	56
Nebraska.....	32	68
Nevada.....	25	75
New Hampshire.....	42	58
New Jersey.....	33	67
New Mexico.....	34	66
New York.....	36	64
North Carolina.....	36	64
North Dakota.....	43	57
Ohio.....	29	71
Oklahoma.....	37	63
Oregon.....	41	59
Pennsylvania.....	33	67
Rhode Island.....	31	69
South Carolina.....	30	70
South Dakota.....	49	51
Tennessee.....	38	62
Texas.....	24	76
Utah.....	26	74
Vermont.....	50	50
Virginia.....	30	70
Washington.....	36	64
West Virginia.....	27	73
Wisconsin.....	34	66
Wyoming.....	39	61
RANGE:		
High (Vermont)	50	50
Low (Florida)	21	79

TABLE 7 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: DECIDING SCHOOL BUDGETS

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS.....	20%	80%
Alabama.....	19	81
Alaska.....	24	76
Arizona.....	18	82
Arkansas.....	9	91
California.....	35	65
Colorado.....	36	64
Connecticut.....	22	78
Delaware.....	21	79
Florida.....	20	80
Georgia.....	19	81
Hawaii.....	57	43
Idaho.....	17	83
Illinois.....	12	88
Indiana.....	13	87
Iowa.....	15	85
Kansas.....	13	87
Kentucky.....	16	84
Louisiana.....	10	90
Maine.....	39	71
Maryland.....	18	82
Massachusetts.....	29	71
Michigan.....	15	85
Minnesota.....	20	80
Mississippi.....	11	89
Missouri.....	18	82
Montana.....	17	83
Nebraska.....	19	81
Nevada.....	27	73
New Hampshire.....	32	68
New Jersey.....	11	89
New Mexico.....	15	85
New York.....	18	82
North Carolina.....	28	72
North Dakota.....	8	92
Ohio.....	14	86
Oklahoma.....	10	90
Oregon.....	29	71
Pennsylvania.....	14	86
Rhode Island.....	17	83
South Carolina.....	23	77
South Dakota.....	10	90
Tennessee.....	16	84
Texas.....	20	80
Utah.....	23	77
Vermont.....	39	61
Virginia.....	16	84
Washington.....	25	75
West Virginia.....	12	88
Wisconsin.....	29	71
Wyoming.....	34	66
RANGE:		
High (Hawaii)	57	43
Low (North Dakota)	8	92

TABLE 8 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: EVALUATING TEACHER PERFORMANCE

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	10%	90%
Alabama.....	8	92
Alaska.....	13	87
Arizona.....	17	83
Arkansas.....	12	88
California.....	8	92
Colorado.....	14	86
Connecticut.....	13	87
Delaware.....	8	92
Florida.....	6	94
Georgia.....	20	80
Hawaii.....	14	86
Idaho.....	7	93
Illinois.....	11	89
Indiana.....	7	93
Iowa.....	7	93
Kansas.....	10	90
Kentucky.....	13	87
Louisiana.....	8	92
Maine.....	14	86
Maryland.....	8	92
Massachusetts.....	11	89
Michigan.....	7	93
Minnesota.....	14	86
Mississippi.....	17	83
Missouri.....	8	92
Montana.....	7	93
Nebraska.....	8	91
Nevada.....	6	94
New Hampshire.....	11	89
New Jersey.....	6	94
New Mexico.....	8	92
New York.....	7	93
North Carolina.....	17	83
North Dakota.....	7	93
Ohio.....	11	89
Oklahoma.....	8	92
Oregon.....	10	90
Pennsylvania.....	7	93
Rhode Island.....	6	94
South Carolina.....	16	84
South Dakota.....	9	91
Tennessee.....	13	87
Texas.....	8	92
Utah.....	20	80
Vermont.....	16	84
Virginia.....	14	86
Washington.....	7	93
West Virginia.....	11	89
Wisconsin.....	9	91
Wyoming.....	8	92
RANGE:		
High.....	(Georgia and Utah)	20
Low.....	(Florida, Nevada, New Jersey, and Rhode Island)	6

**TABLE 9 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: SELECTING
NEW TEACHERS**

	INVOLVED	NOT VER. INVOLVED	
ALL TEACHERS	7%	93%	
Alabama.....	4	96	
Alaska.....	8	92	
Arizona.....	12	88	
Arkansas.....	4	96	
California.....	17	83	
Colorado.....	20	80	
Connecticut.....	7	93	
Delaware.....	5	95	
Florida.....	5	95	
Georgia.....	3	97	
Hawaii.....	9	91	
Idaho.....	13	87	
Illinois.....	4	96	
Indiana.....	5	95	
Iowa.....	6	94	
Kansas.....	5	95	
Kentucky.....	3	97	
Louisiana.....	1	99	
Maine.....	16	84	
Maryland.....	4	96	
Massachusetts.....	8	92	
Michigan.....	7	93	
Minnesota.....	17	83	
Mississippi.....	4	96	
Missouri.....	5	95	
Montana.....	7	93	
Nebraska.....	5	95	
Nevada.....	5	95	
New Hampshire.....	20	80	
New Jersey.....	2	98	
New Mexico.....	4	96	
New York.....	9	91	
North Carolina.....	4	96	
North Dakota.....	4	96	
Ohio.....	5	95	
Oklahoma.....	3	97	
Oregon.....	20	80	
Pennsylvania.....	5	95	
Rhode Island.....	5	95	
South Carolina.....	4	96	
South Dakota.....	8	92	
Tennessee.....	3	97	
Texas.....	4	96	
Utah.....	10	90	
Vermont.....	17	83	
Virginia.....	4	96	
Washington.....	18	82	
West Virginia.....	4	96	
Wisconsin.....	7	93	
Wyoming.....	16	84	
RANGE:			
High	(Colorado, New Hampshire, and Oregon)	20	80
Low	(Louisiana)	1	99

**TABLE 10 TEACHER INVOLVEMENT: SELECTING
NEW ADMINISTRATORS**

	INVOLVED	NOT VERY INVOLVED
ALL TEACHERS	7%	93%
Alabama.....	3	97
Alaska.....	7	93
Arizona.....	9	91
Arkansas.....	3	97
California.....	11	89
Colorado.....	11	89
Connecticut.....	10	90
Delaware.....	12	83
Florida.....	3	97
Georgia.....	4	96
Hawaii.....	2	98
Idaho.....	8	92
Illinois.....	5	95
Indiana.....	5	95
Iowa.....	10	90
Kansas.....	4	96
Kentucky.....	6	94
Louisiana.....	6	94
Maine.....	14	86
Maryland.....	4	96
Massachusetts.....	13	87
Michigan.....	8	92
Minnesota.....	12	88
Mississippi.....	5	95
Missouri.....	5	95
Montana.....	5	95
Nebraska.....	6	94
Nevada.....	1	99
New Hampshire.....	19	81
New Jersey.....	5	95
New Mexico.....	4	96
New York.....	11	89
North Carolina.....	4	96
North Dakota.....	4	96
Ohio.....	5	95
Oklahoma.....	3	97
Oregon.....	13	87
Pennsylvania.....	9	91
Rhode Island.....	7	93
South Carolina.....	3	97
South Dakota.....	8	92
Tennessee.....	4	96
Texas.....	3	97
Utah.....	4	96
Vermont.....	20	80
Virginia.....	3	97
Washington.....	12	88
West Virginia.....	2	98
Wisconsin.....	8	92
Wyoming.....	14	86
RANGE:		
High (Vermont)	20	80
Low (Nevada)	1	99

TECHNICAL NOTES

The data in this report were collected by a mailed questionnaire administered by the Wirthlin Group of McLean, Virginia. The survey instrument was mailed to 40,000 public elementary and secondary school teachers in all 50 states in the spring of 1987.

Questionnaires were returned by 21,698 teachers representing a completion rate of 54.3 percent. Elementary teachers (kindergarten through grade six) compose 29.6 percent (11,827) of the sample and secondary teachers grades 7 through 12) make up 29.1 percent (11,651). Some of the teachers (1,780) teach at both levels.

Each survey response was weighted based on the level and state of the responding teacher. The weights were calculated so that the total survey response would represent the true relative numbers of elementary and secondary teachers across the 50 states. Similarly, the responses were weighted to reflect the true proportion of teachers from the elementary and secondary levels within the state.

The maximum sampling error for this survey is less than plus or minus one percent for the total sample. The sampling variation for any given question depends on the size of the sample and the size of the percentages expressing the results.