

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 300 916

EA 020 482

AUTHOR Van Brummelen, Harro
 TITLE In the Training and Instruction of the Lord:
 Curriculum and Its Change Agents in Three Christian
 Schools.
 PUB DATE Jun 88
 NOTE 4lp.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
 Canadian Society for the Study of Education (Windsor,
 Ontario, Canada, June 1988).
 PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports -
 Research/Technical (143)
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Church Role; *Curriculum Design; Curriculum
 Development; Educational Change; Elementary Secondary
 Education; Foreign Countries; Nontraditional
 Education; *Parochial Schools; Philosophy; *Private
 Education; *Private Schools; *Religious Cultural
 Groups; *Religious Education
 IDENTIFIERS *British Columbia

ABSTRACT

This study investigates, first, how the curricula of Christian schools differ according to the way their supporters view the role of Christians in contemporary society. Second, it analyzes the role of curriculum change agents in schools that are locally autonomous and have little or no external support system. This study looks at the curriculum-in-use in three neighboring British Columbia Christian schools: Agape Academy, Bethel Christian School, and Covenant Christian School. One set of questions in this study focused on the programs taught in the locally-controlled Christian schools. A second cluster of questions focused on the significant factors and change agents influencing curriculum implementation in Christian school settings. Three major factors affecting implementation of change are highlighted: (1) how each school's environment influenced its curriculum; (2) the characteristics and behavior of change facilitators; and (3) the nature of both the old and the new programs. The goals and philosophies of these schools are also discussed. Future research needs to explore whether or how the lives of Christian school graduates differ from their public school counterparts. Appended are the footnotes. (SI)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

ED300916

IN THE TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION OF THE LORD:
CURRICULUM AND ITS CHANGE AGENTS
IN THREE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

HARRO VAN BRUMMELEN
TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY
7600 GLOVER ROAD
LANGLEY, BC, CANADA V3A 4R9

PAPER PRESENTED AT THE
CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE, WINDSOR, ONTARIO

JUNE, 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it
 Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality

• Point of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H. W.
Van Brummelen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) "

A 020 482



IN THE TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION OF THE LORD:
CURRICULUM AND ITS CHANGE AGENTS
IN THREE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Between 1970 and 1985, while public school enrolment in Canada decreased eighteen percent, private school enrolment reached 234,000, an increase of sixty-four percent.¹ As in the United States, much of this expansion was due to growth in evangelical Protestant "Christian" day schools. In the Canadian province of British Columbia, of the estimated 11,500 students in 150 such Christian schools, independent associations of parents administer thirty schools with almost 5,000 students, with churches operating the remainder, most often in their church buildings². Although the growth of the schools appears to be slowing, more than two percent of BC's pupils now receive such schooling "in the training and instruction of the Lord."³

Nineteenth century educational leaders believed that compulsory education would solve social ills such as crime and poverty. Ever since, North Americans have had an unrealistic faith in the ability of schooling to accomplish almost anything.⁴ During the last twenty years, however, fundamentalist Christians who until recently championed public education have now joined Catholic, Christian Reformed, Seventh Day Adventist and Jewish adherents in operating non-public schools. They believe that society and its public schools has rejected traditional values and no longer serves their children's needs. They have transferred their faith in the power of education to a new institution: the Christian day school.

This study investigates, first, how the curricula of Christian schools differ according to the way their supporters view the role of Christians in contemporary society. Second, it analyzes the role of curriculum change agents in schools that are locally autonomous and have little or no external support systems.

The Parameters and Methodology of the Study

Most Christian schools are clear about their basic goal: to help children become obedient followers of Jesus Christ. But what does that mean in practice? One set of questions in this study focused on the programs taught in three locally-controlled Christian schools with elementary grades in a medium-sized British Columbia community of 70,000. What worldviews did the schools attempt to inculcate through their programs? In what ways were the schools' curricula unique and in what ways did they parallel what takes place in their public counterparts? Did their programs differ significantly? Did the schools change their programs as time progressed?

A second cluster of questions that guided this inquiry focused on the significant factors and change agents influencing curriculum implementation in Christian school settings. All three schools in this three-year study implemented curriculum programs or practices new to the users. Two conditions existed that, according to research, favored such implementation. First, the schools were free to (and did) make all decisions about altering practices at the local level, whether those involved incorporating revised beliefs, introducing new teaching strategies, or adopting and using new materials. Second,

each school's supporting community shared the contours of a common vision and purpose.⁵ The paper uses case studies within this context not to draw broad generalizations, but, rather, to add depth and dimension to the existing theory of curriculum implementation and change.⁶ Using Hord and Hall's threefold categorization of change facilitators into responders ("let it happen"), managers ("helps it happen"), and initiators ("makes it happen"), the paper asks: Who made decisions about curriculum and instruction? Who were the key players in the implementation process? How did they interact and facilitate change?

In the United States, a number of studies have described the life world of Christian schools. In Canada, recent government reports in Alberta and Ontario addressed whether private schools, including Christian ones, should be subject to government control and should receive a measure of public funding. The curriculum content of some Christian schools, especially Accelerated Christian School [ACE] ones, has also been analyzed.⁷ But Canadian studies have not investigated Christian school classroom programs as they are currently implemented.

This study, then, looks at the curriculum-in-use in three neighboring Christian schools that represent a diversity of client backgrounds and educational approaches. The first school, operated by a charismatic church, gradually replaced its initial programmed-learning ACE program. The second school, an interdenominational parent-controlled one, started five years ago with right-wing, skill-oriented American resources that it found more and more unacceptable. The third and largest school, founded by members of the Dutch Calvinist Christian Reformed Church in 1953, incorporated

Christian themes in a curriculum that resembled that of neighboring public schools.

I spent five or six full days in each school between February 1985 and May 1988. Each day, I visited classes while in session, and discussed the school's program with the principal, several teachers, and some students. Further, I asked open-ended questions of parents and board members, during planned interviews and while attending school-sponsored events. The schools gave me full access to curriculum-related documents, including teacher-prepared course outlines and student notebooks. The study's length was perhaps too short to determine the long-term success of curriculum change. At the same time, the three-year period yielded much more than a static snapshot. It was long enough to analyze why and how curriculum changes were brought about, and how these were affected by unexpected events such as a fire, a change in principals, and an internal power struggle.

Agape Academy: Advancing the New Religious Right

Ten years ago, Agape Christian Fellowship, a Pentecostal church, began a small school in its church building. On the recommendation of a respected American pastor, the school adopted the Texas-based Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) programmed learning curriculum.⁶ Today, the school has 125 students from kindergarten to grade 12. It has abandoned ACE and has developed its own, more varied program that meets the criteria of British Columbia's "core curriculum." At the same time, the school's program continues to champion the moral, economic and political views of the American

conservative New Religious Right [NRR].

When assistant church pastor Anderson became principal six years ago, the school's curriculum consisted of "PACES" [packets of Accelerated Christian Education]. Each PACE contained about thirty pages of descriptive materials followed by factual "fill-in-the-blank" questions. Most of BC's church schools founded between 1975 and 1985 used ACE: it was a ready-made systems approach that could be used with a handful of students of differing ages. The central bureaucracy set out and enforced specific procedures and regulations about, for instance, uniforms, discipline, room arrangement, and curriculum and its implementation. ACE provided an instant, complete, regimented world of education.

During its first eight years, Agape Academy used PACES in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies almost exclusively, providing little other instruction except during physical education and chapel services. To finish a grade level, students completed twelve PACES in each subject, repeating those on which they scored less than 80% on concluding knowledge-recall tests. Since students worked at their own rates, grade level progress differed greatly among students and from one subject to the next.

For most of the day, the students worked on PACES at individual carrels ("offices") arranged around the perimeter of a large room ("learning center"). The students did not make a sound: teachers ("supervisors" who were seldom qualified teachers since PACES were intended to be self-teaching) penalized students for unnecessary noise such as talking to other students. The three walls of their "offices" surrounded them with silence. The school broke the monotony

by scheduling frequent short breaks, dismissing the school on Wednesday afternoons, and rewarding students with time off if they worked at a better-than-average rate. Many students liked the school because of its small size and caring attitude. However, almost all became weary of the never-ending individual PACE tasks. That very few rebelled may be attributed to three factors: the constant emphasis on obedience in PACE content and chapel services, the detailed system of demerits and punishments, and parental support.

What did students learn? Some students who had mastered reading basics and enjoyed reading made good progress in reading skills. However, even for them, the PACES demanded only rote learning. Having knowledge, the PACES constantly taught, meant being able to regurgitate facts. Further, the ACE program was an unbalanced one: the PACES involved no composition, no listening or speaking activities, no research projects, and no opportunities to develop social skills or creative abilities. The students were processed as identical, de-personalized cogs that could rotate at their own rate but must all go through exactly the same motions. Throughout, students were exhorted and pressured to accept traditional Christian virtues and unthinking loyalty to American democracy and free enterprise. Blind acceptance was more important than interpretation, synthesis, analysis, and evaluation.

Gradually Principal Anderson began to see shortcomings in the ACE program. He suggested to British Columbia's ACE leaders that "standards should be brought up to BC public school ones without loss of Christian distinctness." He proposed that BC's ACE schools develop materials that met the needs of different types of learners and that

was relevant to the Canadian context. His fellow ACE principals, however, feared that changes would dilute their schools' Christian character. Besides, they asked, was it economically and educationally possible to operate any other program with, say, only thirty students at ten different grade levels?

After more than a year of futile attempts for joint action, Mr. Anderson struck out on his own. First, he requested a government evaluation team to visit the school to determine whether the school qualified for Group 2 funding under BC's School Support (Independent) Act⁹. The team examined and assessed the school's program in March 1985. As expected, the team stated that the school did not meet the Group 2 criteria, but Mr. Anderson used its detailed analysis of ACE shortcomings to begin to improve the school's program. He sought help and direction from Christian and public school consultants. He made himself aware of the various programs in existence for Christian schools, flying as far as South Carolina to do so.

Mr. Anderson recognized that he had to overcome many barriers as he turned around the school's life world. The church needed to subdivide the large learning center into smaller classrooms. Some parents would object to moving away from the law-and-order strictness of ACE. His teachers had to become aware of public school curriculum expectations, but not pay them blind obeisance. They would need in-service training for a program that would demand far more preparation time and a metamorphosis to group teaching. The school must employ more and better qualified teachers, at greater expense. Students would have to be weaned from parroting short answers to much more open-ended and thought-provoking activities. They would enjoy

the variety, but not necessarily the greater demands. For them, ACE was dull but had become safe.

Mr. Anderson believed that the keys to successful change were to "keep the teachers fully cognizant and involved," and to make decisions by consensus as much as possible. What helped him was that the teachers believed they were doing God's work in the school: they worked, for instance, for a fraction of regular wages. The school's gradually increasing size and normal staff changeover allowed him to hire certificated teachers who agreed with his move away from ACE.

Mr. Anderson was a model and catalyst for curriculum change. He himself wrote a senior secondary history course intended to enable students to sift the perceived leftist chaff in most textbooks from more wholesome conservative wheat. He asked teachers to assess which Christian curriculum materials the school should adapt at their level and in their subject. One teacher, with his support, wrote a detailed analysis of the government's biology textbook from a creationist perspective. She also developed the school's first writing and composition program for grades 4-6, enabling students to make rapid, visible strides in their writing, and simultaneously convincing parents of the value of approaches other than ACE.

Mr. Anderson did not abandon ACE all at once. Rather, he did so gradually over a three-year period, in close consultation with his staff. Concurrently, the teachers introduced a greater diversity of teaching and learning strategies. By September 1987, only one class still used programmed learning material--social studies workbooks to supplement class work in Canadian geography. Also, the only two teachers lacking public school certification, including Mr. Anderson

himself, had begun to upgrade themselves. Early in 1987 the school was approved for Group 2 provincial funding, indicating that the government was satisfied that the school's standards were at least equal to those in public schools.

Mr. Anderson developed a school philosophy that clarified the school's direction for its supporters. He spelled out three priorities: spiritual, moral and academic excellence. The latter involved the mastery of knowledge that prepared young people for work while maintaining "Christian convictions and standards."¹⁰ On this basis the staff developed descriptions for all courses which were published in the parent-student handbook. Mr. Anderson defended the school's participation in grade 12 government examinations with the use of the biblical account of Daniel and his friends who "chose not to compromise their faith and standards demanded of the Lord," yet "were found to be ten times better than anyone else who was examined."¹¹ Mr. Anderson did recognize, however, some negative effects of this decision. In his grade 12 history class, for instance, he no longer had sufficient time both to present his Christian perspective of history and to cover the material adequately for the grade 12 government history examination.

Moral training permeated the school's curriculum. The school's chapel services detailed how its discipline policy was based on such virtues as diligence, perseverance, sexual purity, godliness/piety, kindness and obedience. Already in kindergarten Bible stories and Bible verses stressed such character traits. Similarly, a study of the book of Proverbs emphasized "godly conduct" and warned "against the base temptations of life." In literature, the

students were asked to "write a paragraph about a Bible character who had a weakness but was used by the Lord in His service. Include the human weakness and tell how the Lord enabled that character to do his job."

The curriculum also reiterated time and again that students should live responsibly by putting their faith in God, not in themselves nor in science or technology: "God has given Canadians many things to be thankful for . . . We must not waste God's creation." ¹² A primary science textbook added that "God has a special plan for everything that He made. He has a very special plan for me." ¹³ In their notes, students answered the question, "Explain how science is not able to answer all the questions facing mankind." The grade 11 chemistry book stated that scientific laws "may be used to describe but not to completely explain behavior. These laws help [the chemist] to master ('subdue') nature and make it work for the benefit of man, as God commanded in Genesis 1:28." ¹⁴

The curriculum emphasized "God's sovereign dealings with our forefathers." Much more than the other two schools in this study, however, it was also stridently anti-communist. The grade 5 social studies textbook explained that Russian Communists jail parents "for teaching the Bible to their children" and that the communist dream has become a "nightmare." Unlike Americans, the book continued, Russians have no free speech and press, live in poverty, and have turned to laziness, drunkenness and despair. Their only hope is to escape to America. In America, "even prisoners eat better food and live in better housing than most Russians." ¹⁵ Canadian history similarly stressed the Communist threat in sources such as "The Battle

for Canada" and "The Naked Communist."

At the same time, as the school moved away from ACE, it introduced varied instructional approaches. The school's handbook now stated that young children learn best through doing, exploring and trying. For the first time, creative writing and project work became a regular part of the curriculum. Teachers introduced audiovisual aids, manipulative materials in primary mathematics, and laboratory activities in science. For the school's agriculture course the students built an experimental hydroponic greenhouse and kept a weed-free garden. The school also expanded its home economics program and began to offer courses in art, consumer education, Spanish, and computer science.

Despite its detailed philosophy and careful introduction of Christian textbooks, however, in some ways the school still did not have a clear educational focus. It had introduced writing-as-process (e.g., "we write to find out what we think"), but also used many grammar workbooks in the essentialist tradition, with extensive drill on topics such as adjectives, sentence parts, and punctuation. The reading program lacked a consistent approach, with phonetic workbooks, workbooks stressing interpretation, and Spalding's "A Writing Road to Reading" all being used at times. The purported emphasis on analysis and reasoning skills was sometimes undermined with workbooks that emphasized factual recall only. Creative, problem-oriented mathematics books contrasted with traditional skill-oriented workbooks at higher grades.¹⁶ The desire to use textbooks from Christian sources sometimes blocked consistent implementation of the school's redefined philosophy.

Mr. Anderson, nevertheless, in three years completely turned around Agape's curriculum and instruction. While doing so, he preserved the confidence of his supporting community and his staff. The school almost doubled in size. Principals from other ACE schools visited Agape and at least some were convinced schools could move away from ACE without losing their Christian character. Agape induced children into a way of life that promoted obedience to a strict moral code, a faith in right-wing laissez-faire capitalism, but, a'so, more responsibility and creativity than that tolerated under the ACE system.

Bethel Christian School: Banning Evidences of Sin

The founders of Bethel Christian School, mainly members of Mennonite, Baptist and Missionary Alliance churches, had concluded that public schools undermined Christian faith. Their lack of influence on public school curriculum committees and PTA's and instances such as a severe reprimand of a teacher explaining a Bible passage in class had convinced them that their children needed a school with a thorough Christian emphasis. Agape Academy, however, was unacceptable because of its ACE curriculum and charismatic leanings. Covenant's supporters, on the other hand, took too liberal a view of smoking and social drinking. Thus, in September 1983 a parent-elected board opened the doors of a rented church facility to 38 students and four qualified teachers. The school's "superior academics in a small class atmosphere" were intended to "train the student to know and lovingly respond to God, deal creatively with life's challenges and learn to love and serve others for now and

eternity." ¹⁷ By the fall of 1987 the school had 225 students in four church locations, with Mr. Brown, a former public school principal, as administrator.

Throughout its first five years of operation, board president Mrs. Bell had a firm hand in instituting and maintaining Bethel's program. Before the school started, she toured half a dozen Christian schools. As a "non-educator" she felt unable to judge the educational effectiveness of ACE. She did not approve, however, of its obsessive fear of government contact, its tight centralized control, and its unwillingness to allow a school to choose and adapt materials to meet local needs. At the same time, the anti-Christian bias of public school textbooks, she felt, precluded their use. She convinced the board to adopt the textbooks published by A Beka in Florida, "the largest distributor of Christian curriculum in North America built on a traditional philosophy of education," ¹⁸ and promoting Christian morals and values. Their use, the board believed, would offset the teachers' one-sided public school training and experience.

However, the teachers soon ran into difficulties. The "superior academic" material advanced too quickly for most children. Moreover, teachers objected to the material's extreme anti-Catholic and anti-Communist stance. Some Mennonite parents resisted the program's intense patriotism and its uncritical promotion of the American way of life. With the head teacher neither having time or inclinations to give curriculum leadership, the board appointed an education committee in the fall of 1985 to recommend changes to overcome these concerns.

The school board appointed Mrs. Blue to the committee. Mrs.

Blue, a former teacher at Covenant Christian school, had sent her child to Bethel for three reasons: the school's emphasis on personal conversion and "fruits of the Spirit" such as meekness; the warm, loving atmosphere; and the A Beka reading program in kindergarten. Soon, however, Mrs. Blue became disenchanted with the A Beka program. She saw children who were frustrated and unable to cope. The program failed to take into account children's developmental levels. Mrs. Blue also questioned its lack of Canadian content.

Mrs. Blue conducted a thorough review of the A Beka as well as four other up-to-date programs. She also attended workshops on current language arts approaches. Her report to the board in January 1986 minced no words:

The A Beka program is drill, drill, memory, memory, line upon line, precept upon precept. The children are treated like machines. There is no room for individual response. Early on it's purely phonetic, with meaningless words and nonsense syllables. Later readers . . . misapply Scripture; a lot of the Christian stuff is not very good quality.¹⁹

With teacher input and consultation, Mrs. Blue's committee recommended a new language arts program and began to review other subjects areas. It reluctantly concluded that no suitable Christian programs existed. It recommended and the board agreed that the school adopt the Gage Expressways series as its main reading program, supplemented with the Christian Bob Jones readers. The Expressways content was "least offensive": it encouraged acceptance of authority, did not promote the occult, included traditional family settings, and was Canadian. Further, it incorporated up-to-date "whole language" approaches. Mrs. Blue worked closely with newly-appointed Mr. Brown to implement this new program.

The school required teachers to show in their yearly course

outlines how they incorporated Biblical principles throughout their program. The grade 1 teacher, for instance, taught a Biblical studies unit on "how people responded to Jesus," including activities to help children "respond in obedience to the Bible." Mathematics stressed that "the rules and principles of math help us learn about the order that God has placed in the world." Language goals included "to identify language as a gift God gave," "to use it to encourage someone," and "to write poetry in praise of God." The teacher used Expressways content selectively to teach explicitly Christian themes: "God instituted the family at creation. It remains the basic unit in our society, and each family should live in obedience to God and His Word." In a unit on "Getting Along with Others," the teacher discussed with the student "God-given" guidelines: be a servant, love one another, and pray for each other. In all grades, teachers promoted good manners as an important part of a Christian life. They continually reminded students of God's care and providence and the need to serve Him in obedience. The students accepted discussions relating to these themes as a natural part of their learning.

The board's appointment of a library committee to read and review all books had a controversial impact on the school's curriculum. The committee approved or rejected all classroom and library books, placing small red stickers on the spines of many approved ones that nevertheless contained material considered objectionable. "Red dotted" books contained warnings: "STOP, Read and Think! Ask yourself these questions: Is the author glorifying God with these statements? . . . The use of this book for reference or study does not mean that Valley Christian School accepts the

philosophy and the conclusions of the author." In such books, the committee also placed red dots besides unacceptable excerpts and selections. One classroom reader, for instance, had red dots besides phrases such as "gosh" and "the ugly old woman," behavior such as "Mrs. Archer barged in and started shouting," feelings such as "When I opened my eyes this morning, the day belonged to me," and selections involving magic and fantasy.

With parents and teachers from a wide range of backgrounds, this policy caused considerable controversy. Teachers asked, "Doesn't the board trust our judgement?", or, "Why aren't the dots placed in teachers' copies only so that we don't stifle the students' own critical thinking and discernment?" They also wondered whether the committee didn't miss the forest for the trees in its emphasis on detail. One teacher believed, for instance, that an outstanding selection in her class reader was a story about an Old Order Mennonite boy whose disobedience had grave consequences. Yet the committee had red-dotted the selection: the father in the story said that "The deifel [devil] is in the river." Some students, as could be expected, made a special point of reading red-dotted passages. The teachers believed that they could teach sensitivity to "worldly things" better through library units focusing on discernment and evaluation. The policy became a bone of contention between teachers and the board.

At the basis of this controversy, however, lay deeper problems. Who was responsible for the daily operation of the school? Was it the library committee which could decide how books were to be used? Was it the education committee which, together with staff input, recommended and helped to implement major curriculum changes?

Was it the board which made decisions about all policies and practices, large and small? Was it Mr. Brown, the newly-appointed administrator? Was it the parents who, in the relatively small situation, were quite vocal about their wishes and demands?

A lack of clarity about overlapping responsibilities led to friction and pain. In the spring of 1988 the fabric that bound the curriculum of Bethel Christian School unraveled. The teachers no longer felt like stakeholders with the board seemingly rejecting their input. The board believed that the teachers and administrator, with their public school backgrounds, were not discerning enough about spirituality and too easily influenced by secular textbooks and approaches. Education committee members interpreted the board's decision to appoint a separate hiring committee headed by Mrs. Bell as a lack of trust in them. Mr. Brown asked why the school needed a professional educator of his calibre when the board strictly limited his role to the execution of detailed board-set policies.

In an attempt to overcome the friction, Mrs. Bell resigned as board president--but kept other key positions. Mrs. Blue applied to have her children enrolled in the Covenant Christian School and withdrew from the education committee. The administrator resigned, as did six teachers. For September 1988, the curriculum would still be in place on paper. However, the curriculum-in-use likely would undergo major changes. Its main curriculum analyst and catalyst, Mrs. Blue, would no longer be on the scene. New teachers would be unfamiliar with the framework and Christian basis of the revised program, and no one would be able to familiarize or help them with its intended implementation. People develop programs for people; when the

people change, the programs change also.

Covenant Christian School: Revitalizing Instruction

Covenant Christian School, operated by an autonomous association, nevertheless drew three-quarters of its clientele from Dutch-Canadian Calvinists. Since its 1953 start, the school tried to meet or exceed government standards for public schools, and it quickly obtained Group 2 government funding when made available in 1977. Mr. Campbell, principal for almost thirty years, sailed the K-7 school calmly, stirring the waters as little as possible. Most teachers were qualified Christian college graduates. Mr. Campbell made few demands on them as long as their classrooms functioned smoothly.

The school taught "basics" competently but tediously. Students had few complaints but showed little excitement.²⁰ Worksheets characterized the curriculum, with creative activities taking a distant back seat to drill and practice. Students had few opportunities for open-ended response. The library was an aging, unweeded collection where students habitually went once a week to choose a book. Teachers would sometimes suggest that the staff investigate a new approach or program. Mr. Campbell would not oppose such suggestions, but he would not take initiatives himself. He left it to the staff to decide what action, if any, to take. The school drifted along without a clear sense of mission. The school's curriculum was flagging if not moribund. School enrolment declined from more than 350 at one time to just over 200 in 1984.

Two events transformed the school. First, early in 1985 an external evaluation team of the Society of Christian Schools in B.C.

recommended systematic curriculum renewal and the transfer of Mr. Campbell to a non-educational assignment. A second, more cataclysmic event was a fire two months later that destroyed most of the school. The fire unified the supporting community behind the school. It generated enthusiasm for a new, larger building. The teachers had to rebuild their files and outlines and resources while teaching in three temporary locations.

The school board appointed a new, young principal, Mr. Carter, to begin his duties in September 1986. While some senior teachers were skeptical of his appointment, Mr. Carter came at a generally opportune time. The board and parents were enthusiastic about new facilities and new leadership, and gave him full support. The teachers were thankful to resume their teaching in a normal, brand new setting. Most were ready to tackle new projects: while the school was being rebuilt they had already jointly analyzed the school's shortcomings and suggested possible action. They pointed out, for instance, the need for course outlines with detailed objectives and "Christian perspective" and for an up-to-date, unified language arts program. They wanted to implement more project and art work as well as creative writing, and correspondingly decrease their use of worksheets.

Mr. Carter quickly established himself as the school's educational leader. Teachers appreciated his enthusiasm, his well-defined vision for the school, and his organizational abilities. Two or three did feel that they did not have as much independence as in the past, and that the school was run "too professionally." Two teachers who did not fit the "team" that Mr. Carter was developing

resigned at the end of his first year; one more retired at the end of his second. On the whole, however, Mr. Carter's leadership was welcomed by staff and parents. The school's enrollment jumped to 325 in 1987 and a projected 375 in 1988. Mr. Carter worked hard to attract new teachers who shared his educational views and could contribute to the school's aims and needs.

How did Mr. Carter begin to implement his vision? He wanted the school, first of all, to be a community school with good parental liaison. Parents must feel ownership in the school's program and activities. The school sent out regular school and individual classroom newsletters. Mr. Carter kept in close contact with parents to nip problems in the bud. He helped his teachers write meaningful comments on report cards, and usually added a personal note to each one. He also developed comprehensive information packages for prospective parents.

Mr. Carter set out to make the school a vibrant learning community. He showed interest in and support for classroom learning. He encouraged less dependence on worksheets and out-of-class remediation. Displays of student work began to brighten classrooms and hallways. On one particular day, hallway collages highlighted the new "annual" science fair; the school-wide political elections conducted by the grade 5's, a student-written and produced play, "Arab meets Jew"; grade 1's reading to grade 6's and 7's; the 200 km runners' club; the school's "Canadian Touch of Brass", and the school's participation in regional music festivals. By recognizing students' learning in various ways, Mr. Carter fostered a sense of excitement about learning and, at the same time, engendered general

pride in the school.

Further, Mr. Carter wanted his school to be at the cutting edge of instructional pedagogy. With the staff wanting to revamp the language arts program, he made this subject area his first concern. His guided discussions led the teachers to conclude that they should become more knowledgeable in the "whole language" approach. Almost all teachers attended a course on this approach the next summer--and Mr. Carter hired the course instructor as one of his teachers for the subsequent year. He also encouraged teachers to use a greater variety of learning activities to meet the needs of children with different learning styles and abilities. Monthly photocopying costs showed a significant decline.

In language arts, a personalized reading program replaced basal readers and their lock-step skill exercises. Each day, the students selected their own reading materials and independent follow-up tasks while teachers held individual conferences. The library, renewed after the fire, now circulated four books per student per week. Further, frequent "writing-as-process" involved sharing, brainstorming, encoding and editing about topics related to the students' learning. The teachers ensured that student authors had audiences. Students read their work to each other and displayed it. They wrote letters to politicians: one class wrote the premier of Prince Edward Island about the pros and cons of constructing a causeway to the mainland, receiving a personal reply and a PEI flag.

Not that the school abandoned its previous "basic skills" emphasis completely. In kindergarten, the teacher still used the somewhat artificial "letter of the week" rather than "emergent reading

and writing" favored by whole language enthusiasts. The primary teachers systematically used McCracken's "Spelling through Phonics" for compulsory daily skill development. Grade 4 to 7 teachers still taught basic grammar and punctuation from skill-oriented textbooks, although they no longer used them to structure their complete language program. The teachers tried to balance a more natural, open-ended approach without losing sight of the skills they believed needed to be taught explicitly.

Such a balancing act had its potential pitfalls. "I look at whole language as a different and better approach to teaching and learning," said Mr. Carter. "but much depends on individual teachers. It can be taught very poorly." The "whole language" specialist now on staff added, "A strength of 'whole language' is the sense of community it can build as children share and help each other, no matter what their reading level. But this is being done only very gradually, since few teachers yet use themes to unify what children are reading and learning." Several teachers worried that the program was so individualized that group interaction and class discussion focusing on Christian response was lacking except in whole-class novel study in higher grades.

Did Covenant attain its goal of being "integrally Christian"? Its program resembled that of a public school more closely than those in Agape and Bethel. Few reading materials were explicitly Christian. The school used Christian textbooks only in Biblical studies, grades 3 to 6 science, and grade 7 social studies. Published by Christian Schools International, these were less isolationistic and conservative than Bob Jones and A Beka ones. One teacher said that "Christian

perspective comes about informally through our attitude and discussions on how we as Christian view issues." Another explained that she would not artificially mention God or Jesus, but tried to engender "an attitude of excitement and wonder as well as responsibility."

The teachers did use many classroom units developed by the provincial association of Christian schools. Units such as "I Am Special," "The Use and Abuse of Drugs," and "Communities of Living Things" all emphasized that God gave us special abilities and responsibilities that we must use to enhance the world. In such units, teachers impressed on students that God the Creator has given us Biblical guidelines, for instance, for our attitude to government. Furthermore, the students' own writing often included religious motifs.

Nevertheless, Covenant's program was not as distinctive as Agape's or Bethel's. Course outlines ignored a Christian basis or purpose, listing topic headings without comment. An experienced teacher new to the school observed that "a sense of common vision and its consistent working out through curriculum units is lacking among many teachers." The curriculum did not wholly reflect the motto of 20th century Dutch Calvinists that "every square inch of life should be claimed for Christ." In less than two years, Mr. Carter had brought about major curricular and instructional changes. The question that remained was whether the community and staff, as the initial excitement of current improvements wore off, could also reach a consensus on the Christian nature of the school's curriculum and the desirable resultant changes.

Influences of the Schools' Milieux on Their Programs

Three major frame factors affect implementation of change in education: a school's external milieu; the characteristics and behavior of change facilitators (and, possibly, of change inhibitors); and the nature of both the old and the new programs. This section highlights how each schools' environment influenced its curriculum, while the next two sections focus on the other major frame factors.

Several preliminary points need to be noted. First of all, parents interested in Christian schooling could choose among three schools. Each school thus attracted and fashioned a distinctive and fairly homogeneous group of supporters. While this diminished problems about philosophy and direction that have plagued some Christian schools, it may also have led, especially in Covenant's case, to an implicit acceptance of the legitimacy of the programs rather than vigorous discussions that might have enhanced change.

Second, no easily discernible differences in socioeconomic background appeared to exist between the schools. Many parents owned or were involved in small local business enterprises, and included a few professionals and a handful of farmers in each case. Economically, the community was almost uniformly middle class, and, politically, small-c conservative. Therefore, milieu differences between the schools appeared to be due mainly to the religious and ethnic backgrounds of leaders and supporters.

The church that sponsored Agape Academy had embraced the American New Religious Right [NRR]. It was instrumental, for instance, in bringing American NRR leaders to BC as keynote speakers

at conferences on politics, economics, and education. As common for the NRR, the family, television and schools were key instruments Agape used to help its adherents locate and interpret their existence.²¹ The church had active family-based educational and social programs. It produced a regular program on local cable television. It operated Agape Academy to induct its children into an NRR way of life. After rejecting ACE, principal Anderson, an American himself, looked first to the conservative A Beka and Bob Jones materials produced in the American south-east.

The parents trusted their church leaders who provided pure and straightforward answers to life's problems, and they accepted the teaching of NRR views in the school. Theological differences notwithstanding, the NRR was united on personal morality and its importance in public life, and instruction in moral precepts and behavior became a keystone of Agape's curriculum. Agape, like the NRR, still believed in the American dream, and especially in the possibility of continued progress through the power of technology and personal initiative. Government regulations and marketing boards caused world food shortages: Agape's greenhouse proved that individuals could capitalize on advanced hydroponic food technology to provide food for the world. Economic problems were the result of government overspending and deficit budgeting. The school gave clear-cut if simplistic answers to difficult problems.

Covenant's teachers used many units developed by teachers in schools belonging to the Society of Christian Schools in BC. These units helped them base their teaching on Christian themes while using resources that were not explicitly Christian. Covenant's leaders also

wanted the school to emphasize a Christian worldview that looked beyond legalistic personal morality, as they believed to be done by many fundamentalist Christians. The story of Jacob and Esau, which in Agape might have emphasized the evil and consequences of lying and deceit, at Covenant showed that God is faithful to his people despite their sinfulness. At Agape it was a given that God created the world in seven days; Covenant's science classes held that God was the Creator but that the first chapter of Genesis was open to various interpretations. Covenant taught a unit on drugs and drug abuse but left it up to the students to decide whether it was right to participate in social drinking. Covenant's parents were, in general, not as convinced as Agape's that their Christian faith had unequivocal answers to society's problems.

The church backgrounds of Bethel's parents meant that, as in Agape, traditional Christian morality pervaded its program. Unlike in Agape's case, however, many parents did not accept all tenets of the NRR. The Mennonite parents, in particular, opposed the NRR's approval of the US "defense" policies and its belief that Christians should become fully involved in the political scene. The placing of "red dots" in books also showed Mennonite influence: dots appeared besides actions of people involved in violence, even if in self-defense.

However, the parent community and hence the school was not as unified as in the other two schools. One particular church controlled Agape. Covenant had a long history that had established its direction and, by and large, the leaders were still Christian Reformed Calvinists. But Bethel's more mixed religious background, its emphasis on parent control, and its rapid growth raised concerns in

the minds of board members about its long-term ability to maintain a clear course. Did the new parents share the original vision? The board hoped that a number of appointed "board advisors" who would become cognizant of the school's direction and operation, and would thus be trained to become full-fledged board members. Legitimate fears remained, however, that shifts in the parental group mix might result in demands for change not in harmony with the school's original goals.²²

By the end of the study, all three schools received Group 2 government funding. They now met minimum time stipulations in core subject areas. Moreover, the government's core curriculum, a 33-page document with major learning outcomes from K-12, affected their curricula more directly than before. Agape, for instance, introduced a writing program and put more emphasis on Canadian studies. Also, the grade 12 government exam cart pulled Agape's grade 12 curriculum horse.

Only Covenant, however, made extensive use of government-supplied textbooks. Accepting that the government should ensure that all schools maintain responsible standards,²³ it had no qualms about the school using public school guidelines and materials--within a Christian framework. Agape and Bethel used such resources only sparingly and critically even after government funding. Indeed, Bethel's board vowed to drop government funding if its curriculum was ever bound by restrictive guidelines or resources. Significantly, however, Bethel had not made major changes in its program to obtain funding, indicating that it already shared many of its learning outcomes with those of public schools. As in the other

two schools, its religious and philosophical differences had not prevented the school from adopting the general organizational and curriculum patterns of existing public education.

Change Facilitators in the Schools

The three schools in this study shared a number of characteristics desirable for successful curriculum change.²⁴ The boards and parents supported and sometimes initiated the changes made in each school. Their extensive time and financial input gave them a sense of ownership and pride in the school. In turn, the principals actively and successfully fostered such support. While the schools had no permanent external support staff, they all availed themselves of consultants when needed. Further, the students were ready for change: Agape's students were bored with PACE work; Bethel's students were frustrated with A Beka's overestimation of their abilities; Covenant's students were weary of worksheets and drills.

Change, however, needs impetus from a catalyst. At Covenant, the community and the staff were ready for change, but principal Campbell was a responder who left change to the initiatives of individual teachers. Principal Carter, on the other hand, quickly and deliberately became the primary change facilitator, an initiator who made things happen. He used staff meetings to discuss needed program changes. He conferred with individual and groups of teachers, asking probing questions and monitoring what was happening in the school. When he had confirmed some of the staff's earlier identification of needed changes, he arranged for the staff to attend in-service training courses that would help them implement innovations. He

quickly became a concerned principal who set direction, clarified the school's curriculum goals, and frequently encouraged his teachers as they implemented change.

Principal Carter also intuitively recognized that with the size of his school he needed secondary change facilitators to complement his work. Soon he appointed his assistant principal as grade 4-7 chairperson who, among other things, would monitor and help with program planning and implementation in those grades. He hired a teacher who was a specialist in the new whole language approach, although by May 1988 he had not yet used her much as a change agent. He chose to be chairperson of the primary (K-3) division himself. He wanted to familiarize himself with those grades but thereby also forestalled one teacher from continuing an independent and potentially counterproductive leadership role.

At Agape, principal Anderson was the initiator for change. He sought out and evaluated a great deal of instructional resources available for Christian schools. He convinced the church to renovate the school and he designed timetables to make new programs feasible. While he did not spend much time formally supervising his teachers, he kept a close pulse on the school by talking to teachers and coming into classrooms for short periods of time on a regular basis. He hired new teachers who favored the shift from ACE to classroom-based approaches. He modeled curriculum development through the detailed planning of his own courses, and encouraged other staff members to become involved in adapting and supplementing materials to suit the school's goals. He provided all the student and teacher resources necessary for introducing new programs. Agape did not have a readily

identifiable second change agent who complemented Mr. Anderson. This was due in part to the small size of the school and in part because Mr. Anderson's strong leadership overshadowed that of other teachers.

A key to understanding the change process, according to Hord and Hall, is an analysis of the configuration of the change facilitator team.²⁵ That was certainly true for Bethel Christian School, whose unique configuration of change agents worked for a time but then faltered. The primary though unobtrusive change facilitator was education committee member Mrs. Blue who conducted the evaluation of present and potential programs. She attended workshops and sought advice from various consultants. She worked closely with the staff in making recommendations to the board and in helping teachers implement the programs once approved.

Board president Bell and administrator Brown were strong secondary change facilitators. Mrs. Bell not only carefully monitored--and sometimes revised--Mrs. Blue's recommendations as she convinced the board to accept them, but her continually high profile also kept before teachers and parents the importance of the planned changes. Mr. Brown, new to the situation, defined his role as a manager who would support Mrs. Blue in implementing recommended program changes, but not to initiate them. He worked with the teachers daily, visiting classrooms and giving concrete help and suggestions. This configuration worked well for a time until, as already indicated, a lack of trust among the change facilitators, kindled and aggravated by Mrs. Bell's tendency to pre-empt the primary change facilitator's role, resulted in a complete breakdown. This example illustrates that while the principal is not necessarily the

primary change agent, the change facilitator team must work in tandem, accept their respective roles, and believe its members are working towards the same goals.

Teachers, of course, are the final gatekeepers and interpreters of change.²⁶ In these schools, a high degree of actual classroom implementation took place. Most teachers were clear about the purpose, nature and practical benefits of changes as they were proposed. They were actively involved in the decision-making process, and were convinced that the changes would enhance the school's program, making teaching more rewarding if not always easier. Their commitment to the changes was a strong contributing factor to their successful implementation, even though the caliber and the extent of the implementation understandably varied a great deal from teacher to teacher, and was not always consistent even within one classroom.

The Nature and Basis of Curriculum Change

A number of characteristics were common to program changes in the three schools. A clear, consistent, philosophically-grounded rationale guided the changes. Also, the program innovations were realistic and practical. Not only were sufficient student and teacher resources made available, but the schools recognized the incremental nature of successful curriculum change. At Agape, the ACE program was phased out over a three-year period. Both Bethel and Covenant studied new language arts approaches for a year and expected to make adjustments and improvements for several years after initial implementation. Powell's conclusion that private schools "seem sluggish when the word education comes up" was not borne out in this

study. None of the three schools was satisfied with being part of mainstream American education; all actively pursued avenues of improvement.²⁷

The schools chose programs that fit their leaders' general approach to life. Agape originally used ACE: its behavioristic approaches would cast students into pre-determined molds. Once the school realized that children were not pieces of machinery that could be processed identically and efficiently, it introduced more flexible approaches. However, its curriculum content still saw the world in terms of black and white: American democracy vs. the Evil Communist Empire; Christian morality vs. hell-bound iniquity; and Biblical creationism vs. ungodly evolutionism. Persons who lived according to the one possible interpretation of Biblical truth would help bring about a better, more Christian world, politically, economically, and, especially, morally.

In Bethel's curriculum, Christian morality and individual upright living was more important than a Christian transformation of politics or economics. Textbook selections that did not explicitly promote a Christian lifestyle were banned or, at least, red flagged. Serving in God's Kingdom meant doing church or missionary work much more so than being engaged as a Christian in the marketplaces of life. Like Agape, Bethel put a heavy emphasis on developing the "right" character traits through direct instruction, modeling, and consistent reinforcement.

Covenant Christian School took a somewhat different route in preparing children to be "God's children." Its Biblical studies program put more emphasis on general themes than on individual

character traits. Christians were to optimize their God-given abilities, and since these abilities varied a great deal, a personalized whole language approach would do so best. Without apology, the school used many secular books, helping its students discern underlying worldviews and values and their consequences from a Christian point of view. The school's curriculum was less explicitly spiritual than that of the other two schools. Its Christian focus was evident most in its devotions, Biblical studies program, and discussions of issues as they arose. Covenant was similar to its Alberta counterparts which, according to one study, followed the "prescribed program of studies with some adaptations to reflect religious beliefs in science and social studies." 28

Christian Schools and their Culture

The rapid growth of evangelical Protestant Christian schools has been called "the most important development in American education in the last three decades." 29 The schools' supporters have re-assigned ultimate responsibility for the control of education from the government to parents or churches. The schools induct children into a worldview shared by a (substantial) minority of North America's population. They expound the preeminence of the religious dimension of life. They teach that the Bible is the supreme Word of God and that personal salvation can come about only through faith in Jesus Christ. They infuse traditional virtues and the moral imperative of living according to the Ten Commandments. They regularly reinforce that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, although the interpretation of Genesis 1 varies from school to school and teacher

to teacher. Teachers model commitment to a Christian way of life and a willingness to work hard for relatively low wages.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that all Christian schools resemble each other closely. Some are hostile to public education, labeling it as atheistic, humanistic, leftist or immoral. Others appreciate what goes on in public education but believe that such schools cannot be all things to all people in a pluralistic society. Some give dogmatic, absolutist answers to social issues. Others let the students search for answers on the basis of some general guidelines. Some administer strict discipline ("Spare the rod and spoil the child"); others stress the importance of Christian love in the classroom and school. Some use a fact-oriented textbook approach; others emphasize teacher-made units and critical thinking. Some use American-based fundamentalist textbooks and programs that promote patriotism and laissez-faire capitalism. Others use public school resources to help children become discerning about the role of Christians in a post-Christian age. The basic reasons for these differences are the diverse views of supporters about the interaction of Christians with their surrounding culture, where "culture" refers to the total body of belief, behavior, knowledge, and values that mark one's way of life.

Bethel Christian School exemplifies best what H. Richard Niebuhr calls the "Christ against culture" position, in which Christ and Christian beliefs are seen as opposed to human achievements and the customs of society.³⁰ Therefore children must be isolated as much as possible from "worldly" things. This has also been called the "monastic" view of Christian education.

Many Pentecostal churches such as the one supporting Agape have moved from a "Christ above culture" position to a "Christ the transformer of culture" one. Previously, they believed that true culture was not possible unless, beyond all natural achievement, Christ related people to a supernatural society and a new value centre. This dualistic, other-worldly view of culture meant that public schools were useful missionary fields to bring people into the fold for a better life in the hereafter. Society around us would continue to be corrupt until Christ returned, so we should not spend much effort reforming it. Agape, however, has become influenced by conservative Christian reconstructionists like Rousas Rushdoony, who believe that by applying Scriptural injunctions quite literally to our modern society, we may transform humans and their culture and work towards the Biblical "millennium." Therefore we need Christian schools: children must know the Bible thoroughly and begin to transform society by applying its teachings to morality, business, politics, and all other fields of human endeavor.

Covenant Christian School's philosophy and goals officially take Calvinist "Christ the transformer of culture" position. People must work at transforming culture in and through Christ, but will succeed only partially until Christ returns. In practice, however, Covenant is also influenced by the "Christ of culture" position, in which the life and teachings of Jesus are held to have greatly and positively influenced Western civilization, and therefore its knowledge must be valued. The school is therefore more open than the others in taking up-to-date public school educational approaches and applying and adapting them to a Christian setting. Transforming the

world for Christ, the school says, paradoxically, through its curriculum practices, can be achieved only by partial conformity to the general educational environment.

Research Involving Christian Schools

Future research about Christian schools needs to explore whether and how the lives of Christian school graduates differs from their public school counterparts. Such research needs to distinguish the schools according to their curricular and instructional approaches; otherwise, the results may just provide "averages" that mean little. Both Canada and the U.S. have sizeable groups of schools in each of the three categories described above, as well as schools that continue to use the ACE program. Another question that arises is whether the schools will continue to accentuate their individuality, or whether their programs will coalesce as associations of Christian schools give common advice, as governments impose or suggest new policies and guidelines, and as new leaders replace the original leadership. Finally, the interaction of primary and secondary curriculum change agents needs more study, as does the degree to which primary change facilitators are able to alter their roles.

Peshkin concluded that the extent to which Christian schools flourish indicates the health of our pluralistic society. He added that they undermined such pluralism, however, by their monolithic doctrinal commitment.³¹ While that may be true in instances where a school teaches that it has the only and all answers necessary for the survival and growth of Western democracy, only one of the programs in this study might be accused of such rigidity. The Christian school

movement itself is far from monolithic, and general conclusions must be made with great care because of the great diversity among the schools.

Finally, the Christian schools considered in this paper were all interested in renewing themselves through innovation--although only within a predetermined religious framework. Despite limited financial resources and educational expertise, the leaders of these schools displayed a notable commitment to improvement and change. Whether such change will, in the long term, make Christian schools more distinct or bring them closer to the mainstream of educational praxis will remain unanswered for some time.

NOTES

1. Statistics Canada, Educational Statistical Bulletin, Vol. 8, No. 8, January 1987.
2. I estimated these totals from the figures supplied by the Ministry of Education, the Federation of Independent School Associations, and the Society of Christian Schools in BC. as well as from estimates made by educators familiar with ACE and other unreported church schools. In British Columbia, private schools do not have to register. As a result, these figures are approximations, especially since ACE leadership does not release any statistics. Currently in BC about 80 ACE schools may have a total enrolment of 2,500 to 3,000.
3. An oft-quoted phrase within Christian schools taken from Ephesians 6:4.
4. See, for instance, Herbart Kliebard in "Fads, Fashions, and Rituals: The Instability of Curriculum Change," in Laurel N. Tanner, Critical Issues in Curriculum: Eighty-seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Chicago: NSSE, 1988), pp. 21, 26-27.
5. The importance of such factors is discussed, for instance, by Robert Donmoyer in "Why Case Studies? Reflections on Hord and Hall's Three Images," in Curriculum Inquiry 17:1 (1987), p. 93, and by Michael Fullan in The Meaning of Educational Change (Toronto: OISE Press, 1982), pp. 47-48.
6. See the "Dialogue" between Shirley M. Hord and Gene E. Hall and Robert Donmoyer resulting from Hord and Hall's "Three Images: What Principals Do in Curriculum Implementation." Curriculum Inquiry, 17:1 (1987), pp. 56ff.
7. See, for instance, Alan Peshkin, God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986); William J. Reese, "Soldiers for Christ in the Army of God: The Christian School Movement in America," in Educational Theory, Spring 1985, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 175-94; Woods Gordon Management Consultants, A Study of Private Schools in Alberta (Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1984); Bernard J. Shapiro, The Report of The Commission on Private Schools in Ontario (Toronto: Province of Ontario, 1985); Alberta Education, An Audit of Selected Private School Programs (Edmonton: 1985); and Harro Van Brummelen, Telling the Next Generation: Educational Development in North American Calvinist Christian Schools (Lanham: University Press of America, 1986). Unpublished master's theses by Neil Bramble (Regent College, Vancouver, 1985) and Gordon Calvert (University of British Columbia, 1988) examine ACE program content.
8. ACE schools are in a constant state of flux. I have identified ten schools that have moved away from the ACE program during the last five years, and of others that today use ACE materials for only part of their curriculum. When larger ACE schools become dissatisfied with their program, they either implement a different program or begin to supplement ACE materials. Small schools (forty or fewer students) tend to close with parents transferring their children or, in some cases, home schooling their children.

9. This 1977 Act currently makes available 10% funding to "Group 1" schools meeting only facilities and anti-discrimination criteria. "Group 2" schools receive 35% of public school per pupil costs and must also meet certain administrative, curriculum, teacher certification and student evaluation criteria. ACE leadership vigorously opposed its schools applying for funding because of possible government interference in the schools.
10. Agape Student-Parent Handbook, p. 8.
11. Ibid. pp. 74-75.
12. Sylvia Tymos, Social Studies Workpac 302 (Vancouver: Academic Distribution Services, n.d.), p. 7.
13. Enjoying God's World (Pensacola, FL: A Beka, 1986), p. 3.
14. Verne Biddle, Chemistry: Precision and Design (Pensacola, FL: A Beka, 1986), p. 5.
15. Old World History and Geography: A Christian Perspective (Pensacola, FL: A Beka, 1981), pp. 170-74.
16. Basic Math I: Traditional Math Work-Text (Pensacola, FL: A Beka, 1983).
17. Valley Christian School promotional brochure, n.d.
18. Ibid.
19. Oral recounting of the report Mrs. Blue made to the board, Feb. 12, 1988.
20. Government science assessment tests, for instance, in 1986 showed that Covenant's students had average scientific knowledge, but that their attitudes towards science were significantly below the provincial average.
21. Edwin Johnston, "Social Scientists Examine The New Right," in Teaching Political Science, Fall 1984, Vol. 12, No. 1, p. 7.
22. Cf. Fullan, p. 47.
23. Van Brummelen, p. 254-55.
24. Cf. Fullan, The Meaning of Educational Change; Michael Fullan and Paul Park, Curriculum Implementation: A Resource Booklet (Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1981); and Walt Werner, ed., Program Implementation Experiences: Cases from British Columbia (Vancouver: Centre for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction, University of British Columbia, 1983).
25. Hord and Hall, p. 55.
26. Walter Werner, "Training for Curriculum Implementation," in Pacific Education, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1987), p. 41.
27. Arthur G. Powell, "Private School Responsibilities: Are They as Important as Private School Rights?", an occasional paper of the Associates for Research on Private Education, 1987.
28. Woods Gordon, p. 15.
29. Bruce S. Cooper, "An Outsider's Look at a Fundamentalist Christian Academy," in Independent School, Winter 1987, p. 78.
30. H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).
31. Peshkin, p. 293.