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ABSTRACT

In response to standardized test scores that did not accurately reflect student learning, Franklin Lower Elementary School in Meadville, Mississippi, began a process of restructuring to become a developmentally appropriate school by using hands-on materials, focusing on whole language, and emphasizing the development of thinking skills. To demonstrate the effects of this process on student outcomes, achievement tests were administered to first and second graders in December 1992; student behavior records were reviewed from 1988 through 1992; and attitude surveys were administered to students, parents, and teachers in 1992. Results of the assessments indicated that: (1) for first graders, average achievement test scores were 84% for reading and 81% for math, both above the national average; (2) for second graders, average achievement test scores were 54% for reading and 78% for math, also above the national average; (3) absences at the school decreased each year since the 1988-89 school year for students overall, although they increased for black males; (4) discipline referrals decreased from 100 during the 1988-89 school year to just over 20 in 1991-92; (5) among the student attitudes surveyed, students' attitude toward teachers was the most positive; (6) among items rated by parents, teachers were rated most positively, while testing was given the least favorable rating; and (7) classroom teachers were more positive about the curriculum and teachers' roles than were assistant teachers or support teachers. The survey instruments are appended. (BCY)

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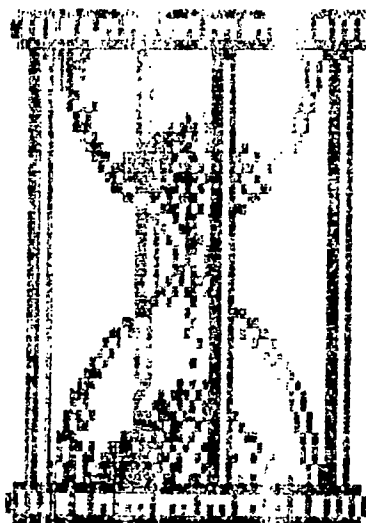
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# FRANKLIN LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



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FRANKLIN LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
GRADES K-2

Route 1, Box 15, Meadville, MS 39653  
601-384-5605

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Pat Reed  
Principal

Lyda Cummins  
Guidance Counselor

Elizabeth Grittm  
Secretary

EFFECTS THAT THE DEVELOPMENTALLY  
APPROPRIATE PROCESS MAKES ON CURRICULUM  
OF A RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The specific purpose of this booklet is to show the effects that the developmentally appropriate process has made on this school over a period of six years.



FRANKLIN LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
GRADES K-2

Route 1, Box 15, Meadville, MS 39653  
601-384-5605

Steps Franklin Lower Elementary Took to Become  
A Developmentally Appropriate School

- Year 1  
1987
- Learning Centers (free choice)
  - Thematic units
  - Basal Readers
- Year 2  
1988
- Whole Language
  - Free choice learning centers
  - Thematic units
  - Writing to Read
- Year 3  
1989
- State Primary Guide
  - Whole Language
  - Free Choice learning centers
  - Thematic units o study
  - Writing to Read
- Year 4  
1990
- Portfolio Assessment
  - Limited use of achievement tests
  - Whole language
  - Free choice learning centers
  - Thematic units of study
  - Writing to Read
- Year 5  
1991
- Team approach to multi-age grouping
  - Performance-Based Assessment GOALS test
  - Portfolio Assessment
  - Whole Language
  - Free choice learning centers
  - Thematic units of study
  - Writing to Read
- Year 6  
1992
- Projected
  - Incorporation of bench marks in portfolio
  - More emphasis on writing process

Franklin County School District

Franklin Lower Elementary School

Grades K, 1, 2

Team Members

Pat Reed, Principal

Flora Banks

Patsy Buckels

Janet Carlock

Eva Guice

1992-1993

## Introduction

Franklin Lower Elementary staff members became involved in developing a profile to analyze the effectiveness of our school to discover areas that need improvement and to develop a plan to improve those areas. This was made possible through an Onward to Excellence grant.

Since we have been making changes relevant to research in our structure and curriculum over the past several years, this process gives us the opportunity to review those changes and to modify those areas that need adjusting.

The Onward to Excellence Grant was introduced to the staff at the first faculty meeting by the Superintendent. Then the staff members were involved in taking and reviewing results of surveys, staff development sessions based on grant information, in providing time for OTE committee members to work on OTE grant, and in administering alternative assessment instruments to determine a base line achievement score.

Our school is located in a rural setting with more than seventy-five percent of the students coming from low income homes. Our school encourages use of developmentally appropriate practices with emphasis on teaching the whole child and providing every child with the opportunity to develop to his/her full potential. The teaching staff is organized into teams of K, 1, and 2 teachers who plan together and provide for continuous progress with opportunities for some multi-age activities.

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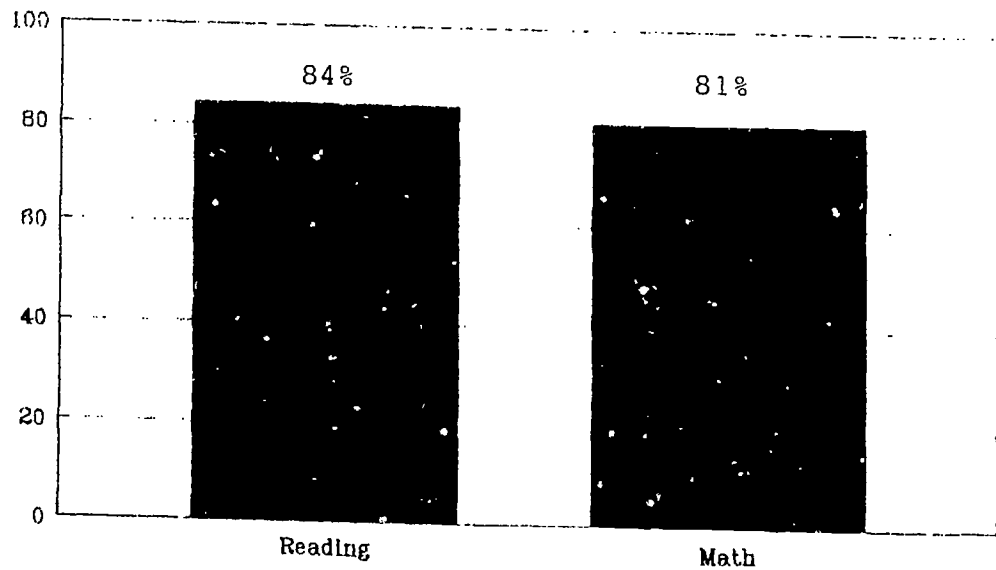
Student Performance



Achievement

Prologue: GOALS Performance Based Achievement Test was given to first grade students in December, 1992. This test measured student achievement in reading and math.

## First Grade Achievement GOALS Performance Based test \*



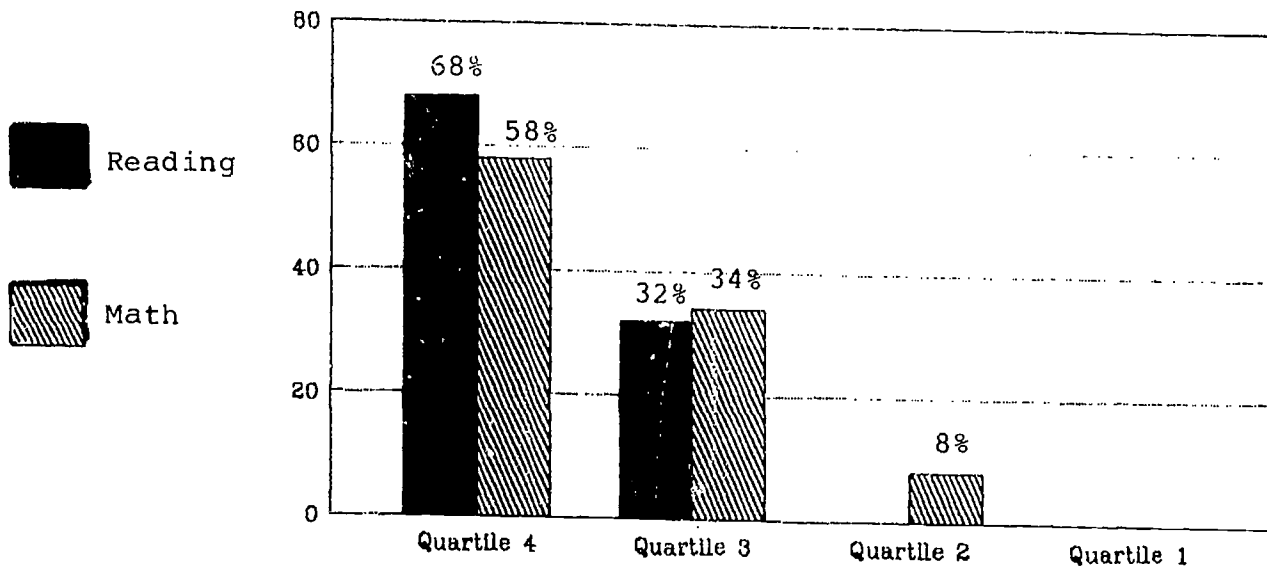
\* This test was designed to be given at the end of the year.

\*\* Note: Scores were given for 76 students in reading. 50 non-readers did not receive scores. In math, 126 students were tested.

Narrative: 1. Students scored higher in reading.  
2. Both reading and math scores are above the national average.

Prologue: GOALS Performance Based Achievement Test was given to first grade students in December, 1992. This test measured student achievement in reading and math.

## 1st Grade Ach. Quartiles GOALS Performance Based test

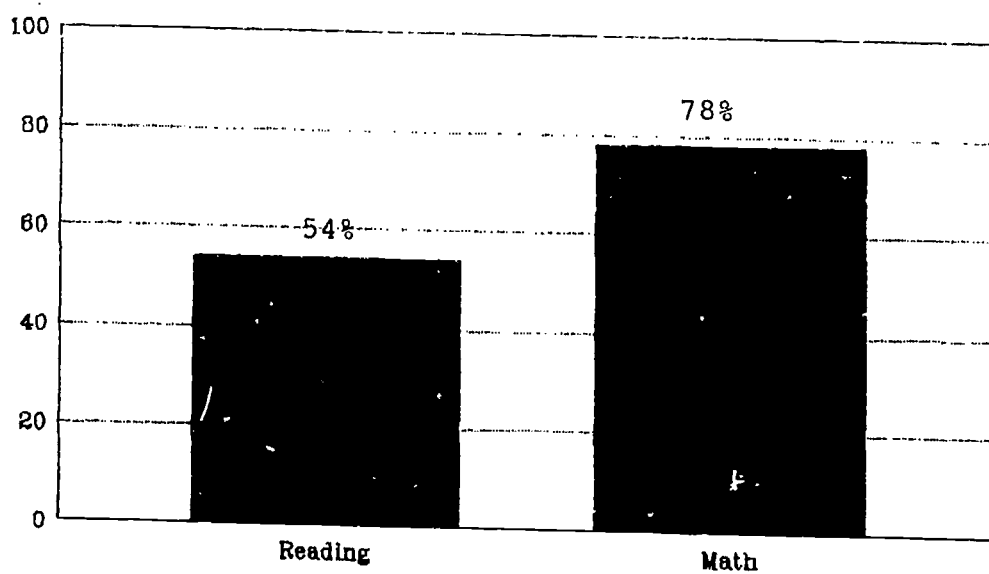


Percentage of students in each Quartile.

- Narrative:
1. Most students scored in Quartile 4 (76% - 99%).
  2. No students scored in Quartile 1 in reading or math.

Prologue: GOALS Performance Based Achievement Test was given to second grade students in December, 1992. This test measured student achievement in reading and math.

## Second Grade Achievement GOALS Performance Based test\*

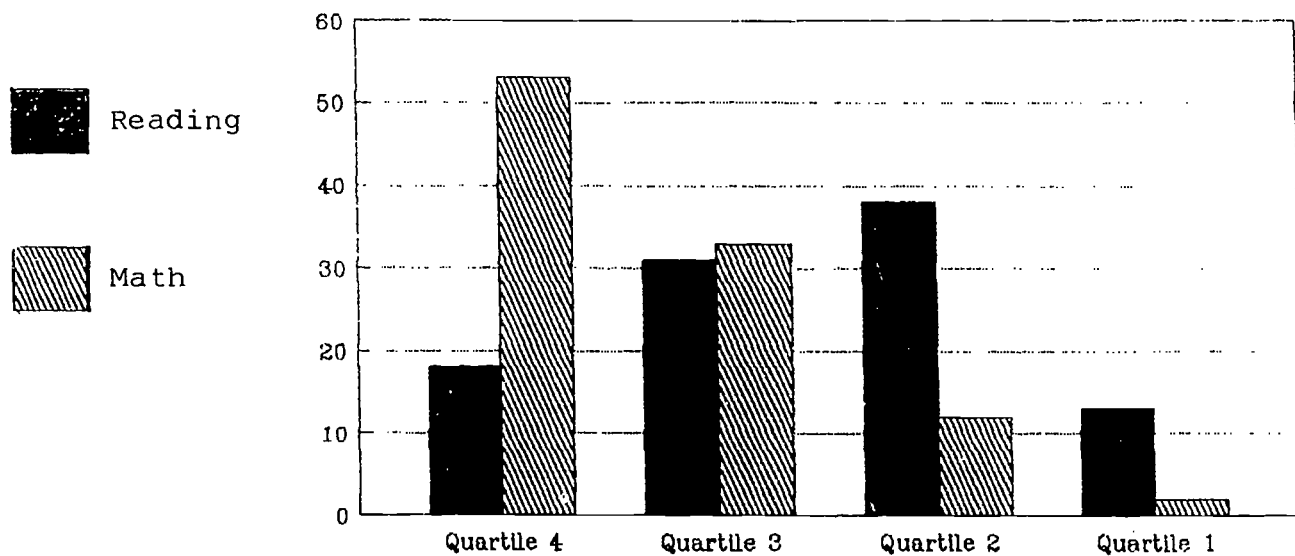


\* This test was designed to be given at the end of the year.

- Narrative:
1. Students scored higher in math than reading.
  2. Students scored above the national average in both reading and math.

Prologue: GOALS Performance Based Achievement Test was given to second grade students in December, 1992. This test measured student achievement in reading and math.

## 2nd Grade Ach. Quartiles GOALS Performance Based test



Percentage of students in each Quartile.

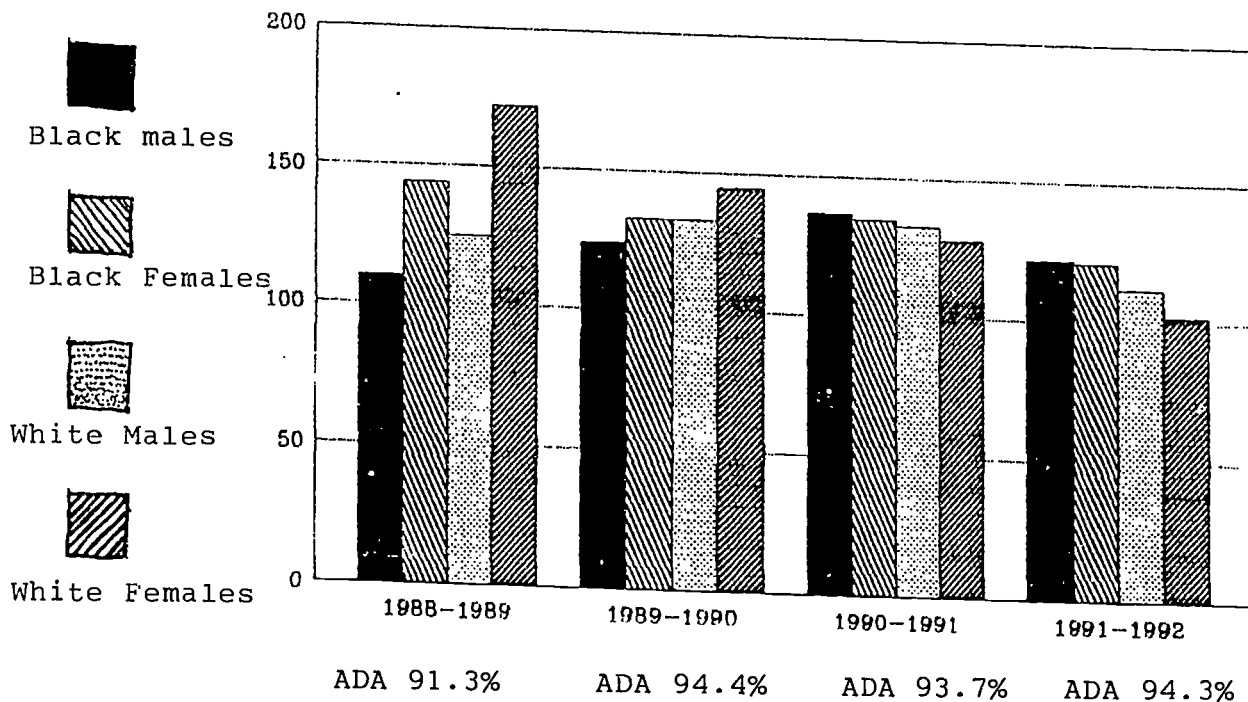
- Narrative:
1. In math, 53% of students scored in Quartile 4 (76% - 99%)
  2. In reading, 38% of students scored in Quartile 2 (26% - 50%)

Behavior

PROLOGUE: Attendance information was taken from office records and shows attendance by sex and race for grades K, 1, 2 for the school years 1988-89; 1989-90; 1990-91; 1991-92.

### Record of Attendance

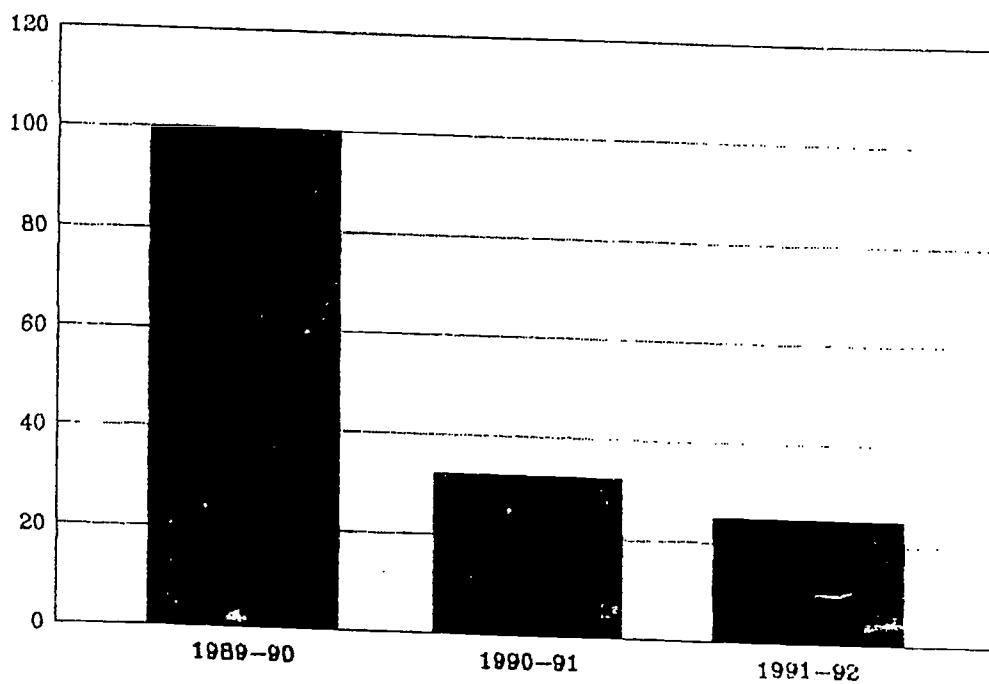
Number of absences by sex and race for a four year period at Franklin Lower Elementary School.



Narrative: Absences were the highest in 1988-1989. Absences by white females has decreased and absences by black males have increased. Absences have decreased in past four years.

Prologue: Referral information for the years 1989-90, 1990-91, 1991-92 were taken from office records and based on referrals to the Principal as defined in the student handbook. Referrals are for grades K, 1, and 2.

## Discipline Referrals



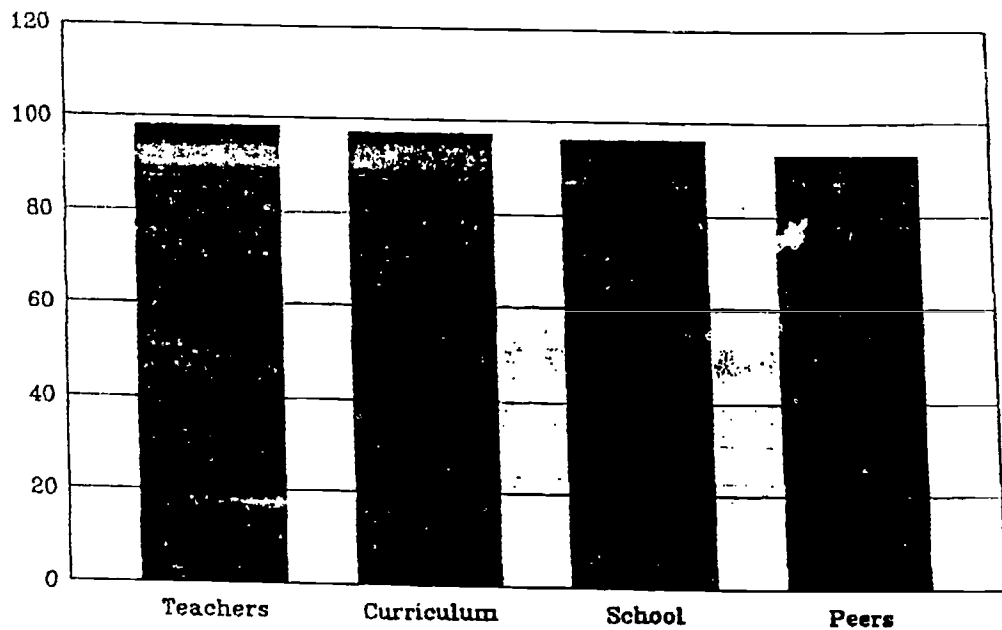
Narrative: Most referrals were made in 1989-1990.  
Fewest referrals were made in 1991-92.  
Discipline referrals have decreased since 1989-90.



Student Attitude

Prologue: Student Attitude Survey (locally designed) was given in October 1992. to grades Preschool, Kindergarten, First, and Second. The survey measured attitude toward school, teachers, peers, and curriculum.

Student Attitude Survey



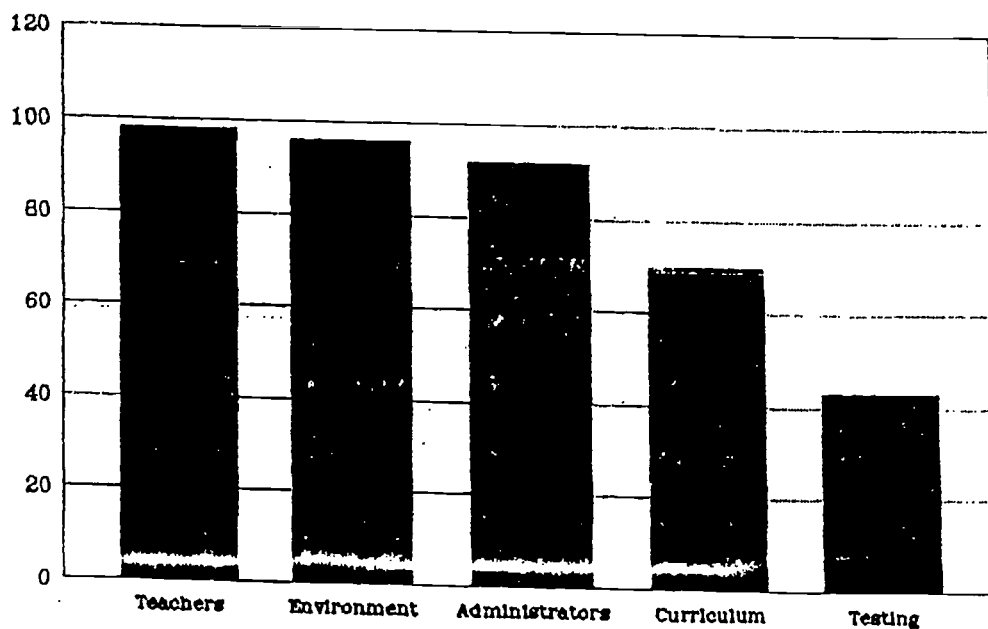
Narrative: Student attitude toward teachers was the most positive.

Student attitude toward peers received the fewest positive comments.

Additional Data

Prologue: Parent Survey (locally designed) was given to all parents on October 29 and 30, 1992, during parent conferences. This survey measured parent attitude toward teachers, administrators, curriculum, testing, and school environment.

### Parent Attitude Survey

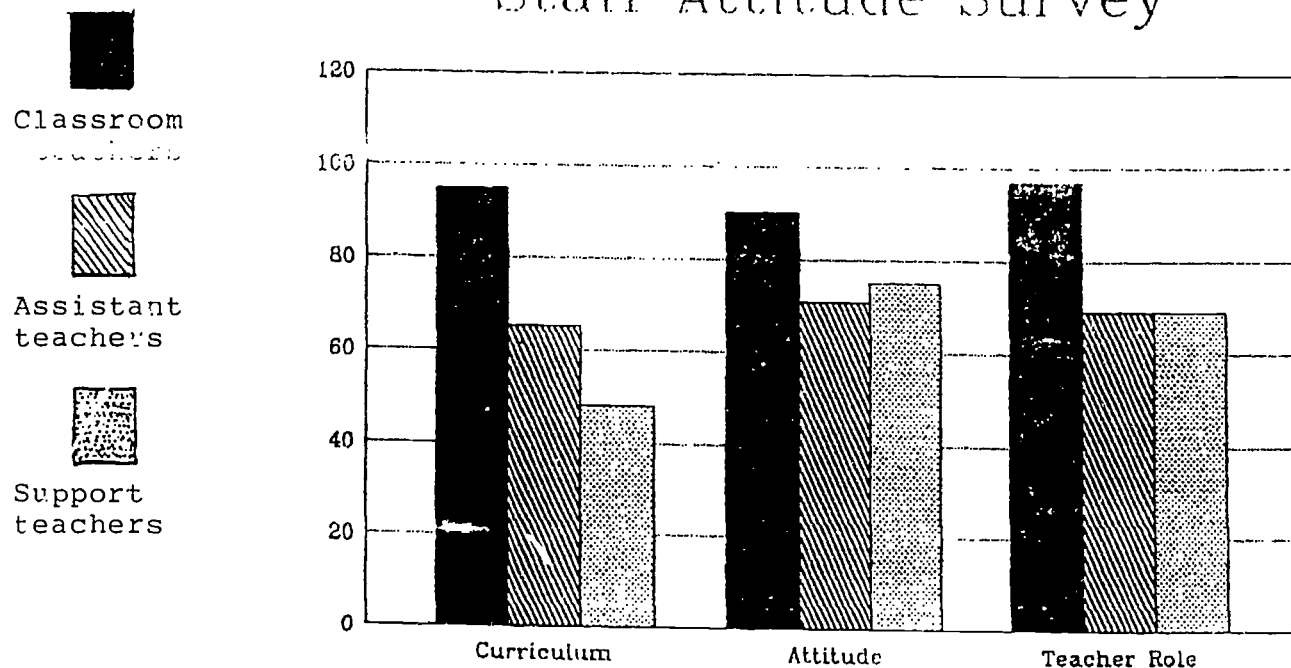


Narrative: The area with the most positive comments concerned attitude toward teachers.

The area of testing received the fewest positive comments.

Prologue: Teaching Staff Attitude Survey (locally designed). This was given to the teaching staff in November 1992. This survey measured the teaching staff's attitude toward curriculum, personal attitude, and role of the teacher.

## Staff Attitude Survey



Narrative: Classroom teachers' attitude was the most positive in all three areas: curriculum, teacher attitude, and role of teacher.

Support teachers were least positive in the area of curriculum.

Assistant teachers had the lowest personal attitude.

## SUMMARY

Over the past years, standardized tests have shown that we needed to restructure. The test results did not give a true representation of what students were learning. Students were being penalized because of these test scores. So, we began looking into Portfolios and Alternative Assessment as a means to give some relief to this situation. Restructuring occurred. The interior of the school was changed so that the focus was placed on students becoming active learners and partners in the learning process. This was done through the use of hands-on materials, introduction of the whole language process, and emphasis being placed on thinking skills development.

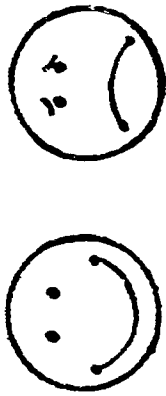
Appendices

FRANKLIN LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

THINKING ABOUT MY SCHOOL (TAMS)

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE \_\_\_\_\_ SEX \_\_\_\_\_ RACE \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTIONS: PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY BELOW.



1. I look forward to going to school. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Teachers at our school like students. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Everyone works together. \_\_\_\_\_
4. My parents think this school is a good school. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Teachers like to teach and to help students. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I am learning a lot in school this year. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Most of what we learn is interesting. \_\_\_\_\_
8. At this school the grown-ups do what is best for the students. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I feel good when I am working in my classroom. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I like school. \_\_\_\_\_



FRANKLIN LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"ONWARD TO EXCELLENCE" SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
PARENT SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: Circle the answer that best describes your feelings.

Number of children in your family enrolled at school \_\_\_\_\_

I have been a school parent for:                      Circle the grade(s) of your children:

(A) entered this year	(A) Kindergarten
(B) one year	(B) First
(C) two years	(C) Second
(D) three years	
(E) four or more years	

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. School helps to build a positive self-image in my child.   | YES | NO |
| 2. Conferences give me needed and helpful information.  | YES | NO |
| 3. My child receives additional individual instruction as needed.   | YES | NO |
| 4. My child gets along well with his/her teacher.   | YES | NO |
| 5. The classroom teacher cares about my child.  | YES | NO |
| 6. If my child has a problem at school, there are appropriate resource people at school to provide help.  | YES | NO |
| 7. The teachers at school place enough emphasis on learning and academics.  | YES | NO |
| 8. Is too much emphasis placed on standardized test scores?   | YES | NO |
| 9. My child is eager and enthusiastic about learning.   | YES | NO |
| 10. My child's learning is interrupted by the misbehavior of other students.  | YES | NO |
| 11. I feel comfortable talking and sharing my concerns with teachers.   | YES | NO |
| 12. I feel free to communicate with the principal.  | YES | NO |
| 13. I feel parental involvement in school activities is important.  | YES | NO |
| 14. Do you feel that you are a welcome visitor in your child's school?  | YES | NO |
| 15. The office staff is courteous and helpful.  | YES | NO |
| 16. I feel good about my child attending school.  | YES | NO |
| 17. Do you believe that a test score is sufficient criteria for your child to be placed in a remedial program (for example - math or reading center)? | YES | NO |
| 18. Should children be pulled out of the classroom for special or remedial help?  | YES | NO |
| 19. Would you feel more comfortable with special and remedial programs being conducted within the regular classroom?                                  | YES | NO |

-SEE REVERSE SIDE-

If you marked negatively for any of the statements, please give the number of the statement, and the reason why you marked the statement as you did. (If needed, continue on the back of this form.)

# \_\_\_\_\_

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Any additional comments you would like to make that are not covered in the survey.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FRANKLIN LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TEACHER SURVEY FORM

NOVEMBER 9, 1992

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. I am teaching because I love children.  | YES | NO |
| 2. I am satisfied with my current teaching position.   | YES | NO |
| 3. I view my role in the classroom as being a facilitator of instruction rather than a lecturer of information.                | YES | NO |
| 4. I enjoy my job more as a result of using the whole language process rather than the basal approach.                         | YES | NO |
| 5. I feel that children should be given the opportunity to make capable decisions relative to their learning.                  | YES | NO |
| 6. I would continue to teach the way I am teaching now even if the administration said I could go back to traditional methods. | YES | NO |
| 7. I feel that students should receive remedial instruction based on a single achievement test score.                          | YES | NO |
| 8. I have noticed that students enjoy reading more since implementing whole language.  | YES | NO |
| 9. A positive feeling permeates the school.  | YES | NO |
| 10. I feel that I should have input on when my students are taken out of the classroom for special/remedial services.          | YES | NO |

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
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