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ABSTRACT

The Brooks Educational Quality Indicators project tested the premise that quality education in Brooks (Alberta) results from the right blend of attention to academics and developing character within a firm set of behavioral demands. The first stage of the study included data collection on district perceptions from teachers, staff, administrators, and trustees. The second stage of the study examined student perceptions through a former-student survey and telephone interviews, and student behavior using homework completion rates, vandalism, and discipline. Achievement tests, diploma exams, participation rates, and Rutherford Scholarships were used to measure student achievement. The findings of the first two stages were analyzed and potential conclusions were drawn. This led to the third stage in which community perceptions were evaluated through an action plan and community involvement. The Brooks indicator project blended academic, social, and behavioral data to provide indicators of students' character development. An indicator system for responsible student behavior included high expectations, mutual respect and recognition, pride, courteousness, caring and sharing, mutual trust, and open communication. The action plan produced a belief statement and followup action plans. Appendices A-E include data on district perceptions, student perceptions, student behavior, student achievement, and community perceptions. (Contains 19 references.) (Author/JPT)

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Academic Outcomes and Behavior

– Identifying Quality Indicators

Brooks School District No. 2092

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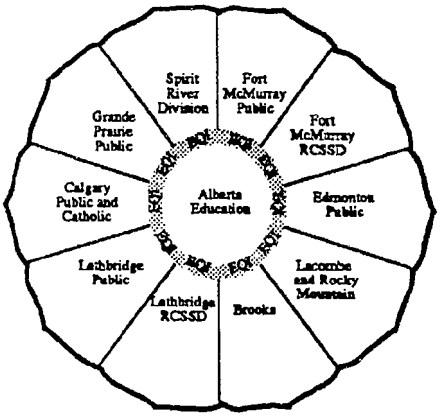

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Academic Outcomes and Behavior

– Identifying Quality Indicators

Brooks School District No. 2092

Under Contract to Alberta Education
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Acknowledgments

The Brooks Educational Quality Indicators Project was spearheaded by the administrators of the Brooks School District. The project proposal was written and supervised by Superintendent Duncan Gillespie. Implementation of the project was the responsibility of Inge Ellefson, the Quality Indicators Directors for the district. She is also responsible for this report.

An advisory council provided input for the project. This council included Ron Ball, Teacher, Vicki Hall, Larry Regner, Lucien Weinmeyer and Vic Budz, Administrators, George Timko, School Board Member, Duncan Gillespie, Superintendent, and Inge Ellefson, Quality Indicators Director.

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Abstract

The purpose of the Brooks Educational Quality Indicators project was to study the validity of the premise: quality education in Brooks is perceived to be the result of the "right" blend of attention to academic success and attention to the development of "character" within the framework of a firm, but supportive set of behavioral expectations and policies. In the first of three stages of the project, data collected included *district perceptions* from: teachers, staff, administrators and trustees. During stage two, data collection expanded to include *student perceptions*: former student survey, telephone interviews, *student behavior*: homework completion, vandalism, counselling/discipline, and *student achievement*: achievement tests, diploma exams, participation rates and Rutherford Scholarships. The findings were analyzed and potential conclusions were drawn. This led to an action plan which included community involvement and the collection of *community perceptions*.

The Brooks indicators project involved an attempt to blend academic, social and behavioral data to provide indicators of character development among students in the district. We established two sets of indicators, one set for students and one set for staff, during stage one. These became refined into one indicator system for responsible student behavior in the community which included: high expectations, mutual respect and recognition, pride in self, others, home, school and community, courteous, supportive caring and sharing attributes, and mutual trust and open communication. Benchmarks were established in stage two for homework completion, vandalism, counselling/discipline, *Former Student Survey*, student interviews and achievement and Rutherford scholarships. The action plan in stage three involved the community. They produced a set of belief statements, as well as follow-up action plans.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Alberta Education collaborated with twelve school jurisdictions to develop indicator systems to measure the success for the educational enterprise in the province. The Educational Quality Indicators (EQI) provided information to assist in assessing the quality of educational programs and the delivery system by focusing on student outcomes. The proposed system of measuring success took into consideration and reflects government policy and the goals of schooling. It addressed two essential questions: (1) Are students learning to their potential? (2) Is the educational system supporting student learning efficiently and effectively?

Context

The Brooks School District is located in the town of Brooks which has a population of 9,500. The town is surrounded by 257,000 acres of irrigated farmland and over a million acres of rangeland used for livestock grazing. The lands surrounding Brooks support an oil industry.

The Brooks School District 's six schools are located within an eight block radius in the town of Brooks in southeastern Alberta. In September 1992 there were 2,372 students, 127 teachers and 46 support staff.

Table 1

Brooks School District, September 30, 1992

School	Grades	Students	Teachers	Support Staff
Brooks Composite	10-12	560	31	9
Brooks Junior High	7-9	385	25	9
Griffin Park	1-9	419	23	8
Eastbrook Elementary	1-6	435	21	4
Central Elementary	4-6	198	12	5
Brooks Primary	1-3	194	12	5
	ECS	181	3	6
Total		2,372	127	46

Purposes

The purposes of the Brooks Educational Quality Indicators (EQI) Project were:

1. to study the validity of the premise: quality education in Brooks is perceived to be the result of the "right" blend of attention to academic success and attention to the development of "character" within the framework of a firm, but supportive set of behavioral expectations and policies; and

2. as an outcome of addressing the premise we expect to define a valid set of quality indicators.

The expected long-term results are:

- higher satisfaction and confidence rate among students, graduates, and employees with respect to the educational product as measured by a staff questionnaire, administrator interviews, student homework completion rate, vandalism rate, discipline rate, former student survey, and telephone interviews;

- a higher than normal percentage of discipline related cases (e.g., our denial of student privileges, suspension and expulsion rates may be higher due to our firm stand on acceptable behavior);

- a lower dropout rate;

- maintenance of high academic achievement test results, diploma test results, participation rates and Rutherford Scholarships;

- wider acceptance of the quality indicators developed by the stakeholders of Brooks.

Assumptions

In planning the Brooks EQI Project we made the following assumptions.

- We are doing a good job in the delivery of quality education in Brooks.

- We have the "right" blend of attention to academic success (cognitive domain) and attention to development of "character" (affective domain) within the framework of a firm, but supportive set of behavioral expectations and policies.

- We have a good school district.

While these assumptions formed the original premises for our project, we then set about determining the extent to which they exist. For example, how good a job are we doing academically and behaviorally, and how firm and supportive are our behavioral expectations and policies?

Definitions

Educational quality indicators are measures that either assess or are related to a desired outcome of an educational system and describe a central feature or features of the educational system. Quality indicators should not be viewed as absolute measures of the quality of an educational system but as part of a system of variables that gives some "indication" of the relative health of that educational system. Educational quality indicator systems are organized sets of vital signs (indicators) from which it is possible to make judgements about the health of an education system.

An *educational indicator:*

- either assesses or is related to a direct outcome
- should provide information that is feasible to gather, valid, and useful for making policy decisions (Smith, 1988, p. 487).

According to Stufflebeam and Webster (1985):

> *Evaluation* is the process of delineating, obtaining, and applying descriptive and judgmental information about the worth or merit of some object's goals, plans, operations, and results in order to guide decision making, maintain accountability, and/or foster understandings (p. 571).

They said that the evaluations should serve parents, students, and teachers, as well as administrators and board members, because all these groups, in various ways are participants in making educational decisions, as well as being accountable for the consequences.

Stufflebeam and Webster stated that *accountability* (or the ability to give an accounting of what was done, for what reasons, at what cost, and with what effect) is a purpose of evaluation. Evaluation programs can and do provide valuable responses to many of the demands for accountability that schools and school districts must meet.

Wayson (1987) defined *discipline* as: "the ability to identify the character of a circumstance or situation to determine one's most constructive role in it, to carry out that role directly, to sustain it as long as necessary, and to learn from the consequences of one's actions. Such skill is learned; it is taught best by people who are willing to demonstrate it in their own lives (in Carter, 1987, p. 8)".

In the Brooks EQI project we defined:

- *homework* as any student work (other than studying or reading) that requires time to complete at home;
- *vandalism* as an action which results in maintenance being involved in clean up/repair, e.g., broken window, graffiti, etc.;
- *counselling/discipline* as any administrator contact with students at teacher request.

Design

The Brooks Educational Quality Indicators Project was organized to take a picture of the whole district in terms of how students behave, to focusing on particular aspects as they relate to student behavior, and to making changes to policy and community involvement to promote positive student behavior. Thus, during the first year of the project, the emphasis was placed on developing indicators of student behavior. The second year focused on particular measures of student behavior such as discipline rates, homework rates, vandalism rates, *Former Student Survey*, telephone interviews, and to address the balance between the behavioral and cognitive aspects of learning, provincial achievement exams, diploma exams and Rutherford scholarships. In the third year, change included the involvement of the community in the development of a set of beliefs about student behavior, and as an outcome of this, a committee of interested members who will carry on some of the suggestions for actions by the group.

In the first year of the project, data collected included: staff comments, a staff questionnaire and interviews with administrators and trustees. During the second year, data collection expanded to include nine areas: homework completion rate, vandalism rate, discipline rate, former student survey, telephone interviews, achievement test results, diploma test results, participation rates and Rutherford Scholarships. The findings and conclusions led to community involvement and the Character in our Community initiative.

The collection procedures considered the present organization of the school district. It included involving the local Alberta Teachers' Association in establishing a support committee and executive member. This Quality Council advised the local project. The council comprised a school board trustee, the superintendent, a teacher, four administrators and the director. Using a combination of surveys, questionnaires, and telephone interviews, the Quality Indicators Director, under the direction of the district steering committee (Quality Council), assessed the views of district employees as to how they describe the system's quest for quality. From this initial data base and in conjunction with available research in the field of quality indicators, the researcher located former students to determine the degree of congruency between the "producers" and the "consumers" concept of quality. Finally, the Quality Indicators Director attempted to isolate indicators, procedures, and attitudes that appear to have the greatest correlation with achieving quality, "Brooks brand". The district plans to maintain those policies, procedures and activities which correlate positively and to decrease or eliminate those which impair improvement.

The original proposal indicated that data would be gathered through survey and interviews. The Quality Council formulated an hypothesis about what quality education in Brooks means and suggested means of obtaining the data. The Quality Indictors Director organized the collection of information and led the analysis of it with the purpose of isolating indicators of quality.

Data were collected through a variety of means. Multiple sources and methods would indicate the consistency of findings. For example, Brooks schools experience a very low vandalism rate. Do we in fact have a significantly lower incidence, and if so, is this an outcome of conscious actions being taken, or is it a by-product of other outcomes being achieved? Figure 1 presents the EQI project design.

Brooks EQI Project Activities

Stage	Activity	Participants
Stage One Identification of Quality Indicators 1989-90	Interviews	Administrators
	Perceptions	Teachers
	Questionnaire	District Staff
	Interviews	Trustees
Stage Two Data Collection 1990-91	Survey	Former Students
	Interviews	Former Students
	Homework	Students - Gr.4 -12
	Counselling	Students - K-Gr. 12
	Vandalism	Maintenance Staff
	Achievement	Students - Grs. 3,6,9,12
Stage Three Implementation of the Action Plan 1991-92	Action Plan	Administrators
	Community Character Profile Survey	Community
	Set of 3 Meetings to Establish a Set of Belief Statements Regarding Responsible Student Behavior	Community and Administrators

Figure 1: Brooks EQI Project Design

Scope

The Brooks EQI project was originally concerned with the "right" blend of attention to academic success and attention to the development of "character". This premise evolved to a focus on responsible student behavior and indicators and beliefs in school and community settings. In our efforts to determine the extent to which responsible student behavior exists, it became necessary to identify and develop measures. It was necessary to maximize the effectiveness of the measures and minimize the disruption of the day-to-day operation of the district.

Responsible student behavior is a function of the home, school and community, and therefore the EQI project branched out to include the community. We collaborated in the establishment of a set of belief statements regarding responsible student behavior.

The EQI project combined the cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects. We found it particularly difficult to separate affective and behavioral aspects.

The attempt to determine whether or not we do have a good school district cannot be answered in three years, but must be monitored over time. Measures which have been developed may be adapted and used again in attempts to determine growth or deterioration in areas of future concern.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

A literature review was developed with the support of the *Educational Quality Indicators Annotated Bibliography* (Alberta Education, 1989). The literature review assisted us in the development of the Brooks EQI Project. It gave us background knowledge in the work which had been developed in terms of indicators, and suggestions as to what still needs to be addressed. This literature review contains literature which pertains to the key themes of our study. Included is information specific to responsible student behavior which was the focus of our project. Also included are the definitions and purpose for the study of indicators. There are models which assisted in organizing indicators for the Brooks project. The models include context, inputs, process and product/outcomes. In conclusion, the aspect of indicators and change is addressed.

Responsible Student Behavior

Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, and Smith (1979) suggested that outcome measures include delinquency figures and teacher ratings of children's behavior, and used, the children's behavior in school, attendance, examination success, employment, and delinquency. Process information included data gathered in the schools, including interviews with the staff, a pupil questionnaire and observations.

Hanson and Ginsburg (1985) set up models which include achievement test scores, self-reported grade point average, discipline problems, and dropout status. They were interested in examining how the students' value systems, and those of their parents and peers affect their achievement in school and their behavior outside school when family background characteristics are taken into account. They found that traditional American values are important predictors of student success, in fact, they are twice as important for student performance as family socioeconomic background; students with strong traditional values are more likely to use their out-of-school time in ways that reinforce learning, for example, high school students with more traditional values spend about three more hours a week on homework than do students with less traditional values.

"How do we want our classroom to be?" is the question that the Child Development Project (CDP) would have children ask (Kohn, 1991). Rejecting punishment and rewards in favor of strategies geared toward internalization of prosocial norms and values, the CDP invites teachers and student to work together to turn their classrooms into caring communities. The primary components of the program intended to bring this about are: a version of cooperative learning that does not rely on grades or other extrinsic motivators; the use of a literature-based reading program that stimulates discussion about values and offers examples of empathy and caring even as it develops verbal skills; an approach to classroom management in which the emphasis is on developing intrinsic motives to participate productively and prosocially, in which teachers are encouraged to develop warm relationships with the children, and in which periodic class meetings are held so that children can play an active role in planning, assessing progress, and solving problems; and a variety of other features, including pairing of children of different ages to work together,

setting up community service projects to develop responsibility, giving periodic homework assignments specifically designed to be done (and to foster communication) with parents, and holding schoolwide activities that may involve whole families (p. 505).

The literature suggests that the "right" blend of attention to academic success and development of "character" depends on the student and the circumstance. What is important are the values taught at school as well as in the home. It is clear that both ingredients must exist in order for quality education to occur. The Brooks EQI Project concentrated on desirable student behavior and outcomes on a community basis.

Accountability

A performance accountability system is a set of indicators or statistics that provides information about how well schools are performing. Data from the system should allow policy makers to compare performance over time, against standards, and with comparable educational entities (for example, schools with other schools). By their choice of indicators, policymakers determine who will be held accountable, for what, and to whom. The concept of comparing performance over time, against standards and with comparable educational entities (if they exist) became the focus of the Brooks EQI project. Also discussed at length was maximizing the usefulness of the data collected and minimizing the burden of collecting it.

Accountability systems should also allow educators to determine the success of their own school programs, sustain support for the reform movement by demonstrating such success, recognize schools for their progress and achievements, and discover how to use the resources available for education in the most effective manner possible (Fetler, 1989).

According to David (1987), indicators are usually discussed in the context of accountability. In this context, it is assumed that rewards tied to high performance on indicators of effectiveness will stimulate low-performing schools to improve. Thus, indicators are viewed as incentives to change via external pressure. David believes that significant change is more likely to result from a system designed to foster professional responsibility for self-improvement than one that relies on external control. This idea formed the basis for all the EQI projects in Alberta. The use of indicators as tools for self-improvement does not preclude their being used for accountability purposes. She also indicated that district policy makers can select those characteristics that are consistent with their (and school staffs') views of effective schools. And, for indicators to be useful to local policy makers in improving the quality of education, they must point to specific strengths and weaknesses as well as sources of explanations for them. Districts can take the following steps: reflect on the content and quality of instruction using research findings as a guide, fine-tune analysis of existing data that provide insight beyond aggregate measures such as test score averages, and involve school staff in the specification, collection, analysis, and interpretation of data for their site. The choice should be guided by their goals and priorities and the potential for policies to affect what is measured. It should also be limited to a small number of measures that do not interfere with instruction. It should be accompanied by attention to the organizational factors that promote use of feedback for improvement at all levels of the system. The goals of the Brooks School District include much effort and energy in the promotion of responsible student behavior. Policy makers have been particularly interested in engaging parents in this promotion.

Accountability, according to Fetler (1989), conceived as the measurement of performance and the setting of goals, is one way to promote the effective use of resources. He indicated that the purposes of California's accountability program are "to allow educators to determine the success of their own school programs, sustain support for the reform movement by demonstrating such success, recognize schools for their progress and achievements, and discover how to use the resources available for education in the most effective manner possible" (p. i). Judgements about school performance are made on the basis of comparisons of the school with itself over time (trends), of the school with all other schools statewide, and of the school with other demographically similar schools. The yearly school report card includes, but is not limited to, assessment of student achievement, reduction of class size and teaching loads, assignment of teachers outside their areas of competence, quality of textbooks, availability of qualified counsellors, availability of qualified substitute teachers, school safety and cleanliness, adequacy of teacher evaluation and opportunities for professional improvement, classroom discipline and climate, teacher and staff training and curriculum improvement, and quality of school instruction and leadership. He concluded that, educators, in working to provide all students with a quality education, have the satisfaction of knowing that they are working for a good cause.

Hawkins (1983) believed that educational decision making powers must be returned to parents and citizens. Today, "educational citizenship" means membership on advisory boards, dealing with large bureaucracies and voting for school board members who have little authority. He maintained that public education needs parents as full partners, as citizens who will again take their rightful role as constitution makers for local education institutions. The Brooks project also involved the community.

Models for Developing Indicators

Fraser, Walberg, Welch and Hattie (1987) presented Walberg's nine factors which powerfully and consistently predict student outcomes and are widely generalizable. The proposed theory of educational productivity has the following groups of factors:

Student aptitude variables

1. *Ability* or prior achievement, as measured by the usual standardized tests;
2. *Development,* as indexed by chronological age or stage of maturation;
3. *Motivation,* or self-concept, as indicated by personality tests or the student's willingness to persevere intensively on learning tasks.

Instructional Variables

4. *Quantity of instruction* (amount of time students engage in learning);
5. *Quality of instruction,* including psychological and curricular aspects;

Educationally stimulating psychological environment

6. *Home* environment;
7 *Classroom* or school environment;
8. *Peer group* environment outside the school;
9. *Mass media* environment, especially amount of leisure-time television viewing (p. 150).

The productivity model's three aptitude variables of ability, development, and motivation were all linked with learning, although ability (especially IQ) and development (especially Piagetian stage) were more strongly correlated with outcomes than motivation. Syntheses

of studies show that quantity and quality of instruction are relatively strong correlates of achievement. In particular, large effects for instructional quality occurred for: the components of mastery learning (especially use of reinforcement, instructional cues, and corrective feedback); acceleration programs for gifted students; cooperative learning; personalized and adaptive instruction; and tutoring and lesson prescriptions based on diagnosed individual needs. Also, open education proved effective in promoting creativity, independence, and attitude to school, and other moderate instructional effects were found to include use of the post-Sputnik science curricula, high teacher expectations, and use of advance organizers. Of the three environmental variables in the model, learning was linked more strongly with home environment (especially home interventions) and classroom environment (especially cohesiveness, satisfaction, and goal direction) than with either peer environment or media environment. It is noteworthy, however, that more than about 12 hours of television viewing per week had a weak deleterious effect on student learning. This research was used for the Brooks EQI Project as a basis for making the decision to collect information regarding student achievement. Also considered was the importance of the home environment.

David (1987) outlined several suggestions for useful indicators such as the amount of time students are exposed to particular topics. These could include: schools rating themselves on a checklist that reflects whether school rules are posted in every classroom, teachers have planning periods and opportunities to plan together, and resources essential to a productive climate (i.e., recent textbooks and teaching materials, photocopiers, libraries, computers, and supplies). Many of these considerations were addressed in the data collection by the staff of the Brooks School District.

According to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI, 1988) consideration should be given to: 1) the level at which data are collected: district, school, classroom, student, 2) the level at which data are organized and reported: district, school, 3) the mechanisms for reporting: reports to the public and media, reports to parents, data made available on request, 4) how schools are compared: with all other schools, with similar schools, with their own past performance. The Brooks EQI project collected data from all levels of the organization including the community.

Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, and Smith (1979) indicated that large-scale surveys show that differences between schools have rather little to do with the variations between individual children in general cognitive ability. The effects are somewhat greater with respect to subjects such as math and science which are largely learned at school. Adequate estimates of the size of any school effect are not possible in the absence of information on what the children's behavior and attainments were like *before* school entry. Their research strategy included student entry measures, including ability grouping at the end of primary school, parental occupation, teacher questionnaire, variations in student entry over time. Student outcome measures included delinquency figures and teacher ratings of the children's behavior in school; attendance; examination success; employment, and delinquency. Also included were ecological measures such as geographical area, balance of intake, and parental choice. Process information included data gathering in the schools, including interviews with the staff, a pupil questionnaire, and observations.

The CIPP Model

The Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) Model (Stufflebeam and Webster, 1985) was used in Ohio schools. Brooks used the CIPP model to a large extent when considering methods for collecting data.

Context

The contextual nature of education is viewed in terms of looking at education and the changing nature of the work force as well as demographic and social trends (Oregon State Department of Education, 1988). It incorporates the following aspects: to define the institutional context, to identify the target population and assess its needs, to identify opportunities for addressing the needs, to diagnose problems underlying the needs, and to judge whether proposed objectives are sufficiently responsive to the assessed needs (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1985). Methods include systems analysis, surveys, document review, hearings and interviews. The Brooks project used document review, surveys, interviews and document review to determine the context of education.

Input

Inputs include students' ability or prior achievement (as measured by the usual standardized tests), development (as indexed by chronological age or stage of maturation) motivation, or self-concept (as indicated by personality tests or the student's willingness to persevere intensively on learning tasks) (Fraser, Walberg, Welch, & Hattie, 1987).

Input evaluation includes: identifying and assessing system capabilities, alternative program strategies, procedural designs for implementing the strategies, budgets and schedules, literature search, visits to exemplary programs, advocate teams, and pilot trials, with the objective of inventorying and analyzing available human and material resources, solution strategies, and procedural designs for relevance, feasibility, and economy (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1985). Input methods typically include a literature search, school visits, advocate teams and pilot trials. The Brooks project used a literature review, interviews, field tests, district perceptions, and the ATA committee and EQI council to identify and assess system capabilities.

Process

Process evaluation includes: identifying or predicting defects in the procedural design or its implementation, providing information for preprogrammed decisions to record and judge procedural events and activities, monitoring the activity's potential procedural barriers and remaining alert to unanticipated ones, obtaining specified information for programmed decisions, describing the actual process, continually interacting with and observing the activities of project staff (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1985) The methods typically used included obtaining specified information describing the process providing a log of actual activities. The Brooks project used student perceptions, student interviews, counselling/ discipline and homework data to identify or predict defects in the design.

Product/Outcomes

Outcome measures can include children's behavior in school, attendance, examination success, employment, and delinquency (Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979).

Major intermediary outcomes include: students' behaviors outside of school (including their employment status) and time spent on homework, watching television and reading (Hanson & Ginsburg 1985). Stronger traditional values are associated with greater academic success. For example, students with traditional values are more likely to work hard in school, think that it pays to plan ahead, participate in church activities, have a mother who thinks they should attend college, have a friend in school who thinks well of students with good grades (Ginsburg & Hanson, 1985).

The methods of collecting educational outcomes typically include: student test scores in achievement or competency tests, attendance, dropout and graduation rates, and fiscal and administrative data including staffing patterns, teacher credentials, pupil-teacher ratios, and per pupil expenditures (Goertz & King, 1989).

The Alberta Education EQI initiative placed an emphasis on student outcomes, and it therefore became a focus for the Brooks project. The literature indicates that it is important to collect descriptions and judgements of outcomes, relate them to objectives and to context, input, and process information, and interpret their worth and merit. The method includes operationally defining outcome criteria, collecting judgements of outcomes from stakeholders, and performing qualitative and quantitative analyses (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1985). The Brooks project looked at student achievement on provincial exams, participation rates, Rutherford scholarships and vandalism. We also devised a method by which to involve the community in determining student behavioral outcomes and expectations.

Issues

Because standardized tests that constitute the core of accountability systems are imperfect instruments, there should be efforts to devise alternative instruments. To compensate for some of the tests' limitations, multiple indicators of student and school performance should be used (Alkin, 1988; OERI, 1988). The concept of using multiple indicators was important to the Brooks EQI project.

According to Smith (1988), state officials who do not see it in their interest to be compared with others could quite possibly derail efforts to standardize definitions and measures and otherwise make it difficult to carry out valid comparisons. Porter (1988) and Fuhrman (1988) both agreed that professional educators must be integrally involved in the process of establishing goals and purposes of education and indicators which reflect these goals.

Educational indicators are statistics, numbers that collectively provide information about the performance of central features of the education system or of the system as a whole. Unfortunately, it is much easier to use numbers to describe quantities in education than to describe the quality of education. This fact has long posed a problem for educational researchers, but it poses even more of a problem for those who seek to develop high quality indicators (Porter, 1988). Publicizing outcome data for individual schools and school districts may be a relatively effective strategy by which the province can persuade

the local school districts to concentrate on improving student learning. On the other hand, the responses of local school officials could result in improved average test scores without increasing student learning (Murnane & Pauly, 1987).

The Power of Schooling to Effect Change

A socioeconomic analysis of educational quality indicators would include the findings that show that for each group of values and for all disadvantaged populations examined, stronger traditional values are associated with greater academic success. For example, according to Ginsburg and Hanson (1985), high performers are: 163 percent more likely to work hard in school; 44 percent more likely to think that it pays to plan ahead; 78 percent more likely to participate in church activities; 131 percent more likely to have a mother who thinks they should attend college; and 96 percent more likely to have friends in school who think well of students with good grades (p. i). These results suggest that schools and parents need to encourage positive values in students from all socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. These findings reinforce the belief that the development of character and intellect go hand in hand.

Hanson and Ginsburg (1985) discovered in their research findings which cut across different types of values that traditional American values are important predictors of student success; in fact, they are twice as important for student performance as family socioeconomic background. This finding has important implications. Since values are more subject to change than family socioeconomic background, a student who does not have the advantage of higher family socioeconomic status need not be relegated to failure in school. This also had implications for the Brooks EQI project in the determination of student and parent value systems. Secondly, students with strong traditional values are also more likely to use their out-of-school time in ways that reinforce learning. For example, high school students with more traditional values spend about three more hours a week on homework than do students with less traditional values. This is a significant amount of time, since the average student spends only about five hours a week doing homework.

Can a good school help its students overcome the adverse effects of economic disadvantage and family adversity? Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, and Smith (1979) contradicted the prevailing pessimism about the possibilities of education and showed that schools can make a difference. A study of 12 London secondary schools found that all analyses pointed rather consistently in the same direction. Children's observed behavior in the school was strongly associated with school process variables. Of all the outcomes considered, this was the one for which the child's personal characteristics, his home background and the balance of entry to the school were least important. Of course, there are other aspects of children's behavior which may well be strongly influenced by these personal, family and social variables. There was also found to be an implication that peer group influences of some kind were serving to shape children's behavior. It is interesting in this context to note that it was *academic* balance which was crucial rather than any mix in terms of the sociocultural backgrounds from which the children came. Children were more likely to show good behavior and good scholastic attainments if they attended some schools than if they attended others. The variations between schools in different forms of 'outcome' for their pupils were reasonably stable over periods of at least four or five years. Schools performed fairly similarly on all the various measures of outcome. That is, *schools which had better children's behavior in school tended also to do better than average in terms of examination success and delinquency.*

These differences in outcome between schools were *not* due to such physical factors as the size of the school, the age of the buildings or the space available; nor were they due to broad differences in administrative status or organization.

The differences between schools in outcome *were* systematically related to their characteristics as social institutions. Factors as varied as the degree of academic emphasis, teacher actions in lessons, the availability of incentives and rewards, good conditions for pupils, and the extent to which children were able to take responsibility were all significantly associated with outcome differences between schools. All of these factors were open to modification by the staff, rather than fixed by external constraints.

This parallels the basic premise of the Brooks Educational Quality Indicators project, which is:

> to study the validity of the premise that quality education in Brooks is perceived to be the result of the "right" blend of attention to academic success (cognitive domain) and attention to development of "character" (affective domain) within the framework of a firm, but supportive set of behavioral expectations and policies.

Or, Brooks schools have better than average children's behavior in school and better than average examination success and lower delinquency rates.

Chapter 3

The Brooks Project

The Brooks Educational Quality Indicators project was a three-year project with three stages.

- In the initial stage, the Quality Indicators Director used surveys, questionnaires, and personal interviews to assess the views of district employees regarding their perception of what quality indicators exist in the Brooks School District. The data and available research in the area of quality indicators were used to develop a set of potential indicators.

- The second stage introduced measures of student perceptions, student behavior and student achievement developed to establish a baseline for looking at what exists now.

- As a result of the assessments the indicators were revised, and in the third stage the school district invited the community to participate in establishing belief statements regarding expected student behavior. Community perceptions were collected.

The follow-up for the district was to maintain those policies, procedures and activities which relate to ensuring responsible student behavior and to eliminate those which impair improvement.

Stage One

The collection procedures considered the present organization of the school district, and worked within its parameters. This included involving the local Alberta Teachers' Association in establishing a support committee and executive member. There was one member established for each school to facilitate two-way communication to the other staff members. Staff meetings and joint administration meetings were commonly used to disperse surveys and present instructions, as well as solving problems and setting directions. The Quality Council advised the local project. The council comprised a school board trustee, the superintendent, a teacher, four administrators and the director.

Other collection procedures included "brain-writing", face to face interviews, over the phone interviews and mail-outs and returns.

Data analysis occurred in a variety of methods. Qualitative data were compiled, summarized, categorized and clustered in the administrator interviews, teacher perceptions, trustee interviews, counselling/discipline, telephone interviews and action plan.

District Perceptions

Administrator Interviews – Administrators are the key leaders in the School District, and as such they have an instrumental role in establishing and maintaining the direction of student learning. The Quality Indicators Director conducted interviews with the superintendent, deputy superintendent, and six principals. Direct references were made to

the appropriate Alberta Education Handbooks, and individual school handbooks. Questions asked included administrator beliefs regarding student behavior, discipline, self-esteem, recognition, activities and attendance.

Teacher Perceptions – The Alberta Teachers Association Educational Quality Indicators (ATA EQI) committee member in each school requested written input from 127 professional (teaching) staff of the Brooks School District regarding their perceptions of indicators of quality. This request was made at the February 1990 staff meeting in an effort to develop a set of quality indicators for the district. Written information from staff regarding student behavioral and affective domains, and the quality indicators which they perceive to exist were organized.

Teacher perceptions were gathered and listed. They were then reorganized according to themes such as: extracurricular, positive encouragement, expectations, open communication, teacher activities, teacher activities, respect, peer support and individualized comments on student work.

Staff Questionnaire – A questionnaire was developed to assist in determining to what extent the educational quality indicators exist in the Brooks School District; 107 out of 140 or 76% of the staff members, including administrators and support staff, returned completed questionnaires at the May 1990 staff meeting within each school.

The questionnaire was based on a "brain-writing" exercise which was held during a professional development day. Teachers were organized into groups of six and requested to participate in a brainstorming session where the purpose was to answer the question: "What do you perceive to be the 'right' blend of attention to academic success (cognitive), and attention to the development of 'character' (affective) and behavioral expectations?" Each teacher wrote a thought and then passed the information to the next person in the group in order for additional ideas to be added. These thoughts were then categorized, synthesized and counted and used to develop the staff questionnaire.

The questionnaire was used to establish a more specific benchmark regarding staff perceptions. The questionnaire responses were ranked from most important within the Brooks School District based on the number of responses in the agree/strongly agree category. Items were not included as indicators if they received less than 50% agreement plus strong agreement.

Trustee Interviews – The Quality Indicators Director conducted personal interviews with two school trustees regarding satisfactions, disappointments, issues, effectiveness, community understanding, local control, student behavior and quality education. Information was documented and given to them for perusal and editing.

The trustee interviews were analyzed to include the pertinent comments regarding student behavior.

Stage Two

Student Perceptions

Former Student Survey – The *Former Student Survey* instrument was based on former school evaluation surveys of students which had been used in the school district. Suggestions on the wording was received from Dr. Hau Chow of Corporate and Fiscal Planning Branch of Alberta Education, as well, as a variety of local school district stakeholders.

The *Former Student Survey* was mailed to all 749 students who had graduated from the Brooks Composite High School within the past five years. Surveys were mailed prior to Christmas, when it was most likely that candidates would be home for the holidays. A stamped return envelope was enclosed. Two notices were also placed in the local newspaper with an explanation of the purpose of the survey, and encouragement for students to complete it.

Telephone Interviews – Telephone interviews were conducted with students who had left school at least three years ago. Former students who had been expelled or had received Rutherford Scholarships were selected for a balanced perspective. The purpose of the interview was to determine former students' perceptions regarding student behavior within the Brooks schools. Thirty phone calls were attempted to expelled students. Three requests were refused, and three interviews were completed. This very low response rate was as a result of no answer (16), no longer in residence (and new residence unknown) (three), refusal of person answering the call to pass on information (two), calls not being returned (two) and disconnected phone numbers (one). Thirteen calls were attempted to Rutherford scholarship recipients; there was no answer at five calls and four students were still at university. All requests were accepted and four interviews were completed. Time became the limiting factor.

Student Behavior

Counselling/Discipline – In the fall of 1990, administrators collected information regarding discipline rates in the Brooks School District. The objective was to attempt to determine the number of students disciplined by an administrator, and the effect of the disciplinary action. The definition used for discipline was "any administrator contact with students at teacher request". The schools each chose a two-week period in which to collect: the nature of the problem, action taken, time involved, and if possible, results of the action.

Counselling/Discipline data were collected by administrators responsible for discipline within the district. The form for collection was developed in conjunction with the administrative group. All six schools were involved.

These data were collected and categorized into the following categories: the nature of the problem, action taken, time involved and results of the action. The information was summarized and organized into a summary matrix by school and by elementary and secondary divisions.

Homework – In the fall of 1990, students from grades 4 to 12 were surveyed to determine the amount of homework completed in the Brooks School District on a *Homework Completion Rate* form. The data were collected by teachers over a two-week period. Homework was defined as: "any student work (other than studying or reading) that requires time to complete at home". Rate of return by the elementary teachers was 100%, overall rate of return was 70.6%. Teachers of subject areas without homework such as band and industrial arts were not involved in the task.

Homework data were collected by teachers from grades 4 to 12. The form for collection was developed in conjunction with the ATA EQI committee. The data were collected by teachers and numbers were compiled for each grade, school and also by elementary and secondary divisions.

Vandalism – Vandalism rates were collected from September 1990 to December 1990. Vandalism was defined as "any action which results in maintenance being involved in clean up/repair, e.g., broken window, graffiti, etc." The data were collected by the maintenance department. A form for collection of information was developed in conjunction with the department.

Student Achievement

Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams – Provincial achievement test results in grade 3 language arts, grade 6 social studies and grade 9 science and diploma exam results in grade 12 for 1989-90 were examined. Participation rates were also calculated.

Rutherford Scholarships – This scholarship is awarded to students who achieve an average of 80% or higher in designated subjects in grades 10, 11 and 12 and who pursue post-secondary education. The maximum value is $1,500.

Stage Three

Community Perceptions

Action Plan – An action plan was developed at an administrator retreat based on the findings from the homework completion, counselling/discipline, vandalism rates, Former Student Survey, telephone interviews, provincial achievement and participation rates, and Rutherford Scholarship rates, related literature and personal perceptions, and what plans could be made to improve the district. A summary and evaluation of the retreat indicate the measure of success achieved. Important outcomes for administrators were:

- increased awareness of "what exists" in Brooks;
- a vision of expected student behaviors in the Brooks School District;
- ideas, issues and problems which administrators face on a day-to-day basis, i.e., what are the obstacles/impediments to attaining the goal regarding student behavior; new ideas about how student discipline could be handled, on a school-wide discipline basis; and
- an action plan.

The action plan included involving the community in establishing reasonable expectations of children of different ages with respect to conduct and values at home and at school. A series of meetings was organized with administrators and central office staff in order to collect information and establish standards and to involve others in the identification of what constitutes good behavior and what steps might be taken to promote good behavior.

The purpose for the Character in Our Community meetings was to review and reestablish a shared vision among schools, homes and community with respect to developing prosocial attitudes and behaviors among our youth. Our goal was to jointly develop a set of beliefs for our community.

Figure 2 identifies the stakeholders and describes the process for involving the community in determining community character.

The process for involving the community included setting up a steering committee consisting of the superintendent, three school-based administrators, and the Quality Indicators Director. This committee clarified the purpose of the meetings, and fine-tuned the process. A series of three meetings with the community indicated the support and interest level which exists regarding the promotion of prosocial skills in our youth. There was a field-test meeting with slated participants and evaluation of the process.

The first meeting included an introductory activity to set the tenor of the meeting, case studies for discussion and a survey (Community Character Profile) to establish how the participants view the community. The second meeting consisted of brainstorming beliefs, personal commitment and concrete actions regarding areas viewed as needing improvement and synthesizing the established belief and commitment statements. The third meeting consisted of reviewing the established beliefs and commitment statements and brainstorming potential action plans.

News releases and other communication strategies were made on a regular basis to keep the public informed of the meetings and the results. The final set of beliefs was given coverage in the local newspaper.

Accurate monitoring of community participation was considered essential, and a final list of interested citizens signed up for further involvement. This involvement will likely take place through School Advisory Councils.

The meetings with the community established a set of beliefs as well as a set of statements of personal commitment. These formed the basis for potential community use, as well as reaffirming the support for school district efforts. The meetings were held mid-year (February and March) and mid-week (Wednesdays). Timing for the meetings was 7:30 p.m. and they were held in one of the secondary schools.

Invitations and reminders were developed and sent to every tenth parent on the school files in each school, and then screened to determine if there was an accurate cross-sectional representation of parents. This was accomplished by the school-based administrators. After much discussion, the meetings were also advertised in the local newspaper, and an invitation was extended to the general public. Reminders were published in the local newspaper each week prior to the meetings. Child care was organized to accommodate single parents.

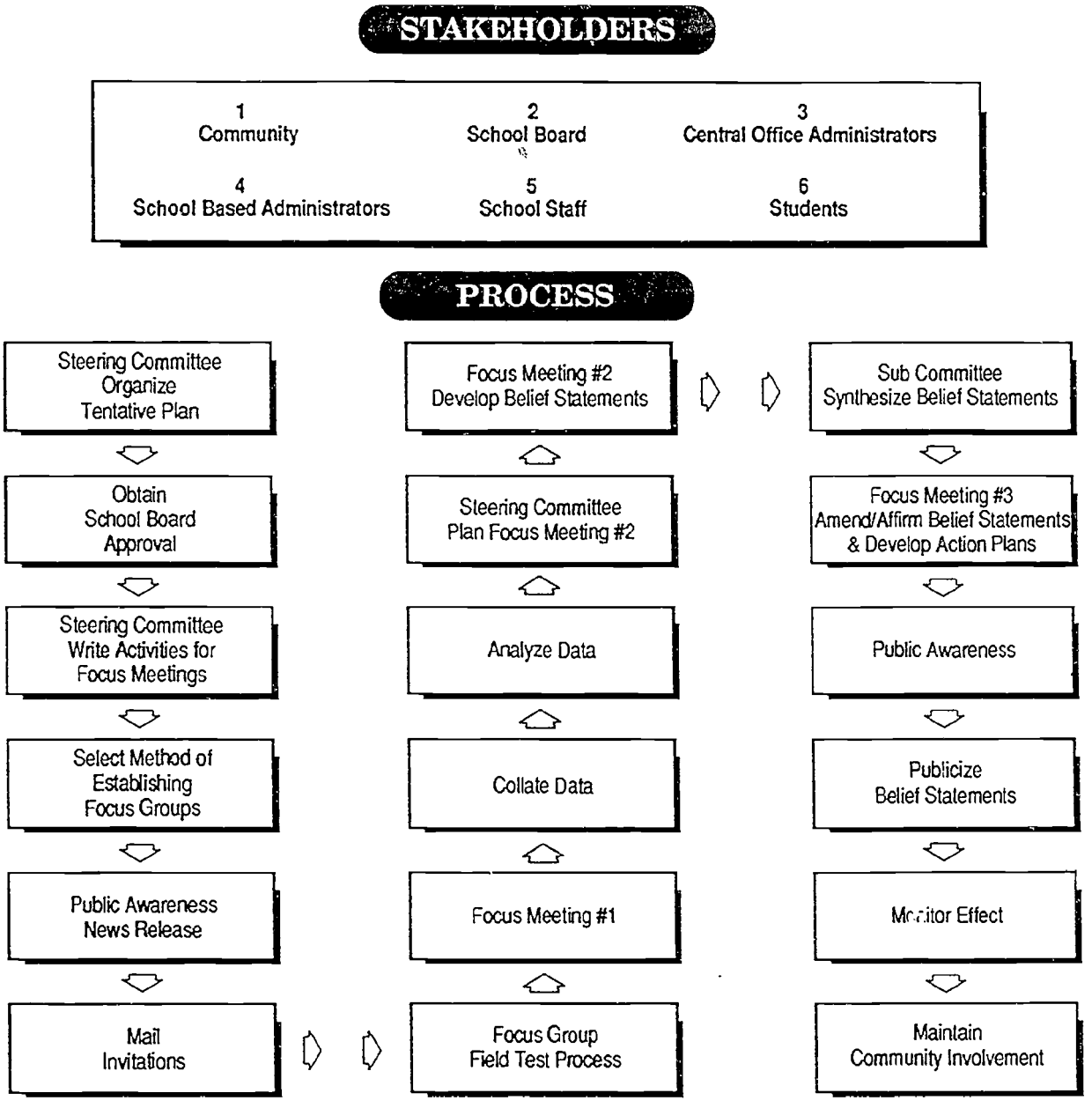

Figure 2: Process for Involving the Community

A role description for administrators was developed in order to clarify the expectations regarding their participation. It was agreed that staff communication should occur through administrators possibly during staff meetings and also whenever there were questions. The teaching staff was not actively involved in the series of meetings. This decision was made in an attempt to keep the focus on the community rather than the schools. Communiqués were developed for the staff.

Case studies were created for community discussion groups. These case studies addressed simulated experiences of vice principals based on actual cases they had most commonly dealt with.

A field test meeting was held prior to the first meeting for evaluation purposes. General recommendations were made for changes in format, timing, and content.

Facilitators' packages were prepared for administrators prior to each of the three meetings. Specific recommendations were made regarding procedures to follow and time recommendations.

The first meeting was organized to heighten awareness by participants regarding the issues surrounding responsible behavior. To facilitate this, case studies were discussed. Also, in order to establish a more accurate picture of how our participants view the community, the Community Character Profile was administered. Issues discussed during the second meeting included: inappropriate use of language, respect for others, law abiding, partying/alcohol/drugs, freedoms, responsibility, inconsistent expectations, hesitancy to get involved, and respect for property. A set of belief statements and "I will" statements evolved from this endeavor. At this point a subcommittee was requested to organize and draft a set of belief statements. In the third and last meeting participants perused and edited the belief statements and "I will" statements and potential action plans.

Thirty-four participants signed up for further commitment to the concept of promoting character in our community.

Community Character Profile – The *Community Character Profile* results were used to create a set of discussion topics of interest to the participating community members. The meetings produced a set of beliefs and "I will" statements. These statements verify that respect, recognition of rights and responsibilities, the importance of the home, fair and consistent rules/laws, etc. form the backbone of our community belief system.

Action plans were suggested for follow-up meetings for interested stakeholders. These action plans will be considered by the committee which will determine the next steps. It was felt that the venture was extremely positive based on the number of interested participants and the number of committed volunteers who signed up for further involvement.

Chapter Summary

Stage one of the Brooks Educational Quality Indicators Project included the collection of *district perceptions* and the identification of quality indicators through:

- Interviews with administrators and trustees
- Perceptions of teachers
- Questionnaire for district employees

Information from within the school district was collected. The qualitative interviews and perceptions were organized into common themes and summarized to form potential quality indicators. The quantitative information from the questionnaire was categorized and where there was strong agreement the data were used to form potential quality indicators.

Stage two included the development and collection of quality indicators measures. These included:

Student Perceptions:

- Survey of former students
- Interviews of former students who were either expelled or received Rutherford scholarships

Student Behavior:

- Counselling/discipline data on students
- Homework data on students
- Existing data regarding vandalism and student expulsions

Student Achievement:

- Achievement of students on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams, and participation rates

Information from the quality indicators measures was collected to validate the indicators which had been established in stage one. Data were also used to develop an action plan for stage three.

Stage three involved collecting *community perceptions*:

- Action plan with administrators
- Community Character Profile with the community

Information generated through meetings with the community led to the development of a Community Character Profile. The results from the profile were used to create a set of discussion topics of interest to participating community members. The meeting produced a set of belief and "I will" statements. Action plans were suggested for follow-up meetings for interested stakeholders.

Chapter 4

Findings

Findings during the Brooks EQI project supported our premise that we have a good school district. The findings follow.

Stage One

District Perceptions

District perceptions formed the basis for the indicators. These perceptions were derived from the administrator interviews, teacher perceptions, staff questionnaire and trustee interviews. Information regarding the findings follows. Details from the data collection can be found in Appendix A.

Administrator Interviews – Information obtained in individual administrator interviews was compiled, and the student behavior aspects were addressed. Common elements or themes which emerge from the interviews included:

- positive student behavior is given high priority by all stakeholders,
- high expectations pervade the organization,
- firm and fair discipline is considered necessary,
- students are encouraged to become responsible for their own behavior,
- student recognition is considered important, especially for student self-esteem,
- awards programs are considered extensive and important, as are extracurricular activities,
- student vandalism is considered important especially in the attempt at making students responsible for their own action, and
- student attendance is considered important in that it affects students' time on task, and also their learning.

Teacher Perceptions – Common elements or themes which emerged from the information obtained from the staff were:

- extracurricular activities and teacher involvement is considered very important,
- positive teacher recognition of students,
- high expectations of student behavior,
- open teacher-student communication,
- student recognition,
- student-teacher mutual respect,
- student individualized attention, and
- student peer support.

Staff Questionnaire – The staff questionnaire results were important to the development of the indicators since they provide the perception of the majority (76% return rate) of the staff. Indicators were chosen where agreement (Strongly Agree, SA + Agree, A) was greater than 50%. Table 2 shows indicators with the highest agreement. Items were not considered as indicators when agreement dropped below 50%.

Table 2

Areas of Agreement on the 1990 Staff Questionnaire (N=107) (%)

Questions	N/A	SD	D	A	SA *
Highest Agreement (SA+A):					
Teachers care about students.	2	0	0	42	56
Teachers have high expectations of students.	4	0	2	71	23
Students smile and laugh at school, and are cooperative and happy.	3	1	2	81	13
Students within our school system want to attend school.	1	2	4	85	8
There is a strong Physical Education program within our school.	2	1	6	61	30
Teachers contact parents to promote communication.	6	0	3	72	19
There is a positive school climate.	3	1	7	70	20
Students feel good about school.	1	2	7	78	12
Teachers work one to one with students.	3	1	7	77	12
There are many extracurricular activities for students.	6	1	7	44	43
Students are courteous to adults within the school building.	2	1	10	81	6
The majority of a student's time spent in school is spent in the academic subjects.	2	3	9	77	9

* N/A=Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Trustee Interviews – Pertinent trustee comments regarding student behavior follow.

- Establishing a fairly rigid set of standards for the school system, so the students know the parameters they can work within. The board would back up the staff (in most cases) if the parameters were exceeded by the student.
- A quality school system is one where parameters are set down and staff and students know what the parameters are and the consequences of breaking the rules and regulations.
- Parents should be responsible for the actions of their children.
- The School Board must set up discipline policy, and each school must also set down guidelines as to expectations, so everyone is on the same wave length.
- Far too much is expected of the educational system - the church, parents and community are also responsible.
- One of the problems today is the broken home - children move from parent to parent. Morals have changed - today attitudes towards adults have changed.
- Attitude is important, and a good student attitude for learning and higher education is necessary in Brooks.
- Students need to develop pride and fit into society and become a strong member of the community.

A model which represents our efforts to focus our indicators for students and staff on the two most important indicators, responsible student behavior and high expectations follows.

Stage Two

Student Perceptions

Measures which were used to identify indicators of student perceptions included the *Former Student Survey* and telephone interviews. A summary of the findings follows.

Former Student Survey – This survey was sent to 749 former students; 175 (23%) responded. Almost half (49%) of the respondents had spent their entire educational career in Brooks, while 25% had spent high school only. The students indicating post-secondary plans included:

- a majority (71%) planned to attend technical school, college or university,
- 23% planned to work,
- 2% planned to attend another high school and
- 1% planned to return to Brooks Composite High School to graduate.

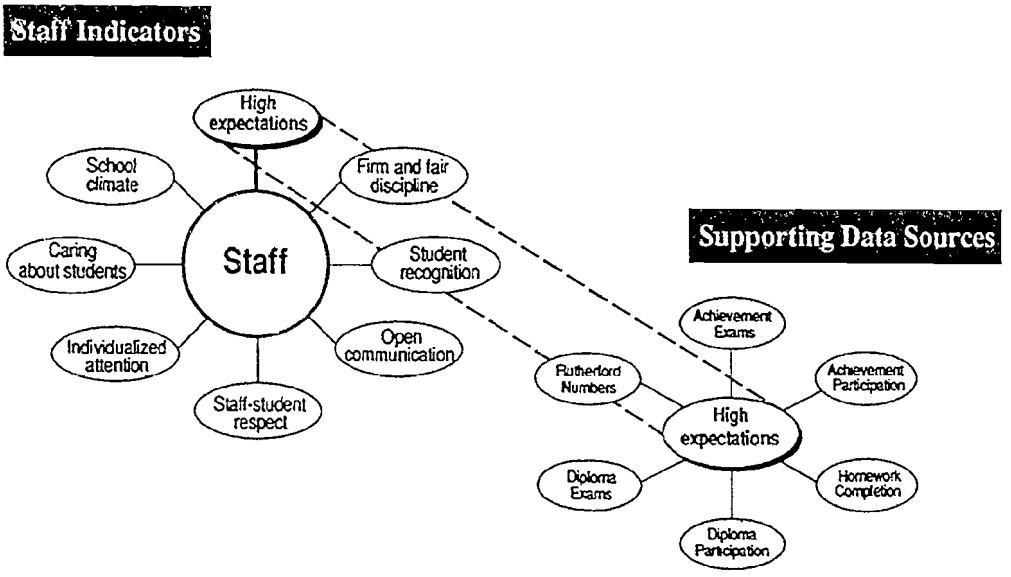

Figure 3: Staff Indicators and Supporting Data Sources

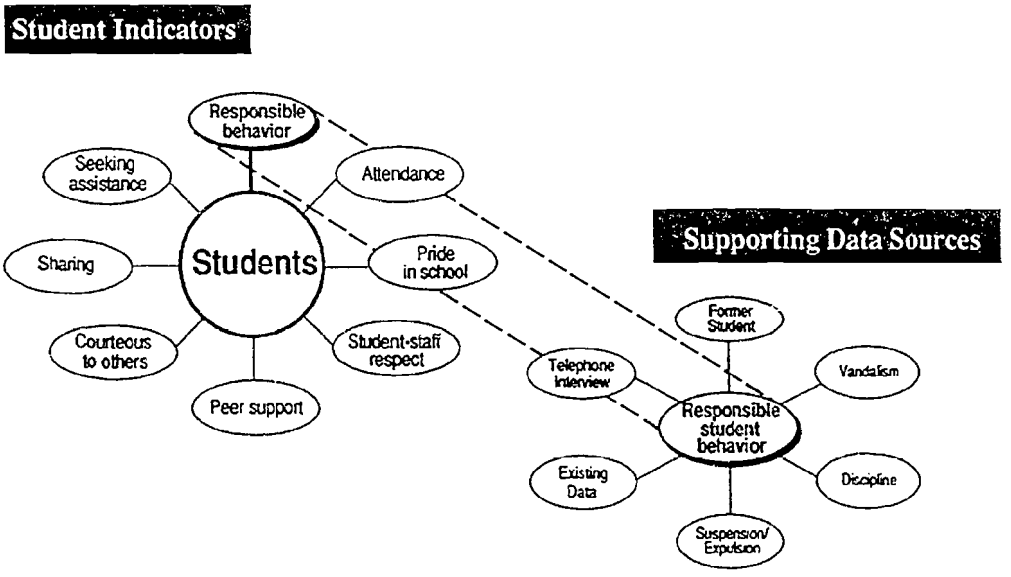

Figure 4: Student Indicators and Supporting Data Sources

Of the respondents:

- 17% indicated receiving an advanced high school diploma with excellence,
- 42% indicated receiving an advanced diploma,
- 35% indicated receiving a general diploma, while
- 5% indicated choosing not to complete high school.

Results indicated that students agreed most that: they learned to solve their own problems; teachers were willing to give students individual help outside of class time; the school(s) maintained a satisfactory appearance; students were expected to behave in an acceptable manner; students knew what was expected of them in school; and there was general satisfaction with the school(s), their teachers and the education received from the Brooks School District. Students disagreed the most with the following: student respect for the property of others; other students' ability to understand their problems; students receiving satisfactory recognition for responsible behavior (e.g., telling the truth, keeping notebooks and locker clean, playing well with others, etc.); the emphasis placed on the social development of students; the help to students to make the transition out of grade 12; the school's guidance and counseling services were satisfactory; the job of helping students understand their moral and ethical responsibilities; recognition for extracurricular accomplishments, and additional time being spent on homework and home study per school night. Table 3 presents the results.

It could be generalized from the above statements that proper attention is being paid to academic success in that agreement was expressed on students' learning to solve their own problems, and that there are firm behavioral expectations in that there was agreement expressed regarding expecting students to behave in an acceptable manner. However, the teachers in the Brooks School District need to pay further attention to the development of character (in terms of developing respect, tolerance, recognition and guidance). Further information can be found in Appendix B.

It was recommended that future use of the *Former Student Survey* be limited to students who have graduated only one year previously.

Telephone Interviews – Former students were interviewed in order to determine their perceptions of student behavior within the Brooks School District.

Of the 7 student interviews:

- Two students questioned School Board policies on attendance and required student behavior.
- Two students felt that the policies had an effect on student behavior.
- All the students felt that policies had an effect on all students.
- Many felt that the home had a stronger influence than school district policies.

Parents supported the school policies in all Rutherford student cases, and one expelled student case. Five of the students were planning on attending college/university and two respondents were working. Details from the data collection can be found in Appendix B.

It was recommended that confidentiality be assured through careful screening of findings for identifying information.

Table 3

1991 Former Student Survey (N=175) (%)

Question	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
Highest Agreement					
Learning to solve their own problems	2	2	4	62	29
Teachers willing to give students individual help outside of class time	4	6	8	52	29
Schools maintaining a satisfactory appearance	0	2	1	68	28
Expecting students to behave in an acceptable manner	0	0	3	78	18
Students knowing what was expected of them in school	2	1	10	76	10
Lowest Agreement					
Respect for property of others	2	11	30	53	3
Other students ability to understand my problems	13	10	24	48	3
Students receiving satisfactory recognition for socially responsible behavior	6	11	32	44	5
Emphasis placed on the social development of students	5	5	34	51	5
Help to students to make the transition out of grade 12	4	19	32	39	6
Schools' guidance and counselling service	11	18	21	41	8
The job of helping students understand their moral and ethical responsibilities	7	5	33	47	7
Additional time being spent on homework and home study per school night	9	9	32	38	11
Our community was actively involved in all aspects of school operations	12	9	29	43	6

* N/A = Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Table 4

Summary of Telephone Interviews with Former Students

Questions	Student #1	Student #2	Student #3	Student #4
1. Student history	dropout (twice)	detentions good attendance bad attitude	rebellious bad attendance	no problem
2. Reaction to policies	don't treat like adults	not too strict not too lenient	students weren't all treated the same	they were fair
3. Effect of policies	–	family upbringing had more impact	no effect	effective
4. Effect on friends	friends jealous	some needed rules those from broken families rebelled	no effect	they followed rules
5. Effect on students	–	same	good majority	policies were enforced – some students didn't follow rules
6. Parents' reaction	happy about dropout	happy with policies – support school	don't know	supported policies

Questions	Student #5	Student #6	Student #7
1. Student history	disciplined regularly dropout	no problems	visited vice principal in junior high
2. Reaction to policies	it got stricter in the high school	should have been more strict - need a more cooperative approach	adequate
3. Effect of policies	no effect	wants to be a teacher	incentive not to get out of line
4. Effect on friends	good for some friends	same	home had already established a firm set of values
5. Effect on students	positive effect – school(s) had good control	reinforced by family life	some students will test boundaries
6. Parents' reaction	satisfactory policies	thinks policies are excellent	values were the same as those of the school district

Student Behavior

Responsible student behavior was an identified indicator, and counselling/discipline, students expulsions, homework and vandalism were identified measures which would show how well we were doing.

Counselling/Discipline – In total 103 students were dealt with during a two-week period: 36 attendance, 14 safety, 13 work habits, 18 attitude, 14 fighting, 3 profanity, 4 smoking and 1 drinking related problem. Action was taken in 100 cases: 28 follow-up (included detention, contract, loss of privileges, work packages and in school suspension), 47 parent contacts, 5 agency contacts, 18 school district contacts (including suspensions) and 2 School Board contacts (including expulsions). Thirty-three cases were elementary and 64 secondary students (6 were unidentified as they were from a school which incorporates elementary and secondary students). Further information from the data collection can be found in Appendix C. Table 5 summarizes the findings according to elementary and secondary levels.

It was recommended that consistent data collection be addressed in order to be able to more accurately chart the district. It was also recommended that the data cases be linked back to the original student indicators to show the links between the measures and the indicators.

Student Expulsions – Controversy over student expulsions led to an examination of how many students had actually been expelled over the past four years. The Quality Indicators Director researched the School Board Meeting Minutes to obtain the information presented in Table 6. The number of students expelled by the Brooks School District has diminished slightly over the past four years.

Homework – In the fall of 1990, students from grades 4 to 12 were surveyed over a two-week period to determine the amount of homework completed. Homework completion rates for the five participating schools varied from 78.4% to 91.1%. Table 7 presents the results. The overall Brooks School District homework completion rate was 84.9%.

It was recommended that since completion may be tied to achievement level, complexity of assignment, and time available in class, it might make sense to insert a standard "homework indicator" into a school term. Teachers could develop a grade appropriate math or language task and ask all teachers to assign it for homework on a particular day. Care would need to be taken to ensure that the students saw this as a typical or regular piece of homework. The results would then provide a typical indication of achievement in a nonschool setting, and whether or not the homework was completed would be an indication of the homework attitude. These results could be compared to the current values.

Vandalism – There was no vandalism as per the agreed upon definition, recorded from September 1990 to December 1990. This was the time period specified for data collection.

Table 5
Summary of Student Counselling/Discipline
Elementary/Secondary, 1990

	Elementary	Secondary	Total District*
1. Nature of Problem			
Attendance (lates, truancy)	4	32	36
Safety (picking on younger children, snowballs, etc.)	11	3	14
Work habits (misbehavior in class)	2	9	13
Attitude (spitting, obscene gestures, behavior)	8	8	18
Fighting	7	5	14
Profanity	1	2	3
Smoking	0	4	4
Drinking	0	1	1
TOTALS	**33**	**64**	**103**
2. Action Taken**			
Follow-up (detention, contract, loss of privileges, work package, in -school suspension, etc)	15	10	28
Parent Contact (phone, letter)	10	34	47
Agency Contact (Social Services, Mental Health, etc.)	4	1	5
Central Office Contact (suspension/expulsion)	1	17	18
School Board Contact	0	2	2
TOTALS	**30**	**64**	**100**

* Six cases were not identifiable as either secondary or elementary students.
** All action taken included counselling.

Table 6

Summary of Student Expulsions

Year	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4	Total**	Percent***
1986/87	12(m*), 9(f*)	2(m), 1(f)	2(m)	n/a	26	26/2297 =1%
1987/88	7(m), 7(f)	1(m), 3(f)	1(f)	1(m)	20	20/2276 =<1%
1988/89	10(m), 4(f)	3(m), 2(f)	n/a	n/a	19	19/2227 =<1%
1989/90	10(m)	5(m), 3(f)	n/a	n/a	18	18/2237 =<1%

* m = male, f = female
** Four out of six schools had students expelled during the time period studied. Two schools had no expulsions.
*** Total students in district that year.

Table 7

Percent Homework Completion, 1990

School	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-9	Grades 10 - 12
A	87.3		
B	84.6		
C	92.7	89.6	
D		78.4	
E			83.2

Student Achievement

Measures for student achievement include the achievement, diploma and Rutherford scholarship. Findings for student achievement as a measure of the indicator high expectations follow.

Provincial achievement test results in grade 3 language arts, grade 6 social studies and grade 9 science and diploma exam results in grade 12 for 1989-90 were examined, as well as, participation rates and Rutherford scholarships. More detailed information regarding achievement results can be found in Appendix D.

Table 8 presents achievement and participation. The Brooks School District compares favorably with the rest of the province on the provincial achievement exams.

It was recommended that teacher judgements combined with the teacher marks could be used to develop an expectancy level for each student. The provincial achievement results could then be used to determine the accuracy of teacher perceptions regarding student achievement.

Rutherford Scholarship

The number of 1989-90 grade 12 students receiving a portion or total scholarship was 27; 15 students received the total scholarship for all three years. This scholarship is awarded to students who achieve an average of 80% or higher on designated subjects in grades 10, 11 and 12 and who pursue post-secondary education. The maximum value is $1500.

Table 8

Percentage of Students Achieving Acceptable Standards and Participating in the Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams, 1990

Grade	Test	Acceptable Achievement		Participation	
		District	Province	District	Province
Grade 3	Math	97.7	91.8	94.0	88.3
Grade 6	Science	85.6	82.5	94.4	86.6
Grade 9	Language Arts	82.9	82.9	80.7	90.7
Grade 12	English 30	95.0	95.0	64.2	57.3
	English 33	95.3	92.1	26.6	21.5
	Social Studies 30	92.6	89.7	61.7	48.0
	Mathematics 30	83.5	84.7	54.5	47.9
	Biology 30	96.9	86.5	62.3	47.1
	Chemistry 30	91.8	87.4	47.4	37.3
	Physics 30	84.1	89.9	28.6	19.9

Note. Grade 12 diploma results (final blended mark) are from January and June 1990. Grade 12 participation rates are based on the total number of students writing in January and June 1990, divided by the September 30, 1989 enrollment.
Source: Alberta Education

Stage Three

Community Perceptions

The information collected during stage two of the project led to a greater understanding of where the district stands in terms of student perceptions of responsible student behavior. It was strongly felt during planning sessions that the district has a joint responsibility with the community to develop responsible student behavior. This led to the initiation of contact with the community to determine its perceptions of "what exists" and our goal for stage three. A series of meetings was organized which would develop a set of belief statements. The process was field-tested with a group of School Advisory members from each of the schools. A survey was then developed to identify the perceptions of the community regarding responsible student behavior. This survey was the Community Character Profile.

Community Character Profile – Table 9 presents the community's perceptions of what was most like our community and most unlike our community. The results for all questions are presented in Appendix E.

Table 9

Community Character Profile Results, 1992

Most LIKE our community
Alcohol use among adults in our community is a problem.
Alcohol use among young people in our community is a problem.
Young people in our community are given too much freedom by their parents.
In our community, schools take responsibility for child development.
In our community, the need for an education is respected and supported.
We do a good job of keeping our community clean, neat and inviting.
*Most UNLIKE our community**
People in our community do not tolerate profanity and vulgarity in public places.
In our community, behavioral expectations for children are consistent.
People in our community get involved when they see unacceptable behavior/conduct in public places.
In our community, the level of sexual activity among young people is very low.
In our community, there is very little vandalism and damage to the property of others.
Children show adults respect in our community.

* These statements were used to develop a set of community beliefs.

Community Belief Statements

Character is the ability to identify the elements of a circumstance or situation, to determine one's most constructive role in it, to carry out that role directly, to sustain it as long as necessary, and to learn from the consequences of one's actions.

Within the context of our community which has good people of all ages, we are committed to attaining an even higher standard of behavior through action consistent with the following. We believe that:

1. Good character is respecting yourself and others. No one has the right to take (without consent), harm or destroy another person's physical or mental well-being. No one has the right to devalue the character of another.

2. No one has the right to take (without consent), harm or destroy another person's property.

3. The difference between rights, responsibilities, and privileges must be recognized.

4. The home must provide the foundation for the development of character.

5. Rules/laws need to be fairly and consistently applied.

6. Respect is a mutual endeavor especially between adult and child.

7. People must have and show respect for rules and laws in the community and for those who have responsibility for enforcing them.

8. The best way to teach character is to be a good role model.

9. Positive self-development evolves from achieving a sense of purpose, from having a positive self-concept, and from being accepted.

10. Community contributions are made by those who wish to institute improvement.

11. Young people need and want age-appropriate limits and expectations on their freedom and activities.

12. An individual is accountable for personal actions and must live with the consequences.

13. Appropriate language and manners are expected in public places.

14. Restricting the use of alcohol and drugs to responsible use is necessary, desirable and achievable.

15. Social activities of young people must be effectively monitored by a responsible adult.

16. Offensive behavior will not be tolerated and those responding appropriately deserve the support of the community.

Figure 5: Brooks Community Belief Statements

Chapter Summary

The findings for the Brooks EQI Project served to determine a set of indicators. With this as an objective, district perceptions were gathered from administrators, teachers, staff and trustees. These formed the basis for the initial set of indicators which include: responsible behavior, attendance, pride in school, student-staff self respect, peer support, courteous to others, sharing, and seeking assistance. The staff indicators were: high expectations, firm and fair discipline, student recognition, open communication, student-staff respect, individualized attention, caring about students and school climate. From this set of 16 indicators, it was decided to concentrate on *responsible behavior* from the student set and *high expectation* from the staff set.

Student perceptions were established in order to measure and set a standard for the Brooks School District. A *Former Student Survey* and telephone interviews were completed. Measures of student behavior were substantiated through information on counselling/ discipline activities, an overview of student expulsions over the past four years, homework completion and vandalism.

Student achievement measures were the provincial achievement test results, and diploma exams results, and Rutherford scholarship recipients.

During the last year, the community was asked its perceptions about responsible student behavior. The results of the survey were used to develop a set of belief statements.

Chapter 5

Summary and Discussion

The purpose of the Brooks EQI Project was to study student behavior and academic achievement. We identified a set of quality indicators of responsible student behavior in the schools. The community was involved in promoting mutually supportive efforts in maintaining and improving student behavior. As an outcome of our project, we developed a set of measures and a set of community beliefs regarding the behavior of our youth.

Context

The Brooks School District is located in the town of Brooks which has a population of 9,500. The town is surrounded by 257,000 acres of irrigated farmland and over a million acres of rangeland used for livestock grazing. The lands surrounding Brooks support an active oil industry.

The district's six schools are located within an eight-block radius in the town of Brooks in southeastern Alberta. The community is stable and there is much pride in the school district. In September 1992, there were 2,372 students, 127 teachers and 46 support staff.

Purposes

The purposes of the Educational Quality Indicators (EQI) Project in the Brooks School District were:

1. to study the validity of the premise: quality education in Brooks is perceived to be the result of the "right" blend of attention to academic success and attention to development of "character" within the framework of a firm, but supportive set of behavioral expectations and policies; and

2. as an outcome of addressing the premise we expect to define a valid set of quality indicators.

The expected long-term results are:

- higher satisfaction and confidence among students, graduates, and employees with respect to the educational product as measured by staff questionnaires, administrator interviews, student homework completion rate, vandalism rate, discipline rate, former student survey, and telephone interviews;

- a higher than normal percentage of counseling/discipline related cases (for example, our denial of student privileges, suspension and expulsion rates may be higher due to our firm stand on acceptable behavior);

- a lower dropout rate;

- maintenance of high academic achievement test results, diploma exam results, participation rates and Rutherford Scholarships;
- wider acceptance of the quality indicators developed by stakeholders in Brooks.

The literature suggests that the result of the "right" blend of attention to academic success and development of "character" depends on the student and circumstance. The values taught at school as well as in the home are important. It is clear that both ingredients must exist in order for quality education to occur. The Brooks EQI Project concentrated on desirable student behavior and outcomes on a school district basis.

Design

The Brooks EQI Project spanned three years. The first stage of the project, 1989-1990, identified a set of quality indicators. Interviews were conducted with administrators and trustees, and teachers provided their perceptions in writing; these formed the basis for a questionnaire that was completed by the school district personnel. Information from these sources was used to identify the quality indicators.

The second stage of the project, 1990-1991, involved collecting data in the following areas: a survey by former students; information on counselling/discipline; homework completion rates; interviews on a very small sample of former students who had been expelled or received a Rutherford Scholarship. Data were subsequently collected on school vandalism. Achievement test results were analyzed for students in grades 3, 6, 9 and diploma exam results for grade 12. An action plan was devised with administrators to address the information collected.

The third stage of the project, 1991-1992, implemented the action plan. The community was involved in completing a profile, and in developing a set of beliefs and a tentative action plan to follow up on perceived needs.

Responsible Student Behavior

One indicator of a good school district is high expectations of student behavior. The Brooks School District chose to study outcomes of student behavior in terms of homework completion, and lack of vandalism. We also collected student opinion on standards of conduct in our schools. Administrators who actively counsel students and a supportive school board collaborate to promote positive student behavior.

Indicators of responsible student behavior included high expectations, mutual respect and recognition, pride in self, others, home, school and community, courteous, supportive caring and sharing attributes, and mutual trust and open communication.

The following model illustrates the indicators of responsible student behavior in the community.

Figure 6: EQI Model of Indicators of Responsible Student Behavior

- *High expectations* – The staff and trustees of the Brooks School District believe that adults must have high expectations of student behavior. Students must internalize the expectations and in turn demonstrate self-discipline. In order to promote self-discipline, adults must consistently help children to see themselves acting responsibly rather than constantly having to enforce positive behaviors. All Brooks staff and trustees demonstrate a commitment to developing responsible behavior.

- *Mutual respect and recognition* – Encouragement to celebrate positive and responsible behavior is provided through counseling and coaching. Respect for the rights of others and a sense of tolerance and understanding are promoted. Adults, especially teachers, model mutual respect and recognition.

- *Pride in self, others, home, school and community* – The personal appearance of staff and students as well as the physical appearance of school buildings show a sense of pride. The teachers actively teach pride through, for example, the care of desks. Pride is encouraged through the celebration of student accomplishments, such as honor roll recognition, scholarships, and so forth.

- *Courteous, supportive, caring and sharing attributes* – Visitors comment on the friendliness and courtesy shown to them by students. Cooperative learning encourages responsible student behavior in the classroom. Integration of special needs students is encouraged.

- *Mutual trust and open communication* – Students take appropriate risks and speak their mind, joke with adults, question policies, and so forth. Schools trust students to live up to expectations. Trust and open communication are modeled by teachers and administrators. There is a positive climate within the Brooks School District.

Findings

In the first year of the project, data collection included staff perceptions, a district questionnaire, and interviews with administrators. This resulted in a model of responsible student behavior. During the second year, data collection expanded to include the following areas: homework completion, vandalism, counseling/ discipline, former student survey, telephone interviews, achievement test and diploma exam results, participation rates and Rutherford Scholarships. They measure the indicators of responsible student behavior and high expectations. The results follow.

1. *Former Student Survey* – In 1991, former students were sent a 40-item questionnaire asking their opinions about their schooling in the Brooks School District. The questions were organized into 12 categories: student behavior, discipline/ attendance, homework, school cleanliness, satisfaction, student problems, extracurricular activities, teacher/administrator, fairness/recognition, individual attention, parent involvement, and school involvement. Using a 4-point scale, respondents were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement with the statements. The *Former Student Survey* was sent to 749 former students; 175 (23%) responded. Almost half (49%) of the respondents had spent their entire educational career in Brooks, while 25% had spent high school only. The students who indicated post-secondary school plans included: a majority (71%) planned to attend technical school, college or university, 23% planned to work, 2% planned to attend another high school and 1% planned to return to Brooks Composite High School to graduate. Respondents reported that 17% received an advanced diploma with excellence, 42% received an advanced diploma, 35% received a general diploma, while 5% indicated choosing not to complete high school.

   Results indicated that students agreed most that: they learned to solve their own problems; teachers were willing to give students individual help outside of class time; the school(s) maintained a satisfactory appearance; students were expected to behave in an acceptable manner; students knew what was expected of them in school; and there was general satisfaction with the school(s), their teachers and the education received from the Brooks School District. Students disagreed the most with the following: student respect for the property of others; other students' ability to understand their problems; students receiving satisfactory recognition for responsible behavior (e.g., telling the truth, keeping notebooks and locker clean, playing well with others, etc.); the emphasis placed on the social development of students; the help to students to make the transition out of grade 12; the school's guidance and counseling services were satisfactory; the job of helping students understand their moral and ethical responsibilities; recognition for extracurricular accomplishments, and additional time being spent on homework and home study per school night.

2. *Student Interviews* – Telephone interviews were conducted with students who had left school at least three years ago. Students chosen for interviews were either Rutherford Scholarship students or students who had been expelled. The purpose of the interview was to determine former students' perceptions about student behavior within the Brooks schools. Thirty phone calls were attempted to expelled students. Many of the students had changed residences, weren't available or didn't call back as requested. Three requests were refused and three interviews were completed. Thirteen calls were attempted to scholarship recipients. Many of these students were at university. Zero requests were refused and four interviews were completed.

Of the seven interviews, two students questioned school board policies on attendance and required student behavior. Two students felt that the policies had an effect on student behavior. All the students felt that policies had some effect on all students. Many felt that the home had a stronger influence than school district policies. Students indicated that parents supported the school policies in all Rutherford student cases, and one expelled student case. Five of the students were planning on attending college or university and two respondents were working.

3. *Counselling/Discipline* – In the fall of 1990, administrators collected information regarding counselling/discipline in the Brooks School District. The objective was to attempt to determine the number of students disciplined by an administrator, and the effect of the discipline action. Discipline was defined as any administrator contact with students at teacher request. The schools each chose a two-week period in which to collect the nature of the problem, action taken, time involved, and if possible, results of the action.

   In total 103 students were dealt with during the two-week period: 36 cases related to attendance, 14 to safety, 13 work habits, 18 attitude, 14 fighting, 3 profanity, 4 smoking and 1 drinking related problem. Action was taken in 100 cases: 28 follow-up (included detention, student contract, loss of privileges, work packages and in-school suspension), 47 parent contacts, 5 agency contacts, 18 school district contacts (including suspensions) and 2 school board contacts (including expulsions). Thirty-three cases were elementary and 64 were secondary students (6 were unidentified as they were from a school having both elementary and secondary students).

4. *Homework Completion* – In the fall of 1990, students from grades 4 to 12 were surveyed to determine the amount of homework completed in the Brooks School District on a *Homework Completion Rate* form. The data were collected by teachers over a two-week period. Homework was defined as "any student work (other than studying or reading) that requires time to complete at home". The rate of return by the elementary teachers was 100%, the overall rate of return was 70.6%. Teachers of subject areas without homework such as band and industrial arts were not involved in the task. Homework completion rates for the five participating schools varied from 78.4% to 91.1%. The overall Brooks School District homework completion rate was 84.9%.

5. *Vandalism* – Vandalism rates were collected from September 1990 to December 1990. Vandalism was defined as any action which results in maintenance being involved in cleanup/repair, for example, broken window, graffiti, etc. There was no vandalism recorded during that four-month period.

6. *Achievement* – Provincial achievement test results in grades 3, 6 and 9 and diploma exam results in grade 12 for 1989-90 were reviewed. Table 8 presented the results.

7. *Participation* – Table 8 also presented the percentage of students who wrote provincial achievement tests and diploma exams. Brooks' participation in these tests was higher than overall provincial participation in all subjects tested except grade 9 language arts.

8. *Rutherford Scholarship* – The total number of 1989-90 grade 12 students receiving a portion or total scholarship was 27; 15 student received the total scholarship for all three years.

Implementation

Administrators considered what might best be done about the information collected, related literature and personal perceptions, and what plans could be made to improve the district. Important outcomes for administrators were: increased awareness of "what exists" in Brooks; a vision of expected student behaviors in the Brooks School District; ideas, issues and problems which administrators face on a day-to-day basis, that is, what are the obstacles or impediments to attaining the goal regarding student behavior; new ideas about how student discipline could be handled, on a school-wide discipline basis, and an action plan.

The action plan included involving the community in establishing reasonable expectations of children of different ages with respect to conduct and values at home and at school. A series of meetings was organized in 1992 in order to collect information and establish standards to involve others in the identification of what constitutes good behavior and what steps might be taken to promote good behavior.

The purpose for the Character in our Community meetings was to review and reestablish a shared vision among schools, homes and community with respect to developing prosocial attitudes and behaviors among our youth. Our goal was to jointly develop a set of beliefs for our community.

The process for involving the community included setting up a Steering Committee consisting of the superintendent, three school administrators, and the quality indicators director. This committee clarified the purpose of the meetings and fine-tuned the process. It was agreed that a series of three meetings with the community would help assess the support and interest that exist regarding the promotion of prosocial skills in our youth. It was also agreed that there would be a field-test meeting with identified School Advisory Council participants to first validate the process to be used.

The meetings with the community established a set of beliefs as well as a set of statements of personal commitment. These formed the basis for potential community use, and reaffirmed the support for school district efforts in terms of promoting prosocial skills. These belief statements are presented in Figure 5.

Conclusions

In our efforts to determine whether we have the "right" blend of attention to academic success and attention to the development of "character" a baseline of information was established for the Brooks School District. It included how the staff and administrators viewed the district, how much student homework was completed, the amount of vandalism and discipline that occurred, how the former students viewed the district and achievement rates.

Staff and administrators in the Brooks School District believe that students behave responsibly. This is shown in the indicators which were identified: mutual respect and recognition, pride in self, others, home, school and community, courteous, supportive caring and sharing attributes, mutual trust and open communication and high expectations. The indicators were measured through the *Former Student Survey*, homework completion, vandalism, counselling or discipline, and student achievement rates.

The 1991 *Former Student Survey* indicated that attention was paid to academic success, and that there were firm behavioral expectations. However, the respondents felt that the teachers in the Brooks School District need to pay further attention to the development of character (especially in terms of promoting respect, tolerance, recognition and guidance). The 1990 homework completion rate baseline for the district was 84.9%. There was no vandalism from September to December 1990. There were 103 cases of counseling for inappropriate student behavior and parental contact by administrators during a two-week collection period. Student achievement was relatively high on provincial exams in 1989-90.

Implications

The Brooks School District personnel were concerned that students behave in order for learning to occur. It is timely in that throughout Alberta and western Canada there is an increasing number of students with behavioral difficulties. The efforts made by our school district in the promotion and support for positive behavioral outcomes could be adapted in other school districts. It is important to remember that student behavior is first and foremost determined by the family, and it is therefore important to establish a school-family-community partnership.

One of the expected long-term outcomes of the Brooks project was higher satisfaction among students, graduates and employees. This will need to be monitored over time and compared to the original results. While a higher than normal percentage of discipline related cases was expected, this did not prove to be the case, but needs to be monitored over time. Dropout rates were not addressed during the project, as there was no agreement reached regarding a definition.

Maintenance of high academic achievement test and diploma exam results, participation rates and Rutherford Scholarships, and wider acceptance of the quality indicators developed by stakeholders in Brooks were expected long-term results. These also need to be monitored over time now that measures have been established.

Recommendations

The Brooks EQI Project has heightened awareness of the importance of the role of the community in promoting responsible behavior in our youth. The objective is to positively influence student behavior through collaborative community efforts. It is recommended that these efforts continue.

We wanted to know how good our school district is. To determine this, multiple indicators assisted us in establishing a baseline of information for future use in addressing improvement or decline. It is recommended that other interested school districts adopt a system of multiple indicators to assist in establishing the level of performance of the district which can be monitored over time.

It is recommended that other districts concerned with promoting positive student behavior adopt and modify measures to suit their school district. These might include: staff questionnaires, administrator interviews, student homework completion rates, vandalism rates, discipline rates, former student surveys and telephone interviews. It is also recommended that school districts form partnerships between their schools, parents and

communities. It is important for schools to have some representation (in an unofficial capacity) with the parents in order to work together in an effort to promote responsible student behavior.

For Alberta Education it is recommended that:

- the information from the Brooks Project be shared with interested school districts throughout the province;
- support be made available to provide for further collaboration and follow-up among projects with common interests; and
- further research projects be initiated by the province so that Alberta can maintain its place at the forefront of efforts to improve the quality of education.

Follow-up

The Character in our Community (CIC) formed a follow-up committee under the auspices of two school administrators. The purpose of this committee was to promote acceptable young people's behavior, throughout the community. The School Advisory Councils (SAC) in each school have a representative on the committee. It will be their responsibility to communicate committee initiatives to their school SAC.

Action research is very challenging. The process in which members of the district became involved was one of the most important outcomes of the project. It was an opportunity to reflect and study an area of interest to participating educators and particularly administrators. Staff and administrators in the Brooks School District believe that students behave responsibly. This was shown in the indicators which were identified: mutual respect and recognition, pride in self and others, home, school and community, courteous, supportive caring and sharing attributes, mutual trust and open communication and high expectation.

Our original premise was that we have quality education in Brooks as a result of the right blend of attention to success and development of character within the framework of a firm but supportive set of behavioral expectations and policies. Stakeholders agreed on the indicators of responsible student behavior. In determining whether we have quality education in Brooks, we collected data from a variety of sources. It would be recommended that initial agreement is essential as to exactly which sources would constitute the identification of quality education.

At this time, we have baseline information in a number of areas, however, what we have yet to accomplish, is to identify how the information we have collected relates to the indicators. For example, how does the amount of homework completed relate to the indicator responsible student behavior? It is recommended that further research be carried out in this area. Other research recommendations include: the homework completion rate which was relatively simple to collect. This collection should be continued. The quality of the homework should be assessed as well as the rate of completion. Vandalism could be broadened to include more minor types of vandalism within the schools. For example, there may be stakeholder interest in collecting information on broken windows; the counselling/discipline rate be collected intermittently over a period of time rather than for a designated two-week period. It is also important that the personnel documenting the information standardize the format among the schools. The administrators should field-test the instrument and assess the information to check for standardization; the *Former Student*

Survey should be sent to a random sample of students rather than all of the students, and a revised format should be sent to only those who have graduated within the past year; the student interviews should be conducted by a person from outside the district; and it was important to take an overview of our student achievement test and diploma exam averages for the district as well as the participation rates and Rutherford scholarships.

The community meetings were the most important aspect of the EQI project in that they gave all Brooks administrators the opportunity to interact with our community in order to share beliefs and discuss our present concerns regarding responsible student behavior.

Concluding Statements

Our original premise was that students need to behave in order to learn. We found that students, families and the community have the same belief. The information collected indicates how successful we were in terms of our combined efforts. The Brooks EQI Project sought to establish whether or not the "right" blend of attention to academic success and "character" within the framework of a firm but supportive set of behavior expectations and policies was implemented. To this end, we reviewed the present policies as well as collected information from parents, students, and teachers on responsible student behavior and academic success. The collection process has heightened the awareness of staff and community regarding student behavior. The belief has been, and still is, that we have a good school district which promotes positive student behavior. The Brooks School District has identified a set of indicators to model this belief and a set of measures to show how well we are doing.

The Brooks EQI Project was valuable to the district in that the process was useful in providing the staff and administrators with the opportunity for introspection. The interviews with administrators and trustees were highly successful, and highly recommended, as were the perceptions requested from the teachers. Information gathering in the first stage for the identification of an indicators model would be easily transferable to any school district.

The indicators which were identified were used to develop supporting data sources. Those recommended for use by other school districts include the *Former Student Survey*, the homework completion rate and the counselling/discipline rate. Data for the discipline rate should be collected intermittently over two weeks rather than for a two-week stretch. It is also recommended that telephone interviews be handled by a person outside the district. The vandalism data would be easy to keep over time. Provincial achievement results are also easy to monitor over time to establish how students are progressing in the district.

The project also provided the administrators with the opportunity to interact with the community and discuss what each considered important regarding responsible student behavior. This was the most important outcome for the district. The administrators were given a clear mandate by the community in their efforts to promote responsible student behavior. The process reaffirmed that we are in tune with our community in our beliefs, and there is congruence between the school and the community.

There is a strong interest in promoting a positive community attitude in developing responsible student behavior. The school district will direct its efforts to monitoring positive behavior, and will continue to heighten awareness of the staff and community as it applies to positive student outcomes. It is important that any school district be committed to involving the community in efforts to promote responsible student behavior since much time and energy are involved.

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Appendix A

District Perceptions

Administrator Interviews

Questions asked included administrator beliefs regarding student: behavior, discipline, self esteem, recognition, activities and attendance.

Discipline/Counselling

- Student discipline is allotted a separate section in a School Board philosophy in the policy handbook which otherwise addresses groups of people e.g. trustees, administration, teachers, etc.

- The School Board is very supportive in the area of discipline and has a firm or pragmatic attitude towards discipline, according to the superintendent.

- The School Board, as a whole Board, acts in the capacity of Student Discipline Committee. In this capacity, they take responsibility for all student expulsions more than five days. They also review with administrators all student suspensions.

- The superintendent believes that students must develop self-control so learning can occur. He believes in firm and fair philosophy towards discipline, and that every attempt should be made to work towards improvement and compliance - not hesitation to move to extreme forms of discipline. The schools should have a caring, secure environment.

- The superintendent has as his vision - the need for firm guidelines and expectations on behavior. Achieving these ends is most effective through self-discipline. Group dynamics and varying home backgrounds necessitate school enforcement and sanctions.

Beliefs

School-based administrators believe in:

- attempting to praise or recognize the students who do follow the rules of safety, and respect

- making the school a happy and safe environment and some form of direction for staff and students to follow. The positive climate in the school is already at a very high level. The objective is to build upon this strength in order to encourage students to assume responsibilities for their own behavior.

- high expectations of students in regards to both behavior and performance. We as adults, have to constantly remind students of our expectations.

- improving student behavior and attitudes in our school.

- addressing problems as they occur - e.g. setting an expectation of behavior - for example - boys giggling - staff approaches behavior in the same way (i.e. work together towards the same goal)

- kids need to know what the rules are - try to enforce good behavior - with a view to improving the situation - e.g. students must make an effort to change i.e. being late

  - try to deal with what students have done. The parent is involved after a short-term suspension - or before a long-term suspension

- expectations are set and consequences are meted out, e.g., swearing at a girl - sent a letter of apology from the team.

- firm and fair - student advocate - upon referral to the office, final decision will lie with the office, - supports teachers, especially with parents - teachers get emotionally involved. Uses corporal punishment sparingly.

Awards

- strive for healthy self-concept - work closely with community - also self-concept awards - model for kids - know strengths and weaknesses - i.e. do the best you can with what you have - school spirit - pride in being from the school, student of the day, student of the month, awards assemblies, multiple categories - announcements, student council, students accept ownership for building and appearance, support student initiative - students must do the work - e.g. gathering place in amphitheater - field trips - supported within reason - should be curriculum related.

- stress on experiencing success in order to develop a positive self-esteem.

- stress on developing a positive family attitude in the school, as well as developing awareness of self-esteem of students (by teachers). Recognition of children, parents, and staff is essential.

- awards - are positive recognition to <u>all</u> students - also have positive recognition during the school year - rewards and awards are a big part of the school - wanting to do better at school - working together, e.g., if there is paper on the floor, a student will pick it up. "Kids That Care" is a program of recognition for positive behavior.

Extracurricular

- intent is to offer students opportunity for different experiences - successes - belonging - teachers associate with other students which makes supervision easier for teacher - sense of accomplishment - variety in activities: athletic and crafts i.e. sports and non sports - develops the affective domain - also have Author's Day, Halloween Dance, walk to Kokomo Beach, cooperative learning, students coming back (consider school <u>"home"</u>) - security, happiness, good feelings - Grade 6 students are responsible in the school by 1) Grades 1-3 walk, 2) milk program, 3) assisting with house leagues, 4) moving furniture 5) library assistants, 6) peer tutoring, 7) litter patrol and 8) safety patrol

- wants to build up a school where kids want to come to school - through field trips, extracurricular activities and computers

- extracurricular - only affects some students - school isn't only academics - there are other things - students must feel good and enjoy school. - approx. 75-80% of students are involved - includes drama, art, students' union, etc.

- want students to have a good feeling about themselves.

- extracurricular - to provide an outlet for students - contribute to positive school climate - provides a way to get at potential to grow emotionally, and physically, e.g. boys' volleyball team - finished 2nd -must learn to deal with coming in 2nd emotionally - uniqueness - degree of concern with respect to what kids do outside the school - that is why it's considered important to be part of CRC and the number of staff members involved in FCSS, and Youth Project, lots of contact with corrections people, e.g., probation officer - keep in constant touch - government organization - Alberta Life and Drug Abuse - staff member attendance - what happens outside schools in kids lives is important - more effective as a school - high degree of staff involvement with community groups

Vandalism

- central-office administrators - there is an understood (unwritten) expectation that schools will not be vandalized.

- system-wide there is little vandalism due to emphasis and money spent in upgrading e.g., school staff get on top of any vandalism of books or facilities and make the student responsible - the School Board has an unwritten expectation that money will be recovered from students - building program - schools are well maintained - larger Maintenance Staff - still some problems getting around to all areas for maintenance, e.g., of benefit of the use of summer students painting program - school students take exception to classmates defacing "painted walls" is an indicator of pride in school - Joint agreement with Town - to share facilities with no charge to either party - an excellent and progressive idea

- school-based administrators - is directed at teachers - try to deal with any vandalism e.g., hole in dark room - efforts to make students responsible for misdemeanors.

- almost nonexistent, mostly outside visitors - gets dealt with when it does happen - student works off cost at school - they are often accidents.

Student Attendance

- central-office administrators - put children in contact with opportunities to learn and achieve the goals - aggressive attendance management sends out a message that it is important.

- school-based administrators - parent contact by principal

- slips on the classroom doors - 2 & 3rd late a letter goes home - 4th late - suspension for 2 days - will phone absentees sometimes - try to get majority - spend a lot of time on absenteeism (i.e., Vice-Principal) 40-50% of administration time per year

- affects time on task and affects student performance - don't encourage in-school drop-outs - attendance rate is over 95% generally - dropout rate in Brooks is approximately 7% - average in Calgary is 10%, and Alberta average is 30% - students have opportunities to change and are encouraged to stay in school.

Teacher Perceptions

Written information was requested from staff regarding student behavior/affective domains, and the quality indicators which they perceive to exist in the Brooks School District.

The 127 professional (teaching) staff of the Brooks School District were requested to provide written input, via the ATA EQI committee members in each school, regarding their perceptions of indicators of quality. This request was made at the February 1990 staff meeting in an effort to develop a set of quality indicators for the district. Written information from staff regarding student behavior/affective domains, and the quality indicators which they perceive to exist have been organized as follows:

Extracurricular comments: I am involved in extracurricular activities, knowing that this gives students a chance to relate to me in a different way, talk to students about their extracurricular activities, encourage extracurricular accomplishments individually, participate in out-of-school activities, coach basketball team, regular comments and questions on extracurricular interests, extracurricular participation, teacher involvement in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, extracurricular activities, enhance school spirit, encouraging extracurricular/co-curricular activities, sports programs: extracurricular programs, awards program, praise, pep rally, and sports programs (extracurricular)

Positive encouragement: positive strokes/try to turn negative to positive, encouragement/ patting on back, open myself for extra help where I can establish a positive one-to-one relationship with student, put the quality work on the board, write the positive comments on the tests and assignment etc., encourage individual efforts of the special education students, try to make positive versus negative comments - positive climate in the classroom, comment positively on all progress, positive reinforcement, continual positive reinforcement to encourage positive growth and behavior, comment positively on all progress, positive reinforcement, continual positive reinforcement to encourage positive growth and behavior, positive feedback, positive feedback, modelling, praise, not allowing put-downs, positive recognition of students and staff, and positive recognition of staff and students

Expectations: I try to make my expectations crystal clear, define expectations clearly, accepting responsibility for helping to maintain class environment, attitude of student toward each other and toward adults present in school, classroom management teaches the concept of acceptable behavior and standards that need to be approached, values and attitudes shared by staff, consistent, ongoing dialogue concerning students amongst staff (i.e., staff room, etc.), clear rules/expectations, school behavior and manners stressed by all teachers, insist on and get good behavior, and consistency of expectations with student behavior

Open communication: keep channels open for discussion in regards to the subject as well as personal, get to know students personally, I spend time outside of class with students who I know have problems outside the school, acknowledge students outside the classroom, talk to students about their extracurricular activities, attempt to communicate to students that I care about them as individuals and that I'm interested in their present and future success, talk with students about their problems, and talk to an relate

Teacher activities: go to student activities, instituted the pat-on-the-back "Hey you're fantastic" gram for the student population, prizes occasionally in class for certain assignments, spend time out of school, awards programs, displaying student work, announcements congratulating students, pictures of award winners in the local newspaper, and pep rallies

Respect: respect students as individuals, try to develop trust, respect and openness, create an atmosphere of mutual respect, treat students with respect, treat student politely and with respect, the children are happy with themselves, and respect for school property as "theirs"

Peer support: peer support leader and counsellor, ongoing involvement in peer support and student counselling, and peer support program

Individualized work: work one-to-one with students and parents, ensure that each individual is in fact as important as the next -don't allow put-downs, recognize the individuality of each student, and show an interest in individuals

Other general comments: use sense of humor, addition of humor to my class, stress manners and politeness at all times, treat them as people not just students, ask students for input, have a class motto and see that students live up to it, through formal surveys and observation, I seek to identify student strengths, stress that community is comprised of people who support one another by contributing in the area of their strength, encourage the development of their personal skills, arrange tasks so that each student can succeed at least some of the tasks, enthusiasm for subject and learning, promote student thinking, be flexible, show that you care, questionnaire on hobbies and interests, student handbook (101 rules on how not to behave), teacher conferences/upgrading, and letters from outside the school district re: behavior and attitude on field trips and sports trips

Staff Questionnaire

A professional development day for teachers was held on October 6, 1989. The teachers were asked to answer the question: "What qualities do our students exhibit which indicate that we are an effective school system?" The answers were organized and some common statements were compiled and used to create the following staff questionnaire.

Table 10

Percent Agreement on Staff Questionnaire, 1990

Questions	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
The students of the Brooks School District score above average on provincial achievement exams.	15	0	2	67	16
Students who move into our system from other areas tend to be behind/lower academically.	27	5	20	45	3
A high percentage of students get honors, e.g., honor roll, Rutherford scholarships, community scholarships, etc.	32	0	12	48	8
The students develop higher level thinking skills.	19	0	14	64	3
The students complete homework and assignments without "hassle".	16	8	39	37	1
The students learn through cooperative learning situations, process oriented math and science activities, and using research facilities	8	3	11	67	12
There is a strong Physical Education program within our school district.	2	1	6	61	30
There is a strong Fine Arts program within our school district.	5	5	26	52	12
The majority of a student's time spent in school is spent in the academic subjects.	2	3	9	77	9
There were few interruptions of academic learning.	7	6	27	58	3
Special Needs students are given priority through individual programs in our school district.	3	4	19	59	15
Students take risks within the classroom to explore the unknown.	12	4	26	55	3

* N/A=Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Questions	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
Students have a high level of organizational skills, communication skills, problem solving skills and decision-making skills.	18	2	29	47	4
Students are responsible for their own education.	4	7	45	41	3
Students feel good about school.	1	2	7	78	12
Students within our school system want to attend school.	1	2	4	85	8
Students have pride in their school work and their school.	5	1	8	78	8
Students respect teacher authority, respect fellow students, respect the law, and have self-respect.	1	3	16	77	3
Students speak positively about their school and their education.	4	1	13	75	7
There is a positive school climate.	3	1	7	70	20
Students show good citizenship, by showing a tolerance for others, being willing to participate in school activities, and being supportive of others, and cooperating with others.	1	3	10	79	7
Students are easily motivated to do better.	5	1	46	46	3
Students practice goal-setting.	17	4	53	26	0
Students develop a love for learning which is life-long.	24	4	34	38	1
Our school district has a low dropout rate.	42	0	3	50	5
Our school district has a low vandalism rate.	20	0	5	64	11
Our school district has a high student attendance rate.	24	0	6	64	7
There are many extra curricular activities for students.	6	1	7	44	43
There are few student discipline problems.	7	4	20	68	2
Playground supervision is easy because the children respect each other.	22	10	27	41	0

* N/A=Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Questions	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
Students smile and laugh at school, and are cooperative and happy.	3	1	2	81	13
Students share ideas, personal belongings, and ideas with others.	9	1	5	78	7
Students are, with the staff, involved in community based projects.	17	2	26	49	7
Student participation in extracurricular activities high.	10	2	13	57	18
Former students have good interpersonal skills in the workplace.	43	1	2	50	5
Students are willing to assimilate Special Needs students into their activities.	12	3	10	67	7
Students are courteous to adults within the school building.	2	1	10	81	6
Students request help when they need it.	3	1	11	79	6
There are few alcohol and drug problems in the school.	21	3	13	45	17
Parents are involved in the schools (e.g., participating in the School Advisory Council).	8	5	17	52	17
Community involvement is important to teachers.	8	1	13	62	17
There is collaborative decision making between teachers and administration.	4	2	13	64	17
There is good leadership in the school district.	7	7	8	67	10
Teachers are well educated, beyond a B.Ed.	17	1	10	59	13
Teachers have a low absenteeism rate.	15	2	7	59	17
There are many teachers involved in extracurricular programs.	10	0	10	49	31
Teachers have high expectations of students.	4	0	2	71	23
Teachers work one to one with students.	3	1	7	77	12
Teachers contact parents to promote communication.	6	0	3	72	19
Teachers care about students.	2	0	0	42	56

* N/A = Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Trustee Interviews

Two school trustees were interviewed person to person regarding satisfactions, disappointments, issues, effectiveness, community understanding, local control, student behavior and quality education. These interviews occurred in October 1990 following their retirement following long tenures as school trustees. It was generally agreed that the two had a strong impact on the school system, and they were highly regarded.

Trustee - Interview #1
10/10/90

Greatest satisfactions include:

- working on board and staff relationships, to improve the communication, and trust between the board and staff without going through channels, or red tape. In other words, there should be some flexibility in the bureaucratic model with regard to communication.

- establishing a fairly rigid set of standards for the school system, so the students know the parameters they can work within, and if parameters are exceeded, the board would back up the staff (in most cases) if the parameters were exceeded by the student. A quality school system is one where parameters are set down and staff and students know what the parameters are and the consequences of breaking the rules and regulations.

Disappointments:

- the attitude of some of the parents particularly in reference to discipline - in expecting the school or someone else to handle their problems - parents should be responsible for the actions of their children, and it should be up to them to set and enforce the guidelines, and not up to the school or the rest of the society.

Primary role of the School Board:

- to set policy - regarding the operation, financial matters (budget) and teaching

Controversial issues:

- sex education - when it was established - organized meetings with parents to explain the program and how it would be handled - people at the time had a different outlook - parents were generally satisfied - if parents know, then you have their support. School Advisory Councils - need proper guidelines which are hard and fast - otherwise parents can create all kinds of problems e.g. attack staff

- creationism - was handled by listening to both sides of the picture abortion - one teacher was pro life - church should be responsible - teacher should present both sides if it does come up - however, it shouldn't be taught in school.

Effectiveness of School Board:

- in comparing operations with other school jurisdictions - we're doing a good job - due to people on the board who were hard working, concerned with students and staff and not in for the glorification of being a politician.

Community understanding:

- the majority of people don't understand what the school board does - a small percent think the board is there to complain when they want something e.g. an elevator for a handicapped student - a small segment of the population is well informed on what the school board does, and how they operated - perhaps the board should make a bigger effort to publicize what they do - almost need a public relations person to promote the school district - this would be another expense.

Who ran the school district?

- a combination of the board and superintendent - the board has lots of input - a number of areas where the CEO needs latitude to run that position - the board can't make every decision - a two way street - necessary to have mutual trust.

Developing policy:

- tried various models and procedures to developing policy - all lacked something in one way or another - one of the better policy things - was on school district philosophy - each member wrote their philosophy and combined all the ideas - to do that for all policy is impractical - therefore administration develops policy as directed from the school board, and their guidelines.

Local control:

- remained the same - as funding for various aspects changed - so certain areas may change control e.g. block fund - province gave up some control e.g. block fund - province gave up some control only to change the parameters.

Student behavior:

- board set up discipline policy, and each school also set down their guidelines as to expectations, so everyone is on the same wave length.

Future:

- the teaching profession is in for a much tougher time - students, because of societal breakdown must deal with a large number of discipline problems - far too much is expected of the educational system - the church, parents and community are also responsible - need more of the 3 R's rather than "feeling good", or self esteem building.

Quality student behavior:

- there is quality in the Brooks School District in that it supplies the atmosphere and facility that would enable students to achieve to the utmost of their ability. Where they have respect for others and are respected by others so they can have a learning environment that isn't comprised by those who aren't there to learn. The overall environment or atmosphere is important. Good discipline, good staff, and good students.

Quality staff:

- generally have a hard-working dedicated staff which is necessary to quality system.

Trustee #2
11/10/90

Satisfactions:

- the development of the system with easy access for the staff and students - facilities are well kept, and that rubs off on the kids. It helps to prevent students from defacing property, by instilling pride in the facility.

- the good caliber of students - many have gone on to higher learning institutions - few dropouts - many students will return to complete their education so they can go to a higher level of learning

- one of the problems today is the broken home - children move from parent to parent. Morals have changed - today attitudes towards adults have changed e.g. the child spending quarters in the machine indiscriminately - are parents teaching restraining/ values? - where is the motivation to make something of the world around them? - children need to be entertained today - everything is given to children today - kids learn to expect "things" - attitude is important.

- no religious schools in the area has been a plus - there is no friction regarding religion.

Dissatisfactions:

- regulated dress for P.E. and the dress of some teacher - they should be role model for students.
- sports programs concentrate on winner who play several sports, and get the "gravy" in terms of funding and financial support.
- schools are bureaucracy builders, and competition builds between schools of set grade groups - board needed to work to get schools to work as a district.
- teachers were very involved in the community in the past - this should be continued.

Role of the Board:

- to provide the building, facilities and staff and control funds - need to continually change and look for new methods - board members need to have time and flexibility of working hours to be able to attend meetings - board members have been professional - because of more time and freedom to attend meetings - also more interest in education.
- discipline and morals of the system.

Board time:

- spent on financial and buildings took a lot of time - not that much time on curriculum - listened to the advice of administrators - also involved in finances.
- tried to get into the schools to check on cleanliness - policies on drug and alcohol abuse and student discipline.
- spent a lot of time on policy.

Controversial issues:

- tried to be fair to student/teacher even during difficult times, has been a very difficult task - set parameters are maintained

Effectiveness:

- few complaints - no one came to the annual meetings - even when they were organized with the town meetings
- some parents had the attitude of "fear" of reprisal if they complained about a teacher - this was never justified.
- re-elections occurred on the basis of performance on the board - board was always approachable.

Community understanding:

- understands the role of the school board as the warden of the dollar. Board gets blamed for a lot of things they don't do. Arguments over strike due to the inconvenience of families rather than the increase in cost to the taxpayer.

Leadership:

- the board ran the district in terms of finances - the superintendent made the day to day curriculum and decisions e.g., brought in the band program although it cost money - Brooks is isolated in terms of sports leagues - board held purse strings.
- effective and organized in developing policy - discussed and worked over policy - much policy developed by ASTA and also ATA, they were the most helpful organizations.

Control:

- provincial control forced home textbook purchases and delays in grants which affected local negotiations to settle a contract - unity is strength, and Southern Alberta School Authorities Association can help in setting a standard.
- argue as a board, but once an agreement is made, everyone needs to stick behind the decision.

Student Behavior:

- was generally followed up - students will challenge the system - - each new school has a different philosophy - not sure about too much parental interference in school related activities - most discipline problems on drugs and alcohol and truancy - what is causing truancy? is it the programs? - most kids want to go to school - industry should also carry some responsibility towards education.

Quality:

- a good student attitude for learning and higher education in Brooks - needs cooperation of teachers to absorb the knowledge that is offered. The desire for high achievement for their own benefit (not just a high standard). Where do students fit into society, pride
- Need an incentive to learn. (Even if it may be fear!)

Appendix B

Student Perceptions

Former Student Survey

The following letter introduced the survey.

Dear Former Student of the Brooks School District,

Re: EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INDICATORS SURVEY

The Brooks School District, as part of the educational quality indicators project, is gathering information about the education provided to school-aged students. The attached survey is being distributed to former students of the district. The survey extends to students who left high school during the past five years.

The **purpose** of this questionnaire is to determine the opinion of former students regarding their schooling with the Brooks School District. Your opinions and attitude are of vital importance to this project. This is not a test. The answers you give will be completely confidential. Do not sign your name or identify yourself in any way. Remember that your opinions and attitudes will assist school personnel in making better decisions regarding improvement in the school district.

The questionnaire is being mailed at this time in order to hopefully find out-of-town students home for the holidays. They will also have time to reflect on their own schooling, and complete the questionnaire.

Please place the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided, seal it and mail it by December 31, 1990.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated, and your opinion will be of assistance to the educational quality indicators project, and the Brooks School District.

Sincerely,

Inge Ellefson
Director, Quality Indicators

Table 11

1991 Former Student Survey (N=175) % Response

Question	
Indicate the amount of time spent in Brooks Schools:	all=49, most=19, secondary only=2, high school only=25, other=4
Indicate the year you **FIRST** left high school:	1985/1986=19, 1987/1988=42, 1989=23, 1990=15, Other=2
Indicate your chosen plan after first leaving BCHS:	to return to BCHS to graduate=1 to attend another high school to graduate= 2 to attend technical school, college/university= 71 to work= 23 other= 1
Indicate the type of high school received:	general= 35 advanced= 42 advanced with excellence= 17 high school equivalency= 0 chose not to complete high school=5
Indicate all of the activities and their duration that would describe best what you have been doing since leave BCHS:	employed= 33 unemployed= 1 university/college/technical school=57 upgrading and employed= 2 other= 7

Question	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
The students got along with each other	2	2	13	72	9
It was easy to make friends in all schools	2	4	20	59	14
The school(s) motivated students to do their best	2	6	28	53	10
Your school(s) experience influenced you in your ability to get along with others	3	4	23	52	17
Students received satisfactory recognition for socially responsible behavior (e.g. telling the truth, keeping notebooks and locker clean, playing well with others, etc.)	6	11	32	44	5

* N/A = Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Question	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
Values being taught in all school(s) were satisfactory	2	9	16	64	9
The school(s) did a good job of helping students understand their moral and ethical responsibilities	7	5	33	47	7
Appropriate emphasis was placed on the social development of students	5	5	34	51	5
Students respected the property of others	2	11	30	53	3
Students were made to follow the rules	3	2	13	68	11
Students who misbehaved were dealt with properly	3	5	26	56	8
Students knew what was expected of them in school	2	1	10	76	10
Student absenteeism was monitored appropriately	2	11	18	53	14
The school(s) expected student to behave in an acceptable manner	0	0	3	78	18
The students should spend more time on homework and home study per school night	9	9	32	38	11
Homework benefitted my education	2	6	14	57	20
The school(s) maintained a satisfactory appearance	0	2	1	68	28
I was satisfied with our school(s)	0	6	13	61	18
Our community was proud of our school(s)	7	3	17	59	13
I liked my teachers	1	5	11	60	21
I received a satisfactory total program from the school district	1	3	13	66	16
Other students understood my problems	13	10	24	48	3
The school's guidance and counselling services were satisfactory	11	18	21	41	8
If I had a problem, there were people available for me to talk to	10	13	20	49	7
I learned to solve my own problems	2	2	4	62	29

* N/A = Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Question	N/A	SD	D	A	SA*
I was in all the student activities that I wanted to be in (clubs, plays, sports, music, etc.)	5	5	18	51	21
These activities were of benefit to my social development	11	5	11	49	24
Teachers liked children and were fair when dealing with them	3	9	21	57	9
I was satisfied with the encouragement our administration gave students concerning their schoolwork	6	8	23	55	7
When students did things well, they were recognized for it	2	3	25	56	14
I received satisfactory recognition for academic accomplishments	9	2	10	66	13
I received satisfactory recognition for extracurricular accomplishments	21	2	14	49	13
Teachers gave me enough personal encouragement in my schoolwork	2	6	24	59	9
The teachers encouraged me to do my best and tried to help me improve	0	5	20	62	13
Most teachers were willing to give students individual help outside of class time	4	6	8	52	29
The individual encouragement helped me to learn and develop	9	5	11	59	15
My parents had opportunities to become involved in school activities	6	3	16	61	13
Our community was actively involved in all aspects of school operations	12	9	29	43	6
The school provided sufficient help to students to make the transition out of grade 12	4	19	32	39	6
I am satisfied with the education I received from the Brooks School District	1	3	13	61	21

* N/A = Not Applicable or insufficient knowledge or information to answer
SD = Strongly Disagree D = Disagree A = Agree SA = Strongly Agree

Results of the Former Student Survey questions regarding aspects students liked best, and those they recommended changing were as follows:

What aspects did you like best about your schooling?

- (66) teachers (friendly, supportive, willing to help, small classes, honesty, enthusiasm, caring, competence, closeness with students).
- (38) extra-curricular activities (after school activities, sports and intramurals)
- (29) friends (social life, helping each other)
- (16) good subjects (industrial shop, phys. ed., science, etc., many options and courses to choose from).
- (6) readiness for university
- (5) diploma (grad)
- (4) well rounded (firm base for further education)
- (4) good academic background (emphasis on high achievement)
- (2) good attitude/easy proximity
- (2) mix with outlying communities
- (2) drama

Additional responses were also recorded.

What aspects would you recommend be changed?

- (51) teachers having favorites, losing temper, too many clique, been in position too long/lack motivation, don't know subject matter, don't push hard enough, lack proper moral behavior, gossip too much)
- (23) guidance counsellors (not informed/available)
- (11) needs remodelling
- (8) student and teacher attitudes (too many cliques)
- (8) too many sports programs (too expensive, too much emphasis)
- (8) need administrator closer to students (should be viewed as authority figure rather than punishment maker)
- (7) teachers (been in position too long/lack motivation)
- (6) need better preparation for further education
- (5) school spirit
- (4) student parking lot
- (4) need alternatives for academically skilled (e.g., IB program)
- (3) discipline needs to be fair (consistent)
- (3) lack of sexual education (and more emphasis)
- (3) extracurricular (sports to expensive, more variety)
- (3) administration
- (3) not prepared for "tough" workforce
- (3) need to improve courses (English, Math, more choices)
- (2) supergrad change to safegrad
- (2) poor school system
- (2) disliked secondary schooling

Additional responses were also recorded.

Telephone Interview Data

The instrument includes questions which were used for students from the Rutherford scholarship lists and expulsion lists. This was done to achieve a balanced perspective.

Purpose for telephone interview of students:

- to determine what former students' perceptions are regarding students' behavior within the Brooks schools.
- The Brooks School District is currently involved in a research project which has been organized with the premise that we feel that we operate with a set of firm yet fair discipline policies.
- For example, the staff feels that they have high expectations of students in regards to both behavior and performance.
- Information gathered from the staff in the district indicates that they believe that they are student advocates, and that they support student behavior. The staff believe that expectations are set and consequence are meted out when necessary. They also believe that a positive climate exists in the schools, and their objective is to build upon this strength in order to encourage students to assume responsibilities for their own behavior.
- I need your help in providing me with some information as part of the Educational Quality Indicators research project, in order to look at our present policies and procedures.
- I want you to know that the information you give me will be kept anonymous, and your name will not appear with the information.

Questions:

1. *Please outline your history with the Brooks School District in terms of discipline and attendance policies etc.*
2. *How do your think or feel about the policies (i.e., are they firm and fair?)*
3. *What effect do you think the policies had on shaping your behavior (in terms of firm and fair discipline and attendance?)*
4. *What effect do you think the policies had on shaping your friends' behavior (in terms of firm and fair discipline and attendance?)*
5. *What effect do you think the policies had on shaping the other students' behavior?*
6. *What do your parents think or feel about the school's policies?*
7. *What are you doing at this time?*

Former students were interviewed in order to determine their perceptions of student behavior within the Brooks School District.

Appendix C

Student Behavior

Discipline Data

The Brooks School District school-based administrators were approached regarding the feasibility of collecting information regarding discipline (including attendance) for the EQI project at a Joint Administration meeting. The data collection instrument was developed, and approval was obtained regarding appropriate changes. It was agreed that each school would establish its own two-week collection period based on when report cards and parent-teacher interviews were scheduled. The deadline for completion was 30/11/90.

In the fall of 1990, administrators collected information regarding Discipline Rates in the Brooks School District. The objective was to attempt to determine the number of students disciplined by an administrator, and the effect of the discipline action. The definition used for discipline was any administrator contact with students at teacher request. The schools each chose a two week period in which to collect: the nature of the problem, action taken, time involved, and if possible, results of the action.

The following instrument was developed in conjunction with the School-Based Administrators following its introduction at a Joint Administration meeting.

DISCIPLINE RATE

BY ADMINISTRATORS OF THE BROOKS SCHOOL DISTRICT #2092

Objective:	to attempt to determine the number of students disciplined by an administrator, and the effect of the discipline action.
Definition of Discipline:	any administrator contact with students at teacher request.
School:	_____
Dates of Collection:	_____
Information:	include: the nature of the problem, action taken, time involved and if possible, results of the action.

_____

_____

Homework Data

Background Information

Information from research indicates that values are more important predictors of success in education than socioeconomic background. An example of this includes:

Major findings from: Hanson, S.L. & Ginsburg, A. (1985).

Two general findings of the research which cut across different types of values are:

- Traditional American values are important predictors of students success: in fact, they are twice as important for student performance as family socioeconomic background.
- This finding has important implications. Since values are more subject to change than family socioeconomic background, a student who does not have the advantage of higher family socioeconomic status need not be relegated to failure in school.
- Students with strong traditional values are also more likely to use their out-of-school time in ways that reinforce learning.
- For example, high school students with more traditional values spend about three times more hours a week on homework than do students with less traditional values. (This is a significant amount of time, since the average student spends only about five hours a week doing homework).

The following instrument was developed in conjunction with the ATA - EQI committee.

Homework Data
Brooks School District #2092

Objective:	to determine the amount of homework completed in the Brooks School District.
Definition of homework:	any student work (other than studying or reading) that requires time to complete at home.
Collection period:	_____
Teacher:	_____
Grade level:	_____
Assignment dates:	% of students completing assignment:

_____

_____

The ATA EQI committee reviewed the homework data collection instrument and made recommendations for changes, and discussed methods for presenting the request for homework data collection to teachers in order to achieve teachers' cooperation. The committee members then presented the homework data collection concept at a school staff meeting. The objective is to determine the amount of homework completed in the Brooks School District, for all students from Grades 4 - 12, over a two week period. The 2 week period was flexible from school to school based on report card and parent interview conference interference.

A decision was made to collect homework data based on the indicator: responsible student behavior.

Vandalism Data

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INDICATORS

VANDALISM DATA FORM

Definition of vandalism - "an action which results in maintenance being involved in clean up/repair, e.g. broken window, graffiti, etc."

Date	School	Description	Maintenance Time	Cost

There was no vandalism as per the agreed upon definition, recorded from September 1990 to December 1990. This was the time period specified for data collection.

Appendix D

Student Achievement

Student achievement in the Brooks School District is at or above the provincial acceptable standard in grades 3, 6 and 9. Results vary in the grade 12 diploma exam results.

Table 12

Percentage of Grade 3, 6 and 9 Students Achieving Standards on the Total Provincial Achievement Tests, June 1990

Achievement Tests	Acceptable Standard*		Standard of Excellence	
	District	Province	District	Province
Grade 3 Math	97.7	91.8	34.9	26.9
Grade 6 Science	85.6	82.5	24.8	24.6
Grade 9 Language	82.9	82.9	8.5	10.8

* Includes standard of excellence.
Source: Alberta Education

Table 13

Percentage of Grade 12 Students Achieving Standards on the Diploma Exams (Final Blended Mark), January 1990

Diploma Exams	Acceptable Standard*		Standard of Excellence	
	District	Province	District	Province
English 30	95.7	95.3	8.7	12.2
English 33	100.0	94.0	0.0	3.8
Social Studies 30	88.6	90.3	9.1	14.1
Mathematics 30	83.7	86.8	23.3	22.3
Biology 30	97.7	88.7	23.3	18.3
Chemistry 30	94.2	89.1	21.2	20.2
Physics 30	78.6	88.8	21.4	22.6

* Includes standard of excellence.
Source: Alberta Education

Table 14

Percentage of Grade 12 Students Achieving Standards on the Diploma Exams (Final Blended) Mark, June 1990

Diploma Exams	Acceptable Standard*		Standard of Excellence	
	District	Province	District	Province
English 30	94.3	94.9	5.7	12.8
English 33	90.0	90.8	0.0	2.3
Social Studies 30	96.1	89.1	11.8	15.4
Mathematics 30	82.9	82.8	14.6	18.0
Biology 30	96.2	84.9	24.5	19.7
Chemistry 30	85.7	86.1	19.0	21.3
Physics 30	93.8	90.7	25.0	27.6

* Includes standard of excellence.
Source: Alberta Education

Table 15

Participation in the 1990 Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams

Grade	Test	District %	Province %
Grade 3	Mathematics	94.0	88.3
Grade 6	Science	94.4	86.6
Grade 9	Language Arts	80.7	90.7
Grade 12*	English 30	64.2	57.3
	English 33	26.6	21.5
	Social Studies 30	61.7	48.0
	Mathematics 30	54.5	47.9
	Biology 30	62.3	47.1
	Chemistry 30	47.4	37.3
	Physics 30	28.6	19.9

* Grade 12 rates are based on the total students writing in January and June 1990, divided by the September 30, 1989 enrollment. Source: Alberta Education

Appendix E

Community Perceptions

Community Character Profile

Table 16

Community Character Profile Results (N=88)

Question	1	2	3	4*
1. People in our community get involved when they see unacceptable behavior/conduct in public places.	15	46	20	4
2. In our community, people complete their previous commitments before taking on new ones.	1	22	54	8
3. People in our community are willing to compromise or take a stand to solve problems.	2	23	52	8
4. Alcohol use among adults in our community is a problem.	3	12	33	37
5. Alcohol use among young people in our community is a problem.	1	12	36	35
6. When it comes to community leisure time, it's easy to find activities in which everyone can be involved.	9	23	34	20
7. Parents in our community know the who, what, when, and where of the social lives of their young people.	5	46	34	1
8. Children show adults respect in our community.	13	36	35	2
9. In our community, laws and rules are enforced.	3	27	49	7
10. Children appreciate and make good use of privileges and opportunities when they are provided for them.	3	32	45	6

* Very Much UNLIKE our Community	Somewhat UNLIKE our community	Somewhat LIKE our community	Very much LIKE our community
1	2	3	4

Question	1	2	3	4*
11. In our community, there is very little vandalism and damage to the property of others.	15	36	33	2
12. In our community, the level of sexual activity among young people is very low.	16	46	20	0
13. In our community, young people are provided with everything and are expected to contribute something.	5	47	32	2
14. Students in our community are dedicated to their school work.	3	26	53	4
15. We do a good job of keeping our community clean, neat and inviting.	1	5	57	23
16. In our community we stress winning and being the best at all costs.	6	35	38	7
17. Physical and mental fitness of the people in our community is a priority.	5	30	46	4
18. People in our community do not tolerate profanity and vulgarity in public places.	24	45	15	2
19. In our community, the need for an education is respected and supported.	2	9	49	25
20. There is respect for the law, courts, and police in our community.	4	29	44	7
21. Children obey/respect their parents.	6	25	51	4
22. Children obey/respect their teachers.	4	23	52	6
23. People support our community organizations.	1	14	56	15
24. In our community, behavior expectations for children are consistent.	18	42	26	0
25. Young people in our community are given too much freedom by their parents.	3	11	44	28
26. In our community, you can trust most people.	2	13	62	9

* Very Much UNLIKE our Community	Somewhat UNLIKE our community	Somewhat LIKE our community	Very much LIKE our community
1	2	3	4

Question	1	2	3	4*
27. In our community, "how you get along" is affected by our income, who your friends are, your education level, and/or the color of your skin.	13	31	28	14
28. Young people in our community take pride in their appearance without being forced to.	2	13	52	19
29. In our community, parents take responsibility for child development.	4	20	58	4
30. In our community, schools take responsibility for child development.	1	7	53	25
31. In our community, social agencies take responsibility for child development.	8	33	38	6
32. In our community, churches take responsibility for child development.	6	28	45	4
33. Young people in our community have enough rights and are expected to accept responsibility for wrong-doings.	8	34	37	7
34. Drug use among adults in our community is a problem.	9	44	20	8
35. Drug use among young people in our community is a problem.	6	33	34	8
36. Parents in our community care about the who, what, when and where of the social lives of their children.	2	27	47	10

* Very Much UNLIKE our Community	Somewhat UNLIKE our community	Somewhat LIKE our community	Very much LIKE our community
1	2	3	4

Table 17

Number of Participants at Character in Our Community Meetings

Participants	Meeting #1	Meeting #2	Meeting #3	Total
Parents	93	76	59	228
Trustees	2	2	1	5
Administrators	15	13	15	43
Total	**110**	**91**	**75**	**276**

Time Line

May 26-28, 1991	Planning for community involvement was first discussed at the Brooks School District administrators' retreat.
October 1991-January 1992	A steering committee was organized and planning took place until the first trial run. Training sessions for administrators were organized as necessary.
February-March 1992	Ongoing pertinent news releases and media coverage.
Feb 4, 1992	Administrators reviewed the process and duties regarding facilitating groups.
Feb 4, 1992	School Advisory members (three/school) took part in Field Test.
Feb 19, 1992	First focus group meeting to find congruence/shared vision with community regarding the perception of student behavior in the community.
Feb 26, 1992	Second focus group meeting to develop solutions which would address the perception of student behavior in the community.
Mar 4, 1992	Third focus group meeting to develop a set of beliefs based on the solutions developed in the second meeting.

March-April 1992	Follow-up feedback to participants and news releases to the public.
September 1992 - June 1993	Character in our community group activities.

Letters of invitation were sent to a cross-section of the community to participate in a series of meetings:

20/10/92

Dear

CHARACTER IN OUR COMMUNITY

Have you ever asked yourself what other parents do in situations like mine? Do your children succeed in getting their way because they convince you "everyone else is allowed to .....?" As a business person do you feel your expectations of youth are different than expectations in many homes? Are standards and expectations of the youth in our community slipping?

You are requested, as a representative of parents, and citizens to participate in a series of 3 meetings led by school administrators to address the question:

How can the home, the school and the community-at-large work together to maintain good character in our youth?

Your name has been chosen at random with men's and women's names alternating. If for any reason your partner wishes to participate also, or if they must take your place please feel free to advise us. It is most important that we have a good cross section of people.

These 3 informal meetings will be your opportunity to help impact our community in a positive way. We sincerely want you to be a part of the process of describing some beliefs, some expectations, and some ideas for action. What is developed will be left to individuals, groups and agencies to use as they see fit.

Yours truly,

Duncan Gillespie
Superintendent of Schools

Case studies were developed for use during the meetings as discussion starters.

Case #1

A thirteen year old blurted a profanity at a community practice. The coach had earlier told all players that profane language would not be tolerated. The coach was taken to task by the parents of the boy since the boy was suspended from the team for a two week period. The father said, "Well, I swear too. The punishment is too harsh".

Case #2

Harry's father received a call from the school that Harry, eleven years old, had stolen merchandise from a local store. Harry's father immediately took Harry to the store - insisting that Harry must make restitution to the storekeeper by doing odd jobs or paying for the merchandise... Harry has such a cute smile and seemed so apologetic that the matter was dropped.

Case #3

Nancy wishes to socialize with a friend on a Friday evening. She tries to insist on being allowed to stay out until 1:00 a.m. in order to "watch videos". Parents set their foot down and clearly expect her home at 11:00 p.m. At 11:00 p.m. Nancy calls with a request to sleep over. Parents reluctantly agree. Nancy is joining an all night unsupervised party with plenty of alcohol in use. A few days later a report in the local newspaper regarding the trashing of her friends' house due to a party was discussed with concern by her parents. "What are young people coming to today?"

Discussion questions:

1. What are the issues in this case? What is the major problem?
2. How do you feel about the social activities of young people in our community?
3. What effect do the social activities have on our families?
4. Do you feel that something could and should be done about the social activities of young people in our community?
5. How can we work together in our community to improve our situation? What do we believe?

News releases were sent to the community newspaper:

News Releases

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED IF OTHER PARENTS MIGHT SHARE THE PROBLEMS YOU HAVE WITH YOUR CHILDREN?

Due to popular demand we are increasing invitations to interested parents to join us in attending "Character in Our Community" meetings. We will address the question:

How can the home, the school and the community-at-large work together to maintain good character in our youth?

The meetings will occur as follows:

1. Wed., Feb. 19, 1992 7:30 p.m. at the Brooks Junior High School
2. Wed., Feb. 26, 1992 (same time and place)
3. Wed., March 4, 1992 (same time and place)

These three informal meetings will give you a chance to say your piece and hear other's views. We sincerely want you to be a part of the process of writing down some beliefs, some expectations and some ideas for action. Whatever is developed will be left to individuals, families and agencies to use as they see fit.

We need to know numbers and names so please confirm your attendance by phoning the School Board Office.

NEWS INTERVIEW

Community involved in district project:

Close to 100 people expected to gather at Brooks Junior High tonight to participate in the final of three meetings to determine what constitutes character in our community.

The Brooks School District project began with invitations being sent out to 250 people to participate in the series of three meetings.

Superintendent Duncan Gillespie said an invitation was sent out of every 10th name on the school roster.

"We looked at the list to try and make sure we had a good cross section of the community."

Gillespie said the character in our community project is one of the wrap-up activities to the Education Quality Indicators project undertaken by Inge Ellefson and the district.

"It's a case of looking at self-discipline. We sensed that there was a need to find a way to get parents together to talk about developing character in our kids and to share ideas on the challenges of parenting."

He said what the district hopes to be able to do is get a written statement of beliefs on responsibilities and how the school, home and community can work together to achieve positive outcomes.

"The school system's interest is to see if we have a fairly accurate understanding of what today's parent have on expectations for their kids."

Gillespie said the district wants to stress it is not felt there is a major breakdown in the community.

"We're continually told by newcomers there is a good standard in schools and the community. We wanted to make sure it did not slip or slide in the community."

Gillespie said the district made it clear to people in attendance at the first two meetings that it is only interested in writing down what people think. Any follow up on ideas will be left up to the community.

The first meeting in the series allowed Brooks School District staff to get acquainted with members of the community. Members of the community were given a questionnaire and asked to assess the community as they see it.

The second meeting analyzed the questionnaire and singled out eight issues that seem to be seen by most people as worth fixing.

The areas singled out by the public are: inappropriate use of language or other offensive behaviors in public places; a lack of respect for others rights (tolerance, physical or verbal intimidation); contravention of rules/laws of school and community; abusive or excessive use of alcohol and drugs (at younger and younger ages); excessive freedoms and the absence of effective monitoring of children's activities/conduct (house parties, curfews); disrespect for property (theft, vandalism, littering); hesitancy to get involved or communicate with offenders or their parents and inconsistent expectations or failure to hold individuals responsible for their actions and consequences.

Gillespie said people in attendance at the second meeting were divided up into groups. Each group looked at a particular issue and wrote up a statement of beliefs on the issues. Included in the statement of beliefs was a look at the corresponding responsibilities the public has to deal with the issues and what ideas can be used to improve the situation.

Volunteers were then obtained to help a planning committee take the ideas and write up a draft manifesto covering a statement of beliefs.

The draft statement will be released at tonight's meeting. An attempt will then be made to obtain a final statement of beliefs.

NEWS RELEASE

CHARACTER IN OUR COMMUNITY

The Brooks School District personnel have received strong encouragement from trustees, staff, and some parents to proceed with plans for a series of community meetings to obtain consensus on reasonable expectations of young people in our schools and our community. Under the plan, parents, the public at large, and school administrators will review community and school standards and expectations with respect to achieving positive social development in our children. Concrete examples of positive and negative development will be used to focus discussion on how we can support each other's efforts to develop positive behaviors. From the discussions, a vision of the "preferred future" within our community will be drawn up. The vision will be communicated widely with an open invitation to individuals, businesses, organizations, and most importantly families, to determine how best they may wish to participate in answering the question: *"How can we work together to make a difference?"*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE