CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT

ACCOUNTABILITY IN SCHOOLS:

NOT A THREAT,

BUT A REAL HOPE

A promise for increased responsiveness both to educators within schools, and to the public they serve

Prepared by
Citizens League Committee on
Achieving Excellence in Schools
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Approved by
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* The drive for "accountability" is very real, and serious, and urgent, and it has to be responded to not only for political reasons, but for the best interests of public education as well. Minnesota schools have been quick to recognize this, and many already have significant new accountability programs under way.

* Usual means of school accountability are inherently negative. Community residents tend not to become involved in school programs unless they are unhappy with something that is attempted to be done. Then the dissatisfaction is most likely to be registered in a round-about way...such as voting 'no' in a bond election.

* Increasingly, the constraints of limited resources...coupled with the desire for excellence...has generated a demand for a results-oriented system of educational accountability. Teachers and administrators desire feedback on what works best. The public is concerned about what outcomes are achieved for the expenditure of educational resources.

* The individual student and his parents have very little choice about how his schooling is managed. Compulsory attendance, limited curriculum choices and fixed geographic attendance boundaries have tended to limit the options available to the family.

* The lack of an adequate voice for the family threatens to do damage to education. Left on the outside, too many critics are simply 'throwing rocks'. Better ways must be found to make public schools accountable and responsive to both the educators within schools, and the public they serve.
IN OUR REPORT

* We do not support some of the more drastic changes often argued for in the name of accountability. Rather, our proposal, while major, is consistent with, and an extension of, many efforts already under way within Minnesota public schools.

* We propose that:

A. The Minnesota Legislature should require every school district in the state to establish a process, within each school, for the development of educational goals, and, these once established, to prepare an annual assessment of progress toward the stated goals.

B. The Minnesota Legislature should establish a Center for Management Assistance to help local schools develop objective-setting, assessment and related management skills.

C. Local school districts should make a greater effort to meet individual student needs by designing their curriculum to maximize individualization of instruction and providing greater options for students.

D. School districts in Minnesota should move to program budgeting as a means to cost-benefit analysis of school programs.

E. Minimum standards should be established by the state and individual school districts in the areas of basic skills and fundamental societal needs.

F. Multi-year contracts should be substituted for "tenure in position" for school administrators.
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I. The public is increasingly concerned about the operations of our public schools in Minnesota.

Our committee has identified a great deal of uncertainty, questioning and doubt about how well our elementary and secondary schools are performing. No one seems certain of what our schools are, or should be, responsible . . . or how well they are meeting their responsibility.

A. On the one hand, there is a general belief that Minnesota has one of the finest systems of public elementary and secondary education in the country.

Resource person after resource person told our committee that the public schools in Minnesota do an excellent job by national standards. We tend to pay our teachers better, provide adequate school facilities, and generally pay the price for "quality education." And, there is some supporting evidence that our support of public schools has paid off:

* The "Ranking of the States" from the 1971 National Education Association Research Report shows Minnesota:

First in the number of high school graduates in 1969-70 as a percent of ninth graders in 1966.

Third in average daily attendance as a percent of cumulative enrollment in 1970-71.

* A 1969 study by the State Department of Education, "Trends in Minnesota Public Education," shows that over the years Minnesota public schools have significantly improved on their ability to hold students until graduation. Only 39% of the number of Minnesota students enrolled in the first grade in 1927 were enrolled as seniors in 1938. But, 97% of the number of Minnesota students enrolled in the first grade in 1957 were enrolled as seniors in 1968.

* Minnesota repeatedly ranks among the top half dozen states in percentage of draftees who pass the mental requirements of pre-induction examinations.

B. However, for many reasons, the public has become somewhat disenchanted with the operations of our public schools.

There was a feeling by many of our resource persons that we are not succeeding in meeting the special needs and desires of the users of our educational system. Several suggested that we first must do a better job of identifying and diagnosing the special needs and aspirations of individual students before we will be able to provide programs needed to respond to them.
One resource person, a student, charged that our schools are not organized to meet the needs of most students. A school board member maintained that school boards do not spend much time addressing questions relating to problems of children. The following are groups or categories of students who were cited as not being very well served by their school system: Disadvantaged students, middle-class students, bright students, slow students, students with IQs just high enough not to qualify for special programs, high-ability students with special learning problems, students with far-out behavioral problems, and others with special learning problems.

One elementary school principal maintained that up to 20% of the students in a given classroom may not be capable of learning to read by conventional methods. Superintendent Young from St. Paul explained that we are now organized to teach groups rather than individuals. Superintendent Davis of Minneapolis pointed out that we simply haven't found the answers on how to deal effectively with many of the students enrolled in our public education programs.

Resource persons suggested to our committee that we do not adequately teach students how to think for themselves, they waste far too much time in schools, and few students learn at a rate close to their potential. Several persons felt that in general our schools do not place adequate emphasis on the mastery of basic skills.

Evidence of the discontent is also found in the actions of the general public. Bond elections are increasingly difficult to pass, recent school board elections have provided an unusual turnover of incumbents, and the last legislative session saw strict spending restrictions placed on school districts for the first time. However, this may reflect a general reaction against increased property taxes, in general, rather than a response to school programs.

Much of the dissatisfaction with public education stems from the taxpayer's burden with increased educational costs. The average cost of educating a child in Minnesota has increased more than 3½ times, in constant dollars adjusted for inflation, from 1934 to 1970. The actual average per pupil expenditure in 1934-35 was $95, as compared to $1,017 in 1969-70. In the same span of years the demands for school programs and services has also increased, in such areas as expanded course offerings and counseling, for example. (See the accompanying chart and graph on the next page for details.)

From 1966 to 1970 there has been an average annual increase of 14.4% in expenditures for local schools in Minnesota. This includes both increase in cost per student, and an increase in enrollment.

Some parents feel that they are unwanted in the public schools and that they are effectively precluded from participating in the schooling of their children. Our committee talked with parents, teachers, principals and school board members about this problem. We found that personnel in some schools are now going out of their way to bring parents into the process. In many other cases, more parental interest would be appreciated.

However, clearly, schools for the most part are not geared to accommodate a high level of parental participation ... and, under these conditions, school personnel may feel uncomfortable in their contact with parents.
Average Per-Pupil Expenditures in Minnesota Public Schools 1934-35 to 1969-70

Total Expenditure Based on Average Daily Attendance...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Actual Expenditure</th>
<th>1970 Constant $</th>
<th>Annual % Change in Constant $</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>305</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>157</td>
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<td>1967-68</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>1,022</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>1,017</td>
<td>1,073</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

$1,100

PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE IN MINNESOTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1934-35 to 1969-70 (IN 1970 CONSTANT $)
II. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS ARE UNDER WAY TO IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MINNESOTA.

A. In 1971 the Legislature created a new "Quality Education Council" to provide funds for local school districts to develop new programs of research and development.

There are 17 members on the Council -- 8 members representing educational organizations, and 8 appointed from each Congressional district, and one at-large by the Governor. An appropriation of $750,000 was made for the current biennium, and the State Department of Education was charged to furnish staffing for the Council.

The Council is charged to evaluate the results of the funded programs, and to disseminate information about the results throughout the state. The following were specifically mentioned as areas in which projects might be funded:

1. Effective utilization of community personnel and resources.
2. Developing model personnel policies and procedures, and new staffing concepts suggest differentiated staffing.
3. Assessment and evaluation of programs.
4. Developing a management model of instructional objectives design which will provide accountability by relating time and dollars to the amount of learning produced.
5. Determining responsibilities to be assumed by the schools exclusively or concurrently with other agencies or individuals.
6. Effective dissemination of educational information.
7. Developing new knowledge about learning and teaching.
8. Developing model educational programs as alternatives to existing educational practices and curricula.
9. Model programs and innovations to increase quality of educational opportunities.
10. Research and testing of new concepts of educational efficiency, effectiveness and cost benefits.

The Council is not limited to supporting innovations, programs or procedures supplementary to existing school structures and programs, but may assist entire new schools or concepts such as open schools, informal schools, and the like. The statute explained that any supportive program must hold promise of both educational and cost benefits, and that the costs and improvements in learning effectiveness introduced will be measured and related.

Thirty-two projects are being funded for the first biennium. Of particular relevance to the work of our committee is a project to be conducted by the Minneapolis school system which will undertake an extensive evaluation of school programs by a committee of citizens, assisted by a professional staff.
B. The state assessment program within the Department of Education is designed to provide significant information for reaching state educational decisions.

In 1971 the State Department of Education began planning an educational assessment program centering on student achievement data. Commissioner Caskey gave the program his top priority as a State Department planning activity, and an ambitious project got under way.

The specific objectives assigned to the program were:

1. To determine the level of performance of students in Minnesota in cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor domains. *
2. To identify the variables which account for the variation in student performance.
3. To report the results of this investigation to educational decision-makers in the executive and legislative branches of state government, the State Board of Education, the Department of Education, local school administrators, local school boards and interested citizens of the state providing a guide for the allocation of school resources.
4. To longitudinally report the extent to which progress is being made in Minnesota schools towards improving student performance within the State of Minnesota.

Policy guidance for the assessment program is provided by a 25-member Assessment Advisory Council with representatives from professional educational organizations, citizen groups, higher education, non-public education, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, the State Planning Agency, and the Statewide Testing Service.

Primary attention has initially been given to assessing student performance in the areas of reading and mathematics at the third and sixth grade levels. Objectives for reading and mathematics at these two levels were developed to reflect—as accurately as possible—those objectives implicit in the instructional materials commonly used throughout the state.

Based upon these objectives, test items have been developed and preliminary testing has already begun to check the validity of test questions in measuring the student's mastery of the intended objectives.

The sample of students to be used in the state assessment program was not designed in such a way as to use the results to make evaluations at an individual school district level. However, important data can be developed to provide state decision-makers with a program to diagnose relevant strengths and weaknesses in Minnesota schools and, subsequently, to provide resources at the various levels of indicated need for purposes of ameliorating weaknesses and capitalizing upon the strengths within the educational systems of the state.

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* Cognitive domain includes instructional objectives which vary from simple recall of material learned to highly original and creative ways of combining and synthesizing new ideas and materials.

* Affective domain includes instructional objectives which describe changes in interest, attitudes and values; and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment.

* Psycho-motor domain includes instructional objectives which emphasize muscular or motor skill, some manipulation of materials and objectives, or some act which requires neuro-muscular coordination.
To diagnose the strengths and weaknesses in Minnesota schools, the assessment will measure differences in student achievement relative to five background areas: School financial resources, human resources, program resources, student/school background factors, and geographic variables.

C. In 1971 the Legislature passed legislation attempting to better equalize educational resources.

As a result of the new school aid formula, two school districts, regardless of their property tax wealth, will be able to have the same local property tax rate for the same pupil unit expenditure up to the statewide average. School districts spending at a level below the statewide average will have a proportionally low local property tax rate. Districts spending above the statewide average must finance the amount above the statewide average exclusively from the local property tax, so their tax rate will be higher.

To a much greater extent, school districts with a low property tax base will, over time, be able to bring their expenditures up in line with more wealthy districts. All districts are now forced to do a better job of evaluating priorities . . . as they must weigh additional program expenses against other programs, rather than being able to simply increase the total budget.

D. The new Public Employee Bargaining Law clarifies management rights, but provides for teacher participation in discussions of educational policy issues.

Teachers can negotiate with school boards on hours of their employment, and their compensation and other economic aspects relating to employment, but they cannot negotiate the educational policies of the district. However, school districts are required to meet and confer with teachers on matters of educational policy. If the process of meeting and conferring on policy issues is not found to be satisfactory, the organization representing the teachers may petition for policy consultants to be brought in to make recommendations to the school board on the matters in dispute.

E. The new "Right to Read" program is intended to encourage the development of better methods of teaching reading in Minnesota.

Minnesota is one of five states selected to participate in a federally funded "right to read" program. The Minnesota program focuses on in-service training. Initially, "reading directors" in 22 districts throughout the state are taking a series of intensive courses on reading education. These instructors will then work in their districts to set up reading programs. The state program will continue until reading directors have been trained for each school district in the state.

The program is administered by the State Department of Education, with the supervision of a Right-To-Read Advisory Council. The Council is made up of representatives of educational groups and the general public. The right-to-read program in Minnesota initially received a grant of $50,000 from the U. S. Department of Education, and $45,000 has been allocated by the state.

F. Individual school districts have provided leadership in developing new programs.

The following examples were brought to our committee's attention:
"Continuous Achievement Monitoring" (CAM) in Hopkins is designed to provide a significant example of how assessment can improve grass-roots educational management.

The CAM program was instigated by teachers in Hopkins who wanted better information for classroom decision-making. To finance the program, the Hopkins School District received a Title III grant from the federal government. The computerized evaluation program was taken from one developed at Stanford University.

The Continuous Achievement Monitoring program is one in which students take a "mini" final examination every few weeks. Computers score the test and print out a report to the student and the teacher, noting not only the total test score, but also which objectives the student answered correctly and which incorrectly. The teacher is then in a position to adjust instruction based on the performance in his classes; and the individual student may study the objectives missed.

Objectives from the entire course will be measured with each test. Accordingly, some of the test items cover material that has not yet been taught, some cover material that has just been taught, and some cover material that was taught some time ago. This enables students and teachers to see the student's achievement grow throughout the year. (Additional information on the CAM program is found in Appendix A.)

Several metropolitan area schools have developed impressive programs for determining educational objectives.

During our committee's deliberations, we heard testimony from several school districts that have done considerable work in developing goals and objectives for their schools. The programs in Roseville, Bloomington and Edina were given particular attention.

The Roseville Public Schools have worked to establish an instructional system of goals and objectives, and a management system of goals and objectives.

The Roseville goals system contains the following elements: A district purpose and goals . . . a global statement adopted by the school board; general goals . . . the continuing goals identified by program and discussion description; and specific goals . . . goals to be achieved in a given period of time.

The Bloomington Public Schools have a very substantial program to establish curriculum goals and objectives. Their work with objectives-setting is an ongoing process that involves periodic review and updating in each and every program area.

The Edina Public Schools have a program for developing specific, measurable, instructional objectives for their entire curriculum. Criteria have been established for their objectives that establish not only what is to be accomplished, but within what time span, and at what cost.

The Southeast Alternatives program in Minneapolis provides parents and students a significant voice in what kind of education they will receive.

The Southeast Alternatives program is based on the premise that learning is a highly personal, individual activity and that learning styles are vastly different. The main purpose of the Alternatives program is to offer educational
options within the school setting which support individual differences for those involved in the educational process.

Southeast Alternatives provides students and their parents five different programs to choose from:

1. A contemporary school, which does not deviate greatly from the present teacher-directed, structured curriculum and school organization by grade levels.

2. A continuous progress primary and a continuous progress intermediate, which employs team teaching and allows each child to advance at his own pace without regard to grade level.

3. An open school with a flexible curriculum, schedule and age grouping, and where affective (interests, attitudes and values) learning is emphasized.

4. A free school with a K-12 program, which has a curriculum structured to contain what those who teach and learn wish to develop and experience. In the free school, the students and the parents have selected the faculty.

5. The fifth program is available at Marshall-University High School, where a flexible array of courses and activities are provided.

All parents in the Southeast Minneapolis community are given a choice as to which alternative they would choose for their child. In 1971, parents were encouraged to make their choice in the spring, but the choice was left open throughout the summer. A student may even change alternatives after a conference is held with parents, student, and counselor in the middle of a school year.

*Both Minneapolis and St. Paul have taken significant steps towards expanding educational opportunities through magnet schools and learning centers.

In Minneapolis a special program was designed for Central High School to entice students from throughout the city into enrolling at this inner city school. Planning for the magnet school program was done in the spring of 1970 by concerned parents, students, staff members and Minneapolis school administrators, who recognized the need for a more relevant educational program. The goals established were to increase the number of students in the school, to get the staff involved in program planning and goal-setting, and to prove that a unique, but sound, educational program could be developed in an inner city school with a high minority population.

Over 200 students have transferred into Central High from other schools and the total enrollment has increased from 740 to 970.

One major reason for the turnabout in student enrollment is the curriculum offered. Students have complete freedom of choice in selecting up to as many as 8 courses each quarter of the school year from a catalog of course offerings. Although students have to complete the equivalent of the courses required by the State Department of Education, they can go about it in a very individualized way. For example, a student could take three English courses in one quarter, and none the next.

Three Minneapolis learning centers provide special programs for students from more than one school.
The Lincoln Learning Center is a store-front school for academic under-achievers who are average or above-average in intelligence. The center serves 50 male students who are admitted on the basis of being three or more years retarded in reading. The center hopes to help the students improve their basic skills, their self-concept, and their attitudes toward school.

The Urban Arts Program is a year-round art school without walls. Secondary school students are released each semester from school on a part-time basis to study the arts with 32 artists at the location of the arts agencies. The program is open to all students in junior and senior high schools, public and private, throughout the city.

The Regional Prescriptive Instruction Center serves elementary-age children who are achieving far below their ability level. Teachers from many elementary schools in the western metropolitan area may refer children to the center, but acceptance of the referrals depends on the active support for the program by parents and the referring school.

In St. Paul a program providing special programs at "learning centers" has been initiated to help provide a quality of educational opportunity for all students and encourage the full development of each child. The concept of "learning centers" maintains that, while a student is assigned to an individual school, he is enrolled in a district and should have access to the full range of district offerings, regardless of where he lives and in what school he is enrolled.

In April, 1970, a pilot "learning center" for the performing arts was established at Central High School. Nearly 4,000 students indicated that they would like to attend the center for a six-week period, and 400 actually were enrolled in the program on a pilot basis.

Experiments with the pilot program indicated that:

- Students were interested in attending specialized learning centers.
- Learning centers effectively could mix students of differentracial, socio-economic, and ability backgrounds in a meaningful educational program.
- Effective bus schedules could be developed.
- Effective schedules between the home school and the learning centers must be developed.
- Learning centers' instructional program must complement and supplement the home school program.

During the 1971-72 school year, nine learning centers were opened in St. Paul: A new city learning center for high school students, a junior and senior high school performing arts learning center, a junior high school automotive transportation learning center, an elementary career exploration and development learning center, a black minority culture research laboratory, and elementary learning centers covering esthetic environment, foreign language and social environment.

The learning centers for elementary schools were developed around a "cluster" of seven elementary schools. The learning centers were organized around a six-day cycle, with one section in the morning and one section in the afternoon. Students enrolled in a learning center attend the center twice during the six-day cycle.
Eventually St. Paul hopes to organize all of their elementary schools into "clusters" and provide five learning centers per "cluster". In addition, some elementary learning centers are likely to be developed on a citywide basis. Plans are to have all students eventually involved in learning center programs.

St. Paul's use of the magnet school approach came in 1971 when they began a pilot open school for 500 students from grades K-12. As of August 1, 1972, there was a waiting list of 700 students.
III. THE CONCEPT OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL HAVE AN INCREASING EFFECT ON EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA.

A. We have come to understand that there are two primary clients to be served by our public schools: Society, and the individual student (and/or the family as spokesman and guardian of the student).

The money society spends on education can be thought of as an investment in its future. Education helps to insure the stability of society and improve the quality of life of its members. It gives individuals the basic skills needed to accommodate a change and retraining in a period of rapid social and technological development.

The public schools have helped to assimilate large numbers of people from diverse backgrounds and providing the basic skills and understanding required of the people to function as constructive members of the community. Over a relatively short period of history, we have become a nation with one common language and a sense of common heritage ... largely as a result of public education.

Perhaps because of the success of our public schools, elements of the public have grown to demand that schools increasingly take on additional responsibilities. These responsibilities have grown to the point where no one seems clear as to just what the responsibilities are, what they ought to be, or even how priorities are to be established.

Our schools, in general, tend to bring students to a common level ... rather than to maximize each student's achievement relative to his or her own potential. For example, we require basically the same curriculum for all students in the school, and provide each student the same amount of time and instruction to master a given skill or learn an element of information.

The individual student and his parents have very little choice about how his schooling is to be managed. Compulsory attendance, limited curriculum choices and fixed geographic attendance boundaries have tended to limit the options available to the child and the parent.

In order to change the education offered their children, most parents would have to change their place of residence to another school attendance area or enroll their child in a non-public school. For social, economic and other reasons, these options are not realistic alternatives for the great majority of families.

Both society at large, and the individual student's family, have a very legitimate claim on public education. The challenge is to provide mechanisms or procedures to enable public schools to better meet the desires and the needs of both the individual and the community.

Schools can expect increasing community pressure for them to become more directly responsible to the student and his parents.
B. At the heart of our committee's consideration is the concept of accountability.... accountability of the public schools to the students and their parents, to the broader community, and to the professional expectations of the educators themselves.

In many ways, public education has always been accountable. For example:

-- Schools have always been accountable for meeting the legal requirements of the state, accounting for their use of public funds, providing staff and support facilities, and for making their educational programs available to all school-age children in the community.

-- School board elections provide voters a rather direct referendum on educational policy.

-- School bond elections serve, to a limited degree, as a referendum on all aspects of school policy.

-- The public has been able to mobilize rather effectively against school activities they have taken exception to.

-- Some parents use their choice of residence to exercise a preference for an alternative program to better meet the educational aspirations they have for their children.

-- Private schools provide an element of competition for the public schools.

C. An improved system of educational accountability is required.

The prevalent form or level of accountability is no longer accepted as being sufficient. Increasingly, the constraints of limited resources...coupled with the desire for excellence...has generated a demand for a results-oriented system of accountability. Put simply, people want to know what outcomes are achieved by the expenditure of educational resources. At the same time, many parents and students are dissatisfied with the degree to which their school system is responsive to them.

Current means of accountability in our public schools are sporadic, inconsistent and largely unrelated to school achievement. Inadequate information is available as to what school districts are attempting to do, how well they are meeting their objectives, or how much educational activities cost.

Current means of school accountability are inherently negative. The community is unlikely to become involved in school programs unless they are unhappy with something that is attempted to be done. Then, the dissatisfaction is most likely to be registered in a round-about way....such as voting against a bond election.

We have found three approaches to accountability in education to be particularly appealing. One kind of educational accountability focuses on improving management by analyzing the application of resources relative to the results achieved. In order to better relate resource input and educational output, programs of objective-setting, measurement, evaluation and cost accounting are required.

Another kind of accountability in education focuses on strengthening the voice of parents and students, as users, in the educational process. This can be facilitated by increasing consumer choice and/or by providing improved lay participation in the management process.

A third approach to accountability in education focuses on professional growth and development. This envisions a system of incentives to encourage and reward the growth and development of faculty members in their education of children.
IV. A COMMON DESIRE FOR IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY CAN BE MARSHALED TO HELP ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The drive for "accountability" in public schools is very real, and serious, and urgent, and it has to be responded to, not only for political reasons, but for the best interests of public education as well.

* The present means of accountability are not adequate . . . as there is little incentive for accountability built into the system. School attendance is compulsory, and each school is guaranteed that it will get the children within its attendance area. So, when "success" as far as organizational maintenance is guaranteed, there is very little pressure to worry how well you are doing. Accordingly, management tools to measure performance are not provided a family to register its evaluation by switching from one school to another.

* Accountability is now desired, and sought, by both the professional providers and the users. Teachers believe they are doing a good job. The lack of an assessment system denies them the opportunity to demonstrate it, against the cries of their critics. Parents want it before they will fully accept what the teachers say. It is also sought by outside groups, such as the legislators who must raise the money for the schools, and taxpayers groups who must pay the money.

* The clamor for greater accountability in education is both fiscal and programmatic. Clearly, the support for increased expenditures has met resistance from the general public. The public has not been shown what it has received from past increases, and Minnesota laws are asking for evidence of increased performance.

Broadly, the debate over accountability now raging reflects the existence, and the divergent points of view and interest, of what we have identified as the two principal "clients" for public education.

Society, which traditionally has been dominant, due to early objectives of the public school system to teach the language to immigrants, accommodate these immigrants into a common American value system, and train the population in the skills needed to operate in a modern industrial society, remains dominant today. Society's interest is expressed through state laws, by state and local boards of education, and the personnel they hire.

* The student and his family, as a primary client of our educational system, has been traditionally downgraded. It was not felt that the family knew best what kind of education was needed.

* At present, these two clients -- both legitimate interests -- are not accommodated in the system in a balanced way. The family -- as client -- has today what we must regard as an improperly weak voice in decisions. Many of the considerations which, years ago, properly made society's voice dominant, no longer apply. Nearly everyone speaks English. Skill levels are now much higher. We can afford, now, to allow people the luxury of greater choice regarding their vocation. We have the resources so that education need not be solely for work, but for leisure and personal development as well. All of
these things now argue for changes to give the family much more ability to influence what is provided by the educational system.

We conclude that the lack of adequate voice in systems decisions for the "family" client threatens now to do serious damage to education. Left on the outside, essentially, too many critics are simply "throwing rocks". Also, their exclusion leads to a kind of confrontation and struggle for total control over the schools, between the professionals and the citizens/consumers, in which one altogether wins and the other altogether loses, i.e., the proposals for "community control" in some cities, and for full-fledged voucher programs.

* We reject this notion of a totally competitive struggle for control and accountability . . . as undesirable and unnecessary. It should not be an either/or situation. Neither point of view is adequate, by itself. An assessment and accounting for the schools entirely by people who run them is, manifestly, unacceptable. On the other hand, an evaluation and accountability for schools entirely by parents and children is, equally, unacceptable. The proper evaluation must reflect a balance of the two, since both the family and the professionals are -- in the most literal sense -- involved in the education of the child.

* A middle way can -- and, now, must -- be found within which these two elements of a proper accountability system can work productively together. It must have as its central concept a "double" system, reflecting the double interests involved.

* This "double" accountability process must focus on the individual school. It is in the individual schools that children learn, not in districts. The focus of discussion about objectives and programs must be shifted, at least in part, downward from the districts. Boards and central administrative staff are too far removed from the classroom, where the teaching and learning occur. Parents, too, relate to particular schools, not to districts.

* This "double" accountability process must focus on a meaningful point of discussion with respect to the programs and expenditures in the individual schools. We would not want, and cannot afford, a vague, unstructured, chaotic and mutually frustrating discussion between parents and teachers. It must be focused, both in terms of the range of issues and in terms of the extent of time it occupies.

* The central problem that must be solved is how to set in motion the steps that will inevitably produce this desired double accountability system within individual schools in Minnesota -- or at least in its major local school systems.
V. OUR PROPOSAL FOR HELPING PUBLIC SCHOOLS BECOME MORE ACCOUNTABLE.

* Our proposal has a simple theme of helping schools develop programs of accountability, helpful both to the educators within schools and to the public they serve.

* We suggest that a useful and constructive program of accountability can be set in motion by requiring schools to report annually on their performance.

This report should include a professional assessment by teachers and school administrators, utilizing the results of testing and other performance data, and the opinions of the people served by the school.

And it should focus at the level of the individual school where students, parents, teachers and the community can participate in the fullest and most meaningful way.

* We strongly encourage schools to provide students more individualized treatment and alternatives for students.

* We would place greater responsibility for performance on those who can best affect student achievement, and provide them with powerful new tools to meet their responsibility.

* In the long run, we feel substantial savings can be achieved in school operations as a result of improved utilization of resources facilitated by the use of assessment information.

Specifically, we recommend:

1. **The Minnesota Legislature should require every school district in the state to establish a process, within each school, for the development of educational goals, and once established to prepare an annual assessment of progress toward the stated goals.**

   Flexibility in the structure of the process should be allowed so that school districts can build upon forms of community participation that already exist within the district, or in other ways structure the process to meet the wide variety of circumstances that exist from school to school.

   However, the statutory language should make it absolutely clear that students, parents and other individuals in the community, as well as the professional staff, must be involved in the process of goal-setting and evaluation. The initial statements of goals should be prepared within two years of the effective date of the legislation. The first annual assessment should be completed and made available to the community within 15 months of the time the initial goal statements are prepared.

   a. The professional staff of each school should have the primary responsibility for drafting specific goals for their building, but the process would encourage active community participation in the process prior to the submission to the board of education for adoption. At the secondary level, there must also be student participation.

   b. Insofar as possible (such as in elementary reading and mathematics) the school staff should prepare measurable objectives to assist in directing and measuring progress toward the goals.
c. Annual assessments of progress should include both professional and user evaluations. The professional staff evaluation would utilize and make public testing results and other performance data along with faculty interpretations and judgments. However, measurability through testing should not be considered an indicator of the importance of the goal. Lay evaluation should include the opinions of students, parents and other residents of the community served by the school.

d. Each school should utilize the goal-setting, objective-setting and evaluation process at the individual school level as a means of developing program and budget proposals.

* As rapidly as possible, procedures should be established by school districts whereby individual school budget and program proposals would be developed and recommended to the school board. These proposals should be developed in accordance with the procedures for faculty and community involvement prescribed for goal-setting and evaluation above.

* To encourage such activities, the Legislature should require each school district to report its expenditures on staffing and on non-salary expenditures by individual schools.

2. The Minnesota Legislature should expand the technical capacity of schools to establish the techniques of assessment and skills in management which make possible a meaningful "accounting" of performance.

We see this as absolutely required if the process of discussion we recommend within the individual school community is to have the informed content needed to make it productive.

a. To assist local school personnel the Minnesota Legislature should authorize and fund the creation of a Center for Management Assistance. The Center should be a semi-independent adjunct of the State Department of Education, reporting directly to the Commissioner and the State Board of Education.

b. In preparation for the 1973 legislative session, the State Board of Education should direct the State Department of Education to prepare a budget and specific educational proposal for the Center.

c. The Minnesota Legislature should assist school districts to establish meaningful objective-setting and assessment programs either providing a state reimbursement of local expenditures per pupil unit, or authorizing school districts to exceed their levy limits for direct assessment expenses.

3. Local school districts should make a concerted effort to meet individual student needs by designing their curriculum to maximize individualization of instruction and providing greater options for students to choose from. In developing specific program plans, the district should work closely with individual school advisory groups, and utilize the Center for Management Assistance for gaining information on successful experiences elsewhere.

a. Individualization of instruction should be promoted with regard to rate, method and objectives.

* We feel that individualization of rate is essential if student achievement and interest are to be maintained at desirable levels. Group programs of objective-setting and evaluation can be a valuable tool in moving to individualization of rate.
* Individualization of method is needed for many students with special learning characteristics. However, additional work needs to be done to better correlate learning characteristics to instructional methods.

* We are intrigued by using individualization of objectives as a means of contributing to the growth, creativeness and identity of students.

We encourage teachers and schools to increasingly bring students into their objective-setting process, both in terms of special objectives of the individual and the objectives of the group.

b. A concerted effort should be made to offer greater options for students within a classroom, within individual schools, among schools within a district, and on an inter-district basis.

The options provided should be designed to meet special educational needs of students, and counseling assistance should be provided to help students and parents choose wisely among options.

* School districts should provide students with alternative programs of learning. These may be options within a course or classroom, within a building, or within the district through optional transfer to other buildings to enroll in different programs.

* School districts should make greater use of cooperative agreements with adjacent and other nearby districts for providing joint alternative programs which would not generate sufficient enrollment to be practical on an individual school basis.

* The State Board of Education should give serious study and consideration to additional ways in which alternative programs might be made available on a multi-district basis.

We urge that the Council on Quality Education be given additional funding to assist local school districts with the start-up costs of proven alternative programs, as well as new experiments.

OUR PROPOSAL IN MORE DETAIL

1. Why does your proposal place so much emphasis on assessment?

Our emphasis on assessment is based on the simple assumption that human achievement is best facilitated by design, rather than by chance. We feel that a first and most fundamental step in improving classroom management entails the development of a more implicit understanding and statement of the intent of instruction. The more the teacher and the child are able to devote their efforts toward specific objectives, or things to be learned, the more likely the child is to achieve the objectives.

However, the real significance of educational objectives is achieved at the point where something actually happens to the child as a result of the objectives. We have come to understand that educators have dutifully developed, and school boards adopted, statements of goals and objectives for many of our schools in Minnesota. However, these statements usually are so broad and general that they have little meaning for the classroom teacher who would apply them to student activities.
Goal-setting, without assessment, will not necessarily be translated into student activity. If the intent of instruction is to be translated into activities of instruction, some compelling force is required . . . and we feel that assessment can provide such a force. Tests have a way of placing emphasis on the objectives they measure. Inherently, an instructor will try to teach toward those items that will measure achievement. Once course objectives are used to measure achievement, objectives become very important in curriculum planning and management, and more attention will be given to the validity and the quality of objectives statements.

Assessment can be a powerful tool to facilitate educational planning and measurement, but there is a real danger that the ability to measure an element of achievement may focus undue attention on the item at the expense of other, less easily measured elements. Clearly, measurability should not be confused with desirability. Neither should goal-setting and assessment be ignored because the precise measures are not available. Emphasis should be placed on both measuring what is planned to be accomplished and continuing to stress some objectives that cannot be measured very well.

2. How would you like to see your recommendations for goal-setting and assessment actually be employed in an individual school district?

We envision a process of faculty and community involvement in establishing goals and measurable objectives, planning and budgeting for activities to attain these goals and objectives, and measuring to see how well the activities do, in fact, accomplish the objectives. As a practical matter, the community can best function as a reactor to recommendations developed by the faculty. It is the faculty that has the working knowledge of the system needed to develop the specific course objectives and corresponding measurement of achievement, and to prepare most budget and program proposals. However, to the degree possible, this should be an open and public process with parental and community participation incorporated from the start.

Public meetings should be scheduled in each school as one means of soliciting community response and encouraging participation. Discussion generated at these public meetings would not only help with school planning, but it would also serve to improve the communication and understanding between school and community.

In addition to the public meetings, lay study committees might be set up on an ad hoc basis to work with the faculty on developing goal statements, preparing budget proposals, and evaluating student progress. Student surveys could be used to provide a valuable measure of their interest and their judgments on different aspects of educational performance.

Not all school districts will be able initially to move to develop specific, measurable objectives. The process can be most difficult, costly, and time-consuming. However, we envision the new Center for Management Assistance providing individual school districts substantial help through in-service training and by providing a Catalog of Objectives and corresponding test items from which the schools may choose.

Where specific, measurable objectives are established for one or more courses, or subject areas, we would like to see achievement-monitoring programs, such as developed in Hopkins, put in motion, with the assistance of the Center. At a minimum, such testing programs should include pre-testing of items not yet taught and post-testing of items for which the instruction has been completed.
Our committee was very impressed with the process of continuous achievement-monitoring (CAM) that has been developed in Hopkins and is also being used on a limited basis in a number of additional metropolitan area school districts. (See Appendix A for a description of the CAM program.

Basically, the CAM program provides three types of information on a continuing basis: What students know about a given topic before they study it, what they know about the topic just after they have studied it, and how well they retain what they have learned.

We are not necessarily endorsing the specific mechanisms of the CAM, but we do feel the Hopkins experiment clearly indicates this form of assessment can be extremely valuable to teachers and students. For example:

Teachers have been able to use the CAM data to do such things as: shorten the time spent on units students already know fairly well, work more intensively with students who do not know the material, review materials that students are forgetting, give more specialized treatment to students who are learning differently, compare different educational techniques to see which is most effective, discuss with students their progress in learning in the course, and change learning sequence to see if students learn more.

Students can use the data to go back and review forgotten material, learn well important objectives currently being studied, and spend more time on those matters they need to learn rather than those they already know.

Both teachers and students benefit from the compilation of written objectives, which is necessary in the development of achievement testing for a given course. The Center for Assessment Assistance would be able to provide large numbers of individual school districts with the necessary assistance they need to develop economically programs of achievement-monitoring for their own schools.

In addition to testing to see how well the school is able to generate student achievement, our proposal would also require the gathering of lay and professional judgments on school performance. Given the present state of the art of testing for the performance of the system, these "subjective" evaluations may be of greater value. Taken together, we are convinced that programs of testing and personal evaluations can provide quite good assessments of school performance at this time.

3. What is the advantage of focusing program and budget planning at the individual school level?

We feel that by involving the individual school faculty in planning its own programs and budget, resources will be channeled in ways likely to be used most effectively in the classroom. Teachers themselves are not only in a good position to determine the priority of needs in their school, but, more important, they are in the best position to know how different resources would actually be utilized with the students.

We should also keep in mind that community input at an individual school can be more meaningful than at the district level, because it gets closer to the affected parents and children. Once meaningful policy planning actually takes place at the individual school level, we feel certain that parents will be willing and eager to
participate in an effective, responsible way. On the other hand, when the individual family is not given an adequate voice in school planning, and left on the outside looking in, their participation will be limited to that of the role of critic. This is a very serious matter for schools. Parents and students are increasingly likely to register their disagreement with various school programs, and their needed support for other school programs then is not provided.

The exclusion of the student's family from school planning can even lead to a schism between the school management and the student-parent customers. Grass-roots friction can cause school boards to become polarized and stimulate proposals for "community control" or full-fledged voucher programs. By programming meaningful community involvement in individual school planning, small problems and dissatisfactions can be ironed out before they become large problems.

We also see budgeting and program planning at the individual school level as a means of encouraging innovation. To be most effective, innovation cannot be imposed from above. Innovation generally needs the full support and enthusiasm of those most directly involved. And we feel this is most likely to be the case at the individual school level, when both faculty and community are meaningfully involved at the initial--or an early--planning stage.

4. How would the preparation of budget proposals at an individual school actually take place?

Once the faculty and the community can reach an agreement on what is hoped to be accomplished, and a meaningful evaluation is made on how well the objectives are being met, the next logical step is for them to figure out how the job might be done better and/or with fewer resources. This brings them to the budgeting process where program decisions can be weighted in terms of cost benefit analysis. As an outgrowth of programs incorporating parental and community involvement, citizen input would be incorporated to some extent from the start. At a very minimum, the deliberations on proposed budget proposals should take place at open, public sessions, and at least some public hearings would be required before the proposal is submitted to the superintendent and the school board.

5. How would your proposal help school boards, as the elected representatives of the district's residents, to improve educational quality and make better use of educational resources?

We feel that by setting goals and objectives one is forced to select those things felt to be most important within the limits of time and resources. We do not feel that specific, measurable objectives can be established initially at the school board level . . . for the task is simply too great, and grass-roots participation would be possible only in the very smallest districts.

Our proposal would provide school boards with specific recommendations on objectives, programs and budgeting, along with indicators of school productivity . . . developed at the grass-roots level. It would then be up to the school board, with the assistance of the superintendent, to actually do the decision-making. This cannot, and should not, be otherwise. The trick is to improve the basis upon which the school board can make the policy decisions.
6. Do you support program budgeting for school districts?

Yes, we do. We strongly feel the school districts in Minnesota should move to program budgeting as a means to cost-benefit analysis of school programs. However, integral to cost-benefit analysis is a working knowledge of just what is wanted to be done, and a means of assessing how well it is done under different conditions, i.e., our stress on objective-setting and assessment.

A combination of assessment and program budgeting would allow a school district to undertake significant cost benefit analysis of alternative ways of achieving the desired educational outcomes. This is a goal toward which all school districts in the state should move as rapidly as possible.

Assisting school districts to develop programming, planning and budgeting systems (PPBS) is one of the functions we would have the Center for Management Assistance provide. We feel that school districts within the seven-county metropolitan area can move to program budgeting within a short period of time. A joint data processing system for metropolitan area school districts called Total Information for Education System (TIES) currently has a program under way which can provide any participating school district with expenditure breakdowns by program and is being designed to handle the bookkeeping mechanics of program budgeting.

7. Just what do you see as the role and function of the proposed Center for Management Assistance?

We envision the Center as being primarily concerned with providing leadership and training for school personnel in school districts desiring better information to manage learning activities. We realize that improved decision-making tools are also needed at the state level; however, we see the primary need for assistance at the level where learning actually takes place.

Our committee came to understand that the most important decisions affecting educational output, or performance, are those made by the student and the teacher within the classroom. In our proposal, teachers, parents and students would be given additional responsibility in school planning and management. Accordingly, classroom teachers, parents and students -- as key decision-makers in the educational process -- need better information and assistance if they are to facilitate student learning.

Assessment information is also needed by school administrators, school board members, state decision-makers ... in increasingly broader and less specific terms. Accordingly, we encourage the development and use of improved assessment data by all parties involved in the management of our public schools, and feel that the efforts at the different levels can be complementary and supportive of each other.

8. What specific functions would you assign the Management Assistance Center?

(1) The Center should provide in-service training assistance for school personnel in areas of objectives-setting, assessment and related management skills. We view this educational role of the Center as perhaps being its most important function. Unless a school faculty understands the development and uses of the new assessment programs, the payoff in improved decision-making will be substantially reduced.

(2) The Center should compile a Catalog of Objectives and corresponding test items for individual school districts and their personnel to choose from. The
items in the catalog would be a compilation of those developed by individual school districts in Minnesota, items from the National and State Assessment Programs, and items developed and compiled in other parts of the country.

(3) The Center should arrange to provide appropriate computer programs and data processing equipment for processing tests and related assessment data. We do not necessarily feel that the Center should furnish the service directly, but it should have the responsibility for making sure that the service is available. TIES provides such assistance for participating schools in the metropolitan area.

(4) The Center should administer the State Assessment Program for the State Department of Education on a contractual basis. Through such an arrangement the Center could offer local school districts, on a fee basis, an opportunity to have elements of the State Assessment Program administered on a comprehensive basis in their district. Under present plans, the State Assessment Program would not gather enough data within any single school district for the district to use the information for making its own internal evaluation. However, if the state assessment tests were made available to individual school districts, they could provide a valuable tool in measuring limited areas of achievement for the individual school, relative to the rest of the state.

(5) The Center should provide leadership and training for school administrators in the use of program, planning and budgeting systems. The real value of program budgeting is directly related to the understanding by the administrative personnel in a school district of PPBS and its uses. This is why the Center's leadership and training role is so important if significant cost-benefit analysis is to be achieved.

(6) The Center should work closely with the first school districts developing a PPBS system in Minnesota to insure the maximum degree of transferability to other school districts. Because of the great potential of PPBS in facilitating cost-benefit analysis, we would like to see the Council on Quality Education give special consideration to early applications by school districts for developing model PPBS programs for Minnesota schools.

(7) The Center should provide a library of experimental programs designed to aid schools in choosing programs to accomplish their objectives. These studies would be a rich source of objectives and assessment tools, and the Center could collect data from assessment reports as they come in for the purpose of showing how achievement varies from program to program.

9. What do you have in mind when you recommend that the State Board of Education study additional ways in which alternative programs might be made available?

Our committee found this concept to be both exciting and difficult. Because of its potential, we feel it warrants further study and analysis. We see a potential for using extra staff or facility capacity available in some metropolitan districts to generate new alternatives on a multi-district basis.

* Enrollment projections should be studied to determine the extent to which some metropolitan school districts can expect to have excess school capacity. During the last year, a number of metropolitan area school districts have come to
realize that we can expect decreased enrollments, resulting in excess school capacity. On the other hand, some metropolitan area school districts in developing suburbs can expect increased enrollments, with accompanying need for new facilities and staff.

Ways should be explored by which school districts with surplus capacity might offer alternative educational programs that would be available to students in other nearby school districts. We feel that an element of competition among school districts would be healthy, and that neighborhood schools, as well as alternative schools, might be more responsive to the students and parents, as clients in the system. We are also convinced that an element of properly structured competition among schools in the metropolitan area has the potential for establishing a wholesome, mutually desirable balance between societal and family control.

Our committee went so far as to construct a model of how such a wholesome balance might be achieved . . . but we concluded that at present there are too many unanswered questions and problems that must be studied further.

Our model would have the Legislature authorize any school district in the metropolitan area to develop "magnet school programs" which would be available as options to students on a multi-district basis:

-- Inter-district "magnet school programs" would have to be developed to meet special educational needs and objectives.

-- Districts desiring to provide a multi-district "magnet school program" would have to submit a specific proposal to the State Board of Education.

-- The State Board of Education would be charged to review each application on its own merits and approve only those applications found to be desirable in their total educational impact.

-- First preference would be given to students whose attendance would contribute to a better social, economic and racial mix in the program.

-- The opportunity to participate would be subject only to the approval of the child's parents.

-- Multi-district "magnet school programs" would initially receive a three-year certification from the State Board of Education, and would be subject to annual review and re-certification thereafter.

Many of the unanswered questions are basic, and must be carefully analyzed before action on implementing legislation should be considered.

* Serious questions exist as to whether parents would choose to transfer their children to other school districts for educational reasons, rather than for social or racial reasons.

* Additional thought must be given on how the transfer of funds from one school district to another could best be handled.

* Additional thought must be given as to the process of providing transportation for students in such an areawide system.
10. Are you trying to generate more new alternative programs at the expense of programs that have already proven themselves?

No, we are not. Our committee was very concerned about innovation for its own sake. We sensed that too often public schools try to develop entirely new, or substantially different, experimental programs in the name of innovation ... and in order to increase their chances of state or federal assistance.

We would rather see alternative programs built upon the successful experiences of other districts. That is one reason why we recommend that the Center for Assessment Assistance provide a library on the experiences elsewhere with different experimental programs, and why we urge the Council on Quality Education to give additional funding to help with the start-up costs of proven alternatives.

11. If individual schools are given greater autonomy, how can we be assured that adequate attention is given to basic skills and fundamental societal needs?

We feel the basic standards must be established by the state and individual school districts in the area of basic skills and fundamental societal needs. We have not attempted to define what are the fundamental societal needs to be met by schools; rather, we feel that the Legislature and the State Board of Education should periodically reassess the scope of responsibility they have delegated to our public schools, and decide what learning is so important that it should be required for all educable children in the state.

Specifically, we feel the Minnesota Legislature should direct every school district in the state to establish minimum achievement standards for their students in the areas of basic skills and fundamental societal needs. In setting their own standards, individual school districts would be required to equal, or exceed, minimum statewide standards that would be set by the State Board of Education. The State Department of Education would have reviewed a district's third-grade reading standard, for example, to be sure that it was, in fact, up to the state's mandated minimum standard.

The effect of this form of standards would be to make time, not achievement, the variable in meeting basic standards. The school system would be under a degree of pressure to ensure that each child continues to receive training and assistance in the area of basic skills until the child has mastered the skills to a satisfactory degree of competence. Likewise, the child and his family would have a more specific goal in the area of basic skills to work toward.

We would make each school district responsible for measuring student achievement in meeting the standards. By doing so, we intend to place the responsibility where it properly belongs ... with the local school district and its personnel. Teachers would not be pressured to get their students to cram for any state test, or anything of the sort. But, clearly, a direct and specific responsibility would be placed on the school and its personnel to give a high priority to fundamentals for the individual child until he has acquired the necessary learning tools to function in a complex, technical and changing society.

We realize that certain students do not have the capacity to meet the basic standards and that special provisions should be made for them. However, particularly in the case of such students, we feel it is critical that the instruction they receive be geared to their level of achievement.
12. What changes, if any, in school staffing might develop from your proposal?

We feel that school districts should provide greater opportunities for professional growth and development of staff. The process of developing systems of objectives-setting and assessment -- coupled with teacher participation in developing school budget proposals -- will require greater management responsibility on the part of the instructional staff. Accordingly, the school board should encourage and reward those individuals assuming greater responsibility.

In 1969 the Citizens League issued a recommendation for establishing a differentiated system of staffing for public schools in Minnesota. As schools develop programs of cost-benefit analysis, objectives-setting and assessment, we hope that this will evolve naturally into new and improved staffing patterns.

We also feel that school districts should develop programs or strategies for better utilizing parent interest and talent by enlisting a parent-student-educator team approach to schooling. We realize, of course, that not all parents want to become involved in their child's learning; therefore, we recommend that the degree of parental involvement in the coordination of learning activities should be a matter of parental preference negotiated between the school and the family. To encourage those parents who are interested, schools should attempt to schedule conferences and discussions with parents at times convenient to the parents.

13. Did your committee discuss teacher and administrator tenure and, if so, what did you conclude?

We feel that there is a management problem concerning tenure as it relates to certified people in supervisory positions.

Our committee concluded that multi-year contracts should be substituted for "tenure in position" for school administrators. It should be kept in mind that teacher tenure is a process to protect certified educators in our schools from being fired without good educational justification. Conditions -- past and present -- require that a clear process be provided to protect teachers from unjust dismissal. However, we feel that the process should change with the responsibilities of the individual.

Tenure should be retained for the employment of administrators within the system . . . but not necessarily as an administrator or on administrative salary. This recommendation would provide all certified educators with the protection of the tenure provisions with regard to employment within the district. It simply would reflect that, as part of management, they should be subject to removal from their policy positions for policy reasons.

To provide an element of job security in a given position, supervisory and administrative personnel might be given rotating contracts of three years or more. These contracts could be renewed annually, giving the individual administrator at least two years' job security at any given time.
14. Why didn't you recommend an educational voucher system* ... as a means of making education more accountable to the individual students and their parents?

Clearly, we did find that the most significant way for making public education more accountable to the individual family is to provide the family with a practical choice among several alternatives. We looked with considerable interest at the concept of a voucher system* and concluded that a "voucher system" would place primary control in the hands of the family ... perhaps at the expense of society.

We feel that educational alternatives should be provided, but that society has a fundamental interest in protecting the quality of the education provided and insuring that certain basic societal needs are met. As long as public education is under the direct control of an elected school board, protections for society are automatically built in. Under a "voucher system" such would not be the case.

We view the concept of providing intra- and inter-district alternatives as a means of gaining many of the advantages of vouchers, while preserving an adequate degree of public control. Perhaps, at some later date when the objectives for public education are more clearly established, and achievement can be measured more precisely, the public interest can be adequately protected under a voucher plan.

15. Are you supportive of the current State Assessment Program?

We feel that the current State Assessment Program undertaken by the State Department of Education is a positive step to provide state policymakers with important information they need in making educational decisions for the state. However, it should be kept in mind that this is a very modest program designed only to provide data to be used by the State Board of Education and the State Legislature. While there are very important decisions made by these two bodies, education in Minnesota primarily is managed at the local level.

We would like to see the state assessment efforts treated as one part of a larger effort to provide relevant data to improve school management at all levels.

* An educational voucher system is a concept that would allow parents to use public money to buy an education for their children at any school they choose — public, private or parochial. Parents of all school-age children would be given a voucher roughly representing their child's share of the public school's budget. The voucher would be turned in at the school chosen, and the school would turn it in to a governmental agency to collect its money.
16. How expensive is the local goal-setting and assessment likely to be?

We recommend that the Legislature either provide a state reimbursement of local expenditures, or authorize the local school districts to exceed their regular levy limits by a modest amount for direct objective-setting and assessment expenditures.

We anticipate that most school districts will not be in a position where they can immediately move to an extensive objectives-setting and assessment program. And since we recommend that the additional funds only be made available for direct expenditures, the initial costs should not be great. In the long run, we feel substantial savings can be achieved in school operations as a result of improved utilization of resources facilitated by the use of the assessment information.

In the committee's deliberation, it was pointed out that an expenditure of at least 1% for research and development is considered essential by most industries. If this criteria were applied to education in Minnesota public schools, this would mean an average expenditure of about $10 per pupil unit. While we do not anticipate an increase in expenditures up to this magnitude, the programs we have recommended would represent a major increase in educational research and development for most school districts and the state itself.

17. Will the funds for goal-setting and assessment be adequate?

While we urge the state to provide local school districts an adequate funding means for their goal-setting and assessment programs, we realize that some school districts may desire more ambitious programs than the additional revenue to be provided will support . . . even with the Center for assistance. However, we feel that if a school district really wants to improve its decision-making process in the way we have suggested in this report . . . sufficient funds can be found.

It might mean that funds would need to be taken from other areas of lesser priority (that is part of what improved management is all about) . . . and it may also mean additional work for some faculty members, without comparable additional pay. However, it should be kept in mind that this is often the case with new or expanded programs.

We strongly urge that school districts should carefully appraise their current standardized testing programs, and consider whether they should re-allocate the use of some of their testing expenditures for assessment programs geared more specifically to the program or "group" evaluation needs of the district.

* If a school district finds that its current testing program is appropriate for evaluating learning activities within the district, the school district should make the results public and use them for making program decisions.

* If current testing programs are not appropriate for making program decisions, new assessment programs should be explored.

During our deliberations we found that Minnesota schools now give a considerable amount of standardized testing. However, those tests given are designed to be
used to evaluate how individual students compare with a large group of students, and not to evaluate the performance of a school system.

This is not intended to imply that the current standardized testing programs do not provide a valuable service. They should continue to be used, as needed, to help understand and counsel individual students.

Un fortunately, the test results often are put to little use in counseling the child, assisting teachers in their work with the child, or evaluating school programs. (See Appendix B for a more detailed explanation of current testing procedures and problems.)
VI. THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS PRESENTLY A COMPLEX AND VARIED PROCESS

As our committee studied the roles of the various parties with responsibility for managing our public school system in Minnesota, it became apparent that the management or governance of public schools is a complex and varied process. We found out that not only is the legal responsibility split among a number of actors, but that the actors themselves have differing views as to how the system operates and who exercises what responsibilities.

Nowhere in the Federal Constitution can there be found any reference to education. Historically, public elementary and secondary education has been perceived as a function reserved to the states and their political subdivisions.

A. The Minnesota Legislature is charged to establish a general and uniform system of public schools.

The Minnesota Constitution is silent on educational programs and policies. However, in Article VIII, Section 1, it reads: The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools.

In the course of our deliberations, two aspects of the constitutional wording frequently were called to our attention by resource persons. The first centers on the meaning of the phrase "general and uniform system of public schools". It is not clear how much local diversity of educational programs can be provided or allowed and still conform to the constitutional mandate.

The second aspect concerns the reference to the "stability of a republican form of government" as being the reason for requiring the Legislature to provide a system of public schools. This suggests to some people that schools are constitutionally required to provide some instruction in civics.

Operating within the broad constitutional mandate, the Legislature has nearly complete freedom in the manner in which it chooses to have public schools organized and managed. For example, the Legislature could go so far as to abolish school districts in the state. The Legislature, however, has historically delegated most of the responsibility for managing the public school system to other actors in the process: The State Board of Education, the Commissioner and the State Department of Education, local school boards, and local school district personnel.

State law in Minnesota says very little about educational programs and instructional areas. However, state law does require instruction in such areas as morals, psychology, alcohol, and drugs. State law also requires schools to teach the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

In 1971, the Legislature assumed greater control of education by increasing state aid significantly and enacting effective levy limits. The amount of state aid to local school districts was increased from an average of about 43% to about 70% of the operating or maintenance costs of public education.
School districts were limited to about $87.00 per pupil unit expenditure increase for the biennium. (Higher spending districts were indirectly limited to increases somewhat less than the $87.00.) By significantly increasing state aids and enacting effective levy limits, the Legislature has assumed, to a very substantial degree, the basic decision of how much money will be spent on public schools.

The State Board of Education has broad power to interpret statutory provisions, and to formulate rules and regulations to enforce the state code. This includes the authority and responsibility for the formulation and alteration of school district boundaries. The rules of the State Board have the force of law, and a local school district would have to prove in court that the State Board had exceeded its powers in order for a local school district to get out from under the State Board's regulation.

The Commissioner of Education serves as the executive officer and secretary of the State Board of Education. Minnesota law gives the Commissioner a degree of rule-making authority on his own. However, our committee was advised that no Commissioner of Education has ever used this authority to establish his own rules. Rather, commissioners have gone through the State Board of Education whenever they have desired any specific rules to be established.

The State Department of Education has considerable responsibility for enforcing the compliance by local school districts of state statutes, rules, regulations and notes. In some cases, the state becomes involved in very detailed aspects of local school management. For example, local school districts cannot enter into contracts for busing students or renting facilities without the state's approving the specific contract. However, generally the department's regulatory function involves prescribing minimum inputs school districts must provide and certain administrative procedures they must follow.

Local school boards have primary responsibility for managing the public school system in Minnesota. As our committee studied the governance process in our public schools, we came to understand that the local school boards have been granted considerable authority and power to manage our public schools . . . perhaps more than most people think. For example, the Legislature has given local school boards authority to formulate their own curriculum and select textbooks to be used in the district. This is true to a greater extent than is found in many other states.
B. Considerable flexibility is possible in managing public schools in Minnesota

The Commissioner and State Board of Education have used their authority primarily to insure that minimum educational inputs are provided. Although the Legislature has given them rather broad power to interpret the statutory provisions regulating the public school system in the state, and to formulate rules and regulations to enforce them... we learned that traditionally they have not opted to exercise the full range of their authority to decide educational policy.

Rather, they have left for the individual school district to decide its own educational objectives and standards of performance. One State Board member suggested that all states are currently in a period of transition in which state educational agencies tend to be moving from routine regulatory functions to providing active leadership in improving education. She explained that she feels that this leadership in achieving the goals established for the state can best be achieved by providing incentives to local school districts, and assistance.

Taken literally, some of the rules and regulations of the State Department of Education appear highly prescriptive. However, we learned that individual school districts are generally able to work around the restrictive aspects of state regulations... when they have an educational reason for doing so. This may be true to a greater extent for school districts in the metropolitan area than it is for most school districts outstate.

School superintendents often are expected to become the real educational policy leader of the district. While the school board has the authority and responsibility for deciding policy issues for the district, we have learned that as a practical matter the school board's most important decision affecting policy is often their selection of a school superintendent.

The superintendent often becomes the real policy leader... in part due to the time constraints on the part-time, essentially non-paid board... but also due to the status of the superintendent as a professional educator. Therefore, the degree to which a school board actually plans and directs the educational program of the district depends on both the will of the board itself and the direction provided by the superintendent.

Within the school district a great deal of flexibility is also possible. The school principal's policy responsibility varies substantially from one district to another. In some school districts the principals assume an active role as an educational policy leader, while in other districts the principals are more likely to function primarily as disciplinarians and business managers.

Much of what happens in the learning process is subject to the policies and decisions of the individual classroom teacher as he or she interacts with students. For example, the teacher largely determines the method of instruction, the environment within the classroom, the internal allocation of class time, and the grading of students. On the other hand, there is a great deal of variation as to the role given the classroom teacher in selecting learning materials and making basic curriculum decisions.
Many factors work together to impose considerable rigidity in how public schools are actually managed.

While most of the parties that help manage our system of public schools have a rather broad range of discretion, few go very far in exercising that discretion. In addition, our committee has learned of a number of factors that tend to limit the degree of management flexibility in the system.

Inertia may well be the strongest single force affecting the management of our public schools today. For example:

* The similarity of arrangements for deciding teacher salaries by all school districts in the state tends to discourage alternative staffing patterns. Teachers receive additional pay on a salary schedule for both additional credit hours of academic training at accredited institutions of higher education and/or in-service training, and additional hours of teaching experience. Salaries for first year teachers with only a bachelor's degree run from $6,700 in Verdi, Minnesota, to $7,825 in Richfield. Maximum salaries run from $8,400 for teachers in Browns Valley, Minnesota, to $18,772 for teacher with a doctorate and 14 years teaching experience in Bloomington. Within the metropolitan area and the larger school districts outstate, the maximum salary for classroom teachers tends to run at least double that of the minimum salary on the schedule.

* Within the metropolitan area, salary expenditures run from 75% to 90% of the total maintenance or operating budget of a school district. The median salary of $578 per pupil unit is currently spent on instructional staff salaries alone. This compares with $28 for administrative costs, $44 for instructional supply costs, $96 for the operation and maintenance of the physical plant, and $39 for transportation.

* Almost all school districts in the state organize their time in a similar fashion. The school year runs from September to June, during which 175 to 183 days of classes are held. At this point, only one elementary school (located in Mora, Minnesota) has broken from the traditional 9-months school year pattern. However, a number of additional school districts presently have similar plans under consideration.

A typical daily schedule for a classroom teacher includes 8 hours spent in the school, of which 5½ hours are spent with students in the classroom. Most instruction is provided by a single teacher in a self-contained classroom with 25 to 30 students. At the elementary level, many school districts use specialists in such areas as music, art, and physical education.

* Our schools do not have an adequate information base for making decisions to change their procedures. At present, there is very little information generated in most school districts as to how one educational procedure works in comparison with another. Minnesota has been a leader in experimenting with such things as modular scheduling, team teaching, and the use of teacher aides. However, adequate data has not been developed to show how the results differ from using conventional methods.
Teacher tenure provisions . . . particularly as they apply to supervisory personnel . . . tend to reduce management flexibility in education. There are two statutes providing for tenure of certified educational personnel in the public school system: "The Teacher Tenure Act for Cities of the First Class" and "The Continuing Contract Law" which applies to the balance of the school districts in the state.

Under the Continuing Contract Law, all certified personnel are given tenure once they have been hired for the third consecutive year, of which the first probationary year can be completed within any school district in the state. The tenure of the employee applies to the position in which the employee has most recently completed a full year with satisfactory performance. For example, a superintendent will acquire tenure for the position of superintendent of the district once he begins his second year in the position . . . provided that he has had at least one year's experience as a certified school employee within some school district in the state.

The Teacher Tenure Act for the three cities of the first class exempts the superintendents from the tenure provisions and requires one additional year probationary experience for all other certified persons before they acquire tenure.

While there are procedures for removing tenured classroom teachers or administrators for such things as incompetency, inefficiency, or improper conduct . . . they are seldom used, and administrators can only be demoted for policy reasons if there is mutual agreement.

D. Our public schools are not structured to be adequately responsive to the desires of the student and his parents.

There are few aspects of public service that people care more about, or watch more closely, than the education of their children. We have found that nearly everyone has an attitude or opinion about how well our public schools are doing. Some parents are very pleased with the education their children are getting, while other parents are quite dissatisfied with school performance.

Public schools come under considerable pressure from the community when parents and students become dissatisfied with some aspect of school programs. If an individual classroom teacher does not do his or her job, pressure can be brought from a number of directions: from the teacher's peers, from supervisors in the system, from the school board, directly or indirectly from the pupils and their parents, and through the political process. Influence through the political process can include such things as press coverage and editorial comments, action by citizen groups, and public positions by elected officials other than members of the school board.

Within a public school system, students and their parents are provided with some important choices in educational programs. High school students are given a number of elective course offerings to choose from. Alternative programs and methods of instruction are available to parents in several metropolitan area school districts.
However, the parents often are only able to exercise a measure of control over the kind of education their children will receive through their selection of a place of residence. Within a metropolitan area, the perceived quality of a school program frequently has a major effect on a family's choice of residence... but it is limited significantly by a family's economic capacity. By and large, students and parents are captive clients of the school that is provided for them.
BACKGROUND

The League has a long and continuing interest in public education, going back to its founding in 1952. This particular study and report is an outgrowth of a number of recent studies on school problems.

In 1969 the League conducted a study on "Stretching the School Salary Dollar," which recommended differentiated staffing. This was followed by studies on state aid to public schools, teacher-school board bargaining, and St. Paul school facilities.

Members of the Board of Directors came to recognize the need for improved planning and management for public schools and, accordingly, charged the committee to:

"Review present efforts to establish objectives and measure and evaluate the performance of elementary and secondary schools, and the need to improve such activities. Consider what information is presently available and what information could be made available in new or improved programs of objectives-setting and measurement and evaluation. The committee should assess the roles of local school districts, associations of school districts, and the State Department of Education, both in setting and reaching these objectives."

Membership

We were fortunate to have the active participation of 47 members of the committee. Four committee members teach at the elementary or secondary level; three are school administrators; seven are professional educators in other capacities, such as research, planning and counseling; four serve on local school boards; and several are involved in education at the University level. However, the common element of all members was their interest and concern as citizens, parents and former students.

The committee was chaired by Roger Palmer, Vice President and Comptroller, First National Bank of Saint Paul. Staff assistance was furnished by Calvin Clark, Citizens League research associate, and clerical assistance by Jean Bosch of the League's clerical staff. In addition to Chairman Palmer, the following members served on the committee:

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<th>John W. Adams</th>
<th>Roger L. Hale</th>
<th>Joe Nathan</th>
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<td>Josef L. Altholz</td>
<td>Sandra Hale</td>
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<td>John E. Cummings</td>
<td>Katherine Howard</td>
<td>Tamara G. Root</td>
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<td>F. Kieth Emery</td>
<td>E. Gary Joselyn</td>
<td>Lynn Truesdell III</td>
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<td>Richard Faunce</td>
<td>Eldon G. Kaul</td>
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<td>Carol Freeman</td>
<td>W. C. Knaak</td>
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<td>William S. Clew</td>
<td>Dorothy Lambertson</td>
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<td>Kitty Goodrich</td>
<td>Sally Lehmann</td>
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<td>Howard M. Guthmann</td>
<td>Stephen C. Lundin</td>
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<td>Robert Miller</td>
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Committee Activity

During the course of our deliberations numerous resource persons met and discussed various aspects of the problem with our committee. The following persons, listed in chronological order, generously shared their thoughts and opinions with the committee:

Robert Bonine, Chairman, Governor's Advisory Committee on Education for the '70s.
Shawne Fitzgerald, recent high school graduate in Minneapolis
Kitty Goodrich, a St. Paul mother, active in St. Paul League of Women Voters' education studies
Caryl Pierson, President, Kenwood PTA in Minneapolis
Katherine Howard, a Minneapolis mother
Mary Lou Williams, a mother who serves as the north Minneapolis to the Triple T program
Ann Anderson, a mother who has been active in Crystal-New Hope League of Women Voters' committees on education
John Morris, a counselor at Eisenhower Senior High School, Hopkins
Dr. William M. Ammentorp, Division of Educational Administration, University of Minn.
Gerald Christensen, State Planning Director
Fred Zimmerman, Planning Director & Controller, Control Data Institute
Peter Popovich, St. Paul attorney specializing in school law
Dr. E. Raymond Peterson, Assistant Commissioner of Education for the Division of Instruction, State Department of Education

State Representative Salisbury Adams, member, House Education Committee
State Senator Robert J. Brown, member, Senate Education Committee
State Senator Harold Krieger, Chairman, Senate Education Committee
State Representative Martin Sabo, member, House Education Committee
State Senator Robert Tennesen, member, Senate Education Committee
Howard Casmey, State Commissioner of Education
Mary Jo Richardson, member of the State Board of Education
Louis Smerling, member, State Board of Education
Dr. Lloyd C. Nielsen, Superintendent, Roseville Public Schools
Howard E. Wallin, member, Roseville School Board
Victoria Jacobson, Roseville Reading Director
Dr. Stanley Gilbertson, Curriculum Director, Bloomington Public Schools
Leila Anderson, Coordinator of Resource Centers, Bloomington Public Schools
Nicholas Duff, teacher, Minnetonka Public Schools
Richard Wakefield, teacher, Roseville Public Schools
Robert Arnold, Executive Director, Minnesota Association of Elementary School Principals
David Meade, Executive Director, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals
Bruce Montgomery, principal, Hancock Elementary School, St. Paul
Charles Bianchi, principal Riverside Elementary School, Bloomington
Norman Olson, principal, Marshall Middle School, Marshall, Minnesota
Jerry Larson, principal, North Junior High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota
Dr. Robert Whaley, principal John Marshall High School, Rochester, Minnesota
Dr. John B. Davis, Jr., Superintendent, Minneapolis Public Schools
Dr. George P. Young, Superintendent, St. Paul Public Schools
Dr. W. C. Knaak, Superintendent, Vocational-Technical School District 916
W. A. Wettergren, Executive Secretary, Minnesota School Boards Association
Dr. Rollin M. Dennistoun, member, Rosemount School Board
Howard M. Guthmann, member, St. Paul Board of Education
R. F. Kennedy, former member, Edina School Board
Dale Dunham, Minneapolis North Pyramid Advisory Committee
Jean Drucker, Past President, St. Paul Schools Committee
Neil Gustafson, member, Minneapolis Citizens Committee on Public Education
Barton Hempel, Concerned Bloomington Taxpayers Association
Mary Jacobson, Past President, Minnesota PTA
Joan Sorenson, St. Paul Coalition for Better Schools
Dr. Glenn Bracht, professor, University of Minnesota
Dr. E. Gary Joselyn, Statewide Testing Program
Dr. James Kent, Director, Minneapolis Southeast Alternatives Experimental Schools Program
Dr. Donald Sensim, Coordinator for Research and Evaluation, Hopkins School District
Daniel Eckberg, Hopkins Continuous Achievement Monitoring Program
Dr. Allen D. Calvin, chairman and president of the board, Behavioral Research Laboratories, Inc., Menlo Park, California
Dr. Kenneth Tolo, School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota
Rev. Bryan Peterson, Minneapolis Citizens Committee for the Educational Voucher System
Dr. Jane Rachner, former teacher and advocate of the voucher system
Dr. Spencer W. Myers, former superintendent and present consultant, Edina School Dist.
Kenneth J. Anderson, management consultant, Peat, Marwick & Mitchell
Dr. Jack Merwin, Dean, University of Minnesota College of Education, and initial staff director of the National Assessment Program
Dr. John Adams, Director, Minnesota State Assessment Program
Dr. John Manning, professor of reading instruction, University of Minnesota

The committee received excellent cooperation and assistance from various organizations and agencies. For example, Dr. Allen B. Calvin, President of Behavioral Research Laboratories, made a special trip to the Twin Cities to meet with the committee. Others who were most helpful are the Minnesota School Boards Association, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, the Minnesota Association of Elementary School Principals, and the State Department of Education.
APPENDIX A: CAM HISTORY AT HOPKINS*

The original concept of Comprehensive Achievement Monitoring was developed at Stanford University by William Gorth and Dwight Allen with the support of funds from the Kettering Foundation.

With the development of modular scheduling at Hopkins High School in the late 1960's, several departments became involved in writing behavioral objectives and were interested in various ways of using them in the classroom. A Hopkins Algebra II team became interested in CAM and, during the 1968-69 school year, arranged to send their test data to Stanford receiving their computer printouts by mail about a week later. This procedure was continued during the following year and the teachers who had used CAM in the classroom decided they wished to continue to develop the program and expand it to other subject areas.

In April 1970, these teachers, with the approval of the Hopkins Superintendent and School Board, applied to the Division of Planning and Development of the Minnesota Department of Education for a Title III grant to support the development of CAM in Minnesota as an evaluation service to students and teachers. The application was approved and the subsequent three year Title III grants were for $103,000 in 1970-71, $96,799 in 1971-72, and $88,319 in 1972-73 the third and final year of federal support to this innovative program (Title III projects must apply annually and are funded for a maximum of three years). Plans are now under way for the continuation of CAM services in Hopkins in the future by integrating it into the regular long range evaluation program of the district.

During the first year of the project (1970-71) approximately 2,000 students were involved in the program. Besides the original Algebra II team, CAM was tried by a 10th grade social studies team, a 3rd and 4th grade math team and a 12th grade senior math team.

Ten thousand students and 150 classroom teachers were involved in C.A.M. testing during the 1971-72 school year. Subject areas included English, social studies, mathematics, reading, science, and music. In one subject or another, it had been tried with students from 3rd grade through 12th grade. In this second year of the project, the Hopkins Evaluation Center serviced teaching teams in nine other school districts in using the program. At least one CAM team was involved from each of the following cooperating districts: Bloomington, DeLaSalle, Edina, Minneapolis Edison, Richfield, Rosemount, Roseville, Shakopee, and St. Louis Park.

This, the third and final year of the Title III project, will concentrate on further expansion to additional teams which have become interested, and on planning for institutionalization of the program in Hopkins and elsewhere where teachers have decided the program is useful and operable. Specifically, the Hopkins Evaluation Center is assisting the cooperating schools in getting the program independently operational in their own districts. The facilitating computer programs have been operating for the past year at TIES (Minnesota School Districts Data Processing Joint Board) which is planning to make CAM processing available to their 28 member metropolitan area school districts as a regular service. The CAM computer programs have also been run at the University of Minnesota Computer Center.

* This historical summary was prepared for this report by E. Daniel Eckberg, CAM Project Director.
One key ingredient of the teacher interest in and support for this concept seems to be that it is "their program." CAM is operated as a service to teachers who have been directly involved by writing and choosing specific objectives for their courses and three to ten test items to measure the attainment of the objectives. Because the data is theirs and goes directly back to them for their analysis and their own evaluation, it seemingly has not been perceived by most participants as a great threat. This philosophy of directly servicing the teachers with data for their own use -- for them to share as they desire -- is a key one as far as the Hopkins Evaluation Center staff is concerned. The Evaluation Center has data to indicate that the teachers in this structure can read the CAM data, do use it with students and have made changes in their courses based on CAM results. Participants have been volunteers and the project staff has relied upon the enthusiasm of CAM using teachers to spread the program to others. It is felt that the above service philosophy encourages teachers to develop CAM as their own program for their own use in continual research and development of better learning -- rather than to view it as the imposition of an external evaluation for administrative or supervisory needs.
APPENDIX B:

THE MINNESOTA STATE-WIDE TESTING PROGRAMS*

The Student Counseling Bureau at the University of Minnesota administers two State-Wide Testing Programs as a service to Minnesota secondary schools and post-high school institutions.

The Minnesota State-Wide Testing Program. In this program all Minnesota high school juniors take a scholastic aptitude test (The Minnesota Scholastic Aptitude Test) and complete a questionnaire dealing with family background and post-high school plans. High schools furnish student grade point averages which are converted to high school percentile ranks. Minnesota high schools and post-high school institutions thus have a measure of scholastic aptitude and a record of high school achievement for all seniors at the beginning of the school year for use in individual and institutional planning and decision-making.

The program has been in existence since the early 1930's and more is probably known about the scholastic abilities and patterns of attendance at post-high school institutions of Minnesota students than of students of any other state. The program is supported financially by the Association of Minnesota Colleges (the principal sponsor), the Minnesota State Department of Education Divisions of Guidance and Vocational Education and the University of Minnesota. There is no charge to students or schools.

The scholastic aptitude test will be phased out after the 1972-73 school year and replaced with another instrument, probably one with more of an achievement orientation.

The Minnesota High School State-Wide Testing Program. This program offers a number of standardized tests of different types from which high schools can select for use in their every-pupil testing program. There is no State-Wide program for elementary schools in Minnesota. Schools pay for this testing service on a per-pupil tested basis. Four types of standardized tests are included in the offerings:

a) scholastic aptitude
b) achievement
c) vocational interest
d) personality

STANDARDIZED TEST USAGE IN MINNESOTA SCHOOLS

The following table shows the percentage of Minnesota schools administering tests of various kinds in grade levels K-12.

* This summary of standardized testing of Minnesota students was prepared by Dr. E. Joselyn, School Testing Consultant, State-Wide Testing Program and member of the committee.
Table 1
Percent of Minnesota Schools Using Standardized Tests of Various Kinds, by Grade Level, 1971-72

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<tr>
<td>Reading Readiness</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) In addition to MSAT which is taken by nearly 100% of Minnesota juniors.
(b) Other than tests included in the schools instructional reading program materials.
(c) Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1%.

External Testing Programs. Many Minnesota juniors and seniors participate in one or more of the national pre-college testing programs. The scores provided by these programs are intended to provide information for both students and institutions to assist in decision-making in areas such as college selection and admission, scholarships and placement after admission. Table 2 shows the approximate number of students who wrote the examination in 1971-72.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Number of Minnesota juniors and seniors participating in National Pre-college Testing Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American College Testing Program</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Entrance Examination Board</td>
<td>9,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Examination</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, approximately 19,000 students took the General Aptitude Test Battery. This battery is controlled by the Department of Manpower Services and is primarily used for students going into vocational or trade education after high school.
DECISIONS ABOUT INDIVIDUALS VS. DECISIONS ABOUT GROUPS OR PROGRAMS

The purpose of any testing is to provide information to assist in the decision-making process. Educational decisions are made about both individuals and groups and it is important to keep the distinction in mind. Most standardized tests are designed to furnish information for decision making about individuals. Information from these tests is not well-suited for making decisions about groups and programs. Some information about groups can be obtained from current standardized tests and they are sometimes used this way, but more often than not such use is inappropriate.

THE QUESTION OF STANDARDS

Norm-Referenced Tests. To have meaning an individual's or group's performance on a test must be compared against some standard. Performance on most tests is compared against the performance of other students or against some external, absolute standard. Test scores which are referenced to the performance of others (a norm group) are called norm-referenced tests. Most standardized tests are of this kind. They are intended to rank people and discriminate maximally among them. They tell us how an individual stands in relation to some relevant group, but do not tell us "how much a student knows" in any absolute sense.

Criterion-Referenced Tests. Tests which measure performance against some pre-determined absolute standard are called criterion-referenced tests. They are intended to determine the level of mastery of skills and knowledge. Either kind can be used to talk about the performance of an individual or a group, but the construction of criterion-reference tests is difficult and except for teacher-made tests, few are in actual use in schools.
The Citizens League, founded in 1952, is an independent, non-partisan educational organization in the Twin Cities area, with some 3,600 members, specializing in questions of government planning, finance and organization.

Citizens League reports, which provide assistance to public officials and others in finding solutions to complex problems of local government, are developed by volunteer research committees, supported by a full-time professional staff.

Membership is open to the public. The League's annual budget is financed by annual dues of $10 ($15 for family memberships) and contributions from more than 500 businesses, foundations, and other organizations.

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