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Innovation in education : academies within schools

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INNOVATION IN EDUCATION:
ACADEMIES WITHIN SCHOOLS

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of
Sociology
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Orlando Pequenez
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ABSTRACT

INNOVATION IN EDUCATION: ACADEMIES WITHIN SCHOOLS

by Orlando Pequenez

The purpose of this thesis is to examine innovative curriculum at the high school level. The high school used in this research offers a program that is an alternative to the traditional curriculum that is taught at most high schools. The alternative program offered at Independence High School in San Jose, California is academies with specific career themes. Students learn a specific occupational field, depending on the academy, as well as traditional academic subjects. The primary focus of this study is on the effectiveness of and satisfaction with the academy program as perceived by both staff and students. The research methodology consisted of a qualitative case study. The research findings suggest that the academy program at Independence High is effective in preparing students for career decisions and enhancing students' and teachers' enthusiasm about school.

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I would like to express my deep appreciation for the love and support I have received, throughout my life, from my mother and father. Thank you, Mom and Dad; I finally reached the light at the end of the tunnel, and it looks bright.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Many critics of U.S. public education believe that it needs to be reformed to make it more pertinent to the demands of post-high school life. Most people agree that our schools are not sufficiently preparing young people to make the transformation to adult life, whether it is going on to college or seeking immediate employment. Kearns and Doyle (1988), for example, charge that public education in this country is in crisis. Statistics reviewed by the National Commission on Excellence in Education's (1983) Nation At Risk report showed that about 13% of all 17-year olds in the United States may be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youth, according to the report, may run as high as 40%.

International comparisons of student achievement show the inadequacies of the U.S. school system. Murphy and Schiller (1992), for example, discuss the 1988 International Assessment of Mathematics and Science, which compared U.S. students in all grade levels with students in four other nations and in four Canadian provinces. This assessment found that American students placed last in math. Americans not only performed more poorly than

students from industrial nations, but also more poorly than those from less-developed countries (Murphy & Schiller, 1992).

American students tied for last in science while Korean students were first. Nearly three-quarters of Korean and British Columbia students were able to use scientific procedures and analyze scientific data, while only about a third of American students could do so (Murphy & Schiller, 1992).

Murphy and Schiller (1992) go on to show more evidence of the deficiencies of U.S. schools as found in studies about students' level of competence, which were measured by objective standards unrelated to comparative performance. For instance, a study conducted by the Educational Testing Service in 1988 found that:

- . American students did not have the skills to read beyond a rudimentary level, and could not read complex materials or read analytically;
- . American students did not possess basic competence in addition, subtraction, multiplication, division or elementary problem-solving;
- . American students did not have the basic knowledge required for solving science problems;
- . American students were ignorant of the significance or relevance of events that have influenced American history;
- . American students did not possess the communication skills needed to compete favorably in today's society. (Murphy & Schiller, 1992, p. 2)

Students who bypass college and opt to enter the workforce may find they are under-qualified for most

promising entry-level positions. According to a 1991 Harris poll cited by Stern, Raby and Dayton (1992), employers who were interviewed reported that they had to turn down five of every six young high school graduates who applied for jobs.

There seems to be a gap between what students are taught in high school regarding preparation for the workforce and what is expected of them by employers. The National Center on Education and the Economy (1990) published a critical report, "America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!" which states that American society invests little in its front-line workforce (Stern et al., 1992). The report goes on to say that we do not expect much from children in school. Expectations for young people, the resources that are devoted to them, and the rewards for performance that are given them have combined to create a system that conspires to produce minimal educational effort or achievement among students who are not college bound (Stern et al., 1992).

College bound students are not doing very well either. Average scores on Scholastic Aptitude Tests given to college applicants declined steadily from 1963 to the 1970s, recovered weakly in the early 1980s, but then continued their decline, and verbal scores sank to an all-time low in 1992 (Stern et al., 1992).

This evidence suggests that high school students may not be getting the proper education needed to prepare them for the experiences they will encounter upon graduation such as college, careers, and participation in democracy in general. These students may not be prepared to decide about a specific direction to take in their lives. Regarding college, students may not have been given enough information to make a prudent decision about whether they want to pursue a college education or to what college to apply. If they do enroll in college, they may not know what subjects or careers are of interest to them.

High school students are accustomed to having their education, and for the most part, their lives structured by a routine imposed upon them. For many students, graduation presents the frightening reality that they are now responsible for their own lives. Most students are ill-prepared to take on such an important responsibility. Without the proper guidance or knowledge needed to make informed decisions as to what to do next, many high school graduates find themselves visionless as to what direction to take in their lives. They may never have received any information regarding different career options or the responsibilities they now face as adults. The leap from high school student to adult is sudden, with most students

not immediately realizing the seriousness of the transformation.

The focus of this study is on secondary education. The study explores an alternative educational program at a San Jose, California high school. Mainly, the study centers on the preparation, or lack of preparation, of students whether entering the workforce or going on to college.

Reasons for the Problem

Some of the problems in the U.S. educational system are being addressed, but the question must be posed, should U.S. schools be solely blamed for the inefficiency in preparing the future generation?

Murphy and Schiller (1992) observed that there are two prevailing explanations for the relatively poor performance of American students in the classroom. First, the quality of education in the schools is poor. Many of the advocates of this position argue that the quality of teaching is inadequate, that curriculum standards are low, that classes are too large, and that the instructional materials are insufficient for effective teaching and learning (Murphy & Schiller, 1992). Some critics claim that conventional methods for teaching academic subjects are sterile and useless. Stern et al. (1992) point out that the general track--which is not designed for a particular occupation

--is unfocused and unproductive. Conventional curricula and instruction appear especially ineffective in low-income and minority communities, where dropout rates remain alarmingly high.

The second prevailing explanation described by Murphy and Schiller (1992) for the relatively poor performance of American students in the classroom is that many students are coming to school as victims of inter-generational poverty and, consequently, are not able to benefit from what schools have to offer. Murphy and Schiller (1992) argue that many students do not benefit from the current educational system because they arrive at school without the set of values or work ethic that enhance learning.

Murphy and Schiller (1992) assert that schools are reluctant to modify traditional delivery systems, which are effective with middle class students, to suit the needs of the disadvantaged, while maintaining standards. The governing educational strategy, Murphy and Schiller (1992) observe, groups students into high, middle, and low ability groups, and then gives all students substantial amounts of non-direct-instructional time--time in which they are expected to do much work on their own (completing worksheets, reading silently, or copying from the chalkboard). This strategy worked reasonably well for many children thirty years ago, but Murphy and Schiller

(1992) charge that it no longer works for a very high proportion of today's students, who do not come to school equipped with the attitudes and values that would enable them to work reliably on their own.

Life as a teenager today is far more complicated and difficult than it ever has been. Many teenagers are poor, unsafe in their own homes and neighborhoods, and have little guidance outside of school. Many are at risk of drug or alcohol dependency, or become pregnant long before they are ready to become parents (Murphy & Schiller, 1992).

Murphy and Schiller (1992) explain that the most frightening aspect of this predicament is its cumulative quality. If vile conditions make it difficult for many students to benefit from schooling, then these deprived conditions may continue to hinder them throughout adulthood. Schools become warehouses for many students, which accept them with their various disadvantages and effect no major changes in attitudes or learning before the students graduate or drop out.

Some critics argue that other institutions besides education are to blame for the lack of preparation of high school graduates. Ray and Mickelson (1993) assert that economic changes have played a major role in shaping the current "educational crisis." They contend that the fundamental changes in wages, jobs, and future

opportunities in the labor market, since 1980, have had negative effects on these youths' school outcomes, motivation and discipline as new workers.

Ray and Mickelson (1993) also suggest that the business community has played a role in the problems being attributed to high school graduates. They propose that there is a link between increasing rates of poverty and the lack of motivation and discipline among non-college-bound youths, with the kinds of jobs that companies have eliminated and created over the past several years.

Ray and Mickelson (1993) contend that changes in the labor market wrought by corporate restructuring since the 1980s have had significant effects on non-college-bound youths. They showed that the industrial and entry-level jobs with core firms that non-college-bound students traditionally entered, and in which they could expect a moderate amount of training, upward mobility, stability, and good annual wages--are disappearing rapidly. Ray and Mickelson (1993) add that the U.S. Department of Labor estimated that, from 1980 to 1985, 11 million workers lost their jobs through plant closings and massive layoffs.

The Charlotte, North Carolina, Chamber of Commerce Task Force on Education and Jobs, formed in late 1987 and continuing through July of 1988, was assigned to identify the workforce needs of the business community, assess the

extent to which the schools were meeting these needs, and propose reforms. According to Ray and Mickelson (1993), all the task force members eventually agreed that low-income parents are at the center of the poor discipline and motivation exhibited by students at school and later at work, linked the problem with poverty, and concurred that poverty is expanding locally and nationally. The task force attributed the rise in poverty to individual behaviors and lifestyles: teenage mothers, single-parent families, illiteracy, and drug usage (Ray & Mickelson, 1993).

Critics such as Ray and Mickelson argue that much of the poverty and lack of discipline and motivation of young adults, however, can be directly traced to the loss of jobs in the labor market and especially to the loss of wages because of the instability and the low wages of the jobs that are available. The apparent insignificance of a high school diploma leads non-college-bound youths to believe that as adults they will face jobs that are unstable, lack opportunities for advancement, pay low annual wages, and provide few if any health benefits (Ray & Mickelson, 1993).

Other critics, such as Jonathan Kozol (1991), believe that poor funding, i.e., lack of money, is a major factor creating the problems that are associated with today's high school graduates. Kozol (1991), moreover, wrote that the

problems of the streets in urban areas, as teachers often note, frequently spill over into public schools.

The lack of funding, as described by Kozol (1991), is grimly evident in an East St. Louis school district of 16,500 students. When the failure of two run-down pumping stations caused major flooding, school officials were forced to call off school for the entire district because the meals distributed to every student in the city are prepared in the two schools that were flooded.

Kozol (1991) explains that in that same week, the schools announced the layoff of 280 teachers, 166 cooks and cafeteria workers, 25 teacher aides, 16 custodians and 18 painters, electricians, engineers and plumbers. The president of the teachers' union, according to Kozol (1991), pointed out the impact this will have on the students. The teachers' union president declared "If you have a high school teacher with five classes each day and between 150 and 175 students . . . , it's going to have a devastating effect" (Kozol, 1991, p. 24). It also was noted that the school system has been using more than 70 "permanent substitute teachers" who are paid only \$10,000 yearly, as a way of saving money.

The lack of funds are further evident in the science labs of East St. Louis High, which are 30 to 50 years outdated, according to Kozol (1991). Kozol further

illustrates the school's plight, where the biology lab has no laboratory tables, textbook shortages are commonplace, and the buildings, which are old and run-down, have leaky roofs and a faulty heating system.

Dr. Lillian Parks, the superintendent of the East St. Louis schools, explains the cumulative damage lack of school funds has on the students:

Gifted children are everywhere in St. Louis, but their gifts are lost to poverty and turmoil and the damage done by knowing they are written off by their society. Many of these children have no sense of something they belong to. They have no feeling of belonging to America. Gangs provide the boys, perhaps, with something to belong to. (Kozol, 1991, p. 34)

The lack of school funds that plague many schools throughout America is unlikely to change any time soon, due to the way public education is financed. Most public schools in the United States depend on a tax on local property for their initial funding. There are also state and federal funding sources, but according to Kozol (1991), the property tax is the decisive force in shaping inequality. The property tax depends upon the taxable value of homes and that of local industries. As Kozol (1991) explains:

A typical wealthy suburb in which homes are often worth more than \$400,000 draws upon a larger tax base in proportion to its student population than a city occupied by thousands of poor people. Typically, in the United States, very poor communities place high priority on education, and often tax themselves at higher rates than do the very affluent communities.

But, even if they tax themselves at several times the rate of an extremely wealthy district, they are likely to end up with far less money for each child in their schools. (p. 55)

Today's schools and students do face unprecedented problems, many of them associated with the community and with large numbers of students from deprived backgrounds. Moreover, the mass media, according to Shor (1987), debases communication by pummeling the senses with loud, fast bursts of language. Education is often ignored by the media, instead children are overwhelmed by the glamorization of expensive cars, sports, clothes and other image-conscious advertisement. As described by Shor (1987), the mass media monopolizes attention by being quickly perceived and unnaturally amplified beyond human scale.

These problems, however, should not be offered as excuses for poor performance by the schools. Nor should the student be blamed or punished for confronting certain barriers that other students may not have to endure. Murphy and Schiller (1992) believe that the educational disadvantages of poor and deprived students can be largely compensated for by appropriate teaching methods--notably more emphasis on, and more time allocated for, direct instruction. Therefore, although the social problems are massive and menacing (and of course, also urgently need to be tackled outside the educational arena as shown by Ray & Mickelson [1993] and Kozol [1991]), the strategies and

techniques do exist to better meet students' needs--at least as far as scholastic performance and possibly appropriate behavior are concerned (Murphy & Schiller, 1992).

Implementing these effective strategies and techniques demands a momentous restructuring of the schools. It demands a real transformation which cannot be painless or comfortable for anyone concerned. As a direct result of maintaining the status quo, U.S. schools are sending two different groups into the world: one that has benefited from schooling and is relatively well-prepared to compete successfully for society's rewards; the other for whom schooling has been a failure, and for whom permanent lower income status is a likelihood. The fact that some students are from deprived backgrounds does not mean that less should be expected of them, nor does it mean that they cannot thrive if presented with realistic educational opportunities. Rather, educators need to individualize services to reach children where they are, and deliver a program of services to compensate for the problems arising from life circumstances (Murphy & Schiller, 1992).

Although reform seems to be the solution which most agree for the growing problems of America's educational system, the question must be posed: How, to what extent, and in what direction should schools be reformed?

Before that question is tackled, however, we must deal with a more basic underlying question: What role should schools play in a democratic society? In the next chapter the examination of two competing theoretical perspectives helps address that question.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The role of education in the United States is ambiguous. The most basic role is that of educating children to read, write, compute, and become informed citizens. This is a simplistic answer, however, to a complicated question. What role should schools play in our society?

The role of education and the school system, according to the French sociologist, Emile Durkheim, is at least as important for their social and moral functions as for the teaching of technical skills and knowledge. Durkheim developed his ideas in a collection of writings called *Moral Education* which was published in 1925, based upon a series of lectures he delivered to teachers (Bennet & Le Compte, 1990).

Ashley and Orenstein's (1985) interpretation of Durkheim's work reports that it is in the school that the child first learns to take part in collective activities outside the family. It is the function of the school not only to transmit knowledge but to inculcate in the child a spirit of teamwork and collective purpose, a desire to develop specialized skills in terms of the needs of others, and a tendency to coordinate his or her own interests with those of the group. For Durkheim, the teacher was a

representation of society's authority over the individual. Durkheim argued that in order for the social and moral functions of education to be maintained, the teacher must be seen as an authority figure who controls the classroom in a fair and just manner. Durkheim also maintained that although the need for basic moral and social education will continue to exist, more advanced education will develop into increasingly specialized subfields as specialization in society continues to occur (Ashley & Orenstein, 1985).

Functionalist Theory

An elaboration of Durkheim is found in functionalist theory, a major theoretical approach in sociology, also referred to as structural-functionalism, consensus theory, or equilibrium theory. A sociologist using this approach starts with the assumption that society, and institutions within society, such as education, are made up of interdependent parts all working together, each contributing some necessary activity to the functioning of the whole society. This approach is often compared to the biological functioning of the human body: each part plays a role in the total system and all are dependent on each other for survival. Just as the heart or brain is necessary for the survival of a human being, the educational system is necessary for the survival of society (Ballantine, 1989).

Functionalists believe that schooling serves to benefit and reinforce the existing social and political order. A primary function of schools, as described by Ballantine (1989), is the passing on of the knowledge and behaviors necessary to maintain order in society. Since children learn to be social beings and develop appropriate social values through contact with others, schools are an important training ground. Following Durkheim, functionalists and many other educational analysts see the transmission of moral and occupational education, discipline, and values as necessary for the survival of society.

According to Bennet and Le Compte (1990), regardless of one's theoretical perspective, the purposes that the general public attribute to schools fall into four general categories: intellectual, political, economic and social.

From a functionalist theorist's viewpoint, the primary intellectual purposes of schooling are to assist students in the acquisition of cognitive skills (reading, mathematics, and so on), and also to assist students in the acquisition of substantive knowledge and inquiry skills (evaluation, synthesis, and so on) (Bennet & Le Compte, 1990). These goals emphasize the acquisition of knowledge as the most common purpose associated with schools.

Functionalists believe that schools also serve four major political purposes: schools educate future citizens

for appropriate participation in the given political order. Schools promote patriotism by teaching myths, history and stories about the country, its leaders and government. Schools promote the assimilation of immigrants. Lastly, schools help to assure order, public civility, and conformity to laws. Functionalists, according to Bennet and Le Compte (1990), believe that schooling facilitates integration into and knowledge about the political system; it is a means by which common social and political values are transmitted to young people and others, like immigrants, who initially may not share them.

Further, schooling serves two major economic purposes, according to functionalist theory. The first is the preparation of students for the work force by teaching the attitudes, technical skills and social behavior appropriate to the work place. Secondly, schools categorize students by academic ability, then point them toward specific career goals appropriate to their perceived ability. In this way, schools create a hierarchical social structure organized by ability and distribute individuals accordingly to fill the diverse roles required by a complex modern industrial workplace. Functionalists assume that no major external impediments stand in the way of success for able, hard working individuals. The attitudes and behaviors which schools teach students include traits such as cooperation,

conformity to authority, punctuality, gender appropriate attitudes, neatness, task orientation, care of property, and allegiance to the team (Bennet & Le Compte, 1990).

Talcott Parsons, one of the most eminent theorists of the functionalist school, as interpreted by Parelius and Parelius (1987), believed it was the role of the educational system to select students for different occupational slots as well as to appropriately socialize those selected. He believed the most important selection is that between those who will go to college and those who will not. According to Parsons, the basis upon which schools allocate students into college-going and non-college-going categories is achievement. Schools reward children with high grades and encouragement on the basis of what they are willing and able to accomplish. At the secondary school level, it is not sufficient to try hard; one must also succeed in mastering the material. Rewarding children on the basis of achievement is central to Parsons' larger view of the integration of educational and economic systems in modern societies. Parsons argued that in modern societies people must be allocated to occupational slots according to their ability to perform adequately in these slots. Expertise is essential, as is making maximal use of whatever talent exists in the population (Parelius & Parelius, 1987).

According to Parsons, one of the first socialization tasks of the school is to teach children that they will be evaluated on the basis of achievement so that students, too, will share in the basis consensus embraced by teachers, administrators, parents and the public at large (Parelius & Parelius, 1987).

Functionalists view young people as resources having future value and as commodities in the labor market. By supporting public education, such as school-business partnerships like "Adopt a School," business owners invest in the development of human resources or human capital, just as they invest in physical capital and other kinds of resources (Bennet & Le Compte, (1990).

Finally, functionalists theorize that schools serve three major social purposes: they promote a sense of social and moral responsibility in students. They also must serve as sites for the solution to or amelioration of social problems. Lastly, they must supplement the efforts of other institutions of socialization, such as the family and the church. Bennet and Le Compte (1990) write that schools today are called upon to solve the problems of juvenile delinquency, poverty, child and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, among other problems.

According to Durkheim, as interpreted by Parelius and Parelius (1987), the primary function of education is to socialize new generations to overcome their egoism and to become productive members of society. Education contributes to the maintenance of the social system and the conservation of the national character. Durkheim believed youngsters must develop a sense of commitment to society and internalize its most central values and ideas. Students must be transformed from egoists, responding greedily to their own endless self-centered desires, into moral citizens, responding with a sense of duty to the nation and with loyalty to something greater than self (Parelius & Parelius, 1987).

As understood by Ballantine (1989), moral values, for Durkheim, are the foundation of the social order, and society is perpetuated through the educational institutions which teach these moral values. Any change in society will promote a change in education and vice versa; in fact, education is an active part of the process of change. Durkheim analyzed classrooms as "small societies" and as agents of socialization. The school serves as an intermediary between the affective morality of the family and the rigorous morality of life in society. In other words, school helps students to adapt and compromise between the differences of their family virtues and those virtues

that are uncompromising within society. Durkheim went on to say that discipline forms the morality of the classroom; without it, a class of students becomes a mob (Ballantine, 1989).

To summarize, functionalism offers one explanation for how education functions within society. Functionalists see the school as a means of reinforcing the existing, mainstream social order. The primary manifest function of schooling is to prepare the child for the adult world. The second primary function of the school is selection and allocation, or preparation of students for later work roles (Mulkey, 1993).

Functionalist theorists would say that the problems of the educational institutions are that not enough students are being properly educated to fill all the occupational roles in society. Functionalists believe that schooling must serve to reinforce the existing social and political order (Bennet & Le Compte 1990) by transmitting and maintaining the beliefs of the existing culture. Functionalists believe that if the U.S. educational system is carrying out the functions of transmission of attitudes, values, skills and norms from one generation to another, then it is fulfilling its role as a social structure, functioning effectively and in cooperation with other social structures in maintaining a state of relative equilibrium.

Where functionalists see a problem is in the lack of qualified students coming out of high school to fill the different roles in a stratified society. When these slots are not filled, it disturbs the equilibrium of the entire society. As Bennet and Le Compte (1990) explain it, if one of these institutions is not fulfilling its function, another institution needs to take over more of that role to maintain the equilibrium of the society. Functionalists agree that if there are not enough qualified people for existing jobs, something must be wrong with some institution of socialization. Some functionalists might say it is flawed families. Others may say it is flawed schools.

Functionalists tend to focus their research on questions concerning the structure and functioning of organizations and institutions. Someone who conducts research and interprets events from this theoretical perspective would see as central the function of education for society but may neglect the individuals in society (Ballantine, 1989).

If a functionalist believed that occupational slots were being filled adequately, then the schools must be doing their job. Functionalists, such as Talcott Parsons, would see this as schools properly placing students in future societal roles. As was mentioned earlier, Parsons believed it is the function of the educational system to select

students for different occupational slots as well as to appropriately socialize those selected (Parelius & Parelius, 1987). According to Parsons, the basis upon which schools allocate students into college-going and non-college-going categories is achievement. Parsons believed that there is general agreement throughout our society that allocation of rewards should be on the basis of achievement. He believed that through two basic functions of education (socialization and selection), the schools provide society with individuals well qualified for the roles they will fulfill. Expertise is essential, as is making maximal use of whatever talent exists in the population (Parelius & Parelius, 1987).

Therefore, functionalists would view the stratification of students as functional because not all students have the capacity for achievement or motivation necessary to attain higher paying and higher prestige jobs. Functionalists view stratification as necessary. It motivates others to achieve. Those who end up in low wage, opportunity-less jobs are there because they did not try hard enough, do not have the intellectual capacity, or are somehow deviant. For functionalists, those at the top deserve to be there and those at the bottom deserve that status as well. This, in turn, maintains the existing social order. In other words, there must constantly be replacement of people in every

strata of society in order to maintain equilibrium among all of society's parts.

Functionalist theory presents a conservative view in regards to its implications that people must meet the needs of the system rather than vice versa. Critics, such as Ballantine (1989), argue that the "functions" of education may serve powerful individuals or groups pursuing their own interests which may be to maintain existing social structures (economic, political, educational) of power, and which may not serve either society or students.

Functionalism has been criticized because it assumes the existence of a consensus of shared values and beliefs about society and usually neglects to discuss the issue of power. Bennet and Le Compte (1990) contend that it presents a benign, unquestioning view of the social system and accepts existing structures as appropriate. Ballantine (1989) argues that the problem most often seen by critics of this approach is that it fails to recognize the number of divergent interests, ideologies, and conflicting interest groups in society. In heterogeneous societies, each subgroup may have its own agenda for the schools--an agenda to further its own interests. Moreover, functionalists tend to neglect the possibility that some groups have more power, resources, and influence than others.

Conflict Theory

A competing theoretical perspective, conflict theory, finds the functionalist approach inadequate to explain the dynamics of schooling. As Mulkey (1993) describes it, conflict theory, an active theory, emphasizes that inequality of property or resource distribution is the major source of conflict in society and is reflected in the schools. These theorists, especially those aligned with social reproduction theory, view schools as institutions that reproduce both the values and ideologies of the dominant social groups, i.e., those with the most power in society.

The work of theorist Max Weber is in the conflict tradition because it focuses on the conflicting interests of groups and their influence on educational systems. As described by Mulkey (1993), Weber would interpret the principle of socialization as it operates in schools as a struggle for domination between status groups which vary in property ownership, prestige, wealth and power. These groups differ in property ownership, cultural status, such as ethnic groups, for example, or power derived from positions in government or other powerful organizations. Education is used as a means to attain entry into the dominant powerful groups. Mulkey (1993) charges that schools serve to maintain and reproduce the class structure, i.e., inequality

within society through preparation for stratified roles in the work force, through rewarding the use of the dominant language and cultural capital, and through state regulation over most aspects of school life. Conflict theorists see this inequality as a major problem. Also, rather than accept the status quo as normal and natural, they are discontented with the fact that dominant groups control the major social and political institutions in society within which their members try to prevent competition from threatening their power (Mulkey, 1993).

The conflict theorists' perspective on the role of education in society is usually framed in a manner that emphasizes the inequalities and deficiencies that the education institutions maintain and create. Conflict theorists believe that the role of schools should be to insure that all children be given an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of gender, race, family income, or any other factor that causes students to be sorted into tracks at school.

A conflict perspective on contemporary American education by Samuel Bowles, as interpreted by Parelius and Parelius (1987), states that the educational system rewards children differentially on the basis of their class origins. Children from elite families become the elite of the next generation. Children of the poor remain poor. Consequently,

the social division of labor is reproduced in each generation. Furthermore, because the system gives the appearance of openness and promotes this ideological myth, children believe that those in the dominant class are there because they deserve to be and that those who are poor are poor because they are lazy and uneducable. This effectively blinds most people to the oppressive nature of the system (Parelius & Parelius, 1987).

One of the key problems discussed in the previous chapter was that schools are ill-prepared to teach students who already come to school with serious problems. These problems may be poverty, pregnancy, poor parenting or drug abuse. Conflict theorists argue that the dominant social structures, usually economic and political, cause many of these problems, especially poverty, thereby maintaining inequalities in society. Conflict theorists believe that the origins of inequality are found in the class structure of a society, and schools mirror this class structure.

Conflict theory has led to a rethinking of the relationships among schools, social class structure, and patterns of economic opportunity. Having determined that the educational attainment of males is a good predictor of their ultimate socio-economic status, as related by Bennet and Le Compte (1990), Blau and Duncan (1967) noticed that the educational and socio-economic status of fathers tended

to be the same as that of their sons, indicating that status seemed to be inherited, rather than transcended. Thus, Bennet and Le Compte (1990) believe, the whole system of class status seemed much more inflexible than the equalitarian social ideology that Americans profess. Bennet and Le Compte (1990) go on to say that while interpretations differ as to whether individuals themselves or social structures dictate the ultimate destinies of specific individuals, it became clear that the process of schooling, because of its close ties to placement in the labor market, is linked as closely to the structure of inequality as it is to structures of opportunities.

Reproduction Theory

Reproduction theory, a variant of conflict theory, questions the American belief that schooling in America promotes democracy, social mobility and equality. Rather, it views the role of schools as institutions that reproduce both the values and ideologies of the dominant social group and the status rankings of the existing class structure (Bennet & Le Compte, 1990).

According to Bennet and Le Compte (1990), reproduction theorists argue that there are several processes by which schools serve the interests of the dominant group in society. First, schools and teachers exclusively use the formal language and associated expectations for behavior of

the dominant culture. This disadvantages the white and minority low income students who do not have family members who can teach them formal English or the behavior of the dominant culture. Because low income white and minority students cannot speak the formal language as well as members of the middle and upper classes, they engage in different patterns of social behavior, which, in turn, fosters discrimination.

Reproduction theorists also believe that schools tend to magnify class differences by sorting individuals into various occupational niches, not so much by their ability, but according to their social class origins. Thus, children are thought by educators to be more able if they are from middle or upper class families, and as a consequence, they are pushed toward the professions or the more desirable careers. Similarly, lower income and minority children are viewed by educators as less able and are placed in vocational curricula with lower expectations (Bennet & Le Compte, 1990).

Conflict and reproduction theorists interpret the inequalities among students in school as a microcosm of the society as a whole. As explained by Mulkey (1993), conflict theory emphasizes that inequality of property or resource distribution is the major source of inequality and thus conflict in society is reflected in the schools.

Conflict and reproduction theorists view schools as institutions that reproduce both the values and ideologies of the dominant social groups. Conflict and reproduction theorists believe that unequal distribution causes conflict because, as described by Weber, unequal distribution creates a struggle for domination among status groups on the basis of what they are willing and able to accomplish (Mulkey, 1993).

Conflict and reproduction theorists see the inequalities of the school system as emanating from social structures, usually economic and political. Those who occupy these dominant social structures maintain inequalities in the school system in order to retain power for themselves. By maintaining certain values and norms that benefit the dominant social structures, the dominant group is able to maintain power and exploit the subordinate group. For example, poverty is more often than not due to low wages. Low wages benefit those who pay low wages. Stratification, then, does not benefit "society," but those who pay low wages. By sorting youngsters into tracks at school, business owners are assured that they will have enough future workers to whom they can pay low wages, thus, enhancing or maintaining profits. Using this approach, conflict theory points out that some students resist the ideology that good school achievement counts for much.

Ray and Mickelson (1993) contend that some students do not see payoffs to a high school diploma because they believe the diploma and the low wage jobs awaiting them are meaningless. They fail to achieve in school not because of family problems, lack of supervision, and so on, but because they (often realistically) interpret the future as bleak. This approach, then, sees pupils as in conflict with the goals of powerful groups. The latter receives unmotivated, undisciplined workers, but want the schools to repair these students.

The relationship between the dominant group and the subordinate group is exploitative, with the dominant group taking most of society's valuables for itself (Parelius & Parelius, 1987). The dominant group also imposes its own values and world view on its subordinates. The subordinates are, however, a constant threat to the stability of the system, and the dominant group must always be on guard. Conflict is always a possibility and violence may eventually erupt, possibly bringing the existing social system to an end. Those in power, then, usually assert that obedience and discipline be taught in the schools as a way to ward off future threats. In time, however, a new social order may emerge (Parelius & Parelius, 1987).

Summary

It is important to organize conceptual frameworks in sociological work. In this case, different theories were considered in discussing the functional role education does play and should play in American society, as well as reasons why schools may be failing a large portion of students. Theory by itself has some clear limitations, however. Each theory taken by itself may seem persuasive but there is no way by which theory, devoid of research, can tell us which alternative is most useful.

It is important, however, to study different theoretical perspectives in order to evaluate the role and the problems of America's education institutions. Conflict interpretations of education systems focus on the role of education as a means to perpetuate the status of the elite who care little about the opportunities they offer (or fail to offer) high school graduates. Functionalist interpretations of educational systems emphasize the opportunity for all individuals to succeed if they acquire the appropriate skills and social behavior needed for the maintenance of the existing society.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The competing theories examined in the previous chapter assert broad opposing objectives of the educational system. No matter which theory seems persuasive, there should be an alternative solution implemented to meet the objectives of training and preparing students for all that lies ahead for them once they graduate from high school. The ideal alternative would benefit both society and students.

Schools and the Community

In order to better prepare students for the responsibilities they will face upon graduating from high school, and for their own personal growth, it has been suggested by critics that reform take place outside, as well as inside the classroom. One of the areas outside the classroom that needs to be targeted is the community as a whole. The responsibility for solving educational problems should not rest entirely with the schools. The community can serve as an excellent resource for numerous educational programs as described by Kindred, Bagin, and Gallagher (1990):

The development of sound and constructive relationships between the school and the community is a necessary and natural function of a publicly supported institution in a democratic society. This position arises from a consideration of the public character of the school and the legal framework within which it operates. It is also supported by the rule of public opinion in the shaping of educational policies and practices. Even though the American way of life is characterized by

constant change, these considerations nevertheless form the basis of the decision-making process in the management of public schools, and they exercise an influence on the nature and direction of change.
(p. 11)

The involvement of the community in school programs and activities creates a partnership in which all parties may benefit. Parents may become more involved in their children's education and school activities. Schools benefit from the resources the community can offer, and the community benefits from the energy and manpower the students can provide. Most importantly, students benefit from their parents becoming more involved in their education, from the resources made available to them by the community, and from the added attention and support of the schools. By becoming involved with the schools, the community is investing in its own future. The creation of better schools results in a higher skilled, better educated work force. The graduates may then strengthen and modernize the community in return. By feeding off each other, they also strengthen each other. The most crucial bond between schools and their communities is the labor market faction of the community.

Schools and the Labor Market

Cooperation and commitment are critical in the relationship between schools and employers. School teachers and administrators should realize that the best potential resource students have in learning a craft or occupation

comes from a company that must employ that specific skill everyday. Employers need to see that their participation in the work force preparation of students is essential for their own ability to remain competitive and their ability to continue to create and renew the skills and knowledge of the work force.

An example of how the community and labor market can work together is found in a San Francisco bay area school district. The Sequoia Union High School District, just south of San Francisco, has implemented a successful program which created a partnership between the "academies" within the schools and IBM, Hotel Sofitel and Stanford Shopping Center.

This career academy curriculum, as described by Stern et al.(1992), integrates the academic and technical contents of its classes. The purpose is to show the students the relationship between academic skills and real-world jobs. The major developmental task was to create a curricula that would integrate computer skills for business with the core academic courses: English, social studies, and mathematics. The approach used to accomplish this was to build the curricula around analysis and solution of problems: identifying the problem, analyzing available resources and tools, and working out a step-by-step solution. This approach was to be used in all facets of the curricula from

learning English, math, and social studies, to dealing with job relationships, to planning a career. The benefit for students is success in post-secondary education and quick advancement beyond entry-level jobs (Stern et al., 1992).

All of the different ideas that have been discussed would be difficult to implement in a traditional high school setting in which students have no central curriculum theme and no central "community" of teachers and counselors to monitor their progress.

Schools Within Schools - Academies

In a "school within a school" or "academy" setting, as is the objective of the California Partnership Academy, an occupational theme is taught along with core academic courses. As described by Stern et al. (1992), students enrolled in a California Partnership Academy take three academic classes and one technical class in the academy each semester during grades 10 and 11. In the 12th grade, the set of academy classes usually is reduced to just the technical class and one or two academic classes. The academic classes taken are usually English, math and science or social studies. The technical class depends on the occupational theme of the academy. All other required and elective courses are taken in regular classes along with non-academy students at the high school. It is important to note that all courses in the academy meet high school

graduation requirements and contribute to a diploma.

One reason for the academy structure coinciding with community and industry better than traditional high school is that part of the program structure involves block scheduling of academy classes.

As described by Stern et al. (1992), by scheduling the four academy classes together, usually during the first four periods of the day, the program personnel can arrange activities for all classes at the same time. Listening to speakers from the business community or going on field trips are some examples of the advantages of block scheduling. This also permits team teaching, whereby two or three teachers work together on a lesson or project. Stern et al. found the following:

The field of technical training is selected through an analysis of the local labor market to determine which field offers the best employment possibilities and will lead to substantial employer support. As of 1991-1992 school year, there were more than twenty career fields on which academies had chosen to focus. California alone had developed programs in seventeen different fields.

• Agribusiness	• Internal Revenue
• Business applications of computers	• Service Administration
• Communication and video technology	• International trade and business
• Construction	• Law and Government
• Education	• Media and graphic arts
• Electronics	• Natural resources and environmental technology
• Finance	• Retail trade
• Health and Health Science	• Space
• Hospitals and Hotels (p. 18)	• Transportation

The findings of Stern et al. suggest that career academies are flourishing because they have succeeded in solving some of the fundamental problems in American high schools. These researchers assert that career academies link school to the world outside, place career academic instruction in a practical context, engage students in a learning community, provide greater choice for diverse students, avoid tracking, and prepare students for both work and further education (Stern et al., 1992).

THE CASE STUDY

The case study was undertaken as a qualitative research in the field setting. This descriptive research tries to present an accurate profile of the academies at Independence High. The field research was done entirely by the researcher and involved a small group of people at one site. The researcher began with a loosely-formulated idea regarding alternative curriculum. Next, the researcher selected the group and site for the study and adopted a social role in the setting and began observing. Using the field research format described by Neuman (1991), the researcher observed and interacted with people in the field setting for approximately five months in 1993. During the months of examination, the researcher made careful observations and kept detailed field notes on a daily basis.

The qualitative case study developed by the researcher consisted of two main methods of data collection: tape-recorded, face-to-face structured interviews following an interview schedule (including several open-ended questions) and field observations.

Sample

The sampling frame surveyed consisted of respondents who are coordinators, teaching staff and students. Among the respondents were three academy coordinators (two of whom

also taught in their academy), six academy teachers, thirty academy students and twenty non-academy students. These educators were selected because they are directly associated with the academy programs. The sample, however, is not a representative sample, and the results are not generalized to the larger school population. The students selected was a collection of academy and non-academy students, in order to gain a broader perspective on the academy programs and the school in general. The students were selected by the academy teachers and, by request of the researcher, were selected solely on the grounds of accurately representing the student body by race/ethnicity and gender. The students ranged in age from 14-18 years old.

The first source of data collected was the face-to-face audio recorded interviews. The first group consisted of the 30 academy students. In selecting students for this study, the teachers and the researcher based selections on representing, as accurately as possible, the ethnic and gender percentages of the 4,000 student school population (see Table 1).

The second group for the audio-recorded interviews consisted of the 20 non-academy students. It must be noted that non-academy students are used in this study in order to learn what they felt or perceived regarding academies and their own education. Again, selections were based on

Table 1**Academy Students Used in Study**

Subjects	# of Academy Students	% of Academy	% of 4,000 Student Body
<u>Gender</u>			
Female	18	60%	52%
Male	12	40%	48%
<u>Ethnicity</u>			
Hispanic	12	40%	34%
Asian	4	13%	30%
Filipino	2	7%	15%
Caucasian	6	20%	14%
African-American	3	10%	6%
Other	3	10%	1%
<u>Total</u>	30	100 %	100%
<u>Age Range</u>	14-18		

*See Appendix A for structured interview schedule

representing, as accurately as possible, the ethnic and gender percentages of the 4,000 student school population (see Table 2).

The third group for the interviews consisted of the six academy teachers. Due to time constraints, the focus was on three of the seven academies on campus (Electronics, Teaching and Performing Arts). Interviewed were two Electronics Academy teachers; two Performing Arts Academy teachers; and two Teaching Academy teachers (see Table 3).

The fourth group interviewed consisted of the three academy coordinators: one from the Electronics Academy; one from the Performing Arts Academy; and one from the Teaching Academy (see Table 3).

Setting

The research was conducted at the secondary public educational institution, Independence High School in San Jose, California. Independence High School opened in 1976, has a large campus which includes four libraries, two gymnasiums, a stadium that seats 8,000, an Olympic Swimming Complex, a theatre that seats 500, and a planetarium. The ethnic diversity, with its high percentage of Hispanic, Asian, and Filipino students, is representative of this area of San Jose. The racial/ethnic breakdown of Independence High School's 4,000 students is: 34% Hispanic, 30% Asian/Vietnamese (over one-half of whom are Vietnamese), 15%

Table 2Non-Academy Students Used in Study

Subjects	# of Non-Academy Students	% of Non-Academy	% of 4,000 Student Body
<u>Gender</u>			
Female	15	75%	52%
Male	5	25%	48%
<u>Ethnicity</u>			
Hispanic	4	20%	34%
Asian	6	30%	30%
Filipino	4	20%	15%
Caucasian	2	10%	14%
African-American	2	10%	6%
Other	2	10%	1%
<u>Total</u>	20	100%	100%
<u>Age Range</u>	14-18		

*See Appendix A for structured interview schedule

Table 3**Academy Teachers and Coordinators Used in Study**

Academy	# of Years Teaching	Race/ Ethnicity	Gender
<u>Electronics</u>			
Science Teacher	17	Caucasian	Male
Electronics Teacher	20	Caucasian	Male
English Coordinator/ Teacher	10	Caucasian	Female
<u>Teaching</u>			
English Teacher	18	Hispanic	Female
English Teacher	22	Caucasian	Female
English Coordinator/ Teacher	20	Caucasian	Male
<u>Performing Arts</u>			
Dance Instructor	21	Caucasian	Female
Dance Instructor	4	Caucasian	Female
Coordinator	15	Hispanic	Male

*See Appendix A for structured interview schedule

Filipino (classified separately from Asian), 14% Caucasian, 6% African-American, and 1% other. Approximately 15% of the 4,000 students attend the seven academies on campus.

The physical appearance of the school's landscaping is clean and orderly. There are numerous grass knolls and many trees throughout the large campus. The one-story buildings are tan with flat roofs. It is a spacious campus that neighbors a large park that separates the campus from a busy San Jose street, creating a serene atmosphere during school hours. It is an open-campus during lunch-time, but there are staff security and San Jose police who patrol the large campus in electric golf carts during school hours. The purpose of the security is to ensure the safety of the staff and students by keeping all unauthorized persons off the campus.

Academy Program

The first academy at Independence High School originated ten years ago. Since the opening of the Electronics Academy in 1984, six other academies have been created: Space, Science and Technology; Teaching; Performing Arts; Publication Technology; Transportation and Energy; and Fashion and Interior Design. There are several other academies that are in the final preparation stages. It must be noted that although all academies are very similar in their pedagogical philosophy, they are all unique in regards to administrative procedures, such as funding. In other

words, they are all separate entities that do not directly rely on each other for survival.

Most students are informed of the academies at their middle schools, some time before the end of their eighth grade year. There are approximately 14 middle schools, referred to as "feeder schools," from which Independence High School draws. The recruiting process involves a representative from each academy going out to all the different middle schools and giving a brief summary of what the program entails. The concept is to give the students an idea of what an academy program is and if it is appropriate to the interests of the students. The students then fill out a form in which they circle the program or programs that are of interest to them.

Upon arriving at Independence High School, freshman are provided with an orientation program and are given brochures regarding the different academies. This targets the students who may not have decided on an academy or may not have received this information at their middle schools. It must be noted that the majority of students are not in the academy programs. Students who enroll in the academies but are not content with the academy are asked to give a one year commitment. After that year is completed, they are then given the opportunity to transfer to the regular school curriculum program or transfer to another academy.

Although no two academies are exactly alike, the class schedule format is similar. Most students enroll in the academies in either their freshman or sophomore year. All students, regardless of academy, must take Freshman Orientation and must follow certain science, math, and English requirements. Generally, these class requirements are taught within the academy by the academy teachers and the academic subjects, math, English, and so on, are integrated into the theme of the particular academy. Normally, an academy schedule encompasses four of the student's six-class periods. The advantage to this is that the students' four academy classes are usually "blocked" together; in other words, they are scheduled together in consecutive order. Scheduling the classes in successive order allows the teachers numerous advantages, such as "team teaching," overlap or integrative teaching, and internships and field trips (which allow students "hands on" access to the career focus of their particular academy).

Objectives of the Research

The purpose of this research is to determine whether or not the academy format is a credible substitute or replacement for the traditional curriculum that is taught in most secondary schools. There are four major objectives that are examined in order to learn if the goals of the academy are being met.

The first objective focused on the improvement, as perceived by staff and students, in the achievement level of academy students. The emphasis is on one particular academy in which many of the students were originally non-academy students and for various reasons (poor grades, poor attendance, and so on) are now in the academy. In order to examine the perceived improvement, the absentee rates of these students before and after they were in the academy were examined. Additionally, the grade point averages and class involvement of students prior to being in the academy versus being academy students were examined. The following questions were asked of the academy teachers and coordinators in order to examine the perceived improvement of these academy students: What are the main objectives of your class and of the academy? Where is the academy right now in regards to these objectives? Do you feel that the curriculum taught in the academies is an added benefit to the students compared to the traditional means?

The second objective focused on students' satisfaction with the academy and the staff's perception of students' satisfaction. The study examines whether academy students have a higher level of satisfaction regarding the schooling they have received since being in an academy. The following questions were asked of the academy students in order to

examine the students' satisfaction with their academy: Is this academy what you expected? In other words, are you learning a lot--gaining skills? Are you satisfied in your choice of academies? Or would you like to switch to a different program?

The following questions were asked of the non-academy students in order to examine the students' satisfaction with their education: Are you satisfied with the education you are getting at Independence? Why or why not? Are you satisfied in choosing not to be in an academy? Or, if you could do it again, would you have enrolled in an academy?

The following questions were asked of the academy teachers and coordinators in order to examine the staff's perception of students' satisfaction: Do you see a difference in attitude among the teachers and students within the academy setting? What if the student is not happy with this academy? Is there anything you especially like about the academy or academies in general?

The third objective focused on the perceived level of social integration academy students experience with peers and teachers. In order to examine the level of social integration, the following questions were asked the academy students: What are you learning in this academy that you feel you would not have learned outside the academy? Do you

feel that the teachers within the academy are genuinely concerned with your future? How about the teachers outside the academy? What do you like about the academy? What do you dislike about the academy?

Non-academy students were asked similar questions: What are you learning that you feel you would not have learned if you were in an academy? Do you feel that the teachers at Independence High are genuinely concerned with your future? What do you like about your classes at Independence High? What do you dislike about your classes at Independence High?

Finally, the academy staff was asked the following questions to examine the perceived level of social integration of the academy students: Is there anything you especially like about the academy or academies in general? Do you feel that the curriculum taught in the academies is an added benefit to the students compared to the traditional means? Do you see a difference in attitude among the teachers and students within the academy setting?

The fourth objective focused on whether academy staff perceive that there is an improved pedagogy in the academy setting. The following questions were asked the academy staff to study the perception of an improved pedagogy: What is the future goal of the academy? Do you feel it prepares

students for life after high school? What are the main objectives of your class and of the academy? Is this how you envisioned the academy to be when you first started? How is it different? Is there anything you especially like about the academy or academies in general? Do you see a difference in attitude among the teachers and students within the academy setting? Is there a difference in your approach to teaching now that you are part of an academy? Do you feel that the curriculum taught in the academies is an added benefit to the students compared to the traditional means? Do you have more work now that you teach in an academy? How would you like to run your classes? How is this different from what you are currently doing?

Interview Schedules

The structured interview schedules developed for the interview of the Independence High School study (see Appendix A), were formulated through several steps: initial informal interviews with the academy staff members at the high school, field observations by the researcher inside and outside the class setting, and several conferences between the researcher and the thesis committee, to eliminate redundancy in the structured interview schedules. The final interview schedules, as well as a summary of the interview process, were then reviewed by the coordinator of the supplementary

program and his staff and were given approval (see Appendix C). The final interview schedule was also reviewed by the San Jose State University Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board and was given approval (see Appendix B). The researcher was then allowed to proceed with the interview process. The teachers and students were told that their participation in the study was completely voluntary.

There were four different structured interview schedules (some open-ended questions) for four different groups. All interview schedules were administered in a private, informal interview process between the researcher and the subject, and were audio-recorded for purposes of shortening the interview process and to ensure accuracy. All interviews with all four groups were done on a one-on-one, researcher and subject basis. All interviews were conducted in empty classrooms and offices to assure privacy. The interviews were all scheduled in advance and were administered intermittently throughout the fall semester of 1993.

Four different interview schedules were necessary in order to test four distinct groups. The first group (30 academy students) was tested with a 24-item interview schedule. The questions were assembled with a chronological sequence of events in mind. The first part centers on how

the student came to be in this particular academy. The second part's emphasis is on the satisfaction of the student with the academy. The third part concentrates on what the student perceives to have been gained or lost by being in the academy.

The second interview schedule, assembled for the 20 non-academy students, was very similar to the academy students' interview schedule. The only major difference was that the focus was on the non-academy curriculum these students were receiving. The 24 questions and the chronology were almost identical to the academy-student interview schedule. Although the non-academy students are not compared with the academy students in this study, their answers allow for a more complete perspective on the class setting experienced by the majority of students at Independence.

The third interview schedule, which contained 25 questions, tested the six academy teachers. The objectives of this interview were to get a comparison of academy versus non-academy curriculum, a teacher's opinion on the effect of the academy structure on the students, and an overall view of the differences of the pedagogy of the academy setting versus the non-academy setting. Although this structured interview schedule was only one question longer than the

students' interview schedule, the interviews were much longer, as the teachers elaborated on the questions far more than did the students.

The fourth interview schedule was administered to three academy coordinators. The academy coordinators, in addition to teaching classes, were in charge of overseeing the entire program. This interview schedule was 36 questions long and was similar to the one given to the teachers. The major differences were added questions regarding the administrative and political processes involved, as well as the day-to-day tasks involved in keeping an academy functioning. As may be expected by the lengthy interview schedule, these three interviews were the longest of the study. Interviews, depending on the group, lasted between 15 minutes and 1 1/2 hours. All four structured interview schedules were assembled with a focus on observing the four objectives.

The second source of data collection was participant observation at the school campus over a five-month period by the researcher. During the five-month period, with the permission and support of the entire staff, the researcher frequently sat in on classes, observed the campus activities, wrote field notes regarding these activities, and observed the natural setting and the human exchange within its own context of social and cultural patterns,

following the guidelines of Neuman (1991), inside and outside the classroom. The interview data, the observation notes, and the literature review served as the framework for this study. All data were collected by the researcher.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This study has four objectives that focus on the effectiveness of the academy format as a credible substitute or replacement for the traditional curriculum taught in most secondary schools.

Achievement Level

The first objective focused on the achievement level of academy students. The findings of this study suggest that the achievement level of students rises once they are placed in an academy.

It must be noted that it would be difficult to track and compare the achievement of students before and after entering an academy without going back to their middle schools (most students enroll in an academy during their freshman or sophomore year). For this reason, the data collected come almost entirely from the Electronics Academy. The majority of students in the Electronics Academy were not originally in this academy. Most of them started out in the regular course curriculum.

The Electronics Academy has a strong connection with what their teachers and the school administrators term "at risk" students. To qualify as an "at risk" student, one must fall under three of the four defined categories: The student or their parents are receiving financial aid from the city, county, state or federal government; the student is already

short of credits to graduate on time; the student possesses attitude problems towards school that indicate that he or she is not going to be successful; the student has tardiness or attendance problems that indicate he or she is not going to be successful. Once these problems have been detected, and the student has been informed of these problems, it is the student's decision whether to join the academy. For these reasons, a majority of the Electronics Academy students started out in the regular class curricula and then transferred to the Electronics Academy once it was established that they were considered "at risk" students.

The results of the structured interview schedules clearly indicate that the achievement level of these academy students rose significantly after transferring from a non-academy pedagogy to the academy pedagogy.

During their tenure in the Electronics Academy, the coordinator and the two teachers interviewed have seen significant improvements in absentee rates, Grade Point Average (GPA) and class involvement (activities, projects) of students who have transferred into their academy. As noted by one of the teachers, "We have all seen significant improvements with our kids after having them for as little as a year." The coordinator explained that the individual attention from teachers, and the group support that these academy students receive has had a substantially positive

effect on the students' involvement in class activities and projects. This, in turn, has raised the GPAs of about 90% of the students who were retained for one year. Improved attendance is a requirement to remain in the academy. As the coordinator explained:

It's real high visibility in the academy. The students can't skip class, can't cut, can't go away for a few weeks and not have someone investigate the problem. We call the same day that they're absent from class to find out from their parents where they are.

With improvements in all three of these areas (attendance, GPA, class involvement), the staff interviewed stated that graduation rates for students classified as "at risk" drastically improve once they have enrolled in the academy. As one teacher illustrated:

Graduation rates have been pretty successful. With "at risk" students, stats show that most of these students would not graduate from high school without a program such as this. Last year, I believe we graduated 93% of our students, which is substantially higher than the regular school program.

The coordinator reiterated the positive effect that improvement in the achievement level of these students has over the course of the program, "We've been successful every year with our student population with both getting them to graduate and secondly, the students are at a much higher rate than non-academy students of going on to college."

Academy Student Satisfaction

The second objective focused on the level of satisfaction of academy students. The study examined

whether academy students have a higher level of satisfaction, regarding school, since becoming academy students.

The first variable observed was the response of the students when asked in the interview if there was anything they would like to change about their curriculum. The response by the students supports the view that academy students are satisfied with their course curriculum. Although 61% curriculum satisfaction is not considerable, it is significantly higher than the 27% curriculum satisfaction recorded by the non-academy students (see Table 4).

The second variable examined the students' enrollment satisfaction and their decision to stay in or move out of the program. The students were asked in the interview if they were satisfied with their decision (either enrolling or not enrolling in an academy), and if they would like to make the change into or out of an academy. The results of these interview questions indicated that the academy students were only slightly more satisfied with their enrollment choice than the non-academy students (see Table 5). However, the results also show that non-academy students are much more willing to switch from their current academic program than are academy students (see Table 6).

Table 4Curriculum Satisfaction

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>Want Change</u>	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Academy students (n=30)	32%	61%	7%
Non-Academy students (n=20)	46%	27%	27%

*See Appendix A for structured interview schedule

Table 5**Enrollment Satisfaction**

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Not Satisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Academy students (n=30)	90%	7%	3%
Non-Academy students (n=20)	88%	12%	0%

*See Appendix A for structured interview schedule

Table 6**Willingness to Transfer Programs**

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Academy students (n=30)	10%	87%	3%
Non-Academy students (n=20)	71%	29%	0%

*See Appendix A for structured interview schedule

The results of these interview questions, as well as several other related interview questions and discussions with teachers and coordinators, clearly indicate that in this study, academy students have a high level of satisfaction regarding school.

Social Integration

The third objective focused on the level of social integration that academy students experience with peers and teachers.

With so many students coming to school without a sense of "home" for many different reasons such as broken homes, disruptive neighborhoods, frequent geographical mobility of family, schools being too big, and so on, the first variable examines whether the academy program is providing a sense of "home" for its students. There were several interview questions directed at learning students' perceptions of the atmosphere within the class setting.

Based on the results of these questions, field observation, and interviews with the teachers and coordinators there was a definite sense of "home" within the academy setting. Over half of the academy students interviewed used the words "home" or "family" in describing their classroom environment (note: the words "home" and "family" were never used by the researcher in the interview process). Although the non-academy students' description of

their class environment was, for the most part, positive--it was far short of depicting a "home" or "family" environment. Instead, the positive portrayal was that of an academic or professional environment. In other words, most of the non-academy students felt it was a good learning environment, but they also depicted the teachers as authority figures and their fellow students as peers, as opposed to friends.

One academy student, when asked about the classroom environment said, "Because there's [sic] only four teachers and they all care about you, and all know you, it's like a big family." Another academy student described it this way:

You learn a lot about getting along with people--working as a team. It's really helpful; the teachers try to make you feel wanted, try to make you feel at home. I'm able to use it [the environment] in everyday life.

The Electronics Academy coordinator believes that one of the major reasons for increased social integration within the academy setting is that students go through the program together for three years. She added:

There's [sic] the emotional ties, the ability to be able to actually touch people's lives and have them touch you. I'm with them for three years, so our lives get intertwined. That's a benefit because I become an adult that they can count on and who is in support of who they're becoming.

The second variable tested observed if academy students are comfortable in discussing personal issues with a teacher. The third variable tested whether academy students develop close relationships with their peers and teachers.

The results showed that most students, academy and non-academy, had at least one teacher with whom they had developed a close relationship and with whom they felt comfortable in discussing any personal issues. Overall, academy students felt they had developed close relationships with most classmates and teachers. The most common reason given for this was that academy students and teachers are in the academy program together for three or four years. The situation that this creates, because teachers and students work together for approximately four periods a day for three or four years, is conducive to developing close relationships.

When one academy student was asked what he liked most about the program, he explained, "You can trust almost everybody in it, because everybody's used to you, so they're open and honest." Another academy student compared her experience before and after entering an academy: "You feel that there's always someone there that you can count on, not like outside classes where you don't have anybody."

The final variable to test the social integration level was whether students feel that their teachers are genuinely concerned about them. It should be noted that most academy students have several non-academy classes as well. Also, some non-academy students have elective classes that place them in academy classes for one or two periods a day. This

allows students a more complete perspective from which to base their answers.

The results, based on the structured interview schedule, indicated that the academy students were confident that their teachers were genuinely concerned about their well-being. All 30 of the academy students interviewed felt their teachers were concerned about them personally; only about half of the non-academy students felt the same way.

One non-academy student explained that "some are concerned with your future; most just want to get the lesson done. They come to class, do what they have to do and that's it." Another non-academy student said:

Certain teachers care, I can't say all of them -- like my world history teacher, he wants me to succeed; he's into my studies. But some of them don't really care; they just want you to pass the class.

An academy student, who also has non-academy classes, saw the concern of teachers this way:

My academy teachers are concerned because they want to know what I want to do with my life. [In] my outside classes, the teachers don't talk to us that way; they just give us the work and tell us to do this or that.

One academy student said she didn't blame her non-academy teachers because they have six periods, all with different kids. She stated:

My academy teachers have been extremely supportive of me since I've been in the program. They've given me confidence and I can go to them for anything. [In] my outside classes, some of them didn't even know my name.

The predominant sentiment by both groups of students

was that the non-academy setting created a system in which teachers are put in a situation to teach many different students a certain amount of material in an allotted time, leaving little or no room for personal, one-on-one exchange. This sentiment was reiterated by this academy student:

The academy teachers do care about you. If you have a problem, aside from school, they try to help you in any way they can, financially or emotionally. Outside of the academy, I think they still care about kids or else they wouldn't be there, but I don't think they really know you. The academy teachers have known you for a couple of years. Those other teachers have you for a year and move on to the next one--so they don't really get to know you personally.

Based on the interviews and participant observation, the academy students seem to experience a high level of social integration with their peers and teachers.

Pedagogical Improvement

The fourth objective focused on whether the academy setting creates an improved pedagogy over the pedagogy of a non-academy program. The first variable tested whether academy teachers develop closer relationships with their peers than they did when they were non-academy teachers.

The results support that the teachers have developed closer relationships with their peers due to increased contact from added staff meetings, field trips and integrated teaching. The prevailing sentiment was summed up by this Performing Arts teacher:

There are two teachers in the academy, when it started, that I barely had spoken to, I didn't even know their first name. Now we all hang out over here. The communication now between these two men and the rest of us is wonderful and that's been a real change.

The second variable studied whether academy teachers are able to grow intellectually and improve their teaching styles more than they did as non-academy teachers. The data show that the academy teachers do feel that their teaching style and knowledge have improved because of the academy setting. The general feeling among the academy teachers was that the academy setting allows teachers to really talk with each other and have in-depth discussions that help broaden their perspective in education. As one teacher put it:

Before, I was by myself in my own little class. You're just so isolated and it's sad because you're all very educated people and you have different philosophies and if you don't share those philosophies, you're not going to enrich each other.

Another teacher added:

I get a lot of good information by the camaraderie that I get from the other teachers and the creativity in my classes has gotten better because it's not just me. If I don't have an idea, I have a lot of people to turn to. So I have the same general philosophy about teaching, but I have a lot more information and resources. I think my classes in the academy have become more in-depth, more organized. And I'm teaching better--that's from the other teachers.

The third variable examined whether academy teachers are better able to identify strengths and weaknesses in students' abilities than they did when they were non-academy teachers. The general consensus was that the teachers were

able to identify strengths or weaknesses better now that they are in the academy setting. The teachers attributed this to the fact that they often meet once a week to discuss individual students. Also, they felt that the academy setting allows for much more one-on-one exchange between students and teachers. Lastly, most academies have a mentor program in which each teacher has a small number of students with whom they meet periodically.

The fourth variable examined whether academy teachers devoted more time to their profession than they did when they were non-academy teachers. Five of the six academy teachers and all three coordinators (who also teach) felt that they devote more time to their profession since being in an academy. They felt that the integrated teaching, the added staff meetings, and the mentor programs were the main reasons for the extra time required of them.

The last variable observed whether academy teachers perceived more integrated learning in the academy setting versus the non-academy setting. The evidence strongly suggests that the academy format allows for far greater integrated learning. The most common reason given by the teachers and coordinators was that the block scheduling, where the academy classes are scheduled in consecutive order, allows teachers to overlap subject matter into the next period or periods. Also, block scheduling allows

teachers to "team teach." This is when two or more teachers combine their classes and integrate two different subjects, i.e., English and history, into one overarching theme. The added meetings between staff members also allow teachers to discuss ways to integrate subject matter.

The results of the structured interview schedules with the students, teachers and coordinators and the participant observation by the researcher assist all four objectives. The research found an increase in the achievement level of students once they transferred into an academy. The data also show a high level of satisfaction among academy students. The study also shows that the level of social integration was high among the academy students. Finally, the fourth objective, which tested the perception of the staff regarding the pedagogy of an academy setting versus a non-academy setting, indicates an improved pedagogy among teachers who transferred to the academy programs.

While not a part of the research objective, the data also show that the academy students and teachers believe academy students are better prepared for life after high school. Because the Electronics Academy has a business-school partnership, students are required for their junior year to have mentors from local industries, which approximately 75% of the time, results in part-time, entry-level positions.

The coordinator believes that the concentrated involvement of the students in this particular class activity better prepares them for the adult role of choosing an occupational track. "Having a work environment that is different than the typical student has helps them have a career path that they normally wouldn't have had access to."

One academy student explained that his internship at Hewlett Packard made him realize the difficulty of gaining employment at a respected company, such as Hewlett Packard, without a college degree. Another academy student felt that the greatest advantage to being in an academy is the connections they have with the business industry. He stated:

I wouldn't be able to work with big companies like IBM, Apple or Xerox, if I wasn't in an academy. On top of learning math, English, and science, it has a program that helps you get ready for the business world, gets you prepared for that environment.

The overriding sentiment as to the goals of the academy was best summarized by an academy coordinator:

The immediate goal is that they graduate on time. Secondly, that when they walk out of here, they have a greater sense of their empowerment and own ability to function in the world at a higher level than they expected to. That they go to college, that they recognize the value of higher education, even if it's a trade school or something. As long as they know that if they do more, that life will be richer for them in every sense. That they realize they have the ability to affect their environment and make choices that are good for them--and that they're not necessarily destined to live in the same communities, with the same problems that perhaps they were raised in.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to (a) explore problems with schools and students and (b) to establish a base of information from a case study in order to conclude if this alternative program is a credible substitute for the curriculum taught at most secondary schools.

The case study was conducted entirely at one high school, with all the data collected by the researcher through participant observations inside and outside the class setting and through one-on-one interviews with staff and students. The case study format was chosen for this project in an effort to seek a detailed examination of one setting.

Gathering information about academies in a public high school required descriptive research. A three-step gathering procedure was used to collect data, which were recorded and analyzed, in a case study of a San Jose area secondary school. The results were presented from two sources of qualitative research, one-on-one structured interview schedules (with several open-ended questions) and complete observations (field notes). The results were in narrative and quotation form as appropriate to qualitative research.

An academy was defined as an educational program in which students are placed together in three or more classes

and are taught a specific career theme, as well as the required core academic subjects, by a specific group of teachers. The results suggest that this academy program is a credible alternative to the more conventional curriculum used in most high schools. The data demonstrate that the academy programs raised the levels of achievement, satisfaction and social integration of their students. The data also indicate an improvement in the pedagogy within an academy setting, as viewed by the academy teachers.

The significance of the research is that it demonstrates that this academy program helps strengthen the connection in students' minds between their course work and the world outside school. Keeping students together with the same teachers for more than one year in a small, school-within-a-school setting develops deeper communication, trust and commitment, which enables students and teachers to become partners rather than adversaries.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Emile Durkheim believed that school is where the child first learns to take part in collective activities outside the family. Durkheim believed it is the function of the school not only to transmit knowledge, but to inculcate in the child a spirit of teamwork and collective purpose, a desire to develop specialized skills in terms of the needs of others, and a tendency to coordinate his or her own interests to those of

the group. Within the academy setting, students must engage in constant collective activity, which develops a spirit of teamwork and benefits the entire group. This would be viewed as a necessary function of schools, according to functionalists, because children learn to be social beings and develop appropriate social values through contact with others (Ballantine, 1989).

Functionalist theorists would view academies as effective because they fulfill the two primary manifest functions of schooling, which is to prepare the child for the adult world and to prepare students for later work roles (Mulkey, 1993).

The competing theory discussed in Chapter Two was conflict theory. Conflict theorists' perspective of the role of education in society is usually framed in a manner that emphasizes the inequalities and deficiencies that the education institutions reproduce and create. Conflict theorists believe that the role of schools should be to insure that all children be given an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of gender, race, family income, or any other factor that may cause students to be sorted into tracks at school. The academies seem to ameliorate some of the obstacles of social class and race.

The academies studied, especially the Electronics Academy with its strong involvement with "at risk" students,

allow all students access to their programs. They encourage all students who are interested to enroll. The academies do not discriminate against any student. Therefore, the barriers of social class structure are at least partially broken down, allowing all students an equal chance, regardless of race, gender or socio-economic status. Lastly, schools often are ill-prepared to teach students who already come to school with serious problems. The "at risk" program within the Electronics Academy deals directly with this problem. A conflict theorist would see this as beneficial, because it is, at least in part, modifying the inequality of the class structure, which according to conflict theory, the dominant group desires in order to keep its power over subordinate groups and to insure a large pool of low wage workers.

Within the academy itself, teachers work as partners to coordinate the curriculum and in particular to integrate instruction in academic and vocational subjects. This enables the academy to accommodate a wide range of students, from college-bound to would-be dropouts, and prevents the program from becoming either an elite enclave or a dumping ground. In other words, teachers are able to focus more on the individual student, and that student's strengths, weaknesses, and interests. This, in turn, prevents the program from narrowing its focus to only one direction,

which may exclude students whose needs may be in other areas. Each academy teacher can relate lessons to what students are learning in other academy classes. As a result, students have the sense that they are not just taking a disconnected set of arbitrary classes but instead are studying the real world from different angles. Teachers also reach out to form partnerships with parents; when students apply to the program, most academies require that parents become involved from the outset by attending meetings or interviews between faculty and their children.

The academies offer some solutions to the growing problems in high schools, where students' skills are under-developed, many students are apathetic and sometimes hostile, test scores remain low, and employers and colleges complain about the poor preparation of graduates. Academies try to improve students' motivation and performance by creating a new kind of high school experience that teaches subjects in a practical context that strengthens the association between their course work and the adult world.

Conclusion

While the findings show some hopeful direction for school reform, efforts must continue to be made by all facets of society, jointly, to better prepare future generations.

The business community must strengthen its relationship with schools and students by giving money and providing internships. This, in turn, benefits industry by creating a more highly skilled, better educated workforce. Students benefit by the integration of academic and vocational subjects because they are able to see the connection between school and the adult world. Students also benefit by being much more desirable for future employment, thus allowing them more career options.

The education industry must make efforts to develop curriculum that meets the demands of post-high school life, as well as meeting the individual needs of the student. Lastly, the education industry must strengthen the connection between industry, parents, community and students in a way that allows all groups to benefit.

The community must bring together all of its crucial facets (government, schools, business industry, and parents) in achieving one goal, improving education. Government must better meet the needs of schools, most importantly, by funding schools so that they have updated books and materials, clean and functioning facilities and safer environments. Parents must become more involved in their students' education, by attending school meetings and functions, meeting periodically with teachers, and involving themselves with their children's school work.

It is crucial that industry, the community, the education institution, the government, and parents bind together in an effort to better prepare students for their own futures and for the future of our society.

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APPENDIX A

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMY STUDENTS

Gender:Ethnic Group:

- 1) How old are you? What is your name?
- 2) What is your class standing (year in school)?
- 3) What academy are you in?
- 4) How did you come to choose this academy? Were you recruited? Were you selected?
- 5) Was this your first choice for an academy?
- 6) Is this academy what you expected? In other words, are you learning a lot -- gaining skills?
- 7) What are you learning in this academy that you feel you would not have learned outside the academy?
- 8) Are you satisfied in your choice of academies? Or would you like to switch to a different program?
- 9) What do you plan on doing upon graduating?
- 10) Do you want to do something related to what you are learning in the academy, once you graduate?
- 11) Are you doing any kind of internship, or anything else related to the academy -- outside of school?
- 12) Has this academy helped you narrow your choices or helped you choose a career?
- 13) Do you work after school? Where? How many hours a week? What time do you get off at night? How do you get there?
- 14) If yes to question (13), is it difficult to go to work and school at the same time? Which is more important to you? Why?
- 15) If yes to question (13), do you plan to keep the same job after school?
- 16) How do you feel about your future? In other words, are you optimistic, pessimistic or do not know?

- 17) Ultimately, what kind of job would you like to obtain? Do you think you will be able to obtain this job? Why or why not? Has the academy helped you?
- 18) How would you like your life to look 5 years from now? (House living in, job, family, so forth)?
- 19) How would you like your life to look 10 years from now?
- 20) Do you feel that the teachers within the academy are genuinely concerned with your future? How about the teachers outside the academy?
- 21) Do you think that what you are learning in this academy will help you achieve your goals once you graduate?
- 22) If it were possible to change your studies, within the academy to prepare you better for the future, what kind of changes would you make?
- 23) If you could change anything at Independence High, what would you change? Why?
- 24) What do you like about the academy? What do you dislike about the academy?

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR NON-ACADEMY STUDENTS

Gender:Ethnic Group:

- 1) How old are you? What is your name?
- 2) What is your class standing (year in school)?
- 3) Were you informed about the academies at Independence High School? When?
- 4) Why did you decide not to join an academy?
- 5) Is Independence High School what you expected it to be like? In other words, are you learning a lot -- gaining the skills you thought you would get?
- 6) What are you learning that you feel you would not have learned if you were in an academy?
- 7) Are you satisfied with the education you are getting at Independence? Why or why not?
- 8) Are you satisfied in choosing not to be in an academy? Or, if you could do it again, would you have enrolled in an academy?
- 9) What do you plan on doing upon graduating?
- 10) Do you want to do something related to what you are learning in school once you graduate?
- 11) Are you doing any kind of internship, or anything else related to school -- outside of of your normal school day?
- 12) Have your classes helped you narrow your choices or helped you choose a career?
- 13) Do you work after school? Where? How many hours a week? What time do you get off at night? How do you get there?
- 14) If yes to question (13), is it difficult to work and go to school at the same time? Which is more important to you? Why?
- 15) If yes to question (13), do you plan to keep the same job after school?

- 16) How do you feel about your future? In other words, are you optimistic, pessimistic or do not know?
- 17) Ultimately, what kind of job would you like to obtain? Do you think you will be able to obtain this job? Why or why not? Has school helped you?
- 18) How would you like your life to look 5 years from now? (House living in, job, family, so forth)?
- 19) How would you like your life to look 10 years from now?
- 20) Do you feel that the teachers at Independence High are genuinely concerned with your future?
- 21) Do you think that what you are learning at Independence High will help you achieve your goals once you graduate?
- 22) If it were possible to change your studies, to prepare you better for the future, what kind of changes would you make?
- 23) In general, if you could change anything at Independence High, what would you change? Why?
- 24) What do you like about your classes at Independence High? What do you dislike about your classes at Independence High?

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

- 1) How long have you been teaching? Total
- 2) How long have you been teaching at Independence High?
- 3) How long have you been teaching in this academy?
- 4) What is your average class size?
- 5) What are the main objectives of your class and of the academy?
- 6) Where is the academy right now in regards to these objectives?
- 7) What will the academy have to do to achieve these objectives?
- 8) Is money a problem in meeting the goals of the academy? How so?
- 9) Do you try to get grants or set up fundraisers?
- 10) Does the academy have an accurate representation of males/females and ethnic groups when compared to the school as a whole?
- 11) What is the future goal of the academy? Do you feel it prepares students for life after high school?
- 12) What is the future goal of your class?
- 13) How would you like to run your classes? How is this different than what you are currently doing?
- 14) Is there a difference in your approach to teaching now that you are part of an academy?
- 15) Do you have more work now that you teach in an academy?
- 16) Do you feel that the curriculum taught in the academies is an added benefit to the students compared to the traditional means?
- 17) How would you define success for the program?

- 18) Is this how you envisioned the academy to be when you first started? How is it different?
- 19) Is there anything you especially like about the academy or academies in general?
- 20) Is there anything you especially dislike or would like to see changed? What? How do you deal with these problems?
- 21) Do you see a difference in attitude among the teachers and students within the academy setting?
- 22) How would you like the academies to look in 5 to 10 years?
- 23) Is this the type of program you would want your children to graduate from? Why or why not?
- 24) How has (or should) the curriculum changed to meet the demands of society?
- 25) Do you feel that students who graduate from an academy are better prepared for future decisions (employment, college, etc.) than are other students?

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR COORDINATORS

- 1) How did you get the position of coordinator?
- 2) How long have you been the coordinator?
- 3) How long have you been at Independence High?
- 4) How many students are in this academy?
- 5) When did it originate?
- 6) What is the main objective of this academy?
- 7) Where is the academy right now, in regards to these objectives?
- 8) What will the academy have to do to meet these objectives?
- 9) Is money a problem in meeting the goals of the academy? How so?
- 10) Do you try to get grants or set up fundraisers?
- 11) What is the composition of students in the academy?
Is it an accurate representation of Independence High?
- 12) What is the breakdown of academy classes taken per year by the students?
- 13) Are there internships and other programs outside the school related to the academy?
- 14) How many teachers in this academy?
- 15) How many established academies are there?
- 16) Are the majority of students in academies or out?
Percentage?
- 17) What are some problems that have arisen within the academy?
- 18) How do incoming freshmen decide on an academy or if they even want to be in an academy?
- 19) Is there a problem with getting too much of one type of student and not enough of other types of students (i.e., males/females or ethnic groups)?

- 20) What if the student is not happy with this academy?
- 21) Is there competition among academies?
- 22) Is there any friction between any of the factions?
- 23) What is the future goal of this academy? Of all academies?
- 24) Do you feel that the curriculum taught in the academies is an added benefit to the students compared to the traditional means?
- 25) How would you define success for the program?
- 26) Is this how you envisioned the academy to be when you first started?
- 27) Is there anything you especially like about the academy or academies in general?
- 28) Is there anything you especially dislike or would like to see changed? What? How do you deal with these problems?
- 29) Do you see a difference in attitude among the teachers and students within the academy setting?
- 30) How would you like the academies to look in 5 to 10 years?
- 31) Why was the academy program implemented in the first place?
- 32) Is this the type of program you would want your children to graduate from? Why or why not?
- 33) How has the curriculum changed to meet the demands of society? How should it change?
- 34) What problems do high school graduates face that they might not have faced 10-15 years ago?
- 35) Should secondary curriculum be different than it was 10-15 years ago?
- 36) Do you feel that students who graduate from an academy are better prepared for future decisions -- employment and college -- than are other students?

APPENDIX B

To: Orlando Pequenezza
2278 Bray Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95050

From: Serena W. Stanford *Serena W. Stanford*
AAVP, Graduate Studies and Research

Date: February 3, 1994

The Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board has approved your request to use human subjects in the study entitled:

"Academies Within Schools"

This approval is contingent upon the subjects participating in your research project being appropriately protected from risk. This includes the protection of the anonymity of the subjects' identity when they participate in your research project, and with regard to any and all data that may be collected from the subjects. The Board's approval includes continued monitoring of your research by the Board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of injury, you must notify Dr. Serena Stanford immediately. Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma and release of potentially damaging personal information.

Please also be advised that each subject needs to be fully informed and aware that their participation in your research project is voluntary, and that he or she may withdraw from the project at anytime. Further, a subject's participation, refusal to participate or withdrawal will not affect any services the subject is receiving or will receive at the institution in which the research is being conducted. If you have questions, please contact me at 408-924-2480.

APPENDIX C

INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

1776 EDUCATIONAL PARK DRIVE
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA 95133

408.729.3911
FAX 408.926.6785

JOHN P. SELLAROLE, Ed.D.
Principal

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December 6, 1993

Mr. Orlando Pequenezza

Dear Mr. Pequenezza:

We understand you are doing a study for your Master's thesis on the Academies at Independence High School and as part of your study you need to interview students through an oral questionnaire.

I have checked with the administration and after review of your questionnaire, they have decided to support you in your study. You may continue forward with interviewing our students at Independence.

Thank you for being patient and cooperative through the process of obtaining permission.

Sincerely,

John E. Duran

FLOYD SEITZ
Assistant to the Principal

RICHARD URIBE
American Hall Villa Principal

JULIA LAWRENCE
Bicentennial Hall Villa Principal

FELTON OWENS
Democracy Hall Villa Principal

RICK ESPARZA
Constitution Associate Principal

EAST SIDE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT-JOE COTO, Superintendent

It is the policy of the East Side Union High School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, religion, race, national origin, sexual orientation, or handicapping condition in its educational programs and activities or in the recruitment and employment of personnel.