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A study of the ethnic distribution of Mexican-American students in a one-school district.

George Hosea Batchelder
San Jose State University

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A STUDY OF THE ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN
STUDENTS IN A ONE-SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Education
San Jose State College

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

by
George Hosea Batchelder
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APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Y. A. Cabrera
Le. D. Cuchard

APPROVED FOR THE COLLEGE GRADUATE COMMITTEE

William Blythe

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM, DEFINITIONS AND PROCEDURE

The information presently available about the Mexican-American student in small rural schools is inadequate. Fifteen percent of the Mexican-American school population lives in rural areas in California and only five percent of the total school enrollment is in one-school districts.¹ This study compiles data from one school, in the Salinas Valley, enrolling approximately fifty percent Mexican-Americans. This descriptive status study is of value for determination of general school operational policies, curriculum revision, applications for federal funding, as well as updating data on the Mexican-American pupil population.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The State Board of Education has stressed the need for equitable ethnic distribution of pupils and teachers.² The California School Board Association has stated that school districts should be encouraged to analyze the extent of racial imbalance and take

¹Bureau of Intergroup Relations, Racial and Ethnic Survey of California Public Schools, Part I, 1966 (Sacramento: State Department of Education, 1967), pp. 6, 17.

²Ibid., p. iii.

steps to correct any imbalance, which may be found to exist.³ An imbalance in schools, even if facilities are equal, results in an incomplete education.⁴ Surveys are necessary to identify where imbalances exist and evidence is necessary to convince school boards and the public that the imbalance must be altered to provide equal educational opportunity for all the students. This study was an attempt to discover the extent of imbalance, which may exist in this district, and to document the quality of education associated with this imbalance.

Importance of the study. The ethnic survey, conducted by the State Department of Education, eliminated one-school districts as irrelevant to the purpose of the study (as the data are meaningless to the sampling procedure), however, it concludes that one-school districts are a significant factor in dealing with problems of desegregation and integration.⁵ This thesis contains the results of a survey designed (1) to measure the ethnic balance of

³ California School Boards Association, The Findings of a Survey to Develop an Inventory of Problems and Practices Regarding Ethnic Imbalance in California Schools (Vallejo, California: Vallejo Unified School District, 1965), p. 12.

⁴ National Association of Intergroup Relations Officials, "Recent School Board Action Related to De Facto Segregation of Pupils and to Integration of Employed Personnel," NEA Research Division Letter, April, 1964, p. 8.

⁵ Bureau of Intergroup Relations, op. cit., p. 4.

students in this district's school; and (2) to investigate the quality of education associated with the ethnic majority and minority concentrations.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Mexican-American. Mexican-American is used to identify a group, a subculture, with certain characteristics. The last names are Spanish; almost all of the persons come from Mexico or are descendants of Mexican citizens. In some instances the connection with Mexico is of several generations past; in a few instances the last name will not be Spanish, but the subject will be included if he is a Mexican-American. A few subjects may have a Spanish surname but not be Mexican-American, as in the case of direct immigration from Spain, the Iberian regions, the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, or Latin America.

High group. The high group refers to the college preparatory students, or the students who are the most academically successful. At every grade level in this school, starting with the first grade, the students are assigned by ability and achievement.

Below average group. The below average group is the reverse of the above group. The students in this

group do not do well in school and are considered potential dropouts.

The sample group. The sample group consists of the Mexican-American students in the high group, grades one to eight.

Comparison group. The comparison group consists of the students in the below average group, grades four, five, and six.

Successful students. Successful students, for the purposes of this study, will by definition mean, those who are assigned to the high group.

III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

The investigator has been employed in this district for six years, intimately working with both the staff and the sample and comparison groups. His subjective views and experiences have undoubtedly influenced this paper; however, the data are very objective. The majority of the material is from cumulative records and other official sources, state reports, school board policies, the teacher's handbook, as well as the personal and continued experience of the investigator.

Each child in the sample and comparison groups was

listed on a file card. All the sources available to the investigator were searched and a compilation was made upon the cards. The cards were used to assemble data in each category under scrutiny. The results will follow, arranged in tables for easy assimilation and comparison. The official "Racial and Ethnic Distribution of Public School Enrollment" made yearly to the California State Department of Education was made available, as well as much more meaningful material, the work sheets from which it was compiled.

Delimitations on the study. The study will be limited to assembling and interpreting data (1) which attempt to identify some patterns and needs of the Mexican-American within this public school; (2) which point to desirable changes within the institution; and (3) to determine some characteristics of the Mexican-American students who are assigned to the sample and comparison groups. The investigator did not attempt to carry out experiments by manipulation of variables, nor to change the environment to validate possible improvements.

Organization of the study. The study is divided into three main parts, reflecting areas of concern: influences on the child (Chapter II); ethnic balance of the

child's environment (Chapter IV); and the quality of education the child is receiving (Chapter V). Chapter VI gives the findings and conclusions for the study and recommends changes which the school could make to improve the educational opportunity of the Mexican-American students. Chapter II provides background on the Mexican-American and cites similar situations to those found in this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The problems that the Mexican-Americans face are not limited to one ghetto, to one city, nor to one state. In at least a five-state area, wherever there are concentrations of the ethnic group, the problems are similar. Chapter II examines the reports and recommendations found in the literature, which consider the problems of the Mexican-American as reported in this study.

I. THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN IN OUR SOCIETY

Discrimination in society. Discrimination, isolation, and withdrawal are not looked on as an evil by many people who do not remember the lessons of history and the history of minority groups. Discrimination should be viewed as an error and folly, morally indefensible, which results in suffering by the whole of society.¹ "These discriminatory practices must be abandoned by the community at large, because they are immoral, because they

¹Cornelis W. Kiefwiet, "Introduction," Understanding Minority Groups (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964), p. xi.

are uneconomical. . . ."² The end to discrimination should not be viewed as the result of the minority becoming identical to the majority. In some cases complete assimilation is impossible and in most cases complete assimilation is unnecessary. ". . . The answer ought not to be to submerge one culture within another."³ The melting pot of America should not be expected to produce the surrender of all ancestral customs and memories.⁴ Our goal should not be a oneness, but a pluralistic society, with the full force of government acting to protect the rights of the individual. "Government has an obligation to match the promise of America with action."⁵

The result of government inaction or of misguided government policy, in the case of the American Indian, leads one to despair if he does not exercise enough influence in Congress or Anglo-American society, because of

²L. M. Lopez, "Three-Year Report of the Mexican-American Community Services Project," (San Jose, California: Mexican-American Community Service Agency, Inc., 1967), pp. 37-38. (Mimeographed.)

³Ibid., p. 3.

⁴Wayne Leys, "The Philosophical and Ethnic Aspects of Group Relations," Understanding Minority Groups, op. cit., p. 7.

⁵Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, The Mexican-American: A New Focus on Opportunity (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), unpagged.

isolation, difference or lack of the franchise.⁶ The Japanese-Americans also learned the result of being different⁷ and few enough in number to be collected and contained.

All of the members of a minority group may be stereotyped and negatively identified by the actions of a few, despite the fact that only eleven percent of a group, by anthropological studies, can be visually identified.⁸ Especially among Mexican-Americans, the successful and acculturated members disappear into society leaving the stoop laborer as the model.

The solution to prejudice and hatred in a democracy should be well learned from the Fascists, who preached international and interracial war and from the Communists, who preached class struggle. Our goal should be intergroup friendship.⁹

Mexican-Americans as a subculture. Heller gives

⁶John Collier, "The United States Indian," Understanding Minority Groups, op. cit., pp. 33-51.

⁷Dorothy Swaine Thomas, "The Japanese-American," Understanding Minority Groups, op. cit., pp. 84-108.

⁸Clarence Senior, "The Puerto Rican in the United States," Understanding Minority Groups, op. cit., p. 114.

⁹Leys, op. cit., p. 2.

an accurate summation about the Mexican-American.¹⁰ She observes that they ". . . are among the least 'Americanized' of all ethnic groups in the United States"¹¹ and ". . . as there is very little intergenerational vertical mobility, so too, there is no appreciable intergroup geographical mobility."¹²

The fact that the Mexican-American has lived in this country from its beginning also leads to a confusion of what to call him. Some Mexican-Americans prefer to be called Americans, some Spanish, some Mexican.

The Mexican-American is the third largest minority in this country. The California population is nine percent Mexican-American. Eighty percent of the Mexican-Americans are now living in urban areas. Eighty-five percent of the Mexican-Americans are native born, with fifty percent of both parents native born. The majority of the Mexican-Americans are third generation, or more.¹³ The Mexican-Americans, for the most part, live in ghettos. Attempts to break out of the ghettos have been unsuccessful, meeting strong opposition from the majority population.¹⁴

¹⁰ Celia S. Heller, Mexican-American Youth: Forgotten Youth at the Crossroads (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 7-99.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 4.

¹² Ibid., p. 5.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 9-29.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 22.

Economic barriers to acculturation. The disadvantage of the Mexican-American is intensified by economic factors, as well as cultural and language differences. Certainly income is an important factor. "The limited income received by the Mexican-American further reduces the possibility of moving noticeably out of their cultural and economic dilemma."¹⁵

Well documented statistics are available on the earnings of single men who were imported into the United States under the braceros program. Often these amounts were too small to provide a living for one, let alone for the head of a household, even if every member of the family worked.

In one instance, in the Salinas Valley, in a crew of seventy-three, fifty-seven workers earned under thirty dollars a week. Additional evidence is available to suggest that even workers under contract for minimum earnings, contracts which are not generally available to domestic workers,¹⁶ failed to earn substantial

¹⁵Y. Arturo Cabrera, "A Study of American and Mexican-American Cultural Values and Their Significance in Education," (unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Colorado, 1964), p. 148.

¹⁶Ernesto Galarza, Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story (Santa Barbara: McNally & Loftin, Publishers, 1964), p. 203.

amounts.¹⁷

The braceros resulted in unemployment or under-employment or reduced wages for domestic workers¹⁸ and the workers were subjected to measures to discourage them from seeking work. "Associations also resorted to systematic harassment of citizen job seekers . . ."¹⁹ including the single referral system, which ". . . demoralized and dispersed . . ."²⁰ experienced crews. The President's Commission on Migratory Labor in 1951 reported that braceros adversely effected wages.²¹

In Monterey County ". . . domestic workers in town sheds who had averaged \$2.50 an hour were replaced by 'Braceros' in the field who started at a base rate of \$2.5 cents per hour."²² Strawberry picking fell from a high of sixty cents per crate to a low of fifty cents after certification for braceros had been obtained.²³ Domestic resident families were vacated from labor camps to make room for braceros.²⁴ Outside the town of Soledad, braceros resorted to prayers, to the Virgin, after the disappearance

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 184-194.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 204-205.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 206.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 215.

²¹ President's Commission on Migratory Labor, Migratory Labor in American Agriculture (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 59.

²² Galarza, op. cit., p. 211.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 213.

of their spokesman.²⁵ Domestic workers had only one other alternative -- to leave.

The expiration of Public Law 78, after renewals, resulted in recruitment under Public Law 414 (green card). From 1955 to 1958, the number of green card holders increased from 380,091 to 528,275, large numbers of workers were admitted daily across the borders. In addition to this, illegal wetbacks continued to enter the United States. The approximately 60,000 California adult workers living on seasonal employment, continued to have competition for their livelihood.²⁶ A competition which the government had not helped. ". . . Government had proceeded to tip the scales even more in favor of property, . . . weakened the already feeble defenses of agriculture unions, . . . and time and time again stopped the workers in their efforts to gain the protection of due process in the redress of their grievances."²⁷

Unemployment outside of agriculture also is the fare of the Mexican-American. ". . . In 1964, there were Mexican-Americans with college degrees roaming the streets of San Jose looking for positions for which they had gone to college to prepare."²⁸ Discrimination against the

²⁵ Ibid., p. 228.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 148-250.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 257.

²⁸ Lopez, op. cit., p. 10.

Mexican-American can be seen, not only by private industry, but also by the government agencies. ". . . We found the Department of Employment was wholly discriminatory;²⁹ . . . persons of Mexican ancestry are still, for the most part, employed at the entry level," in the post office. The city of San Jose is under investigation by the Fair Practices Commission as a result of complaints of discrimination.³⁰

Most of the discrimination is of omission, not of commission. From the community viewpoint, it is the Mexican-American who is the problem; he needs to change.³¹ The Mexican-American rejects the surrendering of his culture and denies surrender is necessary:

It is not true that the Mexican-American's culture tends to inhibit him, or that isolation from the main stream of society has produced a kind of behavior that will not allow him to participate on an equal basis with the average member of the majority community.³²

The feeling is summed up by testimony at the El Paso Conference. "He is industrious -- not lazy. He is proud -- not humble."³³ As a nation, we must recognize that portions of our system are outmoded and fail to deliver to

²⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 2-5.

³² Ibid., p. 30.

³³ Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, The Mexican-American: A New Focus on Opportunity, Testimony before the Cabinet Committee, El Paso, October, 1967. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 42.

all Americans the equality of opportunity. . . ."³⁴ President Johnson states the dilemma of the Mexican-American very clearly: "They believed that they were fullfledged citizens of the greatest nation on earth, even if others didn't always treat them as such."³⁵

II. THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND OUR SCHOOLS

School personnel practices. A major problem in the education of Mexican-Americans is the reluctance of schools to employ members of this ethnic group, thereby providing models for the children to look up to favorably. Head Start personnel testified as follows: "We have actually quite forced Head Start sponsors to hire a certain percentage of Mexican-American teachers and aides."³⁶ Despite the fact that ". . . schools do not provide staff capable of communicating with non-English-speaking parents,"³⁷ it is necessary to ". . . convince the school systems to fully utilize trained personnel of Mexican-American extraction

³⁴Ibid., p. xi.

³⁵Ibid., p. iii.

³⁶U. S. Cabinet Committee in Mexican-American Affairs, El Paso Conference, 1967, No. 21, unpagged. (Mimeographed.)

³⁷California State Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, Education and the Mexican-American Community in Los Angeles County, Testimony presented April, 1968. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 21.

in their systems."³⁸ Mr. Rodriguez, Chief of the Mexican-American Unit, United States Office of Education, stated: "The Mexican American has less than two percent of the teacher population."³⁹ "It is evident that various forms of discrimination are major causes of these problems."⁴⁰

The President's Riot Commission reports: "The schools attended by disadvantaged Negro children commonly are staffed by teachers with less experience and lower qualifications than those attended by middle-class whites."⁴¹ Testimony about Mexican-Americans in California is similar. "We feel that we are getting second-rate teachers in all the Mexican-American areas. . . ." Additional testimony agrees. "Unequal schools, unequal facilities, overcrowding, and ill-prepared teachers are obvious to anyone who will but look."⁴² We feel that ". . . many of the predominantly Mexican-American schools in the barrio had teachers and administrators who were

³⁸ Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., p. 242.

³⁹ California State Advisory Committee, op. cit., p. 10.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 1.

⁴¹ National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, Report of March 1968 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 238.

⁴² California State Advisory Committee, op. cit., p. 7.

rejected by other schools."⁴³ The low quality of teachers in Mexican-American schools is also caused by the assignment of beginning teachers to these areas, resulting in a high turnover rate. "The high rate of yearly turnover or dropout of the teachers in schools made up of largely culturally disadvantaged children . . . is, unfortunately, a continuing problem." "To assign a prejudiced or reluctant teacher, or one inexperienced in teaching children, makes his turnover not only likely, but almost inevitable."⁴⁴

Teacher attitude. The attitude of the teacher working with a Mexican-American child is an important factor. "Teachers of the disadvantaged usually have middle-class background, values, and attitudes, which are in conflict with those learned by the children living in the slum areas."⁴⁵ "Teachers assigned to these schools often begin with negative attitudes toward the students."⁴⁶ Teachers today still tend to regard assignment to schools

⁴³Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., p. 43.

⁴⁴Patrick J. Groff, "Teaching the CD Child: Teacher Turnover," California Journal of Educational Research, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, March 1967, pp. 91-94.

⁴⁵Arnold B. Cheyney, "Teachers of Culturally Disadvantaged," Exceptional Children, October 1966, p. 88.

⁴⁶National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, op. cit., p. 239.

in a Mexican-American district as an inferior one."⁴⁷

Teachers are quoted as saying the following: "I have never had a Mexican who could think for himself; these Mexican kids, why do they have to be here?" Ben Gomez concludes, "the attitudes of many of my colleagues are negative toward the Mexican-American."⁴⁸

If some educators are consciously or unconsciously seeking to perpetuate disparity and differential treatment of citizens who are supposed to be equal how can one expect to have a healthy and equality oriented community?⁴⁹

School officials. When government stops and listens to its citizens, it finds that they have a lot of complaints. Mexican-Americans have complaints about school personnel, who do not care about, nor understand, or reject the Mexican-American culture. This discrimination starts at the highest levels in states, school boards, and administrations, and continues down to the classroom teacher. Mr. Jimenes, Chairman of the Inter-Agency Committee, comments upon the actions of some states: ". . . The programs are still operated through the often

⁴⁷Heller, op. cit., p. 48.

⁴⁸California State Advisory Committee, op. cit., p. 7.

⁴⁹Lopez, op. cit., p. 5.

indifferent state educational hierarchies."⁵⁰ "There are local authorities all across the Southwest who are not ready to accept this challenge." ". . . School boards and school administrators in the present school system are members of the ruling power structure."⁵¹ The professional leadership in education does not believe that schools should be perpetuators of the status quo. "The school leadership also believes in the school as an instrument of social change."⁵²

Ethnic balance of students. The effects of segregation are many and varied. The students show very definitely the effects of separation. "Racial isolation in the schools tends to lower students' achievement, restrict their aspiration, and impair their sense of being able to effect their own destiny."⁵³ Research even shows that, "Mexican-Americans are more likely to stay in school in the areas where other groups represent a

⁵⁰U. S. Cabinet Committee, op. cit., p. 2.

⁵¹Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., pp. 110, 241.

⁵²Committee on Professional Rights and Responsibilities, NEA, Equality of Educational Opportunity, National Education Association, May, 1965.

⁵³U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, Racial Isolation in the Public Schools (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 162.

majority.⁵⁴ Heller states that, ". . . school integration stands out as the most salient factor associated with ambition."⁵⁵

The President's Riot Commission concluded that integration of the schools is ". . . vital to the well-being of this country."⁵⁶ "CTA believes that integration of ethnic and racial groups is desirable. . . ." "In a multi-racial society, for educational and humanitarian reasons ethnic integration in public schools is necessary."⁵⁷

"The Commission on School Integration supports the point of view that all ethnically segregated education is inherently unequal . . ."⁵⁸ The Supreme Court of the United States, in 1954, in a majority opinion written by Chief Justice Warren, asks the question, if separate facilities deprived ". . . the children of minority groups of equal educational opportunities?" The court concluded:

⁵⁴Paul L. Sheldon, "Mexican-Americans in Urban Schools: An Exploration of the Drop-out Problems," California Journal of Educational Research, Vol. XI, No. 1, January 1961, p. 26.

⁵⁵Heller, op. cit., p. 87.

⁵⁶National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, op. cit., p. 243.

⁵⁷Commission of Education Policy of CTA, Integration in the Schools, Bul. No. 9, 1964, unpagged.

⁵⁸National Association of Intergroup Relations Officials, "Recent School Board Action Related to de facto Segregation of Pupils and to Integration of Employed Personnel," NEA, Research Division Letter, April 1964, p. 8.

"We believe that it does."⁵⁹ Mexican-American children were segregated, until the late forties.⁶⁰ De facto segregation still remains a problem on the local level. It is necessary to ". . . convince local school boards that de facto segregation of our children must end."⁶¹ It may be necessary to use ". . . fund cut-offs or court suits to end de facto segregation."⁶²

The extent of ethnic imbalance is not completely known. Commissioner Howe states that the first step is to discover the extent of segregation.⁶³ Even when schools are desegregated, classroom integration may remain unaccomplished.

In a newly desegregated school, those attending the same grade are grouped in separate classrooms on the basis of their achievement levels, the results may be the establishment of racially isolated classrooms within the normally desegregated school.⁶⁴

⁵⁹Brown v. Board of Education, 98 L ed 380 (1953).

⁶⁰Heller, op. cit., p. 47.

⁶¹Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., p. 241.

⁶²U. S. Cabinet Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., p. 3.

⁶³James S. Colman and others, Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. i.

⁶⁴U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, op. cit., p. 162.

The placement of students by test scores results in a segregated school by classroom. The minority group students, for the most part, cluster into the lower ability groups, while the middle-class students cluster into the academically oriented classroom. The result is segregation in rooms side by side, obvious to the students in daily contact with each other, in the halls or on the playground. The cultural bias of the tests are widely recognized, but still students are placed by the test scores. School guidance personnel ". . . do not see scores for what they really are . . . , products of peculiar social and cultural circumstances."⁶⁵ Jensen found that Mexican-American students, measured by the California Test of Mental Maturity, ". . . are actually quite normal in basic learning abilities"⁶⁶ "It is suggested that low I.Q. Mexican-Americans not being basically slow learners, should not be placed, as they are now, in classes with low I.Q."⁶⁷

Minority group education. The use of a different language is looked at with suspicion by the majority

⁶⁵ Heller, op. cit., p. 51.

⁶⁶ Arthur R. Jensen, "Learning Abilities in Mexican American Children," California Journal of Educational Research, Vol. XII, No. 4, September 1961, p. 158.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 159.

group in the United States.⁶⁸ Society, through its schools, has attempted to suppress this foreignness by forbidding the use of the mother tongue. Punishment was prescribed if a student used a language other than English. "If he is caught speaking Spanish, he will be punished."⁶⁹ The folly of suppressing Spanish, even with the good intention of forcing the child to use and thereby learn English, is expressed in many official hearings. "Take away the means of communication from a child and you take away everything from him."⁷⁰ "The Spanish language must be preserved in order to retain the cultural heritage, which gives a sense of identity to the Mexican-American."⁷¹ "English has been, as prescribed by law, the language of introduction, in California . . ."⁷² The failure to teach children by using a language they do not understand can be seen in the dropout rates.⁷³

⁶⁸ William Madson, Mexican-Americans of South Texas (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 106.

⁶⁹ United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Welfare, Bilingual Education, Hearings before Subcommittee, 19th Congress, 1st Session, S. 423, 1967 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 1.

⁷⁰ Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., p. 115.

⁷¹ U. S. Cabinet Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., unpagued.

⁷² United States Congress, op. cit., p. 489.

⁷³ Ibid.

The problem goes much further than merely teaching a language well. "Achievement in school is a result of not only innate intelligence, but of factors of motivation, opportunities and feelings about one's self."⁷⁴ The schools teach little to Mexican-American youngsters about the ". . . contributions that their ancestors made to the history of the Southwest."⁷⁵ In fact, the Mexican-American child, through social pressure, is ashamed and even disowns his ethnic ancestry.⁷⁶ The educational system leaves much to be desired.⁷⁷

Educational programs to be effective have to be based on the values, cultural potential, and educational needs of all individuals including ages, abilities, interests, cultural differences and socio-economic status.⁷⁸

"There is very little basic research going on relating to the cultural and linguistic problems faced by the Mexican-Americans."⁷⁹ Conflicting evidence can be

⁷⁴Jean D. Grambs, A Guide to School Integration (New York: Public Affairs Committee, Inc., September 1967), p. 23.

⁷⁵Lopez, op. cit., p. 13.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 19.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 12.

⁷⁸Marcos de Leon, "Statement of Philosophy and Policy as They Pertain to the Acculturation and Education of the Mexican-American," 1965. (EDIC 1503).

⁷⁹U. S. Cabinet Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., unpagd.

found in the literature about Mexican-Americans. "Several studies have shown that Mexican-American children tend to start out on much the same level as the Anglo-American children, both in I.Q. scores and scholastic achievement,"⁸⁰ or "The minority pupils' scores are as much as one standard deviation below the majority pupils' scores in 1st. grade."⁸¹ Coleman continues: "It appears that in general, children, from a home in which a language other than English is spoken, are at some disadvantage when they enter first grade."⁸²

The special needs of bicultural students are recognized and efforts are being made to provide an education to develop the individual to his full potential. The efforts are not equal to the needs.⁸³

The Legislature finds and declares that because of community, environmental and other conditions which give rise to language, cultural and economic disadvantages, the latent talents of many minors in the elementary and secondary schools are not adequately developed by general educational programs. . . ."⁸⁴

⁸⁰Heller, op. cit., p. 46.

⁸¹Coleman, op. cit., p. 21.

⁸²Ibid., p. 452.

⁸³State Department of Education, California Laws and Policies Relating to Equal Opportunities in Education (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1966), p. 9.

⁸⁴California State Advisory Committee, op. cit., p. 19.

It is our belief that the problem of providing educational opportunity for all, transcends the problems of the big cities, or the problems of rural areas, or even the problems of minority groups . . ."⁸⁵ "Despite the overwhelming need, our society spends less money educating ghetto children than children of suburban families."⁸⁶ "The Mexican-American is the victim of an inadequate school system. . . ."⁸⁷ The fact is that an adequate education is not being provided and will not be provided in the immediate future.⁸⁸ Local districts will not support the programs necessary for minority children. The funds must come from federal sources.⁸⁹ An example of this lack of equal education and failure to remedy the problem can be seen in testimony in 1951.

⁸⁵ Committee on Professional Rights and Responsibilities, NEA, Equality of Educational Opportunity, Conference on Civil and Human Rights in Education, May 1965, p. 1.

⁸⁶ National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, op. cit., p. 241.

⁸⁷ Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, op. cit., p. 50.

⁸⁸ National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, loc. cit.

⁸⁹ California State Advisory Committee, op. cit., p. 19.

The testimony before this Commission was but an echo of the findings of earlier commissions and investigations, yet little or nothing has been done to find an adequate solution to⁹⁰ the educational problems of migrant children.

⁹⁰The President's Commission on Migratory Labor, op. cit., p. 167.

CHAPTER III

INFLUENCES ON THE STUDENTS

The performance of students in school or life depends upon many factors: self-image, culture, intelligence and opportunities. Chapter III will consider these factors as they are reflected in the community and in the school.

I. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE COMMUNITY

The factors, influencing the community attitude toward the Mexican-American, include the fact that Campo-verde is a small community astride route 101 in the center of the Salinas Valley. The main employment centers around agriculture. Field work, equipment maintenance or chemical fertilizer application are typical occupations. Lettuce and tomatoes are the cash crops with sugar beets being planted to insure some income, even if the weather is unfavorable.

Campoverde has a population of 2000 people within the city limits. The residential composition of the community is very mixed, but there is a concentration of Mexican-Americans living in the southwest section of the city. Two housing situations approaching labor camps are

within city limits, one on the main street. Beyond the community, camps and additional housing concentrations are found, that are, from time to time, referred to as camps. Considered regular housing, they do not come under the supervision of the labor code. During the crop season housing is not available at any price.

The wide, clean streets and attractive houses give a respectable appearance to the city. However, behind many of the houses, facing on the unpaved alleys, are sub-building code rentals, which present another picture.

The extent of the division and the resentment between ethnic groups is steadily becoming apparent. Police incidents that were minor in the past are now reaching the proportion of possible riots. The underpaid, under-employed, undereducated youth are challenging the police in gangs as large as fifty in number, even following the police back to the police station or physically blocking the patrol cars.

The older, respectful members of the Mexican-American community are helpless to effectively control the situation. The only advice they can give is to accept the situation, the discrimination, and the lack of opportunity. The percentage of Mexican-Americans in the community is almost fifty percent, but they do not have any political power. The parents are reaching the point where they are demanding

change, even running for city council. The Mexican-Americans are no longer willing to accept the negative stereotype of the bracero, teenage hood, and leaders of the church and community without distinction between them.

The property in and around the community is owned by the Swiss-Italians, who migrated as a colony at the turn of the century. The Swiss-Italians comprise, perhaps, thirty percent of the community and control, through intermarriage and a tight family structure, the political and financial aspects of the valley. If the characteristics of the Swiss-Italians and the Mexican-Americans are combined, over seventy-five percent of the community is foreign-born or of foreign-born parents or grandparents, speaking a language other than English, and giving at least nominal allegiance to the Catholic Church. However, the similarities have worked to divide what could be a strong alliance. The Swiss-Italians are the haves, the Mexican-Americans are the have-nots. The few intermarriages which have taken place have been off-set by a racial incident resulting in the knifing to death of one participant. Numerous other incidents have resulted in a hostility so serious that the division is apparent even within the active church.

The remaining population of the community is mainly composed of Okies who traveled west during and following

the depression. They tend to be concentrated in the merchant class manning the stores while the Swiss-Italian holds the mortgage. The Okies tend to be Bible belt protestants (W.A.S.P.) and are very vocal and superficially appear to be the movers of the community. They may, in fact, think that they are. From time to time power speaks and leaves no question as to who is in control.

The school district includes the incorporated city, the surrounding valley, and the mountains to the west. The district in terms of area is one of the largest of the elementary school districts in Monterey County. The school has an average daily attendance of approximately 900 students enrolled in grades kindergarten through eight.

II. STAFF ATTITUDE AND ETHNIC COMPOSITION

The attitude of the staff can best be seen in the reaction to a foreign language. Until the beginning of the state mandated teaching of Spanish to students, Spanish was not allowed to be spoken on the school grounds. At least one teacher still prohibits children from using Spanish. The teachers' handbook, in use until the start of the school year 1963, required that teachers report students to the office if the students spoke Spanish while at school. Teachers who employ Spanish in their instruction are highly criticized despite a new state law authorizing bilingual

instruction. Some of the teachers feel negative toward the use of Spanish and will make remarks in the faculty room. Some of the teachers think that the students should be forced to use English and should not be allowed to use Spanish. While it is conceded that children coming from Spanish-speaking homes are at a distinct disadvantage, no program has been devised within the regular school program to offset this disadvantage.

The composition of the school staff reflects the attitude of the community. It is interesting to note that of the thirty-four faculty members, plus two administrators and four intern teachers, there is only one Mexican-American; he teaches a group of eighty-eight percent Anglo-American students. Among the classified employees, out of eighteen janitors, bus drivers, and secretaries, no Mexican-Americans are employed except for three bilingual aides required by the guidelines of the federal projects, which pays ninety percent of their salaries. (see Table I) The governing board does not have a representative of the Mexican-American community. Bilingual translators are not regularly available in the front office to assist non-English-speaking parents who telephone or come to school to register their children.

TABLE I

ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS*

| | Spanish Surname | Other White | Total | Percent Spanish Surname |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Superintendent and Principal | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Teachers: | 1 | 22 ^{2/3} | 33 ^{1/3} | 3 |
| Male | 1 | 10 | 11 | 9 |
| Female | 0 | 23 | 23 | 0 |
| Aides | 3 | 4 | 7 | 43 |
| Classified | 0 | 11 | 11 | 0 |
| Male | 0 | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Female | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Students | 418 | 488 | 906 | 46 |

*Racial and Ethnic Distribution of Public School Enrollment and Employees, 1967.

III. THE USE OF FUNDS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

The use of federal funds for the disadvantaged children results in pressure by the community, individual parents, and some teachers to utilize the federal money for the general benefit of all the students, instead of a few, regardless of the needs of the disadvantaged child. Federal funds have been the only source upon which new, even badly needed programs, could be financed. The political and economic conditions of the community have resulted in a reluctance by the taxpayer to support the school in anything that costs money. A much needed capital bond approval vote was turned down twice before it was finally passed. Federal funds were available to supply programs to the disadvantaged that were not available for the rest of the students.

The district cannot afford to employ aides for classroom or yard duty. The aides, paid with Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Migrant Act monies are assigned to yard duty, which gives no special attention to the disadvantaged. The aides are also assigned to classrooms. The classrooms vary from high groups to below average groups. Some rooms contain large concentrations of disadvantaged students and some rooms contain few disadvantaged students. Portions of the aides' time are spent working with the students in classrooms, which

are considered to be academically superior.

The use of federal funds for the purchase of equipment is another example. The school does not have any overhead projectors purchased with regular school funds. A teacher of a high group who wants to use an overhead projector must use one purchased with Elementary and Secondary Education Act money. As the teachers of the high groups are the more experienced and better prepared, they seem to utilize various equipment more frequently than the teachers of the below average groups. The equipment is found in the rooms of the teachers who do not have the below average students. If equipment is wanted by a teacher with a below average group, then he must borrow it from a teacher with a high group and is expected to return it to that teacher. A list of equipment purchased for the disadvantaged is not available to the teachers. The result is a discouragement from using the very equipment that was purchased to help the disadvantaged.

CHAPTER IV

ETHNIC BALANCE OF INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPS

A major factor in acculturation is integration. As long as a student spends the majority of his time with his culture or customs, the opportunity to adopt new ways of living is lessened. This chapter will examine the degree of exposure to Anglo-America in the school.

The ethnic balance in instructional groups is not shown in the state form, "Racial and Ethnic Distribution of Public School Enrollment." The data are so arranged as to result in a rather meaningless arrangement for a one-school district. The data can show, by interpolation, possible dropout rates or failure to enroll students in the upper and lower grades. The report fails to report the percentages of the ethnic groups within the homerooms or within the learning groups. The worksheets by which the form was compiled and the homeroom registers clearly show the ethnic balance. (see Table II)

I. PERCENTAGES OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS

The percentages of Mexican-Americans in the instructional groups, in which the child spends the major part of the day, vary from nine percent to ninety percent.

TABLE II

ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION BY CLASSROOM*

| Teacher | Grade | Mexican-Americans | | Total Number of Students |
|---------|-------|-------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| | | Number | Percent | |
| 1 | 1 | 9 | 32 | 28 |
| 2 | | 10 | 36 | 28 |
| 3&4 | | 36 | 77 | 49 |
| 5 | 2 | 9 | 38 | 24 |
| 6 | | 13 | 48 | 27 |
| 7 | | 18 | 85 | 21 |
| 8 | | 24 | 90 | 26 |
| 9 | 2&3 | 7 | 30 | 23 |
| 10 | 3 | 6 | 21 | 29 |
| 11 | | 13 | 45 | 29 |
| 12 | | 16 | 54 | 30 |
| 13 | 4 | 7 | 19 | 36 |
| 14 | | 18 | 20 | 36 |
| 15 | | 21 | 75 | 28 |
| 16 | 5 | 7 | 24 | 30 |
| 17 | | 10 | 37 | 27 |
| 18 | | 17 | 70 | 24 |
| 19 | | 18 | 69 | 26 |
| 20 | 6 | 4 | 12 | 33 |
| 21 | | 15 | 45 | 33 |
| 22 | | 22 | 73 | 30 |
| 23 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 34 |
| 24 | | 11 | 32 | 35 |
| 25 | | 24 | 85 | 27 |
| 26 | 8 | 6 | 19 | 31 |
| 27 | | 15 | 48 | 31 |
| 28 | | 20 | 77 | 26 |

*Compiled by the investigator from the homeroom teachers' count from registers.

Indeed a regular progression exists. The below average groups have a high percentage of Mexican-Americans (77, 85, 73, 70, 75, 54, 90, 77); the high groups have a low percentage of Mexican-Americans (19, 9, 12, 24, 19, 21, 30, 32). A total of 258 students are assigned to the high group or twenty-eight percent of the school population. The students who are Mexican-American and assigned to the top group equal seventy-three, or six percent. The non-Mexican-American equals 193, or twenty-one percent, in the top group. The students assigned to the below average group in each grade level equal 245; seventy-three percent are Mexican-American. The California State Department of Education's form shows an ethnic ratio between forty and sixty percent by grade levels.

If a teacher in one room were so inclined and used groups within the classroom, she could assign Mexican-Americans to 100 percent groups, for the day, by moving or assigning only nine Anglo-American students together! Data are not available to support or deny if this happens.

II. SAMPLE AND COMPARISON GROUPS

The sample and comparison groups are highly varied in composition. Many Mexican-Americans are very Americanized in the home. Some Mexican-Americans speak Spanish in

the home; some have a high recorded intelligence, while others have no recorded test score. Some cumulative records are completely blank except for the student's name. A close examination of the data for the sample group compared to the comparison group (see Table III), shows some interesting information. There is an inverse ratio between girls and boys in each group. The ratio between girls and boys is thirty-eight to twenty-five in the sample group and twenty-one to thirty-two in the comparison group. A girl has a better chance of assignment to a high group. The language spoken in the home is another factor which may be incidental with the assignment to a high group. If a family speaks only English in the home, the children in this study are more likely to be found in the sample group. Speaking only Spanish in the home seems to make little difference.

The birthplace gives valuable information. Many teachers make the presumption that they are teaching immigrant, migrant students. The data seem to refute the assumption that the students are foreign-born. Only eight in the sample and comparison groups are identified as foreign-born; eighty-five are identified as born in the United States. Only thirty-four are identified as having one or more parents born in Mexico. There is a direct link established between Texas and some students. Many

TABLE III

SAMPLE AND COMPARISON GROUP DATA*

| | Sample Group | Comparison Group |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Number- N | 63 | 53 |
| Grade | K-8 | 4, 5, & 6 |
| Girls | 38 | 21 |
| Boys | 25 | 32 |
| Students with Stand. Test Scores | 33 | 27 |
| Language at home | | |
| English only | 15 | 5 |
| Spanish | 13 | 13 |
| Both | 22 | 24 |
| Birthplace | | |
| California | 30 | 20 |
| Local | 28 | 16 |
| Texas | 11 | 16 |
| United States | 45 | 40 |
| Mexico | 3 | 5 |
| Parent | 15 | 19 |
| Meaningful Address | 39 | 25 |
| Address within City | 37 | 26 |
| Less than 20/20 Vision | 21 | 11 |

*Compiled by the investigator from cumulative records.

students are born in Texas. A few other students were born scattered between such distant places as New York City and Washington. The overwhelming majority of the students were born in California, locally, either in Salinas (where the county hospital is located) or in King City (the nearest hospital). One is identified as being born in Campo-verde. There appears to be a relationship between where one was born and the group to which he is assigned. A child born locally has a better chance of being placed in the sample group.

A thorough search of the school records revealed another problem. Over a majority of the students in the sample group, and many in the comparison group, did not have meaningful addresses on file. If a student were absent it would not be possible to make a home visit. The name of the labor camp is often given with no cabin number. If an Anglo-American dressed in a suit appears at such a camp he often finds that no one can or will speak English, let alone know where the family lives if he should be able to pronounce the name correctly. Rural roads are extremely vague addresses, as even are the addresses in the city. Only the road or street name is often given; the location along the street is not. The nature of the community is such that a person will not know the name of

the people living next to him unless they belong to the same ethnic or religious group. Asking where a person lives is a hopeless task. Follow-up by the school for truancy, medical need, or just home-school communication, is non-existent for many students.

III. THE GROUPING PATTERN FOR INSTRUCTION

The seventh and eighth grade students are assigned to homerooms in a random pattern and then to academic classes in two tracks. This study used the two tracks in the seventh and eighth grades instead of homerooms. (Mathematics, science and physical education are one track; reading, English and social science are the second track.) Using the two tracks will give us a slightly larger number of students than homerooms, but there is little difference in students despite the difference in subjects.

The first, second and third grades have a highly developed program of assigning students by developmental level, which is started in kindergarten. The percentages of Mexican-Americans show that assignment by developmental level works well with middle-class children, but excludes Mexican-American children. In the first grade, there is an immature group, which has the least number of Mexican-American students; the high group has the next least. The

below average group is actually two classes in a cooperative teaching arrangement. The second grade resembles the first as does the third grade. The fourth, fifth, and sixth grades are very classical and the patterns are strictly high, average, and below average.

Students in Campoverde school are classified into high, average, and below average groups. This classification is presumably based upon their performance and academic ability, both as determined by teacher evaluation. The high, average, and below average titles reflect the curriculum and the level of work attempted. Many students are assigned to class or groups for the next year on the basis of teacher-made tests and evaluation of performance in class; most of which are subjective teacher opinion. It is presumed that the better students are the ones who are assigned to the high group, but no definitive materials are now apparent to the investigator, which characterize the better students.

The lack of difference between the high and below average groups, not to mention the nonexistence of objective criteria for the placement of the students into the groups to which they are assigned, points out an educational problem. Students are placed in inferior class situations at an early age, perhaps as early as kindergarten. Differences in instructional levels, as determined

by the group to which they are assigned, result in a placement which may be permanent unless the student experiences a remarkable learning growth which the teacher recognizes; needless to say, this would be atypical. By-the-grace-of- God a student seems to be placed upon enrolling in this school. (The investigator discovered a minority child with a recorded intelligence of 134 placed in a below average group. Her superior work habits pointed her out, but the investigator was unable to have her assigned to a higher group!) An alert student might be assigned to an average or a high group; if he is Mexican-American and it is during the crop season, then the assignment is usually to the below average group. Many migrant students arrive at school with no records, standardized test scores, or report cards. Even when records arrive some weeks after the student has been assigned to class, the materials are often incomplete or do not contain the base for comparison to local norms. Even if the material were complete and comparison were possible, it is doubtful if it would make any difference in the student's assignment once the student had been placed. The establishment of an ungraded reception center, at no additional cost to the district, was rejected by the administration as of no value. Such a center could screen and test students

prior to group assignment, as well as properly make out their enrollment papers and provide Spanish-speaking personnel.

CHAPTER V

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The learning that takes place in the classroom is the vital concern of the educator. Good learning requires good teaching and good teaching requires good teachers. Chapter V will examine a measurement of the learning and consider the qualifications of the teachers.

I. STANDARDIZED TEST RESULTS

Table IV reviews the standardized test scores that are required by the state for the sixth grade. It is apparent that the difference between the homerooms is great, between the amount of teaching that takes place, as measured by the sixth grade test. Paragraph meaning rose from stanine three for the comparison group to stanine eight for the sample group, or from an average of 2.6 grades below grade placement to grade placement. It is also remarkable that students tested by an independent agency, the County Office of Education, for psychological conditions or mental retardation (Special Education) show fewer Mexican-Americans, sixteen, have been tested than Anglo-Americans, thirty-three. Where the legal level for assignment to Special Education is seventy and the class average is 77.5, it is difficult to conceive why the students have not been

TABLE IV
STANDARDIZED TEST RESULTS

| Standardized Test Results (Sixth Grade) ^a | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|-------------------|---|------------------|---|
| Stanford Achievement Test (Mean GE) | | | | | | |
| Room | WD MNG ^b | | PARA ^c | | RDG ^d | |
| BA | 3.1 | 3 | 3.4 | 3 | 3.4 | 0 |
| BA | 3.4 | 4 | 3.7 | 4 | 3.6 | 4 |
| A | 4.3 | 8 | 4.5 | 6 | 4.5 | 0 |
| H | 5.7 | 7 | 6.0 | 8 | 5.9 | 5 |
| Large Thorndike Intelligence Test | | | | | | |
| Room | V IQ | | NV IQ | | T IQ | |
| BA | 77.7 | | 76.9 | | 77.5 | |
| BA | 85.9 | | 94.8 | | 90.6 | |
| A | 91.8 | | 93.9 | | 93.2 | |
| H | 106.7 | | 108.5 | | 107.8 | |

Individual Psychological Tests (on file)

Spanish Surname Students

Other Students

16

33

^aArranged by the investigator from test summary sheets, 1967.

^bWord meaning.

^cParagraph meaning.

^dReading Comprehension.

tested for the extra state support funds for small classes.

The quality of teaching that takes place in the classroom must be questioned. When sixth grade students, on an average, are reading at a third grade level, how can they utilize the state textbooks for their grade level, and how can the teacher follow the county curriculum guide? The failure to teach the children may result from a multitude of forces, one of which appears to be the teachers themselves, in this school district.

II. TEACHER EXPERIENCE AND ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION

The school district has few experienced teachers. The rate of turnover is high (see Table V). Last year the rate of turnover was thirty percent. In 1964-65, forty-three percent. In a period of five or six years the entire staff changed except for a hard core of six permanent resident teachers. The seventh and eighth grades experience almost a fifty percent turnover each year, and a 100 percent turnover in a five-year period. The administration suffers either a change of personnel or of position almost every year. Shifting of grade levels or of assignments also increases the percentage of change. In this environment it is difficult to talk in terms of long-range goals, continuation of the school program, or year-to-year evaluation of successful teaching. The teachers

TABLE V

RATE OF TEACHER TURNOVER*

| Year | Percent of Turnover |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 1966-67 | 30 |
| 1965-66 | 31 |
| 1964-65 | 43 |
| 1963-64 | 21 |
| 1962-63 | 40 |
| 1961-62 | 30 |

*Compiled by the investigator from the records of the Teachers' Association.

who are recruited either are inexperienced or have various other motives for teaching in this district. The salary scale is not a major inducement. The State Board of Education continues to routinely grant provisional teaching credentials to allow the superintendent to staff the school as sufficient numbers of credentialed personnel will not accept employment in the district. The assignment of new teachers in the district should be examined next.

Table VI reveals the following information. The first four teachers, in terms of seniority and experience, work with the highest group at their grade level. The

TABLE VI

TEACHER EXPERIENCE AND ETHNICAL DISTRIBUTION^a

| Teachers in Order of Seniority | Years of Experience | Group Level | Percent of Mexican-Americans |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 15 ^b | H ^c | 19 |
| 2 | 15 | H | 32 |
| 3 | 15 | H | 30 |
| 4 | 15 | H | 48 |
| 5 | 7 | D ^d | D |
| 6 | 6 | BA ^e | 53 |
| 7 | 10 | H | 24 |
| 8 | 5 | M ^f | 45 |
| 9 | 5 | A ^f | 54 |
| 10 | 10 | BA | 100 |
| 11 | 3 | A | 45 |
| 12 | 10 | M ^g | 45 |
| 13 | 15 | BA | 90 |
| 14 | 5 | H | 21 |
| 15 | 10 | H | 48 |
| 16 | 10 | BA | 73 |
| 17 | 15 | H | 36 |
| 18 | 5 | A | 45 |
| 19 | 4 | H | 24 |
| 20 | 5 | M | 45 |
| 21 | 2 | M | 45 |
| 22 | 3 | BA | 70 |
| 23 | 2 | BA | 77 |
| 24 | 2 | BA | 77 |
| 25 | 1 | BA | 75 |
| 26 | 15 | H | 30 |
| 27 | 5 | M | 45 |
| 28 | 1 | A | 69 |
| 29 | 1 | BA | 85 |
| 30 | 1 | A | 20 |
| 31 | 1 | BA | 45 |
| 32 | 1 | M | 45 |

^aCompiled by the investigator from personal interviews and other sources.

^bTen and fifteen represent minimum years.

^cHigh ^dNo data ^eBelow average ^fAverage

^gSeventh and eighth grades, six class average.

lower one-half of the teachers, in terms of seniority, have only two high groups assigned to them. These are both teachers who have many years of teaching experience, but who are new in the district. The upper one-half of the teachers have three below average groups assigned to them. The teacher paid by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has one of the below average groups. Six below average groups are assigned to the bottom one-half of the teachers. The number is the exact converse of the top half. The six teachers with the below average groups are limited in experience: three teachers are new in the first year of their teaching; two are second year teachers; and one has three years teaching experience. The teachers assigned to the top groups have only one person with as few as four years experience, one teacher with five years, two teachers with a minimum of ten years, and five teachers with a minimum of fifteen years experience. It is safe to generalize from this data that the classes with the largest percentage of Mexican-Americans are taught by the least experienced teachers. The classes, which have the more experienced staff members, have the least number of Mexican-Americans.

Experience is one of the measures of a good teacher. The teachers lacking in experience, no matter how good their intentions, cannot be expected to teach as

effectively as tenure teachers. Professional people assign the most difficult cases to the best in their field and pay that person the most; the reverse seems to be the case in this district.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data support the following findings, and provide the bases for the conclusions and recommendations of the investigator. The data were compiled during the fall of the 1967-68 school year.

I. FINDINGS

The study resulted in the following findings:

1. The school had a student population, which was forty-six percent Mexican-American at the time of the study.
2. The majority of the students were born locally and were not migrant.
3. The Mexican-American students were grouped, at each grade level, in a pattern resulting in classes varying from nineteen to ninety percent Mexican-American.
4. Six percent of the Mexican-American students were assigned to the academic groups.
5. The students assigned to the below average groups had the less qualified, inexperienced teachers in a majority of the cases.
6. One Mexican-American was employed as a teacher.
7. No Mexican-Americans were employed by the school district as classified personnel.
8. The attitudes of the teachers in many cases were unfavorable toward the Mexican-American.

9. A division existed in the community between ethnic groups.
10. The findings of this study were similar to other school situations.
11. The findings of this study confirmed the complaints made by Mexican-Americans at government hearings.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the investigator are as follows: Conditions exist in this school district that place a Mexican-American child at an educational disadvantage. The attitude of the community, as shown by the employment ratio and by the number of elected representatives, places the Mexican-American in a second-class position. If a child is Mexican-American he has a greater chance of being placed in a classroom, which undertakes classwork at below grade level and to be taught by less experienced and less qualified teachers. There are serious limitations and omissions within the educational institution, which work to the disadvantage of the largest group in the school. It would seem imperative that drastic changes would be in order to accommodate all of the students in the school.

The results of the present conditions can be seen, as well as the results of attempts by federally financed projects to improve the conditions. De facto segregation and token integration cannot be justified in the total

educational picture. It is the responsibility of the educator to implement sound educational policies and place the needs of the student first, regardless of his ethnic identity.

The end product of education, the result of the cumulative years of study, is the goal that society is expending large sums of money to obtain. Society expects contributions from the educated individual far in excess of the investment in tax dollars. Each individual in a democratic society is expected to make his unique contribution to the full extent of his ability.

It is the assumed responsibility of our society to develop a child's potential. It is not a reason for envy or ill will when extra efforts or funds are expended upon individuals or identified groups to bring them to the same level of education as their more fortunate peers. Extra expenditures are merely their rights as citizens and human beings, that are being fulfilled. It is merely self-defense on the part of society to create individuals who are self-sufficient and can contribute to society instead of being liabilities.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The investigator makes the following recommendations: First, the integration of the homerooms and the

instructional groups. An ethnic balance should be maintained not exceeding forty to sixty percent. Special precautions would be necessary to see that the balance was maintained. A minimum of one-half of the instructional periods, as well as all non-classroom activities should be on integrated basis. Percentages should be observed as a major factor in any grouping situation. Certain subjects may require grouping or criteria other than ethnic distribution. The exceptions should be clearly identified and if the exceptions are valid then an unbalanced group could be allowed. Certain remedial and enrichment classes would be valid reasons. Certainly there are no bases for maintaining the present grouping in many subject areas.

The next factor is the deployment of experienced staff members. All of the children, and certainly the children who need educational help the most, deserve to be taught by experienced teachers. If tenure teachers choose to teach certain groups because it is easier or for other reasons, then once the groups that are undesirable are identified, it is the responsibility of the administrator to adjust conditions to make the undesirable groups desirable. Small class size, assignment of aides, secretarial assistance, availability and priority on use of equipment, resource teachers, freedom to adjust curriculum and grading, and to experiment or whatever other

steps are necessary to make the groups desirable would be in order.

The maintenance of experienced teachers is the goal of any school. It is important that the necessary steps be taken to limit the turnover of personnel to retirement and to the dismissal of less than qualified personnel. If large numbers of inexperienced teachers are continued to be employed by the district, then resource teachers should share the teaching responsibility with them. Certainly the State Board of Education should grant no more provisional credentials until this district brings its salary schedule above the average for elementary teachers. Provisional credentials should then be issued only to balance the ethnic ratio by the employment of Mexican-Americans.

The employment of Mexican-Americans in the school district would create an atmosphere of acceptance. The classified personnel certainly could reflect the composition of the community; if credentialed personnel could not be recruited in sufficient numbers, then this could be offset by the employment of all the classroom aides from the Mexican-American community. One Mexican-American teacher in this community is absurd. Bilingual personnel should always be available in the front office.

The objective tests now available are based upon norms which make the comparisons between bicultural or

bilingual students and Y.A.S.P. students impossible. Even the new instruments being developed for this purpose prove highly cultural. The tests, without exception, are based upon reading or listening skills in the English language, or upon timed competitive factors. The tests place the Mexican-American at a disadvantage. The only conclusion concerning standardized tests is that the student is more intelligent and has more potential than the test can possibly indicate. If standardized test results are being used to restrict Mexican-American students from the high group, it is an error. The test results should be used to insure the assignment of Mexican-American students who score well to the high group, but not the reverse.

Parents and other individuals who want programs for their more fortunate children should seek these programs through the established channels, including the financial increases which may be necessary.

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