A case study of the factors involved in enhancing a positive learning environment in a Native American school in Nebraska

Henry Eggert

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A CASE STUDY OF THE FACTORS INVOLVED IN
ENHANCING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN A
NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN NEBRASKA

Presented to the
Graduate Faculty
University of Nebraska
at Omaha

In partial fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha
by
Henry Eggert
March 1998
FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the Graduate Faculty, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Specialist in Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

A CASE STUDY OF THE FACTORS INVOLVED IN ENHANCING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN A NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN NEBRASKA

By: Henry Eggert

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dan Levine, ED.D.

The purpose of this study is to investigate factors involved in enhancing a positive learning environment in a Native American school. The study will address the factors involved in enhancing a positive learning environment as perceived by K-12 teachers of Native American students.

It was hypothesized that there will be statistically significant differences in the following school climate indicators: (1) shared decision making and consensus on values and goals; (2) academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high expectations; (5) morales and school pride; (6) attendance; (7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations. To test these hypotheses, a DOES measure was used.

The sample consisted of 40 teachers currently employed at Macy Public Schools for the 1993-94 school year.
In applying the results of this study, it should be noted that the sample was selected from a single institution. Therefore, the conclusions are generalizable only within the selected institution. In this context the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Respondents' consistently believe that The Way It Is fall short of The Way It Should Be with respect to all 33 Survey Questions (Appendix B).

2. Respondents' believe that there is no difference between The Way It Is and The Way It Was with respect to most of the questionnaire items.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher wishes to acknowledge the following:

- Dr. Doris Henry--for her time, suggestions and continued support in making this paper a reality

My committee(past)--Dr. Jack McKay, Dr. Harl Jarmin and Frank Hartranft

My committee(present)--Dr. Dan Levine, Dr. Martha Bruckner, Dr. Blaine Ward and Dr. Ross Pilkington
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

An underlying aspect of school or organizational climate is the view that organizations or groups have their own personalities, much as individuals do (Halpin, 1966; Halpin & Croft, 1963; Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991; Moos, 1976, 1979; Pace & Stern, 1958). Hoy and Kottkamp (1991) provided a more succinct definition: "School climate is the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behavior, and is based on their collective perception of behavior in schools" (p. 10). Furthermore, individuals may behave quite differently in groups with different organizational climate (Anderson, 1982; Bidwell, 1965; Bidwell & Kasanrda, 1975; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Field & Ableson, 1982; Forehand & Gilmer, 1964; Hellriegel & Slocum, 1974; Jones & James, 1979; Moos, 1979; Schneider, 1975; Schneider & Reichers, 1983; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968).

Organizational climate has typically been measured by assessing group members' perceptions of organizational characteristics. One of the earliest examples was Pace and
Stern's (1958) attempt to describe college students' and faculty members' perceptions of their environments. They were first to use standardized scales to measure individuals' perceptions of their environment. Halpin and Croft (1963) were first to use Pace and Stern's work to develop a survey. They developed a series of 64 items based on teacher and principal perceptions that described the climate and nature of school climate. Through various statistical manipulations, they developed ways to characterize schools on the extent of collegial teacher behavior and supportive behaviors of the principal.

Others improved the assessment of the perceptions of teachers and principals by including students (Hoy et al., 1991; McDill, Rigsby, & Meyers, 1967; Miskel & Ogawa, 1988; Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967). The results consistently supported the intuitive view that schools and classrooms climates or personalities differ from one another and that participants in these settings generally agree to a great extent in the way they perceive these characteristics. The results also demonstrated that these differences can be described with quantifiable data and linked with school
outcomes such as achievement. Researchers in this tradition suggested that such measures can be of special use to those who were interested in describing behaviors in schools and managing and changing them in ways that were more effective (Hoy et al., 1991).

The external pressures coupled with the desire of educators to improve the instruction of students have created a need to increase the understanding of the factors that influence higher student achievement, more importantly, to what extent do the perceptions of teachers impact a positive learning environment especially in special populations. Furthermore, to what extent are efforts made to address these needs?

Statement of the Problem

The problem is: What factors enhance a positive learning environment as perceived by K-12 teachers of Native American (NAI) students?

The research questions in this study addressed the basic assumption that perceptions of teachers would significantly impact school climate. The research questions were analyzed by utilizing T-tests which provided significant interactions
at or below the .05 level of significance for The Way It Was
to The Way It Is and The Way It Is to The Way It Should Be
for all 33 survey questions.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to ascertain
teachers' perceptions of the factors that enhance a positive
learning environment for Native American (NAI) K-12 students.
More specifically, this study will investigate the
perceptions of teachers relative to school climate as
identified by Dusewicz and Beyer (1988) in their Dimensions
of Excellence Scales in the following areas: (1) shared
decision making and consensus on values and goals; (2)
academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high
expectations; (5) Morales and school pride; (6) attendance;
(7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations.

Research Questions
This study will provide insights concerning the following
questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in
teachers' perceptions of the shared decision-making and
consensus of values and goals?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of their academic commitment?

3. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of an orderly environment?

4. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of high expectations?

5. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of morales and school pride?

6. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of attendance?

7. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of facilities?

8. Is there a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of communications and human relations?

Factors Impacting the Problem

As reported by Estelle Fuchs and Robert J. Havinghurst (1972) from the National Study of Indian Education in the late 1960s, "Many Indian children live in homes and communities where the cultural expectations are different and discontinuous from the expectations held by school teachers and school authorities" (p. 299).
Attempts to improve the quality of life for NAI in the United States have not been particularly successful because assimilation has been the dominant policy of the federal government in its relationship with NAI by teaching dominant cultural values and concepts. The results have been devastating, often resulting in individuals who not only had difficulty with formal education, but difficulty in day-to-day life. Only recently, since the federal policy of self-determination, have NAI people become actively involved in the education of their children. Yet many problems continue to affect the education of NAI students today. Dropping out or leaving school is one of these problems which is overshadowed by the lack of comprehensive information about the problem. Poverty compounds this problem.

The poverty rate for Native American Indian families was considerably higher than the rate of the general population (24% compared to 10%), but lower than the rate for African-Americans (29%). The poverty rate for three of the top 10 most populous Indian states was over 40% (Hodgkinson, Outtz, & Obarakpor, 1990).

In 1969, the Kennedy Report, *Indian Education: A*
National Tragedy A National Challenge, published by the U.S. Senate, found that dropout rates for NAI students were twice the national average in both public and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, with some schools approaching a 100 percent dropout rate. A 1983 National Impact Evaluation of Title IV, Part A Report, found that the dropout contained in a number of studies ranged from 14 percent to 60 percent (Development Associates, 1983). General studies of NAI/AN education offer no specific statistics, but refer to the rate as being higher than other segments of the American population. More recent estimates of the problem include dropout rates from 35.5% (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 1988) to over 50% (Wells, 1991) and in undocumented cases between 80% and 90%. NAI students tended to have the lowest rate out of the total population of returning to eventually complete high school or an equivalency program (NCES, 1988).

As a consequence, efforts to decrease chronic dropout rates and markedly improve education services are likely to be circumvented by inaction.

Decision-makers, especially politicians, often request
the dropout rate as a basis for funding program and fiscal judgments.

The need for understanding Native American educational concerns appears to be both timely and urgent. The need for this study is based partially on the following summary of Native American Indian data.

First, 56% of those 25 years old and over, are high school graduates. The percentage for the total U.S. population is 75%. The percentage decreases to 43.2% when considering those who live on reservations (U.S. Census Subject Reports, 1986, p. 50; U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990, p. 39).

Second, the NAI population who are 25 years old and over, live on reservations, and completed less than five years of school is 16.2%. The percentage is even higher, 37.4, for Navajo (U.S. Census Subject Reports, 1986, pp. 50, 54).

Third, the dropout rate for 1980 high school NAI/AN sophomores was 29.2%, compared to 13.6% for the general public. As a comparison, the dropout rate for Hispanics was 18%, for blacks it was 17%, for whites it was 12.2%, and for
Asian Americans it was 3.1% (Center for Education Statistics, 1986).

Last, eight percent had four or more years of college, compared to 16% of the total population (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990, pp. 38, 39).

Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited in three major aspects. First, the results were based on data collected from teachers at a single institution. Teachers' educational experiences at the surveyed schools may or may not be similar to the educational experiences at other schools with comparable characteristics. The results may not be generalizable beyond the population from which the respondents in this study were drawn; however, the results would be applicable if teachers from more than one school with similar characteristics were studied.

Second, the sample was limited to teachers employed at Macy Public Schools during the 1993-94 school year. There may be significant characteristic differences between previously and currently employed teachers.

Finally, the study was limited to the perceptions of teachers regarding the learning environment of a Native
American school with an enrollment in excess of 400 from one tribe. The population and characteristics of this type of school and its location may also limit the scope of the study. This school may not be representative of similar institutions and the results may not be generalizable. The analysis of the data may provide insights for other schools with similar characteristics.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the school climate dimension. Data collection procedures for the school staff scale on school climate consists of 33 questions which were completed by the K-12 teaching staff during the spring 1994. For each item, respondents choose a rating on a four-point Likert-type scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree".

The four-point Likert scale was used to determine the degree of satisfaction with each indicator. The Likert method consists of response opportunities that are considered to be approximately equal in value and allows for adequate variance. The responses were "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree".

The specific questions for each indicator were:
1. Shared decision making and consensus on values and goals: (a) Items 4, 9, 26, 27, 29.
2. Academic commitment: (a) Items 2, 8, 21, 31.
3. Orderly environment: (a) Items 5, 14, 22, 30.
4. High expectations: (a) Items 23, 24, 33.
5. Morale and school pride: (a) Items 13, 15, 17.
6. Attendance: (a) Items 19, 20.
7. Facilities: (a) Items 7, 18, 25.
8. Communications and human relations: (a) Items 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, 16, 28, 32.

Definition of Terms

Shared decision-making and consensus on values and goals: Administrators, teachers, students, and parents all have a shared consensus on values and goals established for the school, participate in decision making, and have roles and responsibilities that are consistent with these goals and that are negotiated and reviewed on a regular basis.

Academic Commitment: The school personnel has established academic growth as the primary interest and responsibility for students, teachers, and administrators.

Orderly Environment: The rules and conduct that are
generally accepted, that promote an orderly environment, and that are associated with consistent and fair disciplinary practices are established for the students.

High Expectations: The school personnel has high expectations for achievement from their students in both curricular and extracurricular areas.

Morale and School Pride: Administrators, teachers, students, and parents have a code of conduct based on what is right, and sense of pride in their school.

Attendance: Both teacher and student attend school.

Facilities: The building, grounds, and equipment are attractive, safe, clean, and well-maintained.

Communications and Human Relations: Communication among administrators, teachers, students, and parents is honest, frequent, constructive, and conducive to positive interpersonal relationships.

School Climate: "The relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behavior, and is based on their collective perception of behavior in schools" (Hoy et al., 1991, p. 10).
Organization of the Study

In the first chapter the need for the study and significance of the problem were stated, and the research questions to be examined were set forth. Also, the inherent assumptions and delimitations in the study were made.

A review of selected literature related to school climate are presented in Chapter II. The chapter includes studies pertaining to school climate in the following areas: (1) shared decision-making and consensus on values and goals; (2) academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high expectations; (5) Morales and school pride; (6) attendance; (7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations.

Methods and procedures employed in the study are described in Chapter III. Inclusive will be the procedure for selecting the sample, an explanation of the instrumentation used as well as a brief summary of the data collection and statistical methodology.

The analysis of the data are presented in Chapter IV. A summary of the research, discussion, conclusions based on the findings, and recommendations for further research are in Chapter V.
CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

There is a growing need to understand factors that are involved in enhancing a positive learning environment in Native American Indian schools. In reviewing the literature, no research has been conducted in Native American schools which provides the schools with sufficient data to make effective decisions addressing the learning environment and school climate relative to the success of Native American Indian (NAI) students.

There are no survey instruments specifically designed for NAI school systems. One validated survey that is grounded in the principles of school climate provides the framework for examining the literature on school climate which will serve as a basis for this study. Dusewicz and Beyer (1988), authors of Dimensions of Excellence Scales (DOES), identified eight indicators for a successful school climate. The related literature on the eight indicators identified by them were reviewed in the context of the general population. These indicators are interrelated.

The review of the related literature will focus on these
eight indicators: (1) shared decision-making and consensus on values and goals; (2) academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high expectations; (5) morale and school pride; (6) attendance; (7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations.

**Shared Decision-Making and Consensus on Values and Goals**

Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore (1982) found the effect of a stable and consistent environment appeared strongest in schools where both faculty and students participate more in the decision-making process and other activities. This higher level of involvement appeared to enhance shared norms and values, which, in turn, helped create positive relationships among all school members (Breckenridge, 1976; Ellet & Walberg, 1979; Mitchell, 1967; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979; Urich & Batchelder, 1979; Wynne, 1980). Shared activities by staff and students, ample opportunities for students to participate in school activities, and staff and student participation in decision-making helped promote a belief by students and staff that the norms and disciplinary practices of a school were fair. This perception appeared to be highly related to both orderly
school environments and higher achievement.

Not surprisingly, researchers found staffs of effective or improving schools strongly stressed the importance of educational objectives, particularly in mathematics and reading. What was surprising, perhaps, was the particular details of teaching the objectives seemed less important than the emphasis given.

Ronald Edmonds (1982) explained in his work that any organization is more cohesive if all parties understand their major purpose. In schools continually stressing educational goals, the idea to all school members that, above all else, the school is a place for learning was clearly communicated.

The existence of broadly understood educational goals in effective schools has been noted by several educational researchers. For example, Brookover and Lezotte (1979) studied six Michigan schools in which pupil performances was improving and two in which performance was declining. They concluded that improving schools were clearly different from the declining schools in the emphasis their staffs placed on the accomplishment of the basic reading and mathematics objectives. Also, improving schools accepted and emphasized
the importance of these goals and objectives, while the declining schools gave much less emphasis to such objectives and did not specify them as fundamental.

Brookover and Lezotte (1979) noticed a clear contrast in the attitudes of school staffs in improving and declining schools. The staffs of the improving schools tended to believe that all of their students could master the basic objectives and, furthermore, the teachers perceived the principal shared this belief. Teachers in declining schools, on the other hand, projected the belief that students' ability levels were low and that they could not attain the educational objectives. In addition, the staff of the improving schools tended to believe that many of their students would complete high school or college, whereas teachers in declining schools had low expectations in this regard.

Of course, it could be argued that the teachers in the declining school were simply being realistic. Teachers in the improving schools did have something to be optimistic about--their students were, after all, improving.
This argument sheds light on the deeper processes occurring in these schools—those involving the self-reinforcing norm-behavior cycles that operate in all social groups. Every organization develops norms of behavior that dictate how members of the organization are expected to behave. Each individual learns, through interacting with each other, just what is considered appropriate behavior and what is not. When a person behaves in accordance with the norms, the norms are confirmed and reinforced.

In this kind of cycle fashion, norms were reinforced and perpetuated. Behavior, the norms dictated, was what created, in the minds of individuals, the organization's climate. In the effective schools studied by Brookover and Lezotte (1979), improving student achievement was the norm, and the schools as a result had a climate conducive to attainment. A similar spiral of norms and behaviors was at work in the declining schools—only it was headed in the opposite direction. How to intervene in the apparently seamless norm-behavior cycle was, of course, the problem.

Raudenbush and Stephen (1990), noticed the effects of supportive organizational environments on teacher
perceptions. He felt that teacher collaboration might increase teachers' sense of perception because it allowed teachers to provide one another with the strategies and confidence needed to produce effective teaching performances. Similarly, when teachers were able to wield effective control over policies that affect important working conditions, they appeared to be better able to overcome the difficulties associated with teaching low-achieving students.

**Academic Commitment**

Students spend most of their school time within classrooms, and thus it was important to directly study those environments. A good deal of literature suggested that classroom environments were very important in influencing students' attitudes toward school as well as their achievement, and that the classroom environment can mediate between more macro-level influences, such as the school and community, and individual student outcomes (Armor et al., 1976; Cohen, Flotan, & Leechor, 1989; Cronbach & Snow, 1977; Moos, 1979; Murnane, 1975; O'Reilly, 1975; Walberg, 1969a, 1969b).

Much of our knowledge of effective teaching and
classrooms comes from the tradition of "process-product" research. This work focused directly on how the instructional behaviors of teachers affect students' learning and how it has been instrumental in improving teachers' day-to-day pedagogical practices (Brophy & Good, 1986; Centra & Potter, 1980; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Fraser, 1986; Puff, 1978; Rosenshine, 1971).

Many of the conclusions regarding the linkages between teachers' behaviors and students' achievement have been widely supported. Although there may be some variations when examining children of different grade levels or different backgrounds or with different subject areas, the pattern of results remained largely consistent (Brophy & Good, 1986). In general, the literature suggested that the quantity and pacing of instruction, the way in which teachers gave information, the way in which teachers question students and wait response time, and the way they handled seat work and homework all influenced student achievement (Austin 1979; Brophy & Good, 1986; Klitgaard & Hall, 1973; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis, & Ecob, 1988; Puff, 1978; Rosenshine, 1983; Teddlie, Kirby, & Stringfield, 1989; Rutter et al.,
The findings regarding the quantity and pacing of instruction have been most consistently replicated. As would be expected intuitively, students had higher achievement when more of the curriculum was covered and when more time was spent actively engaged in learning that was appropriate to their level. This was most likely to occur when teachers saw academic instruction as a major part of their role, when they were effective classroom managers, and when they maintained an orderly environment that maximized children's opportunities to learn. Effective classroom managers seemed able to monitor the entire class continuously, do two things simultaneously without having to break the flow of classroom events, move activities along at a good pace without confusion or loss of focus, and provide work that was at the appropriate level of difficulty for students and was interesting enough to hold their attention. The most effective teachers were able to balance an inherent tension between covering as much material as possible and ensuring that their students were mastering the material without being either frustrated or bored.
In general, students seemed to learn most when teachers were actively involved in teaching or supervising their students rather than relying on curriculum materials to relay the content (Anderson, 1982; Berliner, 1979; Brophy, 1979; Brophy & Everston, 1976; Brophy & Good, 1986; Carroll, 1963; Cohen, Flotan, & Leechor, 1989; Fisher & Berliner, 1985; Gettinger, 1989; Good, 1979; Kounin, 1970; Rosenshine, 1979; Rosenshine & Berliner, 1976; Stallings, Fairweather, & Needels, 1978; Stringfield, Teddlie, & Suarez, 1985; Teddlie et al., 1989).

Brophy and Good (1986) found the way in which teachers presented information also affects achievement. Generally, well-organized and structured presentations help students organize and remember material. Achievement was also enhanced when key concepts and general rules were repeated; when presentations were as clear as possible, especially for older students; and when teachers were enthusiastic about the subject matter. Teachers structured their questions for students in ways that were most likely to enhance achievement by carefully considering the difficulty and cognitive level of the content and by skillfully eliciting responses and
reacting to students' answers and comments. Similarly, seat work and homework were structured in ways that were more likely to reinforce students' learning rather than simply be busywork.

Studies from the socioecological tradition of studying classroom climate supported findings from the process-product tradition by suggesting that effective classrooms appeared to promote positive relationships among classroom members and had procedures oriented toward academic success. Researchers in this tradition were not primarily interested in describing the characteristics of effective schools or classrooms but how children's perceptions of their learning environments affected both cognitive and effective development (Moos, 1979; O'Reilly, 1975; Walberg, 1969a, 1969b; Walberg & Anderson, 1968, 1972).

Research on classroom climate explored the relationship of students' perceptions of their environment to individual learning (Anderson, 1970; Walberg & Anderson, 1968), differential class performance (Walberg & Anderson, 1968), and academic achievement (O'Reilly, 1975; Walberg, 1975; Walberg & Anderson, 1972). The results obtained in the
studies have been very consistent. For example, classes that were perceived by students as difficult, satisfying, and without friction, apathy, or cliques had higher academic gains than those without these characteristics in such the content areas as physics, general science, mathematics and science (O'Reilly, 1975; Walberg, 1969a; Walberg & Anderson, 1968, 1972). Extensive analysis of a wide variety of studies in this area have shown that students' perceptions of classroom environments account for a good deal of the variation in student's achievement (Walberg & Anderson, 1972; Fraser, 1986; Haertel, Walberg, & Haertel, 1981). 

Some research also indicated that the congruence between students' preferred classroom environment and their actual classroom environment may be just as important as the actual nature of the classroom environment in predicting achievement. This suggested that certain achievement outcomes might be enhanced not only by improving the classroom environment in general but by trying to alter it to ways that were most suited and preferred by a given group of students (Fraser, 1986). 

Raudenbush and Stephen (1990), found that teacher
perceptions of their students' engagement were highly predictive of self-efficacy. To the extent teachers perceive their students are engaged, they tended also to perceive themselves as able to provide good education.

Furthermore, the achievement level of the class to which the teacher is assigned was a highly important predictor of self-efficacy. Without controlling for student engagement, the student achievement level strongly predicts self-efficacy. Controlling for engagement substantially reduces this effect, indicating that the effect of achievement works largely through engagement. This finding was consistent with a view that teachers view low-achieving students as more difficult to teach largely because they view such students as less actively engaged. Even after engagement was controlled, however, a statistically significant effect of achievement remains, indicating that even if low-achieving classes were as engaged as high achieving classes, teachers would still view them as somewhat more difficult to teach well.

**Orderly Environment**

Important elements of effective school environments were an atmosphere that was orderly without being rigid (Edmonds,
1979a, 1979b), and a consistent set of rules and values that clearly map out school goals and policies that were maintained (Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; Rutter et al., 1979) while promoting purposefulness and pleasure in learning (Weber, 1971). Such an atmosphere appeared to enhance students' learning as well as cohesive relationships among school members (Levine, 1990; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1990; Perrone, 1985).

An orderly environment appeared to affect achievement in a variety of ways. First, it provided a disciplinary climate within which students' and teachers' opportunities to conduct task-related work were maximized (Coleman, 1982; Greeley, 1982; Hoffer, Greeley, & Coleman, 1987; Peng, 1982). Second, an orderly and purposeful atmosphere promoted a sense of efficacy among teachers and students, which, in turn, enhanced teaching and learning performances (Metz, 1986; Newmann, Rutter & Smith, 1989). Third, simply the consistency and stability associated with an orderly environment appeared to promote higher achievement (McDill & Rigsby, 1973; Newmann et al., 1989; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; Rutter et al., 1979; Silberman, 1970).
Overall, an orderly and coherent school environment appeared to promote student achievement by enhancing collegial relationships and promoting an atmosphere of trust, caring and cooperation (Chubb, 1988; Lightfoot, 1983; Metz, 1978, 1986).

High Expectations

A large number of studies found that schools in which both students and staff value academic excellence tended to have higher levels of academic achievement. For instance, Edward McDill and his associates (1967) comprehensive work with secondary student suggested that teachers and students seen as emphasizing intellectualism, subject matter competency, and a commitment to academic excellence were more likely to have higher levels of mathematics achievement and higher levels of educational aspirations than those who did not emphasize these areas. These climate variables significantly influenced students even when individual attributes, such as their socioeconomic background, ability, academic values, and the socioeconomic context of their schools, were controlled.

The relationship between high academic expectations
among students and staff and high achievement has been supported in work with both elementary and secondary students, case studies of schools (Brookover & Tezotto, 1979; Cookson & Persell 1985; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; Weber, 1971), survey studies (Brookover & Schneider, 1975; Hoy et al., 1991; Lipsitz, 1984; Schneider, Glasheen, & Hadley, 1979), longitudinal studies (Rutter et al. 1979), and work using the large "High School and Beyond" data set (Coleman et al., 1982; Greeley 1982; Hoffer et al. 1987). For instance, Sarah Lightfoot's (1983) extensive ethnographic work suggested that high-achieving secondary schools were those where the staff were concerned with the rationale, coherence, and integrity of the curriculum and were committed to academic pursuits. Similarly, using survey methods, McDill and Rigsby (1973) suggested that schools that offer students either the opportunity for advanced placement or the opportunity to participate in an accelerated curriculum demonstrated a commitment to academic excellence and, in turn, nurture that commitment to students and faculty. Wilbur Brookover and his associates (1975), in their study of elementary schools, reported that staff and student attitudes were related to
increasing levels of school achievement. Most important among these were staff commitment to improving students' academic performance; high and/or increasing expectations of teachers about students, such as high opinions of student abilities; peer norms emphasizing academics; and staff insistence on reaching basic reading and math goals. High staff and student expectations appeared to lower a student's "sense of futility" and construct the impression that teachers do care and students can succeed (Phi Delta Kappa, 1980). In general, these studies consistently indicated that schools with teachers and students who see higher achievement as a real and attainable goal actually do have higher achievement.

Other studies indicated that, in addition to valuing and expecting academic excellence, frequent and public records and praise for academic accomplishments and good behavior helped to create a positive learning climate (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979; Wynne, 1980). Mary Metz (1986), suggests that praise needed to be based on students' individual progress rather than on the comparison of students with each other.
Finally, some forms of academic competition may enhance student outcomes. Group, rather than individual, competition can promote student camaraderie which boosts school spirit and contributes to greater achievement by promoting positive perceptions about school (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Wynne 1980). Technological and academic arrangements that offer students the opportunity to cooperate with each other in groups and only permit competition between groups can also help promote academic work and positive learning environments (Metz, 1978). Perhaps individual competition differentiates students from each other and contributes to negative perceptions of the learning environment among students who do not succeed as well as others. Competition between heterogeneous groups, on the other hand, may obscure individual performance, promote cooperation among students of various abilities, and nurture a positive perception among all students (Bossert, 1988; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Slavin, 1990).

Morale and School Pride

School members' perceptions and attitudes about their environment represent another important dimension of school
climate. Teachers who reported satisfaction with their work setting were more likely to express high morale and perceived the school's climate as open and supportive of their role than those who perceived their environment as closed and restrictive (Kalis, 1980; Newmann et al., 1989; Sargeant, 1967). In turn, students who perceived their teachers as satisfied with their jobs were more likely to exhibit high levels of attendance and achievement (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979), high morale about their learning environment, and more academic self-confidence (Edmonds, 1979a; Schneider et al., 1979; Weber, 1971). Principals that nurtured high morale among students and staff seemed to maximize their chances of developing student and staff attitudes about individual abilities as well as a learning environment that promoted higher levels of achievement (Coleman et al., 1982; Corcoran, 1990; Fullan, 1990; Goodlad, 1984; Levine, 1990; Lightfoot, 1983; Mortimore et al., 1988; Perrone, 1985).

Mary Metz's (1986) study of three magnet schools showed how teacher morale influenced students' learning. She found that teachers promoted higher student learning through shared involvement and satisfaction with their work and their shared
"pride of craft". Unfortunately, Metz suggested that this finding may only be valid for schools that do not cater to low-achieving students. Working with low-achieving students can have a devastating effect on teachers who have a strong sense of occupational pride and efficacy. Teachers who expressed a great deal of pride and satisfaction in their work appeared to be most effective in classrooms where actual student achievement provided support for their sense of satisfaction.

Other studies suggested that teachers communicated their sense of pride to students in all their verbal and nonverbal interactions. This established a "circle of causation". Students' achievements influenced teachers' morale, sense of efficacy, and expectations for student, which in turn, directly influenced higher levels of student achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Chubb, 1988; Newmann et al., 1989; Rosenholtz, 1985).

Anderman, Belzer and Smith (1991), found environments that stress affiliation, accomplishment, and recognition may be conducive to satisfaction and commitment. Teachers are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs when they are
working in a close knit environment where colleagues respect and support one another, and when they receive support and attention from fellow workers. These findings are corroborated by other recent studies by Yukl (1989), Maehr & Fyans (1989), VanderStoep, Anderman & Midgley (1991), who stressed the relationship between the work-place with satisfaction and commitment.

**Attendance**

Employee absenteeism has been a chronic problem in the public and private sectors of the United States (Bridges, 1980). In 1976, three and one-half percent of the total scheduled work-hours were lost for all public and private business (Bridges, 1980). Surprisingly, Bridges found approximately the same percentage of absenteeism for teachers. Employee absenteeism reduces productivity. It costs taxpayers more than one-half million dollars for substitute teachers and $120 million in fringe benefits for contractual teachers each year (Bridges, 1980). In addition, some have suggested that substitute teachers tend to be less effective in classroom instruction than the regular teachers (Elliott & Manlove, 1977; Winkler, 1980).
Although teacher absenteeism was attributable in part to illness, it was also attributable "in part to abuse of sick leave privileges by healthy employees" (Winkler, 1980, p. 232). A remedy by some educators was for strong action to be taken to alleviate sick-leave abuse by teachers (Elliot & Manlove, 1977; Gendler, 1977; Time, 1977).

Jacobson (1991), found that six senior teachers in one building, all of whom were nearing retirement, had accounted for a considerable amount of the absenteeism occurring in their district. These teachers had long since accumulated the maximum 200 sick days the district reimbursed upon retirement. As a result, rather than "lose" days accumulated beyond 200, these teachers had begun regularly using their additional annual allowance of sick and personal days. This use of sick leave was viewed as acceptable by the building principal, and medical documentation was required of these individuals. Also, the principal was nearing retirement and also taking non-reimbursable sick days. As a result, there was a workplace norm or absence cult at this one site that encouraged teachers to use all of sick leave. Teachers no longer viewed sick leave allowance as a benefit, but rather
as an entitlement.

D. W. Spuck (1974) found that "schools with low levels of teacher absenteeism reported high levels of community support. Teachers also tended to agree with district goals and policies" (p. 29). This was found to exist even when there were low levels of material inducement and unpleasant physical conditions (Spuck, 1974; Winkler, 1980).

Bridges and Hallinan (1978) have conceptualized absenteeism as a substitute type of withdrawal. It would seem that if an employee were satisfied with his/her job, he/she would not resort to withdrawing (in the form of absence). Contrary to previous research, Bridges (1980) concluded that "job satisfaction was not a major factor in absenteeism" (p. 53). Related to job satisfaction with a direct positive effect on teacher absenteeism was work system interdependence (Bridges & Hallinan, 1978; Bridges, 1980).

J. P. Esposito (1981) compared teacher absenteeism rates in schools characterized by an open climate (where teachers work well together and the principal serves as a facilitator) and schools characterized by a closed climate (where teachers tend to have difficulty working together and the principal is
aloof and not concerned with teacher welfare). Esposito found "significantly lower absence rates in schools that teachers perceived as more open than in schools that they perceived as more closed" (p. 458).

System rewards, peer group approval, internalization of organizational goals, and self-expression were all related to decreased absenteeism (Spuck, 1974). Because extrinsic rewards in school systems tended to be applied in a general way, intrinsic rewards were important motivators in school systems.

Anthony Bryk and Y. M. Thum's (1989) analysis revealed that student absenteeism was less prevalent in schools where faculty were interested and engaged with students, and there was an emphasis on academic pursuits. An orderly social environment was also an important condition. Additionally, absenteeism was lower in schools where there was less diversity among the student body in regards to background characteristics and more commonality in the program taken by students. Conversely, schools that responded to diversity in the student body by differentiating program and curriculum had higher absenteeism rates.
It is important to note that these internal diversity effects persisted even after controlling for student-level differences in social class, sex, academic background, and race/ethnicity. Similar effects were related to dropout rates. Students were more likely to graduate from schools where there was an emphasis on academic pursuits, an orderly environment, and less internal differentiation (McDill, Natriello, and Pallas, 1986).

Facilities

People are influenced and affected by their environment. Children and staff exposed to the environmental conditions in school facilities are no exception. Deferred maintenance can create an environment of peeling paint, crumbling plaster, non-functioning toilets, poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, and inoperative heating and cooling systems. This, of course, affects both the health and the morale of staff and students.

Most alarming was the effect of poor indoor air quality for school-age children. Andrews and Neuroth (1988) indicated that the quality of air inside public school facilities may significantly affect students' ability to
concentrate. The evidence suggested that youth, especially those under 10 years of age, were more vulnerable contaminants (asbestos, radon, and formaldehyde) found in some school facilities than the adults.

In the 1988 report on the condition of urban schools, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching found that those schools that were underfunded had low morale, decaying facilities, and a high dropout rate.

In most of the literature, the rationale for repairing and refurbishing school buildings was to protect the government's capital investment, not to protect students or to provide an environment for optimum learning. This relationship, however, was tested in the Washington D.C. school system. It was hypothesized that there was a correlation between student achievement and building conditions. After controlling for other variables, such as a student's socioeconomic status, Maureen Edwards (1991) found that when a school's condition improved from one category to the next—for example, from poor to fair—so did the students' standardized achievement scores an average of five and one-half percentage points. If a school
improved its condition from poor to excellent, then an average gain in achievement scores of 10.9 percentage points could be expected, Edwards claimed.

This underscores the need for commitment at local, state, and federal levels to upgrade school facilities. When the need to restructure education was discussed, there was often no mention of improving the physical site of learning. However, failure to repair and remodel educational facilities may offset benefits derived through restructuring the instructional program.

Communications and Human Relations

In a summary of the research based on a large number of schools in different communities, John Goodlad (1984) asserted that "our schools will get better and have continuing good health only to the degree that a significant proportion of our people, not just parents, care about them" (p.272). Many experts believe that the appropriate place to promote greater parental and community involvement is at the school rather than the district level (Goodlad, 1984, 1987; Joyce, Hersh, & McKibbin, 1983). People can more easily identify with and work with individual schools than with a
conglomeration of many units at the district level. The issue then becomes how best to promote this involvement and to help it develop in a way that enhances schools as supportive communities and as effective learning environments.

Bastian and Associates (1986) discussed two specific methods of establishing community-school links: youth advocacy programs and the use of paraprofessionals in the schools. Youth advocacy programs were designed by a committee of interested parents who formulated and disseminated school policy suggestions that represented the needs of parents and students. These parental committees were actively involved in distributing information about school policies, performance, and programs to the wider community of parents, seeking their opinions and suggestions about current school governance. Local residents served as paraprofessionals by volunteering as tutors, teacher aides, and special program instructors. These strategies were designed to promote healthy relations between schools and communities, and to enhance a school's learning environment. They promoted more orderly schools, reduced teacher/student
ratios, promoted small groups with instrumental norms, and allowed parents to be more directly involved with their children's educational experiences.

Coleman and Hoffer (1987) further suggested that school principals should actively promote social capital among parents by developing opportunities for them to strengthen their relations with each other and with the school. Through parents' meetings and encouraging parental participation in school events, principals promoted more extensive and intensive relationships among the members of the school community, which is the social capital available to students.

Anderman, Belzer and Smith (1991), suggested that different leadership qualities are associated with differing aspects of the school environment. Administrators who promoted their school's instructional climate by encouraging teachers to try out new ideas or by praising teachers for doing a good job were often associated with a school climate that stressed the qualities of accomplishment, recognition, affiliation, and decreased the emphasis on power or competition. In a similar manner, principals who were seen
as emphatically defining their goals for education are associated with a school climate that stresses accomplishment, recognition, a strong sense of unity among teachers, and a decreased emphasis on power.

Teachers' perceptions of various characteristics of their administrators were associated with distinct aspects of the school's climate. Consequently, if one assumes that the principal is in many ways directly responsible for the school climate, then it is safe to assume that principals who were perceived to engage in certain behaviors will in effect produce working environments with distinct characteristics.

**Summary of Related Literature**

There is a substantial amount of information on school climate and the indicators of a healthy school environment. While examining the literature on effective learning environments for Native American students, the research does not provide sufficient information, especially rigorous studies, on how the learning environment is managed in the complex web of operations which characterize Native American way of life.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors involved in enhancing a positive learning environment in Native American Indian schools. The study was designed to address the factors involved in enhancing a positive learning environment as perceived by K-12 teachers of Native American Indian students in Macy Public Schools in Macy, Nebraska.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section contains the procedures employed in selecting the sample for the study. The second contains the selected instrumentation and an explanation of its utilization in this study. The third section sets forth the data collection procedures and data analysis.

The Sample

The sample for this study was drawn from an elementary school and a secondary school in the Macy Public School District. Macy Public School District is located in the town of Macy in Thurston County, Nebraska. Thurston County, Nebraska is divided into two districts on the Native American Indian reservations. The Omaha Indian Tribe is located on
the reservation in the southern half of the county. The Winnebago Indian Tribe is located on the reservation in the northern half of the county. The towns of Macy and Walthill, are both located on the Omaha reservation and contain the largest Omaha Native American Indian populations in Nebraska with an estimated 800 to 1,000 Native Americans (no available census). There is a 100% student population of Native American Indians, as reported by the registrar, in Macy Public Schools.

The survey, Dimensions of Excellence Scales (DOES), was given to all certified teachers in Macy Public schools in the spring of 1994. The sample consisted of 40 certified teachers. There were 23 elementary teachers with 20 female and three male teaching kindergarten through sixth grade. Also, included in the sample were grades seven through 12 with 17 secondary teachers of which there were seven females and 10 males at the time of this study.

The sample consisted of teachers under the ethnic codes of White/Caucasian and Native American Indian. Teaching experience ranged from one year to 36 years.

The ethnicity and gender of the participants of
this study are listed in Table 1. The percentage of teachers who are White females is 65.0%, White males is 28.0%, Native American Indian females is 5%, and Native American Indian males 2%.

Table 1
Participants of the Study by Ethnicity and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. A. Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 1, the majority of teachers are white females.

History of Development of the Instrument

Educators have long been concerned with excellence in schools and with improving school performance by giving attention to the dimensions that have been identified through research. Interest in school improvement has intensified in
recent years, as evidenced by the work of the numerous commissions, committees, and organizations that have reported on the topic.

Research for Better Schools (RBS) (1988) was a federally funded educational laboratory for the Mid-Atlantic region, which includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. As part of its laboratory role, RBS conducts collaborative projects with public education agencies in each of these states. One such project involved the Harford County Public Schools (Maryland) and their development of an action research model for school improvement. As this project related to the priorities of the Maryland State Department of Education and of other educators in the Mid-Atlantic region, RBS joined its resources with those of Harford County to help the schools accomplish this task.

The collaboration began in late 1984 with planning and initial development. The scale items were written by both RBS and Harford County staff. In 1985, eleven schools pilot-tested the The Dimensions of Excellence Scales (DOES) and used the results to select areas for staff development to
improve student achievement. Fifteen new schools joined the effort in 1986, and the initial eleven schools continued to refine the DOES and to make it available to other school districts.

The instrument, Dimensions of Excellence Scales (DOES), utilized in this study was based upon the work of Dusewicz and Beyer (1988). DOES measures eight dimensions related to school effectiveness. They are: shared decision-making and consensus on values and goals; academic commitment; orderly environment; high expectations; morale and school pride; attendance; facilities; and communications and human relations. For each dimension, indicators of effectiveness were identified by Dusewicz and Beyer based on the school effectiveness research.

Overview of the Dimensions of Excellence Scales

Psychometric Qualities

"Reliability" refers to the internal consistency of a scale or test and to the stability or reproducibility of scale or test scores. Approximately 400 items were initially constructed for field-testing the DOES. Two steps were taken to address the reliability of the scale. First, for each
dimension, the correlations between individual item scores and dimension scores were examined and items with low correlations (e.g., below .40) were eliminated. This resulted in a reduction in the number of items across all eight dimensions to approximately 200. Second, coefficient alpha was computed for each dimension to determine how well dimension scores represented universe scores. This analysis of the final version of the DOES resulted in the following coefficients: (1) school climate = .96, (2) leadership = .98, (3) teacher behavior = .93, (4) curriculum = .89, (5) monitoring and assessment = .93, (6) student discipline and behavior = .91, (7) staff development = .95, (8) parent involvement = .90.

Although there is no formal cutoff for determining a reliable measure, clearly all eight dimensions have consistently high alphas, thus indicating that they are reliable measures.

An instrument was developed and validated by Dusewicz and Beyers (1988) called the Dimensions Of Excellence Scales (DOES). The DOES was designed to measure staff, student, and parent perceptions related to specific dimensions of school
effectiveness. Dusewicz and Beyer (1988) developed a 200 item instrument with three survey scales, one for staff, one for parents, and one for students. Each scale contains dimensions that have been found to be related to effective school performance. The dimensions are: (a) school climate, (b) leadership, (c) teacher behavior, (d) curriculum, (e) monitoring and assessment, (f) student discipline, (g) staff development, and (h) parent involvement. Each dimension in turn has a set of indicators. For the purpose of this study, the school climate dimension was the only one utilized to survey the certified teachers in Macy Public Schools. With such a measure, the most important kind of validity was content validity. In other words, the content universe must be both properly defined and properly sampled.

Dimensions were selected on the basis of (1) the availability of a body of research to support each dimension as a correlate of an effective school, and (2) the possibility of change at the local school level. After mapping out each dimension, the research supporting its importance was systematically reviewed and a number of indicators were specified to be addressed in items
appropriately and sufficiently represented each content area or dimension. The results of field-testing lent additional support to the school scales' content validity.

**Data Collection Procedures**

At a weekly teacher's meeting each participant was asked to complete the instrument and return it within a one week period of April 22, 1994 through April 29, 1994.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

The statistical designs for this study was a T-test. Eight dependent variables: (1) shared decision-making and consensus on values and goals; (2) academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high expectations; (5) morales and school pride; (6) attendance; (7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations and four independent variables: (1) ethnicity; (2) gender; (3) experience; and (4) education; were employed.

Frequencies of occurrence for all survey questions and T-test were employed to determine what differences might exist in regard to school climate characteristics. Each participant was used to test the thirty three research questions at the .05 level of significance.
The Dimensions Of Excellence Scales Questionnaire was composed of thirty-three descriptive items about school climate. Each question was divided into three questions which respondents identified as the way it was, the way it is and the way it should be, and identifying them as typical or atypical. The items were grouped into eight categories of: (a) shared decision making and consensus on values and goals; (b) academic commitment; (c) orderly environment; (d) high expectations; (e) morales and school pride; (f) attendance; (g) facilities; and (h) communications and human relations. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated.

A T-test was employed to predict a score on a variable given scores on two or more predictor variables. It was also used as a method for describing the relative degree of contribution of a series of variables in the multiple prediction of a variable. More specifically, a T-test was employed to further analyze each related questionnaire item when significant differences for the sums that were found.
Summary

This chapter was divided into three sections. The first section contained the procedures employed in selecting the sample for the study. The percentage of teachers who were White females was 65.0%, White males was 28.0%, Native American Indian females was 5%, and Native American Indian males 2%. The second contained the selected instrumentation and an explanation of its utilization in this study. The instrument, Dimensions of Excellence Scales (DOES), utilized in this study was based upon the work of Dusewicz and Beyer (1988). The Dimensions Of Excellence Scales Questionnaire was composed of thirty-three descriptive items about school climate. Each question was divided into three questions which respondents identified as the way it was, the way it is and the way it should be, and identifying them as typical or atypical. The items were grouped into eight categories of: (a) shared decision making and consensus on values and goals; (b) academic commitment; (c) orderly environment; (d) high expectations; (e) morales and school pride; (f) attendance; (g) facilities; and (h) communications and human relations. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where
1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. The third section set forth the data collection procedures and data analysis. Frequencies of occurrence for all survey questions and T-test were employed to determine what differences might exist in school climate characteristics.

A T-test was employed to predict a score on a variable given scores on two or more predictor variables. It was also used as a method for describing the relative degree of contribution of a series of variables in the multiple prediction of a variable.

Chapter IV will analyze the findings from the T-test.
CHAPTER IV

Analysis of Data

The purposes of this study were to ascertain teachers' perceptions of the factors that enhance a positive learning environment for Native American Indian (NAI) K-12 students. More specifically, this study investigated the perceptions of teachers relative to school climate as identified by Dusewicz and Beyer (1988) in their Dimensions of Excellence Scales in the following areas: (1) shared decision making and consensus on values and goals; (2) academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high expectations; (5) morale and school pride; (6) attendance; (7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations.

This study was based on responses obtained from the teaching staff employed at Macy Public School (MPS) for the 1993-94 school year. The sample consisted of 40 certified teachers. There were 23 elementary teachers with 20 female and 3 male teaching kindergarten through 6th grade. Also, included in the sample were grades 7 through 12 with 17 secondary teachers of which there were 7 females and 10 males.
The findings were based on an analysis of the 33 survey questions that addressed the research questions. Each survey question was divided into three questions which respondents responded to in terms of the way it was, the way it is, and the way it should be, and identifying descriptors as typical or atypical. The items were grouped into eight categories of: (1) shared decision making and consensus on values and goals; (2) academic commitment; (3) orderly environment; (4) high expectations; (5) morale and school pride; (6) attendance; (7) facilities; and (8) communications and human relations. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. T-tests were used to assess differences in item responses.
The eight subject categories investigated in this study are addressed in the following sections.

**Analysis of Shared Decision Making Responses and Consensus of Values and Goals**

Research Question 1 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding shared decision making and consensus of values and goals. Survey items included the following: #4, "the school uses participatory management and problem-solving techniques in making decisions;" #9, "the school has a consistent, widely-shared norm-belief value system;" #26, "teachers work amicably together on common problems;" #27, "shared responsibility is assumed by students, faculty, administration, and parents for the achievement of school goals; and" #29, "the total school community is involved in an ongoing process of establishing, articulating, and reviewing values and goals." The results are shown in Table 2.
Table 2

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 2 Items

Involving Analysis of Shared Decision Making and Consensus of Values and Goals Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.
The t-tests shown in Table 2 indicate that responses to items 4, 9, 26, 27 and 29 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe there should be more participatory management; more of a consistent, widely-shared norm-belief value system; more teacher cooperation on common problems; more shared responsibility; and there should be more school community involvement in establishing, articulating, and reviewing values and goals.

**Analysis of Academic Commitment**

Research Question 2 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding their academic commitment. Survey items included the following: #2, "the school has an academic emphasis and believes that all children can learn and achieve the school's educational goals;" #8, "the school motivates students to learn;" #21, "the school has a staff who believe they are able to help all students as learn and take responsibility for learning outcomes; and" #31, "the school gives honors,
awards, and other forms of recognition to student for academic achievement." The results are shown in Table 3.
Table 3

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 3 Items 

Involving Analysis of Academic Commitment Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>( p )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
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<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t tests shown in Table 3 indicate that responses to items 2, 8, 21 and 31 were different at a statistically
significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe that there should be more of an emphasis on all children learning and achieving the school's educational goals; more motivation for students to learn; more staff who believe they are able to help all students as learn and take responsibility for learning outcomes; more shared responsibility; and there should be more honors, awards, and other forms of recognition to students for academic achievement.

Analysis of Orderly Environment

Research Question 3 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding an orderly environment. Survey items included the following: #5, "the school has an orderly, business-like atmosphere;" #14, "students generally take care of and respect their own property and that of other students;" #22, "disciplinary problems are few; and" #30, "the school has shared expectation and rationale for disciplinary policies and procedures." The results are shown in Table 4.
### Table 4

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 4 Items Involving Analysis of Orderly Environment Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 4 indicate that responses to items 5, 14, 22 and 30 were different at a statistically
significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe there should be more of an orderly, business-like atmosphere; more teacher cooperation on common problems; more care of and respect for their own property and that of other students; fewer disciplinary problems; and there should be more shared expectation and rationale for disciplinary policies and procedures.

Analysis of High Expectations

Research Question 4 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding high expectations. Survey Questions items included the following: #23, "the school has high expectations for student achievement academic;" #24, "the school has high expectations for student achievement in nonacademic areas;" and" #33, "the school provides opportunities individual strengths or talents and recognizes their efforts to do so." The results are shown in Table 5.
Table 5

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 5 Items
Involving Analysis of High Expectations Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 5 indicate that responses to items 23, 24 and 33 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is
and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe there should be higher expectations for student achievement for academics; higher expectations for student achievement in nonacademic areas; and there should be more opportunities for individual strengths or talents and to recognize their efforts to do so.

Analysis of Morale and School Pride

Research Question 5 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding morale and school pride. Survey items included the following: #13, "the school has a principal who provides leadership for climate improvement;" #15, "the school has good teacher moral; and" #17, "the school has a high proportion for students who speak positively about school experience." The results are shown in Table 6.
Table 6

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 6 Items

Involving Analysis of Morale and School Pride Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 6 indicate that responses to items 13, 15 and 17 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is
and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe there should be more leadership for climate improvement; improved teacher morale; more teacher cooperation on common problems; more shared responsibility; and there should be more students who speak positively about these school experiences.

Analysis of Attendance

Research Question 6 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding attendance. Survey items included the following: #19, "the school has a high rate of student attendance; and" #20, "the school has a high rate of staff attendance." The results are shown in Table 7.
### Table 7

**Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 7 Items Involving Analysis of Attendance Comparing Responses and Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 7 indicate that responses to items 19 and 20 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe
there should be a higher rate of student attendance; and a higher rate of staff attendance.

Analysis of Facilities

Research Question 7 whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding facilities. Survey items included the following: #7, "the school has attractive, safe clean facilities with adequate workspace;" #18, "building and grounds are in good repair; and" #25, "the school has litter-free hallways and classrooms." The results are shown in Table 8.
Table 8

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 8 Items

Involving Analysis of Facilities Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 8 indicate that responses to items 7, 18 and 25 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is
and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that
they believe that schools should be more attractive, have
safe clean facilities with adequate workspace; more
maintenance; and there should be cleaner hallways and
classrooms.

Analysis of Communications and Human Relations In and From
the School

Research Question 8 asked whether there is a
statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions
of the way it is compared with the way it should be,
regarding communications and human relations in and from the
school. Survey items included the following: #1, "teachers
and students feel free to communicate with the principal;"
#3, "students are respected regardless of their academic
achievement level;" #6, "there is good communication between
parents and school;" #10, "the principal has a high level of
visibility;" #11, "both teachers and students treat each
other with respect;" #12, "the principal takes an active
interest in the well-being of both teachers and students;"
#28, "the school has a system of communication that is open,
regular, and honest; and" #32, "the school has conflict
resolution procedures that are applied fairly." The results are shown in Table 9.
Table 9
Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 9 Items
Involving Analysis of Communications and Human Relations In and From the School Comparing Responses and Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>3.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>.95</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>3.73</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert
Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 9 indicate that responses to items 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, 28 and 32 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it is and the way it should be. Respondents thus indicated that they believe there should be more communication with the principal; more respect for students regardless of their academic achievement level; more communication between parents and school; the principal should be more visible; both teachers and students treat each other with more respect; the principal takes more interest in the well-being of both teachers and students; more communication that is open, regular, and honest; and there should be more conflict resolution procedures that are applied fairly.

**Analysis of Communications and Human Relations In and From the School**

Research Question 8 asked whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions
of the way it is compared with the way it should be, regarding communications and human relations in and from the school. Survey items included the following: #1, "teachers and students feel free to communicate with the principal; and" #12, "the principal takes an active interest in the well-being of both teachers and students." The results are shown in Table 10.
Table 10

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Table 10 Items

Involving Analysis of Communications and Human Relations In and From the School Comparing Responses Regarding The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>The Way It Is</th>
<th>The Way It Should Be</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Responses were coded from one to four on a Likert Scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree with the item stated and 4 = Strongly Agree with the item stated. A low mean score infers more disagreement with the question.

The t-tests shown in Table 10 indicate that responses to items 1 and 12 were different at a statistically significant level when comparing perceptions of the way it was and the
way it is. Respondents thus indicated that they believe there should be more communication between teachers, students and the principal and the principal should take a more active interest in the well-being of both teachers and students.

Analysis of Communications and Human Relations In and From the School

Perceptions of respondents' views concerning the way it was and the way it is also were analyzed for all the items described above comparing the way it is and the way it should be. Virtually all of the analyses indicated that there were no statistically significant difference between respondents' perceptions of the way it was and the way it is. For this reason, it was concluded that respondents generally believe there has been no meaningful change with respect to attitudes assessed on the Dimensions of Excellence Scales Questionnaire.
Summary

The Dimensions of Excellence Scales Questionnaire scores of the respondents indicate that statistically significant differences were present in their perceptions regarding all sections of the questionnaire. This study thus found that teacher respondents' perceptions relative to the way it is and the way it should be are different with respect to shared decision making and consensus of values and goals, academic commitment, an orderly environment, high expectations, morale and school pride, attendance, facilities, and communications and human relations.
CHAPTER V
Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This study investigated the factors involved in enhancing a positive learning environment in a Native American Indian School in Macy Public Schools in Macy, Nebraska. This chapter includes summary of the research, a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future investigations in this area.

Summary of the Research

Current research on school climate in Native American Indian Schools is minuscule. There is, however, a substantial amount of literature addressing school climate. Research studies suggest that climate links characteristics of organizations with individuals’ attitudes and behavior and shows organizations affect individuals' behavior independently of their own characteristics (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Brookover and Lezotte, (1979) also found that assessments of the perceptions of teachers, principals and students can be described with quantifiable data and linked with school outcomes such as achievement.

The review of literature supports the notion that the
learning environments have an important impact on student's achievement (Hoy et al., 1991). Furthermore, schools with teachers and students who see higher achievement as a real and attainable goal actually do have higher achievement (Phi Delta Kappa, 1980).

The need for understanding Native American Indian education concerns appears to be both timely and urgent. The National Center for Education Statistics (1988) reports that Native American Indian students have a dropout rate twice the national average, the highest dropout rate of any United States ethnic or racial group reported.

The external pressures coupled with the desire of educators to improve the instruction of students have created a need to increase the understanding of the factors that influence higher student achievement. More importantly, there is a need to determine to what extent do the perceptions of teachers impact a positive learning environment, especially in special populations. In reviewing the related literature, Alexander, Natriello and Pallas (1985), Husen and Tuijnman (1991), Meyer (1980), Shavit and Featherman (1988) found that schools influence students'
achievement as well as their attitudes toward learning.

The problem addressed in this study was: What factors enhance a positive learning environment as perceived by K-12 teachers of Native American Indians (NAI) students? Eight research questions were designed to examine teachers' perceptions about school climate. A Dusewicz and Beyer (1988), DOES questionnaire was modified in order to collect data. The questionnaire was given to 40 teachers who were employed in Macy Public Schools in Macy Nebraska the spring of 1992.

The research questions in this study addressed the basic assumption that perceptions of teachers would significantly impact school climate. The research questions were analyzed by utilizing T-tests which provided significant interactions at or below the .05 level of significance for The Way It Was to The Way It Is survey questions- #1 and #12, and The Way It Is to The Way It Should Be for all 33 survey questions.

Conclusions

In applying the results of this study, it should be noted that the sample was selected from a single institution. Therefore, the conclusions are generalizable
only within the selected institution. In this context the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Respondents' consistently believe that The Way It Is fall short of The Way It Should Be with respect to all 33 Survey Questions (Appendix B).

2. Respondents' believe that there is no difference between The Way It Is and The Way It Was with respect to most of the questionnaire items.

Recommendations for Future Research

The aforementioned summary and conclusion of this study were derived from an analysis of the data ascertained in this study. The following questions are recommended for direction of future research concerning the school climate:

1. What conditions promote healthy and open climates in Native American Schools?

2. What factors determine administrators' perceptions that enhance a positive learning environment for Native American (NAI) K-12 students?

3. Is there a significant difference between teachers' perceptions as compared with administrators' perceptions of
the factors that enhance a positive learning environment for Native American (NAI) K-12 students?
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Appendix A

Teacher Opinion Questionnaire

Date

Dear Teacher:

A study is being conducted to learn more about the ways in which teachers perceive various aspects of their experience here at Macy Public Schools. The idea is to better understand the views of teachers. You are being asked to give your views, and your participation is most important to this study.

This is not a test, and there are not right or wrong answers. Rather, it is an opinion poll for the purpose of finding out how much agreement or disagreement exists from a representative sample of students at this time. Of primary interest are your thoughts about campus life. Your answers, combined with the answers of other students, will provide valuable information.

Identification of individual teachers is not necessary, thus eliminating the need for your name. The results will be analyzed based upon what the group of teachers believe, and all respondents will remain anonymous. Generally this questionnaire can be completed in about 15-20 minutes.

The primary concern is your honest response. Your views are important, and you participation is valuable and very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Henry Eggert
Graduate Student
QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I. FILL IN THE BLANK OR CIRCLE THE LETTER TO THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER.

1. Sex:
   a. Male
   b. Female

2. Age:_______

3. Ethnic Background:
   a. White Non-Hispanic
   b. Black/African-American
   c. Native American Indian
   d. Hispanic
   e. other

4. How much formal education do you have? Indicate only the highest level:
   a. Bachelors
   b. Masters
   c. Educational Specialist
   d. Doctorate

5. How many years have you been teaching at Macy including this year? _______
6. How many years including this year have you been teaching? _____

7. What grade(s) are you currently teaching?
   a. K-3
   b. 4-6
   c. 7-9
   d. 10-12
   e. All
   f. Combination
   g. Other

8. In which major content area(s) are you teaching?
   a. Math
   b. Science
   c. History, Social Studies
   d. English
   e. Other
   f. Combination
PART II. SCHOOL CLIMATE DIMENSION

INDICATE YOUR DEGREE OF AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING FOUR STATEMENTS BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE SYMBOLS. PLEASE CIRCLE ONE OF THE OPTIONS IN EACH ITEM IN EACH COLUMN; DO NOT LEAVE ANY ENCIRCLED.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL CLIMATE DIMENSION</th>
<th>THE WAY IT WAS</th>
<th>THE WAY IT IS</th>
<th>THE WAY IT SHOULD BE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers and students feel free to communicate with the principal.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The school has an academic emphasis and believes that all children can learn and achieve the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students are respected regardless of their academic achievement level.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The school uses participatory management and problem-solving techniques in making decisions.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The school has an orderly, business-like atmosphere.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. There is good communication between parents and school.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The school has attractive, safe clean facilities with adequate workspace.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The school motivates students to learn.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The school has a consistent, widely-shared norm-belief value system.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL CLIMATE DIMENSION</td>
<td>THE WAY IT WAS</td>
<td>THE WAY IT IS</td>
<td>THE WAY IT SHOULD BE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The principal has a high level of visibility.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Both teachers and students treat each other with respect.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The principal takes an active interest in the well-being of both teachers and students.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The school has a principal who provides leadership for climate improvement.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Students generally take care of and respect their own property and that of other students.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The school has good teacher moral.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Students are willing to approach teacher for advice or help.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The school has a high proportion of students who speak positively about school experience.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Building and grounds are in good repair.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The school has a high rate of student attendance.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. The school has a high rate of staff attendance.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The school has a staff who believe they are able to help all students learn and take responsibility for learning outcomes.</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
<td>SD D A SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL CLIMATE DIMENSION</td>
<td>SURVEY ITEMS</td>
<td>THE WAY IT WAS</td>
<td>THE WAY IT IS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>22. Disciplinary problems are few.</td>
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<td>23. The school has high expectations for student academic achievement.</td>
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<td>24. The school has high expectations for student achievement in nonacademic areas.</td>
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<td>25. The school has litter-free hallways and classrooms.</td>
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<td>26. Teachers work amicably together on common problems</td>
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<td>27. Shared responsibility is assumed by students, faculty, administration, and parents for the achievement of school goals.</td>
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<td>28. The school has a system of communication that is open, regular, and honest.</td>
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<td>29. The total school community is involved in an ongoing process of establishing, articulating, and reviewing values and goals.</td>
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<td>30. The school has shared expectation and rational for disciplinary policies and procedures.</td>
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<td>31. The school gives honors, awards, and other forms of recognition to students for academic achievement.</td>
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<td>32. The school has conflict resolution procedures that are applied fairly.</td>
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<td>33. The school provides opportunities for students to excel in areas of individual strengths or talents and recognizes their efforts to do so.</td>
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Appendix B

The Way It Is To The Way It Should Be Survey Questions

Mean Scores of The Way It Is and The Way It Should Be

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