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**AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL RESPONSE TO STATE
INITIATED SCHOOL REFORM LEGISLATION:
MICHIGAN PUBLIC ACT 25**

by

A. Bruce Watson

**A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Educational Leadership**

**Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
April 1995**

**AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL RESPONSE TO STATE
INITIATED SCHOOL REFORM LEGISLATION:
MICHIGAN PUBLIC ACT 25**

A. Bruce Watson, Ed.D.

Western Michigan University, 1995

Educational reform has been a topic of interest to educators, politicians and tax payers for over a century. Michigan's educational reform legislation, Public Act 25, enacted in 1990, is a shared-responsibility model where the state and local school district share responsibility for implementing four major educational reform components. These components are, core curriculum, annual educational report, school improvement planning and accreditation.

The study was designed to answer the following two research questions. Initially, do elementary principals in Michigan public elementary schools perceive educational reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25? And secondly, what order will Michigan public elementary school principals rank the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which are the most likely to allow educational reform to continue? A total of 183 public elementary school principals were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the two main questions.

The study provides important first-hand information about the potential for Public Act 25 to allow educational reform to continue within the state of

Michigan. The conclusions of the study will help educators, legislators and tax payers insure that educational reform does continue to progress under Public Act 25.

There were two major conclusions drawn from this study. First, public elementary school principal agreed that educational reform indicators and conditions were in sufficient strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. Secondly, principals rated the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which were the most likely to allow educational reform to continue in the following order, school improvement, core curriculum, accreditation process and annual report. Principals were separated by classification of school (in- or out-of formula), size and per pupil expenditure. They were also separated by principals' administrative experience, gender and educational background (degree). Each sub group of principals agreed that educational reform indicators and conditions were in sufficient strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. The study concluded that future research might be done with other groups of educators, legislators or tax payers.

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A. Bruce Watson

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Michigan Public Act 25 of 1990 (Appendix A) was created and passed by the Michigan Legislature. Promising to be Michigan School Reform Legislation, the act has been individually implemented throughout the 524 school districts in the state with varying degrees of success.

The major components of Public Act 25 are:

1. State core-curriculum.
2. Process for local school improvement.
3. Required annual report to community.
4. State regulated accreditation process.

The intent of this study was to examine some of the issues involved in the process of implementing Public Act 25. More specifically it sought to determine initially, whether conditions and indicators of reform were present in enough strength in Michigan public schools to make continuing reform possible under Public Act 25 and secondly, to identify which of the four major components of Public Act 25 were the most likely to continue.

Since many hours of legislators' and educators' time (and much tax payers' money) have been dedicated to establishing and implementing Public Act 25, Michigan's School Reform Legislation, a research study that addresses these

questions will be of value. As well, since the intentions of the Act were reinforced in Public Act 335 of 1994, continuation of the practices appears likely.

Definitions

Institutionalization of Reform

The Anderson et al. (1986) study defines institutionalization of reform as "incorporation of the activities, resources, and requirements of the program into the standard operating procedures of the district and school...having the program cease being a separate entity and start being an ongoing, programmatic entity of the school" (p. 61). Further, Fullan (1982; 1991) has defined institutionalization of reform as "continuation of a change that gets embedded or built into the structure of an organization" (p. 89).

Principal

The definition of principal used in this study was derived from several writers. According to Witters-Churchill (1988), the principal is the leading administrator in public elementary, middle or high school. Lezotte (Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, 1988) defines a principal-leader as one who has demonstrated the ability to translate intention into reality and sustain it. Professor Fenwick English (1994) cited Freund and Andrews, (1854) indicating that the word principal is derived from the Latin principalis, which means "first

in ranking" or "of pertaining to a prince or ruler".

Therefore, the definition of principal used in this study is the ranking administrator within an elementary school building charged with the responsibility of translating the intention of school reform into the reality of sustained school improvement.

History - National Reform

Educational reform is not in its infancy. Indeed, prior to the 1900's, researchers were interested in the topic. Several essays and addresses were compiled in the area of educational reform just before the turn of the 20th century (Eliot, 1898). In fact, Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard, served as the chair of what was referred to as the Committee of Ten in 1893. This committee found public schools in "disorder in preparing students for the duties of life" and recommended adoption of a common liberal education for all students, college bound or not.

Later, in 1918, The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education led to a new definition of public schooling moving toward "licensed autonomy" (Dale, 1989) for local districts and the eventual "tracked" high school. In 1958, this "soft curriculum" was replaced by "regulatory autonomy" (Dale, 1989) and an increase in the traditional academic studies developed in response to "Sputnik". "Sputnik", the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics leap into the race for space, jolted the American educational system.

Twenty-five years after "Sputnik", the Nation at Risk Report was developed by the National Commission for Excellence in Education in 1983. The report highlighted for the American public the rising mediocrity of the American educational system in comparison with other nations in the areas of reading, mathematics and the sciences.

Other reform measures followed. The Restructuring School Movement (Pipho, 1989) calling for teacher empowerment (Glickman and Bey, 1990), accountability (Maeroff, 1988), academic control (Elmore, 1991) and school centered improvement (Wise, 1988) all followed on the heels of the Nation at Risk Report.

Each of these reforms have had relatively little impact. Neither the technology nor the core ideology of schooling has changed (Cohen, 1988, Cuban, 1988). These reforms have not altered the prevailing organization, scheduling, curriculum nor structure of schools (Cuban, 1990).

Saranson (1990) said that the problem with school reform is that it is less about what to do and more about what to think. Howe (1991) expanded by indicating that educators keep doing more of the right things for the wrong reason; such as requiring more homework, longer school hours and more tests. In the face of these continuing reform efforts, little substance ever changes in public education (Cuban, 1988). As Goodlad (1992) indicates: "Top-down, politically driven education reform movements are addressed primarily to restructuring. They have little to say about educating" (p. 238).

However, some states have attempted to forge non-traditional reform models such as local-state interagency cooperative models. These models differ from the other reform models which were top down in the area of authority. The local-state interagency model draws its strength from the sharing of authority and responsibility between the state and the local school district. In these cases, certain reform indicators and conditions were found to be in existence that allowed reform to take place. This model of shared responsibility shows promise as explained later.

History - Michigan Reform

Michigan first began discussions on school reform in the late 1960's. William G. Milliken, Governor of Michigan, developed the Michigan Governor's Commission on Education Reform Report (1969). Discussions escalated from this report into the shared-responsibility model of school reform in the early 1990's.

In 1990, Michigan became one of the leaders in the shared-responsibility model which reflects the idea of sharing a vision of what could be in education, establishing a mission statement, developing measurable outcomes, designing the curriculum down from a state core curriculum and using a building level school improvement process to reform the school.

This shared-responsibility model of school reform begins with two basic assumptions:

1. A collaborative willingness exists between the initiator of the reform (state) and those who are expected to implement it (local district) (Fiske, 1990).
2. A connection exists between the reform's components and good teaching and learning in the classroom (Resnick and Resnick, 1985).

Even with the shared-responsibility reform model, few local educators have felt the need to sustain the motivation to "rethink and reorganize their methods... in order to pursue educational goals in which they have only a marginal interest" (Ball, 1987, p. 18). Therefore, the power of local decision makers to reshape external innovations to fit local norms is a conflicting dynamic of school governance which seldom allows reform to move past the initial stages of implementation to become continuing institutional improvements (Fullan, 1982, 1991).

In Michigan, Public Act 25 of 1990 and subsequent Public Act 118 (State Aid Act) of The Michigan School Aid Act Compiled of 1991 (House Fiscal Agency, 1992) were results of state legislators' attempts at initiating a shared-responsibility school reform model. Public Act 25 mandated implementation of several specific components for all public schools in Michigan. The Michigan Department of Education is held responsible for monitoring and facilitating the implementation of the plan. The local school building principal is held responsible for the actual implementation of the building provision of the Act. Those major components (Michigan State Board of Education, 1988) are: (1) Core Curriculum, (2) Annual Educational Report, (3) School Improvement Planning, and (4) Accreditation.

In order to help implement Public Act 25, In-Formula Schools (approximately 374 schools that received state financial aid in addition to local property taxes) were allocated \$25 per student per year through the state aid formula to help offset implementation costs. Out-of-Formula Schools (approximately 150 schools that received property taxes above the state established minimum) received no additional funds to help offset implementation costs (House Fiscal Agency, 1992).

Since 1990, all school districts in Michigan, In-Formula and Out-of-Formula, small enrollment, medium enrollment and large enrollment, and low per pupil expenditure, medium per pupil expenditure and high per pupil expenditure alike, have developed three years of Annual Reports, established building level school improvement teams, district wide school improvement teams, studied and adopted or adapted the state guidelines for the core curriculum, and are in the process of taking steps to become accredited (either through the traditional University of Michigan, North Central Accreditation or new Michigan Accreditation Model) at all grade levels. As mentioned earlier, much time and many dollars, both state and local, have been directed toward accomplishing school reform through the implementation of Public Act 25.

Purpose of Study

Since the adoption of Public Act 25 in 1990, there has been only one investigation carried out which attempted to determine whether it has had the

impact it was intended to have on school reform in Michigan. This research, completed by Edward James Shine (1992), concluded that school superintendents perceived that reform conditions and indicators (detailed in Chapter II) were present in sufficient numbers in Michigan public schools to make continuing reform reasonably predictable. Shine's recommendations also called for several areas of follow-up research. One area mentioned was the need to survey educators other than superintendents who were involved in implementation of Public Act 25. In this current study, elementary principals in Michigan Public Schools were selected as the population for investigating.

While the overall conclusion of Shine's study reports his determination that Public Act 25 "appears likely to continue improving education in local school districts in Michigan after the implementation phase has passed" (Shine, 1992, p. 110), these findings were based solely upon feedback from local district superintendents.

Sergiovanni (1989) states:

Getting the real thing when it comes to school improvement will require that a new balance be struck among those who have a stake. The states must continue to provide strong leadership and push for school improvement on a variety of fronts. They need to be firm in their resolve to make things better and unwavering in setting high standards and insisting on accountability. They also need to provide the resources, the encouragement, and the help that will make things happen in the local schools. Within this framework of accountability and help, school principals, and teachers must be empowered to function in ways that make sense to them.

Empowerment is not the same thing as acknowledging the de facto discretion that already exists in the system. It is a deliberate effort to provide

principals and teachers with the room, right, responsibility, and resources to make sensible decisions and informed professional judgment that reflect their circumstances (pg. 5, 6).

In Shine's study (1992), the school superintendents were chosen as the population to be studied. The current investigation selected the elementary school principal. The premise of this study was that the building principal was the most reliable data source to determine the existence of reform indicators and conditions within the building and to examine which of the four major components of Public Act 25 are the most likely to continue. This selection of the building principal as the respondent to the questionnaire is explained more fully in the literature review in Chapter II.

This current study assessed the perceptions of building level principals in Michigan through the use of a self-response questionnaire (appendix B). Ten percent of all elementary principals in Michigan (randomly selected) were asked to report their opinions on reform conditions and indicators present in Michigan schools and to identify which of the four major components of Public Act 25 would most likely lead to continuing reform. Their collective perceptions were the basis for conclusions and recommendations as to how the Michigan Legislators and Michigan Department of Education can more fully implement the four major aspects of Public Act 25. The purpose was to determine if elementary principals felt that known reform indicators and conditions were in sufficient strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

Importance

Legislative and executive level government officials, in addition to educators at all levels, along with all Michigan tax payers, share an interest in the results of a study that would answer the question: What would it take to fully implement the four major components of Public Act 25?

Michigan's Public Act 25 was advocated by then State Superintendent Donald Bemis (September, 1990) as a "massive piece of legislation that will drive comprehensive school reform in our state for this decade and beyond". If that is the case, these data will also be of benefit to the state of Michigan and other states that may take an interest in the answer to this question.

These same constituents might well ask the question, "how is Public Act 25 doing thus far in reforming the public schools in Michigan?" The results of this research will identify which of the four major mandated components of Public Act 25 the principals perceived to have impacted on school reform the most. In addition, the research will identify which components hold the best promise for future school reform.

Hypotheses

The first hypothesis of this study was as follows: Principals will perceive educational reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength in

Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue. In addition, each elementary principals sub-group, when separated into the following sub-groups; district financial status (In-formula vs. Out-of-formula), district size, district per-pupil expenditure, principal administrative experience, principal gender and principal educational background, will all perceive educational reform indicators and conditions to be in sufficient strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The second hypothesis was as follows: Principals will rank the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which are the most likely to allow reform to continue in the following order: School Improvement, Core Curriculum, Accreditation and Annual Report.

Summary

The desire for school reform has been with us for over a century. In Michigan, Public Act 25 was hailed as the legislation that would reform our public schools. This study investigated whether indicators and conditions of reform were in enough strength in Michigan schools for reform to continue and to identify which, if any, of the four major components of Public Act 25 were most likely to continue.

In Chapter II, a literature review can be found relating to the subject of reform (change), principals and Public Act 25. Chapter III describes the

methodology (procedures and processes) used in questioning the principals and analyzing the data. Chapter IV presents the findings of the study and Chapter V, the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

History of School Reform - National

As stated in the introduction, the study of educational reform is not in its infancy. The literature pointed out that Eliot (1898) compiled several essays and addresses on the topic of educational reform prior to the turn of the century. He chaired the Committee of Ten in 1893 which developed the "common liberal education movement". He listed six:

essential constituents of all worthy education: careful training of the organs of sense, practice in grouping and comparing different sensations, training in making a record of the observation, training of the memory, training in the power of expression and the steady inculcation of those supreme ideals through which the human race is uplifted and ennobled - the ideals of beauty, honor, duty and love (Eliot, 1898, p. 321-322).

During the 20th century, many reform measures were proposed at the national level. Examples are The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education in 1918 leading to the eventual "tracked high school" and the "regulatory autonomy school movement" in 1958 responding to "Sputnik" with an increase in the traditional academic studies (Dale, 1989). Each changed how educators addressed the need of low achieving students in the areas of reading and mathematics.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's educational message to the eighty-ninth congress in 1965 included the following four major tasks, "to bring better

education to millions of disadvantaged youth who need it most, to put the best educational equipment and ideas and innovations within reach of all students, to advance the technology of teaching and the training of teachers, and to provide incentives for those who wish to learn at every stage along the road to learning" (Katz, 1971, p. 25). The federal budget included up to \$150 million for preschool projects under the community action program of the Economic Opportunity Act.

The greatest impact on educational reform at the national level in the 1970's was the passage of Public Law 94-142. This law established the guidelines and rules for providing education to "special education" students nation wide. By 1979-80, all fifty states had enacted special education programs that conformed to Public Law 94-142 (Fuhrman, 1994).

On August 26, 1981, T. H. Bell, National Secretary of Education established the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Their purpose and function was to advise and make recommendations to the secretary and the nation as to the quality of education within the country. Their report, A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform, was presented to the American public in April, 1983. The document included the following recommendations:

Content - high school graduation requirements be strengthened; Standards and Expectations - adopt more rigorous and measurable standards and higher expectation; Time - devote significantly more time to the learning of the New Basics, implement more effective use of the school day, longer school day and lengthened school year; Teaching - improve the preparation of teachers or make teaching a more rewarding and respected profession; Leadership and Fiscal Support - hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring

about the reforms (National Commission, 1983, p. 24-32).

None of these national movements have had the impact needed to truly reform education. However, the Nation at Risk Report did prompt states to respond more than any other national educational reform movement had in the past.

The Center for Policy Research in Education (1992) reported on a five year study begun in 1986 in which they studied six states' educational reform progress. The following states were selected for their diversity: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Minnesota and Pennsylvania. Conclusions of the study were:

1. Highest level of state activity involved mandating more academic courses and changing teacher certification.
2. Rejected complex reform - favored more manageable ones.
3. States' packages lacked coherence.
4. States' initiatives had no clear direction.
5. Modest success in reaching goals expressed in A Nation at Risk.

In another study of national educational reform, Cooley (1991) surveyed all fifty states and reported the following findings:

1. Forty-two states require state sponsored testing.
2. Thirty-three states mandate curriculum outcomes.
3. Eighteen states require and another thirteen states suggest summer school remediation for slow learners.
4. Thirty states require state evaluations of the local district annually.

5. Thirty-five states have strict requirements.
6. Twenty-nine states require mentoring of struggling teachers.
7. Thirty-five states mandate funding for "at risk" children.
8. Forty-nine states reported that state reform efforts moved the educational focus away from the local district and toward the state level (only Colorado claimed to still have a majority of local control).

Both the Center for Policy Research in Education study and the Cooley study measured the perceptions of state level educational representatives. These studies were indicative of the swing in the political focus of the educational reform movement from the federal to the state level. It was not long before governors of the states, realizing the political nature of the educational reform agenda, took the lead in establishing their own educational reform plans. A closer look at several states' educational reform efforts proposed or implemented by their governors follows.

History of School Reform - State

Governors did not begin to play a visible, leading role in educational policy until the 1970's. In that decade, some governors started to become leaders in school reform. Three prominent governors were Anderson of Minnesota, Askew of Florida and Milliken of Michigan (Fuhrman, 1994). More about Governor Milliken of Michigan will be presented under the section concerning Michigan. Most of the reforms centered on funding policy and responding to court decisions.

This movement for educational reform increased in the 1980's with leading governors responding to the above mentioned Nation at Risk Report. Examples of major reform initiatives were Governor "Alexander's Career Ladder Program" for Tennessee, Governor "Kean's Alternative Route" for certification of New Jersey teachers (Fuhrman, 1994).

With the positive response within states to the educational reform initiatives of the 1970's and 1980's, governors continued to place education high on their priority list. Following is a review of several state initiatives in the educational reform arena in the 1990's with a review of Michigan educational reform in the late 1960's, 1970's, 1980's and 1990's.

Arizona

Governor Fife Symington established the Governor's Task Force on Educational Reform for Arizona. That task force recommended on December 1, 1992, the following (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. Local districts must focus more attention on "at risk" students.
2. Decentralization of the school district to empower each building must occur.
3. Each building must be accountable for educational gains or the lack of gains.
4. More professional training of teachers must take place to raise the level of professionalism.

5. Open enrollment within districts must occur.

6. Equalization of the funding within the entire state must be accomplished.

Arizona is currently in the process of implementing many of these major state directions at the local building level.

Arkansas

In 1991, then Governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton, signed PA 236, entitled "Meeting the National Educational Goals: Schools for Arkansas". The major components of PA 236 were (National Governors' Association, 1993): (a) state wide curriculum that was linked to learner outcomes, (b) strengthening of teacher licensing, (c) major emphasis on professional development of current teacher training programs and on-going upgrading.

While Governor Clinton is now President Clinton, Arkansas is still in the process of implementing PA 236.

California

While much has been said about California's Proposition 13, which drastically reduced property taxes and school funding simultaneously, not much is known about the state's effort in true educational reform (outside the finance arena). However, in the late 1980's and early 1990's, under the leadership of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Bill Honig, California initiated the

purist "professional elite" form of core curriculum development (Massell, 1994).

This systematic approach to educational reform places the professional teacher on state wide committees that develop and recommend subject-matter frameworks for textbook adoptions. Since textbook adoptions are statewide, these professional-driven committees insure that only professional teachers are developing the curriculum for the state. In fact, California has no special strategy for soliciting and sustaining broad, lay citizen input during the review and feedback stages of the eight-year curriculum development cycle.

Colorado

Colorado is a state with 1,300 school districts. In 1992 the state legislature under-funded the state education fund in the amount of \$300 million, according to Governor Roy Romer (1992). In attempting to correct this situation, Romer is seeking a state wide initiative requesting a 1-cent sales tax earmarked for education. This shared-responsibility model of education reform requires each school district to identify where the money is going (annual financial statement written in terms that ordinary citizens can understand), site-based decision making for developing curriculum frameworks and the development of performance-based assessments. All these come with a guaranteed diploma as the outcome (similar to Chrysler's three-year car warranty). For any reason, for up to one year, if a graduate of a Colorado public school cannot complete a basic employment task, the employer may send the graduate/employee back to the high school for

retraining.

This Colorado model offers hope of major change in the current under-funded and top-down educational system.

Kentucky

Kentucky is a state that has approximately 630,000 students attending k-12 districts throughout the state. According to the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (Frey, 1992), Kentucky ranked last of all the states in the percent of the over-25 population with a high school diploma in 1980. In attempting to address this issue and in response to the Nation at Risk Report, the Kentucky legislature enacted the Kentucky Educational Deficiency Program in 1984; an amendment to the 1978 Educational Improvement Act.

This legislation required districts to submit Annual Performance Reports to the state department of education, to publish this report in a local newspaper, and to create a Master Educational Improvement Plan (MEIP) which would consolidate accreditation, academic improvement, inservice, financial and program improvement (attendance and dropout) plans into one plan. The legislation also established minimum performance criteria in several areas.

However, in 1989, the Rose vs. The Council for Better Education, et al. case was heard by the Kentucky Supreme Court. The court declared the entire state educational system to be unconstitutional. In the same year, the state established the first standard-setting initiative by forming the Council on School

Performance Standards. In 1990, the legislature passed the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) which included site-based decision making, outcome-based indicators of success, an altered system of accountability (to rid the system of nepotism) and a tax package to fund the reforms based on a one-cent increase in the sales tax (Massell, 1994). Educational reform continues to progress in Kentucky under this plan.

Maine

Developed in 1991 between the legislature and business community, the Maine 2000 Steering Committee - Statewide Partnerships developed the following in response to the national goals (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. Statewide core curriculum to be implemented in all schools,
2. By the year 2000, all children arrive at school ready to learn,
3. Increase the use of technology in all schools,
4. Provide additional state funding for more and better professional development for teachers, and
5. Develop and support state wide partnerships between schools and the business community.

The state of Maine is currently implementing all these in direct response to the six national goals.

Nevada

Governor Bob Miller with the aid of several statewide committees established programs that addressed the first four national goals. They are (National Governors' Association, 1993):(a) reduce class size, (b) state to provide more money to needy children, and (c) state to provide high learning expectations through statewide curriculum and testing.

The state of Nevada is currently implementing these throughout the state.

North Carolina

Governor James G. Martin initiated the North Carolina 2000 educational program in 1991. It is comprised of the following four components (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. The state will empower the people of North Carolina to improve its educational system.
2. Local school buildings must implement each of the nine state wide goals.
3. Local school buildings must create community teams to implement the goals.
4. The state will provide technical assistance to local school buildings as needed.

These four components are currently being implemented in North

Carolina.

Oklahoma

Governor David Walters established, in 1990, the Oklahoma Educational Reform and Funding Act. Three major components of the act are (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. Discussions of educational reform must include all the stakeholders.
2. School buildings must initiate a transition to outcomes based education.
3. School buildings must use only authentic assessment techniques in evaluating the progress of the children.

These three major components are currently being implemented throughout the state of Oklahoma.

South Dakota

Governor George S. Mickelson established the Modernizing Education Initiative in 1992. The major components of the initiative are (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. All efforts must be grassroots efforts initiated at the local level,
2. Selected sites in the first year will be Model Schools receiving Incentive Funds and technical assistance, and
3. The major focus of the initiative will be the statewide development of Math/Science Centers.

These initiatives are currently being implemented in throughout the state of South Dakota.

Tennessee

In 1992, Governor Ned Ray McWherter established the Tennessee 21st Century Classroom Plan. This educational reform plan was composed of the following components (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. All school building programs must be flexible to meet the diverse needs of the children of the state,
2. Teachers must have the highest expectations for each child, and
3. Each building will be held accountable for the progress of the children assigned to that building.

These educational reform measures are still being implemented in Tennessee.

Texas

Texas is a state that has 1,065 school districts with 3.3 million children. Texas too, has made attempts at responding to the Nation at Risk Report. In 1991, Lionel R. "Skip" Meno was named as Texas's state commissioner of education. He has focused on decentralizing the agency and giving teachers more freedom and control. "Texas has been so top-down for so long that it's going to take some time for people to believe they're going to be given some flexibility"

(Potok, 1992, p.31).

Meno's Partnership Schools Initiative which waives many state regulations is based upon local districts stating clearly what children should learn; giving training and resources to teachers, freeing them to develop programs appropriate to their own schools and holding them accountable for the results. "The program is negotiable; the students and the results are non-negotiable" (Potok, 1992, p. 32).

This Texas Partnership Schools Initiative is another example of a shared-responsibility reform model.

Utah

Governor N. H. Bangerter presented the following directions to the state of Utah for educational reform in 1992 (National Governors' Association, 1993):

1. Utah will develop a World Class curriculum by the year 2000.
2. The state will attract and retain the best and brightest citizens for teaching our children.
3. The state will empower each local school building with the responsibility for increasing educational progress.
4. Each local school building will employ technology to accomplish this progress.
5. Each local school building will develop School - Business Partnerships with local businesses.

These directions are currently being implemented in Utah.

Michigan

In 1969, the Michigan Governor's Commission of Educational Reform presented the following recommendations to Governor William G. Milliken. The recommendations were to be phased in over three years to correct problems that evolved over 100 years. Those recommendations were:

Constitutionally abolish the existing State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Public Instruction and replace with a State Director of Education appointed by the Governor; reduce current Intermediate School Districts to 10 -15 regional education areas; consolidate local districts initially voluntarily and finally with state reorganization committee ordering; adopt a different budget system for all schools based upon the classroom unit costs; remove support system concerns from local districts so they can concentrate on the engrossing task of actual education of children; allocate legislative funds immediately to develop and administer a statewide educational evaluation program; approve legislative salary support for certified lay teachers of secular subjects in established non-public schools; and pass legislative resolutions to enable people to vote on a constitutional amendment needed to levy a statewide operational millage for schools (Michigan Governor's Commission, 1969, p. 7-16).

Many of these recommendations never came to be.

Since that time, the state legislature has struggled with unequal state funding of schools and the resultant inequitable availability of educational programs to those 1,600,000 children in 524 K-12 school districts.

In 1988, in response to the Nation at Risk Report, the Michigan State Board of Education established the Michigan Blue Ribbon Commission which developed the "Goals 2000 Deliver The Dream" proposal (Michigan State Board

of Education, 1988). "Goals 2000" is Michigan's example of state initiative in the area of educational reform offering a shared-responsibility model.

As a direct result of the "Goals 2000" state initiative, the Michigan Legislature discussed "Goals 2000" in 1988-89, proposed in 1989-90 and finally passed into law in 1990, what has become known as Public Act 25. Public Act 25, a shared-responsibility reform model, mandates that educational reform take place through the implementation of the following major component: (a) Core Curriculum to be implemented in all schools, (b) Annual Educational Report to be made to the public, (c) School Improvement Planning to involve all stakeholders, and (d) Accreditation of all schools.

Core Curriculum

Public Act 25 under the area of core curriculum mandates that each school district establish a core curriculum for its pupils at the elementary, middle and secondary school levels. This core curriculum shall define outcomes to be achieved by all pupils and be based upon the school districts' educational mission, long-range student goals, and student performance objectives. After consulting with teachers, and school building administrators, the district must determine the instructional program for delivering the core curriculum and identify the courses and programs in which the core curriculum will be taught. The district must make the core curriculum available to all pupils; by 1991-92 at least one curricular area specified in the recommended model core curriculum approved by the state board

must be in place; in 1992-93 at least two of those curricular areas must be in place; and at least one additional curricular area must be in place in succeeding years (Michigan Public Act 25 of 1990).

Annual Report

Public Act 25 mandates that each school district prepare, make available to the state board and the public, and provide that each school in the school district distribute to the public at an open meeting an annual educational report. The report must address the following: (a) accreditation status of each school, the process by which pupils are assigned to particular schools and a description of specialized schools; (b) status of school improvement plan and continuing process; (c) a copy of the core curriculum, a description of its implementation, and the variances from the state board of education's model core curriculum; (d) a report of the aggregate student achievement based upon test results (local, state or national); (e) the district membership retention report for current and previous years; (f) number and percentage of parents, legal guardians, or persons in loco parentis who participated in parent-teacher conferences; and (g) a comparison in a-f above, with the preceding school year (Michigan Public Act 25 of 1990).

School Improvement

Public Act 25 defines school improvement as: (a) developing a mission, (b) having goals based on student outcomes for all students, (c) having curriculum

aligned with the goals, (d) having an evaluation process, (e) having staff development, and (f) having a building-level decision making process (Michigan Public Act 25 of 1990). The act states that all school districts shall adopt and implement a 3- to 5-year school improvement plan and continue the school improvement process for each school within the school district.

Accreditation

Public Act 25 mandates accreditation as follows: school districts shall ensure that each public school within the school district is accredited. Accreditation is defined as certified by the State Board of Education as having met or exceeded the State Board of Education-approved standards which have been established for the following six areas of school operation: (1) administration and school organization, (2) curricula, (3) staff, (4) school plant and facilities, (5) school and community relations, and (6) school improvement plans and student outcomes (Michigan Public Act 25 of 1990).

The common thread running through each of these shared-responsibility educational reform models in the above mentioned fourteen states and especially the Michigan model is the movement of responsibility for implementing educational reform from the national, to the state, to the local district and finally to the building level. Public Act 25 mandates that these four major components be implemented through the building principal and indeed provides disincentives for the building principals for not implementing these components. The building

principal then becomes the key to insuring that educational reform does take place. A review of the literature regarding the building principal's role follows.

Elementary School Principals

Much of the current research points out that the building principal, more than anyone else in the educational field, is responsible for and capable of implementing true school reform.

A review of the literature indicated that the building principal is the key to school reform. "Projects having the active support of the principal were the most likely to fare well" (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977, p. 124).

Research from 1980 to 1990 described the effective principal as one who has implemented high expectations for student achievement, well-articulated curriculum, well-articulated instructional programs, clearly defined goals, objectives, and/or standards, maximized learning time, emphasized reading and math skills, staff development programs, a sense of order in the classrooms and school, a method of monitoring student progress, incentives or rewards for students and teachers, parent-community involvement and positive school climate (Ornstein, 1990).

Additionally, Fullan (1991, p. 144) emphasized, "an understanding of, what is (from the point of view of people within the role), an essential starting point for constructing a practical theory of the meaning and results of change attempts." "Shared vision fosters risk taking and experimentation" as well as commitment to

the long term (Senge, 1990a, p. 209). This was one of the essential roles of the building principal.

Jacobson, (1990, p. 80) indicated that "principals will continue to need to be expert in curriculum development, but will also need a fundamental understanding of school business functions and community relations" and will share more responsibility with teachers. Further, "the effective principal is one who is both an efficient administrative manager and an instructional leader. As a result, today's principal feels pressured to assume both roles yet experiences frustration over the ambiguity and conflict that this dual function creates" (Jacobson, 1990, p. 175).

Both men and women have served throughout the history of our country as elementary school principals. In 1905, 62% of all elementary school principals were women (Jacobson, 1990). In 1928, the per cent had dropped to 55% (Rosser, 1980). However, due to the selective hiring system, called the "old boy network", implemented after the Great Depression and World War II to get veterans back to work, the number of women elementary principals plunged to only 18% (Rosser, 1980; NASSP, 1980). This decline occurred despite there being no difference in performance frequency of leadership task between men and women principals (Guzzetti & Martin, 1984).

However, since the 1970's, the percentage of female elementary principals has grown. "Women focus on instructional and educational issues...that stress achievement within a supportive atmosphere...and intervene more than men...and

manage more orderly schools" (Shakeshaft, 1988, p.407).

According to the Michigan Educational Directory (1992), males accounted for approximately 60% of all elementary school principals and females for the other 40% of all elementary principals in the state of Michigan. These percentages are consistent with the literature nation wide. Elementary principals differed in ways other than gender. Principals' administrative experience vary from no prior administrative experience to over forty years administrative experience. Nationally, more than half of all elementary principals served in an administrative position for 10 years or more. In Michigan, over half of the elementary principals have served in administration over 11 years. In both cases, "the principalship is a significant career role for the majority of those principals" (Pellicer et al., 1988, p. 58).

Elementary principals also varied in their amount of educational training (background) from the master's degree through the doctorate degree. Nationwide, 99% of all elementary principals possess at least a master's degree according to Pellicer (1988). Michigan reports the same per cent. In addition, 38% of all elementary principals held at least a specialist's degree or higher (Pellicer, 1988).

Elementary principals also served in a variety of school districts. These districts varied in the areas of financial classification (In or Out of Formula, receiving or not receiving state funding), size (number of pupils within the district) and per pupil expenditure (amount of money spent to educate one child for a year). A closer look at these variables follows.

District Financial Classification

In 1993 while this study was being conducted, school districts in Michigan were separated into two distinct categories depending on their local property tax level according to the State Aid Formula. When local property tax levels fell below the state minimum, the state subsidized the district up to the minimum level according to a state legislated formula. These districts were called "In-Formula" Districts. In 1992, there were 374 school districts that qualified as In-Formula Districts (House Fiscal Agency, 1992). In addition to this subsidy, these districts also received an additional \$25 per student per year through the state aid formula to help offset implementation costs of Public Act 25. Another 150 districts, receiving property taxes above the state minimum did not receive a state subsidy and therefore were referred to as "Out-Of-Formula" Districts. These districts, unlike In-Formula Districts, did not receive the additional \$25 per student and had to underwrite the entire cost of implementing Public Act 25.

Furthermore, Public Act 25 stipulated that an In-Formula District not complying with the act could lose their entire state aid support. Out-Of-Formula Districts not complying would be penalized 5% of their local revenues.

District Size

In the 524, K-12 school districts in Michigan, there were over 1,600,000

children enrolled in 83 counties (Michigan Department of Education 1014 Bulletin, 1991). The diversity of size of these districts ranged from a high of over 30,000 in Flint and Grand Rapids (excluding the city of Detroit that had 181,264) to a low of 71 in Whitefish School District.

District Per Pupil Expenditure

Per pupil expenditures in school districts in Michigan have for many years been varied. In 1990-91, (Michigan Department of Education 1014 Bulletin, 1991) the lowest per pupil expenditure district was Kingsley (\$2,790 per pupil) while the highest was Lamphere (\$8,749 per pupil).

The Michigan Legislature recognized the vast variety of school districts and the important role that the building principal played in school reform and delegated the responsibility for carrying out most of the mandates in Public Act 25 to the building principal in Michigan's public schools. Perhaps, looking at the usual kindergarten through senior high school administrative structure, it was the elementary principal who had the most to accomplish during this time of intense pressure for educational reform. It was also the elementary principal who may have had the greatest opportunity of insuring that true school reform did or did not take place regardless of the variables impacting on the school.

For these reasons, this study solicited responses from public elementary school principals in Michigan. Using a survey asking about the presence (or absence)

of the known reform conditions and indicators within the school and the principals' perceptions about which of the four major components of Public Act 25 are the most likely to continue data were gathered to assess current conditions of reform.

Reform Indicators and Conditions

Reform Indicators

This investigation of educational reform or change was framed by the research of Anderson, Armstrong, Huddle and Odden (1986), which identified the following reform indicators:

1. State pressure to change which was defined as local district recognition of a demanding state agenda for educational change in local public schools.
2. Consistency of practices which was defined as local districts "perceptions of fit" (Anderson et al., 1986) or the acceptance of innovation that is perceived to be aligned with local practice.
- 3 Support of leaders which was defined as local district leadership in advancing the importance and worthiness of the change agenda.
- 4 Discretionary funds which was defined as ways to provide new dollars to local districts in support of reform efforts.
5. Innovation support which was defined as state communication of trust

in local district creativity to adapt the reform agenda to the district's culture.

6 Cooperative leaders which was defined as local district educators who take the initiative to promote the reform agenda.

7 Knowledgeable assistance which was defined as the provision to local districts of necessary information, advice and technical assistance by the state.

8. State belief in local capacity which was defined as the state's willingness to have faith in the local district's ability to promote improvement in keeping with the state's reform agenda.

Reform Conditions

The coinciding framework was Fullan's (1982; 1991) which identified certain reform conditions found to be present in successful change environments:

1. Lack of turmoil which was defined as the absence of dissonance or goal displacement caused by an interruption in educational practice by factors such as court-ordered busing; school closing, or staff cuts within a district.

2. Lack of overload which was defined as the absence of local district staff complaints about feeling overwhelmed by the rate or the new burdens of a reform agenda, particularly the paper load and the perception that too many changes are occurring simultaneously.

3 Small district complexity which was defined as the presence of decentralized site-based management within the local district which tends to

orchestrate the multiple factors of change.

4. Staff and leader stability which was defined as a consistently low rate of staff turnover on an annual basis.

5 Identification of a reform leadership position which was defined as the assignment of responsibility for implementation of the reform at the local level to a local school person.

6. Feelings of ownership relative to change which was defined as the broad based participation in implementation decisions by local district staff.

These indicators and conditions, when present in enough strength, tended to propel a flexible, adaptable relationship between the state and the local district as described in an earlier study of Public Act 25 completed by Shine (1992).

The overall conclusion reached in the earlier Shine (1992) study based upon superintendents' perceptions of Public Act 25 was: "The known reform indicators and conditions are present in enough strength to make continuing reform reasonably predictable in Michigan's schools." This current study expanded on Shine's study which focused on the perceptions of superintendents as the "voice" of local districts and the flexible, educationally compelling nature of the reform as the "voice" of the state in assessing the "creative tension" (Fullan, 1982; 1991) in the state-district relationship by replacing the superintendents' perceptions with that of the elementary school principal.

Shine (1992) also found that superintendents' responses varied on some

significant variables. Female superintendents perceived educational reform indicators and conditions differently than male superintendents, superintendents with the most administrative experience perceived educational reform indicators and conditions differently than superintendents with the least administrative experience and superintendents with the most educational background training perceived educational reform indicators and conditions differently than superintendents with the least educational background training.

Further, the Shine study (1992) pointed out that while superintendents from both In-Formula Districts and Out-Of-Formula Districts perceived individual reform indicators and conditions differently, overall, they agreed in stating that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength in Michigan's schools to make continuing reform possible.

Shine (1992) found that, while superintendents from small, medium and large size districts perceived individual reform indicators and conditions differently, overall, they agreed in stating that educational reform indicators and conditions are in enough strength in Michigan's schools to make continuing reform possible.

Finally, Shine (1992) reported that, while superintendents from low per pupil expenditure districts, medium per pupil expenditure districts and high per pupil expenditure districts perceived individual educational reform indicators and conditions differently, overall, they agreed in stating that educational reform

indicators and conditions are in enough strength in Michigan's schools to make continuing reform possible (Shine, 1992).

The overall conclusion reached in 1992 by Shine based upon superintendents' perceptions of Public Act 25 was: "The rank order in which the four major components of Public Act 25 are most likely to continue is: School Improvement, Core Curriculum, Accreditation and Annual Report." A subsidiary conclusion based upon general comments of superintendents was that the state of Michigan has failed to provide an enabling package of solid fiscal incentives and reimbursement to guarantee full implementation of Public Act 25.

The literature mentioned previously, especially the Shine study, led to the development of the two major hypotheses of the current study mentioned in Chapter I. The development of the sub-group classification was also derived from the Shine study for comparison purposes.

Summary

A review of the literature indicated that school reform and change had been a topic of interest for some time. Gathering information from the source closest to the actual implementation of the school reform, the building principal, was perhaps the most viable option for investigating whether reform conditions and indicators are present in enough strength to allow reform to continue and which of the four major components of Public Act 25 are the most likely to

continue.

Chapter III describes the methodology (procedures and processes) used in questioning the principals and analyzing the data. Chapter IV presents the findings of the study and Chapter V, the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of elementary principals in Michigan public schools. The first question posed was whether certain reform indicators and conditions within their respective schools would allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. In addition, the study assessed their perceptions as to which of the four major components of Public Act 25 (if any) would most likely lead to continuing educational reform.

The responses to the first question were analyzed in light of research findings about known educational reform indicators and conditions in order to predict continuing educational reform occurring within those buildings (Fullan 1982; 1991). This study asked, "What happens to ideas and practices aimed at reforming curriculum and administrative practices when these ideas and practices are introduced into the schools through a state/local shared-responsibility model?" (Popkewitz et al., 1982).

The context of the purpose of this study was composed of two descriptive ways of looking at the effects of the state-initiated, shared-responsibility reform model, Public Act 25. The first was the principals' perception to the two

hypotheses. The second context was the perception of the principals divided into sub-groups. They were as follows:

Local Elementary School Principal Perceptions

1. Perceived presence of the known indicators (Anderson et al., 1986) and conditions (Fullan, 1982, 1991) associated with continuing educational reform.
2. Perceived likelihood of local district continuation of some or all of the four major components of Public Act 25.

Context of Local Education

1. Likelihood of continuing educational changes relative to State Financial Classification of District (In-Formula/Out-of-Formula).
2. Likelihood of continuing educational changes relative to School District Student Enrollment Size (small/medium/large).
3. Likelihood of continuing educational changes relative to School District Per-Pupil Expenditures (low/medium/high).
4. Likelihood of continuing educational changes relative to Principal's administrative experience (least/most).
5. Likelihood of continuing educational changes relative to Principal's gender (female/male).
6. Likelihood of continuing educational changes relative to Principal's educational training background (Masters/ Specialists/Doctorate).

It was within this framework that Public Act 25 was examined to determine if public elementary school principals perceived the law to be effective legislation in promoting a continuation of educational changes and improvements in Michigan's public elementary schools into the future (Fullan, 1982; 1991).

Sampling Procedure/Population

The population of this study was all elementary public school principals in the state of Michigan in the 1992-1993 school year. A questionnaire (Appendix B) was mailed in February 1993 (after the first semester) to a random sample of all public elementary school principals in Michigan. The sample was selected from the Michigan Educational Directory (1992) which lists 1837 public elementary principals in Michigan. All principals were number 1 through 1837. The first principal was selected at random. A mark indicating every 10th principal from that point on was made until 183 principals had been selected and the entire directory had been reviewed. No principals from the city of Detroit were included due to the political make-up of the Michigan Association of Elementary Principals and the complexities and size of the Detroit Public School system; approximately 11% (181,264) of all the state's 1,600,000 students (Michigan Department of Education Bulletin 1014, 1991). In addition to perceptions, the survey requested demographic information regarding gender, level of administrative experience and educational background.

From the 1990-91 Michigan Department of Education Bulletin 1014

(1991), district demographic information regarding school district size, per pupil expenditures, and In-Formula or Out-Of-Formula state funding status was drawn and matched with the respondents. In Michigan, school district size ranged from the high in Grand Rapids in Kent County in western central lower Michigan (30,697) (not including Detroit in Wayne County in eastern lower Michigan which had 181,264) to the low in Whitefish School District in Chippewa County in eastern upper Michigan (71). Per pupil expenditures ranged from a high of \$8,749 in Lamphere School District in Oakland County in eastern lower Michigan to the low of \$2,790 per pupil in Kingsley School District in Grand Traverse County in northern lower Michigan. That same year, of the 524 public school districts, 374 were In-Formula (receiving state financial aid in addition to local property taxes) and 150 were Out-Of-Formula (not receiving state financial aid).

In addition to the demographic information mentioned above, the questionnaire also asked 28 questions concerning the presence or absence of school reform (conditions and indicators) in the respective buildings. A five point Likert scale ranging from none (1) to sizable (5) was used to rate responses. One question on the clarity of the long term objectives of Public Act 25 was asked. Finally, one question on the potential of Public Act 25 improving the quality of education in schools was asked.

Questionnaire responses of less than three were interpreted as negative. Questionnaire responses above three were interpreted as positive.

One question asked the respondents to priority rank order the four major

areas most likely to bring about continuing educational reform. Finally, one open-ended question allowed the respondent to note any observation, anecdote or comment about the implementation of Public Act 25.

Included with the survey was a cover page (Appendix B) indicating the need for the investigation, directions for the respondents, indication of confidentiality that was provided, and endorsement letters from the Executive Director of the Michigan Association of School Administrators (Appendix C) and Executive Director of the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (Appendix D).

In order to facilitate a high response rate, a self-addressed, stamped envelope was provided for ease in completing and returning the survey. According to the research, the return rate on surveys viewed as salient by the respondent is 77%, drops to 66% if viewed to be possibly salient and drops again to 42% if viewed to be non-salient to the respondent (Borg, 1989). Therefore, an attempt was made to make the survey easy to complete and mail (about nine minutes) and salient to the principals as possible (follow up article in elementary principals' journal). In addition, the questionnaire was copied on bright pink paper so it would be recognizable in the mail basket or on the principal's desk in the event that follow up phone calls were necessary.

Limitations

Questionnaires have built-in limitations which include the soliciting of

"reactive information". As a result, of those to whom it was mailed, this questionnaire was returned only by respondents who voluntarily filled it out and returned it. Those participants may be biased either for or against the subject and these participants may not accurately represent the population. However, the high response rate of over 75 percent of the selected population would allow one to conclude that these findings would be appropriate.

Ordinarily, non-respondent percentages under 20 percent can be reasonably ignored. Percentages over 20 percent, however, raise increasingly serious questions about the "hold-outs" and what they are withholding. A common sampling bias arises when persons having a good program are more likely to respond than persons having a poor program. An effective corrections technique is to select randomly a small sample of the non-respondents and personally interview them to obtain the missing information. (Issac & Michael, 1985, p. 135.)

In this study, the non-respondent rate of 25% prompted follow-up telephone contacts. The results of those contacts are described in Chapter III.

There was also a risk that the respondent may have believed she or he was unique and this may have produced a skewed response. Respondents may also tend to rate questions either very high or very low. In addition, there was no assurance that the respondent read all the instructions carefully nor understood clearly all the questions. There was also no proof that the respondent was the actual principal to whom the questionnaires had been addressed (Issac & Michael, 1985.)

Finally, only regular, elementary, public school principals were selected for this study. Any generalization of this study should be limited to Michigan public

elementary school principals.

Strengths

According to Issac and Michael, (1985), a mailed questionnaire is the most widely used technique in education. The components and process of this questionnaire had been pretested and revised according to the responses. For follow-up, each questionnaire had been pre-numbered in order to enable follow-up telephone calls to non-respondents. This effort increased the final return rate to above 75 percent.

The time of the year this questionnaire was completed was in late February and early March. This is normally a quiet time of year for elementary principals. It is believed that this time frame helped to produce the good response rate.

Another strength was the use of the Michigan Education Directory and Buyer's Guide (Michigan Education Directory, 1992). This directory yielded a very high (98 percent) accuracy rate regarding the names and addresses of elementary principals in Michigan. Only a one percent error was discovered in either address or name of principal. The other one percent error occurred when the principal named in the directory had moved to another position after the directory had been published.

In addition, letters of support from the executive directors of the Michigan Association of School Administrators (Appendix C) and the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (Appendix D) were revealed to the

randomly selected principals (described in Chapter III) in the cover letter which accompanied the questionnaire.

This, together with a statement that the results would publicly be presented to both professional organizations, increased the return rate and the credibility of the study for those selected principals.

The fact that the questionnaire was short (under nine minutes response time) helped increase the return rate. Finally, the printing of the questionnaire on pink paper (easy to find during follow-up phone calls) increased the response rate.

First Research Question

The first question asked of the respondents was whether or not elementary principals perceived educational reform conditions and indicators to be present in sufficient strength in Michigan public elementary schools to make continuing reform possible. Questions 1-17 on the questionnaire (appendix B) addressed the topic of reform indicators and questions 19-29 addressed the topic of reform conditions.

Reform Indicators

The Education Commission of the States in 1986 (Anderson et al.) presented the following reform indicators as signals of readiness for a successful educational change when they were present within a school district or within a state:

(a) state pressure to change, (b) consistency of practices, (c) support of leaders, (d) discretionary funds, (e) innovation support, (f) cooperative leaders, (g) knowledgeable assistance, and (h) state belief in local capacity. The answers to questions 1-17 on the questionnaire indicated whether the principal felt that these reform indicators were present in their local school district in enough strength to make continuing educational reform possible.

Reform Conditions

Fullan's studies (1982; 1991) presented six common elements, that when present in local school districts, were associated with successful educational change and reform. The six elements are: (1) lack of turmoil, (2) lack of overload, (3) small district complexity, (4) staff and leader stability, (5) identification of a reform leadership position, and (6) feelings of ownership relative to change.

The answers to questions 19-29 on the questionnaire indicated whether the principal felt that these reform conditions were present in their local school district in enough strength to make continuing educational reform possible. Replicating the Shine study (1992), a mean score of 3 or more for all principals on any question (1-17 and 19-29) indicated a positive response to that question while a mean score of 2.99 or below on any question indicated a negative response to that question.

Again, replicating the Shine study (1992) when one-half (nine) or more of the questions from 1-17 received a positive response, then principals were deemed

to have perceived reform indicators to be in enough strength in Michigan elementary schools to allow school reform to continue under Public Act 25. When one-half (five) or more questions from 19-29 received a positive response, then principals were deemed to have perceived reform conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan elementary schools to allow school reform to continue under Public Act 25.

Subsidiary Questions

Were principals' responses to the first question in this study influenced by other issues? To answer this question, data was gathered on school district financial classification (In- or Out-of-Formula), school district size (enrollment), school district per-pupil expenditures, principal's administrative experience, gender and educational training background. Results of the questionnaire were analyzed in terms of:

1. Relationship of individual school district financial classification with principal's perception of presence of reform indicators and conditions within their elementary school.
2. Relationship of individual school district enrollment size with principal's perception of presence of reform indicators and conditions within their elementary school.
3. Relationship of individual school district per pupil expenditures with principal's perception of presence of reform indicators and conditions within their

elementary school.

4. Relationship of principal's administrative experience with principal's perception of presence of reform indicators and conditions within their elementary school.

5. Relationship of principal's gender with principal's perception of presence of reform indicators and conditions within their elementary school.

6. Relationship of principal's educational training background with principal's perception of presence of reform indicators and conditions within their elementary school.

District Financial Classification

Michigan State Law provides for state legislative funding to school districts whose local property taxes fall below a specified level. Districts that receive state legislative funding in addition to their local property taxes were referred to as In-Formula Districts. Districts whose local property taxes fall above that specified level do not receive state legislative funding and were termed Out-Of-Formula Districts (Michigan Department of Education Bulletin 1014, 1991). Districts surveyed in this study were divided into two classifications, In-Formula and Out-Of-Formula.

District Size

The size of enrollments in Michigan Public Schools (not including Detroit)

ranged from a high of over 30,000 in Flint and Grand Rapids to a low of less than 100 including Whitefish at 71. District sizes for this study were divided into three groups according to the division provided by the Michigan Department of Education 1014 Bulletin, 1991):

1. 0 - 2,000
2. 2,001 - 4,000
3. 4,001 - above

District Per Pupil Expenditures

Per pupil expenditures (the amount of money that a district actually spent per student) in Michigan varied between a high of \$8,749 in Lamphere and a low of \$2,790 in Kingsley. For this study, per pupil expenditures were divided into three groups according to the division provided by the Michigan Department of Education 1014 Bulletin, 1991):

1. \$0 - \$3,999
2. \$4,000 - \$4,999
3. \$5,000 - above

Administrative Experience

According to Pellicer (1988), approximately one-half of all elementary principals in the nation have served as an administrator for over ten years. Administrative experience of those principals varied from no prior experience to over

forty years of experience. For the purposes of this study and in accordance with this literature, the principals were divided into two groups, those with less than eleven years of administrative experience and those with eleven or more years of administrative experience.

Principal Gender

Both women and men have served as principals in elementary schools. The percent of females has varied over the years and within states. This study sought out differences of perceptions between female and male elementary principals.

Administrative Educational Background

Principals' educational background varied from those holding Master Degrees, those having Specialists Degrees, and those having earned Doctorates. This study divided the principals into groups by their respective earned degrees: Master, Specialist and Doctorate.

In each sub group mentioned above, data was analyzed by reviewing the number of mean responses to the questions. When a sub group had one-half (14) or more above three, then they were deemed to have had a positive response to the questions concerning reform indicators and conditions. When a sub-group had less than one-half (13 or less) below three, then they were deemed to have had a negative response to the questions concerning reform indicators and

conditions.

Second Research Question

The second research question posed to the respondents was, what was the rank order of the four major components of Public Act 25 that were most likely to allow educational reform to continue? This was number thirty-one on the questionnaire.

Public Act 25 - Major Components

The major components of Public Act 25 (Michigan State Board of Education, 1988) were:

1. Core Curriculum to be implemented in all schools.
2. Annual Educational Report to be made to the public.
3. School Improvement Planning to involve all stakeholders.
4. Accreditation of all schools.

Responses to question number thirty-one indicated the preference that principals had for the rank order priority of the four major components of Public Act 25. The major components of Public Act 25 were rank ordered based upon the frequency of number four answers (most likely) of the principals. The component receiving the most number 4 rankings was considered the most likely to continue and the component receiving the least number 4 ranking being considered the least likely to continue.

Summary

The purposes of this study were to examine, at the local district level, the perception of elementary principals' as to the existence of educational reform indicators and conditions that would allow reform to continue under Public Act 25 and their perceptions as to which of the four major components of Public Act 25 were most likely to continue. Some results of this study might be used to generalize to other reform efforts which are parallel in scope. Chapter IV reports the findings of this study while Chapter V reports the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to answer the following questions: Were indicators and conditions of educational reform in enough strength in Michigan Elementary Schools to allow reform to continue under Public Act 25 and Which of the four major components of Public Act 25 are most likely to continue? The first hypothesis was as follows. Principals will perceive educational reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. The second hypothesis was as follows. Principals will rank the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which are the most likely to allow reform to continue in the following order: School Improvement, Core Curriculum, Accreditation and Annual Report.

A questionnaire framed upon the reform indicators (Anderson et. al., 1986) and reform conditions (Fullan, 1982; 1991) associated with successful implementation of educational reform was mailed to a random sample of 183 public elementary school principals in Michigan in February of 1993.

A return rate of 67% (122 surveys) was accomplished in the first two weeks following the initial mailing. Following a prepared script (Appendix E), follow-up telephone calls were made to the 61 non-respondents in March to determine if they had received the survey and would return it. These follow-up

phone calls yielded an additional 9% (16 surveys) return moving the return rate to over 75% (138 surveys). Seven other elementary principals indicated that they had not received the original questionnaire, so a second questionnaire was mailed to them. Of these seven elementary principals, four questionnaires were return, moving the total return rate to above 77%. This accounted for 142 questionnaires being returned out of the original 183.

A map of Michigan (Appendix F) indicating the school districts that responded to the questionnaire demonstrates the wide geographic area encompassed in this study. It is noteworthy to point out that responses cluster around high population areas such as Flint, Grand Rapids, Saginaw, Bay City, Lansing and southeast Michigan. This was expected since most elementary schools are located in the high population areas in the state.

Of the remaining 41 elementary principals who did not return a questionnaire, notes were compiled during telephone conversations. Seven of those elementary principals had moved to another job and their replacements did not feel they had been in position long enough to respond; 14 indicated that they didn't feel they could respond since this was their first elementary principalship; two said they didn't want to respond due to political pressures; eight indicated that they didn't want to waste their time and ten would not answer the phone calls.

Of those returning questionnaires 93 principals (66%) were from In-Formula Districts and 49 (34%) were from Out-Of-Formula Districts; the size of

districts they represented ranged from a high of 30,697 (Grand Rapids) to a low of 322 in Boyne Falls, with 41 (29%) falling within the small range, 36 (25%) within the medium range and 65 (46%) in the large range; and per pupil expenditures in their respective districts ranged from a high of \$8,589 in Bloomfield Hills to a low of \$2,929 in Bad Axe, with 71 (50%) within the low range, 41 (29%) within the medium range and 30 (21%) in the high per pupil expenditure range. Principal demographics were as follows: least administrative experience (10 years or less) 76 elementary principals (53%) and most administrative experience (11 years or more) 66 (47%); female elementary principals accounted for 39% (55 returns) while male principals 61% (87 returns) of the 142 responding elementary principals; and principals holding doctorate degrees 11% (15 returns), specialist degrees 20% (29 returns) and master degrees (69% (98 returns). These categories are illustrated in Table 1.

Perceived Presence of Reform Indicators

Responses to the first seventeen questions yielded the results found in the following Table 2. Elementary principals' mean response to 10 questions concerning reform indicators being present in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25 were three or above. Since this exceeded the necessary number in the first hypothesis this was interpreted as a positive response to the first hypothesis. Therefore, the data

Table 1
Response by 142 Elementary Principals

Demographic	Classification	Respondents	%	Population %
STATE FINANCIAL CLASS	In-Formula	93	66%	67%
	Out-Of-Formula	49	34%	33%
DISTRICT ENROLLMENT SIZE	Small	41	29%	27%
	Medium	36	25%	28%
	Large	65	46%	45%
PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE	Low	71	50%	48%
	Medium	41	29%	30%
	High	30	21%	22%
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	Least	76	53%	55%
	Most	66	47%	45%
PRINCIPAL GENDER	Female	55	39%	40%
	Male	87	61%	60%
PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	MASTERS	98	69%	71%
	SPECIALIST	29	20%	20%
	DOCTORATE	15	11%	9%

supported the first hypothesis that principals will perceive educational reform indicators to be in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The two reform indicators receiving the highest mean score from principals were: question (7) How supportive is Superintendent? (mean = 4.417) and question (8) How supportive is Board? (mean = 4.293). The principals' responses

Table 2
Mean Response to Questions 1-17
(N = 142 Responses)

Question	Mean	SD
1. Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.109*	.926
2. Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.986*	.793
3. Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.582*	.888
4. Consistent with school improvement process?	3.614*	1.001
5. Consistent with reporting practices?	2.830	1.352
6. Consistent with accreditation process?	2.719	1.539
7. Support of Superintendent?	4.417*	.833
8. Support of Board of Education?	4.293*	.877
9. Supportive of local control?	3.166*	1.033
10. Adequate state funding?	1.766	.790
11. Adequate local funding?	2.600	1.009
12. Allows for flexibility in implementing?	3.264*	1.008
13. Increase collegiality within building?	3.035*	1.124
14. Building receiving information from MDE?	3.193*	1.038
15. Building support from MDE?	2.307	1.059
16. MDE knowledge about building?	1.794	.936
17. MDE trust in local building ability?	2.274	.926

*Number of responses above 3.00 = 10

indicated that the strongest indicator of successful reform was at the local level.

Perceived Lack of Reform Indicators

While overall, principals felt that reform indicators were in sufficient strength to allow educational reform to continue in their schools under Public Act 25, they did not feel all reform indicators were in this category. The two reform indicators that received the lowest mean score were: question (10) How

adequate is state funding? (mean = 1.766) and question (16) "How knowledgeable is Dept. of Ed.?" (mean = 1.794).

A possible explanation of these negative view points was that principals perceived the state's ability over the years to illustrate leadership in the area of school finance reform and to keep politics out of the school reform debate as being very low. This explanation was drawn from the responses to the open ended question 32 (Appendix G) which criticized the Michigan Department of Education for mandating programs which were not funded and not adequately implemented.

Perceived Presence of Reform Conditions

Elementary principals' responses to questions 19-29 yielded the results in Table 3. Principals' mean response to seven questions concerning reform conditions being present in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25 were three or above. Since this exceeded the number necessary number in the first hypothesis, this was interpreted as a positive response to the first hypothesis. Therefore, the data supported the hypothesis that principals will perceive educational conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue.

The two reform conditions that received the highest mean score from principals were: question (24) Principal provide leadership? (mean = 4.553) and question (23) Low staff turnover? (mean = 4.064). Again, principals perceived

Table 3
Mean Responses to Questions 19-29
(N = 142 Responses)

Question	Mean	SD
19. Maintain local character?	3.887*	.803
20. MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.806	.762
21. MDE assist with paperwork?	1.552	.665
22. Site based decision-making valued?	3.745*	.996
23. Staff turnover?	4.064*	.789
24. Principal to provide leadership?	4.553*	.626
25. Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.773*	.889
26. Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.319*	1.051
27. Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.745*	.996
28. Future work on Annual Report?	2.553	1.118
29. Future work on Accreditation?	2.893	1.428

*Number of responses above three = 7

the most successful reform conditions to be at the local building level.

Perceived Lack of Reform Conditions

While overall, principals felt reform conditions to be in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue in their schools under Public Act 25, they did not feel all reform conditions were at this level. The two reform conditions that received the lowest mean score were: question (21) Department of Ed. help with paper? (mean = 1.552) and question (20) Department of Ed. sensitive? (mean = 1.806). Again a possible explanation of these negative view points was that principals started with a negative attitude toward the Michigan Department

of Education prior to Public Act 25 as illustrated in the response to question 32 (Appendix G).

Subsidiary Questions - Reform Indicators and Conditions

Did principals perceive reform indicators and conditions differently when compared by various variables? The variables selected were: (a) state classification (In- or Out-Of-Formula), (b) school size (small, medium or large), (c) per pupil expenditure (low, medium or high), (d) administrative experience (least or most), (e) gender (female or male) and (f) educational background training (Masters Degree, Specialist Degree or Doctorate Degree). If at least one-half (14 or more) of the mean responses were over three, that indicated that there was enough strength for educational reform to continue.

Table 4 illustrates the response of principals compared by state financial classification using the *t*-test for independent means and the pooled variance estimate and the Mantel-Haenszel chi-square test where appropriate.

In-Formula District elementary principals reported mean scores above three on 17 of the 28 questions, while Out-Of-Formula District elementary principals reported mean scores above three on 18 of the 28 questions. Since both had one-half or more of the questions above three, the overall response was positive. Therefore, In-Formula and Out-Of-Formula District elementary principals' agreed that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

Table 4
Mean Responses by State Financial Classification
(N = 142 Responses)

#	Question	In-Formula	<u>SD</u>	Out-of-Formula	<u>SD</u>	t	p
1.	Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.022	.897	3.289	.968	-1.60	.112
2.	Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.968	.800	4.021	.785	-.38	.708
3.	Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.527	.880	3.688	.903	-1.02	.310
4.	Consistent with school improvement process?	3.587	1.039	3.667	.930	-.45	.656
5.	Consistent with reporting practices?	2.828	1.396	2.833	1.277	-.02	.982
6.	Consistent with accreditation process?	2.722	1.580	2.711	1.471	.04	.969
7.	Support of Superintendent?	4.370	.886	4.511	.718	-.94	.347
8.	Support of Board of Education?	4.250	.921	4.375	.789	-.80	.426
9.	Supportive of local control?	3.088	1.018	3.313	1.055	-1.22	.224
10.	Adequate state funding?	1.893	.827	1.521	.652	2.71	.008*
11.	Adequate local funding?	2.359	.944	3.063	.976	-4.14	.000*
12.	Allows for flexibility in implementing?	3.118	1.051	3.553	.855	-2.45	.015*
13.	Increase collegiality within building?	3.065	1.121	2.979	1.139	.43	.671
14.	Building receiving information from MDE?	3.161	1.046	3.255	1.031	-.50	.615
15.	Building support from MDE?	2.344	1.037	2.234	1.108	.58	.563
16.	MDE knowledge about building?	1.824	.973	1.733	.863	.53	.596
17.	MDE trust in local building ability?	2.275	.932	2.273	.924	.01	.991
19.	Maintain local character?	3.796	.828	4.063	.727	-1.89	.061

Table 4--continued

#	Question	In-Formula	<u>SD</u>	Out-of-Formula	<u>SD</u>	t.	p.
20.	MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.817	.779	1.783	.728	.25	.802
21.	MDE assist with paperwork?	1.587	.698	1.477	.590	.90	.370
22.	Site based decision-making valued?	3.731	.922	3.771	1.134	-.22	.824
23.	Staff turnover?	4.032	.814	4.128	.741	-.67	.501
24.	Principal to provide leadership?	4.602	.574	4.458	.713	1.30	.197
25.	Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.667	.889	3.979	.863	-2.00	.048*
26.	Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.226	1.001	3.500	1.130	-1.47	.143
27.	Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.656	1.016	3.917	.942	-1.48	.141
28.	Future work on Annual Report?	2.581	1.201	2.500	1.149	.38	.702
29.	Future work on Accreditation?	2.796	1.411	3.085	1.457	-1.13	.259
Above three		17	18				

* p.<.05

In-Formula and Out-Of-Formula District elementary principals' responses varied significantly only on the following questions: question (10) How adequate does state funding of Public Act 25 support your building's efforts to implement the law? ($p < .008$), question (11) How adequate are your district's funds to support your building's effort to implement Public Act 25? ($p < .000$), question (12) How much flexibility does Public Act 25 allow your building in actual implementation? ($p < .015$), and question (25) To what extent have teachers in your building become involved in the decision-making process surrounding the local implementation of Public Act 25? ($p < .048$).

A possible explanation of these differences of perception was that in questions (11), (12), and (25), since the mean score for the In-Formula District was lower than the Out-Of-Formula District, the Out-Of-Formula District principals perceived funding not to be a problem. In question (10), however, In-Formula principals' mean score might have been higher than Out-Of-Formula principals' since only In-Formula District received the additional \$25 per student to implement Public Act 25.

Table 5 illustrates the response of principals compared by size of school district using the Oneway Analysis of Variance and where appropriate the Multiple Range Tests, Scheffe and Least Significance Difference (LSD). Elementary principals from small size school districts reported mean scores above three on 14 of the 28 questions while principals from medium size school districts reported mean scores above three on 18 and large size school districts reported mean

Table 5
Mean Responses by School Size
(N = 142 Responses)

#	Question	Small	<u>SD</u>	Medium	<u>SD</u>	Large	<u>SD</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p.</u>
1.	Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.024	1.012	3.056	.984	3.197	.833	.052	.607
2.	Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.829	.834	4.250	.649	3.938	.814	3.001	.053
3.	Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.293	.981	3.778	.832	3.656	.821	3.389	.037*
4.	Consistent with school improvement process?	3.268	1.025	3.800	1.023	3.734	.930	3.649	.029*
5.	Consistent with reporting practices?	2.829	1.283	2.806	1.238	2.844	1.472	.009	.991
6.	Consistent with accreditation process?	2.550	1.481	2.971	1.689	2.683	1.490	.725	.486
7.	Support of Superintendent?	4.244	.860	4.444	1.027	4.516	.671	1.350	.263
8.	Support of Board of Education?	4.098	.889	4.194	1.117	4.476	.669	2.681	.072
9.	Supportive of local control?	2.805	.928	3.278	1.059	3.339	1.039	3.726	.027*
10.	Adequate state funding?	1.512	.553	1.917	.692	1.849	.930	3.180	.045*
11.	Adequate local funding?	2.195	.782	2.722	1.137	2.794	1.003	4.994	.008*
12.	Allows for flexibility in implementing?	2.854	.910	3.286	1.045	3.516	.976	5.771	.004*
13.	Increase collegiality within building?	2.805	1.167	3.083	1.278	3.156	1.027	1.270	.284
14.	Building receiving information from MDE?	3.244	1.113	3.143	.845	3.188	1.097	.090	.914
15.	Building support from MDE?	2.220	1.013	2.571	1.037	2.219	1.091	1.464	.235
16.	MDE knowledge about building?	1.732	.867	1.943	1.027	1.750	.932	.596	.552
17.	MDE trust in local building ability?	1.976	.851	2.559	.894	2.317	.948	3.971	.021*
19.	Maintain local character?	3.585	.865	3.972	.696	4.031	.776	4.329	.015*
20.	MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.512	.746	1.800	.759	2.000	.718	5.444	.005*

Table 5--continued

#	Question	Small	<u>SD</u>	Medium	<u>SD</u>	Large	<u>SD</u>	F	p.
21.	MDE assist with paperwork?	1.585	.670	1.529	.707	1.541	.647	.079	.925
22.	Site based decision-making valued?	3.537	.977	3.944	.791	3.766	1.095	1.649	.196
23.	Staff turnover?	4.150	.534	4.194	.710	3.938	.941	1.567	.212
24.	Principal to provide leadership?	4.488	.637	4.639	.543	4.547	.665	.561	.572
25.	Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.561	.950	3.889	.919	3.844	.821	1.690	.188
26.	Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.244	1.090	3.500	1.056	3.266	1.027	.718	.490
27.	Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.585	.921	3.778	1.149	3.828	.952	.767	.467
28.	Future work on Annual Report?	2.512	1.165	2.583	1.156	2.563	1.220	.038	.963
29.	Future work on Accreditation?	2.927	1.439	3.056	1.530	2.778	1.373	.446	.641
Above three		14	18	17					

*p.<.05

scores above three on 17 of the 28 questions. Since these were one-half or more of the questions, the data suggested that the principals from each small, medium and large size school districts felt that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The nine questions that the elementary principals from different size districts varied on significantly were: question (3) To what extent is Public Act 25 consistent with your building's customary curriculum practices? ($p < .037$); question (4). To what extent is Public Act 25 consistent with your building's customary practice of reporting to the community at a public meeting? ($p < .029$); question (9) How supportive is Public Act 25 of your building's value of local control? ($p < .027$); question (10). How adequate does state funding of Public Act 25 support your building's efforts to implement the law? ($p < .045$); question (11). How adequate are your district's funds to support your building's efforts to implement Public Act 25? ($p < .008$); question (12). How much flexibility does Public Act 25 allow your building in actual implementation? ($p < .004$); question (17). How much trust do you think the Michigan Department of Education has in local building's capacity to reform education? ($p < .021$); question (19). To what extent were you able to maintain your building's character while complying with Public Act 25? ($p < .015$); and question (20). To what extent was the Michigan Legislature sensitive to local issues and conditions in mandating Public Act 25? ($p < .005$). In each of these, small district principals' responses were lower than either medium or large district principals' responses.

A possible explanation of these differences of perception based upon size of district was that in some larger districts, staff other than the building principal may be actually charged with the responsibility of implementing the law and district size may impede the implementation of new ideas (reform) and slow the process down considerably, thus impacting upon the principals perception of these nine questions (Appendix G).

Table 6 illustrates the response of principals compared by per pupil expenditure for the school district using the Oneway Analysis of Variance and where appropriate the Multiple Range Tests, Scheffe and Least Significance Difference (LSD). Principals' mean responses from low per pupil expenditure districts (17 above three), medium per pupil expenditure districts (17 above three) and high per pupil expenditure districts (19 above three) all were at least one-half of the questions concerning reform indicators and conditions. Therefore, the data suggested that principals from low, medium and high per pupil expenditure school districts felt that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The only five questions that the principals from different per pupil expenditure districts varied on significantly were: question (8) How supportive is your Board of Education of your school building's implementation of Public Act 25? ($p < .038$); question (10) How adequate does state funding of Public Act 25 support your building's efforts to implement the law? ($p < .043$); question (11) How adequate are your district's funds to support your building's effort to implement

Table 6
Mean Responses by Per Pupil Expenditure

#	Question	Low	<u>SD</u>	Medium	<u>SD</u>	High	<u>SD</u>	F	p.
1.	Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.042	.963	3.056	.804	3.345	.974	1.200	.304
2.	Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.887	.820	4.125	.822	4.033	.669	1.222	.298
3.	Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.493	.908	3.550	.876	3.833	.834	1.600	.206
4.	Consistent with school improvement process?	3.465	1.012	3.667	1.060	3.900	.845	2.102	.126
5.	Consistent with reporting practices?	2.704	1.314	2.925	1.403	3.000	1.390	.640	.529
6.	Consistent with accreditation process?	2.676	1.575	2.865	1.456	2.630	1.597	.237	.790
7.	Support of Superintendent?	4.282	.881	4.641	.811	4.448	.686	2.415	.093
8.	Support of Board of Education?	4.113	.919	4.539	.854	4.400	.724	3.360	.038*
9.	Supportive of local control?	3.085	.922	3.342	1.192	3.133	1.074	.786	.458
10.	Adequate state funding?	1.732	.609	2.000	1.062	1.533	.681	3.223	.043*
11.	Adequate local funding?	2.352	.912	2.744	1.019	3.000	1.083	5.187	.007*
12.	Allows for flexibility in implementing?	3.056	.969	3.425	1.107	3.552	.870	3.305	.040*
13.	Increase collegiality within building?	3.014	1.115	3.225	1.143	2.833	1.117	1.068	.347
14.	Building receiving information from MDE?	3.197	.935	3.075	1.207	3.345	1.045	.566	.569
15.	Building support from MDE?	2.268	.999	2.425	1.060	2.241	1.215	.350	.705
16.	MDE knowledge about building?	1.747	.922	1.868	.906	1.815	1.039	.216	.806
17.	MDE trust in local building ability?	2.286	.919	2.256	1.019	2.269	.827	.013	.987
19.	Maintain local character?	3.761	.765	3.900	.928	4.167	.648	2.776	.066
20.	MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.747	.823	1.925	.656	1.786	.738	.715	.491
21.	MDE assist with paperwork?	1.571	.672	1.590	.677	1.444	.641	.443	.643

Table 6--continued

#	Question	Low	<u>SD</u>	Medium	<u>SD</u>	High	<u>SD</u>	F	p.
22.	Site based decision-making valued?	3.718	.944	3.825	.903	3.700	1.231	.183	.839
23.	Staff turnover?	4.143	.597	3.925	1.023	4.067	.828	.971	.381
24.	Principal to provide leadership?	4.535	.581	4.550	.678	4.600	.675	.112	.894
25.	Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.620	.868	3.925	.944	3.933	.828	2.161	.119
26.	Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.169	1.014	3.450	1.197	3.500	.900	1.490	.229
27.	Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.507	1.067	3.950	.959	4.033	.718	4.329	.015*
28.	Future work on Annual Report?	2.563	1.131	2.425	1.259	2.700	1.208	.468	.628
29.	Future work on Accreditation?	2.789	1.362	2.897	1.553	3.133	1.432	.611	.544
Above three		17	17	19					

*p.<.05

Public Act 25? ($p < .007$); question 12. How much flexibility does Public Act 25 allow your building in actual implementation? ($p < .040$); and question 27. To what extent do you think your building would be involved in the concept of "school improvement teamwork" if Public Act 25 did not continue? ($p < .015$).

A possible explanation of these differences of perception was that principals in districts with the highest per pupil expenditures felt their districts had the funds to implement the law and could use local funds to start the building level decision-making process while principals in low or medium per pupil expenditure districts felt that local funding was not available to implement the law and could not locate funds to implement building level decision-making processes (Appendix G).

Table 7 illustrates the response of elementary principals compared by administrative experience using the t -test for Independent Means, the pooled variance estimate and the Mantel-Haenszel chi-square test where appropriate. Elementary principals with the least administrative experience reported mean scores above three on 17 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions while elementary principals with the most administrative experience reported mean scores above three on 16 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions. Since both were one-half or more of the questions, the data suggested that both elementary principals with the least and the elementary principals with the most administrative experience felt that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength to allow educational

Table 7
Mean Responses by Administrative Experience
(N = 142 Responses)

#	Question	Least	<u>SD</u>	Most	<u>SD</u>	t.	p.
1.	Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.096	.945	3.123	.910	-.17	.864
2.	Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.960	.796	4.015	.794	-.41	.682
3.	Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.640	.925	3.515	.846	.83	.407
4.	Consistent with school improvement process?	3.600	1.027	3.631	.977	-.18	.857
5.	Consistent with reporting practices?	2.867	1.319	2.788	1.398	.34	.731
6.	Consistent with accreditation process?	2.778	1.558	2.651	1.526	.48	.634
7.	Support of Superintendent?	4.514	.687	4.308	.967	1.46	.147
8.	Support of Board of Education?	4.405	.757	4.167	.986	1.62	.108
9.	Supportive of local control?	3.260	1.000	3.061	1.065	1.14	.257
10.	Adequate state funding?	1.747	.755	1.788	.832	-.31	.758
11.	Adequate local funding?	2.500	.969	2.712	1.049	-1.24	.216
12.	Allows for flexibility in implementing?	3.400	.973	3.108	1.033	1.72	.087
13.	Increase collegiality within building?	3.093	1.141	2.970	1.109	.65	.516
14.	Building receiving information from MDE?	3.347	1.133	3.015	.893	1.90	.059
15.	Building support from MDE?	2.453	1.094	2.139	.998	1.77	.079
16.	MDE knowledge about building?	1.918	1.038	1.651	.786	1.67	.097
17.	MDE trust in local building ability?	2.392	.963	2.131	.866	1.64	.104
19.	Maintain local character?	3.840	.823	3.939	.782	-.73	.465
20.	MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.853	.748	1.750	.777	.80	.426

Table 7--continued

#	Question	Least	<u>SD</u>	Most	<u>SD</u>	t.	p.
21.	MDE assist with paperwork?	1.527	.667	1.581	.666	-.47	.641
22.	Site based decision-making valued?	3.733	1.018	3.758	.978	-.14	.886
23.	Staff turnover?	4.080	.850	4.046	.717	.25	.801
24.	Principal to provide leadership?	4.587	.680	4.515	.561	.68	.500
25.	Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.893	.909	3.636	.853	1.72	.087
26.	Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.400	1.000	3.227	1.107	.97	.332
27.	Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.733	.977	3.758	1.024	-.14	.886
28.	Future work on Annual Report?	2.653	1.168	2.439	1.191	1.08	.284
29.	Future work on Accreditation?	2.987	1.466	2.785	1.386	.83	.406
Above three		17	16				
*p.<.05							

reform to continue under Public Act 25. The data also revealed that there were no questions in which the responses of elementary principals with different administrative experiences varied significantly. Table 8 illustrates the response of elementary principals on the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions compared by gender using the *t*-test for Independent Means, the pooled variance estimate and the Mantel-Haenszel chi-square test where appropriate.

Female elementary principals reported mean scores above three on 17 of the 28 questions concerning reform indicators and conditions while male elementary principals reported mean scores above three on 15 of the questions. Since both were at least one-half of the number of questions, the data suggested that both female and male elementary principals felt that reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The seven questions that female elementary principals varied on significantly from elementary male principals were: question 7. How supportive is your superintendent of your school building's implementation of Public Act 25? ($p < .030$); question (8) How supportive is your Board of Education of your school building's implementation of Public Act 25? ($p < .022$); question (12) How much flexibility does Public Act 25 allow your building in actual implementation? ($p < .015$); question (14) How much information about the four major aspects of Public Act 25 has the Michigan Department of Education provided your building?

Table 8
Mean Responses by Gender

#	Question	Female	<u>SD</u>	Male	<u>SD</u>	t	p
1.	Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.000	.938	3.172	.918	-1.06	.293
2.	Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	4.074	.749	3.931	.818	1.04	.299
3.	Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.667	.932	3.529	.860	.90	.372
4.	Consistent with school improvement process?	3.741	.994	3.535	1.002	1.19	.237
5.	Consistent with reporting practices?	2.815	1.319	2.839	1.380	-.10	.918
6.	Consistent with accreditation process?	2.860	1.565	2.635	1.526	.82	.415
7.	Support of Superintendent?	4.615	.631	4.299	.916	2.20	.030*
8.	Support of Board of Education?	4.509	.697	4.161	.951	2.32	.022*
9.	Supportive of local control?	3.308	1.076	3.081	1.003	1.26	.211
10.	Adequate state funding?	1.852	.920	1.713	.697	1.02	.311
11.	Adequate local funding?	2.604	1.025	2.598	1.005	.03	.973
12.	Allows for flexibility in implementing?	3.528	.912	3.103	1.035	2.46	.015*
13.	Increase collegiality within building?	3.259	1.200	2.897	1.057	1.88	.062
14.	Building receiving information from MDE?	3.547	1.102	2.977	.940	3.26	.001*
15.	Building support from MDE?	2.604	1.149	2.126	.962	2.64	.009*
16.	MDE knowledge about building?	2.039	1.131	1.647	.767	2.41	.017*
17.	MDE trust in local building ability?	2.415	.865	2.183	.957	1.43	.156
19.	Maintain local character?	3.889	.816	3.885	.799	.03	.978
20.	MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.811	.735	1.802	.779	.07	.946
21.	MDE assist with paperwork?	1.577	.723	1.536	.630	.35	.727

Table 8--continued

#	Question	Least	<u>SD</u>	Most	<u>SD</u>	t	p.
22.	Site based decision-making valued?	3.741	1.118	3.747	.918	-.04	.971
23.	Staff turnover?	4.056	.998	4.070	.629	-.10	.918
24.	Principal to provide leadership?	4.593	.659	4.529	.607	.59	.558
25.	Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.982	.901	3.644	.862	2.22	.028*
26.	Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.444	1.040	3.241	1.056	1.12	.266
27.	Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.778	1.040	3.724	.973	.31	.757
28.	Future work on Annual Report?	2.537	1.224	2.563	1.158	-.13	.899
29.	Future work on Accreditation?	2.852	1.433	2.919	1.433	-.27	.789
Above three		17	15				

*p.<.05

($p < .001$); question (15) To what extent is your building receiving knowledgeable support from the Michigan Department of Education in implementing Public Act 25? ($p < .009$); question (16) How knowledgeable is the Michigan Department of Education about your building? ($p < .017$); and question (25) To what extent have teachers in your building become involved in the decision-making process surrounding the local implementation of Public Act 25? ($p < .028$). In each case, the female principal's mean response was higher than the male principals' mean response. This indicates that the female elementary principals have a more optimistic attitude toward school reform than do the male elementary principals (Appendix G). These are consistent with the literature on the differences of perceptions between female and male educators.

Table 9 illustrates the response of elementary principals compared by educational background using the Oneway Analysis of Variance and where appropriate the Multiple Range Tests, Scheffe and Least Significance Difference (LSD).

Mean scores on the 28 questions concerning reform indicators and conditions above three were 16 for elementary principals with Master Degrees, 18 for elementary principals with Specialist Degrees and 17 for elementary principals holding Doctorate Degrees. Since each of these were one-half or more of the twenty-eight questions, the data suggested that elementary principals with Master Degrees, elementary principals with Specialist Degrees and elementary principals holding Doctorate Degrees all felt that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

Table 9
Mean Responses by Educational Background

#	Question	<u>MA</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>SP</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>DR</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
1.	Pressure to reform prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.175	.968	2.929	.858	3.000	.707	.869	.422
2.	Pressure to reform after <u>Public Act 25</u> ?	3.949	.821	4.069	.757	4.067	.704	.342	.711
3.	Consistent with curriculum practices?	3.598	.897	3.621	.820	3.400	.986	.355	.702
4.	Consistent with school improvement process?	3.594	.958	3.690	1.073	3.600	1.183	.103	.903
5.	Consistent with reporting practices?	2.825	1.299	3.035	1.476	2.467	1.457	.872	.420
6.	Consistent with accreditation process?	2.652	1.537	2.786	1.618	3.000	1.464	.360	.699
7.	Support of Superintendent?	4.351	.879	4.482	.802	4.733	.458	1.481	.231
8.	Support of Board of Education?	4.196	.886	4.393	.956	4.733	.458	2.731	.069
9.	Supportive of local control?	3.094	.996	3.071	1.152	3.800	.862	3.284	.041*
10.	Adequate state funding?	1.804	.772	1.690	.930	1.667	.617	.364	.696
11.	Adequate local funding?	2.577	1.039	2.679	1.056	2.600	.737	.108	.898
12.	Allows for flexibility in implementing?	3.188	.921	3.207	1.177	3.867	1.060	3.095	.049*
13.	Increase collegiality within building?	2.949	1.093	3.069	1.252	3.533	.990	1.796	.170
14.	Building receiving information from MDE?	3.094	1.027	3.276	1.131	3.667	.817	2.127	.123
15.	Building support from MDE?	2.313	1.039	2.207	1.048	2.467	1.246	.299	.742
16.	MDE knowledge about building?	1.821	.934	1.630	.884	1.929	1.072	.597	.552
17.	MDE trust in local building ability?	2.204	.939	2.321	.905	2.643	.842	1.420	.245
19.	Maintain local character?	3.876	.807	3.862	.875	4.000	.655	.169	.845
20.	MDE sensitivity to local building?	1.802	.763	1.759	.872	1.929	.475	.237	.789
21.	MDE assist with paperwork?	1.548	.651	1.655	.721	1.357	.633	.952	.389

Table 9--continued

#	Question	<u>MA</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>SP</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>DR</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p.</u>
22.	Site based decision-making valued?	3.711	.968	3.897	.976	3.667	1.234	.434	.649
23.	Staff turnover?	4.073	.785	4.000	.802	4.133	.834	.158	.854
24.	Principal to provide leadership?	4.629	.601	4.379	.677	4.400	.633	2.320	.102
25.	Teachers involved in decision-making?	3.753	.890	3.793	.819	3.867	1.060	.115	.892
26.	Future work on Core Curriculum?	3.392	1.056	3.310	1.039	2.867	.990	1.637	.198
27.	Future teamwork on School Improvement?	3.742	1.003	3.931	.923	3.400	1.056	1.415	.246
28.	Future work on Annual Report?	2.598	1.152	2.621	1.321	2.133	1.060	1.068	.346
29.	Future work on Accreditation?	2.885	1.398	3.103	1.611	2.533	1.246	.790	.456
Above three		16	18	17					

*p.<.05

Only on two questions did elementary principals with the most educational background differ significantly from elementary principals with the lesser educational background. These were: question 9. How supportive is Public Act 25 of your building's value of local control? ($p < .041$); and question 12. How much flexibility does Public Act 25 allow your building in actual implementation? ($p < .049$). A possible explanation of these was that elementary principals with Doctorate degrees felt more in touch with the Michigan Department of Education than those with Master degrees as expressed in responses to question 32 (Appendix G).

Rank Order of Four Major Components

The responses of elementary principals to question 31 formed the results for the second hypothesis: "Which of the four major components of Public Act 25 were most likely to continue?". Using a frequency count of the number of one (highest) ratings of the elementary principals, the results of the principals' ratings are shown in Table 10.

Since the rank order of the four major components of Public Act 25 of elementary principals above was School Improvement, Core Curriculum, Accreditation and Annual Report which matched the second hypothesis, "Principals will rank the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which are the most likely to allow reform to continue in the following order: School Improvement, Core Curriculum, Accreditation and Annual Report, then the second hypothesis was supported by the data and accepted.

Table 10
Rank Order of Four Major Components

Component	Frequency	Rank
PROCESS FOR LOCAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	68	1
STATE WRITTEN CORE CURRICULUM	27	2
STATE REGULATED ACCREDITATION PROCESS	25	3
ANNUAL REPORT TO COMMUNITY	23	4

Summary

The findings of the study showed that elementary principals perceive reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan school to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. This perception was true for elementary principals from In- and Out-Of-Formula schools, small, medium and large enrollment schools, and low, medium and high per pupil expenditure schools. It was also true for elementary principals with the least and most administrative experience, both female and male elementary principals and elementary principals holding Master, Specialist and Doctorate Degrees all felt that reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The findings of the study also showed that elementary principals selected

the following rank order as the order of those components of school reform most likely to allow reform to continue: School Improvement Process, Core Curriculum Development Process, Accreditation and Annual Report. Both findings support the two hypotheses of this study and further support other research including the Shine study (1992).

Chapter V describes the background of the study, findings of the study, interpretations of the study, limitations of the study, implications of the study and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to determine whether educational reform conditions and indicators were present in enough strength in Michigan public schools to make continuing educational reform possible under Public Act 25. Secondly, it sought to identify which of the four major components of Public Act 25 were most likely to continue. This chapter draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the results of the study. This chapter is divided into six major sections: (1) background, (2) findings (3), interpretation of results, (4) limitations of the study, (5) implications of the study, and (6) recommendations.

Background

Educational reform has been a topic of interest, discussion and research for nearly a century. Beginning with Eliot (1898) and running to the current decade, educational reform has been the focus of attention at both the state and national level. Most recently in Michigan, the legislature adopted Public Act 25 in 1990. The intent of Public Act 25 was that local educators, with the assistance of the Michigan Department of Education, could improve education by implementing four major educational components: a core curriculum, an annual educational report to the community, a school improvement process and accreditation

process.

Two years after implementation of Public Act 25, Edward Shine (1992) surveyed Michigan public school superintendents to see whether or not they perceived Public Act 25 having the impact it was to have had on improving education in the state. Shine used the research of Anderson, Armstrong, Huddle and Odden (1986) and Fullan (1982, 1991) which identified eight indicators and six conditions that were necessary for education reform to be successful. Shine, through the use of a questionnaire, found that superintendents overall, felt that both educational reform indicators and conditions to be in sufficient strength in Michigan public schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. In addition, Shine found the superintendents ranked the four major components of Public Act 25 in the following order as to which was the most likely to continue: school improvement, core curriculum, accreditation and annual report.

This current study set out to determine if elementary principals in the public schools (those mandated to implement Public Act 25) in the state of Michigan, perceived reform indicators and conditions to be in sufficient strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. The second focus of this study was to determine in what rank order the elementary principals would place the four major components of Public Act 25.

A questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of Michigan elementary principals asking their perceptions to questions concerning educational reform conditions and indicators as they related to Michigan Public Act 25. In addition,

the elementary principals were asked to rank order the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which were the most likely to continue. Finally, they were allowed to add any special comments, notes or ideas that they deemed appropriate on an open-ended question.

Each of the responding elementary principals questionnaires were also categorized by the following demographics. They were sub-divided according to the following school district demographics: district financial classification, district size, and district per pupil expenditures. Secondly, they were sub-divided according to the following elementary principal demographics: elementary principal gender, elementary principal administrative experience and elementary principal educational training (degree).

The responses were then analyzed to see if any of the demographics of the school or the principal impacted on the elementary principals' responses. Responses were analyzed using either the Oneway Analysis of Variance or the t-test for independent means. Where appropriate, the Scheffe and LSD tests as well as the Mantel-Haenszel chi-square test were performed. The significance level was $p < .05$.

Findings

Of the 182 questionnaires mailed, elementary principals returned over 77% (142). Demographically by school, 66% were from In-Formula school district elementary principals, 34% from Out-Of-Formula school district elementary

principals; 29% from small size school district elementary principals, 25% from medium size school district elementary principals and 46% from large size school district elementary principals; and 50% from low per pupil expenditure school district elementary principals, 29% from medium per pupil expenditure school district elementary principals and 21% from high per pupil expenditure school district elementary principals.

Reviewing the responses by elementary principal demographics, 53% of the elementary principals had 10 years or less administrative experience while 47% of the elementary principals had 11 years or more administrative experience; 39% were female elementary principals while 61% were male elementary principals; and 69% of the elementary principals held Master degrees, 20% of the elementary principals held Specialist degrees and 11% of the elementary principals held Doctorate degrees. These were consistent with the literature.

Overall, elementary principals rated 10 of the 18 questions concerning educational reform indicators to be in sufficient strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. Further, elementary principals rated 7 of the 11 questions concerning educational reform conditions to be in sufficient strength to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

The elementary principals rated the highest educational reform indicators to be at the local level and the weakest educational reform indicators to be at the state level. In addition, elementary principals rated the highest educational reform conditions to be at the local level and the weakest educational reform

conditions to be at the state level.

Reviewing the responses in relation to the school district demographics, In-Formula school district elementary principals rated 17 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive while Out-Of-Formula school district elementary principals rated 18 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive.

Secondly, small school district elementary principals rated 14 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive, medium size school district elementary principals rated 18 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive while large size school district elementary principals rated 17 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive.

Thirdly, both low and medium per pupil expenditure school district elementary principals rated 17 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive while high expenditure school district elementary principals rated 19 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive.

Reviewing the responses of the elementary principals in relation to the principals' demographics, elementary principals with the least administrative experience rated 17 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive and elementary principals with the most administrative experience rated 16 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators

and conditions as positive.

Secondly, female elementary principals rated 17 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive while male elementary principals rated 15 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive.

Thirdly, elementary principals with Master degrees rated 16 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive, elementary principals with Specialist degrees rated 18 of the 28 questions concerning educational reform indicators and conditions as positive while elementary principals holding Doctorate degrees rated 17 of the 28 questions regarding educational reform indicators and conditions as positive.

In each relationship mentioned, elementary principals from a variety of school types (separated by financial classification, size and per pupil expenditure) and with a variety of personal backgrounds (separated by administrative experience, gender and educational degree), agreed that educational reform indicators and conditions were in sufficient strength to allow educational reform to continue in Michigan schools under Public Act 25.

Finally, elementary principals ranked the four major components of Public Act 25 in the following order: implementation process for local school improvement, implementation of a state written core curriculum, implementation of a state-regulated accreditation process, and implementing an annual local report to the community.

Interpretation of the Results

The first hypothesis of the study was: Principals will perceive educational reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. From the questionnaire, elementary principals overall rated 10 of the 18 questions regarding educational reform indicators as positive. In addition, the elementary principals rated 7 of the 11 questions concerning educational reform conditions as positive. Since more than one-half of the questions were rated as positive by the principals, the results of the analysis of this data indicated support for the hypothesis. Elementary principals overall felt that educational reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

Elementary principals from the various sub groups, In- and Out-of-Formula districts, small, medium and large school districts, low, medium and high per pupil expenditure districts, female and male elementary principals, elementary principals with the least administrative experience and the most administrative experience and elementary principals with Master Degrees, Specialist Degrees and Doctorate Degrees, differed on their responses to individual questions. However, since they rated more than one-half of the questions as positive, over all each sub group felt that educational reform indicators and conditions to be in enough strength in Michigan schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public

Act 25. These findings concurred with superintendents who were the population of the Shine study (1992).

The second hypothesis was: Principals will rank the four major components of Public Act 25 as to which are the most likely to allow reform to continue in the following order: School Improvement, Core Curriculum, Accreditation and Annual Report. The results of the data analysis indicated support for the hypothesis. Sixty-eight elementary principals rated school improvement as the highest, 27 elementary principals selected core curriculum, 25 elementary principals chose accreditation and only 23 elementary principals recorded annual report. This order of ranking of the four major components of Public Act 25 matched the findings reported by superintendents in the Shine study (1992).

Limitations of the Study

There are two limitations in the study design that need to be considered. First, questionnaires have built-in limitations which include the soliciting of "reactive information". As a result, the questionnaires were returned only by those who chose to fill out and mail them. Those respondents may be biased either for or against the subject being surveyed and may not accurately represent the total population. The respondent may believe he or she was unique and this may have produced a skewed response. Finally, respondents may also tend to rate questions very high or very low.

The second limitation is that a random sample of only regular, elementary

public school principals were selected for this study. No other administrators nor teachers were surveyed. Nor were any private schools administrators nor teachers surveyed. Therefore, any generalization of this study should be limited.

Implications

This research will be of benefit to the legislative and executive branch of state government as well as educators who share an interest in educational reform and Public Act 25. The results indicating that elementary principals feel most educational reform indicators and conditions are present at the local level should be viewed as positive. In addition, the results indicating that elementary principals had reservations as to the state's ability to fund and support educational reform ought to be reviewed and analyzed in more detail.

Educators, legislators and taxpayers should feel positive that every group of elementary principals reported that educational reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength in Michigan public schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. However, educators ought to determine if instruments other than questionnaires of superintendents or elementary principals should be utilized to determine the future success of Public Act 25 leading to educational reform in the state of Michigan. Other possible areas to investigate might include reviews of Michigan Educational Assessment Program data, California Achievement Test results, changes in daily attendance of students, changes in grade averages and reductions in drop-out rates and disciplinary

reports. Studies of these variables might provide more information on the topic of educational reform progressing under Public Act 25.

Recommendations

This current study is the second to investigate Public Act 25. In the first study, Shine (1992) found that superintendents (with some reservations) felt that reform indicators and conditions were in enough strength in Michigan public schools to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. This current study, reporting the perceptions of Michigan elementary principals, supports the first study. Therefore, elementary principals recommend that the Michigan Legislature continue funding Public Act 25 and subsequent Public Act 335 to insure that educational reform continues in Michigan schools. Further, they recommend that the Michigan Department of Education increase its ability to assist school districts with the increase in paper work necessary under Public Act 25 and become more knowledgeable in supporting local schools when questions arise concerning the implementation of Public Act 25.

As a result of the reviewing of the responses of the elementary principals to the questions concerning educational reform indicators, elementary principals recommend that the Michigan Department of Education direct additional funding to supporting local district practices that are in line with the literature on educational reform. Since elementary principals rated support of the local superintendent and local board of education as the two strongest educational reform

indicators, they also recommend that the Michigan Department of Education sponsor seminars around the state focusing on an exchange of ideas between Michigan Department of Education staff and local superintendents and board of education members. These seminars could strengthen the resolve of both local superintendents and local board of education members and the Michigan Department of Education staff members to continue to seek success of educational reform under Public Act 25.

Secondly, elementary principals recommend that the Michigan Department of Education establish a plan for touring schools throughout Michigan with the intent of investigating local practices that need state support to allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25. Since the elementary principals rated the Michigan Department of Education knowledge of local building activities as the second lowest educational reform indicator, more work needs to be done in this area. Therefore, the principals recommend that the Michigan Department of Education, through their investigation locate the cause of this low rating and correct it to insure the success of educational reform continuing under Public Act 25.

Finally, the principals recommend that the Michigan legislature hold hearings around the state with various educational groups to acquire feedback as to why both superintendents in the Shine (1992) study and elementary principals in the current study rated adequate state funding as the lowest educational reform indicator. Results of these hearings might allow the legislature to allocate state

funding in such a way as to enhance educational reform under Public Act 25.

In reviewing the responses of elementary principals on the questions concerning educational reform conditions, two recommendations emerge. Initially, elementary principals recommend that the Michigan Department of Education discuss with local educators why both superintendents and elementary principals rated the Michigan Department of Education sensitivity to local building issues and conditions and the increase of paperwork associated with implementing Public Act 25 so negatively. Discussions of this nature might bring about new ideas and insights that would assist the Michigan Department of Education in gathering valuable information while simultaneously reducing the local building administrators need to spend educational time on documentation of successful educational reform.

Secondly, they recommend that the legislature be commended for identifying the local building principal as the key to implementing the four major components of Public Act 25 to insure that educational reform does occur in Michigan's schools. The results of study indicated elementary principals rated this as the single highest reform condition that would allow educational reform to continue under Public Act 25.

It is also their recommendation that future studies of educational improvement legislation, Public Act 25 and Public Act 335 be carried out. The respondents might be middle school or high school principals; or middle school or high school teachers.

Finally a summary of results of this study will be made available through an article in the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals' Journal to all participating principals. An abstract of the results will be sent to both the House Education Subcommittee and the Senate Education Subcommittee along with copies to Representative Robert Brackenridge and Senator Harry Gast, state legislators representing the district in which this study was developed.

Appendix A

State School Aid Act of 1990 Requirements Related to Public Act 25

Act No. 25
Public Acts of 1990
Approved by the Governor
March 13, 1990
Filed with the Secretary of State
March 13, 1990

STATE OF MICHIGAN
85TH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 1990

Introduced by Reps. O'Neill, Jondahl, Gilmer, Barns, Trim, DeBeaussaert, Martin, Kosteva, Munsell,
Keith and Jonker

ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 4009

AN ACT to amend sections 627, 1204a, and 1233 of Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1976, entitled as amended "An act to provide a system of public instruction and elementary and secondary schools; to revise, consolidate, and classify the laws relating to elementary and secondary education; to provide for the classification, organization, regulation, and maintenance of schools, school districts, and intermediate school districts; to prescribe rights, powers, duties, and privileges of schools, school districts, and intermediate school districts; to provide for school elections and to prescribe powers and duties with respect thereto; to provide for the levy and collection of taxes; to provide for the borrowing of money and issuance of bonds and other evidences of indebtedness; to establish a fund and provide for expenditures from that fund; to provide for and prescribe the powers and duties of certain state departments, the state board of education, and certain other boards and officials; to provide for licensure of boarding schools; to prescribe penalties; and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts." section 1204a as added by Act No. 159 of the Public Acts of 1989 and section 1233 as amended by Act No. 56 of the Public Acts of 1987, being sections 380.627, 380.1204a, and 380.1233 of the Michigan Compiled Laws; to add sections 1233b, 1277, 1278, and 1280; and to repeal certain parts of the act.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Section 1. Sections 627, 1204a, and 1233 of Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1976, section 1204a as added by Act No. 159 of the Public Acts of 1989 and section 1233 as amended by Act No. 56 of the Public Acts of 1987, being sections 380.627, 380.1204a, and 380.1233 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, are amended and sections 1233b, 1277, 1278, and 1280 are added to read as follows:

Sec. 627. (1) An intermediate school board shall do all of the following:

(a) Upon request of the board of a constituent district, furnish services on a management, consultant, or supervisory basis to the district. The intermediate school board may charge a constituent district for the costs of services furnished under this subdivision.

(b) Upon request of the board of a constituent district, direct, supervise, and conduct cooperative educational programs on behalf of the district. The intermediate school board may utilize available funds not otherwise obligated by law and accept contributions from other sources for the purpose of financing the programs. The funds shall be deposited with the treasurer in a cooperative education fund and shall be disbursed as the intermediate school board directs. The intermediate school board may employ personnel and take other action necessary to direct, supervise, and conduct cooperative educational programs.

(c) Conduct cooperative programs mutually agreed upon by 2 or more intermediate school boards.

(2) Upon request of the board of a constituent school district, an intermediate school board may provide, either solely or as part of a consortium of intermediate school districts, comprehensive school improvement support services to the district. These services may include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- (a) The development of a core curriculum.
- (b) The evaluation of a core curriculum.
- (c) The preparation of 1 or more school improvement plans.
- (d) The dissemination of information concerning 1 or more school improvement plans.
- (e) The preparation of an annual educational report.
- (f) Professional development.
- (g) Educational research.
- (h) The compilation of instructional objectives, instructional resources, pupil demographics, and pupil academic achievement.
- (i) Assistance in obtaining school accreditation.
- (j) The provision of general technical assistance.

Sec. 1204a. (1) The board of a school district that does not want to forfeit a percentage of the school district's state school aid as described in section 19 of the state school aid act of 1979, Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1979, being section 388.1619 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, or that wants to receive and is eligible for additional state school aid for quality programs as provided in sections 21(1) and 21a of the state school aid act of 1979, being sections 388.1621 and 388.1621a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, shall prepare, make available to the state board and the public, and provide that each school in the school district distributes to the public at an open meeting an annual educational report. The annual educational report shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following information for each public school in the school district:

- (a) The accreditation status of each school within the school district, the process by which pupils are assigned to particular schools, and a description of each specialized school.
- (b) The status of the 3- to 5-year school improvement plan as described in section 1277 for each school within the school district.
- (c) A copy of the core curriculum and a description of its implementation and the variances from the model core curriculum developed by the state board pursuant to section 1278(2).
- (d) A report for each school of aggregate student achievement based upon the results of any locally-administered student competency tests, statewide assessment tests, or nationally normed achievement tests that were given to pupils attending school in the school district.
- (e) For the year in which the report is filed and the previous school year, the district membership retention report as defined in section 6 of the state school aid act of 1979, Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1979, being section 388.1606 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.
- (f) The number and percentage of parents, legal guardians, or persons in loco parentis with pupils enrolled in the school district who participate in parent-teacher conferences for pupils at the elementary, middle, and secondary school level, as appropriate.
- (g) A comparison with the immediately preceding school year of the information required by subdivisions (a) through (f).

(2) Within 90 days after the effective date of the amendatory act that added this section, the state board shall prepare and make available to school districts suggestions for accumulating the information listed in subsection (1) and a model educational report for school districts to consider in the implementation of this section.

Sec. 1233. (1) Except as provided in subsection (3) and section 1233b, the board of a school district or intermediate school district shall not permit a teacher who does not hold a valid teaching certificate to teach in a grade or department of the school, or a teacher without an endorsement by the state board to serve in a counseling role as the role is defined by the state board.

(2) The intermediate superintendent shall notify immediately the state board of the names of noncertificated teachers and the names of nonendorsed teachers serving in counseling roles, the employing district, and the amount of time the noncertificated and nonendorsed teachers were employed.

(3) The board of a school district or intermediate school district may renew through June 30, 1995 an annual vocational authorization of a noncertificated vocational teacher who is employed by the district or intermediate school district on June 1, 1987, even if a certificated teacher is available for hire, if both of the following conditions are met:

(a) The noncertificated teacher is annually and continually enrolled and completing credit in an approved vocational teacher preparation program leading to vocational certification.

(b) The noncertificated teacher has a planned vocational teacher preparation program leading to vocational certification on file with the employing school district or intermediate school district, his or her teacher preparation institution, and the department of education.

(4) A vocational teacher preparation institution shall utilize the employment experience of an annually authorized teacher for the purpose of waiving student teaching as a requirement for vocational certification if the annually authorized teacher is supervised by the teacher preparation institution.

(5) All vocational education teachers certified after June 1, 1995 shall pass a competency test.

Sec. 1233b. (1) Except as provided in subsection (3), the board of a local or intermediate school district may engage a full-time or part-time noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher to teach a course in computer science, a foreign language, mathematics, biology, chemistry, engineering, physics, robotics, or any combination of these subject areas in grades 9 through 12.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), a noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher is qualified to teach pursuant to this section if he or she meets all of the following minimum requirements:

(a) Possesses an earned bachelor's degree from an accredited postsecondary institution.

(b) Has a major or a graduate degree in the field of specialization in which he or she will teach.

(c) If the teacher desires to teach for more than 1 year, has passed both a basic skills examination and a subject area examination, if a subject area examination exists, in the field of specialization in which he or she will teach.

(d) Except in the case of persons engaged to teach a foreign language, has not less than 2 years of occupational experience in the field of specialization in which he or she will teach.

(3) The requirements listed in subsection (2) for a teacher engaged to teach pursuant to this section shall be in addition to any other requirements established by the board of a local or intermediate school district, as applicable.

(4) Except as provided in subsection (5), the board of a local or intermediate school district shall not engage a full-time or part-time noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher to teach a course identified in subsection (1) if the district is able to engage a certificated, endorsed teacher.

(5) If the board of a local or intermediate school district is able to engage a certificated, endorsed teacher to teach a course identified in subsection (1), the local or intermediate school board may continue to employ a noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher to teach the course if both of the following conditions are met:

(a) The noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher is annually and continually enrolled and completing credit in an approved teacher preparation program leading to a provisional teaching certificate.

(b) The noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher has a planned program leading to teacher certification on file with the employing school district or intermediate school district, his or her teacher preparation institution, and the department of education.

(6) If the board of a local or intermediate school district is not able to engage a certificated, endorsed teacher to teach a course identified in subsection (1), the department of education and a teacher preparation institution shall utilize the teaching experience of a noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher for the purpose of waiving student teaching as a condition for receiving a continued employment authorization in the school district and a provisional teaching certificate.

Sec. 1277. (1) Considering criteria established by the state board, the board of a school district that wants to receive and is eligible for additional state school aid for quality programs as provided in sections 21(1) and 21a of the state school aid act of 1979, Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1979, being sections 388.1621 and 388.1621a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, shall adopt and implement a 3- to 5-year school improvement plan and continuing school improvement process for each school within the school district. The school improvement plan shall include, but is not limited to, a mission statement, goals based on student outcomes for all students, curriculum alignment corresponding with those goals, evaluation processes, staff development, and building level decision making. School board members, school building administrators, teachers and other school employees, pupils, parents of pupils attending that school, and other residents of the school district shall participate in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the district's school improvement plan. Upon request of the board of a school district, the department shall assist the school district in the development and implementation of a district school improvement plan. Intermediate school districts and educational organizations may also provide assistance for these purposes. A school improvement plan described in this section shall be updated annually by the board of the school district.

(2) The school improvement plan of a school district shall be maintained on file with the intermediate school district to which the school district is constituent.

(3) The state board shall annually review a random sampling of school improvement plans. Based on its review, the state board shall annually submit a report on school improvement activities planned and accomplished by each of the school districts that were part of the sampling to the senate and house committees that have the responsibility for education legislation.

Sec. 1278. (1) The board of each school district that wants to receive and is eligible for additional state school aid for quality programs as provided in sections 21(1) and 21a of the state school aid act of 1979, Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1979, being sections 388.1621 and 388.1621a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, shall make available to all pupils attending public school in the district a core curriculum in compliance with subsection (3).

(2) A recommended model core curriculum shall be developed by the state board and distributed to each school district in the state. The recommended core curriculum shall define the outcomes to be achieved by all pupils and be based upon the "Michigan K-12 program standards of quality" published by the state board.

(3) The board of each school district, considering the curricular outcomes defined and recommended pursuant to subsection (2), shall do both of the following:

(a) Establish a core curriculum for its pupils at the elementary, middle, and secondary school levels. The core curriculum shall define outcomes to be achieved by all pupils and be based upon the school district's educational mission, long-range student goals, and student performance objectives. The core curriculum may vary from the model core curriculum recommended by the state board pursuant to subsection (2).

(b) After consulting with teachers and school building administrators, determine the instructional program for delivering the core curriculum and identify the courses and programs in which the core curriculum will be taught.

(4) The board may supplement the core curriculum by providing instruction through additional classes and programs.

(5) A subject or course required by the core curriculum pursuant to subsection (3) shall be made available to all pupils in the school district by a school district, a consortium of school districts, or a consortium of 1 or more school districts and 1 or more intermediate school districts.

(6) The state board shall make available to all nonpublic schools in this state, as a resource for their consideration, the model core curriculum developed for public schools pursuant to subsection (2) for the purpose of assisting the governing body of a nonpublic school in developing its own core curriculum.

(7) Any course that would have been considered a nonessential elective course under Snyder v Charlotte Schools, 421 Mich 517 (1984) on the effective date of the amendatory act that added this section shall continue to be offered to resident pupils of nonpublic schools on a shared time basis.

Sec. 1280. (1) The board of a school district that wants to receive and is eligible for additional state school aid for quality programs as provided in sections 21(1) and 21a of the state school aid act of 1979, Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1979, being sections 388.1621 and 388.1621a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, and that does not want to be subject to the measures described in subsection (6) shall ensure that each public school within the school district is accredited.

(2) As used in subsection (1), "accredited" means certified by the state board as having met or exceeded state board-approved standards established for 6 areas of school operation: administration and school organization, curricula, staff, school plant and facilities, school and community relations, and school improvement plans and student outcomes. The building-level evaluation used in the accreditation process shall include, but is not limited to, school data collection, self-study, visitation and validation, determination of outcomes data to be used, and the development of a school improvement plan.

(3) The department shall develop and distribute to all public schools proposed accreditation standards. Upon distribution of the proposed standards, the department shall hold statewide public hearings for the purpose of receiving testimony concerning the standards. After a review of the testimony, the department shall revise and submit the proposed standards to the state board. After a review and revision, if appropriate, of the proposed standards, the state board shall submit the proposed standards to the senate and house committees that have the responsibility for education legislation. Upon approval by these committees, the department shall distribute to all public schools the standards to be applied to each school for accreditation purposes.

(4) The department shall annually review and evaluate for accreditation purposes the performance of a portion of the public schools in the state, including, but not limited to, each school that did not meet accreditation standards the immediately preceding school year.

(5) The department shall, and the intermediate school district to which a school district is constituent, a consortium of intermediate school districts, or any combination thereof may, provide technical assistance, as appropriate, to a school that is not accredited upon request of the board of the unaccredited school.

(6) A school that has not met accreditation standards for 3 consecutive years is subject to 1 or more of the following measures, as determined by the state board:

(a) The superintendent of public instruction or his or her designee shall appoint at the expense of the affected school district an administrator of the school until the school meets accreditation standards.

(b) A parent, legal guardian, or person in loco parentis of a child who attends the school shall have the right to send his or her child to any accredited public school with an appropriate grade level within the school district.

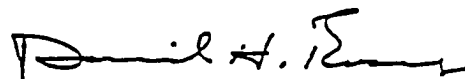
(c) The school shall be closed.

(7) The department shall evaluate the school accreditation program and the status of schools accredited and shall submit an annual report based upon the evaluation to the senate and house committees that have the responsibility for education legislation. The report shall address the reasons each unaccredited school is not accredited and shall recommend legislative action that will result in the accreditation of all public schools in this state.

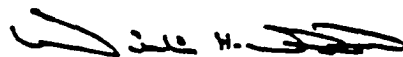
Section 2. Section 1204b of Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1976, being section 330.1204b of the Michigan Compiled Laws, is repealed.

Section 3. This amendatory act shall take effect upon the expiration of 30 days after the date of its enactment.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Clerk of the House of Representatives.



Secretary of the Senate.

Approved.....

Governor.

Appendix B

**Self-Response Questionnaire With
Principal Cover Letter**

A school building code number is attached to page one of this survey for demographic charting only. It will be removed to maintain your confidentiality.

Even if you were not a principal prior to 1990, please answer all questions to the best of your ability. The entire survey takes only nine (9) minutes.

YOUR ASSISTANCE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED

MICHIGAN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

- A. How many total years have you been a school principal?
(please circle only one) 0-9 10-up
- B. What is the classification of your building?
(please circle only one) URBAN SUBURBAN RURAL
- C. Your gender? (please circle) FEMALE MALE
- D. Your highest degree earned to date?
(please circle only one) MASTER SPECIALIST DOCTOR

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS' SURVEY
PA 25

DIRECTIONS: Please check (X) only <u>ONE</u> box in answer to each question.					
	NONE		SOME		SIZABLE
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Prior to <u>Public Act 25</u> of 1990, how much pressure for educational reform did you perceive within your building?					
2. Since the implementation of <u>Public Act 25</u> , how much pressure for educational reform do you perceive within your building?					
3. To what extent is <u>Public Act 25</u> consistent with your building's customary curriculum practices?					
4. To what extent is <u>Public Act 25</u> consistent with your building's customary school improvement planning process?					
5. To what extent is <u>Public Act 25</u> consistent with your building's customary practice of reporting to the community at a public meeting?					
6. To what extent is <u>Public Act 25</u> consistent with your building's customary elementary school accreditation process?					
7. How supportive is your superintendent of your school building's implementation of <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
8. How supportive is your Board of Education of your school building's implementation of <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					

DIRECTIONS: Please check (X) only <u>ONE</u> box in answer to each question.					
	NONE	SOME		SIZEABLE	
	1	2	3	4	5
9. How supportive is <u>Public Act 25</u> of your building's value of local control?					
10. How adequate does state funding of <u>Public Act 25</u> support your building's efforts to implement the law?					
11. How adequate are your district's funds to support your building's effort to implement <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
12. How much flexibility does <u>Public Act 25</u> allow your building in actual implementation?					
13. To what extent has implementation of <u>Public Act 25</u> increased collegiality within your building?					
14. How much information about the four major aspects of <u>Public Act 25</u> has the Michigan Department of Education provided your building?					
15. To what extent is your building receiving knowledgeable support from the Michigan Department of Education in implementing <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
16. How knowledgeable is the Michigan Department of Education about your building?					
17. How much trust do you think the Michigan Department of Education has in local building's capacity to reform education?					
18. How clear are the long term objectives of <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					

DIRECTIONS: Please check (X) only ONE box in answer to each question.

	NONE	SOME			SIZABLE
	1	2	3	4	5
19. To what extent were you able to maintain your building's character while complying with <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
20. To what extent was the Michigan Legislature sensitive to local issues and conditions in mandating <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
21. How well prepared was the Michigan Department of Education to assist your building with the increase in paperwork associated with <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
22. To what extent does your building value decentralized or site based decision-making?					
23. How would you describe your building's usual staff turnover?					
24. To what extent are you as building principal expected to provide leadership in implementing <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
25. To what extent have teachers in your building become involved in the decision-making process surrounding the local implementation of <u>Public Act 25</u> ?					
26. To what extent do you think your building would be involved in the concept of "core curriculum" if <u>Public Act 25</u> did not continue?					
27. To what extent do you think your building would be involved in the concept of "school improvement teamwork" if <u>Public Act 25</u> did not continue?					

DIRECTIONS: Please check (X) only <u>ONE</u> box in answer to each question.					
	NONE	SOME			SIZABLE
	1	2	3	4	5
28. To what extent do you think your building would be involved in making an "annual report to the community at a public meeting" if <u>Public Act 25</u> did not continue?					
29. To what extent do you think your building would be involved in the "elementary school accreditation process" if <u>Public Act 25</u> did not continue?					
30. To what extent do you think <u>Public Act 25</u> will improve the quality of education in your building's classrooms?					

31. Please rank order the four major aspects of Public Act 25 in terms of how likely you think they are to bring continuing educational reform in your building:

(number 4 is **most** likely and number 1 is **least** likely)

state-written core curriculum	_____
process for local school improvement	_____
required annual report to community	_____
state regulated accreditation process	_____

OPTIONAL - OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

32. Is there any observation, anecdote or comment you would like to make about the implementation of Public Act 25 in your elementary school building?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

PLEASE INSERT ALL PAGES INTO THE SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED RETURN ENVELOPE.



Watervliet Public Schools

111

E. Red Arrow Hwy • Watervliet, MI 49098

A. Bruce Watson, Superintendent

Phone (616) 483-5566

Date

Principal's Name
Principal's Address
Principal's School
City, State, Zip

Dear (Principal's Name)

You, as building principal, have been mandated to implement Public Act 25 within your elementary building. As the superintendent of a public school and doctoral student at Western Michigan University, I am interested in your perceptions as the "what it would take to fully implement the four major components" of the act.

Therefore, you and 182 other principals were selected from the nearly 1830 elementary public school principals in Michigan to complete the enclosed questionnaire. This questionnaire will take approximately eleven minutes to complete (which includes reading this letter, answering the questionnaire and placing it in the envelope provided).

The results of the questionnaire will be used to develop a profile of what elementary principals from around Michigan feel about full implementation of PA 25. Following completion of this doctorate dissertation, the results will be provided in article form to be published in your MEMSPA Journal, MASA Fortnighter and MASE Journal with copies going to all state legislators for their review. This study has been endorsed by Bill Mays and Jerry Keidel, Executive Directors of MEMSPA and MASA respectively.

The code on the questionnaire will be used to match your response to demographic data that has been gathered about your school district. It will be removed from the questionnaire afterwards to retain the confidentiality of your response. Neither your name, your school building name nor your school district name will be used in relation to any of your responses.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the number above. Please return your completed questionnaire by Wednesday, February 24, 1993. Thank you for your assistance in this important project.

Sincerely,

A. Bruce Watson
enc.
cover.ed1

RESPONSE TO MICHIGAN PUBLIC ACT 25

The set of questions in this survey concerns the four major aspects of Michigan Public Act 25 which are:

- 1) a state-written core curriculum specifying learning outcomes for students;
- 2) a process for developing a local school improvement plan with a mission;
- 3) a required annual public report by all schools to their local communities; and
- 4) a state regulated local school accreditation process;

survey.ed1

Appendix C

Letter of Support for Dissertation From Michigan Association of School Administrators Executive Director

**MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION
OF
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**



Office of the Executive Director

421 West Kalamazoo, Lansing, Michigan 48933

Telephone 517 371-5250
FAX 517 371-9093

January 6, 1993

Dear Principal:

As an elementary principal, you are keenly aware of the impact that Public Act 25 has had on not only your district, but also the manner in which you fulfill your administrative responsibilities. Bruce Watson, Superintendent of Watervliet Public Schools, is doing a study that deals with P.A. 25 and what it would take to fully implement it in districts throughout Michigan.

I believe that this dissertation study will provide valuable information to elementary school principals and other school administrators in our state. I hope you will take the time to participate in the survey. Your responses are not only essential to Mr. Watson, but will also be of valuable assistance as we continue to work with school improvement programs in the future.

Sincerely,

Gerard E. Keidel
Executive Director

A Member of the Michigan Congress of School Administrator Associations

Appendix D

Letter of Support for Dissertation From Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association Executive Director



MEMSPA

MICHIGAN ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

Unified With The National Association of Elementary School Principals ♦ Affiliated With The American Studies Council Association

DEAR FELLOW ADMINISTRATOR:

Mr. A. Bruce Watson has contacted me and shared with me the questionnaire he plans to distribute to school principals on a random sampling basis across Michigan.

The subject of his questionnaire, P.A. 25, is of interest to our Association. It is my hope that you will take the time to fill out this questionnaire and mail it back to Mr. Watson.

When his doctoral program is completed, he will prepare an article which we will publish in our Journal, so you will see the results of the questionnaire.

I appreciate your assistance on this important project.

Sincerely,

William Mays, Jr.
Executive Director

WMJ:mlf

Appendix E
Telephone Follow-up Script

Follow up script to questionnaire:

Phone call to principals who have not responded by March 3, 1993 (one week after requested date).

Hello, I am Bruce Watson, Supt. of Watervliet Public Schools. Last week, I mailed you a pink questionnaire asking for your perceptions of PA 25.

So far, I have received _____% replies. Since my goal was to have a return rate of above 70% and since I have not yet received your questionnaire, I thought I would call you to see if you received it in the mail.

Do you remember seeing it?

(Follow through answering questions, asking if they will still send it, if they need another copy or for a reason as to why they wish not to be part of the study, documenting their answers.)

Thank them for their time, regardless of their answer.

script.ed1

Appendix F
Map of Michigan



Appendix G
Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Responses to Open-Ended Question #32

Negative Responses (top 4):

Number of Response
Responses

- 21 Legislators provided inadequate funding
for implementation of Public Act 25
- 20 Michigan Department of Education providing
lack of leadership in implementing
Public Act 25
- 17 Insufficient time to implement components
of Public Act 25 and still teach
- 9 Public Act 25 mandates too much paperwork
just for the sake of documentation

Positive Responses (top 4):

- 7 Public Act 25 has a potential to change
education in Michigan
- 6 School Improvement component of Public Act
25 is sound
- 5 Public Act 25 has helped our school
district improve
- 3 Public Act 25 has helped validate what we
were already doing

Appendix H

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: February 3, 1993

To: Arnold Watson

From: M. Michele Burnette, Chair *M. Michele Burnette jkb*

Re: HSIRB Project Number: 93-01-20

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research protocol, "Analysis of local response to state initiated school reform legislation: Public Act 25 Michigan Law" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the HSIRB. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the approval application.

You must seek reapproval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

xc: Thompson, EL

Approval Termination: February 3, 1994

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