

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION  
DISSEMINATION TECHNIQUES FOR A TEAM TEACHING PROGRAM

by 1268

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B. A., Kansas State University, 1964

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A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1969

Approved by:



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R4  
1969  
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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express her gratitude to Dr. Charles Peccolo for his advice and guidance in the preparation of this report.

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## INTRODUCTION

Public interest in the American educational enterprise has intensified during the past two decades. The mass media have made information regarding education easily available to citizens. Nationally known personalities, Admiral Hyman Rickover, James B. Conant, and others, have discussed the inadequacies of American public education and have received wide coverage in the press. After Sputnik was launched in 1957, critics of this country's educational system argued that the national security was threatened. They stated that the educational system was failing to produce an educated citizenry capable of successfully competing with the Soviet Union in the conquest of space.

Added to this criticism from those outside the education profession was the concern of professional educators. Many educators felt that the school systems could and should be improved. Some educators suggested ways of improving procedures and practices of the existing school structure. Others suggested basic changes for organizing and instructing children. These changes have become familiar words to teachers and the public as well. Ungraded schools, modular scheduling, ability grouping, and team teaching are only a few. Trump and Baynham have discussed four types of critics of the educational program including those who want basic changes, those who want to "cut back" the program, those who want "more of everything," and those who



would "refine" the existing program.<sup>1</sup> Each group of critics is vying for public support.

There is evidence that parents view change in educational practices with mixed feelings. The alternative directions that change can take only serves to compound parental confusion. On one hand, change is threatening. The familiar is more comfortable. Criticism of the existing structure of education means criticism of the way parents were educated and by implication criticism of them.<sup>2</sup> In the past, parents have been presented with an ideal model for schools. They have been assured by educators that education of their children will improve when the student to teacher ratio is lowered. Now parents are being told that this may not be the best solution for the schools' educational ills. In reference to the need for good school public relations programs, Anderson has dramatically described the plight of the parent whose school system has suggested the need for change.

Having long been assured that the schools are healthy and that the self-contained classroom is the greatest invention since the wheel, the parent finds himself quite confused when the school people begin to talk about dramatically different arrangements and desperately urgent reforms. Almost instinctively he begins to resist; he worries about his youngster becoming a guinea pig in yet another departure

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<sup>1</sup>J. Lloyd Trump and Dorsey Baynham, Focus on Change: Guide to Better Schools (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1961), pp. 15-18.

<sup>2</sup>Richard A. Gorton, "Parental Resistance to Modular Scheduling," The Clearinghouse, XLIII (March, 1969), p. 393.

from the fundamentals, and he distrusts the apparent inconsistency of the educator.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the average American parent wants the best possible education for his children. He realizes that technological advances have greatly changed the world situation during his own lifetime and he can understand that educational practices need to keep pace with that change. In general parents have been receptive to the need for change as is evidenced by their willingness to provide increased funds for schools.

Communities differ in what they expect of a school system. They also differ in the amount of assistance that they will give their schools. Therefore it is necessary that school systems which have decided to introduce program changes, take into consideration the reaction of parents to the new plan.

### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to review the literature pertaining to the public relations dimension of team teaching. More specifically, the purpose was to establish criterion measures pertaining to ways of disseminating team teaching information to school patrons.

### Justification for the Study

The very existence of schools in this country is

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Anderson, "Public Relations," Team Teaching, Judson T. Shaplin and Henry F. Olds, Jr., editors, (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 254.

dependent upon support from the public. Citizens exercise control over their schools by voting in school board elections, in school bond elections, and on tax proposals. Citizens also exert a subtle influence over schools through pressure and special groups. Compulsory attendance laws assure that all citizens have had at least some experience with the school system.

If schools are to do an effective job of educating children, they need the understanding and support of parents. This is especially true when schools want to initiate changes in the traditional methods of instruction. When parents are convinced of the need for change they usually are willing to support it, although they often do not know enough about educational methodology to initiate changes in the instructional program.<sup>4</sup> It has been found that where parents actively oppose change, the innovation is doomed.

Another innovation in education, nongrading of schools, has provided an example of ways to successfully handle reactions by parents to changes in the instructional program. Principals of nongraded school pilot projects in responding to a questionnaire survey reported that the success of their nongraded elementary schools was due in part to the support of parents.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Henry M. Brickell, Organizing New York State for Educational Change (Albany, New York: State Education Department, 1961), pp. 20-26.

<sup>5</sup>John I. Goodlad and Robert H. Anderson, The Nongraded Elementary School (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1959), pp. 170-172.

One of the suggestions that these principals made to other schools which were contemplating changes was "take time to get the approval of parents."<sup>6</sup> This support was gained through educational programs for parents both in advance of and during the project.

The merits of team teaching are much debated. Attempts have been made to establish the value of team teaching in terms of increased achievement levels of students who are taught under the team plan as compared to those taught by more traditional methods. Research findings in this area are conflicting and inconclusive. The success of team teaching may prove to be dependent on what Arthur King calls the "human considerations" of the people involved with team teaching: teachers, administrators, students, and parents.<sup>7</sup> The degree to which these people find "an understandable and practical relationship to team teaching" will influence its success.<sup>8</sup> If parents and the public in general are to find something meaningful in team teaching, they must be informed as to its objectives, goals, practices, and procedures. Each school that conducts team teaching should present to its patrons a well-thought-out program of this venture. Without such a program, school patrons may develop misconceptions about team teaching, may rely solely

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Arthur R. King, Jr., "Planning for Team Teaching: The Human Considerations," Journal of Secondary Education, XXXVII (October, 1962), p. 363.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 367.

on the prejudiced reports of students in the program, or may expect unrealistic improvements in educational outcomes which cannot be fulfilled by the team teaching program. In any of these instances, the public may become disenchanted with the team teaching program and cause its failure before it has had ample time to prove itself.

The practice of team teaching has diffused to many school systems before careful planning, implementation, and evaluation of it have been possible. Each team teaching situation tends to be unique. Therefore research findings from one specific experiment are not always applicable to another team teaching situation. In spite of this handicap, the spread of team teaching may be beneficial in the sense that it attracts attention to the new potential for organizing the instructional programs of schools. This attention, however, must be directed so that unrealistic demands will not be made on team teaching. A program for presenting team teaching to school patrons is therefore needed.

Because team teaching research has been primarily concerned with the designing, implementing, and evaluating phases of team teaching<sup>9</sup> little work has been done to prepare guidelines for presenting team teaching programs to the public.

#### Definition of Terms

Team teaching refers to such a wide variety of organiza-

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<sup>9</sup>Glen Heathers, "Research on Team Teaching," Team Teaching, Judson T. Shaplin and Henry F. Clds, Jr., editors (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 306.

tional practices that its meaning is confusing. Many educators feel that an effort should be made to limit its usage to situations that meet specific criteria, for example a minimum of three members on a team, a hierarchical structuring of personnel, and a spirit of 'cooperation existing among team members.<sup>10</sup>

Woodring has suggested that the term team teaching itself is a poor choice for the process it describes since "the teaching at any given moment, is done by one individual rather than by a team."<sup>11</sup> He recommended the usage of "team organization and planning" instead of team teaching.<sup>12</sup> Team teaching is the term used most often in the literature and was used in this study.

Team teaching. The cooperative effort of two or more teachers in organizing, presenting, and evaluating instructional material for the same group of students.

Hierarchical organization. Teams organized with the roles of team leader, senior teacher, regular teacher, and teacher aid defined in terms of their responsibilities on the team.

Cooperative organization. Teams without role differentiation among team members and without a designated leader.

Traditional arrangements. Organization of school

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<sup>10</sup>Judson T. Shaplin, "Cooperative Teaching: Definitions and Organizational Analysis," School Organization: Theory and Practice, Marian Pope Franklin, editor (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1967), p. 273.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.



personnel, pupils, and materials so that each teacher without the help of any other teacher, has the responsibility for providing instruction to the same group of pupils.

School patrons. A set of parents who have a child or children attending school.

Innovations in education. Deliberate, specific changes which are designed to be more helpful in meeting the goals of education than the previous manner of meeting these same goals.

Public relations. Those school activities which further public understanding of education and which provide school authorities with an understanding of public opinion in order to help the school improve its educational program. For the purpose of this study, public relations, school-community relations, and public information were used interchangeably.

Administrator. The school official charged with the responsibility for the team teaching public relations program.

Media. The transmission agents utilized to convey messages.<sup>13</sup>

### Limitations

A full and complete public relations program must be directed to the many publics that exist in a community. This study was concerned with only one of those publics, the parents whose children were chosen for a team teaching program. It is recognized that "parents" are not one public and that attitudes

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<sup>13</sup>Merle R. Sumption and Yvonne Engstrom, School-Community Relations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), p. 112.

toward a new program would differ within this group.

Another limitation was the basic assumption that providing information about a school program would engender support for it. The success of any new program is dependent on a variety of complex and interrelated factors. These factors include the overall attitude of the patrons toward their schools, the political orientation of the community, the personality of the school administrators, the leadership of school board members, and the social class, education, and economic level of the members of the community. Providing information about a new program will only partially contribute to its success.

The review of the literature on the subject of team teaching and public relations programs was limited to books, articles, and publications which were available in the Kansas State University Library.



## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Introduction

The reform movement in education, of which team teaching is a part, has attempted to provide alternatives to the existing educational system. Changes in American society have produced pressures for change in educational practices. The changes in society which have most influenced education are the knowledge explosion, the teacher shortage, the population boom, and the technical revolution.<sup>14</sup> These factors have created needs which the educational system is ill equipped to handle. New solutions are in order. One suggested way of meeting the challenges to education is to increase the teachers' productivity "(meaning his power to mediate ideas, skills, experiences, and information more widely and more effectively)."<sup>15</sup> Team teaching has emerged as one possible way to increase the productivity of teachers.

While cooperation among teachers for instructional purposes is not a new concept, experimentation with team organization began to gain publicity during the 1950's as a means of making maximum use of teacher talent. The school reorganization movement gained attention in education circles with the work of the Commission on Experimental Study of the Utilization of Staff in the Secondary School under the leadership of J. Lloyd Trump.

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<sup>14</sup>Medill Bair and Richard G. Woodward, Team Teaching in Action (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), pp. 3-7.

<sup>15</sup>W. Kenneth Richmond, The Teaching Revolution (London: Methuen and Company, 1967), p. 6.

The members of this group were appointed by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals. Under the guidance of the Commission, pilot programs using the team plan were put into operation in over one hundred secondary schools throughout the country. The Staff Utilization Studies also experimented with programmed learning, use of tape recordings, closed-circuit television, and other projects.<sup>16</sup> Through the publications of these projects, other schools have been encouraged to try team teaching.

#### Research on Team Teaching

In spite of the widespread acceptance of team teaching, research is still needed to determine to what extent, if any, it is an improvement over traditional arrangements. Both the critics and the proponents of the team plan recognize the need for improved research techniques in studying the results of team teaching. "Fifteen years of innovation in team teaching has left us with almost no research knowledge."<sup>17</sup> The existing research findings are contradictory.

To date most research has concentrated on measuring the achievement of students under the team organization as compared to the achievement of those students taught in a traditional setting. Findings on student achievement studies vary from

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<sup>16</sup>Lloyd S. Michael, "What Are We Trying to Accomplish in the Staff Utilization Studies?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, XLIII (January, 1959), pp. 5-10.

<sup>17</sup>Robert Anderson, "Staff Utilization," Review of Educational Research, XXXVII (Jun, 1967), p. 328.

one setting to another. One study indicated that students taught by a team scored significantly higher on a standardized achievement test than did students who were taught in a traditional setting.<sup>18</sup> However, another group of researchers found that students who were taught by the team method did not achieve significantly higher scores than students taught in a conventional class when the same teacher using the same course content instructed both groups.<sup>19</sup>

Many aspects of team teaching have not been adequately researched. More attention must be paid to such topics as teacher job satisfaction, teacher education, in-service effectiveness, and pupil attitudes.<sup>20</sup>

### Team Organization

There is great diversity in methods of team organization. Some teams are composed of two teachers who in loose association share responsibility for instructing a group of students in the same subject area. More complex team organizations utilize a hierarchial structure in which there is a differentiation of role among the various members of the team. These more complex

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<sup>18</sup>William Georgiades and Joan Bjelke, "Evaluation of English Achievement In A Ninth Grade, Three Period, Team Teaching Class," California Journal of Educational Research, XVII (May, 1966), p. 112.

<sup>19</sup>Ralph O. Nystrand and Frederick Bertolaet, "Allocating Human and Material Resources," Review of Educational Research XXXVII (October, 1967), p. 454.

<sup>20</sup>Philip M. Carlin, "A Current Appraisal of Team Teaching," Education, LXXXV (February, 1965), p. 349.

teams include team leaders, senior teachers, regular teachers, teacher aides, student teachers, clerical assistants, and education specialists.

Organizing students for the purpose of instruction also varies from team to team. One general characteristic of team organization, however, is flexible grouping of students. Students are usually grouped in classes that are the standard size, twenty-five to thirty students; larger than standard size, up to two hundred students or more; and smaller than standard size, six to twelve students.<sup>21</sup> In addition to grouping students for instruction, team teaching allows a number of students to engage in some form of independent study.

Some schools are organized wholly around the team plan while other schools limit its use to certain curricular offerings, certain age groups, or certain ability groups.

#### Advantages of Team Teaching

Early literature on the subject of team teaching was enthusiastic in describing the advantages of team teaching and pointing out the limitations of the conventional classroom.<sup>22</sup> Much of the early writing was concerned with defending the new programs against critical attacks. The current literature recognizes that team teaching of and by itself has not as yet been proved to be an improvement over conventional practices.

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<sup>21</sup>Dr. K. Lovell, Team Teaching (Leeds, England: Gardham-Jowett Printers, 1967), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup>Judson T. Shaplin and Henry F. Olds, Jr., Team Teaching (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1964), p. 6.

Nonetheless, there was generally a spirit of optimism that with more carefully designed studies, these advantages may be borne out through research. Some educators claimed that the importance of the team concept was in its potential for using the flexible groupings to the maximum advantage of all concerned.<sup>23</sup> Another viewpoint expressed was that most of the current reforms in education can be incorporated and integrated within the framework of team teaching.<sup>24</sup>

The literature expressed the potential advantages of team teaching in terms of benefits to teachers, students, and the school system in general. The benefits for teachers were many. They benefit from the close interaction with other teachers. Their skills are sharpened and expanded through the constructive criticism and the example offered by other team members. Their attitudes toward their work improve because they concentrate their instructional skills on those areas of the curriculum for which they are best prepared to teach. In other words they become specialists. Also they are relieved of many routine clerical duties by teacher aides. Within the team structure, teachers' differing abilities are recognized by hierarchial teaching assignments. Some teachers are good at presenting lectures while others prefer to work with students on an individual basis. Teachers of extraordinary teaching ability may assume leadership roles and receive higher salaries

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<sup>23</sup>Lovell, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>24</sup>Richmond, op. cit., p. 6.

than other teachers. During his first year, a teacher gradually assumes full teaching responsibility within the team framework. In addition, he is guided and supervised by experienced teachers.

Pupils gain in the sense that they are encouraged to develop skills in working without supervision. Their exposure to many teachers during their school careers allows them to benefit from the teaching style of many teachers.

The school system benefits in the more efficient usage of technical equipment. Audio-visual materials can be presented to a large group session rather than several small group sessions. When a change to team teaching is made, the teaching program is re-evaluated, and a desire for improvement is fostered among the members of the teaching staff.

#### Frequently Misunderstood Aspects of Team Teaching

Certain aspects of the team teaching program are open to misinterpretation. Beggs suggested that special effort be made to explain and clarify large group instruction, teacher aides, expense, and the new role of the teacher under the new plan.<sup>25</sup>

Parents have questioned the use of large group instruction. It has been regarded as an attempt to bring college instruction to the high school level.<sup>26</sup> Some parents have seen it as causing students to lose contact with their teachers. Still others have felt that it gives the teacher too much free time. Unless the

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<sup>25</sup>David W. Beggs III, Team Teaching: Bold New Venture (Indianapolis, Indiana: Unified College Press, 1964), p. 50.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.



objectives of team teaching are explained these misconceptions may lead to serious misunderstanding on the part of parents.

The use of non-professional help needs to be clarified. It does not mean that non-certified help will be instructing students. The teacher aid helps a team in its nonteaching tasks, such as monitoring corridors and cafeterias, taking attendance, proctoring study halls, mimeographing papers, grading objective tests, reading themes for mechanical errors and assisting in the library.<sup>27</sup> The teacher aid releases qualified teachers from nonteaching tasks so that they can plan and present instruction. Teacher aides are recruited from parents in the community or may be college students or clerical workers. They may be voluntary or paid workers.

The cost of incorporating a team teaching program should be presented honestly and accurately to parents. Citizens usually view with suspicion any program which will increase taxes. Anderson has noted that the team plan tends to point up inadequacies in the local educational system.<sup>28</sup> Teachers then make demands for changes and these ultimately increase expenses. The cost of team teaching varies with the design of the program. If team teaching is initiated in a limited way, with only one or two teams, costs are usually not great. However, if team teaching is to be introduced on a large scale,

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>28</sup>Shaplin and Olds, op. cit., p. 247.

the cost of education will probably rise.<sup>29</sup>

Team titles, team leader, senior teacher, master teacher, regular teacher, are new to parents. All share responsibility for the students assigned to them. Parents need to be assured that their child will not be overlooked in this more complex arrangement.

### Parental Attitudes Toward Team Teaching

Parental attitudes toward team teaching projects have been, in general, favorable. A questionnaire survey conducted by the Lexington Team Teaching Program, Lexington, Massachusetts, one of the school systems that pioneered in the implementation of team teaching, revealed the favorable attitudes of parents toward team teaching in that program.<sup>30</sup> The only area of the program in which parental reaction was not extremely favorable was with respect to "working in large groups."<sup>31</sup> The researcher explained that this was not an unexpected response since a low student to teacher ratio has been traditionally set forth as ideal by educators.

Parents of fourth grade children in Oceana, California indicated by questionnaire that they approved of team teaching. Seventy-eight per cent of the parents who returned questionnaires indicated that they would like team teaching for their

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Bair and Woodward, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.



children the following year.<sup>32</sup>

In a recent Gallup Poll, 1,634 parents received questionnaires.<sup>33</sup> The findings indicated that parents do accept educational innovations. Team teaching was favored by eighty-four per cent of those parents responding.<sup>34</sup>

The findings of these reports were not detailed enough to indicate what features of team teaching are responsible for parents' attitudes. While parents seem to be well informed and receptive to team teaching it is not possible to predict how a given community will react to the prospect of team teaching.<sup>35</sup> A mixture of feelings on the part of the public accompanies an educational innovation, a mixture of excitement, interest, doubt and confusion.<sup>36</sup> Thus careful planning on the part of an administrator wanting to introduce team teaching to his school system was recommended.

#### Importance of Public Relations

If parents are to understand and support the move to incorporate educational innovations into local schools then every effort must be made to keep them informed. Brickell found

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<sup>32</sup>Andrew S. Adams, "Operation Co-Teaching. Dateline: Oceano, California," The Elementary School Journal, LXII (January, 1962), p. 210.

<sup>33</sup>Public Wants Innovations, National Gallup Poll Shows," Nation's Schools, LXXVIII (August, 1966), p. 16.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Chaplin and Olds, op. cit., p. 171.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

that the person who implements change in school systems is most likely to be the school administrator.<sup>37</sup> It is also his responsibility to see that a public relations program is carried out. The administrator is therefore the key person in providing information to parents regarding team teaching.

The educational program of a school is too important to leave the acceptance or rejection of a new practice to chance. Neither is it wise to wait until a crisis develops before actively seeking community support. A public relations program can provide the community with an accurate account of the advantages to be gained by a team teaching program.

Because of the current criticism of educational systems, public attention is focused on schools. Schools have changed considerably since most parents were students. Duncan pointed out that many parents have what actually amounts to no point of view with regard to the modern school because their own experience was so different from that of their children.<sup>38</sup> Many parents feel that they are quite removed from the school system. There is known to exist what is commonly called the "communication gap" between school and the community. In this country, public attention has focused on the schools, but an increased understanding of the need for the changes that are taking place in the schools has not accompanied the attention.

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<sup>37</sup>Henry M. Brickell, Organizing New York State for Educational Change (Albany, New York: State Education Department, 1961), p. 24.

<sup>38</sup>Robert C. Duncan, "Needed: Leadership in Communication," New York State Education, LVI (January, 1969), p. 19.

If properly directed, the attention may bring with it greater understanding and support. Parents basically want to know two things, that their children are receiving quality education and that the school dollars are being spent wisely.<sup>39</sup> If administrators can show that team teaching allows for the fulfillment of both of these desires, support will be forthcoming.

A new idea is more readily accepted if its benefits are demonstrable.<sup>40</sup> While research in team teaching has not advanced to the point where the advantages of it are known to be indisputable, many of the schools which have tried team teaching are quite enthusiastic in their recommendations of it. An administrator does have numerous reports at his disposal of successful teams to show as evidence in favor of team teaching. It is reasonable to expect that a community will support a team teaching plan if it feels that the school system is truly trying to provide quality education and if the cost is not substantially greater than the traditional arrangement.

A public relations program in regard to team teaching begins at the point where a need for change is recognized either by citizens within the community, teachers, or the administrator. Cooperation is greatest if the community has participated in the planning process. Trump suggested that

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<sup>39</sup>Shaplin and Olds, eds., op. cit., p. 253.

<sup>40</sup>Everett M. Rogers, "The Communication of Innovations in a Complex Institution," Educational Record, XLIX (Winter 1968), p. 68.

coordinating committees including teachers, administrators, board of education members, students, community representatives, and parents be mobilized for involvement in the plans for change.<sup>41</sup>

A general knowledge of the school-community relationship and the quality of support for the schools in the past can be used as an index for gauging support or resistance to team teaching. Such factors as the adequacy of supervisory and administrative service, the adequacy of secretarial service, the supply of instructional resources, the suitability and flexibility in the physical plant, the attractiveness of salaries, and the extent of financial support serve as measures of the extent to which the community is willing to support its schools.<sup>42</sup> If school-community relations have been constructive and harmonious in the past then an administrator need not be unduly concerned about opposition to a new program on the part of school patrons. Also the knowledge that most team teaching pilot projects have continued without significant community objection should allow an administrator to begin plans for initiating team teaching. As the program begins to take shape, parents and the community at large need to be involved.

#### Appraisal of a Public Relations Program

The school public relations program is an on-going one. School personnel must periodically check to see that it is

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<sup>41</sup>Trump and Baynham, op. cit., p. 125.

<sup>42</sup>Shaplin and Olds, eds., op. cit., p. 184-187.

achieving its purposes. If that judgement is based upon the casual observations of school personnel, the conclusions may be biased and inaccurate.

Kindred has suggested that observations, records, telephone surveys, panels, questionnaires,<sup>43</sup> checklists, rating scales, and opinion polls are appropriate techniques for collecting and measuring the results of public relations programs.<sup>44</sup> The objectives of these inventories should be explained so that parents will want to cooperate and will feel that they have a share in improving their local schools.

If the team teaching program is to operate as effectively as possible there must be continuous communication between parents and the school. It is not enough to provide information about the program to parents; the schools must be alert to parents' responses to that information and to the program itself. If negative responses are received, school personnel can then reevaluate the team program and/or provide additional information to parents in an attempt to change their attitudes.

#### Program Dissemination Techniques

Numerous community surveys have revealed that the public is poorly informed about its schools. One possible cause for this lack of information on the part of the public is that the dissemination of information about school programs is inadequate.

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<sup>43</sup>See Appendix

<sup>44</sup>Leslie W. Kindred, School Public Relations. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957), p. 415-418.

The channels of communication open to the school in providing information about its programs can be classified as two types; those which involve person to person communication and those which involve mass communication. The discussion of the communication techniques that follows is by no means exhaustive nor complete, but it does represent the most frequently used techniques as discussed in thirteen books and six periodicals on the subject of school public relations.

Person to person communication. Person to person communication is the most widely used and the most effective means of communicating.<sup>45</sup> Communications studies have shown that the recipient of information can gain a better understanding of what the sender is trying to say, if he has the opportunity to request clarification.<sup>46</sup> The most commonly used channels of person to person communication available to schools are as follows: (1) letters, (2) telephone conversations, (3) informal conversations, (4) organized meetings, (5) parent-teacher conferences, (6) special school sponsored programs, and (7) pupils.

The personal letter is a very effective means of reaching parents. Sent through the mail, it is assured of reaching its destination. Most parents will read a letter which has been addressed to them. In one study, the letter was rated as the second most used source of information about schools received

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<sup>45</sup>Gordon E. McCloskey, Education and Public Understanding (second edition; New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 78.

<sup>46</sup>Duncan, op. cit., p. 20.



by parents.<sup>47</sup>

The authorship of a letter should be clear to the recipient.<sup>48</sup> All letters should be signed personally above the typed signature. This establishes the authority and the source of the letter. In a large school system, the principal rather than the superintendent should sign the letter as the superintendent may be virtually unknown to parents.<sup>49</sup>

Letters to parents may be individually typed or mass-produced as with duplicating processes. Kindred suggests that unless duplicating can be done very well, it is better to use photo off-set or letter press to achieve a nice appearing letter.<sup>50</sup> No matter which technique is used, a standardized, impersonal-sounding letter should be avoided.

Team teaching schools have used the personal letter to notify parents of the selection of their child for the team program.<sup>51</sup> The personal letter may also be used to invite parents to a meeting or to clarify a certain point about the team program.

Thus letters signed by the principal or superintendent

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<sup>47</sup>Harold Van Winkle, "The Crux of Parent-School Relations: Communications," School Executive, LXXVI (December, 1956), pp. 47-48.

<sup>48</sup>Arthur B. Moehlman and James A. van Zwoll, School Public Relations (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), p. 493.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Kindred, op. cit., p. 144.

<sup>51</sup>Carl H. Peterson, Effective Team Teaching: The Easton Area High School Program (West Nyak, New York: Parker Publishing Company, 1966), p. 181.

should be sent to parents to notify them of the selection of their child for the team program. Additional uses may include notifying parents of meetings to discuss team teaching and clarifying the team program.

Jones states that telephone conversations with parents should be limited to one of the following five situations: to secure information about the pupil or his health, to arrange for a conference with the parent, to invite the parent to visit school, to ask the parent to accept a school responsibility, or to talk about a mutual school problem.<sup>52</sup> Long telephone discussions or heated debates should be avoided. Therefore, a discussion of team teaching which would tie up the telephone for some length of time would not be justified. Establishing a time for a personal conference with one of the team teachers or asking a parent to help arrange a program for PTA or another organization regarding team teaching would be appropriate.

Thus telephone conversations with parents regarding team teaching should be in the form of making an appointment for a personal conference, issuing an invitation to a meeting where the topic will be discussed or discussing the subject briefly.

Every person who has an official connection with the school is in essence a means of communicating information about a new school program. Board members, teachers, and school employees, in their conversations with members of the community, may discuss the new program and thereby influence the attitudes

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<sup>52</sup>James J. Jones, School Public Relations (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1966), p. 70.



of others.

Thus it is important to acquaint teachers, board members, and school employees with their potential for influencing public opinion and to provide information for them in terms of objectives, practices, and anticipated outcomes of the team teaching program.

The potential for disseminating information about the instructional program of a school through organized community groups is very great. Moehlman and van Zwoll list the following eight types of organizations that can prove helpful to the school in terms of school-community relations: (1) civic, (2) cultural, (3) economic, (4) political, (5) professional, (6) social, (7) women's groups, and (8) welfare groups.<sup>53</sup> In addition to these community groups is the parent-teacher organization. Not all parents belong to parent-teacher organizations. Those who do are likely to be among the first parents to become acquainted with team teaching. Parent-teacher groups should not be overlooked as a means of providing information about a new program, but neither should they be depended upon to reach all parents in the community.

Administrators have found that a speaker's bureau is effective in providing information to community groups.<sup>54</sup> Staff members usually volunteer for this service which involves speaking to civic organizations on a topic of interest. Adminis-

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<sup>53</sup>Moehlman and van Zwoll, op. cit., pp. 416-426.

<sup>54</sup>Kindred, op. cit., p. 376.

trators notify organizations by mail of the availability of this service.

Parent-teacher groups may want to feature team teaching as a discussion and program topic for one of their general meetings or a special PTA group might study team teaching and present the results to the entire membership. One school that is using team teaching found it helpful to invite a consultant that had spoken to the school staff during the day to speak at an evening meeting for parents.<sup>55</sup>

Thus school personnel should encourage organized groups in the community to devote programs to the topic of team teaching. Teachers with information regarding the team program should be included in the speakers bureau and should be available for speeches at the request of clubs and organizations.

Individual parent-teacher conferences provide one of the best means of explaining the instructional program to parents. One or both parents can schedule an appointment with their child's teacher or teachers to discuss his progress and to gain a better understanding of the school's program. The conference may also serve as an opportunity to clear up any misunderstanding that a parent has about his child's program. Kindred suggests that appointments be scheduled so that the working parent has an opportunity to participate also.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Peterson, op. cit., p. 181.

<sup>56</sup>Leslie W. Kindred, How to Tell the School Story (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), p. 310.

Often the large number of students for whom teachers are responsible, limits the number of parent-teacher conferences that may be held. A special group meeting for the parents whose children are in a team program can prove to be a time-saving and satisfactory way of explaining a new program to parents. At Easton Area High School, Pennsylvania, parents are asked to attend an orientation meeting when their children are chosen for the team program.<sup>57</sup>

Thus parent-teacher conferences should be utilized to explain the team program, to discuss the effects of the program on the student, and to clear up any misunderstanding about the program that may have developed in the community.

Special school sponsored programs offer an opportunity for parents to gain information about the school. Many schools have featured back-to-school nights for parents, exhibits, and demonstrations. A demonstration of team teaching practices can be planned to help parents visualize the new method of instruction. After the program is explained in a large group session, the group can be divided into small seminar groups to discuss the parents' questions. A teacher from the team should be present in each group to lead discussion. This arrangement allows parents to participate in the flexible grouping idea which is a part of team teaching. Brownell, Gans, and Maroon state that "It is unusual to find parents who, if given the opportunity, do not try to understand the purpose and programs

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<sup>57</sup>Peterson, op. cit., p. 181.

of instruction. What better way can education guide public opinion than to present a part of the actual activity program in the form of a demonstration?"<sup>58</sup>

Exhibits which use visual aides to present the team program to parents provide a concrete way of explaining the new programs. Pictures, slides, and tape recordings can be used for this purpose.

Thus administrators should plan special school-sponsored programs such as back-to-school nights, demonstrations, and exhibits which can provide concrete means of informing parents about team teaching.

Educators have long recognized that pupils are a very important channel of communication about schools. In one early study, Van Winkle concluded that parents rely on their children to a large extent for school information.<sup>59</sup> Parents and school superintendents ranked children as the most-used source of information about school. In this same study letters and duplicated bulletins were rated second, and newspapers third. These rankings were not consistent when findings were broken down according to individual school districts rather than reported collectively.<sup>60</sup> The Van Winkle study suggested that parents' concepts of the proper channels of communication

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<sup>58</sup>Clifford L. Brownell, Leo Gans, and Tufie Z. Maroon, Public Relations in Education: A Textbook for Teachers (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1955), p. 219.

<sup>59</sup>Van Winkle, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

varied from one community to another. A more recent questionnaire study of one thousand parents of high school students challenges the concept that the child is the best channel of communication between school and the home. The findings of this study revealed that parents, when given a choice of the source of their information prefer to receive it from sources other than their son or daughter.<sup>61</sup>

Nonetheless it is still accepted as true that what a student knows and thinks about his school becomes known to the community and is often given credence as a primary source of information.

Thus it is important to provide orientation for students regarding the objectives, practices, and expected outcomes of a team teaching program as students are considered to be one of the sources of information about the school.

Mass communication. The number and diversity of mass media available to the school is almost overwhelming.<sup>62</sup> Even the smallest community will probably have a weekly newspaper available to its citizens. Schools have control over some of the media at their disposal, school newspapers, bulletins, and brochures. The majority of the media is not sponsored by the school however. This includes newspapers, television, radio, and motion pictures, slides, and film strips. The mass media

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<sup>61</sup>Richard Endre Anderson, "Home School Communications: Information and Media Preferred by Parents of Selected Colorado High School Students" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, 1967).

<sup>62</sup>Sumption and Engstrom, op. cit., p. 116.

are most useful and economical when the purpose of using them is to reach a large audience in a short period of time.

Newspapers provide a strong link between the school and the community. All authorities in the public relations field agree that they are powerful public relations tools. However, Moehlman and van Zwoll contend that the newspaper has been supplanted by radio and television as the leading medium for school publicity, although they noted that it is still an important molders of public opinion in rural communities.<sup>63</sup> Others describe community newspapers as heading the list of non-school sponsored media in terms of importance.<sup>64</sup>

The most effective use of newspapers can be achieved by providing well-written, timely news releases about school events. Another way to assure good coverage of school news is to develop a good relationship with the editor. Newspapers can provide information to the public about the schools through regular news coverage, feature articles, weekly school columns, editorials, and "letters to the editor" sections.

Team teaching is a departure from the traditional teaching arrangement and is therefore "news." It is very likely that most newspapers would be willing to do a feature article on team teaching. News coverage of school board meetings or programs in which team teaching is the main topic is also possible.

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<sup>63</sup>Moehlman, et. al., op. cit. p. 454.

<sup>64</sup>Sumption and Engstrom, op. cit., p. 120.



Thus schools should consider the newspaper one of their strongest links to the community. The most effective use of the medium can be achieved by providing accurate, well written news releases and by keeping the editor informed of school events and school policy. Team teaching is a departure from traditional teaching arrangements and is therefore considered newsworthy.

Practically every community with a population of thirty-five thousand or more is served by a radio station which provides coverage for the schools within its listening area.<sup>65</sup> On the average at least one person in a family listens to the radio for about two hours each day. Radio is therefore a popular channel of communication that reaches every segment of the population.

Radio stations are required by the Federal Communication Commission to devote a portion of their air time to news "in the public interest." Schools traditionally have received a large portion of this time. This free time may be used by schools in the form of spot announcements, a special program prepared by the station or the school, or a feature of a regularly scheduled program. Dapper suggests that the key to successful radio coverage, as it is with successful newspaper coverage, lies in securing the cooperation of the news and program editors.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>66</sup>Gloria Dapper, Public Relations for Educators (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 88.

Schools may also purchase radio time or attract a sponsor that will pay for their programs.

Thus information about school programs can be broadcast to the public via the free air time offered by radio stations "in the public interest," or it may be purchased by the school or by a sponsor.

Recent surveys reveal that one or more family members view television for about six hours during the day and evening. Kindred states that "television appears to offer exceptional possibilities for the diffusion of knowledge, culture and the molding of public opinion. The dimension of sight as well as sound personalizes the message that is conveyed."<sup>67</sup>

One of the largest deterrants to the use of television is high cost of air time. Television offers air time "in the public interest" as does radio. This time is often at inconvenient hours such as during the noon hour on Sundays. However, parents will watch a program at an inconvenient hour if their child is involved.

Demeter has listed six basic approaches to the use of television for schools. These approaches include integrating a program with an existing show; spot, including news, announcements which can take the form of slides, a piece of copy, a filmed segment or sound on film and which usually vary from ten seconds to one minute; programs prepared by other groups such as the National Education Association; school planned and pro-

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<sup>67</sup>Kindred, How to Tell the School Story, p. 358.



duced shows; television planned and produced shows; and reading announcements put out regularly by one of the many education organizations.<sup>68</sup>

Thus television provides the opportunity for schools to disseminate information to the public regarding a team teaching program free of charge by integrating a program with an existing show, preparing spot announcements, using programs prepared by other groups as "public interest" time, or convincing the station to prepare and produce a program at its own expense. Programs may also be presented by purchasing air time or attracting a sponsor who will do so.

Motion pictures, slides, films, tape recordings, and other audio-visual aides are quite effective as channels of communication with the public. "Without doubt, audio-visual aides are the most effective media for mass communication today," Kindred states. "Film strips and slides are visual aides which school systems can employ, regardless of their size, to acquaint the public with education in the local community."<sup>69</sup>

Audio-visual aides when coupled with person to person communication in the form of speeches or organized meetings can bring visually to school patrons the team teaching experience. Without charts, pictures, slides, and seating arrangements, the team organization may be hard for parents to visualize. The

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<sup>68</sup>Leslie W. Kindred (ed.), Communications Research and School-Community Relations (Philadelphia: Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, Temple University, 1965), p. 197.

<sup>69</sup>Kindred, School Public Relations, p. 340.

use of the same type of equipment that is used with large group instruction is helpful; overhead projectors, slides, and films. Team teaching practices can be demonstrated as the leader explains the program to parents.

"With the possible exception of television, the school-made motion picture is the best audio-visual device a school can employ in furnishing information for the public."<sup>70</sup> It permits the showing of actual conditions and practices. Another of the advantages of motion pictures is that they allow a great deal of material to be presented at one time, and this material is easily understood and assimilated by the viewer.<sup>71</sup> "The impressions left by motion pictures have a lasting and influential effect upon the formation of attitudes and opinions."<sup>72</sup> The plan for producing a school made film must be carefully reviewed so that a visually pleasing product with a clear message will be produced. Schools may purchase professionally produced films about their program; however, the cost would be prohibitive to most school systems. The rule of thumb for the production of a color, sound movie is \$1,000.00 a minute.

Schools may also rent films from film libraries which tell the school story. The film "And No Bells Ring" was produced by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals and can be rented.

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 348.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

Thus motion pictures, slides, film strips, tape recorders and other audio-visual aides help parents visualize the new instructional program. School personnel can be trained to produce quality audio-visual aides at a fraction of the cost of professionally prepared ones.

School newspapers reach most of the parents in a community. The attitudes and ideas of many people are influenced by school newspapers. Surveys show that school newspapers when brought home by pupils are read by three-fourths of the parents and that they rely on them for announcements of parent-teacher association meetings and student events.<sup>73</sup>

Thus the school newspaper provides a means by which information about team teaching can reach a majority of parents of students.

School publications of all sorts may be used to provide information to parents regarding school programs. The most common school-sponsored publications include student and parent handbooks, annual school reports, and brochures on specific topics.

Both secondary and elementary schools often supply handbooks for parents. Parents of elementary students usually receive a handbook especially published for them while parents of secondary school students usually receive student handbooks. Information contained in the handbooks includes beginning and closing hours, vacation dates, rules governing absence and

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., pp. 272-273.

tardiness, health requirements, conferences with teachers, plus the school's philosophy and objectives, methods of teaching and opportunities for home-school cooperation.<sup>74</sup> A section on the new team teaching program could be appropriately inserted under the heading of methods of teaching.

Thus a section regarding a team teaching program should be inserted in the student or parent handbook published by the school.

Printed brochures which are distributed to parents or to the public in a school district may take the form of an annual report which is required by law in some states or a special publication used to provide information about one particular issue. Both may be used to inform parents of a team teaching program. According to Sumption and Engstrom, the annual report is a neglected medium of communication with the public.<sup>75</sup> More and more school districts however, are making their report considerably more attractive and readable by printing it in color and using photography. Dapper suggests that brochures should be made attractive yet modest looking. She also warns against apparent extravagance in school publications. Patrons will not be pleased if their tax dollars are used to print an expensive brochure.<sup>76</sup>

After a team plan has been in existence for several years,

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<sup>74</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>75</sup>Sumption and Engstrom, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>76</sup>Dapper, op. cit., p. 108.

some schools decide to print brochures of their particular plan.<sup>77</sup> Schools that are introducing a team project will adapt their original team teaching design as experience suggests better ways of functioning. Brochures that in a general way describe the team plan would be useful; however, any expense for printed matter that will become irrelevant to the program after a short period of time should be avoided.

Most textbooks in public relations suggest that duplicating processes can be used for providing inexpensive materials for dissemination of information provided that it is well done. Carelessly prepared mailouts and handouts are more of a hindrance than a help to public relations work since they convey a lack of pride and a lack of concern in the product. If materials are to be used for a number of years, it might be well to invest in a professionally laid out and printed brochure.

Thus a portion of the superintendent's annual report may be devoted to the introduction of team teaching in the school system. Also a special publication may be prepared to inform the community of the new team program providing it is tastefully yet modestly printed.

While mass communication provides a powerful tool for providing information about the school to the community, it has several limitations. First it provides for one-way communication only. It is possible for a parent or member of the

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<sup>77</sup>Nicholas C. Polos, The Dynamics of Team Teaching (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1965), p. 129.

community to call the school or to write the editor of a newspaper after reading or hearing a report, but this is infrequently done. Mass communication does not provide the immediate clarification of statements that person to person communication provides.

A second disadvantage of mass communication is that it directs its message to the public as a whole. It does not differentiate among receiver of the message.<sup>78</sup> In addition, the receiver of the message may inaccurately interpret it.

One of the advantages of the mass media over person to person communication is that mass media reach a large number of people in a short period of time. One writer gave this example of the advantage of mass media, "A report of a change in the school curriculum or method of teaching science appearing in the local newspaper may be read by sixty per cent of the people in a community in one day. To reach the same number of people by person to person contacts might take months."<sup>79</sup> However, in small communities word of mouth communication will be very effective and reliance on the mass media to reach most of the community is not necessary.<sup>80</sup>

Administrators of schools that have initiated team teaching have used a combination of person to person communication and mass communication. One school first focused attention on

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<sup>78</sup>Sumption and Engstrom, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

<sup>80</sup>McCloskey, op. cit., p. 259.

the organizational plan of team teaching through news releases to the various media. Later meetings were arranged whereby parents were invited to participate in person to person communication.<sup>81</sup>

Duncan contends that school patrons are selective in the media that they use. "Unless the message is repeated through a variety of means of communication, the information may be lost to many people."<sup>82</sup> The fact that the message is being repeated and the fact that it appears in a great variety of media tends to give more importance and prestige.<sup>83</sup> All other things being equal, a suggestion carried by mass media plus face to face reinforcement is more likely to be accepted than a suggestion carried by either alone.

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<sup>81</sup>Peterson, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>82</sup>Duncan, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.



## SUMMARIZATION OF PROGRAM DISSEMINATION TECHNIQUES

### Person to Person Communication

Letters. Letters signed by the principal or superintendent should be sent to parents to notify them of the selection of their child for the team program. Additional uses may include notifying parents of meetings to discuss team teaching and clarifying the team program.

Telephone conversations. Telephone conversations with parents regarding team teaching should be in the form of making an appointment for a personal conference, issuing an invitation to a meeting where the topic will be discussed, or discussing the subject briefly.

Informal conversations. Teachers, board members, and school employees should be made aware of their potential for influencing public opinion. They should be given information regarding the objectives, practices, and anticipated outcomes of the team teaching program.

Organized meetings. School personnel should encourage organized groups in the community to devote programs to the topic of team teaching. Teachers with information regarding the team program should be included in the speakers bureau and should be available for speeches at the request of clubs and organizations.

Parent-teacher conferences. Parent-teacher conferences should be utilized to explain the team program, to discuss the effects of the program on the student, and to clear up any mis-

understanding about the program that may have developed in the community.

Special school sponsored programs. Administrators should plan special school-sponsored programs such as back-to-school nights, demonstrations, and exhibits which can provide concrete means of informing parents about team teaching.

Pupils. Administrators should provide orientation for students regarding the objectives, practices, and expected outcomes of a team teaching program. Students are considered as a primary source of information about the school.

#### Mass Communication

Newspapers. Schools should consider the newspaper as one of their strongest links to the community. The most effective use of the medium can be achieved by providing accurate, well written news releases and by keeping the editor informed of school events and school policy. Team teaching is a departure from traditional teaching arrangements and is therefore considered a newsworthy topic.

Radio. Radio broadcasts reach every segment of the population. Information about school programs can be broadcast to the public via the free air time offered by radio stations "in the public interest," or it may be purchased by the school or by a sponsor.

Television. Television provides the opportunity for schools to disseminate information to the public regarding a team teaching program free of charge by integrating a program

with an existing show, preparing spot announcements, using programs prepared by other groups as "public interest" time, or by convincing the station to prepare and produce a program at its own expense. Programs may also be presented by purchasing air time or by attracting a sponsor who will do so.

Audio-visual aides. Motion pictures, slides, film strips, tape recorders, and other audio-visual aides help parents to visualize the new instructional program. School personnel can be trained to produce quality audio-visual aides at a fraction of the cost of professionally prepared ones.

School newspapers. School newspapers provide a means by which information about team teaching can reach a majority of parents of students.

Parent and student handbooks. A section regarding a team teaching program should be inserted in the student or parent handbook published by the school.

Printed brochures. A portion of the superintendent's annual report may be devoted to the introduction of team teaching in the school system. Also a special publication may be prepared to inform the community of the new team program provided that it is tastefully yet modestly printed.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A review of thirteen books and six articles pertaining to school public relations and public relations in regard to team teaching was made to establish the most effective ways of disseminating information to school patrons. Two measures were used to determine whether a news medium was effective (1) the maximum number of parents that would be reached and (2) the degree to which it permitted a two-way communication system between school personnel and parents. The ideal situation was considered to be one in which the maximum number of parents could be reached with a disseminating technique that permitted two-way communication.

The personal letter was considered to be the best means of reaching the most parents. A letter could be sent to each parent whose child was in the team program. The likelihood that it would be opened and read was considered to be good since most parents have an interest in school functions which directly effect their children. The letter should come from the office of the principal or superintendent so that the importance of the message would be reflected in the source.

The school newspaper enters a majority of the homes of parents with children in school. The parent would be less likely to read an article on team teaching in the school newspaper than he would be to read a letter. There would be many articles to attract the parent's attention. The person to person aspect of communication would also be absent. Also the

school newspaper is usually written by students and is directed to the student population.

The disadvantage of the letter and the school newspaper was considered to be the one-way nature of the communication. There is no opportunity for a school administrator to get a reaction from the parents nor is the parent able to ask questions about the message he received.

Radio and television are very effective in reaching a large percentage of the community at large. Over ninety-eight per cent of the homes in the United States have at least one radio.<sup>84</sup> One person in the family on the average listens to the radio about two hours each day. More than eighty per cent of the homes in this country have at least one television.<sup>85</sup> Television is viewed approximately six hours daily by one or more members of the family. However, not all parents would view the particular broadcast regarding the team program. Broadcasts would have to be frequent in order to reach the same number of people as are reached by a personal letter or the school newspaper. It is unlikely that radio and television stations would devote the air time necessary to reach a large number of people directly involved in the team program. Therefore radio and television were considered less effective than a letter and perhaps less effective than the school newspaper in reaching every parent.

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<sup>84</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

The newspaper is one of the best channels of communication for school news. Almost everyone reads one or more newspapers each day. More information is gained from it than from any other single source.<sup>86</sup> Therefore it is very powerful in shaping public opinion toward the school. School patrons are selective in the articles that they read. They may or may not read the article concerning team teaching. It is very likely that a parent will read the article if his son or daughter is in the team program. Newspapers were considered to be slightly less effective in reaching the same number of parents than personal letters, but were considered more effective in reaching parents than radio and television. Newspapers, too, are one-way communication. Since public relations strives for two-way communication, they were considered less effective than person to person communication.

General meetings in which all parents have an opportunity to hear and see explanations of the program were considered to be most effective in terms of the two-way communication criteria. However, this method of giving information regarding team teaching is limited in the number of parents that it reaches. Whether a parent receives the information depends on his attendance at the meeting. Those parents who are not motivated to attend meetings miss any information at all if this is the only method used. Also those people who hold different views from those which are likely to be expressed at the meeting will

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

probably not attend.

Programs providing information to existing organized groups in the community are helpful in that they generate interest in and discussion of the new program. Since there are so many different groups in any one community, it would be necessary for the administrator to call upon school board members and members of a public relations advisory committee to reach them all. These person to person contacts are effective in providing information to the community regarding team teaching. However, they require the expenditure of many man hours and should be incorporated in the total public relations program of a school.

Each community has a variety of communications resources available to it. The administrator of a team teaching program will need to select those channels of communication which will best serve his objectives. The effectiveness of the school-communication system will depend in some measure on the availability of media and the nature of their use. It is not possible to say that one particular medium is the best one to use at all times and under all circumstances. A message that is very effectively transmitted by one medium may be less effective in another. No one medium can be expected to do the entire job of disseminating information to school patrons. "A constellation of media, each medium supplementing the others, usually is required to achieve comprehensive coverage."<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 63.



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## APPENDIX A

To help us classify the results of this study, may I ask you some questions about yourself? Remember that the information you give will be confidential.

Please circle the best answer or answer the question briefly in the space provided.

1. What is your relationship to the student?

Mother

Father

Guardian

2. What is your age group?

Under 30 years    30-40 years    40-50 years    Over 50 years

3. If you are the guardian, what is your sex?

Male

Female

4. What is your marital status?

Married

Divorced

Widowed

5. What is the occupation of the head of the household? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What was the last year of school that you completed? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did you attend "Parent's Night" at Manhattan Junior High School last fall?

Yes

No

8. What grade does your son or daughter have in American history this year?

A

B

C

D

F

Thank you for taking time to complete this part of the questionnaire.

If you do not have any information about team teaching at Manhattan Junior High School, please mark (X) the square below and return the questionnaire.

☐ No information

If you do have information about the team teaching program at Manhattan Junior High, please continue with the questions on the next pages.



The following questions are concerned with team teaching in American history at Manhattan Junior High School. Please mark an "X" in the appropriate blank. Mark only one "X" unless otherwise directed.

1. Recently as a result of research there have been a great number of suggestions for new ways of doing things in education. Do you feel that the schools should try out these new ideas in the instructional program or do you feel that the schools should continue with the traditional form?

\_\_\_\_\_ Schools should try out new ideas.

\_\_\_\_\_ No opinion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Schools should continue with the traditional form.

2. Team teaching is a new idea for teaching children. Which of the following statements best describes your feeling about team teaching?

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not favor team teaching.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have no opinion about team teaching.

\_\_\_\_\_ I approve of team teaching.

3. At the present time only American history is taught by a team of teachers. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about other subjects being taught by a team of teachers.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to see all subjects taught by teams.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to see some but not all subjects taught by teams. Which ones?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would not like any subjects taught by teams.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have no opinion on this question.

4. Compared to the regular classroom, how much attention from his teacher does your child get under the team teaching organization?

\_\_\_\_\_ More attention.

\_\_\_\_\_ About the same amount of attention.

\_\_\_\_\_ Less attention.

5. Are you pleased with your child's progress in American history under the team plan?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ Uncertain

\_\_\_\_\_ No

6. Would you like to have your child enrolled next year in a class taught by a team of teachers?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ Uncertain

\_\_\_\_\_ No

7. Were the words "team teaching" new to you at the time your child enrolled in American history or had you heard about this concept before that time?

\_\_\_\_\_ New word

\_\_\_\_\_ Uncertain

\_\_\_\_\_ Had heard term before

8. Please consider the following features of the team teaching program. Check (X) your reaction to each feature in the box provided at the right.

	Like	Do not like	Uncertain
A. Classes arranged so that one teacher with specialized knowledge presents a lesson to a large group of students.			
B. Classes arranged so that students can be divided into small discussion groups with members of the teaching team in each group.			
C. Lessons planned so that students can work on a special project independently.			
D. Classes arranged so that students are taught by more than one member of the teaching team during the year.			

9. Do you see any value in having meetings for parents in which administrators or teachers explain a team teaching program?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Uncertain  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No
10. Would you attend a meeting like the one suggested in Question 9, if it were scheduled?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Uncertain  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No
11. How did you find out about the team teaching program at Manhattan Junior High School? (Check all that apply).
- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| _____ Newspaper      | _____ Other parents |
| _____ Radio          | _____ Own child     |
| _____ Parent's Night | _____ Other _____   |
- (Please specify)
12. How could the school help you understand team teaching? (Check all that apply).
- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ PTA program on team teaching |                                 |
| _____ Letter from school           | _____ Special home room meeting |
| _____ News bulletin                | _____ Radio program             |
|                                    | _____ Demonstration meeting     |
|                                    | _____ Other _____               |
- (Please specify)
13. Is there something about team teaching you particularly like? (Write your answer in the space provided).
14. Is there perhaps, also something about team teaching that you do not like so much? (Write your answer in the space provided).

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. May I remind you to return it in the stamped, addressed envelope by April 17, 1969.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION  
DISSEMINATION TECHNIQUES FOR A TEAM TEACHING PROGRAM

by

JANE ANN DAVIS

B. A., Kansas State University, 1964

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1969

The rapid changes that American society is experiencing are reflected in the pressures for change in the educational system. For the past two decades the reform movement in education has gained impetus in its work to reorganize the existing educational structure. Team teaching is an organizational arrangement which has emerged from this movement.

As the public schools seek to adjust to the needs of a changing society, parents need to be assisted in understanding these changes and the responses that the schools are making to these changes.

The purpose of this study was to review the literature pertaining to the public relations dimension of team teaching. More specifically, the purpose was to establish criterion measures pertaining to ways of disseminating team teaching information to school patrons.

A review of thirteen books and six articles pertaining to school public relations and public relations in regard to team teaching was made to establish the most effective ways of disseminating information to school patrons. Techniques for disseminating information about school programs were placed in one of two classifications, person to person communication and mass communication. The following seven commonly used channels of person to person communication were discussed: (1) letters, (2) telephone conversations, (3) informal conversations, (4) organized meetings, (5) parent-teacher conferences, (6) special school-sponsored programs, and (7) pupils. Techniques for disseminating team teaching information to school patrons were

established.

Seven channels of mass communication were discussed and techniques for disseminating team teaching information to school patrons utilizing each of these were established. Channels of mass communication which appear in the literature are (1) newspapers, (2) radio, (3) television, (4) audio-visual aides, (5) school newspapers, (6) parent and student handbooks, and (7) printed brochures.

Two measures were used to determine whether a news medium was effective in disseminating team teaching information to parents, (1) the maximum number of parents that would be reached, and (2) the degree to which the medium permitted two-way communication between the school and the home.

The personal letter was considered to be the best means of reaching the greatest number of parents. The school newspaper, radio, and television were considered less effective in reaching parents than the personal letter because messages sent through the mass communication channels are less personal and are not assured of reaching every parent. Of the mass media communication channels, newspapers were considered to be an excellent way of reaching parents.

Personal letters, newspapers, radio, and television are all one-way communication. Their effectiveness in providing parents with information about a team teaching program is limited by the fact that they do not allow parents to ask questions nor do they allow school officials to clarify messages.

General orientation meetings for parents in which they

hear and see explanations of the program were considered to be most effective in terms of the two-way communication measure. Since many parents could not or would not attend a meeting, these parents would miss any information at all if this were the only method used.

The use of more than one medium to inform parents about a team teaching program was considered necessary. Comprehensive coverage could not be achieved through a single medium alone. The use of both mass communication and person to person communication was recommended.