TEXAS EDUCATIONAL REFORM: A STUDY
OF THE EFFECTS OF MANDATED
TESTING IN TEXAS

THESIS

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By

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The problem of the study was to examine the effects of Texas legislated basic skills testing as the effects relate to teachers, administrators, and local school districts.

Questionnaires consisting of thirty questions were mailed to a stratified random sample of 120 educators from all twenty Regional Service Centers in Texas. Both teachers and administrators were included in the sample. Factual information and personal opinions were solicited to determine how educators and local school districts have been responding to the testing reform directives. Responses of educational groups and demographic types were compared using the chi-square test and presented in descriptive and tabular form. Nine findings, nine conclusions, and six recommendations resulted from the study.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Significance

The founding fathers fashioned a federal system of government which divided power of policy-making and implementation between the national, state, and local governments. Under the federal system, public education has, from the first years of the nation, been the responsibility of state and local governments. Historically, when local governments have not responded to challenges, state and federal governments have prodded local governments into change through mandates. Thus, legislative government has emerged to become an important force to move the educational system forward, sometimes under conditions created by crises (Mauney & Gray, 1989).

Consistent with the authority vested to states in the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the Texas Constitution of 1876 established the legality of a public system in the state of Texas giving the legislature considerable authority over public education and the nearly eleven hundred school districts in the state. Statutes passed by the Texas Legislature to implement Article VII of the Texas Constitution place most of the state's
educational laws together in the form of the Texas Education Code (TEC). The Texas legislature, therefore, is authorized to establish mandates to correct problems as they deem necessary to initiate reforms in education (Kemerer, 1986).

During the 1980's many states moved toward educational reform as a political movement swept across the land that had its roots in the reaction to public opinion and documents such as the release of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (1983). This particular report, commissioned by the federal government, alarmingly concluded that the nation's educational system was placing the national interests at risk. Politicians on the state level responded legislatively to the alarming disclosure that education was somehow tied to the country's national security. Texas was no exception. Nationally, between 1983 and 1985 state legislatures enacted more than 700 statues mandating tests, rules, and regulations to reform from the statehouse what was wrong with the local school district (Futrell, 1989). Although the federal government has limited authority over education, a climate conducive to change in educational policy-making had been created that would be initiated at the state and local level (Glasman, 1988). Thus, an increase in state involvement became evident due to factors such as a greater dependence
on funding, reduction of the federal role in education, and assumption of larger roles by governors and state legislatures (Love, 1984).

It was not surprising that testing became a part of most reform measures passed in state legislatures. As far back as the 1890s tests were developed to determine the effectiveness of public education. During the 1960s, testing was used when the federal level of the government needed to establish measurements on the local level to gather evidence of the effectiveness of the federal Title I educational programs developed through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. During the 1970s, momentum for testing continued as legislatures demanded educational accountability, thus providing the impetus for a growing number of criteria or curriculum referenced tests. Legislatures across the land installed statewide testing programs during this pre-'80s era (Denton, 1989).

As the call for legislative reform continued to be proclaimed throughout the land into the next decade, the Texas legislature moved to revise the Texas Education Code in a broad sweeping measure in the form of House Bill 72 (The Educational Reform Act of 1984). These revisions directly affected the Central Education Agency (Texas Education Agency, TEA), school boards, and school personnel. Although local school districts retained considerable authority to operate schools, House Bill 72
issued directives from the state level that resulted in a reduction of autonomy of the local school district (Kemerer, 1986).

The first statewide assessment program for Texas was instituted in 1980 prior to House Bill 72 in the form of the, Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS). TABS was created to satisfy the legislative requirements that student performance be assessed. Revised and strengthened, the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) test replaced TABS in 1985 to test minimum skills in reading, writing, and mathematics as directed by section 21.551 of House Bill 72. Beginning in October, 1990, for the period of 1990-1995 the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was developed to replace the TEAMS test. TAAS will be administered to students in grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 in compliance with the rules and procedures for implementation of Section 21.101 of the Texas Education Code (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, forward). The statewide testing of students of House Bill 72 culminates with the 12th grade exit test that Texas students must pass to show mastery of basic skills to meet graduation requirements (Kemerer, 1986).

Although Texas is but one of many states that have mandated educational reform that includes mandated testing, it is clear that the intent of the initiatives are based on concern for the public educational system. Yet,
researchers and policymakers remain divided on the wisdom of mandating change from the state level. Questions still linger concerning the effectiveness of such reforms. Will local school districts be able to successfully integrate reform directives into meaningful changes (Kemerer, 1986)?

Evaluation is a necessary step that must occur to answer such questions. Generally, evaluation concerning policy of the 1980s reform efforts has occurred at the state level with less evaluation at the local school district level. To examine the ramifications of mandated change, researchers and policymakers must turn to those who are most closely associated with the observable effects of the reform directives to ascertain if positive change is occurring due to the mandated testing initiatives (Glasman, 1988).

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to examine the effects of Texas legislated basic skills tests as the effects relate to teachers, administrators, and local school districts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a descriptive study as to the impact state mandated testing has had on local school districts of Texas and to ascertain to what degree changes are occurring as a result of state mandated
testing.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to answer the following questions.

1. Is mandated testing being used to improve student performance/learning?
2. Are classroom events/procedures being altered by a perceived need to prepare students for state tests?
3. Do mandated tests influence curricula?
4. Do mandated tests influence classroom teaching strategies?
5. Is pressure being exerted on the educational community to increase test scores?
6. Are changes occurring within the educational community that are designed to elevate test scores?
7. Are school personnel positions being impacted because of testing mandates?
8. What are educators' personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS and TAAS tests?
9. Are there differences in how teachers, administrators, and school districts respond to mandated tests?

Definition of Terms

The following terms have limited meaning and are thus defined for this study.
Administrators in this study refers to individuals who oversee local school districts, schools, educational programs, or personnel.

At-risk Students refers to borderline students who pose a threat for academic failure.

Curriculum is the course of study developed by a local district to meet the educational needs of its students.

Essential Elements are the instructional targets comprising core knowledge, skills, and competencies designated by the Texas State Board of Education to be taught in the public schools.

Elementary School Teachers are defined for purposes of this study as the instructors in grades 1 through 6.

Federal Government refers to the central authority of government at the national level as established by the United States Constitution which states that all powers not delegated to the federal government are reserved to the state.

House Bill 72 refers to The Education Reform Act of 1984 passed by the Texas legislature that revised numerous sections of the Texas Education Code. Mandatory testing of minimum skills was included in this bill.

Inner City School District refers to a school district located in a more densely populated central section of a city.

Instructional Objectives refers to components of the
curriculum in the subject areas tested in the TEAMS and TAAS tests.

Local School Districts refers to the almost eleven hundred school districts in Texas that function under decisions of school boards and school personnel while receiving directives from the state.

Mandates are legislative directives issued to local school districts by state legislatures.

Reform refers to legislated educational change directed toward educational improvement.

Rural School District refers to a school district serving a population of students from a less densely populated area characteristic of a country setting.

Special Education Students are students who are recognized by the State of Texas by law as having a handicapping condition and qualifying for special services.

TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) refers to the Texas mandated test to be administered to Texas students 1990-1995.

TABS (Texas Assessment of Basic Skills) refers to the first Texas mandated criterion-referenced test of minimum skills 1980-1985.

TEAMS (Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills) refers to the second Texas mandated criterion-referenced test of minimum skills 1985-1990.

Texas Education Agency is the central Education Agency
that consists of the State Department of Education, the state commissioner of Education, and the State Board of Education.

**Texas Education Code** refers to the codified educational policies of the State Board of Education which are authorized through laws passed by the Texas Legislature to implement Article VII of the Texas Constitution.

**Texas Legislature** is the body of elected officials that have the responsibility to make provisions for the support and maintenance of the State of Texas' public school system.

**Urban School District** refers to a school district serving a population of students from an area characteristic of a city or large town.

**Limitations**

The interpretations of the findings of this study should be undertaken only in the context of the following limitations:

1. Although many factors affect classroom teaching, administrative decisions, the curriculum, and student performance, this study was limited to the effects mandated testing has had on these areas.

2. Although minimum skill testing as mandated by the Texas legislature is administered to students in elementary and secondary schools, this study was limited to gathering
data from elementary school administrators and elementary school teachers.

Procedures

To assess the impact of Texas' mandated testing, a survey was conducted to investigate, in terms of the viewpoint of administrators and teachers whether changes have occurred or have not occurred because of mandated testing. The survey questionnaire was reviewed by a jury prior to mailing. The school personnel selected for inquiry were selected randomly from all twenty Regional Service Centers in Texas. Both teachers and administrators were included in the survey. Information was also obtained from a reading of related literature. From these sources, answers to the research questions were sought. The procedures are delineated in detail in Chapter III.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

IMPLICATIONS OF MANDATED REFORM

Proponents and Opponents Of Mandated Reform

A common theme of the literature on educational reform is that these large cycles of reform and reaction have had little effect on the way teachers teach, the way students are expected to learn, and the way knowledge is defined in schools. "Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose" is carved over the archive of research on school reform (Elmore, 1987, p. 61).

Critics of reform movements proclaim that legislative reform measures will fail for many reasons but central to most prophecies of doom is the notion that failure will come because mandates fail to touch the "central activity of schooling, the teaching-learning process." Research concerning the success of regulatory reforms of earlier periods of this century indicate that top-down reforms initiated by "outsiders" did not produce much improvement in the past and were unlikely to do so now (Murphy, 1989, p. 210-212). Many times state directed regulatory measures are characterized as R. F. Elmore states, "They look like someone else's idea about what a school should be. Life in schools becomes an attempt simply to maintain a predictable existence in the face of periodic external disturbances..." (Elmore, 1987 p. 75).

On the other hand, observers of educational change
suggest that the 1980s reforms are different from past endeavors. While the mid-century approach relied on highly publicized commission reports such as The Report of the Committee of Ten in 1893 and The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education in 1918, the impetus for educational change since the 1950s has largely been governmental action. The difference in the educational reform efforts of the 1980s is that the efforts are driven by a combination of commissioned reports and state legislative action. Commission reports such as A Nation At Risk targeted change. State legislative action provided the mandates to insure local action (Firestone, Fuhrman, & Kirst, 1987).

Will the combined efforts of commissioned reports and legislated action lead to positive change in the nations' schools? Advocates for legislative school reform answer in the affirmative (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Proponents of legislative action support the notion that positive change can occur within the school setting when educational "outsiders" exhibit the right attitude and thus play a role that leads to interpretive and catalytic action within the educational setting (McDonald, 1989). However, in the final analysis, policy implementation used actively for positive gains depends largely on the will and the capacity at the local level (Firestone, 1989).
Mandate Action

By the 1980s, parents, business people, policymakers, legislators, and commissioned committees were making demands for public school accountability and productivity (U.S. Department of Education, 1988). An unsurpassed number of education-related bills aimed at improving public education were introduced during the decade. The highest level of state activity dealt with providing more academic content and addressed changes in teacher certification and compensation. Increased student testing and course requirements were mandated, curricula frameworks were aligned with tests and texts, and curriculum standards were established to provide more academic content (Firestone, et al., 1989).

The framers of these legislative actions contend that such initiatives were not created as accountability for its own sake, but rather accountability that would lead to a continual improvement of education programs. As David Stern suggests, "This requires both the commitment and resourcefulness of teachers and administrators" (Stern, 1986, p. 327). Thus, testing became a part of the reform package included in the accountability framework for many states that sought school and student performance measures (Education Commission of the States, 1985). Teachers and administrators were assigned the task of implementation.
Mandate Reaction

Action and reaction by educators based on the accountability and performance factor inherent in mandated testing became real. Data collected by the Office of Education Research and Improvement State Accountability Study Group indicates that in most states accountability has become solely dependent on students' performance on test of basic academic or minimum competency testing as the core of the accountability system. In many states, these tests scores have become the only indicator data collected or reported. These researchers also concluded that although local superintendents and principals may recognize the need to use other indicators along with testing results in judging a district's or school's performance, these leaders recognize that the state is primarily concerned with test scores. Consequently, they have channeled much of their energy to improving performance on that one indicator (U.S. Department of Education, 1988).

With so much emphasis on one indicator, debates and studies concerning the implications of statewide testing initiatives soon followed. David Alan Gilman, professor of education at Indiana State University, observes that one of the primary benefits of minimal competency testing is that the tests cause students to become more responsible and to be held accountable for their own learning. Such tests lead the student to understand that each individual has a
personal stake in the results of the educational experience. Gilman further states that because minimal competency testing causes teachers, administrators, and students to be more accountable, such testing offers a way to improve some of today's deficiencies in education (Gilman, 1978).

Can the pressure exerted enhance the ability of teachers to perform their educational tasks more effectively? Guy Benveniste suggests that if accountability is tied to positive incentives, the accountability scheme will have a positive impact because the result will be teacher motivation. However, without positive incentives, teachers' morale can lower resulting in teacher manipulation such as when teachers attempt to show good results by manipulating the performance indicators in the state accountability scheme (Benveniste, 1986). David Stern writes, "If performance measures are defined in such a way that they seem elitist or irrelevant to large numbers of students and teachers, the accountability system will not achieve its intended motivational purpose" (Stern, 1986).

As accountability measures gain momentum, schools find that they are judged by the output of their students. This practice invites comparisons among schools and school districts. Challenges inherent in such a process are complicated by variables such as student mobility, student
population diversity, incentives, and establishing fair comparison formulas (Stern, 1986). Other factors such as composition of the student population, district size and wealth, and the quality of the instructional program have to be considered in comparing school test scores because any of these may relate to student performance results (Texas Education Agency - Division of Student Assessment, 1989).

Reynaldo Contreras suggests that judging a school by the achievement level of its pupils fails to take into account the effects of parents, community, and peers on a student's long-term intellectual growth. The result could be that as parents seek good schools for their children, educators find themselves under pressure to improve student achievement and political leaders seek popular support by charging "poor school performance" (Contreras, 1988).

During the Center For Policy Research In Education's study on the progress of reform, the researchers who studied six states involved in school reform found that:

Implementing testing programs was problematic for two reasons: the amount of time students spent being tested and the amount of time spent coordinating, administering, and interpreting the various tests. Many school personnel saw state testing as not just a burden but as a burden that provided little in the way of useful information about student progress. Although they felt under pressure for their students to do well on tests, they viewed student attitudes, school climate and other indicators of student performance just as important as test scores, if not more. Only slightly more than 20 percent of the school principals interviewed by CPRE researchers said test scores were
the most important source of information about their schools (Center for Policy Research in Education, 1989, p. 22).

In relying heavily on test scores to judge an individual or an institution, inherent problems can develop. In a recent report of the National Commission on Testing and Public Policy, a scathing report on the infatuation that the country has with test results and the importance attributed to them, the following is cited:

A number of recent studies reveal a wide and troubling range of test preparation practices in schools, from the legitimate through aligning instruction with test content, teaching the test, to outright fraud and cheating. Some states provide test preparation material, and the sale of a host of commercial test preparation materials has become a significant spin-off of the testing industry. . . . most of these practices tend to undermine efforts at educational reform by providing educators, policymakers, and the public with a misleading picture of the schools (National Commission on Testing and Public Policy, 1990, p. 19).

Similar concerns have surfaced in professional circles concerning mandated testing practices. Would testing pressures lead to extreme reactions such as to inappropriate competition for high test scores, to cheating, to job security threats, to added negative pressures on students, to a narrowing of the parental/educator academic expectation of the child/school, to an emerging disillusioned education profession (Hall, 1989)? David Stern, in his article "Toward A Statewide System For Public School Accountability," warns that there are ways to raise test scores for a given group of students
and only some of them actually increase students' stock knowledge. Included in the list are abetting the absence of slow students from testing sessions, teaching the test, to concentrating on measured performance objectives at the expense of unmeasured objectives, to assigning of a school's best teachers to the grade level or subjects tested (Stern, 1986).

The National Commission on Testing and Public Policy's Executive Summary (1990) concludes that "well-designed and responsibly used assessment instruments can be an important source of information . . ." (p.10). However, the report adds that evaluators must "expand the use of richer, more creative, and more varied devices that provide more direct evidence of the knowledge, skills, and behavior of interest in real-world settings" (p.11). The Commission's report additionally concludes that "test scores are imperfect measures and should not be used alone to make important decisions about individuals, groups or institutions" (p.9).

Vito Perrone of the University of North Dakota suggests that criterion referenced tests can be one useful tool used in conjunction with other instruments in providing information to parents and educators by way of documentation. However, it should not be the only documentation (Perrone, 1975).

How can documentation of minimum competency aid the parent, school, and community? Test results can lead to
prescriptive and remedial instruction according to David Gilman, professor of education at Indiana State University. Other positives will follow, Gilman contends. For example, teachers will become aware and motivated to improve their techniques in teaching basic skills. Curriculum directors and curriculum committees will prioritize the skills, knowledge, and competencies that the schools are intended to deliver. Citizens and parents will be made aware of what is being done to correct their children's deficiencies and will become unified with the schools in a common cause (Gilman, 1978).

Reynaldo Contreras of Indiana University observes that teachers are developing strategies to teach and reteach curriculum objectives. Alternative teaching strategies are being devised to reteach unmastered tested domains. In some states compensatory education funds are now being spent on employing resource teachers, staff development, and classroom aides. Contreras sees all of this as a positive move in the direction of providing an effective education to all students (Contreras, 1988). The Center for Policy Research in Education found in their investigation (Firestone, et al, 1989) that districts often used the implementation of student standards as reason to request resources such as personnel for curriculum and assessment.

Others write of time being spent disappropriately in
the classroom to a narrowed curriculum focused on tested domains. William F. McComas writes that since student perceptions about what is important in a course are often tied to what will be measured, students may determine what is valuable from any classroom experience by the areas measured. Thus, curriculum reform "must be driven by the needs of the students and society, not by assessment instruments and test writers" (McComas, 1989).

Curriculum influenced by tests is an issue of great concern to many (Benveniste, 1986). The trend towards more standardized curricula has developed nationwide. Many local districts have aligned their curricula with tests and texts. Many states, Texas included, are pursuing such alignment as well. As the Center for Policy Research in Education investigated the progress of school reforms, state testing was cited as an important impetus for district-level curriculum standardization in approximately half the school districts visited (Firestone, et al., 1989). Vito Perrone suggests that at a time when public confidence in schools is low, it seems easier to narrow curricular offerings and to fall into the simple pattern of "basic skills" education when the need for multicultural curriculum development is more critical now than ever (Perrone, 1980). Correspondingly, a recent national Gallup poll concerning the public's attitudes toward the public schools reveals that 75 percent of the respondents feel
that school districts should require more basic subjects (Gallup and Elam, 1988). Accountability begs for measures. Basic subjects and skills are believed to be more measurable (Perrone, 1980).

The Report of the National Commission on Testing and Public Policy (1990) estimates that direct costs to taxpayers of purchasing and scoring state and local tests range from $70 million to $107 million annually. The time spent preparing students specifically for statewide and school district tests has not been included in this estimate. The cost in terms of teacher and administrator time simply spent administering the tests is in the range of $268 million to $421 million, the report estimates.

While the national trend during the 1980s has been to direct more dollars to the development of evaluation and curriculum materials at the state level in order to restore confidence in the public schools through mandates for accountability, opponents point to the need to direct more fiscal resources and energies to increasing competencies at the local level. Opponents argue that in the decade ahead what is needed is not more centralization but an increased capacity for providing curriculum, evaluation, staff development, and parent training resources to local school units (Perrone, 1980).
Texas Mandated Testing

From 1972 through 1985, the number of state testing programs grew from 1 to 34 (National Commission on Testing and Public Policy, 1990). By 1988, only three states had no provisions at all for statewide testing (U.S. Department of Education, 1988). By 1989 every state had a mandated testing program of some sort (p. 16). Texas became one of twenty-nine states that require both minimum competency testing and achievement testing measures. Testing had gained preeminence as an assessment performance indicator (U.S. Department of Education, 1988) nationally as well as in Texas.

To satisfy legislative requirements that students' performance be assessed, Texas instituted first the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills Test (TABS) early in 1980. In 1985 TABS was changed to TEAMS (Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills) with new learning objectives and with an increase in the rigor of the previous test (Texas Education Agency Division of Student Assessment, 1990).

By the late 1980s concerns were raised about the effects of the Texas TEAMS testing endeavor. Claims were made that school districts had made TEAMS objectives the focus of instruction and that the curriculum of many school districts had been narrowed to the objectives assessed on the TEAMS test. Thus, it was feared that the "minimums"
tested on TEAMS had become the "maximums" in curriculum focus. To discourage minimum curriculum content, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) criterion referenced test followed which was designed to extend and expand the current TEAMS test to include more of the instructional targets delineated in the state's "essential elements" (Texas Education Agency Division of Student Assessment, 1990).

As a result of earlier legislative reform action, the Texas Education Code lists twelve items that are to constitute a well-balanced curriculum from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The law directs the state board to "designate the essential elements of each subject and to require that they be taught in the state's public schools." A school district must provide instruction in these essential elements as specified by the state board in order to be accredited (Kemerer, 1988).

Instead of focusing on the limited set of TEAMS objectives, TAAS developers sought to target varying essential elements drawn from broader objectives to encourage a broader scope of instruction. TAAS designers also expanded the focus of the test with the intent to evaluate a student's ability to think independently, to read critically, to write clearly, and to solve problems logically. The Texas Education Agency's publication Texas Assessment of Basic Skills states that the change in focus
of the TAAS test has been designed to correct three potential areas of concern with state level testing: to negate the possibility that the testing program will become the curriculum, to provide a beginning of the school year review of the previous year's instruction, and to enhance the usefulness of student performance data by making test results available in December for remediation purposes.

As stated in the Foreword of the Texas Education Agency publication, the TAAS test was designed to provide a beginning of the school year review of the previous year's instruction. The intent is that instructors will see the new Fall testing date as a positive initiative to encourage review and then allow teachers to move on to new essential elements following the testing. By making test results available in October and December, it is anticipated that the Texas school districts and teachers will be provided performance data early enough to use the results for remediation purposes. Can a state level test successfully battle a tendency toward test-centered curricula? Can a state level test accomplish the purpose of being used as a diagnostic tool while being a catalyst for beginning of a school year review? TAAS developers focused on that intent.

According to Robert Triscari, education research specialist with the Texas Education Association, (personal communication, June 14, 1990) TAAS was written by a
subcontracted test-writing firm, reviewed and edited by Texas educators, field tested by 210,000 Texas students, analyzed by statisticians, and re-reviewed through numerous committees until the TAAS test came to fruition. When asked about the fiscal costs of mandated tests, Triscari responded that the two year contracted price for test development is state funded at approximately $14 million. Developers have instituted a five year plan in which TAAS will expand into areas of testing such as science and social studies. Two personnel positions for subject area expertise will develop as this expansion occurs. When asked if computer systems and computer personnel positions have been added to accommodate the needs of the state tests, the response was that the Texas Education Agency has used what it originally had to accomplish the computerized needs of the testing program.

The Texas Education Agency makes available reports to individuals and school districts that describe the results of the state test through publications such as the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills: Student Performance Results, Volumes 1, 2, and 3. These reports summarize performance results for all grades tested, provide an overview of the assessment program, present district level performance results for each grade level tested, and list district and campus results reported as percentages of students passing. Comparative results
through these reports indicate that mastery rates continue to show improvement in test scores and that Texas students are generally achieving higher scaled scores at each grade level (p. iii).

These publications are not the only source of information concerning mandated tests results. In Texas the media have been diligent in reporting the results of the state tests to the public. Not only are test results the object of newspaper headlines, but also irregularities and criticisms have captured the headlines on the front page and in the editorial sections. For example, violations to test security appeared on the front page of The Dallas Morning News (March 31, 1990). Three Mesquite school staff members were accused of going into a vault and examining the state minimum skills test before it was given to students. Such purported irregularities have led to extra security measures being instituted with the distribution of the sealed TAAS test. Subject area tests of TAAS will be given to all Texas students on the same day and sent out the next day to insure security. According to Triscari, guidelines for TAAS will be the same as for TEAMS and as with previous state tests, personnel will follow up on suspected irregularities.

Irregularities concerning student exemption are also monitored through a tracking system to detect exemption numbers that appear higher than usual. Guidelines are also
written concerning student exemptions that are implemented at the local level through Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee determination (State Board of Education, 1989).

Test preparation materials are provided to school districts by the Texas Education Agency. Instructional strategies guides that are provided to assist the Texas teacher in test instruction "describe the TEAMS objectives as well as instructional considerations and activities that can be used to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives" (Texas Education Agency, 1989).

The Texas legislature has, therefore, put into motion testing legislation as have many other states across the nation. The Education Agency, local school district administrators, and school teachers have responded in their designated capacities. Will those who monitor reform initiatives find that local Texas school districts share common challenges brought on by state mandated testing?

Summary
Since the 1970s, there has been a dramatic increase in legislative reform designed to hold school systems, administrators, and teachers accountable. Testing has become central to most reform measures. As a result, testing often looms ominously in the lives of many educators (National Commission on Testing and Public
Policy, 1990). Policymakers and educators hence are being led to resolve a central question: Can and is mandated testing being used at the local test to bring about positive change within the school system at large? Can the negative possibilities be turned into positive realities?

William A. Firestone, in his exploration of the phenomenon of successful use of state reform, affirms that there do exist school districts that experience successful use of state reform, affirms that there do exist school districts that experience successful use of state reform, and he concludes that the extent to which positive policy implementation exists depends on the will and capacity of those at the local level (Firestone, 1989). Glasman (1988) suggests that only when emerging questions have been tackled, can definitive evaluative statements be made about the specifics of educational reform. This leads observers to conclude that definitive investigation needs to occur at the local level. This inquiry is designed to gain insights into how mandated basic skill testing has impacted school districts of Texas as viewed by the implementors at the local level.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The focus of this study was to examine the impact of Texas legislated basic skills testing on local school districts in Texas. Data were collected through a survey instrument. The data collection and the analysis of the data in this investigation were designed to ascertain to what degree changes are occurring as a result of state mandated testing. The investigation solicited responses from 120 educators, 90 elementary school teachers and 30 elementary school administrators, throughout the state of Texas representing all 20 regional education service centers.

Population of the Study

The state of Texas has some 1,100 school districts listed in the Texas Education Agency's 1989-90 Texas School Directory. Each school district is located in one of the 20 regional service centers throughout Texas. The sample for this study were 120 educators selected from the Texas Education Agency's listing of schools in Texas.
Selection of the Sample

The sample school districts were selected in a stratified random manner from all of the school districts in the state of Texas. A total of 120 school districts were selected. From the selected school districts, 90 elementary school principals were asked to forward on to teachers a questionnaire that solicited responses concerning mandated testing and how such testing was impacting their particular schools. Thirty elementary school administrators were asked to respond to the same questionnaire. Thus, 90 elementary school teachers and 30 elementary school administrators comprised the total number of 120 educators who were solicited for participation in this investigation.

Development of the Survey Instrument

The data required for this study was acquired from a survey designed to answer the research questions proposed in Chapter I. The survey questions were developed after a search of literature and personal interviews were undertaken to determine what issues needed to be addressed, questions needed to be asked, and concerns needed to be voiced. A panel of educators acted as jury for the survey questionnaire until its completion: two elementary school classroom teachers, a university professor of education, and a past testing administrator who is presently a special
education administrator. As a result of this process, individual questions went through a process of consideration for deletion, correction, or revision.

The questionnaire was two pages in length with questions printed on the front and back of a single page. A total of 30 questions comprised the questionnaire. The questions developed for the survey were all keyed to the nine research questions introduced in Chapter I. Each question called for a check mark response except for three blank lines at the end of the questionnaire which solicited comments from the respondent (See Appendix G).

The questionnaire was written in two parts. Part one "Concerning Mandated Testing" assessed the perceptions of educators in relation to the changes that have been occurring in their schools and districts due to mandated testing. Part two "Concerning Personal Views" assessed the perceptions of educators concerning their own personal responses to mandated testing. The questionnaire also asked for basic demographic information: whether the respondent was an administrator or a teacher, the approximate school population of the respondent's school district, and whether the educational community was rural, urban, or inner city (See Appendix A).

Procedures for Data Collection

Packets containing a cover letter, the survey
questionnaire, and a return postage-paid envelope were mailed to each selected administrator. Also enclosed was a smaller self-addressed stamped envelope with a request form offering the respondent the completed research as an incentive for response. Principals of selected schools received the same enclosures as well as two cover letters: one for the principal and one for the respondent teacher.

The survey mailing date was April 16, 1990. Two months were allowed for the survey return. By June 16, 1990, 100 respondents (83 percent) had returned the survey. Responses were returned from school districts with K-12 school populations ranging from 90 to 186,000 students. Seventy-five teachers and 25 administrators returned the questionnaires. Rural school district response numbered 46 survey returns. Urban school districts were represented by 42 survey returns. Inner city respondents numbered eight returns. Four surveys had undetermined sources.

Procedures for Analysis of Data

Upon the return of the survey questionnaire, the data were organized for analysis. Two approaches of analysis were used. First, a descriptive approach was taken. Responses were converted to percentages, analyzed, discussed, and presented in tabular form. Answers were posited for related research questions. Secondly, since comparisons of sets of responses seemed applicable, a
quantitative analysis was applied to each survey question. The chi-square test was used to determine if sets of responses were independent to a significant degree. In this way it could be reliably determined if educators in the various categories differed in their views. These results were also presented in tabular form and interpreted narratively.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The data presented in this chapter was the result of a survey to determine the impact that state mandated testing has had on local school districts of Texas and to ascertain to what degree changes are occurring as a result of state mandated testing. The survey was designed to provide answers to the nine research questions presented in Chapter I. The data collection for this investigation was conducted during a two month period. One hundred twenty questionnaires were mailed to a stratified random sample of 120 school districts throughout the State of Texas. The sample consisted of 30 elementary school administrators and 90 elementary school teachers randomly selected from all 20 regional service centers throughout the State of Texas. Completed questionnaires were returned by 25 elementary school administrators and 75 elementary school teachers yielding an 83 percent return on the survey. Of the returned questionnaires, 46 were from rural school districts, 42 from urban school districts, 8 from inner city school districts, and 4 from undetermined demographic areas.
Statistical Analysis of Data

The survey questions, discussion, and answers have been presented in relation to the nine research questions introduced in Chapter I. Percentages, demographic data, and answers to the research questions are presented in discussion and tabular form. The data were organized for interpretation and quantitative analysis was done where necessary. The quantitative analysis consisted of the chi-square test which was used to determine if sets of responses from the various categories were independent to a significant degree. The survey questionnaire from which the data were collected and the solicited comments written on the questionnaire by survey respondents are included in Appendices E and G.

Presentation Of Data

The problem of this study was to examine the effects of Texas legislated basic skills tests as the effects relate to teachers, administrators, and local school districts. In order to structure the study, the survey questions have been keyed and aligned with the research questions introduced in Chapter I.

Research question one: Is mandated testing being used to improve student performance/learning?

When asked if the TEAMS test results have been used as
a diagnostic measure in their school district, 55 respondents (55 percent) of the total respondents indicated that the test has been used as a diagnostic measure by both administrators and teachers, 26 respondents (26 percent) felt that the teachers have used the test diagnostically and 8 respondents (8 percent) felt that the administrators have used the test diagnostically. Those respondents who felt the test had not been used at all as a diagnostic tool totaled 11 (11 percent).

Twenty-two administrators affirmed (88 percent) that they felt both teachers and administrators have used the TEAMS test as a diagnostic measure with only one (4 percent) indicating that they did not feel that the test had been used in their district for this purpose. This compares to 33 (44 percent) of the teachers who felt that both administrators and teachers have used the test diagnostically while 10 (13 percent) felt the test had not been utilized as a diagnostic measure in their district. The difference in the two educator groups was significant beyond the .005 level for 3 degrees of freedom with a chi-square value of 14.95.

Examining the data according to types of school district, inner city school districts overwhelmingly indicated by all 8 respondents (100 percent response) that they felt the TEAMS test had been used by educators in their districts as a diagnostic measure either by the
teacher, 50 percent, the administrator, 12 percent, or by both the administrator and the teacher, 38 percent. Thirty-two rural respondents indicated by 69 percent that they felt both administrators and teachers have used the test diagnostically with 8 (17 percent) responding that they felt teachers have used the test for diagnostic reasons. Three respondents (seven percent) felt the test had been used diagnostically by administrators while 3 respondents (7 percent) did not feel that the test had been used prescriptively. Seven urban educators indicated by the largest margin, 17 percent, that they did not feel that the TEAMS test had been utilized in their district as a diagnostic tool. Additionally, 18 (43 percent) indicated that both teachers and administrators have utilized the TEAMS test diagnostically while 13 (31 percent) responded that teachers in their district have used the test for the purpose of diagnosis. Four (9 percent) indicated that administrators have used the test. The comparison of responses of rural, inner city, and urban school districts was not significant.

The question that solicited the reactions of educators concerning the new October testing date of the TAAS test asked if the educator will be better able to use the test for diagnostic purposes due to the earlier testing date. Seventy-nine respondents (79 percent) said that the earlier testing date will enable the teacher to use the test for
diagnostic purposes while 21 (21 percent) responded that they did not feel that the testing date will affect the use of the test for diagnostic purposes.

Concerning the school groups, while 9 (36 percent) of the administrators indicated that the new testing date will not affect the use of the test for diagnostic purposes, 16 (64 percent) felt the new testing date will better enable the educator to use the test for diagnostic purposes. Only twelve teachers (16 percent) did not feel that the new testing date will have an effect on the use of the test for diagnostic purposes with 63 (84 percent) indicating that the new date will positively impact test diagnostic use. The difference between the educator groups was significant as Table 1 portrays.

Urban teachers were least enthusiastic of all the school types about the effect of the new testing date with 11 (26 percent) indicating that the new date will have no effect on the use of the test for diagnostic purposes, and 31 (74 percent) indicating that the new testing date will encourage test use. Thirty-eight rural educators (83 percent) and seven inner city educators (88 percent) responded positively.

In a related question, when educators were asked if they think a pencil-and-paper test is a relevant way to test academic proficiency, 46 (61 percent) teachers responded that they felt that a pencil-and-paper test is
not a relevant way to test academic proficiency. While 12 administrators (48 percent) agreed that a pencil-and-paper test is not a relevant way to test academic proficiency, 12 (48 percent) felt that a pencil-and-paper test is a good way to test academic proficiency. There was a 4 percent non-response from both the teacher and the administrator respondents on this question. The difference in response was not significant as the data in Table 1 reveals. Rural, inner city, and urban respondents agreed that a pencil-and-paper test is not a relevant way to test academic proficiency. Table 2 illustrates the data.

Another survey question presented to the educators asked if the TEAMS test is viewed as an accurate measure of student achievement for students in their district. Thirteen teachers (17 percent) responded yes, adequately, 29 (39 percent) responded yes, minimally, and 32 (43 percent) responded no that they did not feel that the TEAMS test is an accurate measure with 1 percent not giving a response. In comparison, 4 administrators (16 percent) responded yes, adequately, 12 (48 percent) responded yes, minimally, and 9 (36 percent) responded no to the question. The difference in the teachers and administrators was not significant. Responses from the various school types did not render a significant difference either. Table 1 and 2 illustrate the comparison of the participants' answers.
Table 1

Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: Is mandated testing being used to improve performance/learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers Yes No NR</th>
<th>Administrators Yes No NR</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Totals Yes No NR</th>
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<td>48 48 4</td>
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<td>not sign</td>
<td>38 58 4</td>
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<td>16a 36</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>17a 41 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39m 48m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>41m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
Table 2

Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: Is mandated testing being used to improve performance/learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Innercity</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>NR</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>III a</td>
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<td></td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V b</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII b</td>
<td>17a</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12a</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>41m</td>
<td>38m</td>
<td></td>
<td>40m</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

NR = non-response
Research question two: Are classroom events/procedures being altered by a perceived need to prepare students for state tests?

When asked if more classroom time has been devoted to teaching students test-taking strategies since the testing mandate took effect, 85 (85 percent) of the respondents answered yes to the question, and 14 (14 percent) responded no with 1 (1 percent) leaving the question unanswered. There was no significant difference in responses from teachers and administrators on this item as Table 3 reveals, and there was no significant difference between the rural, inner city, and urban responses as Table 4 depicts. All 8 (100 percent) inner city educators indicated that more classroom time has been devoted to teaching test taking strategies since mandated testing took effect. In comparison, 38 (83 percent) rural and 35 (83 percent) urban educators agreed that more classroom time is being devoted to developing test-taking strategies.

When asked how many hours the average teacher in their school district spends preparing students specifically for the TEAMS test, 1 respondent (1 percent) indicated that no hours were dedicated to test preparation, 6 respondents (6 percent) indicated 1-5 hours, 17 (17 percent) responded 6-15 hours, 45 (45 percent) marked 16-30 hours, and 29 (29 percent) answered that more than 30 hours were spent in preparing students for the mandated test. There was a 2
percent non-response to this item.

When examining the teachers' responses, 1 (1 percent) indicated that no time was spent preparing for the test, while 6 (8 percent) indicated 1-5 hours, 14 (19 percent) spent 6-15 hours, 33 (44 percent) spent 16-30 hours, and 19 (25 percent) indicated that more than 30 hours were spent. There was a 2 percent non-response. Three administrators (12 percent) indicated 6-15 hours, 12 (48 percent) indicated 16-30 hours, and 10 (40 percent) marked more than 30 hours. The difference in responses from teachers and administrators was not significant.

The survey revealed that 1 response (2 percent) from the rural school type spent no additional time preparing students for the test, 5 (11 percent) spent 1-5 hours, 12 (26 percent) responded 6-15 hours, 19 (41 percent) answered 16-30 hours, and 9 (20 percent) indicated more than 30 hours. Two inner city school respondents (25 percent) spent 6-15 hours, 5 (63 percent) spent 16-30 hours, and 1 (12 percent) spent more than 30 hours. Of the urban respondents, 4 (10 percent) responded that they had spent 1-5 hours, 9 (21 percent) indicated 6-15 hours, 15 (36 percent) responded 16-30 hours, and 12 (29 percent) dedicated more than 30 hours of classroom time preparing the student for the mandated test. The urban data had a 4 percent non-response on this question. The difference between the demographic types was not significant.
When asked if the teacher will feel compelled to spend the first few months of the school year teaching tested domains due to the early October testing date of the TAAS test, 92 teachers and administrators agreed (92 percent) that the first few months of the school year will be spent teaching tested domains in their school district with 8 (8 percent) projecting that will not be the case in their district. All 8 (one hundred percent) of the inner city respondents indicated that the first few months' instruction will be highly influenced by the mandated test, 41 (98 percent) of the urban respondents agreed that their teachers will feel compelled to spend the first few months teaching tested domains, and 40 (87 percent) of the rural respondents indicated that TAAS' tested domains will be in their teachers' plans the first few months of the school year. There was no significant difference between the school types. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the complete data on this survey question.

When asked if teachers in their district are being monitored more to see if they are teaching tested domains, 56 respondents (56 percent) responded no, and 40 (40 percent) responded yes. There was a 4 percent non-response on this item. Comparatively, 40 teachers (53 percent) responded no, that teachers were not being monitored more while 32 (43 percent) responded that teachers were being monitored more in their districts. Sixteen administrators
Table 3
Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: Are classroom events/procedures being altered by a perceived need to prepare students for the state tests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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</tr>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>92 8</td>
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<td>43 53 4</td>
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<td>.92</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>40 56 4</td>
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</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
Table 4

Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: Are classroom events/procedures being altered by a perceived need to prepare students for the state test?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
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<th>Innercity No</th>
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Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
(64 percent) indicated that teachers were not being monitored more and 8 (32 percent) responded that they were. There was a 4 percent non-response on each group surveyed on this item. As Table 3 indicates, there was no significant difference in the two groups' responses.

Five inner city educators (62 percent) responded that teachers are being monitored more to see if they are teaching tested domains while three (37 percent) of the rural educators responded that teachers were not being monitored more in their district. Seventeen urban respondents (40 percent) indicated that teachers were being monitored more in their districts. The urban survey had a 10 percent non-response to this item. The difference between the demographic groups were not significant as Table 4 illustrates.

**Research question three: Do mandated tests influence curricula?**

The survey question asked if the respondents' school district had altered the curricula to elevate test scores. The response was a strong yes with 76 (76 percent) of the surveyed educators answering that their district's curriculum had been altered to elevate test scores. Twenty-two (22 percent) responded that their district's curriculum had not been altered. There was a 2 percent non-response on this survey item.
Sixty (80 percent) of the teachers responded that their curriculum had been altered to elevate test scores, and 16 (64 percent) of the surveyed administrators indicated that the curriculum had been altered for anticipated test score improvement. There was a significant difference at the .005 level between the two educator groups. Table 5 illustrates the data.

According to the survey, 7 (88 percent) of the inner city respondents indicated that their curricula had been altered to elevate test scores with only one (12 percent) indicating that their curricula had not changed. With a 5 percent non-response, 33 (78 percent) of the urban respondents indicated that their curriculum had been altered, and 32 (69 percent) of the rural respondents acknowledged that their curricula had changed. The difference in the responses of the demographic areas was not significant as Table 6 illustrates.

A related question asked if the respondent's school district provides "test-like" materials to the classroom teacher to instruct the students on how to deal with mass produced tests and if so, are the materials integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. Of the total respondents, 87 (87 percent) indicated that "test-like" materials have been provided to the classroom teacher, and 12 (12 percent) indicated that they have not been. There was a 1 percent non-response to this survey item. Table 5
Table 5

Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: Do mandated tests influence curricula?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
Table 6
Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: Do mandated tests influence curricula?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Rural Yes No NR</th>
<th>Innercity Yes No NR</th>
<th>Urban Yes No NR</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>not sign</td>
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<td>90 5 5</td>
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<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
portrays data of the teachers' and administrators' responses to this item.

The inner city response had 8 (100 percent) indicating that their districts' curriculum had been altered to elevate test scores. Table 6 portrays the complete data of of the school types.

Of the school districts that provide "test-like" materials, 87 (87 percent) indicated that the materials have been integrated into the regular classroom curriculum while 9 (9 percent) responded that the materials have not been integrated into the regular curriculum. There was a 4 percent non-response on this portion of the survey item. Of these schools, 36 (90 percent) of the rural school districts indicated that this material had been integrated into the regular curriculum, and 3 (8 percent) responded that it had not been integrated. This item had a 2 percent non-response. Tables 5 and 6 illustrate the complete data.

Since the TAAS test has an expanded focus compared to the TEAMS test, the respondents were asked if they felt that their school districts would shift the curriculum to match the new focus of the TAAS test. The response indicated that 90 (90 percent) projected that their school district will shift the curriculum to match the focus of the new test with 7 respondents (7 percent) indicating that they did not feel that the focus of their curriculum would change. There was a 3 percent non-response on this
surveyed item. As Table 5 indicates, there was no significant difference in the response of the two educators' groups. Table 6 illustrates the responses of the school types.

**Research question four:** Do mandated tests influence classroom teaching strategies?

The survey question asked if the respondent's classroom teaching strategies have changed to increase test scores, and if so, who initiated the changes. The majority responded that classroom teaching strategies have changed. Only 7 (7 percent) indicated that changes have not occurred. Of the affirmative responses, 36 (36 percent) indicated that the changes occurred because of teacher initiative, 11 (11 percent) because of administrative directive, and 46 (46 percent) because of a combination of teacher initiative and administrative direction.

There was a difference in how the teachers and administrators responded to this question. One hundred percent of the administrators surveyed indicated that changes have occurred in their school districts to increase test scores. Eighteen (72 percent) of the administrators indicated that the teaching strategy changes occurred because of both teacher initiative and administrative direction. Only 4 (16 percent) of the administrators responded that changes occurred due to teacher initiative,
and 3 responded that changes have occurred because of administrative direction. In contrast, 7 respondents (9 percent) of the teachers felt no changes have occurred in their classroom teaching strategies designed to increase mandated test scores. Of those teachers who responded that changes in teaching strategies have occurred, 32 (43 percent) responded that the changes have occurred because of teacher initiative, 28 indicated (37 percent) that both teacher initiative and administrator directive have been responsible for the changes, and 8 (11 percent) responded that changes have occurred due to administrator direction. The difference between teacher and administrator responses was significant at the .025 level for 3 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 10.87.

Three (38 percent) of the inner city respondents indicated that teaching strategies have not occurred in their classrooms designed to increase mandated test scores. However, 3 respondents (38 percent) indicated that changes have occurred due to administrative direction with 1 (12 percent) indicating that the changes have occurred because of teacher initiative, and 1 (12 percent) indicated that the changes occurred because of both teacher initiative and administrative direction. In comparison, 3 (7 percent) of the rural respondents indicated that no changes have occurred. Of the affirmative answers, 19 (41 percent) indicated that the changes occurred due to teacher
initiative, 3 (7 percent) attributed changes to administrative direction, and 21 (45 percent) due to both teacher initiative and administrative direction. In addition, 2 (5 percent) urban school respondents indicated that no teaching strategy changes have occurred. Of the respondents that indicated changes have occurred, 18 (43 percent) indicated that changes have occurred due to teacher initiative, 4 (9 percent) because of administrative direction, and 18 (43 percent) because of a combination of teacher initiative and administrative direction. There was a significant difference beyond .005 level for 3 degrees of freedom between rural and inner city respondents as well as urban and inner city responses. The rural/inner city comparison had a chi-square of 15.33, and the urban/inner city comparison had a chi-square of 14.18.

Research question five: Is pressure being exerted on the educational community to increase test scores?

The research question that asked if school district personnel have been given incentives to raise test scores had 89 (89 percent) responses of no and 10 (10 percent) responses of yes. The non-response was 1 percent to this question. Table 7 and 8 portrays the data according to educational groups and school types.

When the respondents were asked who they felt has been most concerned about scores in their district, respondents
were given seven choices to check: the student, the parent, the public, the teacher, the administrator, the media, and the state legislator. In many cases the respondents checked more than one choice resulting in many combinations of the above choices as their response. For example, of the total responses, 22 (22 percent) of the respondents indicated that teachers were the most concerned about scores, 16 (16 percent) indicated administrators, 3 (3 percent) indicated state legislators, 2 (2 percent) indicated the public, 1 (1 percent) indicated the student, 1 percent did not respond, and 55 (55 percent) responded with a combination of items. All seven survey choices were included in the combinations. Of the 55 percent, administrators and teachers were included most often in the combinations of responses followed by the media and state legislators. Of the teacher responses, 15 respondents (20 percent) viewed the teacher as being the most concerned about test scores, 13 (17 percent) viewed the administrator as being the most concerned, 1 (1 percent) the public, 1 (1 percent) the student, 1 (1 percent) did not respond, and 42 (60 percent) chose other combinations of the listed options. In comparison, 7 (28 percent) of the administrators viewed the teacher as the most concerned, 3 (12 percent) viewed the administrator as the most concerned, 1 (4 percent) the public, 1 (4 percent) the student, and 13 (52 percent) responded with a combination
of the survey choices. The difference in teacher and administrator responses was not significant.

Of the inner city responses, 1 respondent (12 percent) indicated that they viewed administrators as the most concerned, and the remaining 7 (88 percent) responded with a combination of the survey choices. All of the combinations included administrators. Seventeen (37 percent) of the rural respondents viewed the teacher as the most concerned, 5 (11 percent) viewed the administrator as the most concerned, 1 (2 percent) the state legislator, 1 (2 percent) the public, and 22 (46 percent) answered with a combination of responses. Six (14 percent) of the urban respondents indicated that they felt the teacher was the most concerned, 12 (29 percent) indicated that the administrator was the most concerned, 11 (26 percent) the state legislator, 1 (2 percent) the parent, 1 (2 percent) the student, 1 (2 percent) the public, and 10 (24 percent) responded with a combination of choices. There was a significant difference in responses between the three school types beyond .005 level for 12 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 38. The greatest difference was between the rural and urban respondent with a chi-square of 22.81 for 6 degrees of freedom.

When asked if the administrators in the school district are concerned with media reporting of TEAMS scores, 44 (44 percent) of the respondents indicated that they felt their
administrators were moderately concerned, 42 (42 percent) extremely concerned, and 13 (13 percent) indicated that their administrators were not concerned. There was a 1 percent non-response on this item.

Of the teachers surveyed, 37 (49 percent) viewed the administrator as being extremely concerned with media reporting of TEAMS scores, 31 (41 percent) as being moderately concerned, and 6 (8 percent) indicated that their administrators were not concerned. There was a 1 percent non-response on this item. In comparison, 13 (52 percent) of the administrators consider themselves only moderately concerned over media reporting of scores, 5 (20 percent) as extremely concerned, and 7 (28 percent) as not concerned. The difference in these two groups was significant at the .025 level for 3 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 10.3.

Of the inner city responses, 5 (63 percent) indicated that they felt their administrators were extremely concerned, and 3 (37 percent) indicated that their administrators were only moderately concerned with media reporting of TEAMS scores. In contrast, 16 (35 percent) of the rural respondents viewed the administrator as being extremely concerned, 19 (41 percent) moderately concerned, and 11 (24 percent) not concerned. Of the urban respondents, 19 (45 percent) indicated that their administrators were extremely concerned, 21 (50 percent)
Table 7
Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: Is pressure being exerted on the educational community to increase test scores?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes  No  NR</td>
<td>Yes  No  NR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV a</td>
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<td>4  96</td>
<td>.498</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>10  89 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI b</td>
<td>75  25  3</td>
<td>56  44</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>70  30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
Table 8

Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: Is pressure being exerted on the educational community to increase test scores?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Innercity</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>No</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV a</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>100</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.94</td>
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</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
moderately concerned, and 1 (2 percent) not concerned. The urban survey had a 2 percent non-response to this item. The difference in two of these demographic groups was not significant.

When asked if teachers in their district are being encouraged to "teach the test," many respondents inserted the word "to" so that the survey item then read "teach to the test." Of the total respondents, 70 (70 percent) answered yes, and 30 (30 percent) answered no. Of the teachers responding, 56 (75 percent) responded yes and 19 (25 percent) no. Of the administrators responding, 14 (56 percent) responded yes, and 11 (44 percent) responded no. The difference between the two educator groups was not significant as Table 7 reveals. Of the three demographic types responding, all 8 (100 percent) of the inner city respondents indicated that they have been encouraged to teach the test. This response compares to 30 (65 percent) of the rural respondents and 29 (69 percent) of the urban respondents who indicated that they have been encouraged to teach the test. The complete data is portrayed in Table 8.

Relatedly, respondents were asked if the TEAMS tests' contents had been safely secured under lock in their district. The survey choices were no, yes, or not in a position to know. Eighty-four (84 percent) of the respondents indicated that their tests have been safely secured, 15 (15 percent) indicated that they were not in a
position to know, and 1 (1 percent) responded yes/no with a handwritten "but we can get to them to use them" in the margin. Of the teacher responses, 59 (79 percent) indicated yes, they have been secure, 15 (20 percent) not in a position to know, and 1 (1 percent) yes/no. One hundred percent of the administrators indicated that their tests have been safely secured. The difference between the two educator groups was significant at the .050 level for 2 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 6.34.

Of the rural respondents, 40 (87 percent) indicated that their tests have been secure, 5 (11 percent) were not in a position to know, and 1 (2 percent) yes/no. Six (75 percent) of the inner city respondents indicated that their tests have been secure, and 2 (25 percent) responded that they were not in a position to know. Thirty-five urban respondents (83 percent) indicated that their tests have been secure with 7 (17 percent) responding they were not in a position to know. There was no significant difference between demographic types.

Research question six: Are changes occurring within the educational community that are designed to elevate test scores?

When the survey participants were asked if they feel that teachers are being encouraged in their districts to teach the state objectives in order to improve test scores,
89 (89 percent) of the respondents answered in the affirmative while 11 (11 percent) responded that they were not being encouraged to teach the state objectives to improve test scores. Table 9 and 10 depict the data of the responses from the school groups and school types with the significance of difference indicated.

Two survey questions centered around special education exemptions. One asked if the respondent's school district exempts special education students or at-risk students to enhance scores. Of the total responses, 62 (62 percent) responded yes, and 35 (35 percent) responded no. There was a 3 percent non-response to this question. Table 9 and 10 portray the complete response data. The second question asked what percent of the total student population in the respondent's district are exempt. Seventy-five (75 percent) of the respondents did not know. The 25 (25 percent) that did know indicated percentiles ranging from 1 percent to 90 percent. A large majority (93 percent) of the teachers indicated that they did not know this information compared to 32 percent of the administrators who indicated that they did not know. The rural respondents indicated that between 1-12 percent of their school population have been exempted, the inner city respondents indicated that between 9-90 percent of their school population have been exempted, and the urban respondents indicated that from 1-8 percent of their school
Table 9

Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: Are changes occurring within the educational community that are designed to elevate test scores?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No NR</td>
<td>Yes No NR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III b</td>
<td>88 12</td>
<td>92 8</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>89 11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>64 32 4</td>
<td>56 44</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>62 35 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
Table 10

Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: Are changes occurring within the educational community that are designed to elevate test scores?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Rural Yes</th>
<th>Rural No</th>
<th>Rural NR</th>
<th>Innercity Yes</th>
<th>Innercity No</th>
<th>Innercity NR</th>
<th>Urban Yes</th>
<th>Urban No</th>
<th>Urban NR</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III b</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII a</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
population have been exempted from taking the test.

The survey also made inquiry concerning the respondent's district's test scores. According to the survey, 52 respondents (52 percent) indicated that their school districts' test scores have gradually improved since mandated testing was first administered. In contrast, 15 (15 percent) indicated their districts have stayed virtually the same while 13 (13 percent) have experienced drastically improved scores. Only 5 (5 percent) of the respondents were in districts that have experienced a lowering of test scores, and 12 (12 percent) responded that this information was unknown to them. One respondent indicated that their scores fluctuated between staying virtually the same and gradually improving. This question had a 2 percent non-response.

Fifty-two (52 percent) of the teachers and administrators indicated that they were in school districts whose scores have gradually improved. Five (7 percent) of the teachers indicated that their school districts' scores have lowered, 10 (13 percent) stayed virtually the same, and 7 (9 percent) have drastically improved. Twelve (16 percent) of the teachers indicated that this information was unknown to them, and 3 percent did not respond to the question. As already stated, most of the administrators' school districts have gradually improved test scores while 5 (20 percent) indicated that their district scores have
stayed virtually the same, and 6 (24 percent) indicated that their scores have drastically improved. One respondent (4 percent) indicated that their scores have fluctuated between staying the same to gradually improving. There was a significant difference at the .050 level for 6 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 13 for the two educator groups.

The school types that indicated a lowering of test scores were the inner city and the rural respondents. Two (25 percent) of the inner city respondents indicated that their scores have lowered, 1 (12 percent) stayed virtually the same, 4 (50 percent) have gradually improved, and 1 (12 percent) indicated that this information was unknown. No inner city respondent indicated a drastic improvement in test scores. Two rural respondents (4 percent) indicated that their scores have lowered, 7 (15 percent) have stayed virtually the same, 24 (52 percent) have gradually improved, 8 (17 percent) have drastically improved, and 4 (9 percent) have fluctuated between staying the same and gradually improving. There was a 2 percent non-response from the rural respondent. No urban respondent indicated that their scores have lowered while 7 (17 percent) indicated that they have stayed virtually the same. Twenty-four (57 percent) indicated that their scores have gradually improved, 4 (10 percent) drastically improved, and 6 (14 percent) indicated that this information was
unknown to them. The urban respondent had a 2 percent non-response. There was not a significant difference between the school types.

Research Question Seven: Are school personnel positions being impacted because of testing mandates?

The survey question that asked if new personnel positions have developed in the respondent's school district to respond to mandated testing needs had 71 (71 percent) to respond no and a 21 (21 percent) to respond yes. There was an 8 percent non-response on this question. There was no significant difference in responses from teachers and administrators. Table 11 portrays the specific data.

Urban respondents indicated in larger percentages that personnel positions have been added with 15 (36 percent) indicating an increase of personnel, and 5 rural respondents indicated with the smallest percentage (11 percent) that personnel positions have been added. There was a significant difference in the urban and rural responses as Table 12 illustrates.

Respondents were asked if teachers in their school district avoid teaching in grades that the mandated test is given. A total of 57 (57 percent) responded no and 42 (42 percent) responded yes with a 1 percent non-response. Twenty-one administrators (84 percent) responded no while
teachers responded no by a smaller 48 percent. This indicated a significant difference in responses at the .010 level. Table 11 depicts the full data. Rural response was 21 (65 percent) no which can be compared to the urban response of 20 (50 percent) yes. Four inner city respondents (50 percent) responded yes. The difference between the school types has been portrayed in full in Table 12.

When asked if the respondents feel that their job security could be threatened by test score results, 51 (51 percent) responded yes, 48 (48 percent) responded no, and 1 (1 percent) responded with a question mark. Forty-two (56 percent) of the teachers felt their job security could be threatened and 9 (36 percent) of the administrators indicated job insecurity. The difference in school types and groups was not significant. Full data on this question has been portrayed in Tables 11 and 12.

Research question eight: What are educators' personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS and TAAS tests?

Educators were surveyed to see if they feel that mandated testing endeavors have influenced educators to work harder. Fifty-five (55 percent) respondents answered yes and 44 (44 percent) no. This inquiry had a 1 percent non-response. The differences between the educator groups was not significant. Table 13 provides the complete data.
Table 11

Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: Are school personnel positions being impacted because of testing mandates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes No NR</td>
<td>Yes No NR</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV a</td>
<td>24 68 8</td>
<td>12 80 8</td>
<td>1.67</td>
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<td>not sign</td>
<td>71 21 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII b</td>
<td>51 48 1</td>
<td>16 84</td>
<td>9.95</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>42 57 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIV b</td>
<td>56 44</td>
<td>36 60 4</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
<td>51 48 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent. NR = non-response
Table 12

Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: Are school personnel positions being impacted because of testing mandates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Innercity</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV a</td>
<td>11 87 2</td>
<td>25 63 12</td>
<td>36 48 16</td>
<td>rural/urban 16.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>beyond .005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rural/innercity 3.56</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>urban/innercity .6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII b</td>
<td>33 65 2</td>
<td>62 38</td>
<td>50 48 2</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV b</td>
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<td>50 50</td>
<td>52 48</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>not sign</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

NR = non-response
Concerning the school types, the inner city response was a resounding 75 percent no compared to a 12 percent no response from the rural respondents. Twenty-two urban respondents indicated by 52 percent response that they felt testing endeavors have influenced educators to work harder. Table 14 illustrates the complete data.

When asked if the educators felt that in preparation for the required testing, the overall result will be more effective teaching/learning, 62 (62 percent) responded no, and 35 (35 percent) responded yes. There was a 3 percent non-response on this item. Teachers and administrators responded significantly different with 52 (69 percent) of the teachers responding no and 10 (52 percent) of the administrators responding yes. Table 13 portrays the comparative data.

Six inner city respondents responded no by a strong 75 percent while the rural and urban educators agreed with each providing a 57 percent response of no. There was no significant difference in the rural and urban responses. Table 14 provides the specific data on this survey item.

Educators were asked what they felt improved testing scores reflect. The survey participants were given five choices to respond to: improved teaching, improved testing skills, improved student achievement, other, or none of the above. Only 5 (5 percent) responded improved teaching, 37 (37 percent) responded improved testing skills, 4 (4
percent) improved student achievement, 22 (22 percent)
responded all three of the above, 5 (5 percent) marked
other, 13 (13 percent) none of the above, and 13 (13
percent) wrote various combinations of the above choices.
There was a 1 percent non-response on this item.
Handwritten responses for other: teacher test-coaching
skills, teaching to the test, and improved test-taking.

There was a significant difference in how the school
groups responded. Teachers responded: 3 (4 percent)
improved teaching, 34 (45 percent) improved testing skills,
1 (1 percent) improved student achievement, 16 (21 percent)
all three of the above, 10 (13 percent) various
combinations of the above choices, 2 (5 percent) other, and
8 (11 percent) none of the above. Each of the 11 percent
combinations included improved testing skills, and the 5
percent who wrote in other responses included test-taking
skill remarks. There was a 1 percent non-response from the
teacher survey. Administrators responded: 2 (8 percent)
improved teaching, 3 (12 percent) improved testing skills,
3 (12 percent) improved student achievement, 6 (24 percent)
all three of the above, 3 (12 percent) various combinations
of the above, 3 (12 percent other), and 5 (20 percent) none
of the above. Each of the 12 percent combinations included
improved teaching or improved testing skills. The
difference in the two groups' responses was significant at
the .025 level with a chi-square of 16.46 for 7 degrees of
Table 13

Responses From School Groups In Percentages

Research Question: What are educators' personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS and TAAS tests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<td>No</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV b</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
Table 14

Responses From School Types In Percentages

Research Question: What are educators' personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS and TAAS tests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question (See Appendix E)</th>
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<th>Urban</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<tr>
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<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.
NR = non-response
freedom.

The three school types also differed in their responses to this survey item. The rural school responses indicated: 2 (4 percent) improved teaching, 14 (31 percent) improved testing skills, 3 (7 percent) improved student achievement, 12 (26 percent) all three of the above, 2 (13 percent) various combinations of the above, 6 (4 percent) other, and 7 (15 percent) none of the above. The inner school responses indicated: 3 (38 percent) improved testing skills, 3 (38 percent) other, 1 (12 percent) none of the above, and 1 (12 percent) non-response. The urban respondents indicated: 1 (2 percent) improved teaching, 19 (45 percent) improved testing skills, 11 (26 percent) all three of the above, 4 (10 percent) various combinations of the above, 2 (4 percent) other, and 5 (12 percent) none of the above. There was a 1 percent non-response from this group. The difference between the responses of the rural and urban respondents was not significant. The responses of the other two school types were significantly different: the rural and inner city responses showed a difference at the .010 level for 7 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 17.72, and the urban and inner city responses showed a difference at the .025 level for 7 degrees of freedom with a chi-square of 14.5.

Concerning educators' views on the TAAS test, survey participants were asked to judge from the information that
they have received about the TAAS test, if they feel that TAAS is a superior testing instrument than the TEAMS test. The response was that 50 (50 percent) indicated no, 42 (42 percent) responded yes, and 8 (8 percent) did not respond. The difference in the school group responses was not significant as Table 13 depicts. There was not a significant difference in the school types as Table 14 illustrates.

When asked if test revisions as seen in TABS to TEAMS to TAAS justify the expense involved, the respondents had three choices to consider: no, yes, and no opinion. Of the total responses, 76 (76 percent) marked no, 6 (6 percent) yes, and 16 (16 percent) marked no opinion. There was a 2 percent non-response on this question. There was not a significant difference in responses from the two school groups. Fifty-eight teachers (77 percent) responded no, 3 (4 percent) yes, and 12 (16 percent) had no opinion with 3 percent not responding to the question. The administrators responded 18 (72 percent) no, 3 (12 percent) yes, and 4 (16 percent) no opinion.

The three school types also did not show a significant difference in response. All of the inner city respondents expressed an opinion on this item: 6 (75 percent) no and 2 (25 percent) yes. Six (13 percent) of the rural respondents had no opinion, 38 (83 percent) marked no, and 2 (4 percent) checked yes. The urban respondents
responded: 28 (67 percent) no, 3 (7 percent) yes, and 10 (24 percent) no opinion.

Research question nine: Are there differences in how teachers, administrators, and school districts respond to mandated tests?

The survey question that asked the educators if they personally have negative or positive opinions about state mandated tests offered four choices for response: negative, positive, both negative and positive, and neither negative or positive. The majority of the educators (51) responded by 51 percent that they have both negative and positive opinions about state mandated tests. Thirty-eight (38 percent) marked negative, 8 (8 percent) marked positive, and 3 (3 percent) marked neither.

There was not a significant difference in the responses of the two school groups. Teachers responded: 39 (52 percent) both negative and positive, 28 (37 percent) negative, 6 (8 percent) positive, and 2 (3 percent) neither. Administrators responded: 12 (48 percent) both negative and positive, 10 (40 percent) negative, 2 (8 percent) positive, and 1 (4 percent) neither.

Six inner city responses gave a strong 75 percent negative with a 25 percent both negative and positive from 2 respondents. Twenty-four rural respondents responded by 52 percent that they have both negative and positive
opinions, 17 (37 percent) marked negative, 4 (9 percent) positive, and 1 (2 percent) neither. Twenty-four urban respondents (57 percent) indicated both negative and positive, 13 (31 percent) negative, 4 (10 percent) positive, and 1 (2 percent) neither.

When examining the entire survey data, the two school groups surveyed (administrators and teachers) responded with a significant difference on 10 (34 percent) questions while the three school types (rural, inner city, and urban) responded with a significant difference on 5 (17 percent) of the survey questions.

Discussion

As indicated by the 83 percent survey return, educators throughout Texas were eager to share how they are being impacted by Texas' State mandated testing initiative. Enthusiasm for sharing was also evidenced by the fact that 25 percent of the surveys returned had handwritten solicited comments at the end of the survey (see Appendix G), and 38 percent of the surveys had unsolicited comments written along the margins of the surveys.

Some data received on the survey questionnaires raised questions that needed clarification. For example, two returned surveys indicated that from 80 to 90 percent of the respondents' school populations were exempted from the TEAMS test. Mary Cole, Special Education Specialist for
the Texas Education Agency's Special Education Programs, explained through a telephone interview that in some larger school districts special schools exist that have total school populations comprised of neurologically or physically handicapped individuals. Thus, high exemption ratios would be possible for such schools (personal communication, July 10, 1990).

One other returned survey raised questions. One respondent's questionnaire indicated that test security is not fail-safe in that respondent's school district by responding to the question, "Are the TEAMS contents safely secured under lock in your district?" The respondent responded by checking both yes and no and then wrote in the margin, "but we can get to them to use them."

Interestingly, the same survey respondent had written in the margin on question Ia, which concerned the changing of district test scores since mandated testing was first administered, "started high and has gone higher" and on question XVla regarding administrators being concerned over media reporting wrote, "We're very proud and want them reported." Robert Triscari, Education Research Specialist for the Texas Education Agency, stated in a telephone interview that the agency watches unusual test score discrepancies through a tracking system, and the agency has personnel who investigate suspicious irregularities. He added that test security will be stepped up with the new
TAAS test (personal communication July 10, 1990). Although the same security guidelines for TEAMS will be in effect for TAAS, distribution and testing dates will coincide statewide and will be strictly enforced to make violation of test contents more difficult.

As the data in Chapter IV reflect, strong opinions exist among educators concerning the impact that mandated testing is having upon educators and school districts in Texas. While agreement is evident among groups in some areas of inquiry, differences among educator groups and school types exist. Chapter V will present the findings drawn from the data, the conclusions based upon these findings, and the recommendations developed from the data.
Summary

This study was conducted in the Spring of 1990 to determine the effects that mandated testing has had on school districts and educators in Texas and to ascertain if changes are occurring as a result of mandated testing. A stratified random sample of Texas teachers and administrators produced 100 educators who responded to a questionnaire designed to determine how they and their school districts are responding to mandated testing.

Data were collected and analyzed to determine differences in opinions among these representative educator groups and their school types. The chi-square test was used to determine if sets of responses were independent to a significant degree. The results were presented in tabular form and interpreted narratively.

Findings

Based upon the data presented in this study, nine findings were reached. These findings were a direct outgrowth of the nine research questions which provided the
direction for the investigation.

1. Research question one: Is mandated testing being used to improve student performance/learning?

According to the survey, respondents do not feel that a pencil-and-paper test is a relevant way to test academic proficiency. Respondent educators were divided between classifying the TEAMS test as not being an accurate measure of student achievement to being a measurement of only minimum student achievement. The majority of survey respondents indicated that the TEAMS test has been used diagnostically in their school districts by administrators and teachers. All of the inner city school districts' respondents indicated that the mandated test has been used as a diagnostic measure in their school districts. Further, educators appear optimistic that the early Fall testing date for TAAS will enable them to more effectively use the state test for diagnostic purposes.

2. Research question two: Are classroom events/procedures being altered by a perceived need to prepare students for state tests?

The majority of survey respondents devoted more than 16 hours preparing students specifically for the TEAMS test. Administrators and teachers representing all school types agree that the first few months of the school year will be
devoted to preparing students for the TAAS test. According to the survey, more classroom time has been devoted to teaching test-taking strategies since mandated testing has taken effect. By a small majority, respondents indicated that they do not feel that teachers are being monitored more to see if they are teaching tested domains; however, the inner city educator disagreed by indicating that they detected more monitoring has been taking place.

3. Research question three: Do mandated tests influence curricula?

The survey data indicated that curriculum has been altered to elevate test scores. Although teachers and administrators agree that curricula has been altered, a greater percent of teachers than administrators indicated curricula has been altered. All groups indicated test-like materials are being provided to the classroom teacher to instruct students on how to deal with mass produced tests. One hundred percent of the inner city respondents indicated that such materials are provided. The majority of the respondents acknowledged that these materials are being integrated into the regular classroom curriculum. According to the survey, the majority of respondents projected a shift in curricula to match the new focus of the new TAAS test.
4. Research question four: Do mandated tests influence classroom teaching strategies?

Survey respondents from both educator groups and school types responded that classroom teaching strategy changes have occurred to elevate test scores. Inner city schools indicated less change than other school types. Administrators credit teacher initiative and administrative direction as being responsible for the changes. Teachers not only credit administrative direction but also in larger percentages credit teacher initiative as the reason for the strategy changes.

5. Research question five: Is pressure being exerted on the educational community to increase test scores?

The majority of the survey respondents say that teachers are being encouraged to "teach the test." One hundred percent of the inner city school respondents indicated that they were being encouraged to "teach the test." According to the survey, school teachers and administrators are being viewed as being the individuals who are most concerned about test scores in their school district as opposed to students, parents, public, media, and state legislators. One hundred percent of the inner city respondents indicated that they view administrators as being the most concerned about test scores in their district. The respondents indicated that their school
administrators were moderately to extremely concerned about media reporting of TEAMS test scores. The majority of school districts responded that incentives were not being used to increase test scores. Only one respondent indicated test security has been violated. One hundred percent of the administrators indicated tests have been secure under lock in their districts.

6. Research question six: Are changes occurring within the educational community that are designed to elevate test scores?

The majority of survey respondents indicated that teachers are being encouraged to teach state objectives. Special education and at-risk students are being exempted from the test according to the survey to enhance test scores. Inner city respondents indicated the largest exemption percentages. Test scores are gradually improving in the majority of school districts according to the respondents. None of the urban respondents indicated a lowering of test scores while 25 percent of the inner city respondents indicated that their test scores have lowered.

7. Are school personnel positions being impacted because of testing mandates?

While some school districts have added personnel to respond to mandated testing needs, the majority of school
districts surveyed have not added personnel. The rural respondents indicated less change in adding personnel while the urban respondents indicated the greatest change by personnel additions. By a small majority, school teachers indicated that teachers were avoiding teaching in grades that the mandated TEAMS test has been administered. In contrast administrators indicated that they do not believe that teachers have been avoiding tested grades. The inner city respondent indicated by 62 percent that teachers were Administrators were the most confident that their job security was not being threatened by test score results. The remaining groups of respondents indicated by a small majority that they felt that their job security could be threatened by test score results.

8. Research question eight: What are educators' personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS and TAAS tests?

According to the survey, teachers view improved test scores as reflecting improved testing skills. By a small margin, survey respondents do not judge the TAAS test to be a superior testing instrument as compared with the TEAMS test. Seventy-six percent of the respondents do not feel that test revisions justify the expense involved. The majority of administrators feel that, in preparation for the state test, the overall result will be more effective
teaching/learning. By a small majority, educators responded that mandated testing had caused teachers to work harder. The inner city respondent disagreed with a seventy-five percent negative response.

9. Research question nine: Are there differences in how teachers, administrators, and school districts respond to mandated tests?

Administrators and teachers agree that they have both negative and positive opinions about state mandated tests. Examining all of the data from the returned surveys, administrators and teachers responded significantly different on 34 percent of the questions and there were significant differences by school types on 17 percent of the questions. The findings of the research questions one through eight testify that although agreement is evident among school groups and types, differences do exist in some areas of inquiry.

Conclusions

The following conclusions have been drawn based on analyses and interpretation of data gathered for this study:

1. Although educators do not show confidence in the content of the Texas' TEAMS mandated tests, the test has been used as a diagnostic measure to improve student
performance/learning. Educators appear to be optimistic about the diagnostic use of the TAAS test due to its earlier testing schedule.

2. Classroom events/procedures are being altered by a perceived need by educators to prepare students for the state test. More classroom time is being devoted to teaching test-taking strategies since the TEAMS test was mandated, and it is anticipated that Texas teachers will use the first months of the school year preparing students for the forthcoming TAAS test.

3. Curricula have been influenced by state mandated tests. The Texas' TEAMS test has influenced the altering of curricula, and it is anticipated that a shift in curricula will occur to match the focus of the TAAS test. Further, a trend has developed of integrating test-like materials into the curricula to prepare students for mass produced tests.

4. Teacher initiative and administrative direction have influenced changes in teaching strategies to elevate test scores of mandated tests.

5. Although educators perceive that they are being encouraged to "teach the test," and that media reporting of test scores is a concern for most administrators, incentives for test score improvement or violation of test security do not appear to be a commonly used avenue to generate high test scores.
6. Encouraging teachers to teach state objectives and exempting students from taking the test are examples of changes that are occurring to elevate test scores.

7. Some personnel positions are being impacted because of testing mandates. While school administrators are prone to feel confident in their job security, other educators feel threatened by test score results. Additionally, in some instances teachers have avoided teaching in TEAMS tested grades. The addition of personnel to respond to mandated testing needs does not appear to have materialized due to mandated testing.

8. Educators hold varying personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS tests. Administrators in this study feel that the overall result of mandated testing will be more effective teaching/learning. Teachers disagree. Teachers are prone to feel that improved test scores merely indicate improved testing skills. Except for the inner city educator, most educator groups and types feel that mandated testing endeavors have influenced educators to work harder.

9. Teachers, administrators, and school district types do not agree in total to issues that relate to Texas mandated testing. Texas educators see a variety of issues differently, and the educator's school group or school type may influence how the educator perceives issues.
Recommendations

Based upon the findings, the following recommendations are being presented:

1. A study is needed to research teaching strategies that have been deemed helpful in elevating mandated test scores and to investigate if these strategies are educationally sound or advisable.

2. Research is needed to see if relationships exist between teaching state objectives, changing teaching strategies, altering curriculum, and raising test scores.

3. A study is needed to determine what impact test-like materials are having on the curriculum menu.

4. A system needs to be developed at the local/state level designed to link teachers more directly with state level decision makers in order to devise evaluative measures that educators deem relevant.

5. A study is needed to determine what events occur at the local level that shape the viewpoints of the rural, inner city, and urban educator.

6. A system of communication needs to be developed to encourage dialogue at the local level between administrators and teachers to: anticipate undesirable effects of reform changes, generate acceptable sound school practices that responds to the mandates, and maximize the usefulness of the school reform directives.
APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OF ADMINISTRATOR'S LETTER
April 17, 1990

Dear

As a graduate student at the University of North Texas, I am working toward a masters of science degree in reading education. Presently, I am working on my thesis entitled "Texas Educational Reform: A Study of the Effects of Mandated Testing in Texas." Since educators are directly involved with the effects of mandated testing, I am requesting teachers and administrators across the state to respond to a questionnaire that makes inquiry concerning the effects of the state's mandated testing.

To get input from administrators, I have randomly selected names from the Texas School Directory to request participation in a survey concerning mandated testing. You are being asked to give input into this research as an administrator by responding to the enclosed questionnaire. As you can tell by the format of the questionnaire, you as a respondent are to remain anonymous. Nowhere on the survey are you asked information to identify you, your school district, or the region of your school district. This information is not needed for my research.

For your assistance in this matter, I will be glad to forward on to you a free copy of my research when it is completed. To request the research, detach the request slip and return it to me. If you have any questions concerning my research, please feel free to contact me.

Because of the need for a valid return, your prompt input is most essential to this study. Thank you in advance for giving me assistance in completing the requirements for my thesis research.

Sincerely,

Ann Gray
6403 Rainier
Plano, Texas 75023
APPENDIX B

SAMPLE OF PRINCIPAL'S LETTER
Dear

I am a graduate student at the University of North Texas working toward a masters of science degree in reading education. Presently, I am working on my thesis entitled "Texas Educational Reform: A Study of the Effects of Mandated Testing in Texas."

This research will include input from administrators and teachers. To get input from teachers, I have randomly selected elementary schools from the Texas School Directory, and I am asking the principals of these schools to pass the enclosed questionnaires on to a classroom teacher on their staff who would be willing to participate. As you can tell by the format of the survey, the respondent is asked to remain anonymous. Nowhere on the survey is the respondent asked for information to identify the individual, the school, or the school region of the respondent. This information is not needed for my research.

For your assistance in this matter, I will be glad to forward on to you a free copy of my research when it is completed. To request the research, detach the request slip and return it to me. If you have any questions concerning my research, please feel free to contact me.

Because of the need for a valid return, expeditious responses are vital. Thank you and your staff in advance for giving me assistance in completing the requirements for my thesis research.

Sincerely,

Ann Gray
6403 Rainier
Plano, Texas 75023
APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OF TEACHER'S LETTER
Dear Research Participant,

As a graduate student at the University of North Texas, I am working toward a masters of science degree in reading education. Presently, I am working on my thesis entitled "Texas Educational Reform: A Study of the Effects of Mandated Testing in Texas." Since educators are directly involved with the effects of mandated testing, I am requesting teachers and administrators across the state to respond to a questionnaire that makes inquiry concerning the effects of the state's mandated testing.

Because your school has been randomly selected from the Texas School Directory to participate in this survey, you are being asked to give input into this research by responding to the following questionnaire. As you can tell by the format of the survey, you as a respondent are to remain anonymous. Nowhere on the survey are you asked information to identify you, your school, or the region of your school. This information is not appropriate for my research.

Because of the need for a valid return, your prompt input is most essential to this study. Thank you in advance for giving me assistance in completing the requirements for my thesis research.

Sincerely,

Ann Gray
6403 Rainier
Plano, Texas 75023
APPENDIX D

SAMPLE OF RESEARCH REQUEST FORM
Please send me a free copy of the research "Texas Educational Reform: A Study of the Effects of Mandated Testing in Texas."

Name

Address
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
Concerning Mandated Testing (side a)

I. Have the test scores in your school district changed since mandated testing was first administered?
   ___ stayed virtually the same, ___ lowered,
   ___ gradually improving, ___ drastically improved,
   ___ information unknown

II. Have the TEAMS test results been used as a diagnostic measure in your district?
   ___ no
   ___ yes, by teachers
   ___ yes, by administrators

III. Do you feel that with the new October testing date, the educator will be better able to use the test for diagnostic purposes?
   ___ no ___ yes

IV. Have new personnel positions developed in your district to respond to mandated testing needs?
   ___ no ___ yes

V. Has your district's curriculum been altered to elevate test scores?
   ___ no ___ yes, by teacher
   ___ yes, by the administration
   ___ yes, by ______________________

VI. Have your classroom teaching strategies changed to increase test scores?
   ___ no ___ yes, by individual teacher initiative
   ___ yes, by administration direction

VII. Are teachers in your district being monitored more to see if they are teaching tested domains?
   ___ no ___ yes

VIII. Does your school district provide "test-like" materials to the classroom teacher to instruct the students on how to deal with mass produced tests?
   ___ no ___ yes (If yes, are the materials integrated into the regular classroom curriculum?
   ___ no ___ yes)

IX. Has more classroom time been devoted to teaching students test-taking strategies since the testing mandate took effect?
   ___ no ___ yes

X. How many hours do you feel the average teacher in your district spends preparing students specifically for the TEAMS test?
   0 ___ 1-5 ___ 6-15 ___ 16-30 ___ other:

XI. Are the TEAMS test's contents safely secured under lock in your district?
   ___ no ___ yes ___ not in a position to know

XII. Does your district exempt special education students (or at risk students) to enhance scores?
     ___ no ___ yes

XIII. What percent of the total student population in your district is exempt?
      ___% ___ do not know

XIV. Are your district's personnel given incentives to raise test scores?
     ___ no ___ yes

XV. Who do you feel has been most concerned about scores in your district?
    ___ the student, ___ the parent, ___ the public,
    ___ the teacher, ___ the administrator, ___ the media,
    ___ the state legislator

XVI. Are the administrators in your district concerned with media reporting of TEAMS scores?
     ___ not concerned
     ___ moderately concerned ___ extremely concerned
Concerning Personal Views: (side b)

I. Do you personally have negative or positive opinions about state mandated tests? ___ negative ___ positive ___ both neg. and pos. ___ neither neg. nor pos.

II. Do you feel that mandated testing endeavors have influenced educators to work harder? ___ no ___ yes

III. Do you feel that teachers are being encouraged to teach the state objectives in order to improve test scores? ___ no ___ yes

IV. Do you feel that in preparation for the required testing, the overall result will be more effective teaching/learning? ___ no ___ yes

V. Do you think that a pencil-and-paper test is a relevant way to test academic proficiency? ___ no ___ yes

VI. Do you feel that teachers are being encouraged to "teach the test"? ___ no ___ yes

VII. Do you feel that the TEAMS test has been an accurate measure of student achievement for students in your district? ___ no ___ yes, adequately ___ yes, minimally

VIII. Do you feel that improved testing scores reflect: (Can check more than one) ___ improved teaching ___ improved testing skills ___ improved student achievement other: __________________________, ___ none of the above

IX. From the information that you have received about the TAAS test, do you feel that it is a superior testing instrument than the TEAMS test? ___ no ___ yes

X. Do you feel that test revisions as seen in TABS to TEAMS to TAAS justify the expense involved? ___ no ___ yes ___ no opinion

XI. Since the TAAS test has an expanded focus, do you feel that your school district will shift its curriculum to match the new focus? ___ no ___ yes

XII. Do you feel that with the new October testing date, the classroom teacher in your district will feel compelled to spend the first months of the school year teaching tested domains? ___ no ___ yes

XIII. Do teachers in your district avoid teaching in grades that the mandated test is given? ___ no ___ yes

XIV. Do you feel that your job security could be threatened by test score results? ___ no ___ yes

Comments on any of the above items: ____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

___ I am an administrator ___ I am a classroom teacher

Approximate school population in your school district K-12 _________

Type of community your school district serves: ___ rural ___ urban ___ inner city

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT
APPENDIX F

JURY FOR THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT
Jury for the survey instrument Texas Educational Reform: A Study of the Effects of Mandated Testing in Texas

Earp, Norman Wesley, Ed.D. Professor in the Department of Elementary, Early Childhood and Reading Education, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas.


Borowicz, Carol, M.Ed. Fifth Grade Classroom Teacher, Plano Independent School District, Huffman Elementary School, Plano, Texas.

Atwood, Candy, M.Ed. Third Grade Classroom Teacher, Plano Independent School District, Huffman Elementary School, Plano, Texas.
APPENDIX G

SURVEY COMMENTS
Survey Comments

The survey designed to collect data for this study contained three blank lines to solicit comments from the respondent. Each comment received from a respondent has been grouped under the research question relative to the comment. Each comment has been coded to denote the school group and school type from which the comment originated.

Code:  CT = Classroom teacher, AD = Administrator
       R = rural, IC = inner city, U = urban

Research question one: Is mandated testing being used to improve student performance/learning?
"TEAMS is more to a child's education than the ability to pass a paper-and-pencil test." (CT-R)
"My school is one of 104 schools in Texas scoring 90 percent on TEAMS for the past five years." (CT-U)

Research question two: Are classroom events/procedures being altered by a perceived need to prepare students for state tests?
"We waste six weeks teaching to the test." (CT-U)
"I think I am a better teacher now than several years ago. I do feel we are teaching too many objective in the loser grades. We have to rush students through skills that need more time to develop." (CT-U)
"You cannot compare test scores from one year to the next.
The students are not the same. School districts are having teachers direct teaching toward the test. My school has second and fourth (grade teachers) creating materials for TAAS." (CT-U)

"More and more we are teaching to the test. It dominates our lives." (CT-R)

Research question three: Do mandated tests influence curricula?

"Too much emphasis has been placed on these test scores! Teaching have become chained to teaching a set of objectives that greatly limit classroom creativity." (CT-R)

"Sometimes I feel as if we spend so much time preparing for tests that we leave out many valuable lessons." (CT-R)

"Allow teachers to teach the curriculum and all the other skills will fall into place!" (CT-U)

Research question four: Do mandated tests influence classroom teaching strategies?

"Time, energy, and money spent on this type of testing could be better used elsewhere. We need a new attitude in education: teaching thinking, processing analytical skills, learning to learn - not stress on test performance on this type. 'Test taking' skills are taught by drill more than reasoning. Children and teachers become stressed
out. It is hard to resist pressure on the grade level. After experiencing a year in a TEAMS grade, I'd just as soon avoid it in the future. I have nine years experience and consider myself to be progressive and well informed." (CT-U)

Research question five: Is pressure being exerted on the educational community to increase test scores?

"We are testing too young and not able to have enough time to develop and enrich our learning without too much stress on the student." (CT-U)

"Teachers would be kidding themselves if they felt no pressure from these test scores!" (CT-R)

"There is a great deal of competition among campus administrators in our district. This, in turn, puts a lot of pressure on teachers, who then put pressure on the students" (CT-R)

"School districts feel threatened by low test scores (TEA)." (CT-R)

"The TAAS October testing date has put additional pressure on all grade levels. I feel under stress to pressure my second graders for the test that is taken in third (grade). We all feel that we haven't had enough notice that the education system in Texas is too top-bottom organized; i.e. legislative - teacher." (CT-R)

"The public wants high scores - this puts too much pressure
Research question six: Are changes occurring within the educational community that are designed to elevate test scores?
"I have received no information on the TAAS." (CT-U)
"Our test scores improved because we directed our efforts specifically at that. The better test scores do not in any way indicate we are doing a better job than any other district. The test basically has very little meaning." (AD-R)

Research question seven: Are school personnel positions being impacted because of testing mandates?
"With all raises tied to career ladder and your social security number on each student's test, you would be foolish to think these scores are not critical! Our district changes career ladder requirements every year and has these requirements apply to the previous year. We never know what we will need for career ladder or anything else until the day we apply." (CT-U)

Research question eight: What are educators' personal views as to the ramifications of the TEAMS and TAAS tests?
"A state test is useless in our mobile society. Only a national standardized test should be given." (CT-U)
"I feel that the TAAS test is ridiculously hard. Second graders are given a 'predicts' version of 30 sentence passages. These are not minimum skills and should not be represented as such." (CT-U)

"The children are being 'over' tested. It bothers me that scores are compared from year to year instead of comparing a group from 3rd to 5th to 7th, etc. This really is an interesting topic...I'd love to see the results!" (CT-U)

"I wish more teachers would realize that these tests are just BASIC skills! I really wish we had a test to pass from one grade to another." (CT-R)

"The tests have become better over the years - although I have a problem with one test being so much weight in determining academic proficiency." (CT-R)

"I feel there is too much pressure put on odd grade teachers to have high test scores on TEAMS! I hope that the TAAS test (given in October) will relieve some of that pressure." (CT-R)

"Many of the items above are difficult to answer for the district. They are controlled at the building and classroom level." (AD-IC)

"It doesn't matter what your have to work with, you are measured on TEAMS scores only. It is totally unfair." (AD-R)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


