

AN EXAMINATION OF TRANSITION FIRST
GRADE CURRICULUM

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
MAY, 1991

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May 1991

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express sincere appreciation to my major advisor Dr. Kathryn Castle for her encouragement and advice throughout my graduate program and for her many years of friendship. I also thank Dr. David Yellin and Dr. Richard Dodder for serving as members of my doctoral committee. A special note of thanks is extended to Dr. Shirley Raines for her invaluable editorial assistance and for agreement to serve as a committee member despite the distance between our institutions.

I especially wish to express appreciation to Dr. Rosalind Charlesworth for her generous agreement to allow use of the educational environmental rating scale and a modification of a subscale regarding frequency of instructional activities. The environmental rating scale was developed at Louisiana State University by Rosalind Charlesworth, Jean Mosley, Diane Burts, Craig Hart, Lisa Kirk, and Sue Hernandez and was based upon the National Association for the Education of Young Children guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice. The instructional activities questionnaire was developed at Louisiana State University by Rosalind Charlesworth, Diane Burts, and Craig Hart; a subscale was used in the current study to allow teachers to indicate the frequency of instructional activities within their classrooms. I also express appreciation to the National Association for the Education of Young Children for allowing inclusion of portions of the guidelines in the Appendix. Such inclusion should prove helpful to readers. Without the generous permission to use these documents, the current study could not have been completed.

A special thank you is extended to the educators in the school district who participated

in the study. They are to be commended for maintaining an open attitude toward the examination of educational practices and policies affecting young children. Their support for me personally, as well as participation in educational research, is greatly appreciated. I hope that information obtained in the current study will prove useful to their reflective practice.

I wish to express appreciation to my friend and colleague Jane Meyer, who acted as a sounding board during the data collection process and has provided helpful questions during periods of reflection.

Lastly, I acknowledge the love and friendship of my beloved husband Ronald Paul Rhoten whose quiet patience has been the strength and center of my life.

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CHAPTER I

TRANSITION ROOMS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Introduction

Nonpromotion is a pervasive practice in American elementary schools in the primary grades, although its incidence in other countries is often nonexistent (Center for Policy Research in Education [CPRE], 1990). Current school practice across the nation indicates that a growing number of school districts are retaining increasing numbers of children in kindergarten and the lower primary grades (Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; CPRE, 1990; Charlesworth, 1989; Meisels, 1989, 1990; Neill, 1989; Shepard & Smith, 1988; Smith & Shepard, 1987), with researchers estimating as many as 40% (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1987) to 50% of children being asked to repeat kindergarten in some school districts (CPRE, 1990). The cost of repeating a grade level in the primary grades on a yearly basis in the United States is estimated to be \$4,243 per child, based upon the 1987-1988 cost per pupil in public elementary and secondary schools (R. Whalen, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education, personal communication February 19, 1991).

Nonpromotion or grade retention has traditionally taken the form of a child repeating a grade after it has been decided that the child has not made adequate academic progress at that grade level. Among schoolchildren, repeating a grade is usually known as 'failing' or 'flunking.' A different twist has been added to the traditional grade retention or grade

'failure' practice by the phenomenon called *passive retention*. Passive retention is a term coined by educators to indicate that a decision is made to add a fourteenth year to a child's schooling progression before he or she is eligible to enter a public school kindergarten or first grade (Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; Charlesworth, 1989; Meisels, 1987, 1990). Thus, while traditional nonpromotion is a function of teacher evaluation of the child's past classroom performance, the decision to retain a child is also increasingly based upon the perception of his/her potential to perform rather than being based upon current academic achievement.

Traditional entry into public schools during this century has been based upon chronological age. Passive retention, however, is based on the belief that a child's readiness to benefit from educational experiences is dependent upon innate maturational rate rather than chronological age (Ames, 1978; Carll & Richard, n.d.; Frick, 1985; Walker, 1989) and that some youngsters benefit from being grouped for educational purposes with chronologically younger children or children who, like themselves, have been labeled as 'immature.' Determination of the need for passive retention often is obtained by testing the child, and based upon such test results parents may be informed that their child is 'not ready' for kindergarten or first grade experiences and will require an additional year in order to 'get ready' for entrance to public school kindergarten or primary grade.

Sometimes the year is added before the child actually begins his/her educational experience. The child is tested prior to entry into kindergarten and, based upon test results, parents may be advised to keep the child at home or in private preschool for an additional year. This form of passive retention is sometimes called *academic redshirting* and is modeled after the common practice of withholding amateur athletes from active sports competition upon the playing fields, thus gaining an edge over other youngsters (Frick, 1985; Jones & Sutherland, 1981). The decision to academically redshirt a child may also be a parental decision made prior to any use of a standardized test due to a parental belief

that academic advantage may accrue from delayed school entry or from a parental fear that the child will not be able to meet academic standards of the school. In either case, the child who is academically redshirted is chronologically older than classmates just as in traditional nonpromotion.

Many parents are unwilling to delay school entry even when advised to do so on the basis of test results indicating the child is 'unready.' Prekindergarten classes for children who meet legal age requirements for kindergarten entry, but whose parents cannot or will not keep them at home for another year, are provided by some school districts as a way of providing an additional year of schooling prior to entry into the regular kindergarten program. In other districts, children proceed through the usual kindergarten class but are then tracked into special post-kindergarten or pre-primary grade sections. That is, the following year they proceed to an all-day experience in which they are segregated from other children at the first grade level, where they remain for a year prior to entry into the regular first grade. This additional year the child spends in his or her schooling progression (whether at the prekindergarten or pre-primary grade) is usually called a *transitional* grade placement. Transitional classrooms are also sometimes called developmental kindergartens, transition kindergartens, kindergarten plus programs, pre-first grades, readiness rooms, junior first grades, transition first grades, readiness first grades, pre-primary grades or developmental first grades. Approximately 17.5% of all elementary schools in the United States currently implement transitional classes between kindergarten and first grade for children labeled as 'unready' for first grade curriculum (Gardner, 1986; Hymes, 1990; Neill, 1989). It is estimated that in those districts using elementary transitional programs, approximately one-third of children chronologically eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade are passively retained (Walker, 1989). In districts having both transition kindergarten and transition first grade programs, some youngsters may spend three years in a public school classroom prior to entry into first grade.

Grade placement in a transitional classroom may be through the usual evaluative procedure in which teacher recommendation is a major consideration, or a formal assessment result may be used to place the child in the transitional classroom. In either case, of course, the child is placed in a class that is a half-way point between two grades--sometimes between the preschool and the public kindergarten experience and sometimes between the kindergarten and primary grade experience. The end result is that the child is chronologically older than other students as he/she progresses through school because of the additional year in the transitional program. A fourteenth year has been added to the child's schooling experience just as in traditional retention or nonpromotion.

Problem Statement

Several southwestern school districts have established transition first grade programs as an alternative educational setting intended to provide learning experiences for children identified as developmentally unready for the regular primary curriculum. Although the number and cost of transition first grades is unknown, even less is known about the curriculum in transition first grades. Nationwide, little research appears to have been conducted regarding teacher perceptions of curriculum used in transitional programs or teacher opinions about the selection process for children believed to require such an alternative curriculum, and to date no investigation appears to have been completed in which transition first grade teachers were systematically interviewed about curriculum. It would appear that transition first grades have been implemented in southwestern school districts without prior review of the implications such school policy may have for early childhood curriculum or of the impact teacher beliefs may have upon a grade configuration designed to include a transitional program.

Background of the Issue

Controversy concerning the use of transitional programs has continued for the past five decades. Questions have been raised as to the cost and outcomes of transitional programs, and disagreement exists as to what purpose transitional grade placement serves. Some educators feel that placement of a child in a transitional classroom is not a form of nonpromotion but rather a meeting of the child's developmental needs through 'correct' grade placement. They feel that the child will be able to better meet the demands of school by placement in a program that addresses his/her level of readiness. To 'overplace' the child in a grade level for which the child is 'unready,' they feel, would cause the child emotional stress as well as prohibit academic excellence since the child will not be able to keep pace with peers (Ames, 1978; Ames, Gillespie & Streff, 1972; Gesell Institute, 1980). They believe that placement in a transitional classroom is not a form of nonpromotion but rather a matching of the child's stage of development and the curricular level within a particular educational setting.

Others feel that such educational practices as academic redshirting, transitional grade tracking or nonpromotion of large numbers of children in kindergarten and primary grades contribute to the problem of inappropriate academic demand in kindergarten and first grade (Bredekamp, 1990a, 1990b; Charlesworth, 1989; National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 1989; Shepard & Smith, 1988, 1989a; Smith & Shepard, 1987). That is, by holding out the younger and 'unready' children, the schools slowly erode teacher and parent perceptions of what children of that grade level can and should be expected to do. Since the 'unready' child is provided an additional year of schooling in excess of that provided other youngsters, they believe that transitional grade placement is a form of nonpromotion.

Professionals in early childhood education have pointed out that pressure to retain high

numbers of young children through grade repetition or passive retention can be at least partially attributed to the increased concern with academic standards, in response to national attention to standardized test results as a form of educational accountability (Meisels, 1989; Neill, 1989). In an attempt to ensure that students produce specified standardized test scores mandated by state legislatures, some schools advocate strategies of nonpromotion, passive retention, or delayed school entry for 'unready' children in the lower grades. Naturally, the perception is that an older child will be able to produce better work, read better, score higher on tests than a younger child. Research has addressed the problems that students encounter when they are the youngest in their grade, and some studies indicate that when compared with older classmates younger students are nearly always less successful (Beattie, 1970; Carroll, 1963; Davis, Trimble, & Vincent, 1980) and are more likely to be referred to special education (DiPasquale, Moule, & Flewelling, 1980). Some research has indicated that younger children are also more likely to repeat a grade (Langer, Kalk, & Searls, 1984).

Other professionals have reported that transitional classrooms do not appreciably increase academic competence of retained children and may have a negative effect upon their self esteem (Gredler, 1984; May & Welch, 1985; Shepard, 1990; Shepard & Smith, 1989b; Smith & Shepard, 1985, 1987). Some researchers have pointed out that transitional classrooms are often a response of the schools to escalating curriculum in which next-grade expectations are now being demanded of younger children. That is, learning activities previously expected of older children are now introduced at a lower grade level (Bredenkamp, 1990a, 1990b; Brewer, 1990; Charlesworth, 1989; Connell, 1987; Gallagher & Coche, 1987; Shepard, 1989b, 1990; Shepard & Smith, 1988), which helps explain why only older children are able to meet school expectations. Such escalation of curriculum has caused some early childhood professionals---including those who teach in preschools---to react to what they perceive as inappropriate learning climates by

recommending placement in transitional classrooms, where they believe the child will encounter activities more appropriate for his/her age level (Bredenkamp, 1990a). Thus, transitional classroom placement can become a way of 'protecting' a child from what is perceived as inappropriate curriculum that will cause frustration of the child confronted with academic demands beyond his/her capabilities.

The number and cost of providing transitional classrooms in some southwestern states is unknown, since such programs frequently are included as first grade classrooms in data banks maintained at state departments of education. The number of children retained in kindergarten (either by repeating the kindergarten experience or by entering a transition first grade prior to regular first grade) in the state in which the study was conducted is also unknown because such statistics are not maintained by its state department of education. Therefore, it is unknown how many children repeat kindergarten, transition first grade, or first grade in the state. Some school districts maintain careful records of nonpromotion of students; others do not, since it is not a state requirement. Although the state department of education provides a listing of learning outcomes for transition first grade programs (and, also for transition kindergarten programs), no clearly delineated curriculum for transition first grades currently exists for use in the state's schools. Further, few studies have addressed the issue of transition first grade curriculum, either in the southwest or other regions.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined the curriculum of an established transition first grade program in an southwestern school district by comparing the transition classroom curriculum with that utilized in kindergartens and first grades within the district and by examining teacher perceptions of appropriate learning environments and learning activities for children in transition first grade settings. Descriptions have been provided of the specific research

instruments and methods that were used in the study, which was intended to provide a comparative curricula review and explore program elements and functioning as perceived by professional educators associated with the district's transitional program and as observed by the researcher in order to provide a description of the transition program curriculum.

To accomplish these purposes the following research questions were posed:

- (1) What is the nature of the transition first grade system used by Southwestern Independent School District #XXX?
 - (a) When, why and how were the transition first grade classrooms developed and implemented in the district? That is, what is the historical perspective of the transitional program in this particular school district?
 - (b) How does the transitional program differ from the regular kindergarten program and the first grade program in the district in terms of curricula, daily schedule, physical setting, class size, daily activities, provision of special or auxiliary services, stated goals, and student and teacher participation?
 - (c) Have any steps been taken by the district in the past to evaluate the effectiveness of the goals or implementation of the transition first grade program, and if so, what were the outcomes of those investigations?
 - (d) How many children are currently served by the transition first grades in the district, and what trends in enrollment may be inferred from previous enrollment histories of the program?
 - (e) Are any future changes being planned for the transition first grade

program?

- (2) What are the perceptions of district educators associated with the transition first grade program as related to its curricula and its participants?
 - (a) What are the teacher prerequisites believed to be necessary for teaching in a transition first grade? Is specialized educational preparation and/or experience believed essential for the teacher assigned to a transition first grade?
 - (b) What are the characteristics of children placed in transition first grade as perceived by teachers, and what are believed to be appropriate means of identifying such children?
 - (c) Do kindergarten teachers, transition first grade teachers, first grade teachers and administrators agree upon the goals, content, learning activities, and evaluation procedures of the district's transition first grade program?
 - (d) What philosophic, ethical and/or legal considerations do kindergarten teachers, transition first grade teachers, first grade teachers and administrators believe integral in the evaluative procedures (including placement procedures) of the transition first grade program?

- (3) What conclusions may be drawn about the district's transition first grade program in terms of meeting the needs of children? Does it appear that the program is congruent with current professional guidelines regarding the design and implementation of programs serving children aged five to eight years of age?

Significance of the Study

Although increasing numbers of studies completed in the past two decades address the concerns of educators as regards transition first grade programs, most studies have dealt with a review of the academic achievement status of students who have undergone placement in a transitional program. Few studies appear to have focused upon the curriculum in transition first grades. Unfortunately, most studies to date appear to have inherent research design weaknesses that do not allow clear conclusions as to the efficacy of such programs (Jackson, 1975; Shepard & Smith, 1989b).

Most studies also have failed to include teacher opinions about curriculum or effectiveness of transitional programs (Shepard & Smith, 1985; Stroud, 1989). In recent years, however, educational researchers have finally begun to study teacher thinking as a powerful determinant of classroom practices and student learning. Understanding teacher beliefs about how children learn and develop, for example, often provides insight into the reasons for teachers' instructional decisions. That is, what teachers do in the classroom is often directed by what they believe (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Clark & Yinger, 1977; National Institute of Education, 1975; Smith, 1989). For example, in a recent study Smith (1989) used clinical interviews and observational data to examine teacher beliefs about retention---including passive retention. She found that most classroom teachers view nonpromotion as a benevolent intervention that helps students who need it, but that teacher beliefs about children and learning are more closely related to whether they actually recommend nonpromotion for youngsters in their own classrooms. Thus, Smith found that teacher decisions to retain children were better explained by their beliefs about which children could learn in a particular learning environment than by an endorsement of retention as a schooling practice.

Some southwestern school districts have continued to implement transition first grades

as an alternative educational program for large numbers of children in spite of continued controversy regarding the effectiveness, cost, equity, and unintended outcomes of such programs. To date, only two known studies have addressed transition first grades in the state in which the study was conducted (Livingston, 1990; Nicholas, 1984) even though such programs have been implemented in the state since the early 1960s (K. Shafer, personal communication on April 5, 1991). Previous state studies did not directly focus upon issues of curriculum or of teacher perceptions of the worth of transitional placement from a curricular standpoint. Considering the widespread use of these programs---and reports that several of the state's school districts intend to increase the numbers of transition first grades during the next two years---research is needed to review the curriculum of the programs and the beliefs of educators associated with them. Since the success of any school program or educational policy depends not only on the type of selected curriculum but upon the cooperative effort of teachers, administrators and others implementing the program or policy, then a clear understanding of the feelings and beliefs of those involved with implementation is essential. It is equally important that curriculum for an existing educational program actually reflects those ethical and legal considerations believed by professional educators to represent the prerequisite standards for such programs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study provides a description of the curriculum in a long-established transition first grade program as implemented in a southwestern school district. Specifically, the study has attempted to examine the goals, content, learning activities, and program characteristics in transition first grades as perceived by educators associated with the program and as perceived by the researcher during classroom observations. The study also has attempted to compare the curriculum in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade classrooms in the district as related to professional standards for early childhood programs (Bredekamp, 1987) and to learning outcomes suggested by the state's Department of Education, (1990).

This chapter presents a review of related research pertinent to the study in light of the above purpose. The following areas were considered:

1. historical occurrence of transition grades for young children in public schools;
2. research studies reporting positive and negative effects of transition grades in early childhood;
3. historical incidence of nonpromotion in early grades in public school;
4. research studies reporting positive and negative effects of nonpromotion in public school;
5. curriculum in early childhood programs in public schools including historical aspects, recent trends, and curriculum in transition grades.

Review of Transition Grades in Early Childhood

Historical Occurrence of Transition Grades in Early Childhood

Transition programs began to appear in the United States during the 1930s, and most seem to have been established in response to school policies dictating that children entering first grade be taught to read using structured materials in large group settings. Such school grouping policies coincided with recommendations from educators that reading instruction be delayed until a child fully reached the mental age of six years, six months, in the belief that such a postponement reduced the likelihood of school failure and of teacher inefficiency (Morphett & Washburne, 1931).

Though some dissension followed regarding the effects of delayed reading instruction based upon mental age testing (eg., Gates & Russell, 1939), school policies recommending delay of reading instruction provided educators with a rationale for nonpromoting large numbers of children in lower elementary grades through the placement of 'unready' and 'immature' children in special classrooms. For example, McDaid's (1950) study of Detroit public schools' transition program established in the previous decade stated that educators were concerned over high levels of nonpromotion in kindergarten and first grade and the number of children considered too 'immature' to learn to read and face rigorous academic demands of first grade. McDaid reported the Detroit schools decided they had three choices for children not ready for reading instruction: (a) keep children with age peers but have a pull-out program for readiness instruction, (b) keep pupils with age peers and have the classroom teachers individualize instruction as necessary, or (c) create a tracking system to segregate 'immature' youngsters until they were judged ready to learn to read. Transitional Reading Readiness Rooms were created in Detroit schools in 1942 as a form of educational

tracking for 'immature' children, and by 1949 Reading Readiness Rooms existed in fourteen of the nineteen school districts in the metropolitan area. By 1946, 23% of all Detroit first grade pupils had been placed previously in a transitional readiness semester as part of the district's semester-by-semester promotional practice. Detroit Reading Readiness Rooms did not prevent first grade failure, since (based upon the assumption that the program constituted a half-grade failure) 89% of all Reading Readiness Room pupils failed at least one more semester (either repeating the program or repeating the first or second semester of first grade). Forty-four percent of pupils not assigned to the readiness classrooms failed at least one semester of first grade. The stated purpose of preventing later school failure when reading instruction was undertaken therefore was not supported by the outcomes of the Readiness Room placement; nevertheless, McDaid reported that teachers and principals were in favor of the program and that Detroit planned to establish additional transition classrooms. He predicted that the program would prove difficult to eradicate.

Among other early programs were those established throughout the state of California. Russell (1948) reported in a statewide California survey that 271 out of 418 school districts had transition programs, some of which had been established in the previous decade to delay reading instruction. In schools having such programs more than half of all children took three years to complete kindergarten and first grade. Yet, the study indicated no evidence of benefit of the transition programs in terms of later achievement levels or prevention of later nonpromotion. Schools requested monies to continue funding the programs, in spite of negative findings, primarily to provide written materials which were to be used to persuade reluctant parents to place their children in the transition classes.

Hagaman (1947) described the transition first grade curriculum in Long Beach, California, as it existed at the end of World War II. No information was given as to the date of establishment of the program or the number of children placed in the transition first grade, although the author pointed out that approximately 46% of children having

completed kindergarten were considered too young chronologically to begin first grade. The stated purpose of Long Beach transition first grades was to allow children to reach six years, six months of age prior to entering first grade, an age believed by the school district to be optimal for beginning reading instruction. At the time, children could enter first grade at five years, six months of age in California.

In addition to passive retention in the transition first grade classes, Hagaman stated that "...[m]ost slow learners in regular first grade profit also by taking three years in the first two grades" (Hagaman, 1947, p. 173). That is, some children would spend five years in school before exiting second grade---or, four years to complete the first two years of schooling (i.e., kindergarten and first grade). No information was provided giving evidence of the success or failure of the transition program or of the district's nonpromotion policies.

The city of Chicago also utilized transition first grades prior to World War II. Steinmetz (1946) reported that 20% of all kindergarten children were placed in the transition first grade for at least one semester and another 20% repeated a semester of first grade. Children were tested for reading readiness with the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test and the SRA Test of Primary Mental Abilities. Placement in the transitional program was based upon the standardized test scores, which were used by classroom teachers to assign kindergarten children into one of four categories: (a) ready to learn to read, (b) probably ready to learn to read, (c) probably unready to learn to read, and (d) unready to learn to read.

Some school districts have continued to increase the number of transition rooms over the years until they are now an integral part of the school structure. For example, Mossburg (1987) found that the school district in his study had one school with a transition class in 1957. In 1967 there were 25 schools in the district with transition first grades. By 1987 all elementary schools in school system had transition rooms in which 788 children

were enrolled.

Issues Contributing to Incidence of Transition

Grades in Early Childhood

Within this century there has been an increased interest in the growth and development of young children. Advances in medicine have led to greater survival rates of infants, also leading to increased interest in the early development of young children. Social, political and economic forces have focused increased attention to issues surrounding the care and education of young children. During the 1920s and 1930s nutrition and health were of great interest, kindergartens were rapidly made an integral part of public schools in many districts with the arrival of new immigrants, and child study groups were established throughout the nation for parents to learn about the growth and development of young children. The Morrill Act helped establish many of the child development nurseries in home economics departments at land grant universities, where students could undertake the study of child care and child development. During the 1940s war nurseries were established by the Lanham Act as an emergency measure for group care of young children (Osborne, 1980).

The 1960s and 1970s led to increased interest in the early cognitive development of children, partly in reaction to the success of the Sputnik flight, and the establishment of federal Head Start programs provided interventive educational services for children believed at risk for early school failure because of their low socioeconomic status. Interest in cognitive development of young children has continued into the 1980s with establishment of public school preschools, many targeted for disadvantaged youngsters as a means of prevention of later school failure (Osborne, 1980).

Most of these programs have provided some form of assessment, whether in the area

of health, growth, language, socialization or cognition. Many forms of assessment have been devised to determine whether or not a child is developing at a rate believed commensurate with age peers. Researchers at first focused on children's health and physical development. Freud's well known theories of early childhood's effect upon later adult behavior led to interest in children's emotional development and socialization. During the early years of the Head Start programs, interest focused on assessment of cognitive development. With recent federal legislation mandating educational intervention for children at risk for school failure, *predictive* assessment has increasingly drawn the attention of researchers in early childhood. Increased efforts to provide educational services for 'at risk' populations---i.e., children without severe or obvious disabilities but who are believed to be potential school failures or school drop outs or possess possible mild learning disabilities---usually have been accompanied by use of evaluative instruments designed to predict which children were in the 'at risk' population group. There has been support for such efforts since there is increasing evidence that early intervention is indeed effective in lessening effects of poverty (eg., Lazar & Darlington, 1982; Reynolds, Egan & Lerner, 1983).

Sameroff and Chandler (1975) stated that researchers have not usually been able to determine causal explanations for slightly delayed development or 'unreadiness' for later school success. Currently, most school systems operate on the assumption that 'unreadiness' of children with potential for school failure can be predicted by using a standardized test containing items relating to the child's behavior. The practice of using standardized testing to predict outcomes continues despite research indicating that early conditions do not constitute invariant precursors of outcomes that are only slightly abnormal or unusual (Adelman, 1982; Beckman-Brindley & Bell, 1981; Kopp, 1983; Nania, 1988; Rubin & Balow, 1977; Sameroff & Chandler, 1975), and that because of the unstable and rapid growth of young children (Bredekamp, 1987; Keogh & Daley, 1983;

Lichtenstein, 1980; Lidz, 1977; May & Welch, 1985; Paget & Nagel, 1986) and the fact that behaviors may change over time (Beckman-Brinkley & Bell, 1981; Garwood, 1982; Heald-Taylor, 1989; Lidz, 1983; Meisels, 1987; National Association of State Boards of Education, 1988; National Association for the Education of Young Children/National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, 1991), longitudinal assessments that make different measures at different developmental periods should be used.

Nevertheless, tests continue to be used in public schools to predict at risk populations, in part because of federal regulations suggesting early identification of children who may experience school failure. Thus, tests continue to be used to predict future behavior and/or future school success. This is made more difficult by the fact that few schools have formed a definition of what constitutes school 'success' or 'failure.' Success or failure could be defined as letter grades assigned by teachers in any of several school subject areas, defined by behavior rating scales, by demonstrated problem solving skills, or by standardized achievement test scores. That is, school success may or may not include any of several behavioral, social, affective, or health goals defined by schools. And, those behaviors may or may not coincide with the goals of the students and/or parents and/or community. If the outcome goals are unclear, making predictions about future status will be complicated (Keogh & Becker, 1973).

Several tests developed by the Gesell Institute of Child Development are widely used by many schools to make predictions about school success and to make decisions about grade placement, including placement in transition programs (Walker, 1989). The tests have caused considerable controversy because of lack of empirical data to support their use in making educational decisions (Bredenkamp and Shepard, 1989; Charlesworth, 1989; Meisels, 1987; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988, 1989). The assessment of normative growth of infants and children was first popularized in this country by Arnold Gesell in the 1920s (Ball, 1977) while he was Director of the Clinic of

Child Development in the School of Medicine at Yale University. A description of Gesell tasks was first published in 1925 in The Mental Growth of the Preschool Child (Gesell, 1925). More complete versions were published in The Psychology of Early Growth (Gesell, Thompson & Armatruda, 1938), in The First Five Years of Life (Gesell, Halverson, Thompson, Ilg, Castner, Ames & Armatruda, 1940), and in The Child from Five to Ten (Gesell, Ilg, Ames & Bullis, 1946). From 1946 until his death in 1961, Gesell made no major revisions in the tasks in his Gesell Developmental Schedules, but they became the major source of material for the tasks devised by some of his former graduate students at the Gesell Institute in the late 1960s. Gesell tests are among those used for predictive school success. They are currently used in approximately 17.5% of all American school systems (Hymes, 1990; Walker, 1989), usually to predict the ability of individual children to participate successfully in kindergarten or first grade programs, and are often used in school districts with transition room programs. Further, these same followers of Gesell have produced a popular series of books intended for parent use that have fostered the concept that intervention (i.e., teaching, environment, experience) does not affect an individual child's progression through these 'unfolding' stages and can have a negative effect upon the child. The books do not rely upon empirical evidence, but their popularity has contributed to the general public's idea that delay of schooling or transition placement is in the child's best interests. Thus, much popular literature has contributed to the concept of transition grades and passive retention.

Another trend causing increasing incidence of transition first grades are the programmatic reforms in public schools resulting from the perceived need to increase school accountability and raise school standards. Most schools (and the general public) define school success by high achievement test scores. Many public schools have established minimum competency or grade 'exit' standards which require students in lower primary grades to demonstrate a certain level of competence prior to promotion to the next

grade level (Nicklason, 1984). The Department of Education in the state in which the study was conducted has formulated learning objectives for public school programs serving children in four-year-old classes, transitional kindergarten classes, kindergarten classes, transitional first grades, and first grades (1986, 1990).

In summary, societal factors contributing to the increased use of elementary school transition grades include: (a) increased emphasis upon cognitive development as a focus of attention in early childhood; (b) increased interest in identifying populations viewed as 'at risk' for potential school failure, in order to provide early intervention; (c) increased use of standardized tests as a means of identifying eligibility for school programs, with or without proven validity and reliability of such instruments; (d) the promotion and sale of popular lay publications advocating passive retention, either in public school programs or by delayed school entry; and, (e) public demand for improvement in school outcomes, especially measured academic achievement, as proof that public schools are accomplishing school goals.

Effects of Transition Grades in Early Childhood

Researchers have studied the effects of transition classrooms in an attempt to evaluate their effectiveness as an alternative to nonpromotion or social promotion. Most of the studies have concentrated upon the effect of transitional grade placement upon the child's academic achievement, but some studies have also examined the effects of transitional grade placement upon the child's nonpromotion in later grades, school attitude and adjustment, and/or self-concept. A limited number of studies have compared children placed in transition rooms with children identified as transition-room eligible but who were advanced to the next grade. According to Gredler (1984), Jackson (1975), and Shepard and Smith (1989a), few controlled studies exist reporting the effects of either kindergarten

retention or transition room placement and "...few, if any, schools have gathered data to indicate the educational status of children so placed" (Gredler, 1984, p. 469).

This section will first review available studies reporting positive effects of transitional classrooms during the early schooling experiences of young children and will then present a review of studies reporting negative or no effects of transitional grade placement in early childhood.

Studies Reporting Positive Effects of Transition

Grades in Early Childhood

In one of the earliest reports of a transition room, Peterson (1937) described a reading readiness program in Michigan in which transition students were selected by two criteria: (a) a low score on the Lee-Clark Reading Readiness Test, and (b) a mental age test score of less than five years. Students in the program were segregated from other first grade students, and in the spring all students were administered the Gates Silent Reading Test and the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test. All first grade classes, including the transition first grade classes, had mean scores at least six months above the test norms. Since subjective evaluations of the transition teachers were also favorable, the program was viewed as a success by the researcher. No information was provided as to the number of children in the study who were nonpromoted in regular classes or who were passively retained in transition rooms.

Johnson (1942) completed a study of a readiness program which was begun in the Chicago Public Schools in 1939. Chicago used a semester promotional structure in which first grade was considered to be in two levels, each level one semester long. A third designation was added to make three semesters at the first grade level in order to include students deemed unready to begin formal reading instruction. In schools in which

enrollment was of sufficient size, those pupils designated for transition room placement were segregated within a single classroom. In other schools they were assigned to a first grade teacher at the beginning first grade level as a separate reading group, where they remained for two semesters. By the time the program had been in operation for three semesters, 84% of students assigned to the transition program had advanced to the next level of first grade in one semester; thus, 16% of pupils originally placed in the transition program had not, one and one-half years later, completed first grade.

A study conducted in the Antioch Primary School in Contra Costa County, California, reported results of a one-semester reading readiness program begun in September of 1936 (Ring, 1944). All first grade teachers participated for the entire first semester in a delayed reading instruction program. The delay was based upon prerequisites to formal reading instruction as identified by Grey in the 1925 Report of the National Committee on Reading. Beginning with the first group of students in 1936, records were kept to make comparisons between those students who had received delayed reading instruction and those who had not. At the time of Ring's report in 1944, three successive classes had gone through the program. The control group had a mean grade level reading score of 2.6 after 18 months of instruction, while the experimental group had a mean grade level reading score of 2.5 after 13 months of instruction. The control group had a mean reading score of 3.2 after 26 months of reading instruction, while the experimental group had a mean reading score of 3.3 after 21 months of instruction. The conclusion was that the transition readiness group had made better progress even though reading instruction had been delayed. It was also felt that children who had experienced delayed reading instruction had better emotional adjustment than children who had received reading instruction immediately upon entering first grade. No data was provided of the age of children within the programs or of the rates of nonpromotion. Apparently, no records were maintained of later groups of children in the program.

Mann (1961) completed a study in which a semester-long reading readiness program

was used to group pupils identified as too immature for beginning reading instruction within regular first grade classrooms in a school district in Iowa. Two groups were compared, and the experimental pupils were provided readiness instruction using materials designed by the researcher and consisting of 74 lessons. The other group was a control group composed of first grade students. The experimental readiness students were viewed as participating in an extended readiness program and did not use regular first grade curriculum for reading during the first semester. To evaluate the program, five criterion tests were administered during the study at mid-semester, at the end of the semester, and near the close of the first grade school year. The five tests were: the Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness profiles administered at midsemester; the Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Profiles, a learning rate test constructed by the writer; the Reading Readiness Listening Test; and, the Gates Primary Reading Test. The Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness was administered during the midpoint of the first semester. The next three tests were administered at the end of the one-semester readiness room experience, and the Gates Primary Reading Test was administered six weeks prior to the close of the school year.

Mann found the mid-semester test scores favored the control group, who were considered a reading group in the regular first grade classrooms. The difference in mean scores as measured at the end of the semester "...generally favored the experimental group..." (Mann, 1961, p. 97) in that four of the seven subtests favored the experimental group, although none of the differences were significant in the four subtests. One subtest on the Reading Readiness Listening Test was statistically significant in favor of the experimental group. However, the scores on the Gates Primary Reading Test made six weeks before the end of the school year were significantly in favor of the control group.

By the end of the school year, Mann reported, the range of scores on tests was wider among children in the control group than in the readiness group. However, since the readiness group of children had "...seemed to indicate a more rapid rate of progress for a

majority of pupils..." Mann concluded that the program was effective, perhaps in part because the program was believed to be well received by teachers. Given that Mann's conclusion appears contradictory to the evidence produced by the study's criteria, the stated positive conclusion should be viewed with some degree of caution.

Ivancic (1967) completed a study of the effects of a year of reading readiness instruction upon later school progress of children from low socioeconomic families. Two groups of children, totaling 63 subjects, were in the study. They were matched for chronological age, mental age, intelligence quotient, parental education, fathers' occupation, family mobility and family stability. After four years of school attendance beyond kindergarten, children in the two groups were compared upon the basis of grade level attained, standardized achievement test scores, and classroom grades assigned by teachers. No significant differences were found by Ivancic when standardized achievement test scores were compared between the two groups. No significant differences were found in an analysis of grade level attained and membership in the two groups. However, significant differences in favor of the children placed in transition first grade (between kindergarten and first grade) were found in a comparison of the two groups' classroom grades in reading and language as assigned by teachers. Upon this basis, Ivancic (1967) concluded that children who received an additional year of instruction between kindergarten and first grade "...overtake similar children who have been enrolled directly into first grade in both age-grade status and achievement levels within a period of four years of school attendance beyond kindergarten" (p. 4166A). It should be noted that children in the control group (i.e., children who did not attend a transition first grade) were matched with experimental students (i.e., children who had attended the transition first grade) on the basis of chronological age at the end of the kindergarten year and not at the time the statistical comparisons were made. Thus, the experimental children who were rated higher in teacher assigned grades were chronologically older than the control children at the time

of the ratings. Further, for the purposes of the study Ivancic did not consider the transition grade placement as a form of grade failure, yet all of the experimental children had spent an additional year in school. In addition, children did not differ in academic achievement as measured by standardized tests but only as perceived by teachers.

Mayfield (1980) completed a survey of the kindergarten, transition and primary programs in Greater Victoria School District No. 61 in Canada, in which teachers, parents, and principals were asked to report their perceptions of the effectiveness of the school structure. Two of the elementary schools provided transition classes for children identified as 'not ready' for first grade classes. Other schools in the system used the program as an alternative to kindergarten retention but also used it as a form of acceleration, in that kindergarten students viewed as academically advanced were placed in the transition room rather than being accelerated to first grade. Thus, some of the schools maintained heterogeneous enrollment in the transition rooms by placing younger but academically advanced children and older but 'unready' children within the same classroom.

Mayfield found that the subjective evaluation provided by principals and teachers supported the program. Reasons given for providing transition rooms included: (a) nonpromotion could be avoided, (b) transition placement allowed children to continue to mature, (c) transition placement allowed kindergarten teachers to provide enrichment for advanced students, and (d) transition room placement allowed children 'not ready' to learn to read to continue to acquire reading readiness skills.

Wilson (1981) completed a study of the effects of a transitional program on behavioral and academic progress in which the 43 subjects were children enrolled in two transitional classrooms at two different elementary schools in a midwestern community. A Pupil Rating Scale was used by transitional classroom teachers to assess behavioral characteristics. In addition, children were given a verbal rating, which was composed of auditory comprehension and spoken language, and a nonverbal score, which was

composed of ratings relative to school orientation, motor coordination, and personal-social behavior. A combined score was used as a behavioral score for each child. Academic progress was measured by the Clymer-Barrett Prereading Battery as an indicator of the child's readiness for formal reading instruction.

Children in Wilson's study were compared against themselves; i.e., their scores were compared in the spring of the kindergarten year and in the spring of the transition year placement. Upon this basis of self-comparison, Wilson concluded that the program was effective in promoting student progress. No conclusions may be drawn as to how well the children would have progressed if they had remained with age peers, since Wilson failed to use a control group for comparison with regularly promoted students.

An evaluation of the effects of transitional room placement on academic achievement, affective development, and the need for special school services was completed by Dolan (1982). Four groups of students enrolled in second, fourth, and sixth grades at three elementary schools were included in the study. Seventy pupils had been promoted to first grade following a year in a transition classroom; 60 pupils had been promoted to first grade without transition grade placement; 53 pupils had been promoted to second grade following a partial or full year of transition grade placement; and, 16 pupils had been promoted to first grade after parental refusal for a transition grade placement.

Dolan compared the four groups on the basis of Standard Achievement Test scores, Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Rating Scale, and the School Attitude Measure. Parents and teachers also subjectively rated children on their affective development. Data from school records were used to determine the average yearly use of such special school services as Title I reading, summer school, and speech and language programs. Unlike Raygor's (1972) and Jones' (1985) findings, the children in Dolan's study who had been retained a year scored lower than their younger grade peers in arithmetic. No significant differences were found among the four groups in either self-evaluation of affect or in teacher/parent ratings of affective development. While both groups of students who had

been in a transitional classroom setting utilized special school services, Dolan reported the parent refusal group continued to use high levels of support services at the end of sixth grade while the other groups' use had declined. Therefore, since transition students had higher achievement test scores in math and used fewer special school services, Dolan concluded that transitional grade placement was an effective school practice. It should be noted, however, that the numbers of subjects in the four groups being compared were discrepant (only six children were in the 'parent refusal' group in the follow-up grades), and Dolan's analysis did not adjust for initial differences between the groups.

Caggiano (1985) compared three groups of students to evaluate the impact of transitional placement on school success by the end of the seventh grade. Three groups of students were compared. The first group consisted of 128 students who attended a transition first grade; the second group consisted of 125 students whose parents refused such placement; the third group consisted of 178 students who were not recommended for transition first grade placement.

Caggiano's findings indicated significant differences among the three groups on four behavior subscale scores on the Revised Behavior Problem Checklist. Students recommended for transition grade placement but who were promoted to first grade scored lower in attention problems, anxiety withdrawal, motor excess and conduct disorder. Significant differences in academic achievement were found between the control group and both comparison groups, but not between the transitional students and students recommended for transitional placement but who were assigned to regular first grade. That is, the transitional placement seems to have produced no higher academic achievement test scores as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills than the 'at risk' students who had remained with age peers. Transition students had significantly more referrals to special education in subsequent years and significantly more special education placements. Since an additional finding of the study was that students assigned to regular first grade despite

recommendation for transitional first grade placement were more frequently nonpromoted in later grades than children in the other two groups, Caggiano interpreted these results to mean that students placed in a transition first grade are more likely to experience later positive school adjustment and later school success. Other researchers have classified the study as one indicating no difference because most of the outcomes showed either no difference or significant findings did not consistently favor one group over the other (Shepard, 1989b, 1990).

Arkley (1987) completed an evaluative study of a transition first grade during its second year of operation. Subjects in the study had been selected for transition grade placement upon the basis of a percentile score from the prereading skills composite of the Metropolitan Readiness Test, an intelligence quotient score from the Slosson IQ Test, general behavior observed during kindergarten by the kindergarten teacher, and expected skills demonstrated at the end of kindergarten as determined by the kindergarten teacher. The study included 180 pupils in nine transition first grades.

A comparison was made upon the basis of the California Achievement Test scores and an attitude questionnaire administered to students at the beginning and at the end of the transitional year. Teachers in the transition program, principals at the schools, and 45 randomly selected parents of transition students were also surveyed as to their opinions of the program.

Arkley found that the greatest growth in reading during the transition first grade year was obtained by those children who were minority students, students younger than the average student at that grade level, or those students who had originally made among the lowest scores on the readiness test. No significant differences were found in students' attitudes toward school and themselves as learners, as measured in the fall and spring of the transition year. There were significant differences in average math and reading scores among the nine classrooms. The program was viewed as better than kindergarten retention

by 78% of the teachers and 86% of the principals; however, it must be kept in mind that this included only nine educator-participants in each group and that such perception may have been due to the fact that the transition room was an all-day program, whereas kindergarten repetition would have meant assignment during the second year to a half-day program. Parents gave comments ranging from suggestions for changing the class size to allowing more parent participation, but in general parental comments could be categorized as reflecting upon the intellectual and emotional benefits of the program. The lack of a control group severely limits conclusions that may be drawn from the study, and in a later publication the researcher noted (Arkley & Cheaney, 1987) that the study could not be considered a conclusive evaluation of the program but that transition grade placement was believed to be of benefit to students selected for the program.

In a study examining the use of preschool screening data to predict educational outcomes, Saxe (1987) concluded that "...while some of the improvement is undoubtedly attributable to initial [sic] testing error and the effects of maturity, interventions such as Chapter I, resource room, and speech and language services would also make a contribution" (Saxe, 1987, p. 129). Saxe concluded that preschool screening was useful since the resultant interventive services, including a transition room, indicated that young children did, indeed, show improvement the following year. However, kindergarten teachers in the study indicated that 50% of the children in their classrooms were 'unready' for first grade, yet the study included only the 25 children actually assigned to the readiness room. No information was reported as to the status of those children identified but who did not attend the transition room. Saxe reported that there was a general trend of the intermediate group (i.e., the group believed to be 'somewhat ready' for first grade) to be falsely identified as requiring additional school services in the form of a transitional placement or interventive special services. He also felt that teachers were "...more willing to rate children as unready because a structure--i.e., transition rooms--existed to

accommodate them" (Saxe, 1987, p. 114).

Studies Reporting Negative or No Effects of Transition Grades in Early Childhood

Reading readiness grouping practices in Chicago during the 1940s were studied by Steinmetz (1946). Children were placed in the transition program based upon Metropolitan Reading Readiness test scores and their scores on the Test of Primary Mental Abilities (SRA). At the time, Chicago used a semester-by-semester school entry and promotional practice, and the readiness transition room was one-half year in length. Steinmetz' survey found that approximately 20% of all children eligible for first grade placement attended at least one semester of transitional classroom placement, and another 20% of first grade students repeated at least one semester of first grade. Steinmetz concluded that the program reflected stringently inappropriate curricular practices and was not effective in reducing grade failure.

Russell (1948) completed a state-wide survey in California of its decade-old transitional programs. His study included 418 counties, and 271 of these had transition first grades. Over half of all children in those districts having transition first grades spent three years progressing to the end of the second grade, which Russell stated indicated a nonpromotion rate of 50%. Upon this basis, the programs were not viewed as successful by the author. He reported, however, that the districts with transitional programs wanted additional state monies to continue the program and to provide literature for parents who were resistant to allowing their children to attend.

McDaid (1950) completed a study in the Detroit school system. The Detroit metropolitan area had begun transitional programs in 1942 as special classes for 'immature' six-year-olds. Like the California schools in Russell's study, the children in the state of Michigan could legally enter first grade at five year, five months of age. This was viewed

by educators at the time as being too young to benefit from formal reading instruction and to successfully cope with the structured setting of first grade classrooms. McDaid felt that teachers in Detroit were handicapped by the first grade curriculum and the school structure.

McDaid's study indicated that the program had continued to expand until by 1949 there were 14 of metropolitan Detroit's 19 school districts using transitional programs. One hundred sixteen transition classrooms existed at the time of the study, and they served approximately 23% of students eligible for regular first grade for one semester of readiness instruction. However, the programs did not increase later academic achievement nor did they reduce later first grade failure: in addition to children retained in the transition readiness program, 44% of children who were not recommended for transition placement also experienced at least one semester of first grade retention, or, a cumulative retention rate of 67% for first grade students. Like Steinmetz (1946), McDaid viewed this as an indicator of rigidity of curriculum. He also did not find that children who attended a transition first grade semester made higher reading scores during the first semester of first grade, and they did not score better on personal adjustment or school attitude scales.

Even though the program was not successful in reducing grade failure, producing higher reading scores, or producing better personal school adjustment, McDaid reported that the Detroit area schools planned to continue adding transitional classrooms to the school structure. He stated that teachers and principals believed the reading readiness rooms were effective and that "[i]t is the writer's opinion that it will be extremely hard to convince teachers and principals that their Experimental Reading Readiness Group were not superior to the Control Group at the end of the study" (McDaid, 1950, p. 274).

Bell (1973) completed a study of a Detroit suburb's transition program. Seven of the eight elementary schools had transition classes, which Bell claimed were expensive not only in terms of educational resources but in terms of the lives of children. The program had "...continu[ed] in an unquestioning way..." (Bell, 1973, p. 10). The subjects were 64

children who had been placed in the Readiness Room Program in six elementary schools and 12 children in the regular program in a seventh elementary school in the district. (The eighth school in the district also had a transition program but choose not to participate in the study.) The children were selected for the study on the basis of three factors: opinions of the kindergarten teachers as to children's readiness, scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, and total scores of the Anton Brenner Developmental Gestalt Test of School Readiness. Bell wanted to know what was the difference in performance of the two groups after one and two years of additional schooling experience. She also examined children's opinions of self worth, teacher and principal views of student performance of the two groups, and possible outcomes of being educationally isolated.

In the spring of 1971, the Stanford Early School Achievement Test, Level II, was administered to both groups of children. At the end of the first year of the two programs (i.e., one group in transition classrooms and the other group in regular first grade settings), children placed in the regular first grade made greater gains than did the children in the transition class in all but one of the subtests, which related to environmental knowledge. In the spring of 1972, the Stanford Achievement Test, Primary I Battery, Primary I Reading Tests, were administered to both groups. Again, mean scores of the students in the regular first grade were higher than children placed in the transition rooms. Bell concluded that transition room placement was not effective in producing higher reading achievement test scores.

Bell's (1973) examination of self esteem and self confidence of children in both groups indicated that the children assigned to first grade classrooms had significantly higher levels of self esteem at the time of testing in 1971 and 1972, whereas self esteem and self confidence of children in the transition rooms had declined. This is of special interest since it is one of few controlled studies examining self concept as well as achievement. Teachers and principals had "...a high level of commitment to the children in

the [transition] program and believed that they were providing good learning experiences for the children..." (Bell, 1973, p. 113), but Bell felt they had not examined the program for its actual outcomes. She recommended additional study, and she pointed out that transition programs in the district had been questioned by McDaid (1950) two decades earlier without resultant change in policy or program review. Conclusions of the study must be viewed in light of the small size of the group of children who were eligible for transition grade placement but who were advanced to a regular first grade classroom.

Raygor (1972) conducted a five-year follow-up study to compare the school achievement and school adjustment of 92 children, all of whom had been recommended for kindergarten retention, in the Roseville, Minnesota, schools. Four groups of children were compared: (a) thirty-seven children whose parents had agreed to nonpromotion and who were placed in a transition first grade classroom, (b) twenty-five children whose parents had agreed to nonpromotion and who were repeating kindergarten, (c) thirty children whose parents refused to agree to nonpromotion and who were placed in first grade but were considered to have a poor prognosis for first grade success. In addition, a fourth group of pupils consisted of first grade children who had not been recommended for nonpromotion at the end of kindergarten and who were randomly selected from among first grade students in the district.

Comparisons were made among the four groups on the basis of pre- and post-testing on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Bender Gestalt Test, and the Metropolitan Readiness Test. Follow-up testing was done at the end of first, third, and fourth grade using the Stanford Achievement Test, Primary I; the Stanford Achievement Test, Primary II; and a teacher rating scale. The teacher rating scale was based upon five categories of classroom academic performance, excluding age or other considerations. Raygor hypothesized that there would be no difference between the performance of the children retained in kindergarten and the children who attended a transition first grade classroom. In

addition, both retained groups were compared with children who were promoted to first grade but for whom the prognosis of success was poor; comparisons were also made between the two retained groups and the randomly selected group of children taken from the general school population.

Raygor found children retained in the transition room scored higher on the Metropolitan Readiness Test than the children retained in kindergarten at the end of the treatment year, but by the end of third grade there was no difference in academic performance or school adjustment between the two retained groups. Comparisons of the two retained groups with a random sample of children from the same grade level (who were on average one year younger in age) at the end of third grade showed no differences in mean standardized test scores in any academic area other than arithmetic skills. The children who repeated kindergarten had an average score higher in arithmetic skills than the children who entered a transition first grade or the children who had been regularly promoted. Children identified as potential first grade failures had lower mean academic scores at the end of first grade than the nonretained students from the general school population, but by the end of fourth grade Raygor reports "...some of the differences had disappeared" (Raygor, 1972, p. 142). Differences that disappeared were not defined in the study. Raygor concluded that no differences could be found between the two groups of retained students, but that they competed successfully with grade peers at the end of fourth grade while the potential first grade failure group "...continued in a pattern of poor achievement when they were compared with their peer group" (Raygor, 1972, p. 143). Thus, Raygor viewed the transition program as ameliorative. An equally valid conclusion might be made that since, by the time students had reached the third and fourth grades no significant differences could be found among the groups, while there might be some minimal short term positive effects of retention in a transition room placement, children tend to even out in academic achievement with time and the advantage of transition room placement is short lived.

An uncontrolled study completed by Hunter (1975) compared transition pupils to a sample of grade peers on the basis of academic achievement and peer relationships. Hunter hypothesized that transition room students would be equal in terms of achievement and social standing in first through sixth grade. There were 65 pupils who had been placed in a transition room, and 184 pupils who had entered school at the same time as the transition first grade students but who received regular promotion to first grade following one year in kindergarten. At the end of the kindergarten year, the transition first grade students were on average two months younger, 22 points lower on a readiness test, and 10 points lower on IQ test scores than the other students in kindergarten. Hunter used Stanford Achievement Test scores at the end of first and second grades and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in third and sixth grades for comparisons in academic achievement. Significant differences were found in favor of the nontransitional students in all six grade levels. An instrument developed by Hunter was used to measure and compare social rankings of the transitional students and their grade peers. Analysis revealed no difference between the two groups in first, second, fourth, fifth, or sixth grade; a significant difference was found to be in favor of the nontransitional students (i.e., those who had been regularly promoted) in the third grade. Thus, Hunter concluded that transition grade placement, while it did not allow academic achievement at the same level as grade peers, did allow passively retained children to "...achieve continuous academic progress as a group at or above grade norms suggested in standardized test manuals without negative effect upon peer group acceptance" (Hunter, 1975, p. 708A). Despite their age advantage, however, transition grade students were behind their younger grade peers academically and in one of six grades reported less social adjustment.

Matthews (1977) completed a study focusing upon the effects of transition first grade placement upon reading achievement at the end of second grade and third grade, at which time the passively retained transition room students were compared with three groups of

control students. The purpose of the study was to test the validity of the assumption that an additional year of schooling in a transition first grade would remove readiness deficiencies and allow the 'deficient' children to compare favorably with regularly promoted children in later grades.

Matthews' study was conducted in a large midwestern school district and included five groups of subjects: the experimental group (those pupils placed in the transition first grade), two groups of regularly promoted children, and a group of children who had been recommended for the transition first grade placement but who had remained with their age peers. Comparisons were made at the end of second grade in the area of reading achievement and third grade on the basis of reading, mathematics, and a composite reading-mathematics-language achievement scores. The results of the study indicated that the transition first grade placement did provide a small but significant difference in the academic achievement of students placed in the transition program, but the positive result was not sustained. By the end of third grade, Matthews concluded that the transition room placement may have been more effective than doing nothing or than having students repeat first grade, but the program did not enhance academic achievement and did not result in students with readiness or academic deficiencies 'catching up' with or surpassing the average student by grade three.

Leinhardt (1980) examined the effects of transition rooms on reading achievement and found that students with previously low test scores appeared to attain higher achievement levels when placed in regular instructional settings than when placed in transition classes. She concluded that transition-room eligible students in the regular first grade classrooms received more instructional time and, as a result, attained higher achievement levels. Leinhardt felt that poor achievement on the part of transition room pupils might be attributable to the low expectations on the part of teachers, who seemed convinced that the transition room children were 'not ready' for certain types of instruction. Thus, the

teachers withheld learning activities.

Forty-four pupils were in the transition room group and 23 'at risk' children attended first grade without individualized instruction. However, the results of Leinhardt's study must be considered in view of the small sample size for the individualized reading program, since only nine children formed the group, and the fact that the study was conducted in a predominantly black community. Nevertheless, Gredler (1984) believed that the Leinhardt investigation was exemplary because the effect of individualized reading program as well as the effect of transition room placement was examined, revealing that transition room children were no better off at the end of first grade than the transition-eligible children who had remained with age peers. The group showing the most academic improvement was the group of nine transition-eligible children who had remained with age peers and received individualized instruction in the regular first grade classrooms.

In a study conducted in Oak Harbor School District in Oregon in 1981, a researcher interested in later reading achievement completed a descriptive and predictive study examining the relationship among five variables: family environments, cognitive characteristics of the students, behavioral ratings of students, transition room placement, and early reading achievement (Talmadge, 1982). Talmadge found that measures of family environment failed to improve upon a prediction of early reading achievement beyond what could have been attributed to other classes of predictors. The results of the study indicated that intellectual development of the child--not just family environment--was the most prominent factor in beginning reading. Talmadge concluded that transition room placement was detrimental to early reading achievement. After controlling for prior cognitive ability and reading readiness experiences, students who had been placed in transition programs performed less well than students of equal ability who had been placed in regular first grade classrooms even though they averaged a year older at the time the comparisons were made. Talmadge concluded, "Instead of promoting readiness, transition rooms may simply delay

instruction" (Talmadge, 1982, p. 3520A).

Kilby (1982) examined the school progress of a Junior First Grade (transition program) group of students with transition-eligible students for a three year period and found no significant differences between the six groups on achievement measures at the end of first, second, or fourth grades. (Test scores were not available from the district for the third grade.) Kilby also selected 12 transition room students who were then completing the eighth grade, and a review of their achievement records were compared to a representative sample of classmates. Kilby found that the transition room students attained higher than expected achievement for three years following the Junior First Grade experience; in seventh and eighth grade, however, they were below grade level in reading. Throughout all the school years following the transition room placement, they were below grade level in math. No differences between the two groups were identified in school attitude or special education placement.

Kilby interpreted the findings of the study as positive support for transition room placement since 10% of transition room children repeated an additional grade in school while 27% of the transition-eligible students repeated first grade. An alternative interpretation of the findings, however, could be that the study does not support transition room placement since it would appear that 73% of the transition-eligible students were incorrectly recommended for the transition program and appeared to progress in their first grade settings without nonpromotion. In addition, Kilby found no academic differences between the two groups. The small effects of academic improvement in reading for the transition students did not last; the long term effects showed transition students below grade level in both reading and math by the beginning of their high school experience.

A 1983 study in Hillsborough County, Florida, compared the later reading achievement of students of comparable ability, some of whom had been assigned to a transition first grade prior to entry into the regular first grade and some of whom had been nonpromoted in first grade (Zinski, 1983). The transitional program was viewed as an

alternative to grade repetition in the district. The researcher was interested in determining if participation in the transition program would be more effective than grade repetition in enhancing first grade readiness. The *ex post facto* comparison indicated no significant difference in scores of the two groups on reading and language tests, and teacher ratings of student performance also showed no significant differences in the two groups.

Nicholas (1984) examined a transition first grade program in a rural Oklahoma area in which most of the 517 elementary students were from families of middle or low income levels. The school had both a transition first grade (between kindergarten and the regular first grade classes) and a transition second grade (between regular first grade and regular second grade classes). Of the 65 children in the study, 47 students in the experimental group had been in one or both of the transitional grade programs during the school years 1979-1982, and some were as old as twelve years of age when entering fifth grade though they were classified as 'never' having been nonpromoted. Eighteen children whose parents had refused transitional grade placement were in a control group.

Nicholas compared the two groups on the basis of self-concept using the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, academic progress using standardized achievement test scores, and school attitude using school attendance as indices. She found no significant differences between the two groups. There was a "practical difference" (Nicholas, 1984, p. 91) on the basis of school attitude. However, this difference amounted to an average of 1.5 days of nonattendance during the school year, hardly a striking difference among children. Nicholas concluded that while her study showed no effect of transitional grade placement, "[t]hose who espouse developmental placement believe so whole-heartedly in its benefits that they see no need to put it to the test" (Nicholas, 1984, p. 94). The study was limited by the small control group, by the fact that some children in both groups had chronic illnesses (which would have had an effect upon school attitude as measured by school attendance), by the fact that some children in both groups qualified for special

education or special school services, and by the fact that children who had attended the transition classes were older than those in the control group at the time achievement comparisons were made (some by as much as two years).

Jones (1985) examined the effect of transition first grade placement on low-achieving kindergarten students in the Deer Valley School District in Phoenix, Arizona. District policy prevented nonpromotion of kindergarten children, and all nine schools in the district had transition programs. The study compared the progress of pupils assigned to the program and those eligible for the program, and therefore considered at risk for grade failure, but who remained with age peers. There were 274 students in the study who were compared on the basis of the district's basic skills test.

Jones found that the transition students scored higher at the end of first grade than the at risk students who had been promoted, but they were older than the eligible-but-promoted group and had a large pretest advantage (in some cases beginning the transition year with as much as a 1.9 standard deviation advantage over the 'at risk' children). By the end of second grade, however, the transition children showed only one area in which they had significantly higher scores than the at risk students; they attained higher achievement in math. By the end of third grade, however, there were no significant differences among the groups in the four areas of the basic skills test, and, in fact, the mean scores of the at risk students were higher than the transition students---although the differences were not statistically significant. Thus, the only difference among the groups by the end of third grade was that the transition students were one year older because of attendance in the transition program.

May and Welch (1985) examined the relationship between transition room placement as a result of preschool and kindergarten developmental testing and children's later cognitive achievement and social-emotional growth. Two hundred twenty-three children were coded as Traditional, Overplaced, or 'Buy a Year' depending upon their scores on the

Gesell Screening Test and the subsequent school placement. Comparisons were made among their later performances on the full Gesell Developmental Test, the third grade New York State PEP Test in reading and math, the Otis Lennon Mental Ability Test, and the Stanford Achievement Test. Those children who had been retained in a transitional program scored the lowest on all measures even though they were almost a year older than the other two groups of children at the time of the testing. May and Welch reported that referrals for special services and counselling did not differ among the three groups, although a major premise of the Gesell tests is that its use will negate the need for special services. The children who delayed school entry at parental request in the 'Buy a Year' group were more frequently referred to adaptive motor or resource programs. May and Welch concluded that the results of the study contradicted the rationale for the Gesell Institute's advocacy of 'developmental' placement in transitional programs with its testing materials, and that there were no demonstrable positive effects of delaying school entry on children's later academic achievement.

Sandoval and Fitzgerald (1985) examined the long-term effects of grade repetition as compared to transitional grade placement. The stated purpose of the study was to compare the attitudes and school progress of high school students who had either repeated a grade or had attended a transitional class early in their school career. A control group was used in the study as a third group. Self-report instruments were used by high school students to assess the students' attitudes toward nonpromotion through retention or transition first grade placement. Differences were found between the transition first grade group and the control group in academic progress, although differences were not significant. While no significant differences were found in students' attitudes toward retention and transitional grade placement among all three groups, students who had been retained reported somewhat less positive attitudes in self-acceptance. Sandoval and Fitzgerald interpreted the findings to indicate that transitional grade placement was effective as a practice. However,

the authors reported that there was no significant difference among the three groups on academic progress or on self-reported self-acceptance. And, no information was provided as to the incidence of nonpromotion or transition grade placement of students who had already dropped out of high school and who had been grade peers of the subjects in the study.

A controlled study reported by Mossburg (1987) included relatively large samples matched on the basis of gender, socioeconomic level, age at kindergarten entry, and kindergarten readiness. There were 149 children in each of two groups: one group attended a transition room for a year and the second group, labeled as 'developmentally immature,' refused transition room placement and were considered at risk for later school progress. Mossburg found that although the transition room children outperformed the refusal group at the end of first grade (though not significantly so), at the end of the second, third and fourth grades the at risk children had surpassed the children retained in the transition room and were significantly higher on reading, mathematics, and composite standardized achievement test scores. Mossburg (1987) concluded by asking:

Why do we continue to promote the idea of having so many children 'buy a year' between kindergarten and first grade when the effects are so undramatic in first grade and nonexistent for most [children] after second grade? (Mossburg, 1987, p. 82).

Burkart (1988) studied the effects of placement in a transition kindergarten upon subsequent promotion to first or second grade in the Elk River School District of Minnesota. The Gesell School Readiness Screening Test was used to identify children qualifying for the transition program, which delayed entry into the regular kindergarten classes. Subjects in the study were categorized into three groups: (a) twenty-six children diagnosed as developmentally delayed upon the basis of their scores on the Gesell test and who were enrolled in an alternative kindergarten program prior to entry in the regular kindergarten classes, (b) eighty-eight children diagnosed as developmentally delayed upon the basis of their scores on the Gesell test but who were enrolled in regular kindergarten

classes, and (c) a random sample of second graders in the 1987-1988 school year.

Burkart used t-tests to examine the significance of outcomes on the students in the three groups on the basis of report card ratings, teacher check list ratings, Boehm and Gesell test scores, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and Developmental Behavioral Rating Scale scores. He found that there were statistically significant differences between children eligible for the alternative kindergarten program, but who attended regular kindergarten, and those children eligible for the alternative kindergarten program and who delayed entry into regular kindergarten classes by one year. Differences occurred in scores on the report card ratings, the teacher check list and the Gesell scores. There were no significant differences in groups on the Boehm test scores, and Burkart interpreted this to indicate that the promotion and retention practices in the district were questionable. By second grade, the students eligible for the alternative transition class but who had remained with age peers could not be distinguished from other classmates on the basis of measures examined in the study. He concluded that the Gesell test is not highly correlated with any of the variables considered in the study and not a predictor of later student achievement. Only one of the transition-eligible students advanced with age peers was nonpromoted in first grade, whereas all of the transition room children had spent an additional year in school. Interestingly, Burkart attributed much support for the program from teachers, who believed that the philosophy and practice of the transition program was effective.

A 1988 study of 60 students in five Richmond County, Georgia, public elementary schools compared the self concepts of students who had received an additional year of readiness experience in a transition classroom before entering first grade with the self concepts of grade peers as measured by the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Rihl, 1988). Of the original 136 children, all of whom had experienced a year of transitional placement or had experienced first grade failure, 60 students were available for comparison six years later. Of these remaining 60, 34 had successfully completed each

successive grade level and were enrolled in sixth grade at the time of the second measure while 26 students had experienced nonpromotion and were in fifth grade. Rihl found that students who had been nonpromoted again---and were enrolled in the fifth grade---did not retain high levels of self concept. No statistically significant difference could be identified in the self-concept scores of students nonpromoted in first grade and students who had experienced passive retention in a transition room. A review of the participants' fourth grade scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in mean scores of the students who were nonpromoted and the students who had been placed in a transition room. Rihl questioned the district policy since the transition program and grade retention was intended to prevent later grade failure, yet 43% of children in his study who had either attended the transition program or had been retained were nonpromoted in another grade following their first grade placement.

Shepard and Smith (1989b) completed an in-depth study of the academic and emotional effects of kindergarten retention in one school district with an extended analysis of parent interview data on the effects of kindergarten retention for their children. The study included the effects upon children passively retained in transition classrooms. Control children from similar schools where retention was not practiced, rather than relying on the comparability of children whose parents refused retention, were used as a basis of comparison. The researchers stated that they felt one of the most important contributions of the study was the verbatim quotations from parents which revealed, they felt, in ways not captured by surveys how parents held both positive and negative feelings simultaneously.

Shepard and Smith indicated that extra-year programs have different purposes in different school systems---sometimes serving different populations. Their study analyzed the characteristics of children selected by teachers for a second year of schooling at the kindergarten level. They found that children recommended for such programs tended to be male and young, regardless of so-called readiness scores. They found no difference

between children retained in transition programs and their counterparts at comparable schools which did not practice passive retention and did not have high levels of nonpromotion, and their findings indicated that kindergarten retention in a transition program was ineffective regardless of whether the child had been placed in the extra-year program for 'developmental immaturity' or for deficient academic skills.

Several studies have been conducted which included reviews of research studies on transition grades in early childhood. Gredler (1984) summarized the research results on the effectiveness of transition rooms upon increased academic achievement and found that the use of such programs should cause educators and parents to question the outcomes even in studies indicating positive effects, since the effects are so small and usually at the 'cost' of a year of schooling progression. His survey indicated that pupils assigned to transition rooms either did not perform as well as---or, at most, were merely equal in achievement levels following an extra year of schooling to---youngsters eligible for transition room placement but who were placed in regular classrooms. Gredler also found that while the attitudes of teachers toward transition room placement were found to be generally favorable, very few school districts have produced data supporting such placement. Gredler found that the progress of students had not been examined as related to other transition-eligible youngsters who did not undergo retention through transition room placement, and few districts have maintained data allowing comparisons to be made of the long term effect of transitional placement upon later student achievement or nonpromotion.

Summary of Research Findings on Transition

Grades in Early Childhood

A review of literature on elementary school transition programs for children identified as 'unready' to begin first grade has revealed that such programs have existed in the United

States since the 1930s. Early programs appear to have been one semester in length, but later programs have usually taken the form of an extra-year class added between the regular kindergarten and first grade. Earliest use of transition programs appears to have been in large urban population centers, but more recently they also have begun to be included in small and rural school systems. Identification of eligibility for transition programs appears to vary widely, with results from test scores, teacher recommendations, and behavior ratings being among the more common forms of placement criteria.

Usually such programs are defended as being of benefit to children in one or more areas of development. They are claimed to: (a) allow the child to mature so that he or she will be better prepared emotionally for meeting the academic demands of first grade; (b) prevent risk of future academic failure by allowing the child to be fully ready to begin reading instruction (believed by some to be age related) and to acquire any academic skills necessary to function in a first grade setting; (c) prevent stress caused by struggling with academic tasks by allowing the child to be fully successful, implying that the child will be among the more competent members of his or her grade peers by virtue of being among the oldest of the group.

A review of 31 research studies focusing on the effectiveness of extra-year programs was completed for this study. Eleven studies have been identified as reporting positive outcomes for transition programs, and 21 studies have been identified as reporting negative or no differences in the effects of a transition year placement following kindergarten. Two of the studies reporting negative effects were surveys of previous research and included studies completed by more than one researcher.

Effects of Nonpromotion

No national statistics are collected on grade retention in the United States, and census data on the proportion of students who are 'below modal grade' are very inaccurate because

of the variation among states in school entrance age, number of children who delay school entry, and changes in the time of year when census data are collected. A recent report summarized available information on rates of nonpromotion in Washington, DC and 13 other states where statistics were available (Center for Policy Research in Education [CPRE], 1990). The Center for Policy Research in Education estimates that between 5% and 7% of all public school children (or, about 2 out of every classroom of 30 youngsters) are nonpromoted in the United States every year. Annual rates of 6% year after year would produce a cumulative rate of nonpromotion greater than 50%, and even allowing for those students who repeat more than one grade level, by 9th grade approximately half of all school children have experienced grade failure. Annual rates of nonpromotion are higher in the U.S. than in many other industrialized nations; primary grade retention rates in Japan and the United Kingdom, for example, are 0%. The median rate of grade repetition for Western Europe and the Soviet Union is 2% (CPRE, 1990).

Nonpromotion continues to be prevalent in the United States, however. It is commonly believed that grade retention will allow students to acquire prerequisite academic skills, will improve future academic achievement, and will make classroom instruction easier for teachers by eliminating poorly prepared students from the group. Often the financial burden of nonpromotion has failed to be considered, possibly because school districts are paid by state funds on the basis of number of enrolled students, regardless of the grade in which the child is enrolled. Based on estimates of 1985 enrollment of children in grades kindergarten-12th grade, the U.S. Bureau of Census reported that 2.4 million students are nonpromoted in America yearly at an annual cost (based on 1985-1986 education dollars) of nearly \$10 billion (CPRE, 1990). Because the cost is 'hidden' in that it is so rarely reported by schools and because the conventional wisdom of both the public and educators is that the practice is effective, nonpromotion is endorsed by the general public. In a 1990 Gallup poll, 67% of the respondents favored stricter grade-to-grade

promotion standards (Elam, 1990). Such public support creates strong political pressure to continue the practice of nonpromotion.

For the purpose of this study, the school practice of placing children in a transition classroom in order to delay entry into the next grade level constitutes a form of nonpromotion having the same educational outcomes as the usual form of retention. Thus, a transition first grade placement would produce the same effect as repeating the kindergarten experience. A review of the studies reporting positive effects of nonpromotion and negative or no effects of nonpromotion follows a review of the historical incidence of nonpromotion in the United States.

Historical Incidence of Nonpromotion in Public Schools

The beginnings of graded schools in the United States appears to have occurred shortly before the Civil War. Before 1850 student progress was largely an individual matter, but between 1850 and 1860 the concept of school organization by grade level was developed. Large influx of immigrants into metropolitan areas caused school officials to segregate learners into grade levels, with each grade level encompassing a specific set of curricular materials and objectives, in order to allow teachers to deal with large group sizes. Although the majority of students entered school at approximately the same time, learners were segregated not by age but by the material they had covered in school. Thus, an older student (eg., age 12 or 13) who entered the United States having attended no school in his/her country of origin would be enrolled in first grade. Children whose parents delayed school entry were enrolled in the first grade. In small rural schools, of course, often only one or two children were enrolled in any given grade level, and instruction was frequently individualized or students were ability grouped in the essentially multiage classroom

settings. Since grade levels in the larger schools were equated with the acquisition of sequential levels of knowledge and skills, retention became a method to ensure that students had acquired mastery of subject matter before they were advanced to another grade level (Anderson & Ritscher, 1969; Otto & Ester, 1960; Thompson, 1979, 1980; Walker, 1973).

Students therefore continued to repeat curricular material until they acquired proficiency acceptable by local school standards, or until they dropped out of school. Most schools by the turn of the century required compulsory attendance through the eighth grade or until age 14. The practice of nonpromotion continued without any real examination until a major study conducted by Ayers (1909) of the rates of nonpromotion and dropout of students in large city school systems. Then, as today, there was concern that large numbers of students failed to complete the grammar course of study set as a goal by attendance laws. Ayers found that, in 1909, an estimated 20% of all school children failed every year, and by age 14 approximately 40% of students dropped out of school having failed to complete an eighth grade education. Only half of all students enrolled in first grade entered high school; only 10% of those entering high school actually graduated. That is, almost half of all American school children did not complete the grammar school (through 8th grade) education, and only 1 out of 10 American students completed a high school education.

Ayers reviewed the practice of nonpromotion (referred to as *retardation* at the time) in 31 large city school systems. He found that he was hampered by the poor records maintained by school districts, making it difficult to analyze actual policy, a difficulty that continues today (CPRE, 1990; Rhoten, 1991). However, he was able to discover that, on the average, approximately one-third of all school children were overage; i.e., students were older than the age considered average for their grade level. In Memphis in Ayer's 1909 study, 75% of black students were considered overage for their grade. Variability in

age among schools within the same district indicated that larger numbers of black students were overage and that nonpromotion rates varied from school to school within the same district. From 7.5% to 75.8% of students were overage for their grade level in the 31 city school systems investigated by Ayers.

Ayers estimated that for every four first grade students, three were either repeating first grade or were overage. He found that nonattendance was more often related to nonpromotion than to such physical problems as poor vision, hearing, etc. He concluded that nonpromotion was not an effective practice in raising achievement, was practiced at an annual cost of \$27 million (at the time of the study), and was a major contributor to the high drop out rate. He made several recommendations: (a) better record keeping in order to examine the policy of nonpromotion, (b) change in compulsory attendance laws to reflect the actual age attainment necessary for a majority of students to complete eighth grade, (c) half-year promotions in January, (d) placement of non-English speaking students with age peers rather than in first grade, and (e) careful consideration of alternative grouping patterns for children with severe physical limitations, rather than having students simply repeat a grade level.

McElwee's (1932) study indicated that children who had been nonpromoted in a New York City elementary school had been retained from one to five semesters (i.e., from one-half to two and one-half years) at some time during their elementary school career. Thus, some children had taken eight and one-half years to complete the six grades of elementary school. The Brooklyn school also practiced acceleration---that is, double promotions in which a child was advanced an entire year in one semester. During the 1930s, however, nonpromotion rates generally appear to have declined as the Depression years decreased the need to have students leave school for the work force. The concept of social promotion was developed.

Retention rates appear to have declined from Ayers' (1909) study at the beginning of the century, although precise data is not available on the incidence of grade retention

because most states do not keep such records. Dillon reported in 1949 that 638 of 2,000 children who later dropped out of school had been nonpromoted in first grade (Dillon, 1949). This represented a nonpromotion rate of 31.9%. Boesel (1960) reported that approximately 15% of children were nonpromoted in first grade in Toledo, Ohio, during 1960. Jackson (1975) used unpublished data from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to estimate that 1,007,539 students were retained in elementary and secondary schools during the 1971-1972 school year, and he believed that most were retained in the early years of their schooling experience rather than later grades.

Reports of retention rates can be deceiving, however, since they are often reported as the number or percentage of children repeating a grade in any given school year. A survey by Gorton and Robinson (1970) of all the states reveals that at least 5.5% of all students appear to be repeating grades each year. Within the usual school progression of kindergarten through fifth grade, then, this would indicate a cumulative retention rate in elementary schools of approximately 33%, although the rate appears to vary by geographic region. This would compare with elementary school cumulative nonpromotion rates in Western Europe and the Soviet Union of 12% (CPRE, 1990), placing the United States' retention rates upon a level with developing African nations (Haddad, 1979). Nonpromotion rates in the U.S. seem to be rising to pre-World War II rates as schools are challenged by the public about student acquisition of basic academic skills (Thompson, 1979).

Studies Reporting Positive Effects of Nonpromotion

Dotson (1977) examined the relationship between 332 Tennessee fifth grade children's attitude toward reading and several other factors: (a) success or failure in reading, (b) intelligence quotient measures, (c) gender, (d) whether the child had been previously

retained, (e) the grade level the retention occurred, and (f) socioeconomic status of the family. 'Reading failure' was defined as being more than one grade level below the school standard and/or having been nonpromoted by fifth grade, and 'reading success' was defined as having been consistently promoted by grade and as having attained at least fourth grade reading level by the time of the study, when students were enrolled in the fifth grade (i.e., as being no more than one grade level below reading ability for the grade in which they were enrolled). Each subject's attitude toward reading was termed 'positive' or 'negative' as determined by a total score on the Heathington Intermediate Attitude Scale as assessed by Dotson in April of the year of the study. Students with scores in the upper third of the scale were identified as having a positive attitude toward reading; students in the lower third of the scale were identified as having a negative attitude toward reading.

Dotson found significant positive correlations between grade retention, success or failure in reading and later pupil attitude toward reading; i.e., a child who had been nonpromoted or who was more than a grade level below expected reading attainment was more likely to have a negative attitude toward reading. She found no correlation between grade level the nonpromotion occurred and later attitude toward reading; i.e., students were more likely to have a negative attitude toward reading regardless of the grade level in which they had been nonpromoted. According to Dotson's criteria, 18 of the 44 retained students among the 332 fifth grade students met both criteria for 'reading failure' and 62 students met at least one criteria for 'reading failure.' Dotson concluded that nonpromotion was an acceptable school practice.

No comparison was made by Dotson between nonpromoted children of low reading ability and students who had been retained yet continued to have low reading achievement in order to see if a correlation existed between nonpromotion and school attitude among children of equal reading ability. In addition, using the raw data provided by the researcher, a review of the 44 retained children reveals that at the time of the study only six

nonpromoted students were at or above grade level; the remainder were below grade level, most by at least two years of achievement level. Despite Dotson's claim that the study supports nonpromotion, it would appear that her study indirectly shows that children nonpromoted a grade do not usually 'catch up' academically and nonpromotion is correlated to a poor attitude toward reading in later grades.

Turley (1979) found a strong positive effect for nonpromotion of kindergarten children in the Contra Costa County, California, public schools. Nonpromotion was recommended for approximately 15.5% of the kindergarten children in the Lafayette School District, and of this group approximately 68.8% were retained while 31.2% remained with age peers because parents refused retention for their children. Turley compared the achievement in reading and mathematics of three groups: (a) children who spent two years in kindergarten before entering first grade, (b) children who went to first grade after one year in kindergarten even though nonpromotion had been recommended, and (c) children who went to first grade after completing a year in kindergarten and who had not been recommended for nonpromotion. Because the schools were in a high socioeconomic status community holding exceptionally high school standards, the 'at risk' children were eight or more months above national norms on standardized tests at the time of retention.

Turley found that those children who spent two years in kindergarten scored significantly higher in reading and mathematics at the end of first grade than those who spent only one year in kindergarten. She also reported that 'immature' children who spent two years in kindergarten scored as high in reading and mathematics in first grade as those pupils who had not been considered to be developmentally young in kindergarten. Pupils who were considered to be 'unready' but were enrolled in first grade at parent request scored significantly lower in reading and mathematics than their grade peers. In addition, Turley reported that the 'unready' children tended to be nonpromoted in first, second, or third grade. Turley expressed the belief that achievement can be boosted by grade

repetition and that "...a young child is seldom aware of a sense of failure if his important others, his parents, are pleased with the decision [to repeat kindergarten]. But he is usually aware of the fact that he cannot accomplish what his peers accomplish in higher grades" (Turley, 1979, p. 88). No comparison was made by Turley of the progress children in the three groups made in later grades to determine the long term effects of nonpromotion in kindergarten.

A study completed by Haines (1981) examined the effect of nonpromotion upon the subsequent achievement and self concept of elementary students using the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Rating Scale, the Stanford Achievement Test, and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills as measurements. Fifty-five students in grades three, four and five in an urban Wisconsin school district were examined. Of the 55, 24 had been socially promoted the previous year and 29 had been retained the previous year in either grades three, four, or five. Haines did not find any significant difference in self concepts between the two groups of students. She found that a higher percentage of nonpromoted students met or exceeded the minimally accepted achievement scores set by the school district standards; 81.4% of nonpromoted students met or exceeded achievement expectations while 40.9% of socially promoted students met or exceeded achievement expectations. Thus, Haines reported that for one out of five retained youngsters, nonpromotion did not appear to have a positive effect upon academic achievement; for three out of five socially promoted students, the school practice of keeping students deficient in academic skills with age peers was ineffectual.

It should be noted that in Haines' study, students were compared with grade peers. Therefore, all of the nonpromoted students were on the average one year older than the children to whom they were being compared. Further, comparisons were made during the year immediately following the nonpromotion, and other studies have indicated that positive effects of grade repetition tend to disappear over time. Lastly, Haines' failure to find improvement in academic achievement among students in the study may reflect the

students' inability to meet inappropriate expectations upon the part of the schools, since 8 out of 10 nonpromoted students and 4 out of 10 socially promoted students already exceeded grade level standards.

A study completed by Gerstel (1981) was intended to examine the effects of nonpromotion upon reading achievement and social and emotional development. Three standardized tests and a teacher questionnaire were used to measure subjects in grades two through six in a New York school district in order to discover whether the promotional policies of the school system could be deemed effective. The district had recently implemented a stringent promotional standard.

Gerstel found significant differences in the reading growth of retained students across grade levels (i.e., second through sixth grades) but third grade students indicated significantly less reading growth than all other grades. She found no significant differences in self concept of retained students and concluded that nonpromoted students segregated in classrooms with other low achieving students benefited in the area of self concept. However, as children progressed through grades four, five and six, the retained students appeared to develop lower self concepts as measured by the Piers Harris Children's Self Concept Scale. Nevertheless Gerstel concluded that, as perceived by teachers, nonpromotion for the majority of the students did not have a negative effect upon the attitudes of the students or upon their social and emotional growth.

A retroactive longitudinal investigation of the effects of nonpromotion in the early grades upon later academic achievement and school attitude was conducted by Oldham (1982) in Kentucky. Oldham compared third, sixth, and tenth grade achievement test results and measures of school attitude of students who had been retained one or more times with comparable students who had been routinely promoted. Students in the study included 98 high school students, 49 of average initial ability who had been retained one or more times in the primary grades and 49 comparable nonretained students who had been

matched by academic ability, gender, IQ test scores, and school entry age. All students had been enrolled within the same school district throughout their school careers.

Oldham reported that achievement test scores and school attitude self-reports indicated: (a) there was no difference in the nonpromoted and socially promoted students in reading achievement levels, (b) students retained in the early grades had significantly higher mathematics achievement than socially promoted students of comparable ability, and (c) there was no statistically significant difference in attitude toward school of nonpromoted and socially promoted students in later grades. Oldham concluded that retention for the students had long-term benefits, based upon the improvement of math achievement, and he stated that educators have no need for transition classrooms in early childhood programs since the stigma of retention disappears as the students progress through the grades. He based this assertion upon the fact that there was no statistically significant difference in attitude toward school between the two groups of students in his study, nonpromoted students and students of low academic ability who had been socially promoted. The practice of providing transition classes for the purpose of supporting a positive school attitude in low achieving students would be unnecessary since over time no difference could be discerned between nonpromoted and socially promoted students.

It should be noted, however, that some subjects in the study were drawn from the student population after the effects of drop-out might have occurred. That is, students in the study were of legal age to withdraw from public school, and Oldham did not address the issue of those students excluded from the study upon such basis. In addition, no comparisons were made in the study using students who had been placed in a transition classroom. Further, the only positive effect of nonpromotion in Oldham's study appears to have been in the area of mathematics achievement. This supports the findings of Raygor (1972) and Jones (1985).

A comparative study of achievement levels and classroom behaviors of promoted and

nonpromoted kindergarten, third, and sixth grade students was completed by Vollrath (1983) in which subjects were drawn from a district with 24 elementary schools. Comparison of the kindergarten groups was made upon the basis of the Metropolitan Readiness Test and the Behavior Problem Checklist. Results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Behavior Problem Checklist were the measures used to compare third and sixth grade students. Vollrath concluded that nonpromotion was beneficial for the academic and affective development of children.

Several questions of research design are not addressed by Vollrath in the study. Mean scores of students were analyzed by gender group for behavior but were not separated by gender for achievement comparisons. No explanation was given by Vollrath for the difference in analytic approach. Although 24 schools participated in the study, only 34 kindergarten children were identified for comparison; no explanation was given as to how these students were selected, nor was information provided by the researcher as to the percentage the retained kindergarten students reflected of the total number nonpromoted in kindergartens in the district. All comparisons were made with retained children on average one year older than grade peers. No demographic information was provided of the normative population used for the behavioral portion of the comparisons.

Studies Reporting Negative or No Effects of Nonpromotion

Ayers' (1909) report mentioned previously was one of the earlier and more comprehensive studies of the practice of nonpromotion. He pointed out that schools were unable to examine fully the issue of grade retention, since few districts kept records allowing long term evaluations to be made. Schools in the Ayers' study maintained enrollment data, but rarely was information provided as to how many children were in the

grade for the first time---just as such data is rarely available today (CPRE, 1990; Rhoten, 1991). Ayers (1909) made two significant conclusions: (a) The average child in the average school among the 31 cities studied completed eight grades in ten years; and, (b) Later school drop out appeared to be directly correlated to high levels of nonpromotion throughout the graded system.

Another early report on the effect of nonpromotion on achievement was completed by Keyes (1911) and included 5,000 students in a large urban area. Keyes' study failed to indicate improved academic achievement as measured by teacher grades in that 39% of nonpromoted students showed no change after being retained, 40% of nonpromoted students showed lower grades after having repeated a grade level, while only 21% of nonpromoted students actually improved academic performance. Thus, improved academic performance was found in approximately one out of five nonpromoted students.

Klene and Branson (1929) directed a study with an experimental design to investigate the effect of retention upon academic achievement. Children who had been recommended for retention in second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades were reviewed on the basis of chronological age, mental age, and gender. Half of the children were retained, and half were promoted. The researchers reported that children recommended for retention, but who were kept with age peers and socially promoted, profited more in that they indicated later higher achievement levels. The authors did not report whether the differences between the two groups were significant.

McElwee (1932) completed a comparison of seven personality traits of 300 children in Brooklyn Public Elementary School No. 208, New York City. Equal numbers of subjects who had been nonpromoted, accelerated or proceeded normally through grades were selected. Teachers rated all three groups of boys and girls according to the traits, for which no definitions or standards were given. McElwee found that all three groups possessed more desirable than undesirable traits, although in general the accelerated children possessed the desirable traits to a greater degree than did the nonpromoted students, and

that all three groups got along well with other children. She felt that there was usually "...a good reason why a child falls behind his class..." (McElwee, 1932, p. 34), and that usually the problems were mental, physical or emotional difficulties that should be addressed on an individual basis rather than through grade repetition.

A frequent claim of educators is that nonpromotion will help reduce the range of academic ability within the next grade level, easing the burden of group instruction. This was refuted in the study by Cook (1941) in which he examined the formal and the informal school policies of nonpromotion. He concluded that not only is the practice of nonpromotion based on academic performance untenable, in that it does not produce the expected outcome of narrowing range of ability within a classroom, but that standards are discriminatorily applied in that teachers failed more white males than blacks having equally low academic performance.

Dillon (1949) completed a study of nonpromotion in Ohio which included 2,000 children who had entered first grade at the same time. Of these, 643 eventually dropped out of school before completing the required grammar school (i.e., eighth grade) education level. Of the 643, 638 had been nonpromoted in first grade. Thus, Dillon concluded that 99% of the drop outs had been nonpromoted early in their schooling career.

A study commissioned by the Oklahoma Education Association was completed by Pugmire (1950). It reported on the financial and organizational problems of public schools in the state. Pugmire found that in seven sample counties surveyed in the study, an average of 4.6% of all children were retained in 1946-1947. Higher percentages were retained in the lower grades among white students, with 7% in first grade and 5% in second and third grade. The study revealed that nonpromotion occurred at an even greater rate among black elementary school children in the early grades, with 12% of black students retained in first grade, 7% retained in second grade, and 5% retained in third grade. Pugmire felt that nonpromotion contributed to later school drop out.

Coffield (1954) completed a longitudinal, retroactive study of the effects of nonpromotion upon educational achievement in the elementary grades. He also looked at other factors such as the effect of the grade level at which failure was experienced and the effect of rigid promotional policies upon the ultimate variability of pupil achievement within later grades. The study was a survey of superintendents in Iowa schools, which used the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. Two hundred eighty-nine schools participated in the survey, and the subjects included 190 pupils identified as having failed in grades three, four, five or six. All were currently enrolled in grade seven of the participating schools. Since Iowa Tests of Basic Skills had not been administered to children in first or second grades, they were not included in the study.

Each nonpromoted student who had repeated third, fourth, fifth or sixth grade was matched with a nonpromoted student who was in the same grade during the year the grade failure occurred. Two different kinds of matches were used by Coffield: a match of students attending the same school and matched pairs attending different schools within the same district. He found that in 23 of 25 comparisons made on the basis of achievement, there were significant differences in the year following promotion. However, although the nonpromoted children did make gains during the year they repeated a grade, they did not make a year of progress. And, in no instance did the means equal the norm for the grade involved. Nonpromoted students therefore did not raise their academic achievement to grade level by repeating a grade. Thus, Coffield, like Cook (1941), did not find that high levels of nonpromotion contributed to later achievement homogeneity among students.

One of the earliest studies to examine the effects of promotion and nonpromotion upon the social and personal adjustment of elementary school children was reported by Goodlad (1954). He compared the social and personal adjustment of two groups of children, corresponding on the basis of chronological age, mental age, and previous achievement levels subsequent to promotion and nonpromotion, in order to examine the differences that

might be distinguished between the two groups. The study was completed within a single school district and included six schools with high rates of nonpromotion in first grade and five schools with low rates of nonpromotion and having children of similar socioeconomic status as the high-retaining schools. The children were enrolled in second grade.

Standardized tests were used to equate the two groups on academic ability. Goodlad found differences in social adjustment and personal adjustment between the nonpromoted and promoted children with differences favoring the promoted group. He considered a major finding the fact that promoted children were rejected less frequently as a 'best friend' in sociometric tests. Goodlad stated, "...there are clear indications that nonpromotion is the less defensible educational practice" (Goodlad, 1954, p. 325) in attempting to improve academic achievement.

Worth and Shores (1960) compared reading progress of nonpromoted children with promoted children who had been matched on the basis of several variables: IQ test scores, gender, chronological age, language arts test scores, and achievement test scores made before the decision was made to promote or nonpromote. They found that children who had been kept with age peers made higher scores on measures of reading vocabulary and total reading scores when tested one year later. The nonpromoted group of children attained higher skill level scores in paragraph reading, but other areas indicated no differences between the two groups.

During 1960 Boesel completed a three-year evaluative study of the retention policies in the primary grades in Toledo, Ohio (Boesel, 1960). At the time, approximately 15% of first grade students were retained at grade level. Boesel was interested in the effects of nonpromotion on reading achievement and behavior problem tendencies of students who had failed first, second or third grade. Forty-three pairs of students were matched along variables of gender, age, race, IQ test scores, and achievement test scores. The study included 31 pairs of male students and 12 pairs of female students, and Boesel noted that

this reflected the ratio of nonpromoted boys versus nonpromoted girls in the district. Boesel interviewed each student to determine the child's attitude toward family life, perceived general health, and his/her perception of school problems. Comparisons were made in reading progress at the end of the year in which students had been retained, as well as at the end of the second and third year following grade repetition. Results indicated that "[c]hildren repeating first grade made less than expected gains during the year of repetition, but more-than-expected gains the following year..." (Boesel, 1960, p. 126), yet failed to continue to gain by the end of the third year following nonpromotion. She also found that fewer of the nonpromoted children had had kindergarten experience, more of the nonpromoted children had physical anomalies, and more of the nonpromoted children repeated yet another year of school in later primary grades.

Based upon the study's findings, Boesel concluded that nonpromoted students had decreased achievement and more behavior problem tendencies than nonpromoted children. She also stated:

It is possible that the negative effects of failure and nonpromotion may be more temporary than has been generally supposed; under favorable conditions following the end of 'displacement,' children tend to make a good recovery. For the same reason, the positive effects of promotion may not be lasting if the promotion is accompanied by strong pressures to accelerate development beyond natural rates and patterns (Boesel, 1960, 132).

Kamii and Weikart (1963) investigated the achievement test scores, IQ test scores and letter grades assigned by teachers of students who spent six or seven years in elementary school. Thirty-one children who had been retained at least once in grades one to five were compared with an equal number of randomly selected children who had never been retained. A comparison of the two groups revealed that, even with IQ scores and reading ability held constant, the nonpromoted group's achievement scores fell at least 2 years below their peers, and two-thirds of the nonpromoted group continued to be awarded letter

grades of D and F. The authors concluded that an extra year in elementary school was not an effective method of raising achievement levels and that such practice may have had a negative effect upon motivation of the retained pupils.

The effect of nonpromotion upon later reading performance of Tulsa, Oklahoma, elementary school children was examined by Koons (1968) in two phases. The 143 matched pairs of subjects included regularly promoted children and students who had been nonpromoted in either first or second grade. The children were matched on the basis of gender, chronological age, and achievement tests scores in reading and spelling as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Tests. Stanford Achievement Test scores were used to measure subsequent reading and spelling achievement of the two groups. Koons found that while differences in scores were significant during the early phase of the study, by the end of the fourth grade there was no difference in achievement levels between retained and socially promoted groups.

Abidin, Galloday and Howerton (1971) compared 85 sixth graders who had been retained once in the first or second grade with 43 children randomly selected from the general school population who had been promoted with age peers but who had scored below the 25th percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test during the first grade. While letter grades between the two groups indicated no significant difference, the nonpromoted students' scores on standardized tests in math and reading were significantly lower the second year they spent in first grade. At the end of fourth and sixth grades, nonpromoted students and the students who had been socially promoted in first or second grade were compared on the basis of achievement test scores. The comparisons indicated the nonpromoted students were below grade level, while the students who had been kept with age peers scored at or above grade level by the end of sixth grade. The findings therefore indicated that nonpromoted students did not acquire academic achievement levels commensurate with their later grade levels, in spite of their age advantage and repeating a

grade, while low-achieving students allowed to remain with age peers eventually attained grade level achievement equal to or higher than grade peers.

Comparisons made by Ogden (1971) of the later academic performance of students who had been retained in the early grades indicated that half of nonpromoted students in the study continued to have difficulty in high school. His study included 100 students who had failed once in elementary school, and the comparisons were made using four groups of nonpromoted and promoted students with various academic histories. Ogden found that the nonpromoted students had no better school performance than students who had once been recommended for retention, even though the reason often given for having students repeat a grade is that they then will have better school progress in later grades.

In an ex post facto study in 50 counties in the state of Kentucky, Allen (1971) used as subjects 28 students in the eighth grade, all of whom had previously been nonpromoted during their early schooling experience, with an equal number of students randomly selected from the general school population and matched upon the basis of several variables. The two groups were then compared as to letter grades assigned by teachers, teacher ratings, and self concept scores. Allen reported that as economic deprivation increased, so did the probability of nonpromotion. As the adult educational level of the general population in the Kentucky districts increased, the study indicated an accompanying decrease in the nonpromotion rates in school districts. Allen found that promotional policies varied from district to district, grade to grade, school to school---and, that it appeared such differences were related to expectations of the teachers and not to identifiable differences among the students. Further, the nonpromotion rates could be predicted upon the basis of education and income levels of parents within the district. Thus, districts with poor, uneducated parents had higher levels of nonpromotion of students.

Allen did not report how the 28 retained students were selected for the study, nor did he report whether any of the students had been retained more than once. The study also did

not include a control group of students recommended for nonpromotion but who had not been retained.

White and Howard (1973) examined the impact of nonpromotion on the self esteem of students who had been retained in elementary school. They used the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale to compare the self-reports of nonpromoted and promoted children matched along several variables. The White and Howard study indicated that retained students perceived themselves as significantly more aggressive than their peers, and they also indicated less positive self concepts than students who had been regularly promoted.

In Ammons' (1975) study, no significant differences were found between two groups, one of which had been nonpromoted, on self concept as measured by the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. He noted that in the East Texas school district in which the study was conducted, no consistently applied criteria seemed to be applied in making a decision to nonpromote a student, since retention policy varied even within a given district. When polled as to reasons for nonpromotion of students, teachers gave varying responses to suggested standards: (a) low grades, interpreted as C or below, in two major subject areas received automatic retention; (b) low grades in two major subjects received automatic retention, as interpreted on a numerical scale of 100 points in which a student receiving less than 70; and (c) a child who was perceived as not working to expectations based upon IQ scores might be retained. Thus, a teacher might recommend nonpromotion for an academically capable youngster considered to be 'lazy' as well as recommend nonpromotion for a student unable to meet academic expectations.

Haddad (1979) completed a study of the educational and economic effects of nonpromotion policies in several countries for The World Bank. He found that promotion decisions are often based upon unreliable measures of academic performance and ignore affective and social goals of education. He also concluded that there is no evidence that repetition of a grade is more effective than promotion as a means of meeting student needs

or that grade repetition improves academic standards and class homogeneity. Lastly, his study indicated that nonpromotion can have negative effects upon a pupil's self concept and attitude toward school, causing later school drop out. Haddad's data indicated that developing countries have higher rates of nonpromotion than many developed nations.

Wright's (1979) study compared two groups of first grade students, one of which had been retained in first grade, matched along five variables: gender, IQ test scores, school attendance records, parental educational level, and academic achievement. There were 90 matched pairs of white students who were compared at the end of third grade. The study indicated that there were no significant differences in terms of achievement for students who were nonpromoted. Interestingly, Wright noted that children who were retained by the school district were not below national normative test scores and were, in fact, functioning at an acceptable level according to the standardized test cut-offs as recommended by test publishers. However, they were functioning below what the district considered acceptable achievement levels.

New York City instituted its Promotional Gates Program in 1981 and large numbers of students were retained if they failed at the end of fourth and seventh grades to attain a minimum score on the California Achievement Test (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 1984; Illinois Fair Schools Coalition, 1985). A total of 24,000 students were retained, including 17% of all fourth grade students and 26% of all seventh grade students in the city's schools. This program was one of few providing remedial help to pupils who had been nonpromoted, but even with all the extra help, critics of the program have claimed that the nonpromoted students did not do significantly better than promoted students with equivalent academic profiles but who successfully passed the tests (ASCD, 1984).

A review of kindergarten retention was completed by Shepard (1989b) as it occurs in several forms: transition classrooms before first grade, developmental kindergarten before kindergarten, and repeating of the kindergarten experience. Shepard stated that

kindergarten is sometimes considered to be an extra year of preparation before first grade and, as such, repeating kindergarten is often intended to be different from nonpromotion at other grade levels. She stated that many believe that being held back in kindergarten does not carry the stigma associated with retention in later grades, because the populations served and the social effects are believed to be different. This belief is often held since, as Shepard pointed out, kindergarten children are sometimes nonpromoted upon the basis of 'immaturity' rather than poor academic skills. Like Holmes (1989) and Grebler (1984), Shepard found repeating the kindergarten year or spending a year in a transition room is ineffective as a school policy, whether it is practiced to raise academic achievement or whether it is intended to provide developmental maturity.

Some studies reporting negative or no effects of nonpromotion include comprehensive reviews of literature on the practice of nonpromotion. A review of educational research evidence on the effects of nonpromotion completed by Jackson (1975) was highly critical of the design of many of the available studies, which disallowed, in Jackson's view, the ability to draw conclusions from the data. He stated that "[G]iven the long history, high cost, and widespread use of grade retention, one might expect the practice [of nonpromotion] to have been extensively researched by now" (Jackson, 1975, p. 614), but that the practice continued in spite of the fact that "...few soundly designed studies nor the major portion of the inadequately designed studies suggest that grade retention is more beneficial for pupils having difficulties in school than promotion to the subsequent grade" (Jackson, 1975, p. 614). Following a review of all literature related to the issue, the researcher focused upon 44 studies directly related to the topic and compared them using a mathematical effects model, which helped to allow for comparison of studies with different design and contextual variables. Jackson's position on the negative effects of nonpromotion could be summarized in his conclusion that "...those educators who retain pupils in a grade do so without valid research evidence to indicate that such treatment will

provide greater benefits to students with academic or adjustment difficulties than will promotion to the next grade" (Jackson, 1975, p. 627).

A meta-analysis of the effects of nonpromotion on elementary and junior high school pupils completed by Holmes and Matthews (1984) gave additional credence to the studies by Jackson (1975) and Haddad (1979). The Holmes and Matthews' study used a mathematical effect size to compare those studies in which promoted and nonpromoted students had been matched, and the authors felt that the high degree of consistency in the measures lent credibility to the validity of the findings. Effect sizes were calculated on various dependent variable measures, including academic achievement, personal adjustment, attitude toward school, and school attendance and behavior. They found that the outcomes for the students who were promoted with age peers were more positive than for nonpromoted pupils.

Shepard and Smith (1989a) have presented educators with a comprehensive view of the research and school policies on nonpromotion, and their findings indicate that grade retention, whether through repeating the grade or being passively retained in a transition program, does not appear to result in an overall rise in accomplishment. Strict achievement-based promotion policies do not, they feel, improve student learning and do not increase the life chances of students who would otherwise drop out. Issues addressed in the Shepard and Smith analysis included meta-analysis of the effects of grade level retention; nonpromotion and its relationship to later school drop out; a review of kindergarten nonpromotion, including passive retention in transition grades; attitudes of children, parents, and educators toward nonpromotion; and, teacher beliefs about nonpromotion and its effect upon school practice.

Shepard and Smith concluded that nonpromotion is strongly related to later dropping out of school, increasing the probability of high school drop out by 20-30% even when achievement, socioeconomic status and gender controlled studies are examined. They

found that retention in grade has no benefits for either school achievement or personal adjustment. Their review of research indicated that the few studies yielding positive outcomes of retention were "...either poorly controlled or employed populations of unusually bright pupils with questionable need for retention" (Shepard & Smith, 1989, p. 215). They concluded that two years in kindergarten, even when one year has been labeled a 'transition program' failed to enhance achievement or solve the problem of inadequate school readiness. So-called 'at risk' children labeled as 'unready' but regularly promoted did not appear to suffer disadvantages when compared to equivalent children who had spent two years in kindergarten or transition programs. From children's perspective, Shepard and Smith found that grade repetition is viewed as a punishment for some quality or action, and children and parents viewed the experience of nonpromotion as negative and emotionally painful. The researchers felt that their conclusions contrasted sharply with the belief in retention's benefits held by many teachers and laypersons.

Holmes (1989) reported on the effects of grade level nonpromotion by using meta-analysis of 63 studies and found largely negative effects for retention. He found that "[o]n average, retained children are worse off than their promoted counterparts on both personal adjustment and academic outcomes" (Holmes, 1989, p. 27). In the 63 studies, 54 indicated negative results while only 9 were positive. The studies indicating positive effects involved intensive remediation plus retention and, as Holmes noted, an ironically able population of children who had nonetheless been nonpromoted. The positive studies also failed to compare retention accompanied with remediation to promotion with an equivalent amount of remediation. Holmes also noted that positive studies tended to be based upon comparison with grade peers rather than comparison with age peers. When only well-matched studies were considered, a greater negative effect was found for nonpromotion than in the research literature as a whole.

Summary of Research on Nonpromotion

A review of the research on nonpromotion reveals that concern for the efficacy of the practice has been evidenced since the early 1900s. Recommendations as early as 1909 that better records be maintained by school districts in order to better evaluate the outcomes of nonpromotion appear to have gone unheeded, and more recent studies have also recommended that school records tracking the later outcomes as well as controlled studies be made. Most reasons given in support of nonpromotion as a school practice echo rationale for transition classes: nonpromotion is believed to (a) allow the child to mature so that he or she will be better prepared emotionally for meeting the academic demands of later grades; (b) prevent risk of future academic failure by allowing the child to acquire any academic skills necessary to function in a later grade setting; (c) prevent stress caused by struggling with academic tasks by allowing the child to be fully successful, implying that the child will be among the more competent members of his or her grade peers by virtue of having repeated curriculum before going to the next grade level.

For the current study, 33 studies concerning nonpromotion in the early grades were reviewed. Of these, six studies reported positive outcomes for nonpromotion in the early grades while 27 studies reported negative or no effects for the school practice of nonpromotion in the early grades. Of studies reporting negative or no effects, four studies were comprehensive reviews of research relating to nonpromotion.

Studies reporting positive outcomes for nonpromotion generally tended to be studies which compared children who had been retained with their younger grade peers, studies in which children who had been nonpromoted were above grade level norms on standardized tests but who were considered unable to meet higher district academic standards, or studies in which no comparisons were made to control groups.

Curriculum in Early Childhood Programs

Historical Aspects of Curriculum in Early Childhood Programs

The early childhood programs in the United States were those patterned after the Froebelian kindergartens of Europe. Frederich Froebel (1782-1852), known as the Father of Kindergarten, established the first kindergarten in 1842 in Blankenberg, Germany (Foster & Headley, 1966). Froebelian kindergartens emphasized exploratory behavior, allowed children to express themselves, encouraged learning by doing, considered outdoor activities important, and used multiage groupings. Play was considered an essential form of creative self-expression as well as a way to learn, and Froebel designed and developed many materials for children's play activities. These included materials he called 'gifts' and 'occupations' as well as songs, games, nature study, and work in language and arithmetic based upon the child's maturity (Spodek, 1973). The 'gifts' were sets of manipulative materials used by children in prescribed ways, and the 'occupations' were activities with clay, wood, paper and scissors, stringing beads or buttons, drawing, embroidering, and weaving. Froebel considered all of these activities as contributing to the child's physical, moral, and intellectual development (Spodek, 1973). Froebel believed that young children developed in a definite way and that teaching must present them with new materials and activities in a certain order (Wills & Lindberg, 1967).

Maria Montessori influenced the American kindergarten in the 1920s and 1930s, especially since many of the early U.S. kindergartens were established in large urban areas to provide support for the poorer working families, many of whom were newly arrived immigrants. Montessori, an Italian physician, had also worked with children from poor families. She developed many self-correcting materials designed to educate children

through their perceptual senses (Widmer, 1970), many of which are commonly found in early childhood programs and in American Montessori preschools but which are less frequently used in public schools (Spodek, 1973).

By the 1880s the rapidly expanding American population and the increased demand for kindergartens for all children, not just the economically disadvantaged, led schools to include kindergarten programs within the public school systems. Many young children, however, continued to delay school entry until they entered first grade. As late as 1957, public schools enrolled only 45.7% of the five-year-olds in public school kindergartens (Hymes, 1975). By the beginning of this decade, however, that number now has increased to approximately 97% (Hymes, 1990). Beginning with the first kindergarten in St. Louis public schools in 1873, divisive dissension over what activities should be included in the public school early childhood programs has ensued (Logan, 1960; Widmer, 1970). Concern has been expressed (Hill, 1926/1987) that programs for young children reflect the developmental needs of young children while at the same time preparing them for the academic work in later grades, and this concern remains an issue today (Freeman & Hatch, 1989).

Literature does not always make clear distinctions among curriculum for young children in the various forms of preschool, kindergarten, Head Start, nursery school, public school primary grades, and child care centers. The tendency in more recent years has been to include all such programs under the general term, early childhood education, since they all serve children until the age of nine years (Almy, 1975; Bredekamp, 1987; Hymes, 1968; Leeper, 1974). Regardless of their nomenclature or the administrative auspices under which they are provided, clear indications that the education for all young children provided in group settings should be the same has been promoted by the profession (Bredekamp, 1987; Hymes, 1968). That is, good schools for young children are good schools, regardless of the ages served or the settings in which the programs occur

(Spodek, 1973). Rarely, however, has the construct of play as a way to learn been included in the lower primary grades in public school. Usually there has been a clear demarcation between the kindergarten program--often perceived as the only portion of early childhood within the public school setting--and the lower primary grades of first, second and third grades--which also serve children defined as being within the period of early childhood (Bredenkamp, 1987). Some studies have indicated that teachers who teach in the primary grades hold quite different beliefs about the goals of first, second and third grade programs and the goals of the kindergarten programs than the belief system of kindergarten teachers (Anastasi, 1978; Falen, 1976; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Rountree, 1977; Stroud, 1989). In general, teachers in the primary grades believe their primary goal is to promote reading achievement, and they hold different views as to the value of play and self-directed activities than do kindergarten teachers, who often indicate they believe play and self-selection of materials and activities to be an integral part of the early childhood program.

Lilian Katz (1988) has pointed out that the curriculum in early childhood programs should reflect the best of what we know about how young children learn and develop. Thus, states Katz, we must consider not only what children can do but what they should be doing. She has stated that good programs provide the opportunity to work together on a variety of projects that help young children make sense of their own experiences. They should provide opportunities for interaction, for active rather than passive activities, for spontaneous play, and integration of learning into the interests of members of the group (L. Katz, 1988; Katz and Chard, 1990).

Recent Trends in Curriculum in Early Childhood Programs

While concern about appropriate instructional practices in early childhood programs,

both those in preschool settings and those within public school systems, is not a new phenomenon, during the 1980s a renewed controversy about the curricular content of kindergarten and primary grades seems to have occurred. Two reasons the issue of appropriate practice has become a major topic of interest have been identified by Bredekamp and Shepard (1989):

[T]he number of early childhood programs has increased rapidly, particularly with the advent of prekindergarten services in many public schools and the expanded need for child care for employed families. At the same time, there has been a negative trend toward escalated academic demand in kindergarten and preschool (p. 14).

Much of the emphasis upon discrete skills and inappropriate activities in early childhood programs has been attributed to the misuse of test scores and the demand that young children produce specified scores on standardized tests (Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; Center for Law and Education, Inc., 1988; Meisels, 1987, 1990; Neill, 1989; Oakes, 1986; Shepard, 1989a; Shepard & Smith, 1988). The number of tests being used in early childhood programs has grown explosively, according to some educators, and their use has had a direct impact upon the content and policies of programs (Medina & Neill, 1988) even though the tests used may lack reliability or validity (Meisels, 1987).

As a result of all these factors, some educators feel that the curriculum in kindergarten and first grade has qualitatively changed during recent years. Academic demands made of children in kindergarten and first grade are believed to be considerably higher today than they were 20 years ago:

The curriculum now being taught in many kindergartens is profoundly different from what it was two decades ago. The kindergarten classroom, once conceived of as a play- and group adjustment-oriented setting, may now also be a classroom with an 'academic' approach, characterized by direct teaching of discrete skills with specific expectations for achievement. This type of rigid curriculum is less responsive than others to wide ranges in age and ability and many schools have resorted to retention

and extra-year [transition first grade] programs for children. The 'academic' approach to kindergarten is in contrast to a 'child-centered' approach in which activities are based on the goal of moving each child as far forward in his or her development as possible.... Advocates of developmental kindergarten programs should emphasize the effectiveness of an active learning (Egertson, 1987, p. 1).

In a survey of kindergarten teachers in the St. Louis area, for example, Nall (1982) found that the three most frequently reported changes in kindergarten programs in recent years were (a) more academic emphasis in programs, (b) increased grouping for instruction directed by the classroom teacher, and (c) greater use of commercial materials. Florida recently reported a kindergarten curriculum which included over 200 content area objectives to be covered during the year (Webster, 1984). Kindergarten reading programs have become paper and pencil oriented with textbooks, workbooks, and ditto sheets (Carver, 1986; Willert & Kamii, 1985), and many states are extending kindergartens into all-day programs in order to include all of the academic activities.

Curriculum in Transition Grades in Early Childhood

While a number of studies have examined the effectiveness of transition room placement from the standpoint of effect upon the retained child, a limited number of studies have looked at the curriculum in transition programs in early childhood. An early description of transition first grade curriculum in the Long Beach, California, schools was completed by Hagaman (1947). The author described the transition first grade as having 25-30 students with one teacher, usually segregated from other first grade students but occasionally grouped in a first grade classroom as a separate reading group. Hagaman (1947) stated:

The program planned for children in transition first grade groups is different from that for the first grade in that no effort is made to teach reading at too early an age; thus, tensions are avoided. Emphasis is on language development and those experiences which enrich the background and increase readiness for all learning including reading (p. 176).

During the first semester, children in the Long Beach transition first grades were introduced to thematic units similar to those familiar to kindergarten teachers: (a) units about transportation, including trucks, airplanes, ships and harbors, trains, and buses; (b) units about various places and familiar workers in society, including farms, service stations, a lumberyard, the home, markets and stores, fire stations, and bakeries. Suggested materials included wooden blocks; large wooden boxes and saw horses for construction activities; woodworking tools such as hammers, saws, brace and bit, T-squares, nails, etc.; various paints and floor easels; clay; general paper and pencil materials such as writing paper, rulers, crayons, primary pencils, manila paper, glue, easel paper, etc.

Hagaman indicated that playing with blocks, dramatic play, construction opportunities, and field trips should be included among daily activities. The opportunity for daily active outdoor play with balls and other large motor equipment was considered essential for the program, and screening for health needs was suggested. Teachers were advised to begin reading readiness activities with children indicating an interest, even if work was begun on an individual basis. In short, the program that was described by Hagaman seems quite similar to the curriculum for any quality early childhood program, with the exception that it was limited to children eligible for legal entry into the regular first grades.

A Junior First Grade transition classroom in Sioux Falls South Dakota School District 49-5 was described by Solem (1981). The program, intended for children legally eligible for first grade but who were identified as needing "...time to prepare and to grow, if they

are to avoid early academic failure and damaged self-concepts" (Solem, 1981, p. 283), was provided in classrooms with an enrollment limited to 15 students. The junior-first grade instruction was said to be designed to improve reading and math readiness; to develop oral language; and, to increase a child's ability to understand spoken language, to listen, and to follow directions. Activities were said to focus on developing gross-motor skills and eye/hand coordination, although none were described by the author. Development of "...a healthy self concept..." (ibid, p. 283) was said to be an essential element of the program, and other curricular areas emphasized were listed as music, art, and physical education. Health, science, and social studies were "...taught only incidentally, when appropriate situations [arose]..." (ibid, p. 283).

A description of the transition first grade program in Eastern Lancaster County School District, Pennsylvania, has been provided by parents (Hood, Dero, Martin, Petrofske, Reese, & Stouch; 1982). The differences between the first grades and the transition first grade curriculum was described as being based upon the physical differences that exist between children eligible for each of the programs. Children were placed in the transition first grade program based upon results of the Gesell preschool test. Transition first grades classrooms were described as having:

...a high degree of sensory involvement---seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling. Movement is important because the large muscles of the body are still developing. Lessons are shorter in length to accommodate the children's attention span, and activities are varied in terms of grouping and room location.... Academic skills are very much a part of the P-1 [transition first grade] program. At the beginning of the year, a child's academic skills are assessed and the child is guided to move to higher levels as in any other grade (Hood, et al; 1982, p. 16).

The authors described the program as basically consisting of five major areas: (a) social and emotional development, (b) work habits, (c) perceptual-motor skills, (d) reading

readiness, and (e) math readiness. Social studies, science, health, safety, music, and art were included in relation to these five major areas, according to the description, and a typical daily schedule was provided by the authors in which most of the day was divided into time segments of 10-40 minutes allotted to a curricular area. Opening exercises, math, language arts, perceptual-motor activities, Workjobs, storytime, music, Discovery Reading Program, and lunch were included each day. Morning and afternoon recesses of 15 minutes were included. Each afternoon, a variety of activities were rotated on a once-each-week basis and included science, social studies, math, art, motor skills.

A principal in an Oklahoma elementary school described efforts in his school district to reduce nonpromotion in the early grades and prevent early school failure through the use of transition programs and identification of 'immature' students with the Gesell preschool test (Friesen, 1984). Although no description of the transition first grade was provided by the author, he stated that a transition first grade would be:

...an all-day class similar to first grade but with a curriculum which, while advanced from kindergarten,...[would] not [be] as structured and fast-moving as the first grade curriculum. After one year in...[the transition first grade], the pupil...[would move] on to first grade. A transition class would eliminate most kindergarten retention and reduce the difficulty of deciding whether to advance a youngster to first grade...(Friesen, 1984, p. 18).

The Aumsville School District's transition first grades in Oregon have been described as a reading readiness program to help children identified as 'at risk' in a first grade program (Pheasant, 1985). The program has been described as emphasizing motor skills, including large muscle development and eye-hand coordination. "Reading readiness activities are in progress constantly..." (p. 22), and other activities mentioned included patterning with paper-pencil materials, working individually with a teacher aide, using the Addison Wesley Reading Readiness Curriculum (with emphasis upon letter recognition and phonetic activities, most involving worksheets), and a classroom reading corner. A listing

of skills expected of children in the program prior to entry into the regular first grade was provided by the author, and it included 40 items. Most were skill items in math and reading readiness, but work habits were also addressed.

Norris (1985) examined the different types of reading instruction used in four transition classrooms and the subsequent effect upon reading achievement of 50 children. Twenty-three children in two of the transition first grades received the traditional instruction with basal readers and workbooks, while the Success curriculum, a language experience approach, was used in a third transition first grade classroom with 13 children. The fourth group of 14 children were exposed to the Big Book (or, shared reading) as a form of reading instruction.

At the end of the year a test of basic reading skills was administered to children in all four groups, and no significant differences were found among the four. Norris concluded that the Big Book experience "...promoted achievement at least as well as traditional methods" (Norris, 1985, p. 115). No comparisons were made with a control group in regular first grade settings.

Chesterfield County, Virginia, schools established a transition program in the fall of 1985, and it was provided as an alternative program for children eligible for the regular kindergarten but who were considered developmentally 'unready' (Galloway & George, 1986). Children were identified for the program using the Gesell preschool test. The transition kindergartens were in self-contained classrooms with 20 students--a lower class size than the regular kindergarten classes in the district. Each transition classroom had a teacher and a teacher aide, which further reduced the teacher to student ratio. Schools without an enrollment of sufficient size placed students within a regular kindergarten classroom but without access to all materials and activities provided the regular kindergarten students.

According to the authors, the Chesterfield County transitional program curriculum was

intended as developmental rather than remedial. Although no description of activities or daily schedule was given, the authors reported that "[c]hildren in the regular kindergarten section work with games and activities that have them matching letters, learning beginning sounds, and so forth, in addition to the activities assigned to the junior kindergarten children" (Galloway & George, 1986, p. 69). Both programs were half-day in length.

A descriptive survey of the transition first grade classes in Indiana was conducted by the Indiana Department of Education (Williams, R., 1987). There were 176 schools already utilizing transition first grade classrooms and an additional 13 schools which planned to implement transition first grades in the 1987-1988 school year. Using a questionnaire, Williams asked respondents to rate the importance of selected goals of the transition program and to identify the means of reading instruction used in the program. The researcher also conducted observations in selected transition first grade settings. Goals identified in the survey as most important in transition first grade were: (a) improvement of prereading skills, (b) enhancement of self concept, (c) development of oral language abilities, and (d) learning to follow directions. Formal reading, mathematics, and handwriting were rated as being less important. Most of the transition first grades reported using a basal reading series and accompanying workbooks, sometimes supplemented with phonics materials, and children were expected to complete the readiness portion and the preprimer portion of the series in three out of four classrooms using them. More than half of the respondents reported using a curriculum guide for the transition first grade program, but when asked what area within the program needed improvement, respondents frequently expressed a desire for a written curriculum.

Stroud (1989) completed a survey designed to compare, measure, and analyze the opinions of kindergarten teachers, transition first grade teachers, and first grade teachers regarding the curriculum for transition first grade classrooms. Stroud's study, also completed in Indiana, additionally examined the effects of teaching experience and

educational preparation on teachers' opinions as to appropriate transition first grade curriculum.

Included in the study were 156 kindergarten teachers, 104 transition first grade teachers, and 263 first grade teachers. Only two respondents (both first grade teachers) were male. Results indicated that 313 teachers had educational backgrounds in elementary education, and 210 teachers had educational background in early childhood education. The questionnaires were mailed to 189 elementary schools.

Stroud developed a five-part instrument designed to have teachers prioritize content, learning activities, goals, and evaluation procedures. Results indicated that, although play is believed to serve an important function in children's growth and is an essential component in developmentally appropriate early childhood programs (Bredekamp, 1987), approximately half of the responding teachers believed playing with blocks, playing with dolls and housekeeping items, and playing with sand and/or water were not important learning activities in a transition first grade (Stroud, 1989). Teachers with backgrounds in elementary education were least likely to report play activities as important learning activities. Reading orally from a basal reader and doing workbook pages were considered important learning activities by fewer than one-third of the teachers, but nearly three-fourths believed that children in transition first grade should be writing and reading their own stories. While science, social studies, and health are considered relevant to the curriculum in educational programs for young children (Bredekamp, 1987), fewer than half of the responding teachers in Stroud's study considered such topics important content areas in transition first grade classroom (Stroud, 1989). Stroud reported that responses indicated that first grade teachers and teachers with elementary education background were least likely to report these content areas as important. She recommended that the Indiana State Department of Education develop a written curriculum for transition first grades programs in the state.

The Department of Education in the southwestern state in which the study was conducted has developed learning outcomes for state transition programs, both transition kindergartens which are provided prior to entry in the regular kindergarten programs and transition first grades which are provided prior to entry in the regular first grade programs (1990). While offering no guidance in the specific types of activities in transition programs, one may infer from a review of the suggested learning outcomes for the state's transition first grades that some outcomes are intended to be learned through direct instruction and rote memory; eg., naming the president of the United States, naming basic facts about the solar system, identifying and naming (U.S.) coins and their equivalent values, rote counting by ten's to 100, naming three-dimensional shapes upon request, matching a series of identical symbols to another series having the same order, reproducing an exact number of sounds heard while eyes are closed.

Summary of Curriculum in Transition

First Grades

Indications from the literature are that the number of transition programs are increasing in some southwestern states, even though some states such as Texas and California have discontinued passively retaining children in transition grades prior to first grade entry (Cohen, 1990). Their establishment continues to elicit controversy from parents and from professionals. While the research literature indicates examination of the effects of transition programs, a review of the literature does not reveal guidance for the classroom teacher as to what constitutes appropriate learning activities, daily schedule, materials, grouping patterns, and adult-child ratio for the transition first grade. Although professional guidelines for early childhood programs indicate children should be self-directed and use concrete materials in active learning for major portions of the day, described programs for transition first grades indicate a dichotomy exists between knowledge and practice. For

example, many teachers indicate that basal readers and accompanying workbooks are frequently used in transition first grade classrooms (R. A. Williams, 1987) and outdoor play is often not emphasized (Hood, et al; 1982). It would appear that little attention has been given to the curriculum for transition programs even though school policy implementing them has continued for over half a century.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Nature of the Study

The methods chosen for the current examination of curriculum in a transition first grade program were selected with a view to gaining an understanding of its nature, organization, functioning and evolution by using multiple types of inquiry. Different ways of looking at the transition first grade program curriculum were used in order to develop a more holistic description and to avoid limitation of perspective.

The 'success' of an educational procedure or policy can be partially determined by reviewing its technical outcomes. The value of a school policy is also determined by examining it in the context of the purpose for which it is employed (i.e., how it 'works' in the actual setting) and in relation to those factors contributing to its persistence such as teacher beliefs, mandated district or state standards, school structure, available resources, tradition, community composition, etc. It is the examination of the educational policy in this contextual approach that one can discover whether the intended outcomes or purposes of a program are in alignment with the actual outcomes, and whether the context of the educational setting contributes to unintended outcomes. The utility of a transition first grade program therefore must be evaluated by examining the way it functions as a part of a larger system and as a whole rather than as individual classrooms.

Viewpoints of participant educators must be considered for the impact their opinions

and decisions have upon the school structure and functioning of an ongoing transition program's curriculum. An educational program description cannot be complete without a review of viewpoints of the educators working in the program since they have such impact upon educational implementation. As previously stated, no description of transition first grade curriculum that systematically included interviews of individual teacher participants has been identified. The current study included educator interviews and teacher ratings of program components and instructional activities.

Evaluative research requires the groundwork of descriptive research. Only when such descriptions of transitional programs as operating systems are available can professional educators improve the provision of services for young children perceived to be at risk for potential educational failure. Because of the numerous questions surrounding transition first grade programs and because of the limited funding available to provide services for at risk students, it is essential that an attempt be made to provide a contextual description of a functioning transitional curricular program in the hope that such a description may assist in formulating an interpretation of the transition program's usefulness and its relationship to the larger educational system. Thus, evaluation of a school policy is dependent upon a prior description of the program or problem as it exists. The current study has attempted to provide a description of a functioning transition first grade curricular program and includes observations made at the program site and education environment ratings completed by the researcher in addition to viewpoints of educators in the program.

The current study would be defined as a naturalistic or constructivist approach (Biklen & Bogdan, 1986; Emerson, 1988; Guba & Lincoln, 1990) in which data are viewed as 'accessible' since it relies upon the skills of observing, speaking and listening that we all employ daily (Biklen & Bogdan, 1986). Naturalistic/constructivist study has been described as entering the everyday workplace of the group or thing being studied in order to make it more understandable (Denzin, 1971) rather than relying upon data collected

outside the environment (as, from school records or mailed questionnaires). Emphasis in the current study was placed upon field methods to collect data, including observations of action in the natural context and interviews to obtain the observations and experiences of those who are a part of the natural setting. Both field collection of data and participant interviews were conducted in order to add dimensions missing in other studies, but researchers have suggested (Emerson, 1988; Mathison, 1988; Williams, D., 1986; Smith, M., 1982, 1986, 1989) that such naturalistic approach is strengthened when combined with additional quantitative measures. Mathison (1988) has pointed out that combined techniques (or, triangulation) helps to eliminate bias, and M. Smith (1982, 1986) has suggested that combined methodology in naturalistic inquiry provides insights not always available in quantitative approaches and add rigor to a study. In the current study field collection of observational data, participant educator interviews, and participant educator responses to questionnaires were combined with a review of documents and materials used in transition first grades. These were then compared to standards set by the early childhood professions (Bredenkamp, 1987; Moyer, 1986) and those suggested by the Department of Education in the state in which the study was conducted (1990). Comparisons were made between participant educators' perceptions of the transition program's curriculum with findings from field observations. The results were used to form a narrative description of the transition program curriculum.

Guba (1987) and M. Smith (1982, 1986) have pointed out that the constructivist approach can be used to provide a description of a phenomenon or to provide an illustration. Such a description sometimes is used to exemplify what has been uncovered at a more general level through conventional quantitative evaluation approaches. Such naturalistic/constructivist studies are intended to provide additional insight not made possible through quantitative approaches, alone, or to add depth of understanding to that which has already been uncovered. This definition would apply to the present study.

Another suggested purpose of a constructivist study, according to Guba (1987) is to provide realization to an audience and to help 'make real' the particulars of a case study and to provide depth or realism, anecdotal materials, or vicarious experiences to the audience. In an educational study, the constructivist inquiry would help describe the context of a particular educational phenomenon, offering enlightenment to those to whom the setting might be new or unfamiliar and providing insight to those intimately involved in the context of the study but who might be 'blinded' by their frequent contact with the setting. The current study might contribute in this sense to the understanding of participant educators in the examined transition first grade program or to other school systems with an interest in transition first grades.

There are several examples of constructivist studies with the purpose of providing depth of insight and realization to an education audience. They include Eisner's (1979) description of educational settings in The Educational Imagination; the study completed by McDermott (1976) in a New York first grade classroom; Goodlad's (1990) Teachers for Our Nation's Schools; Kidder's (1989) ethnographic school study, Among Schoolchildren; Sizer's (1985) descriptive study of American high school settings in Horace's Compromise; Freedman's (1990) ethnographic description of minority students in a low socioeconomic school in Silent Victories; Lives on the Boundary (Rose, 1989), a study of the relationships of home environment and teacher influence to minority students' later school success; and MacLeod's (1987) naturalistic study of the influence of environment upon teen aspirations for school success and job attainment in Ain't No Makin' It. A common element of all of the above examples is that, while they may provide additional perspectives to professional educators, they also may be read by laypersons with equal insight. This provides reader accessibility, an element to which Biklen and Bogdan (1986) and Guba and Lincoln (1990) have referred.

Summary of Nature of Study

In summary, the current examination of a transition first grade in a southwestern school district is a naturalistic (or, constructivist) inquiry conducted in the actual context of the educational setting. Field observations were combined with other sources of information: guided interviews with participant educators, educational environmental rating scales, educators' questionnaire and checklist responses, reviews of program documents and materials, and comparisons of program documents, materials and questionnaire responses to guidelines suggested by the state department of education and to standards set by the early childhood professions. The study is therefore multidimensional and naturalistic in nature. Since it was decided *a priori* that the selected methods would be modified during the course of the study when additional data sources were discovered or identified as contributory to the purposes of the investigation, the study could also be defined as constructivist.

Four Elements of the Study

There are four entry conditions or elements sought by the researcher completing a naturalistic/constructivist inquiry as defined by Guba and Lincoln (1990) and D. Williams (1986): (a) the study is completed in the context of the phenomenon; (b) the researcher recognizes beforehand that some questions may be undefined at the beginning of the study, although some questions will have been raised and formulated to provide a structure and direction to the study, and therefore additional queries may be included during the course of the investigation; (c) the researcher is considered an instrument and may employ additional instruments as a part of the investigation; and, (d) tacit knowledge is a legitimate part of a naturalistic inquiry, especially as the study is initiated, provided such knowledge is

explained or defined.

The first element that the constructivist study must be conducted *in the actual setting* is included because additional viewpoints or perspectives may be dependent upon the context and time frame of the studied setting. That is, appearances from the *outside* of a studied element often provide a different worldview than the perspective obtained *within* a setting.

Guba and Lincoln (1990) give the second element as having a certain sense of openness in the questions framed prior to the study. They state:

Second, Constructivists are unwilling to assume that they know enough about the time/context frame *a priori* to know what questions to ask. That is, it is not possible to pursue someone else's emic construction with a set of predetermined questions based solely on the inquirer's etic construction (p. 175).

Thus, while the researcher may enter a study with some preconceived questions as a framework, those questions may necessarily be modified or enlarged as the researcher interacts with the participants, who may provide information not known by the researcher beforehand that would be important in a descriptive study. While questions for the present study were formulated by the researcher as a starting point, additional questions or aspects were pursued during the course of the study that were provided by the participants in the transition first grade program with the goal of developing a more complete description of the program.

"Third, given that the human instrument is to be employed, the question of which methods to use is easily answered: those that come most readily to hand for a human" (Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 175). In this sense, Guba and Lincoln imply (and give examples of; see Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 176) various methods that may be used in a naturalistic/constructivist study: questionnaire, poll, interview, observation, survey, etc. Other researchers also have suggested that variety in methodology contributes to the depth of description unattainable in a unidimensional study (Emerson, 1988; Geertz, 1988;

Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Mathison, 1988; M. Smith, 1982, 1986, 1987, 1989; D. Williams, 1986). There is, under this construct, no single best approach; rather, those methods accessible to the researcher and contributing to the desired outcome are used.

Lastly, the constructivist researcher "...insists on the right to use tacit knowledge" (Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 176). They state that since it is impossible for the constructivist researcher (or, anyone else) to enter an educational situation with a *tabula rasa*, then tacit knowledge is an appropriate inclusion in a research inquiry. As an example, Guba and Lincoln (1990) state:

Most of the readers of this book are likely to be educationists. Most of them can walk into a school building that they have never seen before, and, after spending a bit of time there, even without talking to anyone, can answer questions like, "Is the principal of this school authoritarian?" or "Are children in this school happy?" or "Is the science curriculum up to date?" How...[do the educationists]...come to...[their] conclusions? Ask them and they probably won't be able to tell you. But you can rely on their judgment, for it will more often than not be right. It is precisely this same tacit understanding of a situation that serves the constructivist in the beginning stages of an inquiry, and it is exactly this tacit knowledge that is ruled irrelevant by the positivist on the grounds of its subjectivity (p. 177).

Tacit knowledge might be rejected as subjective under the more rigid positivist or quantitative definition of an educational research study, even though the positivist researcher may undertake an investigation with such tacit knowledge as a base, but in the naturalistic/constructivist inquiry such understanding is relied upon in the beginning of the study to offer structure and guidance. It is not ignored or dismissed. It is used, though explained, as a tool. In the current study, an understanding of the National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) for appropriate school practice in early childhood educational settings such as primary elementary grades

was considered tacit knowledge.

Methods of the Study

With the above four elements in mind, four methods were selected: (a) questionnaire and checklist responses by participating educators, (b) guided interviews with participating educators, (d) on-site observations including the use of an educational environmental rating scale, and (e) review of documents associated with the transition program and a comparison of such documents to adjacent grade level documents, professional guidelines, and suggested state Department of Education suggested learner outcomes for transition first grade. Therefore, methods included six approaches which were selected for the current naturalistic/constructivist inquiry. They were intended to provide additional insight into a complex issue through methodological triangulation as suggested by Mathison (1988) and M. Smith (1986).

Questionnaires, instructional activities frequency checklists, educational environmental rating scales, guided interviews, and documents and materials review were used to form curricular comparisons and descriptions. The questionnaires, checklists, and guided interviews were also used to provide insight into the perceptions of educators associated with the transition program as to its program characteristics. The interview questions addressed the appropriateness and utility of the curriculum in the district's transition first grades, especially as related to teacher perceptions of young children as learners and curricular goals and content for transition first grade, and were used to provide insight to the curriculum and the program policies as the participants see them. All six approaches have been integrated to provide a narrative description of the curriculum of the district's transition first grade program: (a) as perceived by the educator participants in the program, (b) as revealed during researcher observations and ratings, and (c) as discovered by examination, review and comparison of curricular materials or program documents.

Possible Outcomes of the Study

Hypotheses are difficult to specify in advance with much clarity or precision for evaluative or descriptive studies. However, several general outcomes were predicted for the proposed study as related to a review of transition first grade curriculum and teacher perceptions of appropriate curriculum for children identified as eligible for transition classroom settings.

The current descriptive study provides information that allows conclusions to be drawn as to what teachers perceive to be curricular components of a district's transition first grade. It was predicted *a priori* that teachers would believe transition curriculum differs little from kindergarten curriculum and that transition curriculum would differ from first grade curriculum in materials and pace, but they would believe major differences exist in the capabilities of transition-eligible students versus first grade students. It was predicted that in reality, however, the curriculum of transition first grade and 'regular' first grade would be similar in that transition classes would resemble 'watered down' academically oriented first grade curriculum which provides, more or less, the very type of structured first grade work it seeks to avoid.

Observations were expected to reveal whether transition first grades in the district provide classroom settings congruent with developmentally appropriate practice as outlined in NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987). Researcher observations and educational environmental inventories based upon the NAEYC guidelines (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988) were expected to indicate whether transition first grades in the district include materials, activities and interactions usually considered essential in learning environments for children within this age range. The curriculum as indicated by outcomes of researcher observations and use of the educational environmental inventories (i.e., *what is* as observed by the researcher) was compared with the

descriptions of daily activities and interactions provided by the educator participants (i.e., *what the teachers believe is*). These perceptions were discussed freely with educator participants in order to more fully understand reality from the point of view of the teachers and administrators in the program and to include information as to how they think the program 'works,' for one purpose of the study was to provide information and insight as to what curriculum the educators believe exists, why they believe the curriculum is beneficial, and how they believe the curriculum differs from that used in kindergarten or first grades in the district.

No prediction was made as to the congruency of the district's transition first grade curriculum with NAEYC primary grade guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) based upon the current study, but it was hoped that information gained from this study might prove helpful to the district in assessing the effectiveness of its own program or prove useful to those school districts contemplating establishment of transition programs. Thus, one intended outcome of the study was that it might prove useful to the district in a self-examination of the transition program's intended outcomes as related to implemented curriculum.

If transitional programs are indeed a form of promotion to educational environments meeting developmental needs, then one would conclude grade placement in a transition first grade would also include diagnostic assessment to ensure that what might have been perceived as a slight developmental delay was not instead an indication of a need for intensive intervention. That is, since children placed in the program are believed to be at risk developmentally, it would follow that such children would be provided further diagnostic evaluation, especially if screening tests were the basis for placement decisions. It was therefore predicted that referrals for additional diagnostic assessment were likely to ensue following student placement in the transitional first grade program.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions of terms were used throughout the study:

ability grouping: the school practice whereby children believed to possess similar academic ability are placed together, either within a classroom or within a small group, for instructional purposes

academic failure: achievement below the student's perceived potentialities and/or receiving evaluative marks in a subject below the standard required by the school for promotion

academic redshirting: the practice of withholding a child from school entry in the hopes of increasing his/her ability to compete academically, based upon the perception that age advantage will provide the child a competitive edge over grade peers and/or prevent academic failure

at-risk student: any student identified by screening procedures or by meeting prescribed definition (eg., family income or family configuration, physical limitation of the child, language difficulties, etc.) as apt to experience serious and substantial school difficulties at some time during his/her school career; for the purposes of this study, the term does not refer to children served by special educational services

Chapter I: a federal program providing funding to schools having high enrollment of low income families in order to provide additional services for students, in the belief that such enrollment represents an at-risk population

content: any subject matter which includes knowledge and/or skills, which may or may not be specifically planned and/or supervised by the classroom teacher

curriculum: "that which includes all experiences of children for which the school accepts responsibility...[and]...encompass[ing] the course offerings; the documents which express the curriculum; the instructional processes which transmit, transpose, and translate the documents of curriculum; and especially the interactions and experiences

of individuals" (Ragan & Shepherd, 1977, p. 192)

developmental age or developmental quotient: a test score given as an age level and reflective of the perceived ability level of the individual, rather than the child's actual chronological age; developed by the Gesell Institute, developmental age has no empirical evidence to support its claim

developmentally appropriate practice: all policies and practices for children and their families in programs serving children in age-specified groups as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1987)

developmental delay: a characteristic believed to be present in an individual, usually as measured by a test, indicating that he or she is less capable than other individuals of the same chronological age and that he or she requires special educational services to meet his/her needs or interventive services

early childhood: the age range from birth through eight years of age

early childhood education: educational programs serving children from three years through eight years of age and therefore, for the purposes of this study, including public school kindergarten through third grade

early childhood education major or early childhood education teacher or early childhood teacher: an individual whose professional background includes specialized college courses dealing with the total development of children from birth through eight years of age, including appropriate learning environments; for the purposes of this study, the term will include teachers whose teaching certificate indicates endorsement to teach children within that age range, including public school preschools through third grade

educator or professional educator: "one who teaches, instructs, or otherwise contributes to the educational development of others" (Good, 1973, p. 206); for the purpose of this study, the term will refer to classroom teachers; teachers with specialized certificates such as reading or speech; administrators such as principals,

superintendents, or curriculum specialists; university professors, or other educational professionals who regularly deal with school issues

elementary education major or elementary education teacher or elementary teacher: an individual whose professional background includes specialized college courses related to materials and methods for teaching subject matter content to children, generally within an age range of six to twelve or fourteen years; for the purposes of this study, the elementary teacher is a person certified to teach in grades kindergarten through eighth grade

evaluation procedures: any method used to assess and report and/or record student progress

goals: desired learning outcomes for an educational program; usually (but not always) made explicit by a school district

graded school: the practice of segregating groups of pupils in grade levels, usually by age, for educational purposes (based upon the beliefs that instruction is more efficient when learners are grouped in a setting with specific learning objectives for the particular grade level and that children accumulate knowledge in a sequence in which some constructs are more difficult to acquire than others and may be based upon concepts previously learned)

guided interview: an interview in which questions constructed by the researcher are posed in such a manner to allow the respondent to raise cogent points of interest and reveal personal points of view, as opposed to questions framed to elicit categorized responses, and reveal aspects of an issue perhaps unknown to the researcher

kindergarten: an educational program, usually half-day in length, for young children; for the purposes of this study, the kindergarten is a half-day public school program which serves youngsters who have reached the age of five years on or before September 1 of the year they enter school

learning activities: educational tasks or projects which achieve the desired program

outcomes

maturationalist or nativist: an individual whose philosophic view of human development includes the idea that development is essentially preset at birth, is invariant, and is dependent upon innate maturational rate of development

naturalistic inquiry or constructivist inquiry: an investigation into a phenomenon in which (a) the study is conducted within the context or actual setting, (b) the participants' views of the phenomenon are given consideration, (c) the researcher is himself/herself considered an instrument and additional instrumental approaches are employed as believed necessary, and (d) tacit knowledge is believed to offer insight and direction to the inquiry.

overage: a child who is chronologically older than the average age range for the grade level in which he or she is enrolled

overplacement: placement of a student in a grade level beyond the emotional and/or cognitive abilities of the pupil as perceived by an educator, based upon maturational theory/assessment rather than the legal or usual age of entry for the grade level

passive retention: the practice of withholding a child from an age-eligible educational setting based upon a prediction of the child's ability to succeed in the learning environment; may refer to delaying school entry by the parent or to grade placement within a segregated school track, such as a transitional grade, with other children also being passively retained

prekindergarten or developmental kindergarten: an educational program (usually half-day) provided in some districts as a transition grade for children legally eligible to enter public school kindergarten, but who have been segregated with other children deemed unready to enter the regular kindergarten program

preschool: an educational program designed for children prior to their entry into kindergarten and usually serving children aged three to five years of age; preschools

are provided in some school districts to serve four-year-olds, who may or may not be labeled as at-risk students, in the state in which the study was conducted

primary grades: kindergarten, first, second and third grades; sometimes delineated into lower primary (kindergarten and first grade) and upper primary (second and third grade); for the purposes of this study, a transition first grade will be considered a primary grade rather than a special education program

promotion: the practice of advancing a pupil to the next grade level, usually based upon completion of a year's schooling experience with grade peers and maintaining achievement records acceptable by school standards

readiness or school readiness: a term implying that a child possesses characteristics making it possible for him or her to benefit from a specific curriculum; implies a philosophic belief that a child may or may not be prepared to learn what will next be presented in an educational setting, that it is unwise to provide materials and/or activities until the child has acquired readiness, and that such readiness can be predicted beforehand based upon current behavior of the individual

retention or nonpromotion: the practice of withholding a pupil from an age-eligible educational setting based upon the pupil's past academic performance or by teacher recommendation; the child, who has been in a given grade level for a full school year, is required to remain at that level for a subsequent school year with younger grade peers

social promotion: advancing a pupil to the next grade level with his/her grade peers based upon the emotional and social needs of the developing child, rather than being based upon the individual's achievement record or to meet preset academic school standards

tracking: a sorting mechanism practiced by some schools in which children are grouped into a single classroom based upon a preconceived standard, whether a test score or district-devised criterion

transitional first grade or transition first grade: a grade level between the usual kindergarten and first grade experiences providing a full-day educational program for the school year; commonly known by many other terms such as junior first grade, kindergarten plus, developmental first grade, etc.

urban location: relating to a city; for the purposes of this study, a population area of more than ten thousand persons will be considered as an urban setting

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made by the researcher for the current study:

- (1) Opinions may be expressed through responses on a self-report instrument.
- (2) The Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire compiled by the researcher reflects curricular options available for transition first grade programs in the state in which the study was conducted.
- (3) Viewpoints and opinions expressed by educators in guided interviews more accurately reflect actual educational practice than information obtained solely from surveys or questionnaires in that interview responses can be directed to specific issues of importance to the respondent, and perhaps unknown to the researcher, rather than limited to categorical replies.
- (4) It is believed that educators will respond freely and honestly in an investigation focusing on school practices and school curriculum, provided their opinions are received respectfully and regarded as essential to a descriptive research review process.
- (5) Guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice, as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1987), is the consensus of the early childhood profession as to what constitutes appropriate

- policies and practices for educational programs serving young children age birth through eight years of age.
- (6) The Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in [Primary] Classrooms (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988) accurately reflects the guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice as developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1987) and, as such, is an appropriate environmental rating scale for use in kindergarten, first grade, transition first grade, second grade, and third grade classrooms as an evaluative tool.
 - (7) Transition first grade placement constitutes a form of passive retention and, as a form of retention, produces the same effects as the traditional form of retention/nonpromotion.
 - (8) Continuous examination and appraisal of an educational program is essential, since such programs are not static, and is a way to ensure that programs continue to meet the needs of the children they serve.
 - (9) Individual schools form a microcosmic society that is synergistic. No one educational program exists separately from others within a school community. Policies and practices within any given grade inevitably affect the ongoing programs of other grade levels and/or auxiliary service programs to form the whole.

Procedures

Procedures for the proposed study included conducting guided interviews with professional educators associated directly or indirectly with their district's transition first grade program; observations (including informal observations and structured observations

using an educational environmental checklist rating) were made by the researcher on-site in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade classrooms in the district; questionnaires and checklists related to activities, materials, and aspects of the transition program were completed by participating educators; and, review and comparison of documents relevant to the program, including those provided by the district and those provided by the state's Department of Education. These proposed approaches included the following:

- (1) On-site observations in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade classrooms in the designated school district were used to form descriptions of daily activities, curricular materials and interactions of teachers and children in the settings. Observations were based upon an understanding of the NAEYC guidelines (see Appendix A) for integrated components of practice within primary classrooms (Bredekamp, 1987) and included the use of an environmental classroom rating checklist (see Appendix B) based upon the NAEYC guidelines (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988). Observations were made in all transition classrooms within the district at least four times during the school year 1990-1991. Observations were also made in participating kindergarten and first grade classrooms, using the same educational environmental rating checklist.
- (2) Dialogue with kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade teachers in the district was conducted periodically throughout the study to explore the opinions of teachers as to the transition first grade program. In addition, more structured exit interviews were conducted following the informal classroom observations and utilized guided interview questions developed by the researcher (see Appendix C). Interviews were conducted with all transition first grade teachers and with kindergarten teachers and first grade teachers in four of the five elementary schools in which transition first grades were located. In one of the elementary schools, the kindergarten and the first grade teachers declined

to participate in the study; in a second elementary school, the kindergarten teacher refused to allow classroom observation by the researcher but agreed to complete questionnaires.

- (3) Guided interviews with principals and administrators responsible for curriculum supervision in the district were conducted to ascertain their opinions as to the transition first grade program. The guided interview questions developed by the researcher were used (see Appendix C). Interviews were conducted with all principals at elementary schools in which transition first grades were located. An interview was also conducted with the district superintendent, who is charged with responsibility for curriculum development and supervision.
- (4) A review of previous and current district literature provided parents and the general public as to the stated goals, curricular content, and pupil selection processes for the transition first grades in the district was completed by the researcher. These documents were compared to the reported goals, curricular content, and pupil selection processes reported by participating educators in the district and observed by the researcher.
- (5) A questionnaire was provided to participating kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade teachers in which they indicated personal beliefs as related to prioritized goals, content, appropriate learning activities, materials, learner attributes, and assessment techniques appropriate for use in transition first grade classrooms (see Appendix D). This questionnaire was used with all transition first grade teachers in the district and with participating kindergarten teachers and first grade teachers in four of the five elementary schools in which transition first grades were located. It was used to explore the opinions and beliefs of teachers as to what they believe constitutes appropriate curriculum in a transition first grade.

- (6) A questionnaire was provided to principals and the superintendent in the district in which they indicated personal beliefs as to the prioritized goals, content, learning activities, materials, learner attributes, and assessment techniques appropriate for use in transition first grade classrooms (see Appendix D). All five principals of elementary schools in which transition first grade are located as well as the superintendent responsible for curriculum supervision in the district completed a questionnaire.
- (7) A review and comparison of daily schedules used by kindergartens, transition first grades, and first grades in the district was made to provide insight into program emphasis and underlying program beliefs, based upon a comparison with NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) for appropriate practice in primary grade early childhood programs.
- (8) A review and comparison of the learning outcomes promulgated by the state's Department of Education (1990) for transition first grade programs and the actual program activities, which imply desired outcomes, as observed by the researcher and reported by teachers was made.
- (9) A review and comparison of items included on pupil progress reports provided parents in the district for kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade programs was made as a means of assessing the relationship of such information to the NAEYC (Bredekamp, 1987) guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice and suggested learner outcomes from the state's Department of Education (1990).
- (10) A review and comparison of daily activities, materials, and teacher-student interactions in transition first grades in the district, as reported by participant educators (see Appendix E) and as observed by the researcher on-site using the NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice in primary

classrooms (Bredekamp, 1987) and the Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in [Primary] Classrooms (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988), was made.

Instruments Used in the Study

Instruments used in the study included guidelines established by NAEYC (Bredekamp, 1987) delineating appropriate and inappropriate practices in educational primary grade levels serving children age five through eight years of age. These guidelines were considered for the purposes of this study to be the consensus of the early childhood profession as to the standards for policies and practices in early childhood programs. Observations made in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade classrooms were based upon a knowledge and understanding of these professional standards with the purposes of identifying differences in practices among the three programs (kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade) and identifying areas in which the district transition first grade practices are congruent with recommended practices. See Appendix A for a copy of the NAEYC Integrated Components of Appropriate and Inappropriate Practice in the Primary Grades.

An environmental educational rating checklist based upon the NAEYC Integrated Components of Appropriate and Inappropriate Practice in the Primary Grades was used by the researcher during some of the observations in each classroom as an evaluative tool. See Appendix B for a copy of the Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in [Primary] Classrooms (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988). This checklist has been used in a pilot study as well as a research study in the state of Louisiana (Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, & Kirk, 1990; Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, & Hernandez, in press). Use of the instrument in the current study was intended to contribute

to the profession in that it allows additional information to be obtained as to the utility of the tool. To date, only one other educational environment rating scale has been identified for use in early childhood programs (see Harms & Clifford, 1980), and it is designed primarily for child care centers for children prior to school entry.

Guided interviews were conducted with the district superintendent and with selected principals, kindergarten teachers, transition first grade teachers, and first grade teachers. The purpose of these interviews was to allow educators to raise issues or give opinions about the transition first grade program in the district. All six transition first grade teachers and all principals in the five elementary schools in which transition first grade classrooms were located were interviewed. Three kindergarten teachers in three of the transition schools and four first grade teachers in four transition schools were interviewed. Interview questions addressed personal beliefs about the district's transition first grade program, including how the program functions, how it serves children's needs, and in what ways the program differs from kindergarten and first grade settings. Therefore, a total of 13 classrooms were observed, including six transition first grades, three kindergartens, and four first grades. A total of 19 participant educators were interviewed. See Appendix C for questions that were used to guide interviews.

A questionnaire was used to further explore concepts educators involved with the program, both directly and indirectly, indicated as personal beliefs about curriculum in a transition first grade program as it exists in the district. This questionnaire was intended to allow educators to prioritize their beliefs about goals, content, appropriate learning activities and materials, program characteristics, and assessment techniques appropriate for use in transition first grade classrooms. This instrument, designed by the researcher, is modeled after one used by Stroud (1989) with Indiana transition first grade teachers. It allows practitioners to indicate those elements that they believe to be important to a program and to prioritize those considered to be the most important. The results from the prioritized

questionnaire were used to further identify curricular elements (especially activities and materials used on a daily or frequent basis) that educators perceived as being important in a transition first grade setting. The questionnaire has not been used previously in its present, modified form. It was used in the current study to assist in forming categoric curricular components when constructing a narrative description of the transition first grade curriculum. Eighteen of the 19 participant educators completed and returned the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire. See Appendix D for a copy of the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire.

An Instructional Activities Questionnaire was used to assist in determining the frequency with which some types of activities and materials were used in transition first grades (see Appendix E). Twelve classroom teachers completed and returned the Instructional Activities Questionnaire, including all six transition first grade teachers. One kindergarten teacher did not return the instructional activities questionnaire, and one participating educator did not return the prioritized curriculum questionnaire. This questionnaire was modified from one of two subscales developed to assess Louisiana kindergarten teachers' beliefs about teaching and the instructional activities they believe important (Charlesworth, Burts & Hart, 1988). Only the second section was employed in the current study, and it was used in the current study to allow teachers to report the frequency of various instructional activities in their classrooms. Results from this instrument were used to compare to observations made by the researcher, responses given on the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire, and the materials inventoried by the researcher in individual transition first grade classrooms. These findings were then compared to the guidelines established by the early childhood profession (Bredekamp, 1987).

Limitations of the Study

All of the six transition first grade teachers and all five principals of schools in which transition classrooms were located participated in the study. In four of the five transition schools, first grade teachers participated. In three of the five transition schools, kindergarten teachers participated. Limitations, therefore, would include that in two of the transition schools the two kindergarten teachers declined to participate and that in one of the transition schools, the three first grade teachers declined to participate. Teachers who declined participation stated that such participation would require too much time; one kindergarten teacher additionally stated that having an observer in her classroom would be too stressful.

The Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in [Primary] Classrooms (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk & Hernandez, 1988; see Appendix B) was a measure constructed using the NAEYC position statement on developmentally appropriate practice for young children (Bredekamp, 1987; see Appendix A). The 28 items on the rating scale are grouped into 8 areas provided in the NAEYC guidelines, and each item provides polarized statements regarding behaviors, materials or activities that might be observed in a primary classroom setting. The Likert-type checklist previously was utilized in a Louisiana study in kindergarten classrooms (Burts, Hart, Charlesworth & Kirk, 1990). In the original study, independent ratings were made by four members of a research team, each of whom observed on two occasions for a period of 30 minutes during a two-day period. Total classroom observations were four hours in the Louisiana study, and all observers scored the developmentally appropriate classroom higher ($M=4.2$) than the less developmentally appropriate classroom ($M=1.4$) (see Burts, Hart, Charlesworth & Kirk, 1990, p. 413).

In the current study, observations were made by one researcher in all 13 classrooms.

Observations were made in transition first grades on a minimum of four occasions for a minimum of three hours; observations were made in kindergarten and first grade classrooms on one occasion for a minimum of four hours. Thus, in the current study ratings in transition classrooms were based upon a minimum of 12 hours. In kindergarten and first grade settings observations were based upon a minimum of four hours.

No item analysis was provided by Burt, Hart, Charlesworth & Kirk (1990). Limitations therefore would include the fact that the rating scale is newly developed and that data are not available for item analysis validity. In general, Likert scales are summated rating scales used to measure the degree to which attitudes, values and other characteristics exist. Likert-type scales permit ranking of individuals in terms of a characteristic, but permit only limited information for saying how much more of a characteristic exists in one individual as compared to another individual (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1985). Only one other educational environmental rating scale has been identified for use in early childhood settings (Harms & Clifford, 1980), and it is primarily intended for use in preschool settings.

Research Locale and Subjects

Location of the Study

The location for the current descriptive study was the transition first grade program provided in a public school district in the southwest. According to district documents (see Appendix G), the city school district was established transition in 1980. The transition program identified to date as the earliest in the state was implemented 30 years ago in another city (K. Shafer, personal communication on April 5, 1991). Six transition first grades are currently located in five of the eight elementary schools in the school district in

which the study was conducted.

The city in which the study was conducted is an urban area with approximately 28,390 citizens (Shahidullah & Cosby, 1989) and was founded at the turn of the century. Its major industry is an oil refinery, and the city is the state headquarters for the company. Many Native Americans live in or near the city, and two Native American agencies and a reservation are located immediately south of the city while another reservation lies to the north. A tribal powwow is held annually on one of them. County inhabitants include approximately 93.6% Whites, 4.2% Native Americans, 1.7% Blacks, 1.5% Hispanics, and 0.5% Asian or Pacific Islanders (Shahidullah & Cosby, 1989). A major state rodeo, sports car race, and national iris festival are held in the town each year. The city is the site of several historical buildings and homes which are often toured by visitors to the state.

Public schools include one high school, two junior high schools, and eight elementary schools. There are four private schools in the city, two of which serve students through the eighth grade. All of the public elementary schools are of approximate equal size, with enrollments of 302-424 students in kindergarten through sixth grade at the close of the first nine weeks period during the academic year 1990-1991. Five elementary schools are designated as Chapter I schools, including four of the five schools in the current study.

Every elementary school has a full-time school counselor. After-school tutoring for elementary students is available two nights each week during the school year, and after-school Spanish programs are also available. Special education programs, remedial programs in mathematics, and remedial programs in reading are provided for students with special learning needs. Programs for students identified as academically gifted have been established by the district. A Training Skills Laboratory was established in 1976 for handicapped children from birth to five years of age, and administrators in the district state that they consider the laboratory a model program.

School officials report that an additional transition first grade was established in an

elementary school in the fall of 1990, and another transition first grade was transferred from one elementary school site to another campus. In this community, the classes are known as Developmental First Grades.

Subjects in the Study

The subjects in the study included all transition first grade teachers in the public school district, selected kindergarten teachers, selected first grade teachers, selected principals, and appropriate district administrators. There are currently six transition first grade teachers located in five of the eight elementary schools.

Other subjects included three kindergarten and four first grade teachers within elementary schools in which transition first grades are located (i.e., a total of seven additional teachers). At one of the elementary schools having a transition first grade, there was only one kindergarten teacher and she declined to participate in the study. She stated that allowing someone to visit/observe in her classroom would be personally stressful and would cause her anxiety. At a second elementary school having a transition first grade, there were three first grade teachers and one kindergarten teacher. All declined to participate in the study, and the school principal reported that the teachers believed it would require too much time to participate and that they did not wish to have anyone observe in their classrooms.

Administrators in the study were limited to principals in those schools in which the six transition first grade classrooms are located (i.e., five principals). The superintendent designated as responsible for curriculum instruction for the school district was also included as a subject. Until the current school year, the district has had an assistant superintendent responsible for curriculum and instruction. This individual was recently demoted and, since the position had not yet been refilled, was not included in the study.

Because the previous superintendent resigned, the acting superintendent included in the study was new to the district. Therefore, a total of 13 classrooms were observed, including six transition first grades, three kindergartens, and four first grades. A total of 19 participant educators were interviewed, and eighteen participant educators completed and returned the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire. Twelve classroom teachers completed and returned the Instructional Activities Questionnaire, including all six transition first grade teachers. One kindergarten teacher did not return the instructional activities questionnaire, and one participating educator did not return the prioritized curriculum questionnaire.

Analysis of Data

Data acquired from the study were used to formulate a narrative description of curriculum in a transition first grade program in an urban school district in the southwest. The description includes verbal passages and also includes tables to make the descriptions more readily lucid to readers.

Data are never value-free...and they certainly do not 'speak for themselves;' that is, they do not carry their own meaning and interpretation [in] an unequivocal way.

Evaluators, guided consciously or unconsciously by their own values, select *which* facts are to be determined and once obtained, *what they mean* (Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 178).

If this is the case, care must be taken to ensure that an authentic description of the transition first grade curriculum evolves. The values of the researcher must not be allowed to color and misrepresent that which is studied, producing a description that is biased. Therefore, perceptions of the participants in the program were given consideration so that, when conflicting opinions as to the curriculum of the program occurred, some further investigation and observation could be made to ensure that the final description was an

accurate reflection of the transition first grade curriculum in the district rather than the initial perception of the researcher or of any individual teacher in the program. This is a way of taking negative cases (in this instance, teacher opinions of the curriculum that appear to be in conflict with observations of the researcher and/or in conflict with other teachers' perceptions) and using them to guide the continuing collection of data until the researcher decides that a fulsome description of the transition first grade program curriculum is possible. This method of deliberately seeking nonsupporting evidence while collecting *in situ* data has been suggested by J. Katz (1988) as a way to provide interactive relation of method to findings: when the researcher finds more and more corroborating evidence for one particular viewpoint, that perspective is selected as being more representative even though other perspectives may be reported.

Applied consistently in field research, the search for negative cases will: force the researcher to focus on social process as experienced from within, induce research subjects to act toward the researcher as a meaningful member of the native world; enfranchise readers as colleagues competent to make an independent analysis of the relation between data and explanation; and, shape a role which subsequent researchers can readily take up for testing substantive findings.... This system of social research relations promotes generalizability, reduces the problem of reactivity, establishes constraints toward reliability, and enhances replicability (J. Katz, 1988, p. 134).

Attention was given to the reported perceptions of the participant-educators since they live daily in the context of the transition first grades and are able to offer additional aspects of the curriculum. Such assertions were verified in the field by the researcher or were carefully documented with other sources/observations in the event of discrepancies.

Such congruency is slowly reached in naturalistic/constructivist inquiry, and is best acquired by careful and ongoing collection of verbal descriptions throughout the study. While a structure for conducting observations and collecting information is therefore

designed prior to beginning the study, it is understood that observations and interviews will continue when descriptions provided by educator participants are in conflict with researcher observations. That is, the search for negative cases continues until the researcher is satisfied that reported observations and descriptions are representative.

Analyses in the current study relied upon a daily log/journal maintained by the researcher in which notations were kept of all observations made on-site in the district. Notations made during classroom visits, about documents provided by the district, and reflections made concerning any information or materials provided parents of students in the program were included. This journal formed a vital part of the data and formed a deposition, as it were, which was relied upon when formulating the final narrative description.

Analyses also included reports made by educator participants in the program as collected informally throughout the study. That is, information provided by teachers during classroom visits was also maintained in written notation in the research journal.

Categoric analyses, taken from responses from educator participants on questionnaires, notations made during observations, and data collected from the interviews and questionnaires, were used to form a codified structure for a description of the program's curriculum. This curricular description was then contrasted and compared with the perceptions of participant educators as to curricular content as well as contrasted and compared with the NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) and the checklist data (Charlesworth, Burts & Hart, 1988) and the rating scale (Charlesworth, Mostley, Burts, Hart, Kirk & Hernandez, 1988). Thus, final analyses resulted in a descriptive, prosaic explanation of the transition first grade curriculum from the standpoints of *what is* with *what is believed to be* with *what ought to be*.

Conceptualizing Generalizability, Trustworthiness
and Rigor in the Constructivist Investigation

In general there have been two approaches to generalizability in the area of qualitative research. Most of the work during the present decade has dealt with developing a *conception* of generalizability that is useful and appropriate for qualitative (i.e., naturalistic or constructivist) inquiry that differs in its perspective from that usually applied in quantitative studies. A second approach has been to try to gain generalizability through synthesis of pre-existing qualitative studies (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990); i.e., by building a body of studies having a common theme or element and providing implications or inferences from their commonalities, support is given to individual studies.

The current study applies the first concept of generalizability. The study used information collected in context from participant-educators and from researcher observations, both structured and informal, to complete a narrative description of the curriculum in a transition first grade in a southwestern school district. In that the study is unique to the district in question, generalizations cannot be made to other contexts. In that the description attempts to accurately reflect the perceptions of the participants as well as the observations of the researcher while providing a comparison with guidelines for such programs established by the profession, insight is provided for others engaged in such educative programs. While limitations of context exist, all studies possess such limitations even when professing that their findings may be widely applied to other contexts. In considering such limitations, it is well to keep in mind the admonition of researchers familiar with qualitative studies, who have stated:

It is virtually impossible to imagine any human behavior that is not heavily mediated by the context in which it occurs. One can easily conclude that generalizations that are intended to be context free will have little that is useful to say about human behavior

(Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 62).

Guba and Lincoln (1982) have also said that:

The aim of [naturalistic] inquiry is to develop an idiographic body of knowledge. This knowledge is best encapsulated in a series of 'working hypotheses' that describe the individual case. Generalizations are impossible since phenomena are neither time- nor context-free (although some transferability of these hypotheses may be possible from situation to situation, depending on the degree of temporal and contextual similarity) (p. 238).

In determining whether social research can be generalized, it has been suggested that researchers should abandon the idea that context-free statement or, generalizations, can and should be sought, but rather that 'thick description' should be the desired goal (Emerson, 1988; Geertz, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Thick description, in this sense, means that the study describes the subject of the investigation so thoroughly that the reader may himself/herself decide whether the context of the study may be applied to another considered context. In other words, the description of the curriculum of a transition first grade in the current study may be generalized to the extent that additional sites are similar in time frame and located within similar communities. The decision to generalize is left to the reader, although the researcher has attempted to draw thoughtful conclusions as to how results from the current study might or might not be applied in other situations.

Given these viewpoints, several researchers have called for replacing the concept of generalizability with that of 'fittingness' in which they argue that an analysis must also include the degree to which the researcher and/or reader believes the situation studied might match other situations in which one is interested (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Geertz, 1988; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Guba & Lincoln, 1982; J. Katz, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Goetz and LeCompte (1984) and Geertz (1988) place an emphasis upon clear and detailed description as a means of allowing the reader to decide the extent to which findings in a study might be applicable to another context, while J. Katz (1988) recommends that the

researcher make explicit what inferences might be drawn. To the extent that the site of the current study typifies other southwestern communities, then some degree of generalizability might be assumed. Criteria of similar time frame and context might or might not limit the transference to school districts within other states, and the judgement would be left to the reader. It should be clearly apparent, however, that an individual case study is insufficient data from which to draw conclusions as to curricular content of all other transition first grade programs.

Guba and Lincoln (1990) have suggested that criteria for judging the adequacy, rigor and authenticity of naturalistic/constructivist inquiry must be made from four different viewpoints: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. They state that the trustworthiness or rigor of a naturalistic/constructivist study is another way of defining objectivity, and as such requires a demonstration that a given inquiry is free of bias, values and/or prejudice upon the part of the researcher and provides an authentic and accurate view of the subject being studied. J. Katz (1988) has suggested that criteria for judging analytic fieldwork should be upon the basis of its representativeness, reactivity, reliability, and replicability.

Increasing credibility or perception of the study as representative would be supported in a constructivist inquiry by prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing (in which the researcher allows professional peers to challenge or question conclusions or descriptions), negative case analysis (in which the researcher attempts to identify those data that fail to fit previously found data), and member checks (in which the researcher asks members of the group studied to provide feedback) (Bloor, 1988; J. Katz, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). In the current study, repeated observations were made. Exit guided interviews were conducted with participant educators in order to allow challenge to perceptions based upon the researcher observations and to provide additional information not previously identified as essential to a fulsome description of the transition

program. In instances in which viewpoints of teachers and researcher diverged, effort was made to seek further information to ascertain the cause of the differing viewpoints and to attempt to provide additional data for support of the final narrative description.

A second criteria suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1990) and by J. Katz (1988) is transferability or replicability. In constructivist inquiry the researcher does not provide the confidence limits of the study but rather, "...what he or she does is to provide as complete a data base as humanly possible in order to facilitate transferability judgements on the part of others who may wish to apply the study to their own situations..." (Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 242). In the current study, the confidence limits of the study would be dependent upon a balanced view obtained from multiplicative data sources that fairly represents the information uncovered in the study (especially in the data gathering process and in the data analysis processes in individual interviews).

Dependability, as a third criterion for judging the adequacy for a constructivist inquiry, is parallel to the conventional criterion of reliability in that it is concerned with the stability of the data over time. Shifts and changes in hypotheses are inevitable, report Guba and Lincoln (1990), but need to be "tracked and trackable (publicly inspectable), so that outside reviewers of such [a study] can explore the process, judge the decisions that were made, and understand what salient factors in the context led the [researcher] to the decisions and interpretations made" (p. 242). In the current study, the researcher cannot provide publicly inspectable data because of promises made to the school district to protect the identity of the district, individual elementary schools, and participating educators. Effort was made, however, to obtain information from more than one source in compiling the narrative description, and information has been provided the reader about the sources of data that hopefully offer the reader insights into the reasons for the final descriptions.

The fourth criterion for trustworthiness of a constructivist study suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1990) is confirmability. J. Katz (1988) has advised that field researchers

should try to reduce reactivity. Confirmability (or avoidance of reactivity) may be thought of as parallel to the conventional criterion of objectivity in positivist inquiries. Like objectivity, confirmability is concerned with "...assuring that data, interpretations, and outcomes of inquiries are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator and are not simply figments of the evaluator's [i.e., researcher's] imagination" (Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 243). This means that data can be tracked to their sources, and that "...logic used to assemble the interpretations into structurally coherent and corroborating wholes is both explicit and implicit in the narrative of a case study" (ibid.).

Efforts to Seek Generalizability, Trustworthiness and Rigor in the Current Naturalistic Investigation

The process of seeking credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were integral to the ongoing investigation. Several methods of collecting information for the current study were utilized and included prioritized questionnaires, guided interviews, instructional activities frequency checklists, educational environment rating scales, review of district curricular materials and participant observations. Forty-two visits were made to the city from October 1990 through January 1991, including 44 classroom observations totaling 132 contact hours; 42 hours 40 minutes were spent interviewing 19 educator participants. Additional visits were made to school lunchrooms, recess periods, Christmas program presentations, tours of media and computer centers, teacher lounges, and walking tours of buildings and grounds. Additional teacher contact was made through informal lunch, weekend, telephone and before and after school visits.

In addition to school contact, approximately 14 hours were spent driving through the city streets and walking through downtown and shopping center districts. During these visits the locations of community services and points of interest were fixated using city

maps and a telephone directory: local parks, historical monuments and buildings, public health clinics and local hospital, newspaper publishing firm, airport, major shopping areas, city-owned utility companies, police station, YMCA, local state employment office, city golf course, local drug and alcohol treatment centers, city swimming pools, public library, school board building, street maintenance office, local landfill, city sewage treatment plant, vocational technical school, post office and city hall.

Daily city newspapers and weekly regional classified newspapers were read during three months of the study, and Southwestern Bell Telephone Company directory listings were reviewed for industrial, business, church, and private school listings. Realtor master listings of homes for sale or rent in the city were perused, and the researcher visited informally with local realtors and Chamber of Commerce representatives. Telephone visits were made with city staff in various departments, museum personnel, local attorneys, representatives from Native American agencies, Chamber of Commerce employees, state employment office employees, refinery employees, church affiliated private schools, and public librarians. Chamber of Commerce brochures and city street maps, geological survey maps, regional road maps and school district boundary maps were examined. Over 100 photographs were made of city parks, neighborhood settings, downtown district, local churches, exteriors of school buildings, railway yards, industrial sites and major points of interest in the city.

Information used in the narrative description was obtained through personal observation, personal communication or written document. To substantiate a statement, effort was made to verify one source with another source and, whenever possible, with a third source. Thus, when information was provided by a participant educator at one school, the issue was raised at another school site for verification or negation by other participant educators. Occasionally conflicting statements were encountered. For example, a school official reported that the city's schools were the second largest employer in the

city, while Chamber of Commerce data indicated the city schools ranked as fourth in employer size. By contacting the largest seven employers listed by the Chamber, the report from the school official was not supported by information from document and interview sources. One educator reported that the transition program had been in existence for 18 years, but continued efforts to confirm this longevity did not produce verification. The conclusion, after questioning those associated with its beginning year, was that the transition first grade program in the district is now completing its eleventh year.

Often conflicting reports appeared to be a reflection of different policies at different school sites, but sometimes perceptions of a teacher or principal were not supported by other reports, other interviews, other questionnaires or by researcher observations. In such instances, effort was made to review the perceptions of the educator participant to attempt to identify *why* the perception or opinion was held by the individual (i.e., what support or rationale the individual could offer for the statement of policy or practice) and to further explore the conflicting report with the individual.

Written documents, too, sometimes appeared to provide conflicting data; eg., brochures from the Chamber of Commerce did not have coinciding statistical information in their various publications. Whenever possible, the most recent data was used after verifying its authenticity and source. In some instances additional verification was provided by local businesses, industries, school employees, census data or librarians. Information from city personnel was verified with city commission reports and by contacting more than one city department employee responsible for the department. Written documents from the school district were uniform and congruent, except that one school had additional forms used in the transition first grade.

By integrating all of the above sources of information, it is hoped that the described study has been made as rigorous, trustworthy and authentic as possible.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The following chapter provides a narrative description of the curriculum in a southwestern state's transition first grade program. The first section describes the context of the study from the aspect of the wider community and its local schools. As previously mentioned, this information is provided in order to offer insight into the transition program as a part of a broader microcosm and to allow the reader to draw applicable inferences to settings of other transition programs. The contextual description is then followed by a physical description of individual schools and classrooms in which transition first grades are located.

The second section of the current chapter reviews the curricular materials and personal interactions of the transition program and includes three sections: (a) materials used in the district transition program; (b) daily schedule of activities in the district transition program; and (c) interactions within the transition program, including child-material interactions, child-child interactions and child-adult interactions. The general community and physical classroom settings, materials and equipment, daily schedules of planned activities, and personal interactions in the classroom setting have been included in the narrative description of the transition first grade curriculum based upon the supposition that these four elements comprise an educational curriculum.

The third section of the current chapter offers a comparison of documents associated with the district transition first grade program and guidelines from the National Association

for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] (Bredekamp, 1987) and the state's Department of Education (1990). The fourth section of the current chapter reviews educational policies of the district as related to the transition first grade program and educator perceptions of the transition program. Policy issues addressed in this section include those believed to be associated, directly or indirectly, with the transition first grade curriculum. Growth and expansion of the transition program, the interactive function between curriculum of transition first grade and later grade levels, transition room placement decisions, and district support for purchase and provision of curricular materials are included. Educational beliefs and perceptions of transition first grades as expressed by educators associated with the program have been included.

Since anonymity was assured to participants in the study, the name of the school district has not been provided. Pseudonyms have been used for all elementary schools and participating educators in the belief that such use will provide greater readability in a descriptive study.

Context of the Study: The Community and Local Schools

The Community

When entering the city from the south, the outline of oil refinery structures may be seen while still nine miles from the city limits. They dominate the skyline as the visitor descends into the valley in which the city is located, and when drawing closer to the city limits the acrid odor of sulphuric fumes adds olfactory awareness to visual awareness of the refinery's presence. When entering the city from the east one passes a major state reservoir and city lake before crossing a large interstate river. To the north and west lie grassland plains. The city is situated approximately 20 miles from the state line.

Two state highways traverse the city and intersect in the southern edge near the river. A freight railway runs through the center of the city, silent testament to its importance in transport of oil and pipeline equipment. Most city roadways run parallel and are aligned to the north-south or east-west in the tradition of townships built on the relatively flat southwest plains. It is only the northeast quarter of the city which consists primarily of curving neighborhood streets. Many streets have names reflecting the city's Native American heritage: Osage, Comanche, Potomac, Otoe, Ponca, Detroit, De Soto, etc. Others have the usual prosaic tree names, perhaps in grateful recognition of the wide variety that grow within city limits in contrast to surrounding bare plains, and songbirds: woodthrush, wren, redbird, canary, hummingbird, oriole, mockingbird. A few street clusters are named for early state leaders, United States presidents or ivy league universities.

Many city streets are paved with brick. The public works division responsible for street maintenance reports that brick paving was first used in 1918 and continues to be maintained at public insistence, according to officials, in many residential areas. Twenty-two miles of residential streets retain their brick surface, representing 13.3% of all city roadways (and, of course, a larger percentage of residential streets where they primarily occur). Some major thoroughfares once brick paved have been resurfaced with asphalt, including the entire downtown area. City officials report that some downtown merchants now regret the loss of the brick pavers, originally resurfaced because of complaints of noise levels. Requests from downtown merchants to restore the brick pavers as a part of the city's historical legacy have received no action due to the projected expense.

Many of the homes in the city were built during the heyday of the oil boom in the late 1910s and in the 1920s and 1930s, and they boast the gracious brick facades, spacious lawns and wide porches of those eras. Because of the age of many residential areas, trees planted by original owners in the established neighborhoods and in the older city parks are large and include specimen of oak, elm, pine, birch, maple, spruce, sweetgum, osage

orange, and cedar. In one of these older areas of the city controversial charges of contamination from the oil refinery were recently resolved following a lengthy dispute by a settlement which included a buy-out from the refinery, and in this southern section of the city a visitor finds the neighborhood pockmarked by empty lots where approximately 20% of the houses have already been moved. Other houses await transport, lifted from their foundations with brick chimneys and brick porch supports removed and temporarily resting on railroad ties or concrete cinder building blocks. City officials and refinery representatives have reported in newspaper accounts that the neighborhood will be turned into a city greenbelt recreation area.

There are 61 churches and a synagogue within the city, according to telephone directories, reflecting the strongly held religious tenets of state citizens. Some Protestant churches have tribal affiliations adopted as a part of the church names. Other indications of Native American presence in the region include 'smoke shops' outside city limits on major highways (at which cigarettes are sold without federal or state tax) and billboard advertisements for bimonthly Indian bingo games at a local reservation located just outside the city. Health clinics established for Native Americans are located in the city, and an alcohol treatment center for Native American women is located immediately outside the city near tribal lands. An international pow-wow is held each fall.

Businesses and industries within the city reflect the pervasive influence of oil and agriculture in the region. For example, there are metal companies specializing in purchase of scrap oil pipeline and used farm combines, and some automotive alternator repair shops in the city also provide repair services for large oil transport trucks and wheat combines in addition to the usual automobile alternator repairs found in other cities. Several welding businesses advertise repair of pipeline, ranch gates or cattle guards. Livestock buyers, dealers and hauling are advertized, and there is a business specializing in artificial insemination of cattle. Fencing operators advertise services for temporary electric fencing

for cattle and security fencing for oil wells in addition to the usual backyard home enclosures.

Chamber of Commerce documents provide information about employment in the city. According to Chamber of Commerce data from a February 1990 survey, the largest employer in the city is the refinery with over 4,000 employees. The Chamber lists the second largest employer as the hospital with 490 employees, third largest as the city with 407 employees, and the public schools as the fourth largest employer with 364 certified personnel. However, the city school staff reports that, in addition to certified personnel, the district also employs 254 support personnel--some of which are part-time workers. Employers having more than 100 employees include an asphalt firm; a discount house distribution center; an industry producing structural steel registers; an industry producing oil related steel products such as steel storage tanks, truck tanks, pine clamps and pipe caps; a rotary rock drill bit company; a chain discount merchandising store; and a financial institution (which has its state headquarters in the city).

Employers having more than 75 employees include a bank, a trucking firm, a chemical company producing carbon black, and a retail grocery store. Other manufacturers and businesses in the city include producers of aluminum storm windows, a company which makes barbecue smokers, a tooling die firm, a pump rebuilding firm, a drum recycling company, a gas and diesel engine replacement parts company, a pump turbine and machine repair firm, a built-in vacuum system manufacturer, a welding company and an ornamental iron manufacturer.

The city's cultural and recreational centers include several buildings having historical significance. A major tourist attraction is a large mansion built in 1925 by a local oilman; buildings and grounds are open to the public, and small museums and a modern conference center and retreat are located on the estate. An annual foodfest is held on the estate grounds each year. A well known bronze statue is connected with another museum dedicated to

pioneer memorabilia. The museum houses exhibits of frontier furniture, clothing and household equipment as well as storing genealogical archives. The city's cultural and hospitality center was once the former home of an oilman and today shelters a Native American museum, a ranch exhibit featuring memorabilia from a nearby world famous ranch, and war memorials.

Annual cultural events in the city include a yearly national sports car race held on a city-owned road course, an international flower show and sale, an annual rodeo named after a famous nearby ranch, a Native American pow-wow, a fine arts festival, a chili cookoff, the county free fair, a tennis tournament, and a city-sponsored fishing derby at the nearby city lake. City schools regularly hold annual Christmas and music programs. A local theatrical group provides dramatic presentations, and there are three local movie houses.

Local Schools

There are four private schools in the city. Two are parochial schools, and both serve students in preschool through the sixth grade. A third private school lists itself in telephone directories as a Christ centered school providing education for children in preschool through the eighth grade. The fourth private school provides classes for preschool through the second grade.

Public schools include one high school, two junior high schools, eight elementary schools and a vocational school. Every elementary school has a full-time school counselor. Five public elementary schools are designated as Chapter I schools. After-school tutoring for elementary students is available two nights each week during the school year, and after-school Spanish programs are also available. Special education programs, remedial programs in mathematics, and remedial programs in reading are provided for students with

special learning needs. Programs for students identified as academically gifted have been established. A Training Skills Laboratory was established in 1976 for handicapped children from birth to five years of age, and administrators in the district consider the laboratory a model program. The school district also has a child development center for four-year-olds, and a Head Start center for the city is located on the grounds of one elementary school.

Elementary schools use what the district labels as platoon subjects in 3rd through 6th grade levels. Platoon subjects include mathematics, music, art, science, physical education, and library media. Teachers for these six curricular areas meet with students four times per week in 40-minute sessions. Thus, one-half of each school day for upper elementary students is devoted to platoon subjects and the other half day is concentrated on homeroom subjects such as reading, language arts, spelling and social studies. School counselors conduct group guidance activities and also provide individual counseling for all grade levels. Orchestra is available for 5th and 6th grade students.

The eight elementary schools serve 3,051 children in kindergarten through sixth grade, including the school district's four-year-old program and a disabilities program. Individual elementary school enrollments ranged from 302 to 424 at the end of the first nine-week period during the 1990-1991 school year. There are two junior high schools serving 1,468 students in grades eight, nine and ten. The high school has 1,193 students, bringing total district enrollment to 5,712 during October of 1990. This indicated a net gain in enrollment over the 1989-1990 school year of 129, according to district documents.

Some shifts in elementary enrollment were experienced this year, according to district personnel responsible for attendance statistics, and may possibly be attributable to changes in housing patterns (especially with the closing and moving of homes within the buy-out neighborhood) and/or the transfer of special elementary programs (including transition first grade classrooms) among city elementary schools during the current school year.

The Transition Program Schools

School documents report that the district was among the earliest in the state to establish a transition first grade program. Transition first grades were established in the district in 1980, and in this community the classes are known as Developmental First Grades and serve children identified as developmentally unready for first grade according to district standards. Five of the city's eight elementary schools provide transition first grades, with a total of six transition classrooms assigned to the program; i.e., one school has two transition first grade classrooms in the program.

Two schools having transition classrooms are located on major thoroughfares, but the other three (like 7 of the city's 13 schools) are located in quiet neighborhoods with predominately single family homes. Five of the eight elementary schools are adjacent to a city park or recreation area, and four of these five schools have a transition first grade program.

All transition program schools have school lunchrooms, but no food is prepared on the premises of any elementary school in the district. Food is prepared at both junior high schools and transported to elementary schools by truck. Lunches are served on disposable trays (which, ironically, are produced by a competitor of the local petroleum refinery) with disposable tableware. All transition program elementary schools have interior hallways; coat lockers are provided in four schools and the fifth has coat hooks in the hallway for developmental first grade and within the classrooms for kindergarten and first grade children. All transition program schools have gymnasiums, art rooms, library media centers, science rooms, music rooms and faculty lounges.

Physical amenities of developmental first grade classrooms vary. Some have large windows, for example, and others have none. Floor coverings include linoleum tiles, a combination of linoleum tiles and carpeting, or carpeting. Availability of sinks with running water and toileting facilities varies for transition program schools; some have

neither, some have sinks only, and some have both sinks and restrooms within the classroom setting. Availability of teacher storage, display areas, bulletin boards, chalkboards and supply cabinets also varies widely. Each school has its own principal.

The transition program elementary schools have all adopted school nicknames, and the names are all those of aggressive animals--either wild predators (usually cats) or domestic dogs having reputations of ferocity.

All elementary schools in the district begin and dismiss at the same time, and recess is identical at all elementary schools: ten minutes each morning and afternoon, and approximately 20-30 minutes after lunch. Four transition program elementary schools begin serving lunch at the same time, although one school now requires two lunch periods because of enrollment size. Thus, at four of the five transition program schools, the entire school--grades K-6--is outdoors concurrently for recess periods. Teachers have no supervisory duties for recess, lunch, dismissal, or before school arrival. Some kindergarten teachers in transition program elementary schools appear to remain with students until picked up by parents; others do not.

Individual schools, classrooms and educator participants are described below. Pseudonyms have been given the schools and educator participants in order to provide greater readability and anonymity as suggested by Smith (1987) and Biklen and Bogdan (1986) and as modeled by Goodlad (1990).

Individual Transition Schools

Cedardale

At the end of the first nine weeks of school in 1990 there were 354 children enrolled at Cedardale, a decrease of 25 students from the same reporting period last year, with 47

students in kindergarten, 14 children in developmental first grade, and 50 children in first grade. Cedardale is the smallest of the transition program elementary schools, although two other elementary schools in the district have lower enrollments than Cedardale. It is a Chapter I school.

Cedardale faces south on a quiet residential street, and orientation of the building is primarily east-west with two wings extending northward from the east end and center of the building. One of the wings was added several years after the school was constructed.

The neighborhood is primarily filled with older homes, the majority of which are moderate single home dwellings with wood exteriors, large shade trees and single car garages. The nearest arterial street is approximately two blocks east of Cedardale. Immediately across the street from the school entrance is a family child care center, and a white framed portable building on the east end of the schoolyard houses a Head Start program with adjacent driveway for parents to pick up and drop off children. To the west of the school is a city park. The school has a large, grassy front lawn that slopes to the south and west, and large trees are on the north playyard. Many neighborhood streets are brick, and several streets have sidewalks. Cedardale is a 'walking' school; no children ride schoolbuses to Cedardale except Head Start children, although some parents transport children in private cars.

The main entry to the brick school is located in the approximate center of the south exterior, and asphalt parking lots lie on the east and west ends of the building. When entering the main doorway, immediately to the right is a glassed enclosure with work areas for the school secretarial and clerical staff. The principal's office is immediately behind the glassed-in area and is therefore located in the approximate center of the building. Cedardale has a lower level, where the lunchroom eating area is located. Near the main office there is an ill child room with two cots for children who have become ill at school. Children may remain there until parents have been notified to come pick them up. Linens for the ill child

room are laundered by PTA volunteers. Cedardale also has a separate teacher workroom used by faculty and teacher aides to prepare learning materials.

Elmwood

Elmwood is the second largest of the transition program elementary schools (with Maplecrest and Oaklawn tied as largest of transition program elementary schools as well as largest elementary schools within the district) and had 416 students as of October 26, 1990 (the end of the first nine weeks of school). There were 86 children in kindergarten, 20 children in transition first grade, and 44 children in regular first grade. This represents an increase in enrollment of 59 students from the same reporting period last year.

The Elmwood campus occupies less land space than the other transition program elementary schools. It faces north and occupies much of a city block, with private homes backing up to the western and eastern edges of the school grounds. The land is essentially level. The north front lawn is limited in size, within a few feet of the brick paved street that is lined with large elms. The area is apparently not used for outdoor play. A grass surfaced outdoor area lies along the west side of the building, and this playyard is restricted to upper grade use. In the south corner of the campus is a square shaped, asphalt surfaced area used for outdoor play by lower elementary children at the school, including developmental first grade. Parking at the school is limited to head-in spaces on the southern boundary of the school. A small city owned swimming pool is also located on the southeast corner of the block.

The school has had three additions to the original building, according to teachers and staff, and the school seems to sprawl in several directions because of the added wings. A few feet from the front door is the main office, and visitors must look closely for its sign or they might be led astray into the north wing, which has yet another classroom wing

projecting from the end of its corridor. The lunchroom and gymnasium are located in the approximate center of the building's west half. A large teacher lounge with upholstered furniture pieces, coffee tables, storage cabinets, and four large work/eating tables is also in the west wing area adjacent to the lunchroom and gymnasium. Faculty restrooms are located in the teacher lounge, but because of the size of the building additional restrooms for adult use are located in the east wing. A small work area is located immediately west of the kitchen area of the school lunch room. It is used by teachers and teacher aides when preparing classroom materials, and it competes for space with stacks of xerography paper and boxes of dry cereal used in the school's breakfast program.

The transition program is located at the extremity of the building's southwest end--as far from the main office as it might be situated--and is the first classroom by the southwest entrance.

Elmwood is situated entirely at ground level and is one of two transition program elementary schools that has handicapped student access. It is located in one of the older sections of town. The school principal and teachers report that children who attend Elmwood are from lower middle and lower income families. The school has been designated as a Chapter I school. Most homes in the area indicate need of repairs or maintenance, and some advertise small businesses or work from their homes (eg., ironing, radiator repair, child care). Two city thoroughfares are nearby, one two blocks south of the school and another four blocks east of the school. Most streets in the area are brick paved and lined with elm or maple trees.

Elmwood is the least clean of the five transition program elementary schools. Teachers and principal complained that janitorial services have been unsatisfactory this school year, and several changes in contractual services have been made. The school, however, also indicates signs of earlier neglect: woodwork in need of cleaning and damaged by gouges, floors in need of waxing, rusting coat lockers, light fixtures with

debris inside, light bulbs needing replacement, outdoor metal handrails and poles in need of painting, and asphalt play areas in need of resurfacing.

Maplecrest

Maplecrest is located in the approximate geographic center of the city on a four-lane thoroughfare adjacent to a large, tree-filled city park. The building site slopes steeply to the north and west, with the southern portion where the main building located at the highest land grade. The main brick building is situated on the south edge of the campus by the main street, and a self-contained brick structure built on the east school boundary five years ago as a maintenance building is now utilized for classroom space. A large metal building was erected on the north edge of the campus last year to house additional classrooms. Thus, the school consists of three separate buildings lying on the south, east and north edges of the campus. The three buildings are connected by a covered walkway. There are virtually no trees on the outdoor play area other than those on the street edge, but the nearby park and residential trees soften the appearance of the bare playground. An asphalt parking area is located immediately east of the main building. An asphalt, one-way drive along the east of the campus is used for arrival and dismissal of riding students.

Maplecrest is approximately three blocks from the city high school. The school is one of two elementary schools tied for largest enrollment in the city; it has 424 students, with 53 students in kindergarten and 58 children in first grade. Thirty-one children are enrolled in the two transition first grades. One of the transition classes was transferred to Maplecrest in the fall of 1990 from another elementary school located 10 blocks south of Maplecrest, and according to the school principal the transfer of the program was made so that the other elementary school could comply with requirements of the recently passed state law concerning elementary grade class size. Children are bused to Maplecrest from two elementary schools (one with an overflow enrollment), and children assigned to two

other elementary schools are transported to Maplecrest by parents. Thus, the school provides services from five different school areas (including Maplecrest) across a broad geographic area. The school has several other special programs besides the transition first grade, according to the principal: emotionally disabled, hearing impaired, and a training program. Maplecrest has one kindergarten teacher. It is a Chapter I school.

The original main building at Maplecrest was built in 1931. It is constructed of yellow brick and has indications of pride in the historical aspects of the building. For example, the wide, mahogany framing on doorways and windows has been retained in its original varnished state and shows signs of careful maintenance. Wing archways are framed with mahogany gingerbread woodwork that is dust-free, and there are large mahogany framed skylights in the hallway ceilings. Original hardware remains on doors, and in the teacher lounge the brass fixtures are polished. The building also retains many original light fixtures, and they have been cleaned and repainted rather than replaced. Tilework in the hall has been waxed. Paintings, sculpture and art prints grace the main foyer on the south entrance, next to the main office.

The school lunchroom is located on a lower level reached by stairways. All entrances to the main building require stairwell use, and therefore it is not handicap accessible, although the other two buildings are. The gymnasium is on the main floor and appears to be larger than the lunchroom. Like many of the other transition program schools, the gymnasium has oak flooring and a curtained stage at the east end of the room.

Oaklawn

The newest elementary school in the city is Oaklawn with an enrollment size of 424 children at the end of the first nine weeks of school in 1990. This represents a drop in enrollment of 53 students from the same time the previous year. In the fall of 1989

Oaklawn was clearly the largest elementary in the city with 477 students, having 98 students more than the elementary school closest in size, but this year the school 'shares' the honor of having largest elementary enrollment with Maplecrest. There are 45 children in kindergarten, 65 children in first grade, and 20 children enrolled in the transition program at Oaklawn. Limitation in class size set by the transition first grade teacher and the school principal caused some children, whose parents enrolled them after the formal school enrollment period, to be bused to Maplecrest. Oaklawn is a Chapter I school.

The school is located on a two-lane asphalt street that forms a main thoroughfare through the western edge of the city, and it is situated three blocks from a major intersection. The school is aligned north-south on the campus, with a large asphalt parking lot in front and playgrounds to the south and east of the rectangular building. Only trees in the south utility easement break the flatness of the playground, which is sparsely planted with grass. The main entrance is at the northwest end of the school near the school lunchroom, teacher lounge and gymnasium, while the main office is situated in the approximate middle of the school. The office is much smaller than those of the other transition program elementary schools. A long, carpeted hallway runs through the center of the building, and classrooms project in clusters along this central corridor. Lockers line the walls, and only glass doors provide outside views from the one-story building. The modern building style was selected, according to school officials, to conserve energy costs.

Some land surrounding Oaklawn is undeveloped, but to the north are modest brick and frame single family homes that have been built since the 1970s. To the north and west of the school is one of the larger mobile home parks in the city. Beyond the nearby intersection is farm land interspersed with widely scattered industrial and manufacturing firms. The railway line lies about one-fourth mile to the east of the school.

Willowpark

Only two public schools (both elementary schools) are located in the eastern half of the city, and Willowpark is one of them. The two-story brick structure was built circa 1957 and is situated on quiet, curving residential street. The site drops steeply from the east to the west and south, and the southwest corner of the campus is considerably lower than the northeast perimeter of the campus. Large maple, elm and oak trees are scattered over the schoolgrounds, and a city park and recreational center adjacent to the school also enjoy large shade trees.

Willowpark enrolled 395 students at the end of the first nine weeks of school in 1990, an increase of 37 children from the same period last year. There are 51 students enrolled in kindergarten, 51 students in first grade, and 19 students in the transition program. The transition classroom was added in the district this year, and students in the program are from the immediate area and from the elementary school located approximately 2.5 miles north of Willowpark.

The school faces east, and the main entrance is in the approximate center of the building. Visitors pass an outdoor memorial to a former Willowpark teacher before climbing steps and entering the wide doorway to face the glassed enclosure of the school office. At the entrance, a display proudly announces that Willowpark is one of few elementary schools in the state with 100% parent membership in the PTA. Displays of student work is scattered throughout the school above lockers and in recessed, lighted hallway exhibit cases.

A teacher lounge, counselor's office, and the teacher and staff workroom are located near the main entrance. The large oak floored gymnasium is located in the southwest portion of the building, and the lunchroom is in the lower level--and, is not accessible to physically handicapped individuals. The transition program is located at the extreme

northwest corner of the building by an outside entrance, as far from the main office as would be possible.

The Teachers and Their Classrooms

Ms. Arroya and Ms. Camp

Ms. Arroya's classroom is located in the northeastern end of the building, farther from the main office than any other classroom in the building. She has 12 students. The room is a large rectangle oriented east-west, and the space provided is generous enough that half of the room is used as an open area while the remaining half is used for student desks and teacher work area.

The door is situated at the southwest corner of the room. Cabinets and shelves are on the west, north and south walls. Chalkboards line the east wall, and a book display ledge runs underneath the entire length of the chalkboard. Approximately 25-30 books are displayed, with covers facing the nearby student desks. Large windows with Venetian blinds are on the north wall. They are closed tightly, and Ms. Arroya stores chart tablets and other materials behind them, she says, in an attempt to reduce the drafts that enter from the poorly caulked windowpanes. Shelves line the north wall underneath the windows and hold 200-300 trade books at the eastern end and learning materials at the western end. The west wall has chalkboards used by Ms. Arroya as bulletin display areas. They provide additional storage; behind the removable chalkboards are shelves that line approximately one-third of the west wall. A ceiling fan is suspended from the ceiling.

A small restroom is in the southwest corner of the room, but Ms. Arroya states it is used by the teacher and not by children, who use the restroom facilities down the hall. This may be due to the distance to the teacher lounge facilities, which are almost at the opposite end of the building. The teacher restroom is lined with shelving installed by Ms.

Arroya's husband, and the room is filled to capacity. A sink and drinking fountain are near the southwest corner of the room. Cabinets are above and below the sink, and the floor in this room is covered with linoleum--as is the entire room, except for the area rug in the northwest corner of the room. The sink area appears to be used for art projects; an easel stands on the floor next to the sink, the paper cutter is on the sink countertop, and paint and brushes are stored in the cabinet under the sink.

Furniture in the room is clustered at the east end, and the 400-square foot area rug at the opposite end in the open area appears to be used for group time activities. Only an adult sized rocking chair is located on the brightly patterned rug. Ms. Arroya's desk backs against the center of the south wall, with teacher storage in the form of map drawers and shelves immediately behind it. Additional teacher storage is provided by a large two-doored closet in the southeast corner of the room. The children's desks face one another in clusters in front of the teacher's desk. A drafting stool is between the student desks and the chalkboard on the east wall.

Additional work areas for the children are in the classroom. There is a listening center with tape recorder and individual headsets at a table in the southeast corner of the room, and another worktable with chairs is on the south wall. A round table with four chairs sets in front of the teacher desk. A portable cart holding a television and a collection of carpet samples is stationed at the northeast corner of the room.

The room is clean and orderly. Shelves, cabinets, teacher desk, worktables and storage areas are neat and relatively dustfree. Several bulletin boards are covered with fabric as a background, and student work and teaching charts and posters are displayed throughout the room on walls and bulletin boards. By the classroom door is a display of small individual calendars, one for each child, to which have been attached small stickers and other markings. Ms. Arroya states that the calendars are a part of the discipline system used by the school district. Teacher-made 'cubbies' for daily storage of individual

workpages rest atop a covered heating unit on the middle of the west wall.

When exiting Ms. Arroya's classroom, a visitor enters a hallway leading to the north outdoor play area. There is one other classroom in this short hallway; it belongs to the school's only kindergarten teacher, who declined to participate in the observational portion of the study.

Ms. Camp is one of two first grade teachers at Cedardale. Her classroom is in the main east-west wing and is much closer to the school office than the transition first grade classroom. The school's other first grade teacher's classroom is next door to Ms. Camp's room.

Ms. Camp's first grade room is oriented east-west. A door at the northwest corner of the room leads into the main hallway, and directly across (on the south wall) is a door leading to the front lawn of the school. The outside door is poorly sealed, and Ms. Camp uses a small floormat to block the cold air that leaks under the doorsill. Windows covered with Venetian blinds line the south wall, and they allow bright sunlight from the winter sun to enter the room. There are low bookshelves under the windows holding trade books, basal readers and encyclopedia sets.

Chalkboards are located on the west wall and appear to be used for classroom instruction (the chalk residue is quite visible), but the chalkboard on the north wall is used by Ms. Camp as a display area. A small chalkboard on the east wall is next to a calendar, weather chart, and displays of student room tasks. The area is apparently used for group time experiences, and it is covered with a carpet remnant approximately 100 square feet in size. The remainder of the room has linoleum flooring. Two white ceiling fans are suspended from the ceiling.

A small restroom with toilet and sink is located in the northeast corner of the room. Like Ms. Arroya's classroom toileting area, the restroom is lined with shelves. They hold sets of basal reading material and other teaching materials. Unlike Ms. Arroya's class

restroom, Ms. Camp reports that the children regularly use the toilet within the classroom. A second sink and drinking fountain is just outside the door of the restroom. It has cabinets above and below the sink area, and the countertop forms a U-shaped storage area that takes up approximately half of the east wall. Most of the countertop space is filled with materials from the district's first grade basal reading series and teacher-made storage 'cubbies' for holding workbook pages and ditto sheets. On the north wall are bulletin displays, including individual student calendars similar to the ones in Ms. Arroya's room noting daily status of children's behavior during the month.

The teacher desk is located at the east end of the room immediately in front of the classroom sink area and next to the restroom. Student desks are grouped in sets of four, five and six desks in the western two-thirds of the room. Two small worktables with five chairs are located on the west wall, and a small desk and chair are by the door. The spaces appear to be used as work areas, since during observations they usually held jigsaw puzzles. A large reading C-shaped reading table with nine student chairs is placed close to the north wall in front of the bulletin board. A vertical, free-standing display stand next to the reading table is used for display of student work. Ms. Camp states that she purchased the stand at an auction, and it was previously used in a shoe store.

At the 'front' or west end of the room is an overhead projector and an adult-sized chair. Ms. Camp reports that she regularly uses the overhead projector for whole-class instruction, especially in mathematics. A portable cart holding a television and a teacher aide worktable and chair are stationed in the southwest corner of the room. By the hall door is a teacher closet and a large set of map drawers, which hold bulletin board display materials, and shelves, which hold reading materials.

Ms. Mapp, Ms. Hillson, and Ms. Parker

Ms. Mapp is the transition teacher at Elmwood Elementary, and she has 20 students. The classroom is located at the far southwest end of the school building. It is rectangular in shape with a north-south orientation. A door entering from the main hallway is located in the southeast corner of the room. Immediately across from it is a door leading to the west outdoor play area, but Ms. Mapp's children exit from the hallway for their recess since the grassy play area is restricted to upper elementary students. While the lunchroom is at the end of their wing, the media center is at the opposite end of the school building.

The room is smaller than other classrooms in the wing because a partition was erected several years ago, according to Ms. Mapp and other teachers in the building, to provide office area for a specialist teacher. The room is carpeted, and large windows line the west wall with a single shelf ledge below. The windows provide natural light and a view of the elm trees which line the farther edge of the schoolyard. The north wall is covered with chalkboards, and the east wall has a combination of chalkboards, bulletin boards, low open shelving and cabinets. There are ceiling fans. The room has no water source or restroom area; a sink and children's restrooms are located at the opposite end of the wing, adjacent to the lunchroom. Two bathroom passes (one for a boy and one for a girl) hang by the hall door.

The south end of the room attracts a visitor's interest: it consists of a low, carpet-covered stage with a false fireplace and mantle. This unusual classroom feature indicates that perhaps at one time the room was used for a specific purpose, perhaps vocal music or drama productions. Two teacher storage closets are on each side of the stage. The closets are lined with shelves for storage of teaching materials, although they once may have been used to allow students to enter the staged area during productions. The roof over both closets, according to Ms. Mapp, leaks when it rains. Protective covering is over some

teaching supplies under the stained ceiling, and the closets smell musty.

Ms. Mapp's desk is situated at an angle by the outdoor entrance, and behind it is a small wall shelf with teacher materials. A portable two-tiered cart with television and cassette player are opposite the teacher desk by the stage area. The children's desks are grouped facing one another in sets of five. They occupy the center and north end of the room, and the only open floor area is the stage platform and the area immediately in front of it, which forms a pathway between the two doorways.

Down the same school wing at the end of the corridor is Ms. Hillson's kindergarten classroom. Ms. Hillson is one of two kindergarten teachers in Elmwood; the other kindergarten teacher's classroom is across the hall.

Ms. Hillson's kindergarten--like the other kindergarten classroom across the hall--is almost twice the size of the transition first grade classroom. Like all the classrooms in this wing, it is oriented north-south. There are two doors into the room, one in the northeast corner of the room and one in the southeast corner of the room. Nine windows cover the upper half of the west wall, with low shelving below. Filing cabinets, a large maple map cabinet holding bulletin board materials and a reading table used as a workspace for the teacher aide are located in the northwest section of the room. A chalkboard on the north wall is used as a bulletin board, but a chalkboard on the east wall shows signs of daily use. The entire south wall is covered with storage space: low cabinets are below and bookshelves and cabinets are above. In addition, the southeast corner of the room is partitioned off for a walk-in teacher storage area that is approximately 40 square feet.

Portable cabinets and shelving carts are used to separate the west area in the room into small interest areas for blocks, housekeeping, math and puzzles. The teacher desk is located by the north hallway entrance, and behind it are wall shelves for storage of teaching guides, reproducible workbooks, and professional books. There are four rectangular worktables grouped in sets of two with student chairs; they are grouped in the center and eastern half of the long room. The seating areas are not assigned, according to Ms.

Hillson, and children may sit where they wish. A small personal computer on a portable table is located on the east wall.

On the opposite side of the school building is Ms. Parker's first grade classroom. Ms. Parker is one of three first grade teachers at Elmwood and has 24 students this year. (A fourth teacher teaches a combined first-second grade.) Ms. Parker's classroom is located in the most recent addition to the school structure. It is a rectangular room with one window on the west wall. The door to the classroom is located in the southeast corner of the room, and the teacher's desk is adjacent to the door and faces the classroom. Behind it are tall bookshelves which are freestanding to form a partitioned area for additional teacher storage. A television sets atop the shelving. The north wall is covered by chalkboards and a filmscreen.

A reading table is located near the west wall, and the teacher's side faces the classroom. Individual student desks are grouped in sets of seven in the center of the room; they occupy most of the classroom area, and there is no large open floorspace. A piano stands in the northeast corner of the room, and an adult-sized rocking chair is located in the southwest corner of the room. Three small rectangular tables are situated against the west wall and are used to hold daily work assignments. Against the east wall is a table used as a listening center; it holds a cassette players and headsets. Nearby two small tables and three chairs are by a low bookshelf, which holds a collection of approximately 300 basal readers and trade books.

The entire south wall is covered by storage. There is a sink by the door, and the remaining length of the wall has cabinets and closets. Some of the closets have pull-out drawers. Above the cabinets are paper boxes labeled with various teaching unit topics; they are labeled by month or holiday theme (eg., March, Halloween, September, etc.).

Ms. Riverside, Ms. Rhoades, Ms. Bridges
and Ms. Woods

Ms. Riverside teaches transition first grade in a newly built district structure that is an outbuilding at Maplecrest Elementary. Ms. Riverside has 15 students this year.

Ms. Riverside's classroom is a rectangular, carpeted room with no windows. One door leads into the central hallway of the building where coat hooks, drinking fountains and restrooms are located. Another door leads a small porch and a grassy area next to a covered walkway leading to the main school building, where the transition first grade children trek daily for visits to the lunchroom. The media center, gymnasium, main office, etc., are located in the main building. A set of rest mats for napping are stacked neatly in a pile by the doorway.

The west half of the room is occupied by the teacher's and children's desks. They all face a chalkboard and two small bulletin boards which are on the west half of the north wall, with the teacher desk to the rear and the student desks side-by-side in three rows. A portable two-tiered cart holds a television and phonograph player at the front of the room. A strip of linoleum flooring approximately seven feet wide is on the south wall in front of a set of cabinets, closets, and countertops which line approximately half of the south wall space. A large rectangular table with 10 stools is placed against the south wall on the linoleum floor, and Ms. Riverside states she uses this area for messy work such as paint or glue. On the wall next to the worktable is a chart listing each child's name with daily notations for classroom behavior. At the front of the room is a bulletin board with individual laminated pieces of paper labeled with each child's name, which are removed for infractions of classroom rules. Both displays are part of the district's assertive discipline program.

In the northwest section of the room are tall bookshelves and a sink. The sink is,

therefore, located in the carpeted area of the room. A reading table with six chairs and a large worktable with chairs are nearby. On the west and east walls are low shelves with containers and boxes of equipment. On the west wall there is also a cabinet with drawers; it holds a cassette player and a collection of teacher-owned cassette tapes. In the southeast corner of the room is a housekeeping area, and Ms. Riverside has covered this portion of the linoleum flooring with a carpet remnant. Individual cubbies to store daily worksheets are on top of the shelf in this area. One cubbie is marked with Ms. Riverside's name.

Next door to Ms. Riverside's room is Ms. Rhoades's classroom, the other transition first grade at Maplecrest. There are 16 students assigned to her classroom this year. The transition classroom was added at the school this year, and while Ms. Riverside's students are from the neighborhood area, Ms. Rhoades' students are transfers from other elementary schools in the district.

With the exception of a sink, which is lacking in Ms. Rhoades' room, the classroom is physically a mirror image of Ms. Riverside's classroom. The windowless room is mostly carpeted, with approximately one-fourth of the room floored with linoleum along the north wall. Doorways on the west and east ends of the room lead to the central hallway and the outside playyard. On the north wall--as on the south wall in Ms. Riverside's room--half of the room has cabinets, closets and countertop storage. This room, too, has the teacher desk at the rear of the classroom and facing the chalkboard, and student desks are lined in three rows facing the front of the room. They occupy the west half of the room. Near the hall door is a round table with chairs, and in the northwest corner is a low, open display of Unifix™ cubes. Individual cubbies for storage of students' daily worksheets are against the west wall. A small display by the door is used for the district's disciplinary program, and the children's names are printed on clothespins which are transferred on the bulletin board display by the teacher for student misbehavior. The rules governing the progression for violations of class rules is posted nearby.

Ms. Rhoades has a reading table and chairs and a listening center in the east half of the room. There is also a work table with six chairs in this area, next to the classroom gerbil cage perched atop a filing cabinet. On the east wall is a small table with cassette player and phonograph player, and cassette tapes and phonographs with story books are nearby. A narrow, tall bookshelf holds trade books, puzzles and other materials. In the northeast corner is a teacher-made canopy in a circus theme with soft throwpillows. The walls of the room are covered with a vinyl-coated wallpaper, as is Ms. Riverside's room next door. Ms. Rhoades complains that she lacks bulletin board display areas. At this end of the room she has attached to the wall materials correlated with Beginnings (Lippincott, 1971), the district reading program for the transition first grade.

In a brick outbuilding that is situated perpendicular to the one in which transition first grades are located are additional classrooms, including Ms. Bridges, who teaches kindergarten classes at Maplecrest, and Ms. Woods, one of the two first grade teachers at the school. Rooms in this brick addition are the only classrooms in the five transition program schools without an inside hallway; doors on the west open onto a covered walkway leading to the main building, and doors on the east open onto a narrow sidewalk adjacent to an asphalt driveway used by parents when dropping off and picking up their children.

This year Ms. Bridges' has 28 students in the morning and 25 students in the afternoon session. A full-time teacher aide is assigned to the kindergarten room this year because of the class size overload.

Ms. Bridges' classroom is at the end of the brick structure and is therefore closer to the main building than other classrooms located in the elementary school outbuilding. It is a large room with, according to the school principal and Ms. Bridges, approximately 1,500 square feet of space. Thus, the classroom is the approximate size of a small home or apartment, and it is easily three times the size of Ms. Mapp's transition first grade

classroom at Elmwood Elementary. The area was not originally designed as a classroom but was built for the school district's food services division.

The room is entirely carpeted, and the south wall is covered with brick since it was once an outside wall. There are no windows other than sidelights by the two outside doors. Most of the south wall is lined with a low cabinet with small drawers, one for each student in both afternoon and morning classes. The 25-foot set of drawers is used to hold students' work, and the cabinets were designed by Ms. Bridges and built by the district. On the east wall are coathooks with cabinets and shelves above. Immediately in front of the coathook area is a large rectangular table with six stools, and nearby is a large round table with five student chairs.

A restroom with a toilet and sink occupies the northeast corner of the room, and shelves high on the restroom wall store various teaching materials. Another sink and drinking fountain are located immediately outside restroom area. Cabinets above and below this sink are used for the storage of art materials.

Next to the art sink is a small area containing housekeeping equipment. Two small tables are nearby; one holds covered containers used with beans and rice, and the other has four student chairs. A larger round table in front of the housekeeping area has five student chairs. Behind the housekeeping area, and lining the east wall, are storage cabinets, bookshelves and countertop for storage of learning materials. At the end of the length of storage is a door leading into the classroom to the north and a collection of reading chart stands and pocket charts. The west wall has chalkboards and bulletin boards, and an adult sized chair. A large, open carpeted area in front of the chair is used for group experiences. A portable cart holding a television, videorecorder, filmstrip projector, phonograph play and cassette tape recorder stands opposite the teacher's chair near the open carpeted area.

Because of the generous size of the room, Ms. Bridges has grouped all student desks at the west end of the room, which is oriented east-west, leaving two large carpeted areas in the room: one at the west end and one at the east end. The teacher desk is positioned at the

east end. Low shelves behind her desk hold learning materials which, according to Ms. Bridges, are being used for the day or week. Against the left side of her desk is a cart holding the pair of classroom gerbils, and immediately in front of her desk is low shelving holding trade books.

Two classroom doors north of Ms. Bridges' kindergarten room is Ms. Woods' first grade room. This year she has 17 students assigned to her first grade. One additional second grade student comes to the room each morning.

The rectangular room has no windows. There are two doors--one leading to the east driveway and one leading to the west walkway, which leads to the main building, and the school playyard. There is a doorway leading to an adjacent classroom.

A restroom with toilet and sink is in the northeast corner of the room, and a drinking fountain is immediately outside the restroom. Ms. Woods' desk is next to the restroom in the northeast corner of the room, while students' desks are lined in rows in the west half of the room. A small table and adult-sized chair is centered facing the children's desks; Ms. Woods reports that she spends most of the day here rather than at her 'real' desk. Piles of basal workbooks, basal reading materials, ditto worksheets, etc., cover and surround the small work table and adjacent floor.

The south wall is lined with two long chalkboards. The north wall has a chalkboard, bookshelves and countertop space. The west wall has a television in the southwest corner, and a computer and printer are positioned on a table in the same area. Two sets of bookshelves stand against the wall. The north wall has two four-drawer filing cabinets, a small dormitory-sized refrigerator, phonograph player and records, and a sink and countertop with cabinets above and below. Thus, most of the north wall is lined with storage.

On the opposite side of the room, a credenza against the northeast wall provides additional storage. It is filled with the current year's basal textbook materials. An upright

piano covered with games, ditto worksheets, and basal reading material stands in the middle of the area, and a large recliner chair sets behind it. A large wicker chair is nearby. The coathooks against the east wall are apparently unused by children, since many boxes impede access to them and the lunchbox shelves above the coathooks are covered with teaching materials. A reading table in the area also appears to be unused for reading instruction; its top is covered with posters, basal reading material, various papers, laminating supplies, boxes of teaching materials, etc. Thus, the southeast section of the room is used primarily for teacher storage and preparation of materials, according to Ms. Woods, while the western two-thirds of the room is used as a classroom.

Ms. Townsend

Ms. Townsend teaches transition first grade in one of the newer elementary schools in the district. Her room in Oaklawn Elementary is located in one of the areas teachers call 'pods,' meaning a grouping of classrooms grouped along the main north-south hallway. This year there are 20 children assigned to her classroom. Several students who enrolled late were unable to be placed in the transition program at the school because of limit on class size (set by Ms. Townsend and acceded to by her principal). The students are bused to Maplecrest and assigned to Ms. Rhoades room. Ms. Townsend reports that the provision of bus services is unusual, since late enrollment usually means that students would be placed in a first grade classroom or parents would provide transportation to another elementary school for transition first grade.

The fully carpeted rectangular room has an entrance from the hallway on the north wall and an outside door on the south wall that leads to the south playground. There is a restroom with toilet and sink located in the northeast corner of the room by the hall door; a second sink and drinking fountain is immediately outside the restroom on the east wall.

Cabinets, countertops, closets and bookshelves line the east and north walls; chalkboards and bulletins boards line the south and west walls. One bulletin display area is devoted to the assertive discipline program of the district, and children's names are posted on cut-outs which, according to Ms. Townsend, change periodically with a monthly holiday or seasonal theme. Above the room's cabinets are neatly paper-covered and labeled xerography paper boxes; most appear to contain teaching materials for thematic units such as zoo, dinosaur, circus, community helpers, nutrition, farm, nursery rhymes, transportation, weather, plants/seeds, etc. Other boxes have labels with months of the school year.

Student desks are grouped in sets of five in the southern two-thirds of the room. Ms. Townsend's desk is set at an angle in the southwest corner of the room, facing the classroom. Two small rectangular worktables are set along the west wall, one of which is used as a listening center with headsets. A computer is also located on the west wall. Two additional small rectangular worktables are in the room--one at the east end of the room and one at the north end of the room. A two-tiered portable cart with television and phonograph record player also hold boxes containing sets of cassette tapes and phonograph records.

There are three first grade teachers and a kindergarten teacher who teach at the elementary with Ms. Townsend. They declined to participate in the research study, giving as a reason that other commitments prohibited the amount of time necessary.

Ms. Watter, Ms. Lakeside, and Ms. Vale

Ms. Watter teaches in one of two new transitional first grades opened in the district. It opened in the fall of 1990 at Willowpark Elementary. This year there are 19 children assigned to her classroom.

The rectangular room is located at the northwest corner of the building, and it is farther from the main office than any other classroom other than the one across the hall. The floor is covered with the same linoleum tile as the hallway. Ms. Watter's desk is in the southwest corner of the room by the classroom door and faces the room. The north wall is lined with cabinets, closets and countertops for storage of teaching materials. Windows on the east wall have small mini-blinds, and the west wall is lined with bulletin boards and chalkboards. The south wall has chalkboards, bulletins boards, and a tall set of bookshelves which stand in the southeast corner of the room opposite the teacher's desk. Behind her desk is a coat closet and a map cabinets with bookshelves above. The map drawers hold holiday room displays. Next to Ms. Watter's desk is a vertical nonbreakable mirror; it is used to display names of children in the district's assertive discipline program. Behind it, taped to the wall, are individual calendars for the children for the current month with daily indications of behavior. A display of classroom rules is mounted on the wall nearby.

Student desks occupy the major portion of the room. They are grouped in sets of four and face one another. A round table with four student chairs is located in the northeast corner of the room, and a small rectangular table and a rectangular two-student desk are on the south wall. Neither have chairs; an empty puzzle storage rack sets atop one. A four-drawer filing cabinet, a covered watertable, a low book display shelf, and a floor abacus are aligned along the east wall. Eighteen individual storage cubbies for holding student work are also located on the east wall atop a heater cabinet.

There is no restroom in the classroom, but there is a sink in the countertop on the north wall. The countertop also holds a phonograph player, a cassette player and a world globe. A pendulum clock hangs on the south wall. Student lockers are in the hallway outside.

Ms. Lakeside is the kindergarten teacher at Willowpark Elementary. The room Ms. Lakeside occupies is larger than Ms. Watter's classroom. It, too, is rectangular but is

oriented east-west rather than north-south as is the transition first grade. The room is floored in linoleum tile. A door in the northwest corner leads to the main hallway, and another door in the center of the south wall leads outside to a steep hillside with steps connected to the sidewalk in front of the school. Children use this door to exit and enter the building to meet parents on the residential street, which lies so far above the classroom that it can only be seen by standing by the windows along the south wall. Low shelving lines the south wall under the window.

There is a bathroom with a sink in the northeast corner of the room. Another sink and drinking fountain are just outside the restroom, with countertops and cabinets forming a horseshoe shaped storage area. On the west wall are chalkboards, bulletin boards, a teacher's coat closet, map drawers with bookshelves above and a five-drawer filing cabinet. The southeast corner of the room has a rug area approximately 240 square feet in size, which Ms. Lakeside reports is often used for group experiences. A set of wooden unit blocks is stored on low shelving adjacent to the rug. There is a housekeeping area with a mirror, stove, refrigerator, telephone, a box holding four dress-up clothing items, and a doll and dollbed. On the north wall is a chalkboard with two bulletin boards on each side. The bulletin boards are used to display children's names and behavior calendars for the assertive discipline program the district uses. Individual teacher-made student cubbies to hold daily worksheets are located above the enclosed heater on the south wall. Lockers for coats and book backpacks are located in the hallway.

The teacher's desk is located on the east side of the room facing worktables used by the kindergarten children. There are three rectangular worktables, each having six chairs, and a round worktable with four chairs. In addition, there are two trapezoid tables (each having six chairs) and two small rectangular tables.

Across the hall from Ms. Lakeside's kindergarten is Ms. Vale's first grade classroom. Ms. Vale is one of two first grade teachers at Willowpark. This year Ms. Lakeside has 24 students in her first grade.

The room is oriented east-west and is a mirror image of the kindergarten room across the hall. The floor is linoleum, and tall windows with blinds line the north wall. There is a door leading from the main hallway, and opposite it is a door leading to the outdoor playground. There are two ceiling fans.

A restroom with a toilet and sink is located in the southeast corner of the room next to the hall door; it functions as a storage area for learning materials, since it is lined with shelves. The teacher's desk is by the hall and restroom doors, facing the classroom, with shelving and bookshelves nearby. There is a second sink and drinking fountain just outside the restroom, and surrounding the sink are countertops with cabinets below and above which form a horseshoe-shaped storage area. Chalkboards are located on the south and west walls. Individual student cubbies to hold daily worksheets set atop the enclosed heater on the north wall. Student lockers for coats and book backpacks are located in the hall.

Students' desks are grouped in the south and west two-thirds of the room. A hexagon-shaped table with student chairs is at the back of the room, near the east wall, with nearby shelves holding learning materials. Low bookshelves line the north wall under the windows and hold mostly hardback books. In addition, there is a rolling library bookcart holding encyclopedia sets and other textbooks. A small table with a cassette recorder and two headsets is against the south wall. A reading table with student chairs is next to the east wall, and map drawers with bookshelves above are located in the southwest corner of the room. A television, filmstrip projector, overhead projector and phonograph player are located in the classroom.

The District Curriculum for Transition First Grade: Materials,
Daily Schedules and Personal Interactions

Materials, daily schedules of planned activities, and personal interactions in the classroom setting have been included in the following narrative description of the transition first grade curriculum based upon the supposition that these three elements--along with the community and the physical classroom settings, as described earlier--comprise the educational curriculum.

Inventories of teaching materials within individual classrooms appear in Appendix F and are listed by school. Some classrooms participating in the study did not have current inventories available, and the provided inventories therefore represent a compilation by the researcher. Effort has been made to make the listings as complete and descriptive as possible. Therefore, while the materials section below refers to the transition first grade program in its entirety, materials for individual kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade classrooms participating in the study are provided in Appendix F. The description of the transition program curricular materials was also drawn from responses to the Instructional Activities Questionnaire (see Appendix E), discussions with transition first grade teachers, and the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire (see Appendix D). Classrooms deviating substantially from the transition program as a whole in the availability of instructional materials are addressed, with specific references to identified discrepancies and/or inequities.

The description of daily scheduling of activities as a curricular element for the transition first grade program was formed by referring to individual classroom schedules, teachers' oral self-reports of usual progression of daily activities, responses to a questionnaire asking teachers to report frequency of various activities (see Appendix E), guided interview questions (see Appendix C), responses to the Transition First Grade

Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire (see Appendix D), and researcher observations. Attention has been given in the narrative description to curricular components included in a typical day in the transition first grade as well as those omitted or curtailed in the program. Emphasis has been given to describing integration of the total transition first grade program day. The section on daily schedules refers to a general schedule of the total program rather than individual classrooms, but deviation of individual transition first grades has been addressed.

Lastly, a description of typical interactions in the transition first grade program is included as a curricular element. Sources for described interactions were obtained from researcher classroom observations, results from the Checklist Rating for Developmentally Appropriate Practice in [Primary] Classrooms (see Appendix B), guided interview responses (see Appendix C), and teacher self-reports in the Instructional Activities Questionnaire (see Appendix E). Interactions were also inferred from participant educators' responses in the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire (see Appendix D) and from the available instructional materials for classroom use (see Appendix F). Interactions described in the transition first grade program include child-material interactions, child-child interactions, and child-adult interactions. In addition, types of interactions not observed or those specifically prohibited by teachers as well as reference to inclusion of parents as an interactive interpersonal component have been addressed.

Materials

According to guidelines established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] (Bredekamp, 1987), materials used in primary grade classrooms should provide opportunities for youngsters to interact with the materials as

well as interact socially with other children while using such materials. The guidelines state:

Learning materials and activities [in appropriate primary grade settings] are concrete, real, and relevant to children's lives. Objects children can manipulate and experiment with such as blocks, cards, games, woodworking tools, arts and crafts materials including paint and clay, and scientific equipment are readily accessible. Tables are used for children to work alone or in small groups. A variety of work places and spaces is provided and flexibly used..., [and] every day, individual children or small groups are expected to work and play cooperatively or alone in learning centers and on projects that they usually select themselves... (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 69).

Other professional groups have suggested appropriate curriculum materials essential in providing a quality environment for the early schooling progression of young children in the primary grades. The Association for Childhood Education International [ACEI] has provided criteria for the selection of equipment and materials for primary classrooms and has suggested guidelines for specific kinds and types of materials (Allen, Deans & Leitman, 1986a, 1986b). They state that in addition to criteria for safety and durability, the educational requirements for materials for primary classroom use include those intended to meet physical, social and emotional criteria as well as intellectual criteria, and the materials would also meet a variety of intended uses rather than a narrow range of classroom use. They state that the educational requirements of a material for use in the early childhood program would include that it:

...accomplishes a variety of purposes within given or related areas; adapts to different ages, needs, interests and abilities; arouses curiosity, stimulates initiative and invites exploration; provides for concrete experience as a basis for abstract learning; involves as many of the senses as appropriate; promotes thinking and encourages practical problem-solving; [and] stimulates skill development and broadening of concepts

(Allen, Deans & Leitman, 1986a, p 22).

The same authors suggest that in meeting the physical, social and emotional criteria, selection of materials for primary classroom use should give consideration to whether the material:

...motivates action; allows freedom of movement; stimulates muscle development and coordination; encourages a favorable attitude toward self and others; stimulates imaginative and creative responses; provides opportunities for a variety of individual, partner and group activities; gives pleasure (Allen, Deans & Leitman, 1986a, p. 22).

In general the more adaptable educational material--i.e., one that may be used for a variety of purposes by various age levels--is considered a more valuable resource in a good early childhood program because a multipurpose material or piece of equipment encourages development of a variety of areas or skills. For the purpose of this study, many adaptable learning materials have been arbitrarily classified as a specific type even though they might be included under a different heading; eg., woodworking is classified as a separate category, even though some educators might include such materials under a listing with creative art media while other educators might include it under large motor equipment. Sequence of the materials categories provided in the current study is alphabetical, and there is no intent to prioritize materials according to their availability or use in individual classrooms. More materials were available in transition classrooms, however, for reading instruction than for any other content area (see Appendix F).

Under the various material listings, four aspects have been considered: (a) rationale for inclusion of the material in an early childhood curriculum, (b) examples of the materials identified in the transition first grade program inventories, (c) suggested provision of the material by early childhood professionals, and (d) perceptions of the educator participants about the material in the transition first grade program.

Construction Toys. Construction toy materials support development of both

mathematico-logical as well as science knowledge (particularly in the area of physical science) and are considered "...increasingly important as children enter the primary grades" (Hirsch, 1974, p. ix) because of their ability to allow children to integrate such curricular areas as social studies, physical development, mathematics, art, science and language arts (Hirsch, 1974). They are also included as an art medium in some references because of the contribution they make toward creative use of materials (Hendrick, 1990; Hirsch, 1974; Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986), especially since they "...allow children [to] project their imaginations even more than they do when involved directly in housekeeping play, because blocks [and other construction toys] are less structured" (Hendrick, 1990, p. 271).

A review of transition first grade materials inventories (see Appendix F) indicated that transition first grade rooms had inadequate provision of concrete materials for creating an appropriate learning environment as described by NAEYC and ACEI guidelines for construction and manipulative use. For example, commercially available learning materials used for construction--such as wooden unit building blocks, Lego™ construction bricks, Lincoln Logs™, Tinkertoys™, Locktagons™, Construction Straws™, or Rig-A-Jigs™--were rarely available in the transition first grades or were available in limited supply. None of the transition classrooms had inventories of large hollow floor blocks. Only two of the six transition first grades had wooden unit building blocks within the classroom, and neither set was complete but consisted of a partial classroom set. One teacher possessed the partial set of unit building blocks because they had been 'inherited' from a special education program previously housed in the classroom. One transition first grade had a collection of wood scraps available for use in block construction, but such pieces do not support mathematical equivalencies, and the number of wood scraps was limited. Three transition classrooms were supplied with wooden letter blocks (sometimes called alphabet blocks or concept blocks because of the colored, raised alphabet letter imprints on the sides

of the 2" cubes), two had Lincoln Logs™, and two had Lego™ building bricks. The only construction material available in all transition first grades was Unifix™ cubes, and some classrooms had more Unifix™ cubes than other classrooms.

Guidelines by ACEI (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986) have suggested that primary age school children have available for classroom use one set of giant Tinkertoys™ (i.e., an oversized set for floor use), one set of regular Tinkertoys™, six sets of attribute blocks, two table sets of counting cube blocks, a classroom set of Cuisenaire™ rods, a set of large wooden unit building blocks, a set of Geo™ blocks, Lego™ building sets, an Erector Construction™ set, two sets of design cubes (six-sided tricolored one-inch cubes), and provision of various discards used for creative constructive activities. NAEYC guidelines suggest that construction learning activities are appropriately provided in the early childhood program when children are provided opportunities to use the materials in small group settings as well as independently (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 69). Haskell (1979, p. 51) has pointed out that provision of unit building blocks, in particular, provides the opportunity for the child to grow in problem solving ability as he/she progresses throughout the primary grades. An appropriate quantity of unit blocks for the primary age classroom with 20-30 students has been suggested as a minimum of 900 pieces (Stanton & Weisberg, 1962). Additional construction toys for table or floor use would also be included in the primary grades (Hendrick, 1990).

Ten of the 18 respondents indicated on the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire that building with blocks is an educational task or project designed to achieve desired transition program goals, and 3 of the 10 indicated that block play should be ranked among the top five learning activities for the transition first grade. Nine respondents indicated that using other types of construction toys such as Lincoln Logs™, Tinkertoys™, or Lego™ bricks was important in transition first grade curriculum. Two educators listed construction toys as among the five most important learning materials

provided transition first grade students. Yet, two transition classrooms had no construction toy materials other than Unifix™ cubes. All classrooms had adequate floor space to provide occasional, if not daily, block play, but even the two transition classrooms with partial unit blocks sets lacked sufficient quantity of blocks to encourage sustained involvement with the material--and, teachers reported that the material was not made available to students on a daily basis.

Transition classroom teachers reported Unifix™ cubes were used in a prescribed manner (usually with laminated cards providing structured mathematical outcomes) rather than as creative construction toy. One transition first grade teacher reported that construction toy play was never provided in her classroom, and two other transition first grade teachers reported that it was provided once each week (but, not all children were allowed to use the materials weekly because of time constraints). The other three transition program teachers reported that construction toy play with Lego™ bricks, Tinkertoys™, Lincoln Logs™ or a similar toy was provided regularly (two to four times each week). However, in all 27 observations in district transition classrooms during the course of the study, such play was observed only twice: on one occasion for less than twenty minutes with four children, and on a second occasion in another transition first grade for approximately fifteen minutes with three children.

Use of discarded or recycled materials (such as styrofoam packing materials and toothpicks, wood scraps and corrugated paper, etc.) in constructing creative stables or sculpture was never observed, although inventories of available teaching materials indicated that two transition classrooms had such materials on hand. Recycled materials in art construction have been suggested as an excellent way to enhance cognitive concepts as well as fostering the recognized value of aesthetic development, especially in classrooms with limited resources (Castle, 1990; Cherry, 1972; see pp 153-157). Teachers in four of the six classrooms reported that, while they occasionally included craft activities, autonomous

use of three dimensional construction craft media had not been provided transition students in the current school year.

Cooking. Cooking in the classroom setting can help the child acquire vocabulary for objects and processes, refine concepts about quantity and relationships, learn health and safety skills, understand causal-effect relationships, become aware of ethnic and cultural associations; it also motivates task persistence and introduces the child to a natural sequence that can provide the child a strong relationship between the reading process and the reason for written communication (Ackerman, 1981; Ferreira, 1982; Jenkins, 1982; Johnson & Pelmons, 1982; Mayesky, 1990; Rhoten, 1987; Veitch & Harmes, 1981; Wannamaker, Hearn & Richarz, 1979). In particular, concepts in the science and mathematics content areas--eg., heat transfer, change of state in a substance, sensory observations, additive amounts, counting, measuring, predicting, timing, etc.--make cooking a valuable activity at the preschool or primary school level (Rhoten, 1987). Some classroom cookbooks have been written solely to introduce science concepts (Ontario Science Centre, 1987) and learning skills through active involvement in cooking (Faggella, 1985; Please Touch Museum, 1990).

Suggested equipment for classroom cooking includes baking pans in two sizes, a bread pan, a cookie sheet, cupcake pans, pie pans, two 8" round layer cake pans, two sets of mixing bowls in two sizes, three plastic mixing/storage bowls with lids, an electric skillet, a hot plate, a ladle, two or more sets of measuring cups, two or more sets of measuring spoons, paper or plastic plates, paper or plastic cups, paper or plastic eating utensils, a three-quart sauce pan with lid, a four-quart sauce pan with lid, a small toaster oven, a spatula, cooking spoons for mixing (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). In addition, of course, there would be need for paper towels, hot pads, aprons, liquid soap, aluminum foil, dishpans, dishcloths, etc. Other specialists have suggested that equipment useful in the classroom includes plastic pitchers, clear plastic measuring cups, a

kitchen timer, a wire whisk; they suggest that classrooms hold a 'kitchen shower' to request that parents supply a learning center with necessary items (Veitch & Harms, 1981). Some educators have pointed out that use of recipes designed for classroom cooking can eliminate the need for elaborate equipment (Rhoten, 1987), and many simple recipes can be made with paper cups, measuring spoons, measuring cups, and an electric skillet (Veitch & Harms, 1981).

Transition classrooms did not have available sufficient equipment and supplies to conduct cooking activities, and teachers reported that available equipment was personally owned and was not provided with district funding. Two teachers reported that they occasionally conducted cooking activities, and classroom cooking was observed twice in those two classrooms during the course of the investigation. All teachers reported that they occasionally used food items as tangible rewards for 'good' class behavior; one teacher reported that such food rewards occurred as frequently as weekly.

Nine respondents of the 18 educators associated with the transition program indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that cooking was an important content area that should be included in the transition first grade; two educators ranked cooking as the second most important content area for transition first grade.

Creative and Sensory. Appropriate settings for young children include access to a variety of materials which encourage creative and emotive expression (Dixon & Chalmers, 1990). Free aesthetic expression often allows the child to simultaneously acquire cognitive concepts about how a material reacts or functions while fostering the child's logical thinking, develops feelings of competence and pride, and helps the child develop eye hand coordination and hand strength necessary for use of writing instruments (Cherry, 1972; Hendrick, 1990; Haskell, 1979). In addition to fostering positive self-esteem, sensory materials also are frequently used in an early childhood setting both as a creative media and

as a way to allow children to express needs and emotions in an acceptable manner. For example, the value of finger painting for the young child has been succinctly described by Stangl (1975):

One cannot measure the satisfaction finger painting brings to the child who is tense, timid, autistic, shy, fearful, aggressive or hyperactive. It allows the child to get involved. It requires no help or skill, there is no fear of competition and the student is always successful. (How can the lesson fail?) Finger painting enables the individual to explore, to experiment, to be imaginative and creative, to be expressive and to get rid of many frustrations. It provides an opportunity for growth in self-confidence by allowing the student complete control over the paint (Stangl, 1975, pp. 4-5).

Materials for creative art use in the transition classrooms consisted primarily of crayons, construction paper, manila paper, drawing paper, glue, scissors, tempera paint, large paintbrushes, and marking pens (see Appendix F). Suggestions for art materials to be provided in the primary school setting include a wide variety of paper types such as construction paper, corrugated paper, non-toxic crepe paper, finger paint paper, manila paper, six mural Kraft rolls in assorted colors, newsprint, poster board, colored art tissue paper, white tracing paper, paper bags in assorted sizes, transparencies for overhead projectors, paper plates in assorted sizes, and self-adhesive paper (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). Suggested art hand tools include drawing pencils, colored map pencils, colored chalks, 12 three-fourth-inch bristle paintbrushes, 12 one-inch bristle paintbrushes, 15 boxes of large size crayons and 15 boxes of mixed small colored crayons, lettering pens, at least two sets of colored felt-tipped pens in various colors, scented felt tipped colored marking pens, blunt sewing needles, and left- and right-handed scissors (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). Paint supplies should include finger paint, liquid laundry starch for use as finger paint, enamel paint, poster paint, water base paint, and powdered tempera paint (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). Other creative art

materials suggested by ACEI for primary classroom use include one 25-pound bag of natural clay, carpet warp, various types of cloth for stitching (burlap, muslin, felt, stitchery mesh), three standing floor easels, six table easels, glue, wheat powder for making finger paint and paper mâché, laminating film access, five individual hand looms, seven packages of weaving loom loops, and a wide variety of recycled materials (such as ribbons, wrapping paper, wallpaper samples, magazines for collage, empty margarine containers, newspapers, scraps of carpeting, spools, styrofoam, buttons, egg cartons, etc.) (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). The above listing would be considered a minimum supply, and other authors have suggested that a more creative environment would be provided by additional commercial and recycled materials (Hendrick, 1990).

Sensory materials such as water, playdough, natural clay, sawdust, fingerpaint, modeling clay, food items used in a watertable (flour, rice, beans), sand, etc., were reported by two transition teachers as being used sometimes (weekly), reported by two teachers as used regularly (two to four times each week), and reported by one teacher as being used on a daily basis. However, only two classrooms had watertables, and one was teacher-made and teacher-owned. One of the teachers reported that only food items--never water, sand, soap suds, etc.--were ever used in the water table. No teacher reported using sand or mud in the classroom. However, sand, mud and water play are widely recognized as a way to provide tension-relieving activities for young children (Tweedie & Rhoten, 1989) and, especially when combined with simple auxiliary equipment, also function as an excellent way to foster cognitive development (Hendrick, 1990). Suggested basic equipment to support appropriate sand play includes ordinary plastic or metal kitchen utensils (cups, spoons, pails, small shovels, sifters, funnels, scoops and bowls); appropriate auxiliary equipment to promote water play includes clear tubing, sponges, strainers, funnels, corks, pitchers and measuring cups, rotary beaters, spoons, small bowls, plastic basters, and straws (Mayesky, 1990, p. 565). These would be in addition

to dishpans or a water/sand table for classroom use. In two classrooms, access to sensory materials was limited to Fridays. One classroom was introducing finger painting for the first time in November of the current school year. Although some transition classrooms possessed floor easels, at no time were the easels observed being used for painting; however, in classrooms in which floor easels were an available learning materials, easels were observed being used to support and display reading activity materials.

Three transition teachers reported that providing opportunities for children to cut their own shapes from paper was an instructional activity provided students sometimes (weekly), while three teachers reported that it was an activity provided regularly (from two to four times each week). Coloring or cutting predrawn forms was reported by four transition teachers as an activity provided children regularly (two to four times each week), while a fifth teacher reported using such materials sometimes (weekly) and a sixth teacher reported using such materials rarely (monthly). Two teachers reported using art media such as paint or crayons or marking pens *without teacher direction as to end product* on a daily basis; three, on a regular basis (two-to four times each week), and one teacher reported using such materials once each week. Teachers reported that usually such materials were restricted to crayons with manila paper or recycled paper. However, it was observed during transition classroom visits that crayons were not supplied as a communally available material. That is, parents were expected to supply their child with crayons as a classroom tool, and some students had limited numbers of crayons and/or pencils.

In responses to the prioritized questionnaire, 9 of the 18 educators indicated that a desired outcome for a transition first grade curriculum would be the goal of enhancing a child's ability to express needs and emotions in an acceptable manner. Of these nine, three indicated that such expressive ability should be prioritized as the second most important goal of a transition program. The traditional outlets for emotional release in an early childhood program--active large motor play and sensory activities such as water play, sand

play, finger painting, etc.--were not available in the transition first grade classrooms on a daily basis. For example, pieces of large motor equipment for indoor use were limited or nonexistent (see sections on construction toys, physical education and social studies).

Eight of the 18 respondents indicated on the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire that art was an important content area that should be specifically planned by the teacher for the transition classroom, and three of these ranked art as among the five most important content areas. All 18 respondents indicated that from one to three categories of learning activities, (a) drawing, painting, using colored chalk; (b) coloring, cutting and pasting; and (c) using clay, playdough or modeling plasticene, were important in the transition first grade setting. Twelve of the 18 respondents ranked one or more of these three types of activities as among the five most important activities to be included in transition first grade curriculum. For example, eight respondents indicated that coloring, cutting and pasting was a learning activity category that should be ranked among the five most important educational tasks or projects that should be provided to achieve desired program outcomes.

During guided interviews and discussion, four teachers reported that art activities involving some type of paint occurred four to six times each month. One teacher stated that paint media was used two or three times each month, and another teacher stated that art was used twice each week (or, eight or nine times each month). One teacher stated that "...most art is whole group in my classroom, and I would estimate that 70% of it is a patterned activity or a craft. For example, we might use a stencil to make a lion for the letter L."

Interactive Games. Researchers have addressed the educational value of group games as contributory to the stimulation of children's intellectual and social development (Kamii & DeVries, 1984). The use of card games, board games, and games involving manipulative pieces such as dominoes is an active form of learning that can support the child's attempts to understand the intents and viewpoints of others as well as provide exposure to various

concepts, and game playing in the primary classroom therefore contributes to moral, social, and cognitive development.

No transition classroom had available sufficient inventory of interactive commercial games, and some classrooms had available as few as three games. Teachers reported that child-made or invented games were not used in transition rooms, although making and playing games has been reported as supportive of young children's development (Castle, 1990). Some classrooms having interactive games available reported that they were not used weekly. Transition teachers reported that they did use teacher-made folder games, but most folder games were formulated from commercial worksheet materials, did not include three-dimensional media, and did not promote child-child interaction. Teacher responses to the Instructional Activities Questionnaire indicated that interactive card games or board games were included regularly (two to four times each week) in two transition classrooms, once each week in three transition classrooms, and rarely (monthly) in one classroom.

Manipulatives. Children in the primary grades have considerable verbal experience but continue to learn best through active manipulation and physical exploration rather than through fatiguing seatwork (Bredenkamp, 1987). Therefore, appropriate learning environments for primary children include a wide variety of materials commonly called manipulatives. Unstructured manipulatives which can be used in a variety of ways, like other materials provided in early childhood programs, are considered more valuable in the classroom inventory than manipulatives which are limited in their application.

Commercially available manipulatives include such learning materials as wooden, foam, interlocking and cube puzzles; small representational toys such as cars, people, animals, houses, etc.; media which have multiple pieces that can be patterned or counted, such as pegboards, Lite Brites™, parquetry pieces; manipulatives which may be joined or strung, such as beads or sewing cards; toys that require pushing or pulling, such as Slinky™; and,

alike toys that may be patterned, counted or constructed such as Color Clowns™, Ringa-Majigs™, or counting cubes. Noncommercial manipulatives include beans, stones, seashells, pine cones, etc. Games or activities made from laminated pieces of paper are not categorized as manipulative since they are not three dimensional.

Elimination of two categories (cutting and pasting and sensory materials) reduced educator responses on the prioritized questionnaire to 3 of 18 individuals who ranked concrete materials as among the five most important learning materials in transition first grade. Two of the educators ranked blocks as among the five most important learning activities, and one educator ranked building with blocks and building with construction toys as among the five most important learning activities in transition first grade. Stringing beads, using sewing cards, playing with dolls, using woodworking tools, using magnets, using scales, using magnifying glasses were not ranked among the five most important activities by any of the educators associated with the transition program. Transition teachers reported that playing with manipulatives such as puzzles, pegboards, stringing beads and sewing cards were used in five classrooms two to four times each week; in one classroom, such materials were used weekly. During guided interviews, transition teachers mentioned need for additional quantities of manipulatives more frequently than any other desired learning material.

Mathematics. Guidelines for appropriate educational practice with children in the primary grades state:

The goal of the math program is to enable children to use math through exploration, discovery, and solving meaningful problems. Math activities are integrated with other relevant projects such as science and social studies. Math skills are acquired through spontaneous play, projects, and situations of daily living. Teachers use the teacher's edition of the math textbook as a guide to structure learning situations and to stimulate

ideas about interesting math projects. ...Noncompetitive...number games are played for practice (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 71).

Provision of mathematics materials can be made so that student-materials and student-student interaction is encouraged (Johnson & Johnson, 1987), and educators have suggested that provision of concrete materials which support real learning rather than memorization of math facts is especially important at the primary grade levels (Burton, 1985; Henninger, 1987; Kamii, 1985a, 1985b; Kamii & DeVries, 1976, 1980; Kamii with Joseph, 1989). Kamii and DeVries (1980) have pointed out that presenting the young child with situations to encounter cognitive dissonance provides problem solving opportunities, and they state that interactive math games are especially useful in providing practice in acquiring math skills in meaningful situations while learning how others approach solutions to everyday math problems. They and others have suggested that classroom game involvement should include commercial as well as child-invented games (Kamii & DeVries, 1980; Castle, 1990).

Mathematics materials suggested for primary classroom use include two floor abaci, six sets of attribute blocks, two sets of table counting cubes, a classroom set of Cuisenaire rods, one large set of floor dominoes, a large set of wooden building blocks for floor use, a geo set, two sets of number bars or rods, a set of proportional numbers, five calculators, a toy cash register, a large gear-operated teaching clock, from 6-10 small wooden clocks with manually operated hands, five counting sticks, a flannel board with at least two math flannel board kits, different types of math flashcards, 6-12 commercial games with math integrated into the playing rules (eg., bingo, dominoes, link numbers, number floor line with bean bags, etc.), a magnetic board with a set of magnetic numerals and geometric shapes, a math chart, various linear measuring tools (meter sticks, tape measures, yardsticks, rulers, etc.), real and toy money in varying denominations, a set of English and metric scales, indoor and outdoor thermometers, rubber stamps with numerals and

geometric shapes, clock faces, and sets of liquid and dry volume measuring tools in English and metric form (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). The above suggestions would not comprise a complete inventory; rather, they would be supplemented with additional materials such as checkers, die, card games, phonograph records with songs about math, story books with mathematics as a theme, puzzles, parquetry pieces, pegboards, geometric stencils, sets of small objects, etc., that would be made available for use during the day (Bredenkamp, 1987; Hendrick, 1990; Mayesky, 1990) and other recycled materials used in child-invented game play (Castle, 1990). Materials would also be used by the classroom teacher for graphing, recording math facts, group cooking charts, etc. (Burton, 1985).

Of the eighteen educators responding to the prioritized questionnaire, all 18 indicated that math readiness (numeral recognition, recognition of geometric shapes, etc.) was an important subject matter which should be introduced to transition first grade students. All 18 indicated that math readiness should be ranked among the top five most important content areas for the transition program. Educators associated with the program were less united in their perception of the importance of mathematics skills (eg., addition and subtraction competency) as a content area for transition first grade; only 8 of the 18 respondents indicated that math skills were important in transition first grade, and of these 8, only 3 indicated that math skills should be ranked among the five most important content areas in the transition program.

Teachers in the transition program reported using flashcards with math facts; two teachers reported using such materials regularly (two to four times each week), two teachers reported using such materials sometimes (weekly), and two teachers reported using math flashcards rarely (monthly). Three teachers reported using rote recitation of the alphabet or rote counting as a classroom activity on a daily basis. Two reported such rote recitation occurred rarely (monthly), and one stated that rote recitation occurred regularly

(two to four times each week). Four teachers reported that their students almost never (less than monthly) participated in timed or competitive math activities; one teacher reported planning such activities sometimes (weekly) and one teacher reported planning such activities rarely (monthly). Five teachers indicated that they incorporated math activities into other subject areas on a regular (two to four times each week) basis; one teacher reported that she incorporated math activities into other content areas daily.

Four respondents indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that computer literacy was an important content area for transition first grade, and three indicated that using a computer was a learning activity important to achieve desired program goals in the transition first grade. Access to computers for classroom use varied among the transition first grades. One transition classroom used the school computer center on a weekly basis with the transition teacher as instructor for whole-class use. One classroom had a computer on a rotating basis within the classroom setting. Three transition first grade teachers reported that students in their classrooms did not ever use the computer, and one classroom had a computer assigned permanently to the classroom. Availability of software for transition first grades also varied among school sites. Of those teachers with access to computer use, only one reported that she had opportunity to request the district purchase of appropriate software. Some teachers reported that software was acquired through the Parent Teachers Association of their local elementary school.

Music. Music curriculum for 20-30 children in a primary classroom should include a wide variety of instruments for child use (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). Appropriate curriculum for primary age school children should integrate music into the classroom each day, and children should have the opportunity to explore and experiment with various forms of music media (Bredenkamp, 1987, p. 72). Suggested materials include a twelve-bar autoharp, bell sets (one each of chime, melody, resonator, song and step bell sets), three individual handbells, two pairs of castanets, two pairs of clappers,

cymbals (both hand pairs and two sets of finger pairs), a manipulative music scale blocks set, two pairs of maracas, either a marimba or a xylophone, and a drum. Rhythm instruments should include tone blocks, triangle, Chinese or Indian tom-tom, tambourine, three pairs of sand blocks, and six sets of rhythm sticks. Equipment in the primary classroom should also include a cassette player, a phonograph player, from six to eight earphones and jacks, and adequate supplies of both phonograph records (from 11-22 recordings of exercise, folk dance, rhythm and song) and cassette recordings (from 7-14 musical selections and 2-5 cassette tapes for recording) (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). Teaching aids suggested by ACEI include song music books, rhythm music books, access to a piano, music charts and song charts (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986).

Availability of materials for music was limited in the transition first grades. None of the transition first grade classrooms were equipped with a piano. All classrooms had phonograph record players and cassette players, but phonograph records and cassettes did not reflect the various categories suggested by Lindberg, Quisenberry and Hindman (1986). Teachers reported that most phonograph records and cassette tapes were personally owned and were not purchased with district funds. Three of the six transition classrooms had limited numbers of phonograph recordings of music (fewer than eight), and one of these three teachers shared phonograph and cassette recordings with another classroom teacher in order to make such materials available to her students.

Cassette recorders and phonograph players were reported by transition program teachers as frequently used, with four teachers indicating they were used daily and two indicating they were used from two to four times each week. Sometimes, however, the researcher observed that phonograph or cassette use was limited to materials from the district transition first grade reading program or to recordings of trade books with accompanying text. Transition teachers reported that such book/tape sets were frequently

acquired with 'bonus points' in a commercial paperback book sales program in which sales to students submitted to the company by the classroom teacher resulted in free teaching materials provided the teacher.

Eleven of the 18 respondents indicated on the Transition First Grade Curriculum Prioritized Questionnaire that music was important as a content area for transition first grade classrooms, and two respondents indicated that music should be ranked among the five most important content areas. Seven of the 18 respondents indicated that playing musical instruments was an important learning activity that should be provided in the transition first grade curriculum. Responses on the instructional activities frequency questionnaire indicated that two of the transition first grades include activities with musical instruments sometimes (weekly), but four of the six classrooms do not have rhythm instruments. Use of rhythm instruments by children was never observed in classrooms during the course of the investigation.

Nine respondents indicated on the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire that singing was an important curricular activity for the transition first grade, and one respondent ranked singing as the fourth most important learning activity for transition students. Singing appeared to be a frequent activity in transition first grade classrooms. Children participated in singing of songs during most observations, and all transition grade teachers reported singing as an instructional activity occurring regularly (two to four times each week) or very often (daily). Two of the transition teachers had collections of teacher-made songboard flip charts to use as visual cues with children. Three teachers owned extensive collections of music cassette tapes, and these appeared to be used daily in those classrooms. Five of the six teachers reported that they used music cassette tapes daily during rest periods following lunch. Some teachers appeared to rely upon lullabies or instrumental recordings for rest time, while other teachers reported they usually played a recorded story. In either case, the report of frequent record or cassette recordings

may reflect the use of the materials during daily rest periods since they were not observed being used frequently during instructional periods.

Physical Development. Guidelines for appropriate practice in the primary grades state that "[o]utdoor activity is planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves freely" (Bredenkamp, 1987, p. 73). An important principle of teaching practice with young children in the early elementary grades is that they should be engaged in active rather than passive pursuits (Katz & Chard, 1990). In the NAEYC position statement on developmentally appropriate practice in the primary grades, Bredenkamp (1987) states:

[P]rimary-age children are far from mature physically and need to be active. Primary-grade children are more fatigued by long periods of sitting than by running, jumping, or bicycling. Physical action is essential for these children to refine their developing skills.... Expressing their newly acquired physical power and control also enhances their self-esteem. Physical activity is vital for children's cognitive growth as well. When presented with an abstract concept, children need physical actions to help them grasp the concept in much the same way that adults need vivid examples and illustrations to grasp unfamiliar concepts. But unlike adults, primary-age children are almost totally dependent on first-hand experiences (p. 63).

For example, children often acquire concepts about mathematics through music and physical education activities or through manipulation of concrete objects rather than abstractions presented in paper and pencil format (Van Deusen-Henkle & Argondizza, 1987). Outdoor activity involving large motor play can be an effective learning environment when playyards are equipped with materials that involve children in several types of interaction rather than the limited opportunity to relieve stress from prolonged time segments in which children are required to complete adult-assigned tasks involving

inactivity (Churchman, 1986; Frost & Klein, 1979; Frost & Sunderlin, 1985).

Virtually no equipment for outdoor play or to support large motor development was available for the transition program. District policy does not provide formal physical education classes for elementary students until third grade, although some transition teachers reserved the school gymnasium each week for group play. Teachers reported that equipment used during such time periods usually consisted of balls. Outdoor recess periods for transition grades--like all other grades levels in the district elementary school--is provided daily for ten minutes in the morning and in the afternoon. Observations in transition grades revealed that, unless teachers planned carefully, even these limited opportunities for large motor development were greatly reduced due to transition time constraints: putting away materials, putting on coats, lining up at the door, getting the classroom ball and/or jumprope.

Inventories for all six transition classes to encourage large motor development in outdoor settings included balls, jump ropes, and whatever climbing structures existed at individual school playyards. For indoor use, four classrooms had beanbags, and two had walking balance beams. Two classroom teachers reported using almost daily cassette recordings or phonograph records for coordinated exercise with the whole class. The recordings were used indoors on carpeted areas of the classroom, and the time allotted was reported as 5-10 minutes.

Large motor equipment suggested for primary age children includes climbing structures, horizontal bars, horizontal ladders, traveling rings, tumbling mats, wagons and wheelbarrows, walking balance beams, a variety of balls, beanbags and beanbag targets, hoops, jump ropes, ring toss games, softballs, tetherballs, gardening tools, shuffleboards, bowling pins, rope/tire/canvas swings, low slides, wheeled toys, mounted steering wheels, and tile or open barrels set in concrete (Hendrick, 1990; Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). In addition, Mayesky (1990) has suggested that outdoor curricular

media include a variety of salvage materials such as rubber tires, tire tubes, lengths of garden hose, ropes and cardboard boxes to enrich the environment. She also suggests that empty cable spools can be used alone or joined with plumbing pipe, and rowboats that are no longer seaworthy can be used as outdoor play props (Mayesky, 1990).

In spite of the obvious lack of available equipment for large motor play, 15 of the 18 educator participants indicated large muscle development as an important goal in response to the Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire; 3 of the 18 listed large muscle development as among the top five prioritized goals for transition first grades. None of the 18 respondents indicated that they believed using wheeled toys outdoors was an important learning activity for transition first grade. Nine of the 18 educators indicated that using swings, slides, climbing structures, jump ropes and balls outdoors was an important activity that would achieve program outcomes for the transition first grade; three of the nine ranked use of such outdoor play equipment as among the five most important learning activities suggested for transition first grade curriculum. Because of the number of children simultaneously using playgrounds during school-wide recesses and the limited equipment, few transition first grade students were observed actually using such outdoor equipment. Nine educator respondents indicated that nature appreciation and environmental awareness were important as subject matter content for the transition first grade, and two ranked such knowledge as among the five most important content areas for the transition program. Nine respondents also indicated creative movement as important content that should be planned by the transition first grade teacher for students.

Activities specifically planned for outdoor learning did not appear to be a high priority for transition first grade teachers, who reported that they rarely (monthly) planned activities for outdoors. Five teachers reported that they regularly (two to four times each week) included creative movement as an instructional activity; one teacher reported planning creative movement activities sometimes (weekly). During the 27 observations in transition first grade classrooms, creative movement was observed in one classroom on one

occasion.

Reading. Appropriate practice in literacy and language development for young children is to provide opportunities for them to expand their abilities to use oral language, written language, and to enjoy participating in such activities (Bredekamp, 1987). The goal is therefore to increase language competency rather than to acquire specific technical skills. Such subskills would include "...learning letters, phonics, and word recognition..." (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 70) and would be taught as needed to individual children and in small groups as the need arises (Bredekamp, 1987) through classroom games, toys, and activities such as cooking, dramatic play, art, music, science or social studies projects, etc. (National Association of State Boards of Education [NASBE], 1988). Children's literature in the form of nursery rhymes, traditional stories, picture books, and trade books exemplifying the highest standards of illustrative art and written speech (rather than stilted 'stories' composed of words from restricted vocabulary lists in basal series) are the daily models for literature and language (Bredekamp, 1987; Cullinan, 1987, 1989; Heald-Taylor, 1989; Holdaway, 1979; Johnson & Louis, 1987; Lukens, 1986; Machado, 1985; Morrow, 1989; Raines & Canady, 1989; Trelease, 1985; Willert & Kamii, 1985). Well known stories, predictable stories, and repeated/shared reading of new or favorite tales, in particular, form the basis for instructional strategies for the emergent reader (Bridge, Winograd, & Haley, 1983; Grant, 1990; Johnson & Louis, 1987; Morrow, 1989; Raines & Canady, 1989, 1990)

Children's literature is used in conjunction with meaningful written language as the mainstays of strategies for reading instruction in quality early childhood programs (Bredekamp, 1987; Cullinan, 1987; Fields, 1987; Hall, 1981; Hansen, 1987; Hensen, Newkirk & Graves, 1985; Lukens, 1986). In appropriate learning environments for primary age children, teachers employ instructional strategies that integrate writing activities

naturally into the daily schedule as children find a need for written language to complete projects, label handiwork, evaluate activities, record experiences or their fantasies, create self-made books or books modeled from others' works, make lists of things or actions for classroom activities or to accomplish a task, or correspond with parents or other resource persons (Bredekamp, 1987; Hensen, Newkirk, & Graves, 1985; Moore, Moore, Cunningham & Cunningham, 1986; Morrow, 1989). Language is therefore considered, in its written as well as spoken form, a functional and a social act. Integration of reading and writing into extended play activities (NASBE, 1988; Raines & Canady, 1989) as well as those dealing with specific content areas in the primary grades (Moore, Moore, Cunningham & Cunningham, 1986; Raines & Canady, 1990) is done because of the utility of the act, not rote completion of a meaningless task.

Basal readers are viewed as inappropriate as the major means of conveying literacy instruction (Goodman, 1990; Goodman, Shannon, Freeman & Murphy, 1988; Heald-Taylor, 1989). Appropriate materials for the reading program in a transition first grade would therefore include materials that would model children's literature of the highest quality and materials that would allow for active involvement with language. Bredekamp (1987) states:

Teachers provide generous amounts of time and a variety of interesting activities for children to develop language, writing, spelling and reading ability, such as: looking through, reading, or being read high quality children's literature and nonfiction for pleasure and information (p. 70).

Bredekamp (1987) also states that in appropriate primary age settings:

Many learning centers are available for children to choose from. Many centers include opportunities for writing and reading...and places to practice writing stories and to play...language games (p. 68).

Whereas, in inappropriate primary grade settings:

The focus of the reading program is the basal reader, used only in reading groups, and accompanying workbooks and worksheets. ...Children are required to complete worksheets or to complete the basal reader although they are capable of reading at a higher level (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 70).

The school district in the current study mandated use of D'Nealian handwriting materials and Beginnings basal reading series in transition first grades. All transition classrooms displayed D'Nealian wall charts prominently in the room. Some teachers utilized D'Nealian handwriting workbooks exclusively, while other teachers used a combination of commercial workbooks and less structured writing activities. In two classrooms, teachers reported that they were experimenting with invented spelling for the first time this year. Four classrooms used student journals, but only one of the classroom teachers used an interactive dialogue with students, and two of the other three teachers reported they did not read the journals. Two teachers used student journals once each week. All teachers required all students to write in their journals as a whole class activity and assigned topics to students, although in one classroom topics for journal writing were occasionally selected by children.

One transition teacher was borrowing multiple copies of paperback children's literature from the school kindergarten teacher for use in the transition first grade, and she hoped to apply Parent Teacher Association (PTA) discretionary funds for purchase of such materials for the 1991-1992 school year. In another classroom, the teacher had personally purchased approximately 40-50 sets of paperback books, some with accompanying copies in oversized format for shared reading experiences (or, as they are popularly known, Big Books); she was writing a grant proposal to the district educational foundation in hopes of receiving funding for purchase of additional books. Two other classrooms had limited numbers of Big Books, cassette tapes and multiple copies of children's literature that had been purchased with PTA funds.

Five of the transition first grade teachers had produced child-made books during the current school year. Of these five classrooms, one teacher had included the activity one time, and children had made one page of a teacher-assembled book. In a second classroom, child-made, teacher-made, and group-made books had been included in the transition first grade during the first semester.

All transition teachers reported using a listening center with recorded stories on a weekly basis. Sources for recordings included media from the district basal reading series, personally purchased books with accompanying cassette or phonograph record, and commercially available recordings with books. Commercially available media were reported as frequently obtained through participation in publishing house bonus points; teachers collected bonus points by selling paperback books to students in their classes and then received free books in exchange for points. Many of these recorded books were popular, well known children's literature.

District basal materials included a wide range of posters, wall charts, big books, cassettes, phonograph records, consumable workbooks, teacher guides, basal readers, etc., with an emphasis upon phonics as an instructional reading approach. Teachers reported that they relied upon these materials for the major part of the reading program; all classrooms spent considerable proportions of the school day using the basal materials or conducting suggested extended learning activities involving the basal reader concepts. Material in the basal reading program relied upon word lists of limited vocabulary, so 'stories' in the series were not accurate reflections of natural language. No teacher reported relying upon children's literature or child-produced writing as a major source of reading instruction material. Only one teacher used self-selected reading daily, and the time allotted for such activity was ten minutes in whole class participation.

Use of traditional nursery rhymes was observed used by teachers in three of the transition classrooms. In two of the classrooms, teachers had made flip charts or display

charts with words and illustrations of familiar rhymes. One of these two teachers had an extensive collection of oversized song charts for shared reading during whole group songfests, and such materials appeared to be used daily.

Classroom inventories of trade books varied considerably among the six transition first grades. Three classrooms had virtually no library books of any kind, other than a collection of deaccessioned books from the school library and/or those personally owned by the teacher. In two classrooms, inventories of copies of children's literature were estimated at 300-400 books and would not include the classroom collections of paperback books. Most were teacher-owned. No classroom teacher reported obtaining books from public libraries, and no teacher used thematic display of children's literature (i.e., books with a similar topic or theme). Two transition first grades were not observed to have children's literature on display, and two of the transition classrooms did not have library centers within the rooms.

Since recommendations state that primary classrooms should be rich in resources of written language and should include a wide variety of trade books, child-made books, class-made books, group-written experience stories on chart paper, oversized books for shared reading, recordings of books, film media depicting children's literature, chart displays of poetry and songs, etc., then none of the transition first grade classroom inventories of reading materials would be considered sufficient. Although some classrooms had extensive collections of children's books, they were not utilized as the primary basis of reading instruction. In addition, teacher-provision of such materials dictated that those teachers with longevity as classroom instructors had more materials than teachers beginning their careers; thus, reading materials were inequitably provisioned by the school district.

Science. Materials and equipment for science activities was essentially unavailable in the district's transition first grades (see Appendix F) even though several authors have

suggested that materials for science investigation are readily available from the natural environment and from recycled discards (Althouse, 1988; Harlan, 1984; Holt, 1988; Lindberg, 1990; Nichols & Nichols, 1990; Williams, Rockwell & Sherwood, 1987; Woodard & Davitt, 1987). NAEYC guidelines suggest that appropriate primary classroom settings integrate science materials into the setting:

Discovery science is a major part of the curriculum, building on children's natural interest in the world. Science projects are experimental and exploratory and encourage active involvement of every child. The science program takes advantage of natural phenomena such as the outdoors, and the classroom includes many plants and pets for which children provide care daily (Bredenkamp, 1987, p. 72).

Inventories of science materials in all six classrooms included magnets (2), magnifying glasses (4), watertables (2), puzzle match-ups of dinosaurs (1 set), teacher-made sound box matching games (2 sets), sensory 'feely' matching boxes (2 sets), dinosaur flannel pieces (1 set), dinosaur floor puzzles (2), and kitchen measuring cups (3 sets). There were two gerbils in one transition first grade, but they were housed above child height, and children were not allowed to handle the animals. Two teachers also owned thematic unit boxes with science as a concept. The combined science transition room inventories would be considered insufficient for one classroom and quite insufficient for six classrooms.

Listings of equipment and supplies by ACEI (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986) suggest that primary classrooms should have available for science curriculum an ant farm, aquarium with glass cover, balloons, barometer, bicycle pump, cages with removable bottoms for birds and small animals, a magnetic compass, a set of two electric dry cell bells with wiring, garden equipment for outdoor gardening, hot plate or access to stovetop, access to an incubator, insect cages, iron filings, two large horseshoe magnets and two strong bar magnets, magnifying glass table stand, sets of small magnifying glasses, various measuring sticks, access to a microscope, prisms, access to a refrigerator,

balance beam scales, seeds for growing flowers and vegetables, a terrarium with glass cover, three to five test tubes and beakers, two thermometers (one for indoor use and one for outdoor use), clock-like egg timers, a tuning fork and a weather vane. Others have suggested that the early childhood program should have mirrors, a flashlight, a magnetic compass, tongs and tweezers and forceps, several pairs of child-sized safety goggles, basins or washpans, assorted sieves and sifters, funnels, an eggbeater, eye droppers, a mortar and pestle, a kitchen baster or ear syringe, meter sticks and rulers, metric tape measure, metric bow calipers, timing devices, a stethoscope, a kaleidoscope, locks and keys, gears and geared devices, pulley and wheels, lever devices, a Slinky™ toy, transparent color paddles, prisms, pinwheels or windmills, and kite making materials (Holt, 1988). Holt has also suggested that a wide range of natural materials such as real cork and real sponge samples, shells, wool samples, leather pieces, raw flax, bird nests, soil samples, etc., should be provided in a science inventory (Holt, 1988, p. 23). Such equipment would be in addition to games, puzzles, posters, books, charts, filmstrips, records, etc., with science themes.

Teachers' self-reports of frequency of science activities involving exploration of animals, plants, magnets and/or wheels and gears indicated that such involvement occurred in four transition first grades sometimes (weekly) and in two transition first grades rarely (monthly), but at no time were planned activities for science investigation observed by the researcher during the course of the study in kindergarten, transition first grade, or first grade classrooms. Only one transition classroom had a permanent science area, and this area consisted of a shelf with covered containers filled with found objects such as acorns. Two of the classrooms contained 'found' objects such as seashells, acorns or rocks, but at no time were children observed handling the materials, and the materials were never observed on display. Although four of the five elementary schools having transition programs are adjacent to city parks, teachers reported that walking field trips to the areas

occurred primarily in the autumn to collect fallen leaves or in the spring to observe newly spouting leaves. Teachers reported that the annual field trip for transition first grade students last year by bus was to a zoo located in another city.

Lack of active child involvement, insufficient materials, limited community excursions, and infrequency of activities reflect inappropriate primary grade science curriculum in the transition program as defined by NAEYC guidelines, which state:

Science consists of memorizing facts or watching teacher-demonstrated experiments. Field trips occur rarely or not at all. A science area may have a few plants, seashells, or pine cones that have been there many months and are essentially ignored by the children (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 72).

Social Studies. None of the transition first grade rooms was adequately supplied with materials usually considered essential for social studies at the primary grade level. NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) state that social studies at the primary level should be integrated as a part of ongoing curriculum. "Relevant art, music, dance, drama, woodworking and games are incorporated in social studies" (Bredekamp, 1987, p.71). Development of a positive self concept, autonomous behavior, awareness of other cultures, prosocial behaviors when working with others, empathy for the feelings and concern for the rights of others, and understanding of gender equity are usually goals suggested by curriculum specialists as appropriate for early childhood programs (Hendrick, 1990; Hersh, Paolitto & Reimer, 1979; Johnson & Johnson, 1987; Kamii & DeVries, 1984; Mayesky, 1990; Smith, C., 1982). Smilansky and Sheftaya (1990) have also pointed out that recent research on sociodramatic play has demonstrated that many of the cognitive skills needed to engage successfully in dramatic play activities are also the skills children need to succeed and achieve academically. Social studies at the primary level should integrate activities and materials emphasizing concepts regarding cultural awareness and

gender equity. NAEYC guidelines for appropriate practice in the primary grades state that:

Multicultural and nonsexist activities and materials are provided to enhance individual children's self-esteem and to enrich the lives of all children with respectful acceptance and appreciation of differences and similarities (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 72).

In the area of supporting social-emotional development, appropriate practice for primary grade levels includes integration of activities within the context of the total school day, and this is accomplished when:

Teachers promote prosocial behavior, perseverance, industry, and independence by providing many stimulating, motivating activities; encouraging individual choices; allowing as much time as needed for children to complete work; and ensuring moments of private time alone with the teacher or with a close friend (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 73).

Equipment suggested as necessary for primary age children includes dramatic play housekeeping equipment (stove, table and chairs, dishes), dolls and doll accessories, puppets and materials for puppet construction, costumes and other dress up clothes, accessories for block play (small wooden or rubber animals and people), cash registers, pretend food items and cooking utensils, accessories or props for dramatic play settings (such as gas station, business office, grocery store, school, barber shop, post office, etc.), and transportation toys (small and medium sized cars, trucks, airplanes and boats) (Hendrick, 1990; Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986; Mayesky, 1990). These materials would be in addition to books, puzzles, posters, games, filmstrips, recordings, etc., with social studies as a theme. Combined inventories of all six transition first grades would not meet generally accepted inventories of equipment, materials and toys necessary to support prosocial development (Hendrick, 1990; Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986; Mayesky, 1990) even though many props for social studies and dramatic play may be obtained or made from recycled materials.

Phonograph records, cassette tapes, and books with social studies themes were

present in all six classrooms in limited quantities (see Appendix F). Housekeeping equipment to support dramatic play and interpersonal relations was available in limited supply in one of the six transition first grades, and there were dress up clothes available in one transition first grade classroom in limited quantity. A doll house was available in one of the six transition first grades, but it had few pieces of doll house furniture. Puppets were available in one of the six transition first grades; they consisted primarily of pretend animals (i.e., not realistic animals). Block accessories for concrete social studies play were generally not available, although one classroom had a large teacher-owned collection of small metal and plastic cars.

Three transition teachers reported that participating in dramatic play was included as an instructional activity sometimes (weekly), two transition teachers reported including dramatic play regularly (two to four times each week), and one transition teacher reported including dramatic play rarely (monthly). Yet, few of the transition classrooms were supplied with dramatic play props. When questioned, some teachers reported that they were including group choral recitations as a dramatic play activity in the classroom.

Two teachers reported planning multicultural or nonsexist materials for classroom activities on a daily basis, while the other four transition teachers reported providing such activities weekly. Yet, the only materials available for child use during classroom observations exemplifying multicultural or nonsexist values were trade books; there were no dolls, puppets, block accessories, posters, costumes, etc., that might be used to support such awareness. Five of the 18 respondent educators indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that they believed multicultural and gender awareness was an important goal of the transition first grade educational program.

Fourteen of 18 educators indicated that they believed that fostering a positive self concept was an important program goal, and 8 of the 14 ranked fostering a positive self concept as among the top five goals of the transition first grade program. Eight educators

indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that they thought empathy for the feelings of others and/or concern for the rights of others were important goals of the transition first grade, and one respondent ranked both goals as among the five most important of suggested desired program outcomes.

Woodworking. Woodworking provides support for aesthetic, cognitive and physical development, and such activities should be included in the primary grades as a creative as well as physical outlet (Adams & Taylor, 1990; Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986; Bredekamp, 1987; Haskell, 1979; Hendrick, 1990; Mayesky, 1990; Skeen, Garner & Cartwright, 1985). Hendrick (1990) has pointed out that teachers often express concern for children's safety during woodworking, but that it appears more likely that their hesitancy to include such activity is due to lack of knowledge about tools used in woodworking. She says:

Some schools shun presenting carpentry, perhaps because some teachers have had little experience with woodworking tools and therefore think they are dangerous, but the activity is so satisfying for children that teachers should learn to use tools with care and competence so they can help children be successful, too (Hendrick, 1990, pp. 268-269).

Curriculum specialists have pointed out that it is especially important to provide sturdy woodworking tools, which contribute to the child's success, provide greater safety, and cost less in the long run (Haskell, 1979; Hendrick, 1990; Skeen, Garner & Cartwright, 1985) It has been suggested that woodworking equipment might be shared among four classrooms and stored centrally or rotated at the primary level to reduce school cost as well as to provide for safe, out-of-the-way storage (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). Suggested basic woodworking tools include two claw hammers (not tack hammers), a crosscut saw, and two well-made wood vise (Hendrick, 1990). ACEI has suggested that,

in addition to a good woodworking bench equipped with two wood vise, primary age children be provided with two claw hammers, two 4"-6" C-clamps, a non-ratchet brace and assorted bits, a hand drill with a set of bits, three rulers, sandpaper in various grades, assorted nails (especially roofing nails) and screws, a medium rasp, tongue depressors and popsicle sticks, and yarn scraps (Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986). In addition, of course, a wood supply should be readily available. Soft pine wood is the preferred material (Hendrick, 1990; Mayesky, 1990; Lindberg, Quisenberry & Hindman, 1986).

None of the transition first grades were equipped with woodworking tools, benches and supplies. Only 1 of 18 participant educators indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that woodworking activity was important as a content area in transition first grade, although 3 of 18 respondents indicated that using woodworking tools was an important learning activity that should be provided for transition first grade students.

Daily Schedules

Development and learning in primary-age children is fostered by the integration of curriculum content areas in educational programs, based upon the premise that the physical, social, emotional and cognitive domains of human development are integrated and that therefore development in any one dimension is interrelated with development in another dimension (Bredekamp, 1987). Since children's learning, like development, is integrated during the early years, a relevant principle of instruction in public school primary-age programs is that daily scheduling should reflect integration of curriculum (L. Katz and Chard, 1990). The school day in a model early childhood program is not segmented into discrete subject areas that arbitrarily separate curricular topics, and one area of curriculum is not emphasized at the expense or elimination of another. Young children extend their knowledge of several curricular areas by involved, sustained, cooperative effort in projects

that naturally promote the integration of a variety of skills such as reading, writing, taking turns, measuring, planning, counting, speaking, illustrating, sharing, graphing, constructing, etc., while simultaneously supporting their social, cognitive, physical and emotional development. Such projects may be a group effort or an individual pursuit and are characterized by: (a) the personal interest, active involvement and autonomy of each child; (b) the opportunity to continue involvement over an extended period of time, perhaps several days or even weeks; and, (c) the valuing of all aspects of human development as natural vehicles for instructional practice (Bredekamp, 1987).

Appropriate practice in a primary grade would therefore include a daily schedule in which:

[t]he curriculum is integrated so that learning occurs primarily through projects, learning centers, and playful activities that reflect current interests of children. For example, a social studies project such as building and operating a [pretend or real] store or a science project such as furnishing and caring for an aquarium provide focused opportunities for children to plan, dictate and/or write their plans (using invented and teacher-taught spelling), to draw and write about their activity, to discuss what they are doing, to read nonfiction books for needed information, to work cooperatively with other children, to learn facts in a meaningful context, and to enjoy learning. Skills are taught as needed to accomplish projects (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 68).

Conversely, inappropriate practice in programs for children from five through eight years of age would involve instructional strategies which:

...revolve around teacher-directed reading groups that take up most of every morning, lecturing to the whole group, total class discussion, and paper-and-pencil practice exercises or worksheets.... Projects, learning centers, play, and outdoor time are seen as embellishments and are only offered if time permits or as reward for good behavior

(Bredekamp, 1987, p. 69).

Also, inappropriate scheduling would ensue when:

[c]urriculum is divided into separate subjects and time is carefully allotted for each with primary emphasis given each day to reading and secondary emphasis to math. Other subjects such as social studies, science, and health are covered if time permits. Art, music, and physical education are taught only once a week...(Bredekamp, 1987, p. 67).

Using the above descriptions to define appropriate daily scheduling in early childhood programs, a review of teachers' schedules, teachers' self-reports of frequency of various instructional activities in the classroom, prioritized curriculum questionnaire responses, and researcher observations revealed that the transition first grade program did not appear to integrate curricular areas during the school day. Some areas of curriculum content were eliminated, limited or rarely included among planned activities. Restrictions on access to certain materials or interactions also occurred in daily schedules.

In the current study, educator respondents could have ranked general curricular content areas such as music (including singing), art, science, social studies, math readiness or oral language as the five most important curricular content areas. Respondents indicated as more important than these general areas such skills as phonics, reading (of sight words), reading readiness (recognition of letters), handwriting, and mathematics skills (such as addition and subtraction). For example, 8 of the 18 respondents indicated that handwriting skills were more important as a curricular content area than science or social studies, and five of these indicated that handwriting should be among the top five curricular content areas. Of the 18 respondents, 8 indicated art and 11 indicated music were important curricular content areas, yet only three ranked art or music as among the five most important content areas. Both music and art activities have traditionally been included as an important aspect of the early childhood setting because both foster creativity, active learning, and language development.

All 18 respondents indicated reading readiness (including letter recognition, left-to-right sequencing, and other prereading skills) as important in a transition first grade curriculum. Sixteen of the 18 respondents ranked reading readiness first among the top five prioritized content areas. This ranking of reading activities as among the most important of all curricular content areas was revealed in daily schedules in the district's transition first grades. Daily schedules in the transition program reflected large segments of time devoted to the instruction of isolated reading skills promoted in the district's phonics-based reading program. Major portions of the day were spent in whole-group activities with either the teacher directing activities or supervising the rotation of small groups of students among assigned, designated activities selected by the adult teacher rather than chosen by students. Usually the activities involved a currently targeted phoneme and an accompanying alphabetic symbol. Letters were thus introduced in isolation, and they were limited to a sequence provided in the basal reading program so that children could begin immediately to practice sight recognition of single syllabic words formed from the introduced letters, even though the words formed from the letters constituted a list of unrelated words.

An indication of the prominence of reading instruction--and, the virtual elimination of science and social studies from the curriculum--may be inferred from responses by participating educators to the prioritized curriculum questionnaire regarding curricular content for a transition first grade (see Appendix D, Part II). Only 6 of the 18 respondents indicated that science and social studies were important curricular areas to include in the program for a transition first grade. Of the six individuals indicating science and social studies as important curricular areas, one indicated that both social studies and science should be among the five most important curricular content areas, and another respondent indicated that science should be among the five most important curricular content areas. The other four respondents indicated that science and social studies were important, but not

important enough to rank among the top five prioritized curricular content areas. This appears to support findings by Stroud (1989) who found that fewer than 5% of Indiana transition grade teachers indicated science as being important and fewer than 3% of Indiana transition grade teachers indicated social studies was important to include in a transition first grade program.

All six district transition classrooms provide an all-day program for children. During observations there appeared to be similarity in sequence of daily activities, and during guided interviews teachers also reported similar daily sequence of activities. All teachers reported that mornings ordinarily included reading readiness and math activities with music activities (singing, sometimes accompanied by recorded music) integrated into large group instruction. Four transition teachers reported that morning activities were conducted only in a large group setting--i.e., with all children participating simultaneously in the same activity--or with children working independently. In three of these four transition classrooms, independent work was completed at student desks, while in the fourth classroom independent work was completed at desks or other assigned places within the classroom. Two transition teachers reported that large group, small group, and independent activities were used in the morning schedule. In these two classrooms, independently completed tasks were conducted at desks or areas within the classroom, while small group work was usually done in an open area on the floor.

Activities observed on site and teacher reports in guided interviews indicated less similarity among transition classroom afternoon schedules. Three teachers appeared to continue large group instruction and independent work in afternoon schedules; one teacher continued to have a combination of large group instruction, small group work, and independent activities during the afternoons. Two teachers continued to have large group direct instruction with independent activities (completed at desks or interest centers around the classroom) and deviated from this schedule only on Fridays. On Fridays, these two

teachers provided less structured activities but assigned tasks to students on a timed rotation basis; i.e., small groups of children were sent from one activity center to the next when the teacher announced that activities would change. Child-initiated activities were not allowed until teacher-assigned tasks had been completed.

All classrooms provided some type of format in which large group direct instruction occurred for both morning and afternoon schedules. All teachers reported that large group direct instruction periods usually lasted from forty-five to sixty minutes. Morning large group activities included the ubiquitous calendar, weather, greeting, song, assignment of classroom tasks to individual children, etc., in what is sometimes known as circle time or opening time. Some teachers utilized this beginning time period to review assigned tasks for the morning (or, day). Some teachers provided a 'sharing' or 'show and tell' time during this large group segment in which any child might speak to the group; others rotated the activity among children, assigning each child a specific day to share an idea, object or event with the group. Two teachers appeared to provide daily large group exercise accompanied by recorded music during this early morning large group instructional period.

Daily schedules provided for diverse arrival times of children in different ways. Some transition teachers allowed children to talk to one another, use library books in the room, use crayons and recycled paper at their desks, etc. That is, while not actually assigned tasks there were activities in which they might engage on a self-selected basis. Other classrooms began the day with arriving children working independently at their desks with assigned tasks until the whole group had arrived. Such tasks consisted of worksheets (which they were to complete by coloring, cutting, dot-to-dot, etc.) or student journals (see section entitled Personal Interactions for description of journal writing as an activity). Some teachers played recorded music while children were arriving. In one classroom, each child upon arrival found a personal folder with assigned worksheets and a weekly schedule placed on his/her desk, used by the child/teacher to keep track of assignments during the

week. Thus, individual daily schedules were provided for each student by the transition teacher, and the schedules were checked daily.

Some similarity among transition classroom schedules may be attributed to the fact that all elementary schools in the district provided morning and afternoon recess at the same time each day. Allotted recess time was ten minutes for both morning and afternoon recess and was supervised by school principals and/or teacher aides. Transition children in some schools shared designated outdoor play areas with students from kindergarten, first and second grades; in other schools, kindergarten through sixth grade shared the entire playground. Having a recess period, however, does not necessarily mean that children have recess. In two transition classrooms, students who failed to complete teacher-assigned tasks were regularly kept indoors to continue their work, and loss of recess time was also used as punishment. Teachers reported that assigned tasks each day varied in number, depending upon time of the school year. Assigned tasks (or, what teachers often called 'centers') were, according to teacher reports and observations, usually five tasks each day. Teachers said that some days children would have seven to eight assignments. It was observed in some classrooms that some children never appeared to complete all assigned tasks in each school day.

Physical education classes were not provided for transition classes, but teachers in all five transition schools were allowed by principals to reserve a time period for use of the school gymnasium. Several teachers shared the time period with other classes (either kindergarten or another Developmental First Grade), and one teacher scheduled the gymnasium Tuesday and Friday afternoons although other teachers appeared to reserve weekly sessions. Two teachers reported that, while they often reserved the gymnasium for organized physical games and activities, they sometimes did not use the time each week. One teacher stated:

I really try to get to the gym every week, but sometimes we have so many things to

do that we just don't seem to have time. I know that it's important, but with the reading [readiness] program there are a lot of things to finish every day, and some of the children are so slow. Or, absent. I still have a lot of kids who are gone a lot.

Lunch schedules also were alike in length of time provided for children and were dissimilar only in that enrollment at one school necessitated two lunch periods; the principal reported that early and late lunch times were rotated among classrooms, so that all children eventually had both early and late lunch periods. Teachers reported that they disliked the early lunch period because it detracted time from the morning work period, which was usually scheduled with reading activities. In all schools, upon completing their meal students were allowed to use outdoor play areas until the afternoon session resumed the day's work.

All transition first grades were officially provided access to two specialist teacher programs. Children attended the media center, and the elementary school counselors visited each transition class weekly. Teachers reported during guided interviews that the district counseling program was alike among the elementary schools in that the district utilized programmed educational counseling materials from a national publisher in all district schools. During observations, the programmed material was used by school counselors rather than open discussion among students; the counseling time was therefore whole group direct instruction by the counselor. During the course of the study, heated debate regarding the use of the programmed material was in progress in the district. The published material was the subject of both school board meetings, letters to the editor of the local newspaper, and statewide television coverage. Some parents objected to the material and were calling for its discontinuance. One teacher stated:

I don't know what all the flap is about on this Quest (Skills for Growing programmed counseling material) stuff. There are a lot of parents really up in arms about it, but it's used in a lot of places. Don't they use it in (your school district)? I don't know what it's about, because I have never read any of it--and, of course I'm never there

when she's (the counselor) using it.

Children attended the library media center on a twice-weekly basis, and these periods were also whole group direct instruction by the media specialist. Transition teachers did not remain in the classroom during the counseling periods or during the library media sessions.

One transition first grade schedule provided for allotted computer class time in the computer classroom, three transition first grades never had computer time scheduled, one transition first grade had a computer permanently assigned to the transition room, and one transition first grade rotated a computer for classroom use among other primary teachers at her elementary school. Therefore, schedules for student computer use varied among the transition first grades.

Few teachers reported utilizing instructional television programming with transition first grade classes, although one teacher stated that her students watched Reading Rainbow every Wednesday. All teachers reported occasional use of the television (although in some classrooms, televisions were borrowed from other classrooms or from the library media center) with a videorecorder to play movies for children; such viewing was ordinarily either a holiday theme or a group reward for acceptable classroom behavior. Scheduling of these viewings was reported to be on Fridays in most classrooms.

Transition teachers in classrooms lacking restrooms and sink facilities scheduled regular time periods to take care of physical needs. In all classrooms, youngsters were allowed to leave their classrooms to use restrooms located in hallways, and teachers limited the number of students leaving the room at any given time through restroom passes. Teachers appeared to add scheduled restroom breaks immediately following morning recess, afternoon recess, and after lunch. Restriction to restroom facilities appeared to be limited only during large group instruction; one teacher particularly mentioned that she did not allow children to leave the group to go to the bathroom while she was giving

assignments during morning large group sessions. Only two teachers were observed to promote hygiene by scheduling handwashing prior to lunch each day. Access to drinking fountains was unrestricted even in those classrooms lacking drinking water facilities; teachers allowed children to use drinking fountains in the hallway.

Daily rest periods were scheduled in all transition classes, but the rest period was gradually reduced and then eliminated in one transition room after two months. Activities allowed during rest periods varied considerably from classroom to classroom. In all classrooms, teachers reduced lighting in the classroom. Teachers used recordings during rest periods, but the selection varied considerably. Some teachers played soft, instrumental music, some teachers played recordings of stories, and during one observation a transition teacher ironically played a phonograph record with lyrics suggesting physical responses (clapping, jumping, etc.). In at least one classroom, children who slept were allowed to continue to rest until they awakened.

Teachers responses on the Instructional Activities Questionnaire (Appendix E) indicated that transition room daily schedules included creative art and sensory experiences (eg., playdough, finger paint) as well as more structured craft activities such as coloring and cutting predrawn forms in similar frequency. Two teachers reported having painting, drawing, or marking pens daily; three reported having such activities from two to four times weekly; and, one teacher reported having such activities once each week. However, during guided interviews teachers reported that they had included crayons in the categorical response, and they did not have painting daily--or, even weekly--as an activity. Children had access to crayons almost daily in all six transition classrooms, however.

Teachers indicated that sensory activities were made available in similar frequency: one teacher reported having sensory activities daily, three teachers reported having sensory activities from two to four times each week, and two teachers reported having sensory activities once each week. In a similar vein, teachers reported having activities in which

children colored and/or cut predrawn forms: three teachers reported having such activities from two to four times each week, two teachers reported having such activities once each week, and one teacher reported having such activities daily.

All transition teachers reported using whole class direct instruction for major portions of the morning schedule; some teachers also used small group or independent work. Teacher responses on the Instructional Activities Questionnaire (see Appendix E) and guided interviews indicated that typical activities during whole class direct instruction in the morning schedule included giving directions for assigned tasks to be completed independently; routine daily activities such as flag salute, calendar review, birthday announcements, weather recording, songs, etc.; basal reading activities; worksheets from the basal reading series or reproduced from other sources by the teacher; and, use of concrete learning materials by children, either as an assigned task or selected by the child after completing assignments.

Teachers reported that afternoon schedules included whole class direct instruction and/or small group and independent work. Whole class direct instruction activities reported by teachers and observed by the researcher included math or reading flashcards, handwriting or copying from the chalkboard, math or reading activities. Science or social studies were not reported by transition teachers during guided interviews as activities included each week and were not observed during the course of the study. Teachers reported that afternoon daily schedules were perceived as being less structured than morning sessions. Art or cooking activities, for example, were reported as more likely to occur in the afternoon schedule.

Personal Interactions

The NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice suggest that

professionals who plan learning environments for the primary age child should place emphasis upon promoting opportunities for the child to have active exploration and interaction with the adult(s), other children, and materials and equipment in the school setting (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 3). Since much of what children learn is a result of their own independently derived constructions of meaning, primary classrooms which support child autonomy in choosing among tasks, materials and people to work with help provide optimal cognitive and social development (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1990; Forman & Kuschner, 1983; Kamii, 1985b, 1989; Kamii & DeVries, 1976; Katz, L., & Chard, 1990; Rogers & Ross, 1986; Willart & Kamii, 1985).

Early childhood programs must provide for *child-initiated activities* together with involvement with the teacher in planning, implementing, and evaluating their learning experiences. With young children, academic skills are developed and enhanced through programs in which there are activities for both independent activities and small-group instruction (National Association of Elementary School Principals, in Shores, 1991, p. 4; italics added).

In the primary classroom, much learning activity takes place through play with toys or materials in playful interactions; i.e., children interact with others in the environment while using materials made available without undue adult restrictions or inhibitions. While there are necessarily limits to provide for safety and equity among members of the group, activities are characterized by flexibility and social intercourse. As Bredekamp (1987) has stated:

Teachers and children together select and develop projects. Frequent outings and visits from resource people are planned. ...[L]earning from others through conversation while at work or play occurs daily (p. 69).

NAEYC guidelines also state:

The process of interacting with materials and people results in learning. ...Much of

young children's learning takes place when they direct their own play activities.

During play, children feel successful when they engage in a task they have defined for themselves.... Such learning should not be inhibited by adult-established concepts of completion, achievement, and failure. Activities should be designed to concentrate on furthering emerging skills through creative activity and intense involvement. ...[T]he child's active participation in self-directed play with concrete, real-life experiences continues to be a key to motivated, meaningful learning in kindergarten and the primary grades (Bredekamp, 1987, pp. 3-4).

In order to provide settings that foster such active participation and child-directed involvement with people and things, teachers provide a wide range of materials and spaces from which children choose daily as a place to work. While basic learning materials are provided daily as interest centers--large blocks, sand or water play areas, paint, library books, dramatic play props, manipulative toys, construction toys, card and board games, musical equipment, writing materials, etc. (Bredekamp, 1987)--other areas are changed frequently to facilitate involvement. Further, complexity and amount of the materials increases with age span and group size (Bredekamp, 1987; Lindberg, Quisenberry, & Hindman, 1986) in order to provide challenge and involvement as children become more familiar with the materials and other members of the group. Abundant natural, unstructured materials, recycled materials, and commercial materials for learning should be made available in the school environment (McAfee, 1986). Teachers should be especially sensitive to provide materials or equipment for youngsters who indicate unusual interest, capability, or cultural needs (Bredekamp, 1987; McAfee, 1986) and to promote positive interactions among children within the group (Rogers & Ross, 1986).

Teachers do not restrict their role in the classroom to establishing the environment and then merely acting as a custodian while children select materials and partners and engage in play activities. The teacher is an active facilitator who assists children's involvement with others and with learning materials by observing carefully, asking questions, making

suggestions occasionally, or adding more complex materials or ideas to a situation (Bredekamp, 1987). Challenge with questions or materials, and subsequent observation of the child's interaction with other children and/or materials following such provision, is a major role in evaluation and planning for future learning opportunities (Almy, 1975; Heald-Taylor, 1989).

Personal interactions within the transition first grade program are described in the following three sections. Child-materials, child-child and child-adult interactions are included as a curricular element within the formal school setting. The descriptions were derived from self-reports of transition first grade teachers, classroom observations, and guided interviews with educators. Inferences of interactions were also drawn from participant educators' responses to the prioritized questionnaire and transition first grade teachers' responses to the instructional activities questionnaire regarding frequency of planned activities. Eg., classrooms lacking wooden unit blocks would obviously not provide interaction with such materials; likewise, teachers reporting required daily use of worksheets suggests such materials are relied upon in the district transition program as a learning medium children should use daily. Passages including quotations from teachers and/or students in the transition classrooms are as accurate as field notes and memory allow, and effort has been made to record such conversations with authenticity if not verbatim.

Interactions: Child-Material. Child interaction with classroom materials is affected by such factors as availability, access and applicability. Availability of the material is affected by whether the material has been provided for the classroom, since materials which have not been purchased by the school district may or may not be personally provided by the classroom teacher. For example, lack of outdoor climbing equipment is unlikely to be provided by an individual teacher because of its prohibitive cost and installation, but a

material such as liquid soap for an outdoor science activity such as bubble blowing is inexpensive and might be purchased by the transition teacher.

A second factor affecting child-material interaction is access; sufficient amount of the material and teacher limitation on when the material may be used both impact accessibility for child-material interaction. When only one item is inventoried for classroom use or when the transition teacher places the material in learning centers infrequently, access to the material is automatically limited. A third factor affecting child-material interaction is applicability. Limitations set by the teacher on *how* a material may be used (i.e., *applied*) in the classroom also affects child-material interactions.

Many learning materials considered necessary for appropriate developmental practice were not available for transition first grade classrooms (see previous section entitled Materials). Thus, child-material interaction was restricted by the fact that the school district did not provide classrooms with certain types of materials. Transition teachers repeatedly mentioned the limited number and amount of construction materials, manipulatives, trade books, and outdoor play equipment available for the transition program. Teachers failed to mention the lack of commercial board and card games as a learning material, yet Kamii and DeVries (1984) have pointed out that such materials promote social and cognitive development. Teachers also failed to mention need for science, music, woodworking or art media.

Teachers reported need for equipment that would allow certain materials to be used with ease in the classroom; specifically mentioned were water/sandtables, terrycloth towels and paint aprons for art clean-up, rugs or carpeting so large block play would be less noisy, large airtight containers for storage of learning materials, housekeeping equipment for socio-dramatic play, equipment for classroom cooking, oversized copies of children's literature for shared reading experiences, and finger painting trays. Teachers also mentioned materials lacking in sufficient quantity; specifically mentioned were current

publications of children's literature in multiple copies, wooden puzzle trays, Lego™ construction bricks, Lincoln Logs™, art and craft materials (many of which were reported as teacher-purchased), floor easels, magnetic boards with sets of magnetic pieces, individual chalk boards, pegboards and pegs, and manipulatives for use in mathematics activities. One teacher also wanted bulletin boards in her classroom. Two teachers wanted a roll laminator for their school so that they could laminate child-made or teacher-made books and songcharts for classroom use. Roll laminators were available in other schools in the district, and teachers reported they had been purchased with PTA funds.

Even when certain materials were inventoried by classrooms, access for such child-material interaction was sometimes limited by the teacher. Such limitation was sometimes the result of restriction to the material on a given weekday. In two transition first grades, for example, child-choice of materials was limited to Friday afternoons. On the remaining four school days, children were assigned tasks to be completed. In two other classrooms, availability in the classroom implied, but did not necessarily indicate, child-material interaction. The following narrative passages taken from classroom observation field notes exemplify limitation of access imposed by the transition teachers.

The researcher was compiling a listing of materials available in a transition first grade classroom and was seated by low shelving while noting the types and amounts of materials stored in that location. Most of the shelf space was allotted to plastic containers (both open and covered) filled with manipulative materials. They included three-piece matching puzzles depicting animals and their habitats, sewing cards and yarn, tactile alphabet letter shapes with accompanying trays, checkerboard game sets, a small plastic balance beam scale, styrofoam packing pieces, commercial and teacher-made die, etc. A boy joined the researcher and squatted on the floor beside her.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"I'm making a list of 'stuff' you and the other boys and girls use here in Developmental First Grade," the researcher replied.

"Then why are you writing that down? We don't never use that," he said.

"You don't use any of the stuff on this shelf?" the researcher asked.

"Nope. We don't never use none of it. What's in that (container)?" he asked, peering into a container held by the researcher as another child walked up to the researcher and the child.

"What are you doing?" the second child asked.

"I am making a list of all the things you use in your classroom," the researcher said.

"Well, we don't use any of that stuff," he said.

"I already told her that," said the first child.

In another classroom, the researcher was compiling an inventory of transition classroom materials, including those in two storage areas, when the following conversations occurred with the transition first grade teacher.

The researcher was compiling a listing of materials on low shelving located under the classroom windows when the transition teacher approached.

"Are you including all that (material on the curricular inventory)?" she asked.

"Well, yes, I was," replied the researcher.

"Well, most of those games were here from a former kindergarten teacher. We don't really use any of them," she said.

Games on the shelf area included Operation™ and Candyland™.

And, at a later time:

The researcher was noting the kinds and amounts of various games and toys stored behind removable chalkboards when the transition teacher joined her.

"You know," the transition teacher said, "most of the things in that cabinet are not

really used except on an occasional basis."

"You don't use items in this cabinet often? Is that because they are difficult to get to (since the heavy doors must be lifted out in order to reach them)?" asked the researcher.

"Well, it's not that as much as I feel that I can better meet children's needs with classroom games I have made myself," she replied. "Here are some of the games we really use." The transition teacher then showed the researcher two large storage drawers nearby which were filled with teacher-made folder 'games.' Most of the folder activities were quite similar in that they usually provided independent use rather than an activity for several child players to share in an interactive game. The folder 'games' also were alike in that they used no three-dimensional manipulative pieces; they were essentially colored, cut out, laminated worksheet pages that focused upon reading or math skills. The toys and games in the hidden storage area, however, consisted of concrete materials, card games, stringing beads, puzzles, toys, etc., rather than paper skill tasks.

Limited accessibility for child-material interaction also occurred in transition first grades. Although all classrooms had paint available, no teacher reported providing paint on a daily basis and some reported providing paint less frequently than weekly. The expressive arts, however, "...invite children to explore and develop technical skills that make possible and encourage creative expression. They...provide opportunities for socialization" (Dixon & Chalmers, 1990, p 12). Although often viewed as an appendage to education, the arts provide necessary contributions to all areas of young children's development (Clemens, 1991; Dixon & Chalmers, 1990). As Dixon and Chalmers have stated:

[T]here has been a tendency for creativity to be so closely and exclusively equated with the arts that they have been seen as discrete and special areas, separate from more ordinary, routine activities of the school curriculum. As a result, classes in the

expressive arts have been relegated to a peripheral position in education, offered to children as a diversion from the real business of schooling, and seriously pursued only by students who demonstrate specific talents... (1990, p. 13).

Access to unstructured materials was limited to Fridays in two of the transition first grade classrooms. Inaccessibility promoted such materials as 'play' as opposed to 'work' media, as the following narrative description of interactions indicate.

It is a Friday morning and, following the usual beginning of the day with the flag salute, calendar activity, weather chart, etc., the teacher reviews activities for the day. Children are introduced to assignments involving the district reading program and reminded to place completed pages in their folders. The teacher then reviews activities which will be made available for children who have completed their 'work.'

"Be sure to finish all your work, and then you can use the free centers. Remember to finish up first. In this center we have rice today," says the transition teacher pointing to the covered water table. Immediately a loud cheer goes up among the youngsters, and several jump out of their chairs to clap their hands.

"Can you remember the rules? Do we need to go over the rules about rice?" asks the teacher. They children sober immediately, and several of the boys who have exuberantly risen quickly sit in their chairs. The group then repeats aloud rules associated with the use of the material, primarily involved with number of children allowed in the area and keeping it contained in the water table. One boy does not repeat the rules with the group but continues to try to attract the teacher's attention. He repeats plaintively that he has never used the water table, although it is now December of the school year.

And, in another classroom which had 'centers' only on Friday afternoons, some materials/activities appeared to be viewed as a special reward or treat for week-long compliance in completing 'real' school work. Despite such limitation of access, the

following narration reveals that the transition teacher used the threat of withholding such infrequently provided materials as a means of behavior control:

The transition teacher is seated at a small table checking worksheets completed by students, and three boys who are at a work area using materials begin to giggle, push, shove, etc. They are being 'physical' with one another, although they do not appear to be disturbing other children, most of whom are seated at their desks working on worksheet assignments. The boys grow louder and continue to giggle.

"All right, get to work! _____ and _____, you are supposed to be working. If you continue acting the way you are, we will not have centers this afternoon. I want the silliness stopped right now," says the teacher.

The room grows quiet, and even children who have been conversing at their desks are silenced. The teacher continues checking submitted work from the children standing in line in front of her.

In one transition classroom, restricted access of some children to materials recurred frequently as a result of their being unable to complete assigned tasks as rapidly as other youngsters in the room. The teacher was quite explicit in her belief that such inaccessibility was deliberate, not accidental, and contributed to their school socialization.

"The way I see it," she said, "many of these kids just dream away and don't really get down and work. Like, _____ often talks to other people. I have to put her desk 'way over against the wall every day while they're supposed to be working, or else she never gets anything finished. And, when she gets up to get something, she never goes in a direct line. You should see how she goes [across the room]! It's like this!" She gesticulates with her hands, indicating a weaving motion. "Like, she wanders all over the room just to go get something! I figure, if they want to waste their time like that, why should they have a reward of using the fun things? Besides, they won't get to waste time like that in first grade, and they need to learn to buckle down."

On the day of this conversation, the researcher observed carefully to see how many children completed assigned tasks. By the end of 'center' time, eight children had not yet completed assigned tasks and had been unable to use any 'free' or self-selected materials in the room (i.e., the less structured or, as the transition teacher phrased it, the 'fun' things in the room). Forty percent of children in the class therefore had severely restricted access to classroom materials, since there were 20 children enrolled in the transition room. Other children also had restricted access, but they were able to complete tasks in time to enjoy the autonomy of selecting one or two areas in which to work.

In addition to availability and access, child-material interactions in the transition first grade program were affected by applicability, or, limitations imposed by the transition teachers on the places and ways in which a learning material could be used (applied) in the classroom. Sometimes limitations of applicability appeared to be utilized by classroom teachers due to their adherence to instructional strategies involving the entire class or large groups of children, rather than allowing children to use materials independently or in small groups. On other occasions, applicability appeared to be limited arbitrarily by the transition teacher as a means of reinforcing the isolated academic skills associated with the district reading program. The following narrative descriptions of classroom interactions illustrate limitations of material applicability.

The transition teacher arrives breathlessly with an armload of grocery sacks. They are filled with food items, a large container of sugar cookies, a large bowl, and an electric hand mixer. The lunch period is almost over, and she hurriedly begins setting the items on a small work table at the side of the classroom.

"I'm late! The kids will be inside any minute! I had to go home to pick these up. It took me hours last night to make all these [cookies]," she says.

"Is it someone's birthday?" asks the researcher.

"Oh, no, it's just that we finished the Li book [in the district basal reading program]

and so we are going to ice cookies this afternoon." She continues to set out all the ingredients for the icing and begins mixing the ingredients. By the time the children arrive in the classroom, the icing is complete and it and the cookies await. Children are allowed to place icing on a cookie to eat, after reviewing the phonics lesson of the sound produced by the letter Ii, but they are neither allowed to observe the teacher mix the ingredients nor actively participate in the process themselves.

In a second transition classroom cooking activity, food ingredients were being used to produce a non-edible cookie dough Christmas tree ornament. The completed product was to be a gift to parents. The teacher limited how the cooking material could be used by the children, as described in the following classroom observation.

The transition teacher has placed cooking equipment and ingredients on a small table to demonstrate the mixing of dough ingredients while children watch. Children are seated on the carpeted area immediately in front of the table. The teacher repeatedly reminds the group (and, individual children) to "sit on your pockets" throughout the demonstration; she is apparently unaware that children closest to her are unable to see the top of the table.

The teacher has a running monologue of questions as she proceeds with the mixing. She uses various words (knead, mix, palm), asking whether children know what each word means, and queries them about cooking experiences they have had at home. The teacher calls upon individual children to join her at the table to participate in the mixing, kneading, etc., and each child is timed by the group. Children count to 25, count to 100 by 5s, recite the alphabet, hum "Frosty the Snowman," etc., as a way to ensure equal time among the lucky ones chosen to help.

When the dough is fully ready, the teacher uses a rolling pin to roll out the dough on the surface of the small table. She demonstrates using a cookie cutter to cut an ornament, still insisting that children remain seated. The group is then dismissed to their seats to complete a worksheet, and groups of children are called to the teacher to

stand in line in order to select a cookie cutter and cut their ornament. The teacher uses a spatula to carefully place each ornament on a prepared cookie pan.

The transition teacher took the cookie ornaments home and baked them. On the following school day, she set out the ornaments and teacher-purchased acrylic paint on the same work table with small paint brushes. Children were called two at a time to apply paint to their ornaments. The teacher also applied paint to the ornaments, painting spots 'missed' by children and painting the undersides of the ornaments. The teacher stated that completion of the ornament by an adult was necessary so that the neatness of appearance would be more "acceptable" to parents as a sentimental memento.

Most transition classrooms were supplied with tempera paint and finger paint, yet some transition teachers did not appear to make such materials available to children frequently. For example, one transition classroom was introducing finger paint for the first time as an art material during November. Her primary purpose for introducing the material appeared to be to reinforce a phonics skill introduced in the district basal reading program, and the following narration describes limited applicability of finger paint as a material.

The transition teacher has set up a long worktable with art media, and while children work at their seats she calls groups of students to work at the area. There are 12"x18" pieces of finger paint paper stacked on the table. They have been previously painted by the children with blue tempera paint, although the children apparently do not know why they have painted the blue papers.

"Remember that we talked about Elora Eish (a character in basal reader)? Well, today we're going to make an aquarium for Elora Eish with finger paint," says the teacher, emphasizing the sound of the letter Ef. The children respond excitedly, and the teacher immediately reminds them to sit on the stools grouped around the narrow table.

"Here's the finger paint," says the teacher (again emphasizing the beginning sound

Ef). "Now, you won't need very much. First you use these (indicating small bowls with paint), and just dip out a little bit to make the inside of the aquarium," as she demonstrates using a spoon to apply paint to make aquarium plants. "See? I got too much paint. You just need a little bit. And then, when you get all done you can make *Flora*." The teacher adds a small fish with paint.

The teacher then questions the children about how many plants are needed, where they belong in the aquarium, how much paint they should use, and what the name and sound of the letter *Ef* is. The children wiggle on the stools, leaning over to view inside the paint bowls. The teacher makes no mention of an aquarium, its use, whether children have previously seen an aquarium, what they know about tropical fish and their habitat, why people keep tropical fish, underwater plants, etc. Her questions appear to be directed to two ends: conserving amounts of paint used by individual children, and the letter sound *Ef*.

Some instances were observed in transition classrooms in which teachers appeared to limit applicability of materials due to perceived time constraints or an adult requirement for neatness of appearance. The following narration describes child-material interactions limited by the transition teacher as a way to move quickly through an assigned task with basal materials in the required reading program.

The classroom teacher has reviewed a letter book (i.e., individual consumable basal workbooks revolving around individual letters of the alphabet, in which each letter is introduced with emphasis upon its phonetic attributes) in a large group setting, and children have now returned to their seats. Children are asked to place their letter books on their desks and turn to the first of the assigned pages for completion.

"Remember, we have to get these ready before lunch, so let's get moving," she says to the group. She then begins passing out small cardboard pieces, one to each

child. They are cartoon depictions of an insect form and are supposed to be inchworms (children are now working in the Ii book). All of the 'inchworms' were removed from perforated sheets by the transition teacher prior to the beginning of the activity. Children have been told to complete the first page and then, when ready, are supposed to fold the 'inchworm' on the dotted lines prior to gluing it on the second designated page in the workbook to create a three-dimensional effect. Each of the five groups of work tables have two glue bottles to share. Although the goal appears to be to quickly complete several pages dealing with the phonetic concept associated with Ii, some children do not seem to have the idea yet.

"Teacher! Teacher! I'm ready for my caterpillar!" calls out one child.

Interestingly enough, a quite similar occurrence involving basal reading workbooks in another transition first grade classroom also exemplified limitations imposed by the teacher for child use of learning materials.

The children are seated at their desks using letter books from the basal reading program, and the teacher is at the front of the class giving instructions and asking questions.

"Let's open our books. Let's turn to the first page. What do you see? That's right, animals." She reviews the names of depicted animals, all beginning with the letter Ll. (Ironically, few would be familiar to children in the region; eg., lobster, llama, lion and leopard. There is also a lizard and a ladybug.)

The teacher then distributes sheets of tagboard with perforated pictures of the various animals. The children are to remove the pictures and glue them onto 'correct' places on the page, using dotted outlines of the various animals as a guide for placement. Several children have difficulty removing their pictures, and the teacher moves down the rows of students giving assistance. When each child is ready to place an animal onto the page, the teacher puts the glue on the pages--not the children.

In one observed interaction with materials, the teacher appeared to be limiting the applicability of the material use in order to meet teacher expectations for desired outcomes. That is, she wanted the child-material interaction to meet an adult-set standard for neatness. The following narration illustrates:

Children are seated at their desks with letter books from the district basal reading program. The teacher, at the front of the room, demonstrates how to correctly write the letter of the alphabet on the assigned worksheet. She verbalizes how she wants children to form the letter, emphasizing directionality, staying on the line, size, and slant. Children begin to copy the letter form repeatedly on their worksheets.

"No, no; not like that," she corrects one child. "I want to see you holding your paper with your other hand. You have to hold it like this" (demonstrating by placing his nondominant hand on the worksheet at the 'correct' angle).

Occasionally children were observed occupying themselves with concrete materials when they were supposed to be participating in a passive learning situation. The following narration indicates one child's solution to lack of interaction with materials during a large group activity.

Children have been in a large group setting since school began at 8:15 a.m.; it is now 9:20, and the teacher has completed the morning opening and reviewed assigned tasks. She is now reading aloud a book brought by a child for group reading, a daily practice in this classroom. The teacher, of course, has not previewed the book and the chapter is long. It is a nonfiction chapter book about a dolphin, and the story appears to have no illustrations. The teacher sits atop a tall drafting stool while children remain seated at their desks. The children are fidgeting, and the teacher occasionally interjects questions requiring a one-word response.

One boy rolls a crayon back and forth across his desk until the teacher tells him to put it away. When doing so, he pulls out a pencil from his supply box. He begins to

toy with it; he rolls it across the top of his thighs, out of sight under his desktop. He then tries catapulting it onto his desk top, catching it in his hands. He spreads his left hand on his desktop and uses it to trace his hand, then traces the perimeter of his desktop and the desk space opening. He zips and unzips the pocket on his jeans, putting the pencil in and out of the pocket. He drums it on the desktop, at which point the teacher tells him to put it away. Instead, he surreptitiously holds it inside his desk and breaks it in half. For the remainder of the chapter reading, the boy smooths the ends of the broken pencil and fits them carefully together, like a puzzle, again and again, before finally breaking it a second time. He straightens perceptibly when the teacher closes the book and announces that it is time to begin their workpages.

Requiring a pencil for completion of the assigned worksheet--and, apparently possessing only the one pencil--the boy tries to use the broken piece with the point to write. It is too short, so he then takes the broken half with the eraser to sharpen it in the classroom pencil sharpener. The broken piece is too short for him to successfully sharpen the damaged tool. He approaches the teacher and asks for her help.

"What happened to your pencil? How did it get broken?" she asks. The boy shrugs and looks away. "Is this the only pencil you have?" she asks. He nods. "Well, you should take better care of it if it's the only one you've got!" she says. She locates another pencil for him in her desk drawer.

When the boy returns to his seat, he continues to fit the two pieces of the broken pencil together again and again before finally beginning his worksheet.

Interactions: Child-Child. Transition teachers were frequently observed allowing child-child interactions during portions of the day, although in all classrooms there were portions of the day in which children were expected to work silently or at least refrain from providing assistance to another child. Occasionally materials did not inherently promote child-child interactions. For example, in some classrooms the learning materials provided

for children were 'closed' in that there was only one way to use them and they did not require social interaction for their successful use. The following child-child interaction narration illustrates teacher promotion of cooperative effort among children during some portions of the day with some materials.

It is afternoon and children are allowed to leave their desks to use what the teacher calls 'centers' scattered throughout the classroom. There are five areas set up, and children are supposed to use all five areas before the end of the day. In a narrow corridor between the teacher's desk and the last row of student desks, the teacher has placed six clasped envelopes on the floor. Each envelope contains a learning 'game' which is a teacher-made activity with several laminated workpage pieces, and each 'game' promotes either a reading skill, math skill, or oppositional concepts (eg., top vs. bottom, first vs. last, big vs. little). They are not self-correcting. Students are supposed to use at least two of the 'games' before moving to another area of the room. When they have completed all of the assigned 'centers' they may return to their seats to use crayons and paper or use other materials in the southeast corner of the room.

Two boys and one girl are using the envelopes. The girl works silently and quickly, rapidly completing several of the envelopes and returning the paper pieces to the accompanying envelopes. One of the boys is slowly putting the pieces into correct locations on the page, but the other child is having difficulty and keeps asking the teacher for help.

"Why don't you ask _____ to help you? He knows most of these," the teacher says. The boy requesting assistance hesitates, and the transition teacher intercedes. "_____, will you help _____ play this game? Here, which one do you want to do?" she asks the first child. She then turns to the entire class and says, "Remember, it's ok to work with a buddy on these [games]; you're supposed to do your

[worksheet] pages yourself, but these are more fun with a buddy."

The two boys begin to work together. They begin to converse quietly, with the competent child giving directions. Their turn-taking is disproportionate, since the activity is not really a 'game' requiring exchange of turns, and the boy requesting assistance does more watching than placing of pieces. However, he appears to listen to the first boy's explanations.

Sometimes transition teachers used classroom management techniques designed to encourage peer pressure in order to elicit desired behavior. For example, in four of the six transition classrooms, teachers used an extrinsic reward system that expected whole-group compliance for eight school days before being awarded. In the behavior management system, on days during which the teacher did not correct any given child, she wrote an alphabet letter on the chalkboard. When the entire word, S-U-R-P-R-I-S-E, was completed on the chalkboard, the teacher provided a treat for the entire class. In some classes, the teacher decided whether the day had been a 'good' one, while in other classrooms a letter was earned when no group member had received a teacher reprimand during the day. The following narration illustrates teacher manipulation of child-child interactions to elicit desired classroom behavior.

The children have been outside for afternoon recess and are slow to settle down and resume working. Most of the children are engaged in seatwork, but some children have completed assigned tasks and are now using 'center' materials. Three boys are scuffling on the floor near two large floor puzzles.

"Ok, you guys better cut that out. Time to settle down. Don't we all want to finish our SURPRISE word today? Are we going to finish if _____ and _____ keep that up?" she asks. "If everybody wants a treat, then we better not have a bad day." She looks expectantly at the third child, who is seated on the floor nearby with another floor puzzle. The third boy begins to urge the first two boys to quit arguing

over the pieces. He finally asks one of the boys to join him, rather than continue working on the puzzle with the first boy.

One transition teacher was highly skilled at encouraging children to work cooperatively with one another, although her suggestions usually were directed to urging children to work in pairs. She used such expressions as help a friend, find a friend to work with, when you finish help someone at your table, be a friend, work together, help by sharing with _____, read your story to _____, find someone to play _____ with, etc. She often began large group activities by asking, "Who can help all of us by _____?" and requesting assistance to remember something from the day before, answering a question, providing information, etc.

Child-child interactions were severely curtailed in all six transition classrooms because of the instructional strategies used by teachers. In all six classrooms, major portions of the day were scheduled for direct whole group instruction or work periods in which children were expected to complete a series of assigned tasks independently. For example, classroom observations revealed that although teachers called such activities 'centers,' they were not self-selected, child-initiated activities among a classroom selection of many materials and areas. Instead, all six transition teachers rotated small groups of students among five to eight assigned areas or tasks. Most activities were completed by the child alone at his/her desk. Some activities allowed children to use materials side-by-side but did not require interaction (eg., using headphones as a listening center, at which children followed along with individual paperback basal reading materials while listening to a recording of the same story). In all classrooms, observations indicated that 'centers' included daily a minimum of three assignments which might be classified as worksheets; in some classrooms, more worksheets were used daily. Other assignments might include concrete materials. In two classrooms, unstructured materials usually were not made available except on Fridays or when the child had completed teacher-assigned tasks.

During all observations conducted in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade classrooms, only on one occasion was the classroom teacher observed to engage in a playful activity to promote child-child interaction. A transition teacher had placed life-size food models with a basket and a checkered cloth on the classroom floor. There were paper plates and plastic tableware on the cloth, and a recording of "The Teddy Bear Picnic" was on the classroom cassette player with an accompanying book. Children had been listening to the tape the day before, and they all appeared to know the words to the song. During the afternoon, the transition teacher sat on the floor and began to pretend that she was at a picnic with a teddy bear. Children immediately joined in the dramatic play, and began to converse with one another as if they were at a picnic. The teacher interjected questions about picnics, foods animals eat, the names of the model foods on the tablecloth, seasons of the year when people had picnics, etc., while continuing to promote social interaction among children in the area. When the teacher withdrew, the researcher observed that children continued the play--and repeated many of the teacher's comments about picnics, food names, appropriate times for picnics, etc., to other children who joined the play.

Inferences may be drawn from the Instructional Activities Inventory (see Appendix E) as to teacher facilitation of child-child interactions. One transition teacher reported that students were encouraged to plan and coordinate their own activities every day. Three teachers reported that children plan and coordinate their own activities one day each week, and two teachers reported that children were encouraged to plan and coordinate their own activities rarely (monthly). During classroom observations, support was not found for the response of the transition teacher reporting daily planning and coordinating of activities by children; rather, some children who were able to complete assigned tasks during the allotted time period were allowed self-choice among friends and materials in the classroom. Further, teachers' reports that such child self-direction occurred regularly (two to four times each week) would be true--according to classroom observations--only for some

members of the class.

Interactions: Child-Adult. Teacher-child interactions in the transition program were characterized by teacher attempts to elicit behavioral compliance and by arbitrary teacher decision-making. The district used a behavior management system in which all teachers were expected to apply what has become known as assertive discipline, a technique that supposedly provides children with logical consequences for behavior. In assertive discipline, behavior that is deemed acceptable by adult standards is made clearly known; deviations from the expected behavior should result in escalating unpleasant consequences, so that the child begins to conceptualize that it is to his/her benefit to abide by group rules imposed by the adult. Teachers also provided children with extrinsic rewards, both individually and as a group, for compliance with imposed rules. Rewards included food, special activities (usually in a large group format), and stickers. Theoretically, each child's daily behavior was evaluated by the teacher and reported periodically to parents. In the transition first grade program, reports were made monthly to parents unless poor behavior necessitated notification more frequently. This behavior management system was adopted by the school district, and most (but not all) of the transition teachers had attended inservice training programs in its implementation.

Some transition teachers have modified the assertive discipline program format in their own classrooms. For example, one teacher reported that, in addition to the steps outlined by the school principal for escalation of punishment of children (the fifth and final step was that the child was sent to the school office to visit with the principal), she had added what she termed a 'half-step' for the beginning weeks of the school year. In this half-step, she stated that she provided each child at the beginning of the school year with a paper cup containing 10 reward stickers. The teacher removed a sticker from the child's cup for each rule infraction. Later, children were provided only seven stickers, then five stickers, and finally, one large sticker. In October she began implementing a bulletin board displaying

icons labeled with each child's name; portions of the picture were colored daily by children to indicate good behavior, while removal of the picture from the grouped display meant the child had misbehaved.

All six transition classrooms utilized such displays to indicate both daily performance as well as conduct of individual children during the current month. Children's names were written on the chalkboard by the teacher in some classrooms to indicate noncompliance. However, the degree to which such assertive discipline techniques were employed differed among classrooms. In one transition room, children were observed to remove their calendars noting daily behavior status and hide the calendars inside their desks. In this classroom, the teacher maintained behavior calendars for what she called her 'problem' children but not for all members of the group.

In another transition classroom, both daily, weekly, and monthly monitoring of child behavior was displayed in the room. However, the teacher in this classroom rarely was observed using the labeled clothespins to note individuals' infractions of rules. Calendars were carefully noted with good behavior (the teacher placed small, brightly colored stickers on each date for each child) as well as poor behavior (the day was marked with an x) by the teacher. For example, by the sixth school day of one month 8 of 12 students had received at least one notation for misbehavior on their monthly calendars. Thus, 66% of the enrolled students had received notations of poor behavior during six successive school days. Candy and other group rewards appeared to be used infrequently in this classroom, but group praise was often given. Classroom observations indicated that individual admonishments or compliments were given quietly and unobtrusively rather than publicly in the same classroom, whereas in the other five transition rooms praise for individual student performance or behavior was almost always public.

Use of time out chairs, locations in which disruptive children were placed by teachers for varying amounts of time as a punishment, varied among the six transition classrooms.

In classrooms using time out chairs, the amount of time was usually five minutes for a 'second' offense (after a warning) and ten minutes for a 'third' offense. Chairs were located in isolated areas of the classroom. The behavior management technique was used infrequently in some classrooms, but in two classrooms the time out chair was employed often. One classroom had two time out chairs. By the end of the school day in one transition classroom, the researcher observed five children had spent five minutes each in the time out chair and two children had spent an additional ten minutes each in the time out chair. There were 19 students in the class. In a second transition classroom during one school day, the researcher observed six children spent five minutes in the time out chair and one spent an additional ten minutes in isolation. There were 16 students in the second classroom. Within at least one of the transition schools, in addition to the isolation in a time out chair, transition children were also assigned detention on Saturday for infractions. The following narration describes one interaction involving the teacher's explanation of Saturday detention:

It is Monday, and children in the transition first grade are in a whole class group setting. Following several activities, including show and tell, the teacher gives instructions for the day's work. Some children continue to talk as they disperse to their seats, and one boy is louder than the rest. He finally gives another boy a shove as they proceed to their desks, and the second child protests.

" _____ , this is Monday, and you are barely getting started on the week but you're getting started on the wrong foot. You just had Saturday class. Do you want to have Saturday class again? Get to work and remember that you need to behave this week, or else next Saturday you will be here at school again," says the teacher.

Transition teacher responses on the Instructional Activities Inventory (see Appendix E) indicated that three teachers reported they almost never (less than monthly) used isolation to obtain child compliance. One teacher reported using isolation daily, and two teachers

reported using isolation regularly (two to four times each week). During observations, time out was observed in four of the six transition classrooms.

Escalation of degree of punishment was theoretically a set sequence; i.e., an undeviating progression in the assertive discipline procedure was supposed to be used. In one classroom, however, the teacher was frequently observed 'skipping' levels in the series. Some students (in all observations male students) would be admonished and threatened with a higher level punishment. For example, the following interaction between the transition teacher and a male student occurred one afternoon:

"All right," the teacher interrupts the group in a firm voice, "I'm hearing too many voices. Some people are talking and they've not finished their work. _____, I will not warn [by putting your name on the blackboard]. It is work time," says the teacher.

"I am working," protests _____.

"Don't tell me that. You get to work, because you won't get a warning."

Teacher reports of tangible rewards given for appropriate behavior or performance (such as stickers or food items) varied among the six transition first grades. Four teachers reported using food or stickers daily, one teacher reported using food or stickers two to four times each week, and another teacher reported using food or stickers sometimes (weekly). Two teachers reported that they withdrew special privileges such as recess or free center time for misbehavior of individual children on a daily basis in their classrooms. One teacher withdrew special privileges two to four times each week, one teacher withdrew special privileges sometimes (weekly), and two teachers reported that they withdrew special privileges rarely (monthly). All transition teachers reported on the Instructional Activities Inventory that they provided verbal praise or approval for appropriate behavior or performance daily, and classroom observations supported four of the teachers' assertions that positive affirmation was given to children daily. For example, in one classroom warm

and responsive feedback to children was observed frequently. The following narration exemplifies such interaction between child-adult in this particular transition first grade classroom.

The transition teacher has been working one-on-one with a student. They are seated on the carpeted floor, and the child has been putting together laminated puzzles made from sentence strips. Each sentence strip is a teacher-made replication of sentences used in the district basal reading series. The teacher offers affirmative feedback as the child completes each puzzle and reads it aloud ('good' or 'right'), and when the child has finished all of them the teacher leans toward her and says, conspiratorially,

"You know, I thought this was going to be hard for you, but it's easy. Do you know why it's easy?" The child shakes her head, no. "Because," says the teacher with a smile, "You are so smart!" She reaches out and touches her.

"I'm smart," agrees the girl. "I know how to read."

"That's right, and you're doing a good job, too."

In one classroom observed by the researcher, the teacher usually addressed children by their given names; in another classroom, the teacher usually addressed children by terms of endearment such as sweetie, honey, dear, sweetheart, etc., even when reprimanding a child. In the other four classrooms, teachers sometimes--but, not always--used children's given names when conversing with them. In one transition first grade, the teacher frequently referred to herself in the third person when conversing with children. Such interactions were usually initiated by the teacher and appeared not to expect a response. Thus, exchanges consisted of such phrases as "Mrs. ____ thinks John should..." or Mrs. ____ wants everybody to...."

In addition to the assertive discipline program, child-adult interactions were characterized by arbitrary limitations or standards set by transition teachers. Usually such

limitations related to desire for quiet classrooms or desire to promote certain academic competencies. For example, teachers in the transition program sometimes prohibited children's application of letters or letter sounds if such use had not previously been introduced in the approved sequence of the district basal reading program. The following description of child-teacher interaction illustrates arbitrary limits set by the teacher.

The children are seated in three rows of desks facing the chalkboard, and the teacher, standing at the front of the room, has asked students to suggest words that might be written by using the letters of the alphabet introduced after approximately three months in the transition first grade reading program. Letters introduced in class are written across the top of the chalkboard. One child repeatedly calls out cat and finally spells the word loudly for the teacher, who ignores her. She finally addresses the child, saying that she will not write the word cat because the letter Tt has not yet been introduced.

"We don't have that letter yet," she says.

Another child suggests writing a classmate's name and spells it aloud. The teacher says she will not write this suggestion, either, since "...we have not had the upper case letter for writing _____ (child's name)."

In another classroom observation, the following exchange between teacher and child indicates an interaction characterized by adult-imposed standards of performance for an 'art' activity.

Children have been provided with ditto sheets the teacher has reproduced from a publishing house blackline master for holiday themes. The completed sheet, when colored and cut, is supposed to be rolled around a pencil to form a tube. The tube will then be bent to form a candy cane for use as a classroom Christmas tree ornament. The teacher has demonstrated how the paper is rolled around the pencil.

Children begin to complete the color sheet, and most children automatically begin to use red crayons as the teacher used in her own candy cane. One or two children

begin to use green crayons as well, and the teacher remonstrates, "Remember: we're going to use Christmas colors. You need to use your red crayons for this." One child obediently uses his red crayon on the alternating strips formed by the ditto sheet. When she completes her coloring, she begins to cut out the shape. The teacher, observing her work, says,

"_____, you will need to go back over your colors. Christmas colors are not light, they are bright. Your candy cane is pink, not red. Get your crayons out and color over your lines again so they will be red," says the teacher.

The child complies. Meanwhile, several children continue to argue that some candy canes are red, green and white. "I saw some at Wal-Mart," asserts one child.

And, in another classroom, a similar interaction between child and adult involving arbitrary standards imposed by the classroom teacher occurred. The following narration describes the observed interaction.

Students are completing assigned worksheets at their desks, and the teacher moves among the children attaching stickers to completed pages before they place them in their storage cubbies to take home. One of the worksheets is a dot-to-dot page, and children have been told to complete the outline of the car and color it. They are then to complete two sentences at the bottom of the page by filling in the blanks with the correct words. One sentence says, 'I like to ride in a ____.' and the other sentence says, 'My favorite color of car is ____.'

One child completes the outline and makes several additions with crayons: trees, road, sun, etc. The only portion of the car she colors is the wheels, which she colors brown. She fills in the two blanks, writing car and white, using the list of color words on the wall to write the second word. When satisfied that she is finished, she raises her hand to indicate to the teacher that she is ready to have her work checked. The teacher approaches and reaches out to apply a sticker reward, then withdraws her

hand.

"Finish your work," she says.

"I did," replies the child.

The teacher addresses the entire group. "Boys and girls, didn't I tell you to color your car when you finished [connecting the dots]?" she asks. The teacher turns to the girl. "Color this car," she says, tapping the worksheet gently. "It looks kind of ugly just white." She leaves to review other students' work, and the child sits staring at the page. The researcher approaches and kneels beside the girl's desk.

"Does your family have a car?" asks the researcher. The girl nods. "What color is your car?" the researcher asks.

"White," says the child.

Another transition teacher used a warning system of green light (indicating group behavior is acceptable to teacher standards and children may continue to work), yellow light (a teacher warning that the group is perilously close to violating classroom rules), and red light (indicating that the group must undergo sanctions for 'breaking' classroom rules). She used the color signals to regulate group behavior as well as to regulate the frequency of child-teacher interactions permitted during whole class direct instruction. Large teacher-made signals of red, yellow and green located at the front of the room were turned over to display her assessment of the group's behavior. In the following observation, the teacher also used the signal as a way to control child-teacher interactions.

The transition teacher is conducting a whole class activity in which children, seated at their desks, are completing assigned pages in the district basal reading workbooks while the teacher, at the front of the room, provides direct instruction (primarily in the form of questions to encourage children to note the phonetic attributes of the letter Ll, which is the topic of the current book). The teacher appears to wish members of the group to advance to the next page simultaneously, and she repeatedly asks children to

wait for other children to complete a page before advancing to the next page.

"Ok, now you are getting ahead of everybody. Remember, wait until I tell you to turn the page. You won't know what you're suppose to do," she says.

"Teacher! Teacher! How do I do this? Is this like the li one? Huh, Teacher?" a child calls out repeatedly. He continues to seek a response, standing and sitting, turning the pages back and forth. His rapid completion of the first page appears to make him impatient to complete the next one, and he keeps trying to get the teacher to respond.

Finally the teacher walks quietly over to the green, yellow and red display and turns the green back to the board. She then displays the yellow signal, indicating that the group is being warned. She walks in front of the group and in front of the child seeking her attention.

"Ok, everybody needs to know we're on yellow light. _____, I won't talk to you. You're on the next page, and we aren't ready for that. You need to stay with us. I can't just talk to you. I have to talk to everybody." She then continues to answer questions from other children about the first page.

In another transition classroom, in which the teacher reported that approximately half of the day was spent in large group direct instruction, the teacher appeared to place great value on quiet responses of children during whole class direct instruction. She required children to raise hands requesting the teacher to call upon them before responding; that is, it was the teacher who decided when children might interact with the adult. The following child-teacher interaction observation illustrates teacher control/limit of child-adult interactions.

The transition teacher has been asking questions about a story she has been reading aloud to the group. She usually prefaces each question with a child's name, although even then other children wave hands in the air or call out responses. (Most questions

require one-word rather than extended language responses.) At one point, the teacher asks the questions without addressing it to a specific child. The room is suddenly filled with the clamor of the children's voices as they call out the answer.

"Raise your hand! Raise your hand!" She looks at the group disapprovingly and sits, silent, until the group quietens. "Now we're being so-o-o-o quiet. That's good. Now we're being polite," she says with a firm nod, continuing to read from the book and without referring to the unanswered question.

Other child-teacher interactions were observed that appeared to indicate adult desire for quiet classrooms. The following narrations provide examples of silence or quiet voices as a standard of behavior.

Children are being rewarded for good behavior by movie viewing and popcorn. They have just entered the classroom following morning recess, and, knowing of the treat, appear quite excited. The smell of freshly popped corn fills the air as the teacher aide adjusts the videotape in the machine. The teacher instructs the children, who are seated at five groups of desks, to turn their chairs so that they face the videorecorder and television at the rear of the classroom. Noisy compliance begins. The children were already chattering, but now the chair movement adds to the noise level.

"Now, we're getting really loud. It's [the movie] not going to start until everybody gets quiet," the teacher warns. Finally, when the children do not appear to respond to her request to lower their voices, she adds, "The quietest group will get served [popcorn] first!"

And, in another classroom:

The teacher is involved in whole group instruction, and she is demonstrating use of Unifix™ cubes for an activity the children are to complete later in the morning.

"Help me count," she says to the group, who begin to chant aloud with her as she lays each cube down. "Would you not put your hand on the Unifix™ cubes?" she

adds to a child who has reached up to touch the material. The interruption throws the group out of sequence, as some children cease counting and others continue even though the teacher is no longer placing Unifix™ cubes for them to count.

"Let's start again. I think we got mixed up." The group begins again, but they are not in unison. Some children begin to speak louder--possibly in an attempt to dominate the counting or to urge others in the group to join with them.

"Wait! Wait! Everybody's getting too loud. I will choose a quiet person to count for me," she says, looking out over the group.

And, in another transition classroom:

"Time to line up for lunch. Girls, go to your lockers and get your things," says the transition teacher. Girls immediately begin surging toward the storage area where lunchboxes are kept. There are a lot of giggles, dropped lunchboxes, slamming of locker doors, etc. The teacher then tells the boys to get their lunchboxes, too.

"Now, there's too much noise out here. You guys need to be quiet. Don't you know other people are still in their rooms?"

The boys return to the classroom and also line up for lunch.

The observer watched this scene reenacted six times during the course of the study. On all occasions, boys were reprimanded for being loud, impolite, etc., and girls were never corrected for similar behavior. Girls were always allowed to collect their lunchboxes and be in line ahead of boys. The noise level of the two groups of students did not appear to differ between boys and girls, and yet there were three times the number of males as females within the transition classroom. The transition teacher, however, appeared to believe the boys were louder. The probability that they were, indeed, louder is great since their percentage of the total class enrollment was so much greater.

Since the school day in the transition classrooms followed imposed school-wide schedules for morning and afternoon recess, and since the recess time was so very brief, both children and teachers watched carefully to make certain they did not miss the

opportunity for active movement. Sometimes such adherence to time schedules was observed to limit both child-material interaction as well as child-adult interaction. The following narration describes such limitations.

It is almost morning recess time for the transition first grade. The school day began at 8:15 a.m. with large group direct instruction (flag salute, weather chart, counting days of the school year thus far, etc.). At 9:05 a.m., the children begin assigned seatwork, and at 9:20 a.m. the teacher interrupts to tell children to take out their journals. Children pull colored pocket folders out of their desks and open to blank pages in the teacher-made books. The class has been studying a unit on transportation, and the teacher announces that the topic of today's journal page will be vacations. She calls upon several children to describe vacations they have had in the past.

"We've been talking about transportation. When you go on a vacation, you use transportation to get there. I need some kind of transportation in your picture. So, what two things are you going to draw? You're going to put where you go and what you ride in. Be sure to write something, too" she adds.

Some children begin to busy themselves with crayons immediately. Two boys at the back of the room, both Native Americans, sit quietly but are not using the materials. The teacher, who has been moving among the group offering suggestions, spelling words, and asking questions, approaches these two students.

"Time to go to work," she announces briskly. They look at her but do not begin to draw as requested.

"I never been on a 'bacation," murmurs one student.

"But, you can draw where you would like to go," the teacher counters. She then moves to another child. The second boy begins to draw, but the first continues to sit.

By now several of the children have hurriedly completed something on their pages,

although few have complied with the teacher request to 'write something' because they know that, when they are done, they may select a library book and return to their seats. The teacher gives a time warning to the group just as the Native American boy completes his page.

"Three minutes until recess! Finish up!" she says.

"Teacher! Teacher! Check mine! Will you check mine?" the boy calls out, vainly trying to gain her attention. Unfortunately, most of the children are hurrying to complete their pages and have them 'checked' by the teacher, so that they will not miss recess time. She moves slowly closer to the child, checking other students' work as she goes, until she finally has reached him. She reaches down and marks his page without comment. The boy and the child next to him stuff their journals into their desks and the two children move toward the end of the room, where materials are stored on open display shelves.

"Can we get a puzzle?" the first boy calls back to the teacher.

"No, I want you to look at a book," says the teacher without looking at him. She continues to check journals and does not comment when the boy returns to his desk empty handed.

A child runs up excitedly shouting, "Ms. _____, Ms. _____! It's recess! It's recess time!"

Interactions with adults other than the classroom teacher were limited for children in the district transition program. Teachers reported that they relied resource persons infrequently (two teachers reported that they never had resource people from the community, while four teachers reported such visits occurred once or twice a year). Children also regularly had interaction with the library media instructor and with the school counselor. Occasionally observed child-adult interactions with other school personnel appeared to reflect lack of understanding of language patterns of children within this age

range. For example, during one visit by the school counselor, the group was using the district mandated programmed material. The lesson involved decision making when conflict occurs. Although the counselor continued to give examples which children might encounter in the school setting, such as sharing of playground equipment or taking turns speaking during a classroom group time, her continued use of the term 'alternative solution' did not have meaning for the members of the group. Their puzzlement over the term was obvious, yet the counselor continued to use 'alternative solutions' rather than an expression such as 'other things you could do when....'

Teachers reported during guided interviews that child-adult interaction with parents in the school setting was also limited. Two teachers stated that, by the middle of December, they had not yet met all parents of their students. Three teachers reported that parents did not usually visit their classrooms, and a first-year transition teacher stated that no parent had visited thus far. The other two transition teachers reported that parent visitation at school would be 'unusual.' All six transition teachers reported on the Instructional Activities Inventory that use of games or activities directed or made by parents occurred almost never (less than monthly).

Summary of Personal Interactions

Interactions in classrooms may be categorized as child-material interactions, child-child interactions and child-adult interactions. Child-material interactions are affected by such factors as availability, accessibility, and applicability; i.e., whether the material has been made available for child use by the school district, the teacher or the parent; whether the child has limited or restricted access to the material; and, whether the teacher imposes limitations on how, when or with whom the material may be used. Child-child interactions may be actively facilitated by the classroom teacher.

Certain types of child-material interactions in the transition program were nonexistent in that some materials were not made available for classroom use in the district. Teachers reported materials unavailable or materials limited amounts included construction toys, manipulatives, trade books and outdoor equipment. Transition teachers failed to note lack of science, music, social studies, woodworking, commercial board and card games, and certain art media. Child-material interactions in transition classrooms were limited by restrictions imposed by transition teachers for accessibility and applicability.

Child-child interactions in the transition program were actively promoted by some teachers. In most transition classrooms, however, whole class and large group instructional strategies placed severe limitations upon the amount of time available for such interactions. Major portions of the transition day were spent completing assigned tasks related to academic skills, and little opportunity existed in most transition classrooms for social exchange with other children.

Child-adult interactions in the transition program were characterized by attempts to impose adult control and standards of behavior upon individual children. Limitations of opportunities for child-adult interactions resulted from adherence to whole class and large group instructional strategies; only one teacher worked daily with individual children, providing opportunities for personal conversations. Extrinsic group rewards included food and activities. Punitive measures for individual children included isolation for disruptive behavior, public announcement of misbehavior of individual children, and removal of privileges. Individual transition teachers applied all of these measures differentially, but as a whole the transition program exemplified attempts to manipulate and coerce children rather than develop individual ability to act prosocially and autonomously.

Educational Policies Affecting Transition First Grade: Entry,
Class Size, Referral, Promotion, Teacher
Preparation, Program Expansion

School policies, both formal and informal, necessarily impact upon functioning of ongoing educational programs. In the current study, attempts were made to examine explicit and implicit district educational policies believed to have a possible effect upon the transition first grade curriculum. Policies examined included selection and entry of children into the program, referral of children for further diagnostic testing and provision of special services, funding sources for necessary curricular materials, promotion and evaluation procedures, expansion and/or inclusion of the program within district elementary schools, class size, and teacher preparation sought by district administrators. In the sections below, information was obtained through guided interviews and prioritized questionnaires with/from educators associated directly and indirectly with the district transition program and from district documents.

Selection and Entry into the Transition Program

Until the past year, entry into the transition program was based upon the child's test results on a developmental screening instrument. All entering kindergarten students were screened using the Maturational Assessment Test (Hull House Publishing, 1985), and parents were notified of the results in parent conferences. Students were selected for additional screening with the Gesell School Readiness Test (Haines, Ames, & Gillespie, 1980) during the spring semester based upon kindergarten teacher recommendation, and parents were notified of screening results but were neither required to give written permission nor notified in advance of the examination. Spring screening with the Gesell

instrument, administered by kindergarten and transition first grade teachers who had participated in Gesell Institute training seminars, resulted in a score labeled by the Gesell publishers as a so-called 'developmental age.' Children who scored a developmental age below five years on the developmental screening test were recommended for nonpromotion in kindergarten, and children who scored a developmental age above five or five and one-half years but below six years were recommended for placement in the transition first grade. Children who scored a developmental age of five and one-half or six years were considered 'borderline' students, and parents were warned that they might fail to succeed in first grade (and, some parents elected to have the child placed in transition first grade rather than first grade). Thus, district eligibility standards were that, by the fall, all entering first grade students would be at least six and one-half years in 'developmental age' as measured by a test. No additional diagnostic testing was completed with youngsters who were recommended for placement in the transition first grade, although both teachers and principals reported that kindergarten teachers sometimes recommended diagnostic assessment rather than developmental screening.

New procedural policies were implemented last year. High numbers of students were being recommended for possible placement in the transition first grade, and transition teachers felt some children were being recommended by kindergarten teachers for developmental screening rather than being recommended for additional psychometric referral. The new policies dictate that kindergarten teachers refer students, and transition first grade teachers screen students during the spring for possible placement in the program. Thus, *who* screens potential transition students has changed. District policy dictates that parents must be notified of possible grade nonpromotion by February 1, but teachers stated that during the autumn parents were often 'warned' that their kindergarten child was being considered for possible transition room placement for the coming school year.

The instruments being used in kindergarten and for transition grade placement decisions also have undergone change. The district used the Maturational Assessment Test during the fall semester of the 1989-1990 school year with all enrolled kindergarten children as usual, but district-wide screening of students entering kindergarten was not conducted during the fall of 1990. Teachers claimed that the decision was based upon cost. Administrators and teachers reported that a recent decision had been made: all kindergarten students would be tested with the Brigance instrument (considered by the district educators as an 'academic' test rather than a 'developmental' test) during the spring of 1991 and succeeding school years. Referrals by kindergarten teachers of children recommended for possible placement in transition first grade would be screened by transition first grade teachers using the Maturational Assessment Test rather than the Gesell screening test. Further, teachers reported that although the developmental test was no longer the Gesell screening test, in which they had received training, they were using the newly adopted Maturational Assessment Test without receiving formal instruction in its administration. Teachers stated they believed the tests to be quite similar. Teachers, principals and counselors in the district reported that they believed the Maturational Assessment Test to be quite similar to the Gesell readiness test but that it cost less. The Maturational Assessment Test, like the Gesell, purports to provide a developmental age. The test, according to district educators, assesses emotional development, small motor development, beginning readiness skills, and ability to remember personal information. Educators, however, say the new test is less controversial. Thus, *how* potential transition students were to be screened has changed.

Educators appeared puzzled by researcher questions regarding parental permission to screen children for eligibility to enter the program as well as to have parental permission to place students in the program. Most administrators (and, all transition teachers) indicated that it had never occurred to them to request parental permission to screen children for

eligibility. The general consensus seemed to be that they had never needed permission.

"D-1 isn't really a special education program and doesn't fall under [Public Law] 94-142 or [Public Law] 99-457, and we don't really need parent permission to do any testing," said a school principal.

Educators varied in their opinions as to whether the parent was empowered to decide whether his/her child would attend the district transition program. Some teachers stated that schools avoided the suggestion that a final placement decision was a parental decision.

"After all," stated one transition teacher, "the school has the right to fail a child. We don't have to have parent permission to do that. And, even though D-1 [i.e., transition first grade] is not failing a grade, the school should have the right to put them where they belong. I never give a parent the idea that they can say no. Of course, a lot of them know they can, so we do end up sending some to first grade. But, I always try to give the impression that this is the best thing, and that we are glad we found out in time."

All district administrators were united in their perception that final placement decision was a parental decision. School documents imply that such concurrence is necessary for a successful transition first grade experience; the district handout (see Appendix G) provided to parents of prospective transition first grade students states that "...it is highly unlikely that anyone without a developmental point of view can really take part in a successful Readiness Program." One school principal stated:

"We don't really know the class size each year until the test results are in and the enrollment is known. So, some parents go ahead and enroll their children in first grade even though they should probably be in Developmental First. We try to catch them as they show up at the first of school."

Although appearing united in their belief that the transition first grade was a positive educational service and that some children should delay entry into first grade, educators

associated with the program were not united in their perception of the reliability of the Gesell screening instrument. Their concerns may have been contributory to the district change in test selection. They said:

"Gesell is not always an excellent choice in placement because it could be interpreted in different ways," said a kindergarten teacher.

"I think that Gesell outcomes just depend on who's giving the test. I mean, sometimes if that person knows the child, then maybe it colors her idea of how well he did. I am trained to give the [Gesell] test, but sometimes I think that what we decide is just based on our own knowledge or observation of that child and not the test itself, which isn't very objective," said a first grade teacher.

"We were really having to look at the Gesell because of all the problems with it, and I think we will be on firmer ground with the new policy [on entry into transition first grade]. Our new procedures will be more objective," said a school administrator.

"I don't think we really have a policy [on entry into the transition program]. There is no concrete policy on what to do. Much of what we do--testing, referral, and all that--is subjective," said a kindergarten teacher. "The tests are subjective, anyway."

Educator responses to the prioritized questionnaire indicated that 14 of 18 respondents believed that multiple criteria used for pupil selection was an important transition first grade program characteristic; six respondents ranked multiple criteria use for pupil selection as among the top five suggested program characteristics (see Appendix D, Part V). Five educators indicated that an age cut-off for pupil eligibility was an important program characteristic, though none believed it to be among the top five characteristics of a transition program.

District records indicate that at the end of the first nine-week reporting period there were a total of 102 children enrolled in the district transition program and 440 children enrolled in regular first grade, or, a total of 542 children eligible for first grade. The 102 children placed in the transition program therefore represents approximately 19% of the

total district enrollment eligible for first grade. Since transition program students will attend the regular first grade in the coming school year, the district is nonpromoting almost one out of five students chronologically eligible to attend first grade. Such nonpromotion rate does not, of course, reflect total nonpromotion rate in kindergarten since it does not include children who are repeating kindergarten this year. Records of numbers of children repeating kindergarten this year were not available from district records. See Table I for a comparison of enrollment in transition and non-transition schools in the district in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade programs.

Referral and Provision of Special Services for Transition Students

Federal laws addressing the educational rights of elementary school children include The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Education For All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) of 1975. Discrimination is prohibited under The Rehabilitation Act, and children who qualify may not be excluded from participation in, nor denied benefits of, programs receiving federal funding. Public Law 94-142 requires schools to provide programs for eligible children requiring nonstandard educational services, to provide children and their parents due process, provide accessibility for services, and provide appropriate educational placement procedures and appropriate educational programs. Under Public Law 94-142, placement in programs out of the educational mainstream must provide expeditious treatment, cannot withhold services, must be a team recommendation with the parent as a decision maker, and must use multiple criteria in making placement decisions (Selakovich, 1984).

In the transition program in the current study, children were removed from the regular first grade settings and segregated in separate classroom settings, although district

TABLE I
 ENROLLMENT BY GRADE AND SCHOOL IN
 DISTRICT AT END OF FIRST NINE
 WEEKS 1990-1991

Elementary School	Kindergarden Enrollment	Transition First Enrollment	First Grade Enrollment	Total Transition and First Grade Enrollment	% Placed in Transition First Grade	Total Elementary School Enrollment
School A*	55	-	47	47	-	302
Cedardale	47	12	52	64	19%	354
Elmwood	86	20	68	88	23%	416
Maplecrest	53	31	58	89	35%	424
School B*	43	-	51	51	-	361
Oaklawn	45	20	65	85	24%	424
School C*	54	-	48	48	-	331
Willowpark	51	19	51	70	27%	395
Totals	434	102	440	542	19%**	3051

*Denotes elementary school without a transition first grade classroom.
 **19% of 1990-1991 first grade students are placed in transition classrooms.

educators denied that the program was a special education program. Admission to the program was based upon results from a screening instrument and did not include further diagnostic assessment, although it has been suggested that screening instruments are not designed to make placement decisions but should merely be used to make referrals for additional evaluation (Bredenkamp & Shepard, 1989; Charlesworth, 1989; Meisels, 1987, 1989, 1990; NAEYC/NASBE/ECS, 1991; Shepard, 1990, 1989b). Only one of the educators associated with the district program stated that, once a child had been placed within the transition first grade, referral could be made by the transition teacher for additional educational services. Although some transition children attended speech therapy, placement in such programs was made during the kindergarten year prior to placement in transition first grade. Children were not assessed for eligibility for learning disability programs, speech therapy, etc., once they had been placed in the transition program.

Further, teachers were united in their claim that some students had been erroneously placed in the program rather than placed in programs serving educationally mentally handicapped students or learning disabled students, even though district documents clearly state that the transition classes are designed for students who "...have at least a normal potential to learn (above 90 IQ)." Educators said:

"Other screening is allowed in kindergarten, but it is not allowed in Developmental First. Like, you can't refer children to LD [learning disabilities program] and so forth. Even if the child is believed to qualify for EMH [educationally mentally handicapped program], he is not referred," said a transition first grade teacher.

"Some Developmental First teachers feel that Developmental First has been abused, and children with really low abilities have been placed there. I think that's probably right. Some of them should be somewhere else," said a kindergarten teacher. "Children for Developmental First are supposed to be academically ok but socially immature."

"Children should be appropriately placed in Developmental First. The class next door [i.e., the transition first grade] has had within the same school year an EMH child and an ED [emotionally disturbed] child. Neither helped the Developmental First class. It was chaotic the whole year. We heard the trouble through the wall," said a first grade teacher.

"Any child who after testing was diagnosed as obviously being learning disabled or an emotionally handicapped child should not be placed in the Developmental First grade class. The class is designed for all children who are developing or maturing at the rate nature is directing. The developmental first grade students should have at least a normal potential to learn (above 90 IQ)," stated a school principal. When asked whether additional testing might be done following placement in the transition first grade, the same principal said, "After they are placed in the Developmental First then we do not make any more referrals until first grade. We believe they ought to be given a chance to mature and prove themselves. Once the test results [from the developmental screening instrument] are available, then recommended placement for the child that may have special learning needs and need further testing occurs then, not in D-1." The researcher asked whether this meant additional psychometric testing must be recommended by the kindergarten teacher and not by the transition teacher, and the principal replied, "yes."

"No additional referrals are made during the school year [in transition first grade]," said another school principal. "We need to give them time to prove themselves."

"Low academic work is often the reason for referral [to screen for transition first grade], but that was not its original intent," said a first grade teacher. "Then, after they get them in there [i.e., after students are placed in the transition program], they can't refer them [for further diagnostic testing]."

"The kindergarten teacher watches them all year, and children who are screened for

D-1 are not tested for LD," said a transition first grade teacher.

"I have one student this year who surely qualifies for EMH," said a transition first grade teacher. "I asked if I could have him tested, but my principal said no."

None of the respondents to the prioritized questionnaire indicated that automatic psychometric referral should occur for all children targeted by the developmental screening test, and although 6 of the 18 respondents indicated that availability of psychometric services was an important program characteristic, none ranked availability of such services among the top five program characteristics. Eleven of 18 respondents indicated that provision of speech or language therapy for transition first grade students needing such services was important in a transition program; of these 11, 2 ranked provision of speech and language therapy as the third most important characteristic of a transition program. Eight respondents indicated a health and/or eye examination was an important transition program characteristic, but none ranked such examinations as among the top five characteristics. Five educators indicated that adaptive physical education services should be made available for transition students; one respondent ranked such physical education classes as the fourth most important program characteristic.

Only two of the six schools having transition classrooms have handicapped access.

Class Size in the Transition Program

Class size in the transition first grade program varied from a low enrollment of 12 at one school to high enrollment of 20 in two classrooms. Average class size in transition first grade classrooms is 17 students. All but two classes reflect imbalanced enrollment by gender; male students predominate in four of the six classes. Of all 102 students currently enrolled in the transition program, 64 are boys and 38 are girls. Males represent 63% of all transition first grade students in the district, and males represent 73% of transition student

enrollment in four of the six transition rooms. See Table II for a comparison of individual transition classroom enrollment by total class size and by gender.

Transition teachers were responsible for supervision of their classrooms; no teacher aides were assigned to five of the six transition programs, although 3 of 18 respondents indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that they believed provision of a teacher aide was an important program characteristic. At Willowpark, the school principal reported that he assigned a teacher aide to the transition classroom for 40 minutes each day. Parent volunteers were not utilized in any of the six transition classrooms.

All 18 educators associated with the district transition classes agreed that small class size was an important transition program characteristic. Fourteen respondents ranked class size as among the top five transition program characteristics, and 10 of the 14 ranked class size as being either the first or second most important program characteristic. During a guided interview, however, one first grade teacher questioned why there should be a limit to transition first grade class size. She said:

"It's an all-day program and class size numbers are limited. Why should they be limited when the idea is that these students need an extra year to mature and all [of them] get blanket 'S' for a satisfactory grade? If they had to stay back in kindergarten, the class size wouldn't be limited. I think it's important for all classes in the lower grades to be small."

Educators were divided in their perception as to whether there was a formal district policy to limited class size in transition first grade. However, one transition first grade teacher was adamant in her assertion that it was her own personal policy to limit enrollment in her own classroom. She said:

"I have a full class, and I always have a full class. I won't take more than 20 students. If I did, this would be just another first grade. They [some parents] show up late every year for enrollment, and then the class is always full. This year they are

TABLE II
TRANSITION FIRST GRADE CLASS SIZE

Transition Classroom	Males Enrolled	Females Enrolled	Total Enrollment
Cedardale	8	4	12
Elmwood	10	10	20
Maplecrest 1	10	5	15
Maplecrest 2	13	3	16
Oaklawn	9	11	20
Willowpark	14	5	19
Total Enrollment	64	38	102

busing them to [another school], but I don't think that's fair. Why should they get special services? They don't show up for enrollment because of the Pow Wow and then the district has to pay to bus them. Parents are supposed to transport kids [to transition first grades in other schools] if they want them [i.e., their children] in the Development First."

This narration alludes to one of the district policies: that school transportation services were provided disproportionately within the school district. At Cedardale, for example, all transition children were considered 'walking' students in that no bus transportation was provided. At Maplecrest, students enrolled in the transition program represented residents from five elementary school sites, and bus transportation was provided for some but not all commuting students. The school principal at Elmwood reported that their transition class was 'full' and that they had a waiting list of parents who wished to enroll their children but who could not or would not transport them to other transition first grade classes. Oaklawn transition first grade was not able to accept all students whose parents wanted them in the program, and students from the Oaklawn district were bused to another school site for transition placement. Willowpark served students from its own area as well as from two other elementary schools, and parents were responsible for transport of students.

One school principal mentioned that the transition program was 'full' and yet parents of students from other elementary schools were still trying--in November--to gain entry into the program for their children. He said:

"Most transition classes have 12 or 15 kids, and yet ours is full. I am really put out about this, and if other parents want in, they won't be added [to our transition first grade]. Ours is full."

Evaluation and Promotion

Educators appeared to agree that basal reading series tests, standardized tests such as achievement tests, intelligence tests, teacher-made tests, subject area tests in math or other subjects, or grades on homework or in-class assignments were unimportant as an evaluative method in the transition program. In these six evaluative approaches, only 4 of 18 respondents indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that teacher-made tests were important; one person believed teacher-made tests should be ranked as third among the top five procedures to assess student progress. One of the 18 educator respondents indicated that standardized tests were important and should be ranked as fifth among the top five prioritized procedures to evaluate student progress. Nine respondents indicated that screening tests or readiness tests were important as an evaluative technique in the transition first grade, and 4 of the 18 ranked such tests as among the five most important evaluative procedures used in transition first grade.

All 18 respondents indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that teacher observation was an important evaluative procedure in transition first grade; 12 of the 18 ranked teacher observation as the most important of the top five ways to assess student progress. Four educators indicated that observations made by other teachers (music, speech, etc.) were important in assessing student progress in transition first grade; one respondent ranked other teacher observation as the second most important evaluative procedure. Five respondents indicated that oral or written parent reports regarding their child's progress was an important evaluative procedure in the transition program, and two respondents ranked parent reports as the second most important evaluative procedure. Information shared by parents during parent-teacher conferences was also valued: 6 of 18 respondents indicated that such information was important in the evaluation of student progress.

Several ways in which transition teachers might record students progress were

suggested on the prioritized questionnaire (see Appendix D, Part IV). They included checklists of skills, checklists of activities or materials used, anecdotal records made by the transition teacher, portfolio of the child's art or written work, non-print notation (eg., photographs, videotapes, cassette), and the student's own evaluative report. Thirteen of 18 respondents indicated anecdotal records from the transition teacher observations were an important way to record student progress. Six respondents ranked anecdotal records as among the five most important ways to record student progress. Seventeen of 18 respondents reported that they thought checklists recording students' skills acquisition was important as a way to record student progress; 12 of the 17 ranked skill checklists as among the five most important evaluative recordkeeping for transition students. Eight educators indicated that keeping a record of materials used or activities enjoyed by transition students was an important way to provide a record of student progress, and three of the eight ranked such a checklist as among the top five ways to keep records of student progress. Likewise, eight respondents listed maintenance of student work in a portfolio was important in a transition program; seven respondents ranked student portfolios as among the top five ways to record student progress. Nonprint media and self-evaluation were not indicated as important in evaluating student progress in transition programs by any responding educators.

Several methods of conveying information to the parent about evaluation of their child were suggested on the prioritized questionnaire; they included parent conference, telephone report, progress report with letter grades (A, B, C, etc.), and progress report with marks ($\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{-}$, S, U, etc.). Six of the 18 respondents indicated that parent conferences were important ways to share information with parents, and two of the six ranked parent conferences as among the top five ways to convey student progress. Five respondents indicated that telephonic communication to parents was important; two of the five ranked telephone reports as among the top five ways to convey student progress to parents. No

educator associated with the transition program indicated that progress reports with letter grades was an important way to convey information to parents regarding their child's school progress. Fifteen of the respondents indicated that progress reports with marks (such as $\sqrt{+}$) were important as a way to communicate student progress to the parent, and nine ranked progress reports with marks as among the top five ways to report student progress to the parent.

Educators reported that promotional policies were clear in the transition program, since all students placed in the transition first grade advanced to first grade in the following year. The district's written policy manual did not, according to school principals, address promotion of transition students. However, the district's transition program handout (see Appendix G) clearly states: "[T]he developmental program is a form of non-grading. In actuality, it adds another grade...before first grade" (parent handout, p. 13).

During guided interviews transition teachers and kindergarten teachers reported that parents frequently asked whether a child might advance to second grade following placement in transition first grade. A transition first grade teacher said:

"At my school we have a group meeting in the fall for parents whose children may be attending Developmental First. In the spring, we have another meeting for parents who have not yet decided [whether to allow placement of the child in the transition program]. They always ask whether they [i.e., the child] can go to second grade [after the transition first grade placement]. Then, after we explain that they will go to first grade and why, they want to know how they will do in first grade. They ask if they will be ahead or just bored."

And, a kindergarten teacher stated:

"Every year, parents always ask if their child will go to second grade after Developmental First. And, they always ask if it is the same as 'staying back.' "

A first grade teacher said:

"One question is always the same: 'Can they skip first grade?' "

Another transition teacher said:

"Parents always ask the same questions: 'Won't my child be bored in first grade next year?' and 'Will he go to second grade after D-1?' and 'Can't I just put him in first grade and let him catch up?' "

Teacher Preparation for the Transition Program

Teachers and administrators were asked to indicate on the prioritized questionnaire (see Appendix D) whether specialized professional preparation of classroom teachers assigned to the transition program was important. Several different categories of teacher preparation programs were suggested on the prioritized questionnaire, and they included (a) the teacher has a certificate in early childhood education, (b) the teacher has a certificate in special education, (c) the teacher has a reading certificate, and (d) the teacher has an advanced degree. Educators associated with the transition program appeared to believe that specialized preparation as a transition teacher was unnecessary, since only three respondents indicated that any of the four preparatory programs was important as a prerequisite for a transition first grade teacher. Of these three, all three indicated that holding a teaching certificate in early childhood education was important and should be ranked as among the five most important program characteristics in transition first grade. Of the three, two indicated that it was important that the teacher have a reading certificate.

Three of the 18 respondents thought that it was important that the transition teacher had several years of teaching experience, and one of the three thought that such experience was among the top five most important program characteristics. Teaching experience of transition program teachers ranged from one teacher who was a first-year teacher to one teacher with fifteen years of teaching experience in the elementary grades. Mean teaching experience of transition teachers was six years. However, three teachers had fewer than

two years as a classroom teacher, and three teachers had 10 or more years as a classroom teacher. Therefore, half of the transition teachers were inexperienced and nontenured classroom teachers while half had taught for a number of years.

Eight of the 18 respondents indicated that it was an important program characteristic that transition first grade teachers be qualified to administer screening instruments. Of the eight, two indicated that such ability should be ranked among the top five program characteristics. Three transition teachers have attended inservice sessions qualifying them to administer developmental screening instruments, but they have not received inservice training for the screening instrument currently used in the district.

Actual professional preparation of current transition first grade teachers included five teachers certified in elementary education; one teacher certified in early childhood education; and one teacher with certification in special education (learning disabilities) and elementary art education. Only two of the six teachers held an advanced degree; one is in elementary education, and one is in early childhood education. See Table III for a comparison of professional preparation of transition teachers in the district.

Funding Sources for Curricular Materials

All teachers in the current study expressed dissatisfaction with the source of funding for curricular materials in their school district. In the district, average estimated expenditures for a school child in elementary and secondary schools in the district was \$2,704.04 as compared to a statewide average expenditure of \$3,067.82 during the 1988-1989 school year (State Aid Department, State Department of Education, personal communication on February 20, 1991) and compares with a nationwide average 1987-1988 school child expenditure of \$4,243 (R. Whalen, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education, personal communication on

TABLE III
 TRANSITION TEACHER PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

Transition Teacher	<u>Elementary Education</u>		<u>Special Education</u>		<u>Early Childhood Education</u>		Trained to Administer Screening Test
	BS	MS	BS	MS	BS	MS	
A	x						x
B					x		
C	x	x					x
D	x						
E	x		x			x	x
F	x						

February 20, 1991). Teachers stated they felt that they were not provided sufficient materials, and some reported many of the curricular materials used in their classrooms were personally owned because requests for monies to purchase classroom materials were not usually funded.

During guided interviews, transition teachers reported that many of the materials in their classrooms were purchased with monies provided by their school Parent Teacher Associations (PTA). Teachers' perceptions varied as to the ownership of materials purchased with PTA monies. Some teachers labeled such equipment with the school name and seemed to consider them property of the school district; other teachers appeared to consider the discretionary funds were being donated to individual teachers, and they viewed the property as personally owned. The ambiguity became particularly apparent in classrooms with insufficient materials--because when a teacher resigned, retired or transferred to another position (removing personally owned curricular materials from the classroom) available learning materials were depleted.

During guided interviews with both administrators and teachers, educators labeled some district schools as 'rich' and other schools as 'poor' because PTA monies were differentially provided in the district. One administrator remarked that he felt the district would eventually be forced to address the situation. He said:

"Some schools do not have patrons able to fund their PTA in the same manner as other schools. I feel that we will have to do something about that, and with requirements of [recently passed state law], money is going to be tighter than ever for awhile since we must address class size. But, it is obvious that it is unfair that schools with affluent parents can provide money while schools with poor parents have students doing without."

During the current school year, due to the fact that three transition first grade teachers are new to the transition program as well as teachers with limited experience in the

classroom, discrepancies were observed among the transition first grades in classroom inventories. Three transition rooms had more teaching materials available for classroom use. Experienced, longtime teachers owned many of the materials used in their classrooms, and classroom inventories (see Appendix F) fail to represent the district policy of allowing PTAs to underwrite cost of classroom needs in some--but, not all--elementary schools.

Transition Program Locations and Expansion

During guided interviews educators reported that the district transition program was initiated during the fall of 1980. The school in which the transition classroom was located no longer has a transition first grade at the school. The principal at Maplecrest Elementary stated that, seven years ago, a second transition first grade classroom was added. The transition classes have been moved among several elementary schools, but not all schools have housed the program. When asked why transition classrooms had relocated among school sites, principals said such transfers were due to shortage of classroom space and teachers said the moves were due to enrollment patterns in low income families.

When asked how they believed the transition program had changed during the past five years, educators responded that the number of transition classes had grown. The expansion was not perceived as something that would necessarily continue. Comments made included:

"We now serve all elementary schools' needs, so I don't expect additional Developmental First grade classes to open during the next few years. Besides, where would we put them?" asked a school principal.

Another comment from an administrator:

"I would see us opening a four-year-old program before opening another transition

first grade. For example, children at the [nearby Native American reservation] would really benefit from a district four-year-old program," stated one school principal.

A transition first grade teacher, when asked whether she foresaw changes in the transition program during the next five years, stated:

"All of the schools are currently being served, and we fill the needs of all the schools which share the Developmental First classrooms. We probably won't add a Developmental Kindergarten [i.e., a transition kindergarten for children deemed unready to enter the regular kindergarten program even though they are chronologically eligible for school entry]. We would fight for a Developmental Second Grade...before allowing the district to add a Developmental Kindergarten."

Two administrators were able to foresee the impact of a newly passed state educational bill which includes legislative mandates for smaller class size as having a potential impact on the transition program. One administrator said:

"Space may put the Developmental First back as a program, as an extracurricular program. My feelings are that's wrong--these kids are not ready for first grade but don't need to repeat kindergarten."

Another school administrator predicted:

"Most people don't realize that we are going to have difficulty finding room for all the classrooms we are going to need. This district may not have the luxury of Developmental First grades when we have to have classrooms. And, they are provided with special class sizes, and that's another luxury. Those classrooms may be assigned to regular grades, because we may have to have them [to meet state mandates]."

When asked for additional ways in which the program had changed or might change, educators said:

"Maybe Developmental First might begin using Whole Language."

"I don't think they are going to change."

"They have changed in one way: we're using a new test. And I don't like it."

"Some teachers think there should be a Developmental Second Grade."

"I think we may add one [transition classroom] in all the schools."

Comparisons of the Transition Program with Professional
Guidelines, Adjacent Grade Level Practice,
and Suggested Learner Outcomes

Comparisons of the Transition Program
with Professional Guidelines

One of the stated purposes of the current study was to compare the transition program curriculum with professional guidelines. The National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] is an early childhood professional organization composed of approximately 75,000 members. NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice with preschool, kindergarten and primary age children have been adopted by National Council of Accreditation in Teacher Education [NCATE] in accrediting early childhood teacher education programs. Assumptions made were that (a) the Guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice, as outlined by NAEYC (Bredekamp, 1987), is the consensus of the early childhood profession as to what constitutes appropriate policies and practices for educational programs serving young children age birth through eight years of age; and, (b) The Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in [Primary] Classrooms (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988; see Appendix B) accurately reflects the NAEYC guidelines and, as such, is an appropriate evaluative

rating scale for use in kindergarten, first grade, transition first grade, second grade, and third grade classrooms.

In order to form comparisons of the transition program with professional guidelines, several sources of data were used. Classroom observations, educational environmental rating scale, review of district progress reports and other district documents, and the learner outcomes suggested by the state's Department of Education were used. Observations were made in each transition classroom on four to six days during a three-month period with observation times of two- to four-hour periods. Additional hours of observation were spent in school holiday programs, noon recess, and lunch periods. Total observation time in each transition classroom ranged from 12 to 18 hours.

Classroom observations using professional guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) and the educational environmental rating scale based NAEYC guidelines devised by Charlesworth et al. (1988; see Appendix B) did not reveal congruence with appropriate practice in primary classrooms as defined by the early childhood profession. The 24-item rating scale rated classroom environments in several areas: (a) goals, (b) instructional strategies, (c) integration of curriculum, (d) guidance of social-emotional development, and (e) motivation. Each of the 24 items was scored on a Likert scale based upon classroom observations by the researcher. Transition classrooms received total mean scores of 1.5, 1.3, 2.8, 2.0, 1.5, and 1.8; the overall mean score on the educational environment scale (see Appendix B) was 1.8. Refer to Table IV for comparisons of individual transition first grade classrooms on the educational environmental rating scale.

Based upon educational environment rating scale results, no transition classroom could be classified as developmentally appropriate. Curriculum was fragmented during daily schedules and focused on textbooks, workbooks, and ditto sheets. Dominance of reading instruction in the program reduced or eliminated some content areas, and discrete skill instruction in phonics was the focus of language, writing and spelling and was taught primarily through the use of commercially published workbooks, ditto sheets or teacher-

TABLE IV
 TRANSITION FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM RATINGS
 ON THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT RATING
 SCALE (SEE APPENDIX B)

Category	Transition Program Mean Score	Individual Transition Room Scores					
		A	B	C	D	E	F
1	1.5	2	2	1	1	2	1
2	1.7	3	2	2	1	1	1
3	1.5	3	2	1	1	1	1
4	1.3	2	2	1	1	1	1
5	1.7	3	2	2	1	1	1
6	2.2	3	3	1	2	3	1
7	1.6	3	2	2	1	1	1
8	2.0	3	1	2	2	3	1
9	1.5	2	2	2	1	1	1
10	2.8	4	2	2	3	2	1
11	1.5	2	2	1	1	2	1
12	1.0	1	1	1	1	1	1
13	1.7	2	1	1	2	3	1
14	1.7	3	2	2	1	1	1
15	1.5	2	2	2	1	1	1
16	1.3	1	1	2	2	1	1
17	1.8	3	2	2	1	1	1
18	2.1	3	3	2	2	1	2
19	1.7	3	1	2	1	1	2
20	2.3	4	2	3	2	1	2
21	1.5	3	2	1	1	1	1
22	2.5	4	3	3	2	1	2
23	2.5	4	3	2	2	2	2
24	2.1	3	2	2	2	2	2
OVERALL MEAN	1.8	2.75	1.95	1.75	1.45	1.45	1.29

made worksheets. Curricular content areas were not integrated, and nonstructured creative arts, science, outdoor activity, social studies, and health and safety were omitted or included infrequently. Lack of concrete learning materials and insufficient inventories of materials and equipment inhibited ability of some classroom teachers in providing activities in some curricular content areas and limited their ability to include some activities on a regular basis, but teachers also withheld material access from children in their promotion of goals for reading instruction.

Motivation of student learning in the transition program was characterized by external reward and punishments, extrinsic rewards, use of individual children as a group example, public display of icon or charts delineating children's behavior and/or progress, and adult provision or withdrawal of privileges as a way to externally control behavior. Punitive isolation of children (including half-day detention on weekends) resulted when children failed to meet adult imposition of rules based upon passive activity and standards of interaction with others in the school setting. Primary guidance techniques in transition classrooms included power of the teacher to provide extrinsic rewards or punishments and curtailment of social opportunity for children to interact with others.

Teaching strategies included directed instruction of whole class or large group for major portions of the day with an emphasis upon reading and math as content areas. Lecturing to the whole class while all children participated in paper and pencil activities dominated instructional approaches in the transition program. Opportunity to use certain learning materials or activities were offered as time permitted or as a reward for completing activities valued by the adult for their contribution in introducing discrete reading or math skills. Children worked primarily alone or parallel to (but without social interaction with) other children. While learning centers were provided in all transition classrooms, they consisted of assigned task areas where children were expected to complete a sequence of teacher-directed activities within a highly controlled daily schedule. Thus, little opportunity

for child decision making or for following personal interests existed.

Curricular areas for which the program was designed concentrated upon a narrow intellectual focus of discrete academic skills. Provided activities were limited to those associated with a narrowly defined approach to reading and math, and children were expected to do the same thing at the same time daily despite differences among individual children. Learning and instruction were confined to limited cognitive goals rather than broader approaches of learning how to learn, and activities provided for the benefit of interest or cultural background of individual children were not observed.

Therefore, the comparison of the transition first grade classrooms individually and *in toto* with guidelines established by the profession (Bredekamp, 1987) and with suggested instrumental ratings based upon such guidelines (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk & Hernandez, 1988) indicated that the transition program provided educational settings and practices incongruent with professional guidelines for the primary age children.

Comparisons of the Transition Program with Adjacent Grade Level Practice

Since one assumption of the current study was that individual schools form a microcosmic society that is synergistic and that no one educational program exists separately from others within a school community, then policies and practices within any given grade inevitably affect the ongoing programs of other grade levels and/or auxiliary service programs to form the whole. Therefore in addition to observations in transition classrooms, observations were conducted with three kindergarten teachers and four first grade teachers in schools housing a transition first grade. In two transition schools kindergarten teachers declined to participate; in one of these two transition schools, the first grade teachers also declined to participate.

Classroom inventories of the teaching materials and equipment available in the participating kindergarten and first grade classrooms were compiled by the researcher (see Appendix F). Participating kindergarten and first grade teachers completed guided interviews, prioritized questionnaires, and instructional activities questionnaires (see Appendices C, D and E). Educational environmental ratings were made of participating kindergarten and first grade classrooms using the educational environmental rating scale developed by Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk and Hernandez (1988; see Appendix B). Caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions from comparisons of adjacent grade levels and the transition classrooms because: (a) numbers of eligible kindergarten and first grade teachers were limited, since in one transition school the kindergarten and first grade teachers declined to participate, in another transition school the only kindergarten teacher at the school declined classroom observations, and in some schools only one of the eligible first grade teachers participated in the study; and, (b) observations were made in participating kindergarten and first grades on one occasion for a minimum of four hours. Educational environmental ratings were based upon the single observation, whereas observations in transition classrooms were more extensive.

The findings indicated that kindergarten classrooms in the study had a broader range of materials and equipment and included more concrete materials than transition first grades. Further, such materials were reported by kindergarten teachers as more frequently provided by the district or by individual school Parent Teachers Associations rather than teacher-purchased, although kindergarten classroom inventories did include many teacher-made activities. Educational environmental ratings on the Likert-type scale (see Appendix B) indicated mean scores of 3.0, 2.6 and 3.5 and a total kindergarten mean score of 3.1. Thus, the kindergarten classroom rating mean was greater than the highest scoring of the transition classrooms. Refer to Table V for a comparison of individual kindergarten classes on the educational environmental rating scale.

TABLE V
 KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM RATINGS ON THE
 EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT RATING
 SCALE (SEE APPENDIX B)

Category	Kindergarten Program Mean Score	<u>Individual Kindergarten Scores</u>		
		A	B	C
1	3.3	3	4	3
2	3.7	3	4	4
3	2.3	2	3	2
4	3.0	2	4	3
5	2.3	2	3	2
6	3.3	3	4	3
7	3.3	3	4	3
8	4.0	4	4	4
9	2.3	2	3	2
10	3.3	3	4	3
11	2.7	2	3	3
12	2.3	1	3	3
13	2.0	1	3	2
14	3.0	2	4	3
15	2.7	4	2	2
16	1.3	1	1	2
17	3.7	3	4	4
18	3.0	2	4	3
19	3.3	3	4	3
20	3.7	3	4	4
21	3.0	3	3	3
22	3.3	3	4	3
23	4.7	4	5	5
24	4.0	4	4	4
OVERALL MEAN	3.1	2.62	3.54	3.04

Kindergarten classrooms, like transition classrooms, were characterized by lack of integration of curriculum, the dominance of reading instruction as an area emphasized as first and with math emphasized as second in importance, and the elimination of some curricular areas and materials (especially science and creative art activities). Teachers in kindergarten classrooms also relied heavily upon whole-class direct instruction and instructional materials associated with discrete phonics skills, according to self-reports and observations. Kindergarten teachers also relied upon the district assertive discipline program as a major means of providing social-emotional guidance. However, in general kindergarten teachers provided more opportunities for social interaction, more opportunities for use of concrete materials, and more daily time in which child-initiated activity was allowed.

Findings indicated that first grade classrooms were more similar than kindergarten classrooms when compared to transition first grades on the basis of inventories of available materials and equipment, daily schedule, classroom observations, and mean scores on the educational environmental rating scale. First grade classrooms, in general, had larger inventories of learning materials and equipment than did transition first grade classrooms. However, such inventories were more unidimensional than were transition first grades with a predominance of textbook, workbook, reproducible worksheets, and materials from the basal reading program. Time was rigidly assigned to whole-class instruction during observations, with all children expected to work at the same pace on the same materials. Two first grade teachers reported that they used whole class reading instruction in the mornings and whole class mathematics during most afternoons. Teachers adhered to the district assertive discipline program with enforcement of rules through external rewards and punishment of infractions. Children were infrequently encouraged to interact with others in the group or to self-select activities. First grade classrooms used some concrete materials for mathematics instruction, but first grade inventories did not include interactive games,

construction toys, manipulatives, or musical instruments. Mean rating scores on the educational environment rating scale were 1.2, 1.2, 2.6 and 1.6, with an overall mean score of 1.6.

Refer to Table VI for a comparison of first grade classroom ratings on the 24-item educational environmental rating scale. Refer to Table VII for a comparison of kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade mean ratings on the educational environmental rating scale.

Comparisons of the Transition Program with
Suggested Learner Outcomes and
District Progress Reports

District progress reports of the kindergarten program, transition program, and the first grade program were viewed as representing desired learner outcomes in the district, and these were examined for content and then compared to one another. Progress reports used in the district transition first grade were then compared to the Suggested Learner Outcomes for Developmental Four-Year-Olds, Developmental Kindergarten and Developmental First Grade provided for state public schools by the state's Department of Education (1990). Educator self-reports on the prioritized questionnaire regarding goals of the transition program were also compared to the district progress reports for transition first grade and to the district handout provided to parents of prospective transition students (see Appendix G).

Comparison of Transition Program Progress Reports with Suggested Learner Outcomes: The district progress report for transition first grade includes 32 items, and the state's Department of Education suggested learner outcomes includes 140 items.

TABLE VI
 FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM RATINGS ON THE
 EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT RATING
 SCALE (SEE APPENDIX B)

Category	First Grade Program Mean Score	<u>Individual First Grade Scores</u>			
		A	B	C	D
1	1.3	2	1	1	1
2	1.5	3	1	1	1
3	1.5	2	2	1	1
4	1.8	3	2	1	1
5	1.5	2	2	1	2
6	2.0	3	2	1	2
7	1.3	2	1	1	1
8	2.0	3	2	1	2
9	1.5	3	1	1	1
10	2.0	3	2	2	1
11	1.5	2	2	1	1
12	1.3	2	1	1	1
13	1.5	2	2	1	1
14	1.5	2	2	1	1
15	2.0	3	2	1	2
16	1.3	2	1	1	1
17	1.3	3	1	1	1
18	1.3	3	1	1	1
19	1.8	3	2	1	1
20	2.0	4	1	2	1
21	1.8	2	2	2	1
22	1.8	3	2	1	1
23	2.3	3	2	2	2
24	1.5	3	1	1	1
OVERALL MEAN	1.6	2.63	1.58	1.16	1.16

TABLE VII

COMPARISONS AMONG PARTICIPATING KINDERGARTEN,
 TRANSITION FIRST GRADE AND FIRST GRADE
 PROGRAMS BASED UPON EDUCATIONAL
 ENVIRONMENTAL RATINGS
 (SEE APPENDIX B)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
CURRICULUM GOALS				
1. Range of Curriculum Areas for Which Program is Designed		3.3	1.5	1.3
5 4 3 2 1				
•physical	•narrow focus			
•social	•intellectual emphasis			
•emotional	•discrete academic			
•intellectual	skills emphasis			
•learning how to learn				
2. The Place of Children's Self-esteem, Sense of Competence, and Positive Feelings Toward Learning in the Curriculum and Instruction		3.7	1.7	1.5
5 4 3 2 1				
•Each child is given an equal amount of positive attention	•Children who conform receive more attention			
	•Children are given attention according to their level of academic performance			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
3. View of Growth and Development 5 4 3 2 1 •Work is individualized •Children move at their own pace	•Evaluated against a group norm •Everyone is expected to achieve the same narrowly defined skills •Everyone does the same thing at the same time	2.3	1.5	1.5
TEACHING STRATEGIES				
4. The Emphases in the Curriculum 5 4 3 2 1 •Learning occurs through projects and learning centers •Children's ideas are extended, questions are encouraged, and interests are developed •All subjects are integrated into units	•Curriculum is divided into discrete subject and time units •Emphasis on reading first and math second •Social studies, science, health are included only if time permits •Art, music, and physical education are taught once per week by specialists	3.0	1.3	1.8

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
5.	<p>Organization of the Curriculum 5 4 3 2 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Activities center on topics such as in science or social studies •Topic activities include story writing and story telling, drawing, discussion, hearing stories and informational books, and cooperative activities •Skills are taught as they are needed to complete a task 	2.3	1.7	1.5
6.	<p>Teacher Preparation and Organization for Instruction 5 4 3 2 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Learning centers are set up which provide opportunities for writing, reading, math and language games, dramatic play •Children are encouraged to critique their own work •Errors are viewed as normal and something from which children can learn 	3.3	2.2	2.0

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
7. Instructional Activities		3.3	1.6	1.3
5 4 3 2 1				
•Children work and play cooperatively in groups	•Children work alone, silently on their worksheets or workbooks			
•Projects are self selected with teacher guidance	•Little, if any, peer help is permitted			
•Activity centers are changed frequently	•Penalties for talking			
•One or more field trips				
•Resource people visit				
•Peer tutoring				
•Peer conversation				
8. Learning Materials and Activities		4.0	2.0	2.0
5 4 3 2 1				
•Concrete, real, and relevant to children's lives	•Limited primarily to books, workbooks, and pencils			
•Blocks, cards, games, arts and crafts materials, woodworking tools, science equipment, etc.	•Permanent desks that are rarely moved			
•Flexible work spaces (tables, carpet, etc.)	•Mostly large group instruction			
	•Playful activity only when work is done			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
INTEGRATED CURRICULUM				
9. Language and Literacy		2.3	1.5	1.5
5 4 3 2 1				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Technical skills are taught as needed •Generous amounts of time are provided to learn through: literature and nonfiction reading; drawing, dictating, and writing stories; bookmaking; and library visits •Daily reading aloud by teacher •Subskills such as letters and phonics are taught individually and in small groups using games •Literacy is taught through content areas such as science and social studies •Children's invented spellings are accepted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Teaching is geared to passing standardized tests •Reading taught through skills and subskills •Reading taught as a discrete subject •Silence is required •Language, writing, and spelling instruction focus on workbooks •Teaching focuses on reading groups with other children having adequate amount of seatwork to keep busy •Phonics instruction stresses learning rules rather than relationships •Everyone must complete the same basals no matter what their abilities •Everyone knows who is in the slowest reading group •Acceptable writing has correct spelling and is standard English 			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
10. Math		3.3	2.8	2.0
5 4 3 2 1				
•Children encouraged to use math through exploration, discovery, and solving meaningful problems	•Taught as separate subject			
•Integrated with other areas	•Taught at a scheduled time each day			
•Skills acquired through play, projects, and daily living	•Focus on textbook, workbook, practice sheets, board work			
•Math manipulatives are used	•Lessons follow text sequence			
•Math games are used daily	•Seldom any "hands on" activity			
	•Must finish work in order to use games and manipulatives			
11. Social Studies		2.7	1.5	1.5
5 4 3 2 1				
•Themes may extend over a period of time	•Included occasionally if reading and math are completed			
•Learned through playful activities, discussion, trips, visitors, writing, reading, social skills development, (planning, sharing, taking turns)	•Mostly related to holidays			
•Art, music, dance, drama, woodworking, and games are incorporated	•Brief activities from the social studies textbook or commercially developed newspaper (i.e. <u>Weekly Reader</u>) and doing dittoed seatwork			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
12. Science		2.3	1.0	1.3
5 4 3 2 1				
•Discovery, built on the children's natural interest in the world	•Taught from a single textbook or not at all			
•Projects are experimental and exploratory, encourage active involvement of every child	•Complete worksheets			
•Plants and pets in the classroom	•Watch teacher demonstrations			
•Through projects and field trips children learn to plan, apply thinking skills, hypothesize, observe, experiment, verify	•No field trips			
•Learn science facts related to their own experience	•Materials in the science center are rarely change			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
Appropriate	Inappropriate	K	T-1	1
13. Health and Safety		2.0	1.7	1.5
5 4 3 2 1				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Projects designed to help children use personalized facts •They learn to integrate facts into their daily habits •Dictate or write their own plans •Draw and write about these activities •Read about these activities •Enjoy learning because it is related to their lives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Posters and textbooks are used •Once a week lessor or once a year unit on health 			
14. Art, Music, Movement, Woodworking, Drama, and Dance		3.0	1.7	1.5
5 4 3 2 1				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Integrated throughout the day •Specialists work with teachers and children •Children explore a variety of art media and music •Children design and direct their own products and productions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Taught as separate subjects once a week •Specialists do not coordinate closely with classroom teachers •Representational art is emphasized •Crafts substitute for artistic expression •Coloring book type activities •Use patterns and cut-outs 			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
15. Multicultural Education		2.7	1.5	2.0
5 4 3 2 1				
•Materials and activities are multicultural and nonsexist	•Materials and activities lack evidence of attention to cultural diversity and a nonsexist point of view			
16. Outdoor Activity		1.3	1.3	1.3
5 4 3 2 1				
•Planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves freely on a well designed playground	•Limited because it interferes with instructional time or •Provided as a time for recess to use up excess energy			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
GUIDANCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT				
17. Prosocial Behavior, Perseverance, and Industry		3.7	1.8	1.3
5 4 3 2 1				
•Stimulating, motivating activities are provided that promote student involvement	•Lectures about the importance of appropriate social behavior			
•Individual choices are encouraged	•Punishes children who become bored and restless with seatwork and whisper, talk, or wander around			
•Enough time is allowed to complete work	•Punishes children who dawdle and do not finish work in allotted time			
•Private time with friend or teacher is provided	•No time for private conversations			
	•Only the most able students finish their work in time for special interests or interaction with other students			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
18. Helping, Cooperating, Negotiating, and Solving Social Problems 5 4 3 2 1 •Daily opportunities to develop social skills such as helping others, cooperating, negotiating, and talking with others to solve problems	•Little time to develop social skills--mostly independent seatwork and teacher directed activities •Only social opportunity is on the playground but no consistent adult is available to provide guidance	3.0	2.1	1.3
19. Guidance Techniques 5 4 3 2 1 •Positive guidance techniques are used: -Clear limits are set in a positive manner -Children involved in establishing rules -Children involved in problem solving misbehavior -Redirection is used -Meets with child who has problems (and with parents) •Recognize that every infraction doesn't warrant attention and identifies those that can be used as learning opportunities	•Teacher is in adversarial role •Emphasis on power to provide rewards and punishments •Maintaining control of the classroom is primary goal •Teachers: -enforce rules -give external rewards for good behavior -punish infractions •When there is social conflict, participants are separated and quieted--social issue is avoided •Teacher attitude is demeaning to child	3.3	1.7	1.8

TABLE VII (continued)

Educational Environmental Rating Description	Grade Level Mean Ratings		
	Appropriate	Inappropriate	
	K	T-1	1
20. Facilitation of self esteem by expressing respect, acceptance, and comfort for children regardless of their behavior	3.7	2.3	2.0
5 4 3 2 1			
•Children are trusted to make some of their own decisions			
•Children are encouraged to develop their own self control			
•Teacher is warm and accepting			
•Teacher provides understanding and nurturance			
•Teacher adapts to children's needs			
•Teacher screams in anger			
•Teacher neglects children's individual needs			
•Physical or emotional pain is inflicted			
•Criticizes, ridicules, blames, teases, insults, name-calls, threatens, frightens, and/or humiliates			
•Laughs at children in derogatory manner			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
MOTIVATION				
21. Internal vs External Sources of Motivation and Rewards for Achievement		3.0	1.5	1.8
5 4 3 2 1				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Encourages development of internal rewards and internal critique •Guide children to see alternatives, improvements, and solutions •Guide children to find and correct own errors •Teacher points out how good it feels to complete a task, to try to be successful, to live up to one's own standards for achievement •The reward for completing a task is the opportunity to move on to a more difficult challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Uses external rewards and punishments •Corrects errors; makes sure children know right answers •Rewards children with stickers, praises in front of group, holds children up as examples •Motivation is through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -percentage or letter grades -stickers -stars on charts -candy -privileges 			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
		<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
Appropriate	Inappropriate			
22. Teacher as a Model for Motivation		3.3	2.5	1.8
5 4 3 2 1				
•Through relationship with teacher, child models teacher's enthusiasm for learning, identifies with teacher's conscientious attitude toward work, and gains in self motivation	•Children identify with teacher's lack of enthusiasm and interest in his or her work and emulate it			
TRANSITIONS				
23. Transitions Within the School		4.7	2.5	2.3
5 4 3 2 1				
•Children are assisted in making smooth transitions between groups or programs throughout the day by teachers who: -maintain continuity -maintain ongoing communication -prepare children for each transition -involve parents -minimize the number of transitions necessary	•Day is fragmented among many different groups and programs with little attempt by adults to communicate or coordinate successful transitions			

TABLE VII (continued)

<u>Educational Environmental Rating Description</u>		<u>Grade Level Mean Ratings</u>		
<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>T-1</u>	<u>1</u>
24. Transitions Within the Classroom		4.0	2.1	1.5
5 4 3 2 1				
•transition activities (i.e. special song)	•single announcement			
•warning signals are given	•abrupt changes			
•ample time is allowed	•wait for all to arrive before begin next activity			
•next activity is intrinsically enticing	•individuals singled out for being slow or distracted			
OVERALL MEAN RATING		3.1	1.8	1.6

K = Kindergarten
T-1 = Transition First
1 = First

Suggested learner outcome areas addressed for developmental (i.e., transition) first grade include adaptive skills, creative skills, language arts, mathematics, motor skills, science and social studies. The district progress report provided for parents of children in the transition program does not include many of the suggested learner outcome items from the state's Department of Education listing. In the category entitled adaptive skills, for example, 5 of the 25 suggested learner outcomes appear on the transition report as alike or similar items. On the suggested outcomes section entitled creative skills, only 1 of 12 items might be considered similar to an item on the transition progress report (but, deals with creative use of music rather than participation, as indicated on the transition report). There are 34 learner outcomes in the area of language arts suggested by state's listing; of the 34, two items are related to those found on the transition report: (a) recognizes color words, and (b) matches upper and lower case letters of the alphabet. Two other items are similar, but the transition report demands more rigorous performance: (a) the transition report requires that the child associate sounds to letters of the alphabet, while the suggested outcome is that the child begins to identify most initial and final consonant sounds; and (b) the transition report requires that the child recognize words 'learned to date,' while the state's suggested learner outcome is that the child can recognize sight words through language experience stories.

In the area of mathematics, state suggested learner outcomes include attributes of objects and some rote skills in the list of 21 items. Of these, one item is less academically and abstractly demanding on the suggested learner outcomes than on the transition report: the state's Department of Education (1990) suggests that an appropriate outcome is for the child to join two sets of two objects and be able to say it is now a set of four when asked how many, implying that addition should continue to be related to concrete objects. A similar item relates to the use of concrete objects to identify sets of objects after some have been taken away. On the transition report, however, an item simply states that the child

should be able to have computational skills in addition and subtraction.

Most of the differences between the suggested learner outcomes from the state Department of Education and the progress report provided parents of children in the transition program deal with descriptions of behaviors using concrete objects rather than discrete skills and the fact that some areas addressed by the learner outcomes (eg., motor skills, science, social studies) are not addressed on the transition report. The suggested learner outcomes listing is considerably lengthier than the transition report listing. Overlap of the two is limited, however, but even on similar items performance standards are higher on the transition report. Items on the suggested learner outcomes also include health reports and process rather than product evaluation.

Comparison of Transition Progress Reports with Adjacent Grade Level Progress

Reports: District progress reports for kindergarten provided to parents address six areas: behavior and social development, visual perception and eye hand coordination, pre-reading and language skills, math skills, self-help and motor skills, and a section requiring long-term memory of factual information (including personal information such as home telephone number, date of birth, full personal name, full name of parents or guardians, home address, ability to name letters of the alphabet, ability to name days of the week). District kindergarten progress reports are marked to indicate progress as satisfactory, improving, or needs to improve (i.e., S, I or N). An attendance section and a height and weight record is also included for parents. There is a section for the kindergarten teacher to note comments as well as a section to note the child's grade level placement for the coming school year.

District transition first grade progress reports to parents include seven main sections: maturation skills (six items); academic, social and personal development (nine items); reading and language skills (seven items); math skills (eight items); penmanship skills (two

items); and a section to record quarterly attendance. Areas of development are marked by the teacher as either satisfactory or needs improvement. An area is included for teacher comments, and a section is provided for the teacher to note the child's grade level placement for the coming school year, although it is district policy that all transition first grade children are advanced to regular first grade the year following transition placement.

District first grade progress reports to parents include a section for quarterly reporting of academic progress in reading, spelling, penmanship, language, social studies, mathematics, science, art, music, library-media, and physical education. Eleven content areas are listed. Space is provided for teachers to note comments (using a 25-item code) as well as letter grades. Attendance records are also provided. There is no area for the first grade teacher to provide individual comments. There is a section in which the teacher may note the child's grade level placement for the coming school year.

Comparison of progress reports provided parents in the three grade levels (i.e., kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade) indicate that specific skills are listed on both kindergarten and transition first grade progress reports. Kindergarten progress reports include self-help and motor skills (eg., put on and fasten own wraps, hop on one foot) that are not included on the transition first grade progress. A visual perception and eye hand coordination section is also not included on the transition progress report, although some items from this section are identical to those on the transition progress report. Thirty-nine items are provided on the kindergarten progress report, and 32 items are on the transition progress report. Six items on the kindergarten report are in a category not addressed on the transition report. Eleven items are alike on both reports, and 10 items differ only to some extent. For example, on the kindergarten report an item is 'knows the eight basic colors,' while on the transition first grade report card the item is 'knows the eight basic color words.' And, on the kindergarten report a math skill is listed as 'recognizes numerals 0 to 10 first semester, 20 second semester,' while on the transition

progress report there are two items, 'recognizes numerals to 20' and 'recognizes numerals to 50.' Thus, there is considerable overlap of the kindergarten and the transition first grade progress reports provided parents, while the transition report and the first grade report differ markedly.

Educator Perceptions of the Transition Program

Nationwide, little research appears to have been conducted regarding transition teacher perceptions of transition programs. To date no investigation of transition program curriculum appears to have been completed in which transition first grade teachers were systematically interviewed about their perceptions of the program's curriculum and policies. One purpose of the current study was to examine the beliefs of educators associated with the program and their perceptions of the program's functioning. The first two sections which follow address participants' beliefs and perceptions of (a) the transition child's traits as learner, and (b) the goals and content of the program. The third section addresses educators' perceptions of the differences between kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade programs in the district. Sources of information included guided interview questions (see Appendix C), prioritized questionnaire (see Appendix D), and district handouts provided to parents whose children have been recommended for placement in the transition program (see Appendix G).

Educators' Perceptions of the Transition

Child as a Learner

District handouts provided to parents of children recommended for placement in the transition program provide the school district's philosophical explanation for how children

learn and develop. The handout states:

We believe that children are individuals and develop at varying rates. We believe that some children require more time to master developmental stages than others. We believe that the learning process includes academic, social, emotional, and physical development. We believe that learning is often a sequential process. We believe that a child can flourish in an environment in which a positive self-concept is encouraged. We believe that education should be a pleasant, motivating experience to the extent that the child will want to pursue learning (from district handout, p. 2; see Appendix G).

And, another section of the handout provided parents states that the transition class is designed for all children who are "...developing or maturing at the rate nature is directing..." and that "...growth is orderly, structured and predictable."

The handout implies that harm is irreparable when children are advanced to a grade level for which curriculum is believed too difficult for the child to succeed. It states:

Overplacement [i.e., being placed in a grade level for which developmental tests predict that the child is unready] can impede the natural development of the child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. Because society smiles fondly on the intellectual child, they [sic] soon learn to put the major part of their energy into intellectual growth at the expense of physical, emotional or social growth. Because they are in over their heads, something has to give. This means that one or two areas of the child's development grow at a faster rate than other areas of his development. With each passing year, the gap grows wider until a distorted, one-sided, limited personality has developed. The child who enters school before they [sic] are developmentally ready cannot cope with the environment and they are forced to simplify their relationship to it and deal with it in a few areas only (from district handout, p. 9; see Appendix G).

During guided interviews, statements made by teachers and administrators implied that children eligible for the transition program exhibited emotional needs that would impede

their ability to develop intellectually and that such needs would not be met by the regular first grade program. Some educators also implied that intellectual ability is unrelated to transition placement, but others stated that transition children are unable to cope with the academic demands of regular first grade curriculum. In a guided interview one educator said:

"Developmental First is a place for children who aren't ready academically for regular first grade curriculum," said an administrator. "But, they usually aren't ready emotionally, either."

Another administrator said:

"The Developmental First meets emotional needs. It gives them a year to grow. In one [of the transition classes in my elementary school] there was a female with a 165 IQ. It [the transition program] meets scholastic needs, too, but emotional needs pull away from their ability to perform."

Comments from teachers included:

"It gives them a year to grow and extra time to develop motor skills. Nearly all of them have a discrepancy somewhere in their motor skills," said a kindergarten teacher.

"Developmental First is not to meet academic needs. It is to meet other phases of personality--emotional, social. And, certainly some intellectual [needs are met], but that is not the primary reason for Developmental First because that's not what they need," said a transition first grade teacher. "Developmental First is because they just can't develop faster, and you just have to give them time to grow. And, age has nothing to do with it. I've had eight-year-olds before [in the transition first grade]."

"I think kids come in here because they just aren't mature enough to handle first grade. They just aren't mature enough to stretch that fast that soon, and so it is because they can't handle what's in first grade," said a transition first grade teacher.

"They need to come here so that they can grow some more."

One kindergarten teacher stated:

"Children in D-1 [i.e., transition first grade] are academically ok but socially immature acting. Any change or imperfections would cause them upsets. For example, one girl could not remember a sequence of directions, and she would become very upset that she would not be able to remember what she was supposed to do or what she was supposed to take home in kindergarten. She would have been lost in first grade. As they mature and have time to adjust to school, they will be all right. But, you have to give them time."

And, a first grade teacher stated her beliefs about the typical transition student:

"Kids who qualify and are put back in Developmental First exhibit the following characteristics: They are very quiet--won't participate with the group. They are very insecure. They can't keep up with the mainstream. They have poor spatial vision and can't see the lines, so they can't print on lined paper. They have sloppy work; their work appears very immature."

The district parent handout also gives examples of behavioral traits of children targeted for placement in the transition first grade. It states that transition students may exhibit any of the following behaviors:

- often not part of the group
- unable to stay on the subject
- short attention span
- fails to complete work
- complains of being ill; i.e., stomachache [sic], earache, headache
- cries easily
- insecure about anything new
- flighty around room

- does not like school
- does not like teacher
- daydreams
- may wet bed
- tire easily (especially after school)
- few friends
- lash out angrily
- relate better to and play with children who are younger
- erratic school achievement (from district handout, p. 2; see Appendix G).

Educators' Perceptions of Transition Program

Goals and Content

Twelve of 18 educators indicated in their responses to the prioritized questionnaire (see Appendix D) that they considered an important goal of the transition first grade program the fostering of the child's positive self-concept, and 8 of the 18 ranked fostering a positive self concept as among the top five goals of the transition first grade program. Eight educators indicated on the prioritized questionnaire that they thought empathy for the feelings of others and/or concern for the rights of others were important goals of the transition first grade, and one respondent ranked both goals as among the five most important of suggested desired program outcomes.

In the area of motor development, eight respondents indicated that small motor development was an important goal, and two ranked it as among the top five goals. Nine respondents indicated large motor development was an important program goal; two ranked it as among the top five goals. Nine respondents indicated auditory and/or visual discrimination as important transition program outcomes, but none of the educators ranked

such abilities as among the top five program goals.

In the area of cognitive development, 17 of 18 educators indicated that prereading skills was an important program goal, with 11 ranking prereading as among the top five goals of transition first grade. Fifteen respondents indicated that beginning math skills was important, with 10 ranking such skills as among the top five goals. Ten educators indicated that problem solving ability was important as a desired outcome for the transition program, and five respondents ranked problem solving ability as among the top five goals.

Educators also appeared to believe that program goals should include those skills and behaviors which promote compliance with group instruction in the school setting. Fifteen respondents indicated that remembering and following oral directions was an important program goal; 9 of the 15 ranked it as among the top five program goals; seven ranked ability to follow oral directions as among the five most important program goals. Fourteen respondents listed learning to take care of books, supplies, and the school environment was an important transition program goal. Twelve ranked learning to share space and materials with others was an important goal, and one ranked it as among the top five transition first grade program goals.

During guided interviews, educators offered various viewpoints on how the transition program meets children's needs. They said:

"This is a chance for them to gain some maturity so that they can learn to complete a task without distraction. They learn better social skills and how to handle school," said one principal.

"I think it's more for parents who refuse to let them repeat kindergarten. The ones in the program here are different in that they come to school knowing more--especially language. They are different from the ones at other [transition program] schools," said a first grade teacher.

"It is not [designed to meet] academic [needs] because it's more like kindergarten,

considering what we do in first grade," said a first grade teacher.

And, a transition first grade teacher said:

"It [the transition program] is for children who just aren't going to make it in first grade. This gives them a chance. We just can't advance them more than they're ready for. I think it's a better way than repeating kindergarten, but though this isn't a grade failure I think if they still aren't making it then we need to look at something else rather than retaining them in, say, second grade. Keeping them back two years is just too much."

When the researcher asked whether the transition teacher knew if district policy allowed children who had been placed in the district transition first grade to be nonpromoted in upper elementary grade (i.e., grades four, five or six), she replied that they were--and, her assertion was supported by local administrators. However, it was her belief that first grade teachers were not allowed to nonpromote children who had attended a year of

Developmental First grade. She said:

"Because, the idea is to keep them out of first grade before they're ready, but we can't just keep doing it [nonpromoting them]. But, later on if they are in academic trouble, then maybe it would be better than pushing them up into grades where they are not going to be able to handle it. I think keeping them back two years is the limit, though."

Transition first grade teachers also stated that, although the transition first grade was believed to be a form of nonpromotion, nevertheless it was the perceived policy that children previously placed in the transition first grade were to be promoted to first grade regardless of their academic standing.

District documents implied that the purpose of the transition program was to protect children from future academic failure. It states:

The [transition] class is designed for children who have a developmental lag, which can likely be remedied by time and educational experiences on a level where they can

be successful--children who are not ready for the skills taught in the regular first grade are likely to fail is placed there (from district handout, p. 11; see Appendix G).

Overall, educators appeared equivocal as to whether transition first grade was a program designed to provide an educational setting that made fewer or less stringent academic demands on children than the first grade program--because the child was not able to compete academically--or whether the purpose of transition placement was only to allow the child to mature in order to be 'ready' for first grade. Some proposed both reasons as a program goal, and some stated that the program was to 'protect' children from expectations they were believed to be unable to meet. When asked during guided interviews what research literature they had read regarding transition program purposes, goals, or curriculum, educators generally responded they did not regularly read professional literature. One principal stated that, having formerly been an elementary music teacher, it was her perception that it was unnecessary to read about development of young children. Teachers' usual response implied that time constraints did not allow them to regularly read professional literature. One transition school provided several professional journals for teachers in the faculty lounge.

The district handout provided to parents of children recommended for transition program placement is quite specific about the purpose of the program. It states:

The purpose of the Developmental First grade class is to provide the identified students with the educational environment in which to further assimilate kindergarten skills and to prepare for the first grade curriculum at a pace by which the students can gain confidence and a positive self-concept (from district handout, p. 2; see Appendix G).

Goals and objectives are listed in the handout, and they state that program placement will give the child "...time to grow," and "...develop a strong sense of self" (from district handout, p. 6; see Appendix G). Other goals are listed:

Provide an environment rich in equipment and materials....

Provide movement experiences for development of physical and motor skills.

Promote nutritional snacks and information about health and knowledge.

Build a foundation for abstract math concepts through...concrete materials.

Build a foundation for science through discovery and play with blocks....

[Provide play with] natural materials such as sand, water, twigs, shells....

Help the child develop problem solving techniques.

Promote creative expression through art, dance, music, cooking and story telling.

Provide...varied opportunities for oral expression (from district handout, p. 6; see

Appendix G).

Some of the stated program goals and objectives, however, are incongruent with transition classroom practice. For example, daily nutritional snacks were not provided in the transition program. Cooking, discovery science, block play, math manipulatives, creative dance, creative art, and opportunity to develop large motor skills were also not included or severely limited, according to educators' responses to the prioritized questionnaire, reports in guided interviews, on site observations, and self-reports on the activities frequency questionnaire.

Educators' Perceptions of the Differences Among
Kindergarten, Transition First Grade,
and First Grade

Teachers reported that parents whose children had been recommended for placement in the transition program frequently asked about the differences between transition first grade and regular first grade. None reported that parents asked about the differences between kindergarten and transition first grade. Teachers and administrators in guided interviews

claimed that there were distinct differences among the three programs. They said:

"Children in first grade need to be able to handle a series of oral directions; it starts out real fast with reading. It [transition first grade] is really for the ones who just aren't ready to move that fast," said a transition first grade teacher.

"Parents often feel guilty if their child is retained. We try to help them understand that it's not their fault and it's not the child's fault. And, we try to help them realize that putting the child in Developmental First is better than repeating kindergarten, where they would just do the same thing, and going to first grade, where they are not going to be successful," said a first grade teacher.

"There is a real difference between Developmental First and regular first grade. But, there are some differences between the Developmental First grades, too, and I would like to see more coordination in curriculum among the D-1 teachers. Parents usually want to know if the child can catch up and, if so, if [their child] can go on to second grade. They also ask what their child is going to do [in transition first grade] if [he/she] isn't going to first grade. I invite them to visit and see what goes on in D-1 and in first grade, and then they know there's a difference," said a principal.

"They [i.e., parents] usually want to know if their child will be bored next year in first grade or if he can go to second grade if he has a growing spurt and catches up. [They also ask if they] can put them in first [grade] and then, if they don't make it, put them back [in the transition program]. They think they can catch up, but they can't," said a transition first grade teacher. "First grade is too advanced and too fast for them."

Some teachers were quite explicit about differences they believed existed among the three programs and about what differences they hoped would be maintained. One first grade teacher said:

"Developmental First has more group activities and desk work than kindergarten.

Developmental First stresses phonics and listening activities. Many more ditto book activities should be used in D-1, but kindergarten should have few dittos and first grade should have zero K-1 or K-2 ditto activities (like, from Frank Shaffer or Carson-Dellosa or Milliken). They will have plenty of those from the regular workbooks."

And, two transition first grade teachers stated:

"I think the main difference between Developmental First and first grade is that we allow them to move around more," said one transition first grade teacher.

"They can get up out of their seats. They can sit on the floor," said another transition teacher.

"In first grade, the pace is very fast in the reading program," said a first grade teacher.

"I'm not sure what it [i.e., the transition program] will be like in five years, but I hope I hope it is still based on children who are developmentally unready and does not become a dumping ground for any child having difficulty. I also hope it continues to be a child oriented program and does not become a watered down or remedial first grade," said a transition first grade teacher.

While most educators currently associated with the transition program reported that curricular content of transition first grade and regular first grade differed, one principal formerly associated with a transition school insisted that the transition first grade was a first grade that used first grade curriculum. He held positive views of the benefits of the program and stated:

"It's a first grade curriculum, just slower paced. The parent handout even says it's a first grade curriculum. I know it works. I've seen it take the pressure off kids. Those kids [from the transition program] went to the top half of their class. I know they wouldn't have made it except for Developmental First."

However, no support was found in the district handout for parents that curriculum is the same curriculum used in first grade. The district parent handout states:

The curriculum for Developmental First is completely different than a regular First Grade setting. The students progress at a more relaxed rate without the pressures of completing an assigned number of books or pages. More time is spent on readiness skills, language development, and social experience than would normally be allotted for in a regular First Grade Class. Developmental First provides more individualized learning than Kindergarten or First Grade.

The curriculum emphasizes the development of perceptual skills, motor skills, language, and readiness skills for reading and mathematics. They will progress on a continuum [sic] of skills as far as they are able to proceed. They will be enrolled in the first grade the following school term (from district handout, p. 4; see Appendix G).

Summary of Results

The results of the current study was provided in five major sections. The first section included a description of the community, its local schools, and physical descriptions of individual classrooms participating in the study. These descriptions provided contextual insight into the transition program in the belief that an educational program does not exist separately but is in part a reflection of the larger community, and that such descriptions are especially important because the values and cultural backgrounds of community members are significant factors in considering what should be included in school educational programs (NAEYC & NAECs/SDE, 1991). Such descriptions also allow the readers of naturalistic studies to draw applicable inferences to settings of other transition programs and is therefore an important part of qualitative research generalizations.

A second major section provided descriptions and inventories of curricular materials, daily schedules, and personal interactions in the transition program based upon the

supposition that such elements--within the context of the community and physical classroom settings--comprise the educational curriculum. The narrative description of transition program curricular materials considered four aspects: (a) rationale for inclusion of the materials in a primary grade curriculum, (b) examples of the materials identified in the transition first grade program inventories, (c) suggested provision of the materials by early childhood professionals, and (d) educator participants' perceptions of the materials based upon guided interviews and questionnaire responses.

Narrative description of the daily schedule in the transition first grade program addressed both appropriate integration of scheduling in primary classrooms suggested in professional guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) and areas of curricular content eliminated, curtailed or rarely included in daily activities in transition classrooms based upon researcher observations and teacher reports. Personal interactions included child-material interactions, child-child interactions, and child-adult interactions. Availability, accessibility and applicability of such interactions with materials and people were described as observed on-site and reported by participating educators.

Results indicated that reading dominated the transition program in that daily schedules revolved around a basal readiness series focusing upon phonics instruction. None of the six transition classroom inventories included sufficient materials in science, interactive games, or construction toys. Teachers reported some materials were not made available to children on a daily basis, and in some classrooms concrete learning materials were provided only to those children who were able to complete tasks assigned by the teacher. Personal interactions in the classroom were predominately adult-controlled, whole class direct instruction; child-child interactions were curtailed due to involvement with teacher assigned tasks.

A third section of the study provided comparisons of the transition program with professional guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) and the state's Department of Education (1990)

suggested learner outcomes. Educational environmental comparisons were made of all transition first grades, selected kindergarten classrooms, and selected first grades using a rating scaled based upon NAEYC guidelines (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk & Hernandez, 1988). Findings indicated that transition classrooms provided environmental settings for primary age children incongruent with recommended professional guidelines for educational practice in primary grades. Educational settings in kindergarten were more appropriate while first grade settings were less appropriate than transition first grades. On a Likert-type scale of one to five, with one being inappropriate and five being appropriate primary grade practice, educational environmental rating means were 3.1 for kindergartens, 1.8 for transition first grades, and 1.6 for first grades. Thus, findings indicated educational environments appeared to become progressively less appropriate during the schooling progression in the district.

A fourth section of the study reviewed educational policies of the district as related to the transition program. Seven educational policies addressed included (a) selection and entry, (b) referral and provision of special services, (c) evaluation and promotion policies, (d) transition teacher preparation, (e) program provision and expansion, (f) class size in transition classrooms, and (g) funding sources for curricular materials. Information regarding educational policies was obtained during guided interviews with district educators and district documents and from the prioritized questionnaire.

Results indicated that selection process for transition first grade placement has undergone change in the past year. Educators were using a new developmental screening test and assessment procedures, and referral for screening was made by kindergarten teachers while actual screening was completed by the transition first grade teachers. Educators reported that parental permission for screening was not obtained since they do not perceive the program as a special education placement. No further diagnostic referrals were made for transition students until first grade. Educators reported that during the

decade of the transition program's existence, it had grown from one classroom serving 15 children to six classrooms serving 102 children, but they did not believe more transition first grades would be established in the near future. However, some teachers reported they believed transition second grades might be provided. During the current school year, 19% of first grade students were placed in a transition first grade classroom. Educators reported that transition students were assigned to a regular first grade following transition placement.

Results indicated that class size ranged from 12 to 20 children with a mean enrollment of 17. Male students predominated in transition classrooms: of all six transition classes, 63% were boys. In four of the six classrooms, 73% of transition students were males.

Of the six transition teachers currently associated with the program, three were experienced teachers (from 10 to 15 years of teaching) and three were inexperienced (one year or less as a classroom teacher). Five of the six teachers held elementary education certificates, one held an early childhood teaching certificate, and two teachers had advanced degrees.

Teachers and administrators believed that some schools were provided greater resources through local school Parent Teacher Association donations. Three of the six transition teachers were new to the program during the current school year, and their reports of available resources and classroom inventories revealed inequities in available materials and equipment.

A fifth major section of the study examined educator perceptions of the program and included (a) perceptions of the transition child as a learner, (b) perceptions of the transition program goals, and (c) perceived differences between transition first grade and adjacent grade levels. Information for the section on educator perceptions of the transition program were derived from on-site observations, guided interviews, prioritized questionnaire responses, and district documents. Findings indicated that educators perceived the

transition student's emotional development as delayed as compared to regular first grade students, and they reported they believed that transition placement prevented future academic failure and emotional stress. No empirical support was offered by district educators for such opinion, and educators reported that although they were aware of controversy regarding screening tests used for transition placement they were unfamiliar with research literature regarding outcomes of nonpromotion. Educators reported they did not regularly read professional literature.

Educators appeared to believe transition placement as a benign intervention intended to provide additional time to allow transition students to gain physical, emotional and cognitive 'maturity.' Educators' reports of the intended goals of the program compared favorably with information in district handouts (provided to parents of prospective transition students), but such stated goals were not supported by observations, educational environmental ratings, or educators' reports of practice as reflected on the prioritized questionnaire and the instructional activities questionnaire. Educators reported that they believed transition classrooms differed from regular first grade settings primarily in pace, class size, and opportunity for more active involvement during the day.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The current study focused upon nonpromotion of public school children chronologically eligible for first grade placement but who were instead segregated in a grade level between kindergarten and first grade after being identified by the school district as 'immature.' Such grade placement, called transitional grade placement, is usually based upon the belief that a child's readiness to benefit from educational experiences is dependent upon innate maturational rate rather than chronological age (Ames, 1978; Carll & Richard, n.d.; Frick, 1985; Walker, 1989). Approximately 17.5% of all elementary school districts in the United States currently implement transition classes for children labeled as 'immature' or 'unready' for first grade curriculum (Gardner, 1986; Hymes, 1990), and it has been estimated that in districts using elementary transitional programs, approximately one-third (Walker, 1989) to one-half (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1987) of children chronologically eligible to enter first grade are tracked into transition programs as a form of nonpromotion. Usually such programs are promoted as being of benefit to children in one or more areas of development. They are claimed to: (a) allow the child to mature so that he/she will be better prepared emotionally for meeting the academic demands of first grade; (b) prevent risk of future academic failure by allowing the child to be fully ready to begin reading instruction (believed by some to be age related; see Morphett & Washburne, 1931);

(c) prevent emotional and physical stress caused by adjusting to a school setting believed to be too difficult for the child to succeed, implying that the child will be among the more competent members of his or her grade peers if allowed to delay instruction.

Transitional programs at the elementary level have been in existence since the 1930s (Johnson, 1942; Peterson, 1937; Ring, 1944; Russell, 1948), yet little effort appears to have been made to examine the curriculum used in such programs. Studies traditionally have focused upon later academic progress, attitude toward school, and self-concept of children who have attended a transition grade, yet according to some researchers most studies to date appear to have inherent research design weaknesses that do not allow clear conclusions as to the efficacy of such programs (Gredler, 1984; Jackson, 1975; Shepard & Smith, 1989b). A limited number of studies have compared children placed in transition classrooms with children identified as transition-room eligible but who were advanced to the next grade (May & Welch, 1985; Raygor, 1972; Shepard, 1989b; Smith & Shepard, 1985). Fewer studies have focused upon curriculum used in transition first grades (Stroud, 1989), and most studies which have examined transition grade curriculum have failed to include teacher opinions about curriculum or effectiveness of transition programs (Shepard & Smith, 1985; Stroud, 1989). No previous study has been identified which systematically interviewed transition teachers or those associated with a transition first grade program as to their perceptions of the curricular content and educational policies of such programs.

Controversy over the cost and outcomes of transitional programs has continued, and some have questioned the purpose such grade placement serves. Some educators feel that transitional grade placement is not a form of nonpromotion but a way of meeting the child's developmental needs (Ames, 1978; Ames, Gillespie & Streff, 1972; Bohl, 1984; Gesell Institute, 1980; Uphoff, 1990; Walker, 1989). Others feel that transitional grade placement is a form of nonpromotion and contributes to a perceived problem of inappropriate

academic demand in kindergarten and first grade (Bredekamp, 1990a, 1990b; Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; Charlesworth, 1989; May & Welch, 1985; National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 1989; Shepard, 1989b, 1990; Shepard & Smith, 1988, 1989b; Smith & Shepard, 1985, 1987). That is, many believe that the learning activities previously expected of older children are now introduced at a lower grade level (Bredekamp, 1990a; Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; Brewer, 1990; Connell, 1987; Charlesworth, 1989; Egertson, 1987; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1987; Gallagher & Coche, 1987; NAEYC & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education [NAECS/SDE], 1991; Oakes, 1986; Shepard, 1989b, 1990; Smith & Shepard, 1987). Further, questions of the equity of such programs have been raised. Transition classes have been declared illegal in California (Brewer, 1990) and Texas because they have been shown to discriminate against children on the basis of age, ethnicity and/or gender (Cohen, 1990), and they have been challenged in other state courts (FairTest, 1988).

Some southwestern school districts have continued to implement transition first grades as an alternative educational placement for large numbers of children eligible for first grade in spite of continued controversy regarding the effectiveness, cost, equity, and unintended outcomes of such programs (see Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; Charlesworth, 1989). The number of children retained in kindergarten (either by repeating kindergarten or by entering a transition first grade) and the cost of such educational policy is unknown in the school district in which the study was conducted since no records of elementary school nonpromotion or implementation of transition programs are maintained by the district or by the state's Department of Education (Data Section, Department of Education, personal communication on September 11, 1990). And, although two known studies have been identified which focus upon transition grade placement in the state in which the study was conducted (Livingston, 1990; Nicholas, 1984), no known study has examined transition

first grade curriculum in the state.

Summary

The current naturalistic/constructivist study emphasized multiple methods of field collection of data to provide a narrative description of the transition first grade curricular content and program policies in a southwestern school district which has implemented transition classes since 1980. The six approaches of obtaining information included: (a) repeated on-site observations in transition classrooms and adjacent grade levels using the researcher's tacit knowledge of guidelines for public school primary grades believed to be the consensus of the profession (see Bredekamp, 1987, and NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991), (b) guided interviews with educators associated directly or indirectly with the transition program, (c) a prioritized questionnaire in which participating educators indicated their beliefs as to the importance of various curricular elements, (d) an educational environmental rating checklist derived from NAEYC guidelines (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk, & Hernandez, 1988), (e) a questionnaire completed by transition teachers indicating frequency of various instructional activities within their classrooms (Charlesworth, Burts & Hart, 1988), and (f) a review of documents associated with the transition program such as progress reports and parent handouts (see Appendix G) and comparisons of such documents with the state's Department of Education (1990) suggested learner outcomes for transition first grade.

The results of the current study were provided in five major sections. The first section included a contextual description of the community, its local schools, and individual classrooms participating in the study in the belief that an educational program does not exist separately but is in part a reflection of the larger community. Such descriptions also allow the readers of constructivist studies to draw applicable inferences to settings of other

transition programs and are therefore an important part of qualitative research generalizations.

A second section provided description and inventories of curricular materials, daily schedules, and personal interactions in the transition program based upon the supposition that such elements--within the context of the community and physical classroom settings--comprise the educational curriculum. The narrative description of transition program curricular materials considered four aspects: (a) rationale for inclusion of the materials in a primary grade curriculum, (b) examples of the materials identified in the transition first grade program inventories, (c) suggested provision of the materials by early childhood professionals, and (d) educator participants' perceptions of the materials based upon guided interviews and questionnaire responses. Narrative description of the daily schedule used in the transition first grade program addressed both appropriate integration of scheduling in primary classrooms suggested in professional guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) and areas of curricular content eliminated, curtailed or rarely included in daily activities in transition classrooms based upon researcher observations and teacher reports. Personal interactions included child-material interactions, child-child interactions, and child-adult interactions. Availability, accessibility and applicability of such interactions with materials and people were described as observed on-site and reported by participating educators.

A third section of the study provided a comparison of documents associated with the transition program to NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) and to the state's Department of Education suggested learner outcomes (1990). Comparisons were made of transition, kindergarten and first grade settings to an educational environmental rating scale (Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk & Hernandez, 1988; see Appendix B) based upon the NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice in primary grades (Bredekamp, 1987; see Appendix A).

A fourth section of the study reviewed educational policies of the district as related to

the transition program. Seven educational policies addressed included (a) selection and entry, (b) referral and provision of special services, (c) evaluation and promotion policies, (d) transition teacher preparation, (e) program provision and expansion, (f) class size in transition classrooms, and (g) funding sources for curricular materials. Information regarding educational policies was obtained during guided interviews with district educators and district documents. A fifth section of the study examined educator perceptions of the program and included (a) perceptions of the transition child as a learner, (b) perceptions of the transition program goals, and (c) differences between transition first grade and adjacent grade levels. Information for the section on educator perceptions of the transition program were derived from on-site observations, guided interviews, prioritized questionnaire responses, and district documents.

Conclusions

Materials, Daily Schedule and Interactions

Many learning materials considered essential for appropriate developmental practice in classrooms serving primary age children were unavailable in transition classrooms, and what materials and equipment were available were inequitably provided among transition schools in the district. Failure to provide some types of learning materials and dominance of the district basal reading program resulted in classroom inventories lacking sufficient materials and equipment in the content areas of science, social studies, mathematics and art. Materials for science, social studies, music, and large motor development were virtually nonexistent. Materials necessitating cooperative interaction among children, such as interactive games or socio-dramatic materials, were limited or unavailable.

Materials available for transition classroom use were primarily associated with the

district basal reading series, and such materials were unidimensional and focused upon discrete phonetic skills rather than being supportive of children's emerging literacy (see Cullinan, 1987, 1989; Heald-Taylor, 1989; Mills & Clyde, 1991; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Materials intended to meet a wide variety of intended uses rather than a narrow range of classroom use were unavailable or were lacking in sufficient quantity to sustain involvement of several children over a period of time; eg., construction toys such as Lego™ bricks, large wooden unit floor blocks, Tinkertoys™, etc.; props for socio-dramatic play such as puppets, housekeeping media, costumes, dolls; block and sand accessories such as transportation toys, representative replicas of people and animals; and, manipulatives such as Geo™ blocks, Cuisenaire™ rods, Teddy Bear Counters™, wooden counting cubes, etc., were limited or were not inventoried. Even in classrooms with concrete learning materials, child access to such materials was found to be limited by transition teachers in preference to paper and pencil tasks related to the district basal reading program.

Transition teachers reported that while whole class craft activities associated with the reading or math program skills were occasionally included, autonomous use of creative art media was infrequent. Some teachers reported that access to some materials was used as a reward for completion of daily assignments, and other teachers limited access to some materials in order to complete assigned use of materials in reading. Other teachers reported many materials were not made available by the district. For example, some classrooms lacked materials or equipment for classroom cooking, science, multicultural awareness, woodworking, sand or water play, musical instruments, construction toys, large motor development, or socio-dramatic play, and in addition they lacked sufficient math manipulatives, materials for small motor development, music media, children's literature, and art media.

District stated goals and objectives for the transition program imply that children will

be provided an environment rich in materials, where "...experiences are direct and concrete, to build the foundation for later, more abstract experiences" (district parent handout; see Appendix G), but such materials were unavailable or subjected to teacher restrictions. District handouts also stated that the transition program would provide experiences for physical development, nutritional snacks, creative experiences in art and music, math concepts through manipulatives, concrete objects for kinesthetic use, sand and water play, creative dance, cooking, discovery science, and varied opportunities for oral expression (see Appendix G). However, such materials and opportunities were neither observed nor reported available by teachers.

Daily schedules in the transition program included large blocks of time in which children were required to participate in whole class activities, remaining in sequence with the group and attending to periodic direct teacher instruction. Teachers' self-reports indicated that major portions of the day were spent in either whole group instruction or in teacher-assigned tasks completed independently at a desk or designated area of the classroom. Such tasks revolved around paper and pencil exercises or worksheets focused upon isolated reading or math skills. Physical activity was primarily limited to abbreviated periods of outside recess or, in some classrooms, whole class participation in exercise. Elimination of physical activity is inappropriate because of the physical and biological needs of young children. NAEYC and NAECS/SDE have suggested (1991) that:

...[I]n appropriate programs children are not required to sit and attend to paperwork or listen to adult lectures for extended periods of time because such activity is at odds with children's biological needs. Likewise, the curriculum provides for active physical play and periods of more restful, quiet activity since this pattern is compatible with children's physical needs (p. 25).

In two of the transition classrooms, scheduled periods for child-initiated activities were limited to Friday afternoons or restricted to those children whose work pace allowed them to benefit from self-directed activity for short portions of the day as a reward for

completing teacher-assigned tasks.

Educator responses to the prioritized questionnaire indicated that they viewed as more important daily inclusions of phonics, handwriting, sight word practice, and addition or subtraction activities than general curricular content areas such as art, science, or social studies. All respondents indicated reading readiness as important in a transition program, and 16 ranked reading readiness as the most important of the top five prioritized curricular content areas. Such emphasis was reflected in transition room daily schedules, which devoted large segments of time to whole group instruction of isolated reading skills promoted in the district's phonics-based reading series.

Personal interactions in the transition program were characterized by a limitation upon child-materials interactions and child-child interactions by the transition teachers, who restricted access and applicability of materials (i.e., how the materials could be used) and provided tasks and daily schedules that limited child-child interaction. Some teachers promoted child-child interaction in assigned tasks, but they usually encouraged children to work in pairs rather than small groups. Child-adult interactions in the transition program were characterized by attempts to impose adult rules and adult control rather than attempts to promote individual children's prosocial and autonomous behavior. Teachers utilized extrinsic rewards, punitive measures such as isolation, public display and announcement of rule infractions, peer pressure, and threats of further sanctions to manipulate and coerce children into compliance. Such measures were associated in large part with a district-wide assertive discipline program in which teachers were expected to participate, but they also appeared to be used due to teachers' attempts to maintain group control because of reliance upon whole class instruction as a primary teaching strategy.

Comparisons: Goals, Practice and Documents

Comparisons were drawn between the curricular goals and practices of the transition program and adjacent grade levels, professional standards, and suggested learner outcomes. On-site observations using NAEYC guidelines (see Bredekamp, 1987, and Appendix A) and ratings using an educational environment checklist developed from professional guidelines for appropriate primary grade level practice (see Charlesworth, Mosley, Burts, Hart, Kirk & Hernandez, 1988, and Appendix B) indicated the transition program as a whole provided educational settings and practice incongruent with recommended professional guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987). The 24-item rating scale rated classroom environments in several areas: (a) goals, (b) instructional strategies, (c) integration of curriculum, (d) guidance of social-emotional development, and (e) motivation. Ratings were based upon a Likert scale of one to five, and transition classrooms received total mean scores of 1.5, 1.5, 2.8, 2.0, 1.8, and 1.3; the overall mean score on the educational environment scale was 1.8.

Kindergarten classrooms in the study had a broader range of materials and equipment and included more concrete materials than transition first grades. Educational environmental ratings indicated mean scores of 3.0, 2.6 and 3.5 with a total kindergarten mean score of 3.1. Thus, kindergarten classrooms scored higher ratings than the transition classrooms on the educational environmental rating scale. In general, kindergarten teachers provided more opportunity for social interaction, more opportunity for use of concrete materials, and greater portions of daily schedules in which child-initiated activity was allowed.

Mean rating scores on the educational environment rating scale in first grade classrooms were 2.6, 1.6, 1.2 and 1.2, with an overall mean score of 1.6. Thus, grade level practice might be viewed as progressively less appropriate in the district's

kindergarten, transition first grade and first grade classrooms. Caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions from comparisons of adjacent grade levels and the transition classrooms because: (a) numbers of participating kindergarten and first grade teachers were limited, and (b) observations were made in participating kindergarten and first grades on one occasion for four hours, and ratings on the educational environment were based upon the single observation, whereas observations were made in each transition classroom on four to six days during a three-month period with observation times of two to four hours. Total observation time in each transition classroom ranged from 12 to 18 hours.

Comparison of transition program goals and practices with learner outcomes suggested by the state's Department of Education (1990) indicated that overlap was not extensive. Learner outcomes suggested by the state's Department of Education were more comprehensive and included more items of observed behavior using concrete objects. Transition program progress reports used in the district to convey child progress to parents included items with higher skill expectations than some of the state's suggested outcomes.

Educator Perceptions of the Transition Program

Educators associated with the transition program reported that entry into the transition program resulted from teacher referral and screening prior to parent notification. Further, placement in the program was based upon results from a single maturational screening instrument. Transportation for the program was discriminatorily provided transition students throughout the district, and parental decision to enroll a child in the transition program may have been related to ability to provide daily transport. Further diagnostic assessment and teacher referral were reported as being disallowed during the transition classroom year. Educators asserted transition room placement was not a special education setting and that prior notification and/or due process under federal guidelines was

unnecessary. Therefore, either (a) the program is a form of academic tracking, which has been reported as ineffectual, discriminatory and detrimental to children's schooling progression (see May & Welch, 1985; Medina & Neill, 1988; Meisels, 1989; Oakes, 1986), and families and children are being denied equitable access to provision of educational services during the transitional year; or, (b) the program is a form of special education, in which case parents and children are denied transportation services provided for other students, due process under federal guidelines of informed consent, denied multiple criteria in placement decisions, planned educational intervention that includes parents as a part of the decision making process, further psychometric referral for continued monitoring of students' progress, and students are denied placement in the least restrictive environment (see FairTest, 1988; Meisels, 1987; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Selakovich, 1984). Dissatisfaction among transition teachers with district procedures for referral of students for transition placement resulted in modification of the selection process this year and was in part based upon transition teachers' beliefs that some children referred for transition grade placement were in reality in need of special education services, although children were denied further diagnostic referral during the transition year placement.

Some educators associated with the transition program reported that a dependency upon local school Parent Teacher Association for purchase of needed equipment and supplies resulted in discrepancies among individual classroom inventories, with transition schools in higher income neighborhoods enjoying greater provision of learning materials due to PTA largesse. Further, supplementation of available materials with teacher-purchased learning aids has exacerbated the differences among transition classrooms in availability of appropriate learning materials, since transition teachers with longer tenure possessed greater learning resources than did newly employed transition teachers.

Class size was limited to a maximum of 20 students in the transition program, with

class size ranging from 12 to 20 and a district-wide mean of 17 students enrolled in transition classrooms. Males represented 63% of transition room enrollment in the six transition classrooms, and in four of the six classrooms males represented 73% of enrollment. There were a total of 102 transition students in the 1990-1991 school year at the end of the first nine weeks period. Transition students represented approximately 19% of the total district enrollment of children eligible for first grade placement. The 19% does not include students retained in kindergarten during the current school year, and total kindergarten nonpromotion rates in the district are greater than 19%. The district is therefore nonpromoting a minimum of 19% of students each year in one grade level and this reflects the escalating nonpromotion of primary children observed nationally (Bredenkamp & Shepard, 1989; Center for Policy Research in Education [CPRE], 1990; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1987; Shepard, 1990; Shepard & Smith, 1989) in spite of professional recommendations that nonpromotion rates below third grade should not exceed 0-2% (CPRE, 1990). Participating principals and kindergarten teachers reported 8%-10% of children repeated the kindergarten experience this year, bringing the total district kindergarten nonpromotion through retention or transition placement to approximately 26%-28% in the current year. Thus, approximately 143-151 district kindergarten children (or, at least one-fourth of all kindergarten students) are being retained prior to entry into first grade, assuming district enrollment is fairly stable. If district nonpromotion rates in first and second grade equate with the national average of 6% (CPRE, 1990), then district practice ensures a cumulative nonpromotion rate of 32-38% of all students prior to entry into third grade.

The district costs for educational services was approximately \$2,704.04 per school child during the academic school year 1988-1989 as compared to a state average expenditure of \$3,067.82 (State Aid Department, state's Department of Education, personal communication February 20, 1991) and a national average expenditure estimates of \$4,243.00 (R. Whalen, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States

Department of Education, personal communication on February 20, 1991) to \$4,890 per school child (Dawson & Rafoth, 1991). The annual cost of maintaining such rates of nonpromotion in the district is approximately \$275,800 for transition classrooms and approximately \$387,000 to \$411,000 for all nonpromoted kindergarten students (i.e., children repeating kindergarten as well as transition students). An estimated \$469,000 to \$557,000 will be expended by the district in nonpromotion of student cohorts during their schooling progression from kindergarten through second grade, based upon enrollment of cohort children in the current study (i.e., children in the district who were eligible for first grade placement during 1990-1991 school year and who should have, theoretically, continued together through the same grades during successive school years). Such a figure is conservative, of course, since costs have risen since the 1988-1989 school year upon which educational expenditure has been based.

Educator perceptions of teacher preparation for transition teachers indicated that no special professional preparation nor teaching experience was believed to be essential prior to assignment in the transition program. Respondents did not indicate that it was necessary for the transition teacher to be qualified to administer screening instruments. Currently, half of all transition teachers might be classified as experienced teachers (with 10-15 years of teaching experience in the primary grades) and half might be classified as inexperienced (with either no experience or only one year of teaching prior to assignment in the transition program).

Educator perceptions of transition program expansion was that, while it had continued to expand since its inception in 1980, it now served all elementary schools. The program began with one classroom of 15 students in the fall of 1980 and now has six transition first grades in five of the eight elementary schools and an enrollment of 102 transition students. Some respondents indicated that the district might consider implementing a transition grade level between first and second grades for children 'unready' to enter second grade. Such

implementation might contribute to district nonpromotion rates in first grade to the degree that the current program contributes to high nonpromotion rates in kindergarten. As a whole, all educators associated with the district transition program appeared to view its goals and purposes in a positive manner, although most principals and teachers reported that they did not read (or read infrequently) professional literature and were unaware of research data associated with transition programs (although some reported they were aware of controversy regarding the use of some screening instruments commonly used to target transition program students). Administrators seemed unaware that district literature provided parents about the transition program did not reflect actual practice or curricular materials used in the program.

Recommendations

The following educational recommendations are provided for school districts already implementing transition classes and those considering such a grade placement, although they specifically relate to the district which participated in the current study. The second set of recommendations are provided for those educators considering additional research related to transition programs as an educational practice and are based upon the questions raised in the current study.

Recommendations for Educational Consideration

1. District expenditure is approximately \$387,000 to \$411,000 annually for its kindergarten nonpromotional practices. It is clear that the district practice of transitional grade placement results in educational dollars that could be expended in providing appropriate alternative interventive services such as smaller class size,

teacher aides, appropriate concrete learning materials, or such innovative programs as Reading Recovery. It is also clear that, in a state ranking 44th in educational expenditures (R. Whalen, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education, personal communication on February 20, 1991) and in a district spending \$363.78 less per school child than the state average (State Aid Section, state's Department of Education, personal communication on February 20, 1991), review of district policy regarding limited allocated educational funding is advisable.

2. District kindergarten nonpromotional policies resulted in 26-28% of students in the current study being identified as incapable of successful matriculation in first grade settings provided in local schools. Such nonpromotion rates contrast with recommended rates of 0-2% (S. Bredekamp, personal communication in September, 1990) and rates in Western Europe of 2% (CPRE, 1990). This implies that district educators view more than one-fourth of all local school children as unable to benefit from the district's first grade settings, which suggests that an immediate examination of primary grade curricular practices should be undertaken. This is especially imperative in view of the fact that numerous professional groups report inappropriate practice in primary grades as a causal factor in high rates of nonpromotion and later drop out rates (see NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Shepard & Smith, 1988, 1989a; Smith, 1989; Smith & Shepard, 1987).
3. Perception of children as incapable learners may be the result of inappropriate instructional strategies and inappropriate curriculum rather than high numbers of 'immature' children in the district. Inservice programs for district teachers and principals should be considered to provide information about how young children

learn in settings with integrated curriculum, how to provide alternative instructional strategies that may be used in lieu of whole class direct teaching, and how to avoid daily scheduling of large segments of time devoted to practice of isolated, unrelated cognitive skills. Such inservice is especially important in view of the fact that both principals and transition teachers in the current study reported that they did not regularly read professional literature. Teacher beliefs about the child as a learner have been shown to have powerful effects upon such educational practices as integration of curriculum and nonpromotion of students, but even though such belief systems are strongly held, teachers can change beliefs and practices when given access to information (see Peterson, 1989). Since there is an interconnectedness of teacher beliefs, their knowledge of how young children learn, and teacher practice, using research-based information in district inservice is essential for restructuring of such negative school policies as nonpromotion or inappropriate curriculum. Teachers must be viewed by the district, however, as competent and thoughtful professionals capable of assimilating research data and must be provided the opportunity to share in educational policy decisions. Such empowerment would be essential in effecting curricular change since teachers are more likely to implement policies in which they have had a role in formulating.

4. Should the district choose to continue the practice of segregating large portions of children chronologically eligible for regular first grade in transitional classrooms, the district should consider evaluating its screening and diagnostic procedures for the identification of such children. Current district transition placement practice is subject to criticism for failure to meet guidelines for appropriate assessment, identification and provision of services for children in nontraditional educational settings (see Meisels, 1987, 1989; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991), and are particularly vulnerable since it

appears to discriminate on the basis of gender. The National Academy of Sciences panel studying special educational placements has stated that any placement separating the child from peers must clearly benefit the child (Heller, Holtzman & Messick, 1982). Others have invited corrective action through the courts when high retaining district practices affect disproportionate numbers of students on the basis of income, ethnicity, or gender (Shepard & Smith, 1989a), and previous litigation has suggested that schools using screening tests and transition programs must provide children and families the protection of procedural due process guidelines under The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Center for Law and Education, 1988; FairTest, 1988). The new screening device may still identify disproportionate numbers of male students.

5. The district practice of relying upon individual schools' Parent Teachers Association as a major source of funding for classroom materials appears to have created inequitable allocation of resources among elementary schools. The traditional teacher practice of supplementing classroom learning materials with personal purchases also appears to have contributed to disparate transition student access to curricular materials in the current study. The district should consider providing additional funding for teachers entering/establishing a classroom for the first time, and it should consider addressing overreliance upon PTA funding as a primary source of curricular materials for individual schools. Such overreliance may originate in low district per student expenditure.
6. Incongruence between stated goals and purposes of the district transition program and actual practice and policy as observed on-site and as reported by participants suggests that the district should consider investigation of the transition program and its relationship to adjacent grade level practice. In particular, stated goals and objectives in the handout provided parents of children recommended for transition placement

differs markedly from the actual curricular program practice. The district handout makes specific reference to such materials as rhythm instruments, cooking supplies, blocks, sensory media, etc., that were not available for transition classroom use. In addition, many of the suggested activities (especially those regarding written language) were not reported by transition teachers as included in the transition program.

Recommendation for Further Research

1. Transition teachers' beliefs about transition program outcomes warrants further investigation. Of particular interest is the lack of educators' awareness of research-based evidence of unintended outcomes of transition placement such as demonstrated discriminatory placement of transition children upon the basis of age, ethnicity and gender; contributory effect upon later grade dropout rates; and lack of research support for transition placement as a way to ensure longterm future academic success. Teachers' and principals' reliance solely upon screening instruments as a valid form of predicting future academic success would be of interest, as would educators' abdication to screening results in making program placement decisions.
2. Educators' beliefs in the transition program as an appropriate setting for children perceived incapable of deriving benefit from next-grade curriculum indicates a linear, unidimensional perception of child development. Future studies might focus upon educators' philosophical beliefs; some participants in the current study indicated a support for transition grade placement appearing less related to reported research in child development than to unquestioning acceptance of unsubstantiated statements made in books promoted by for-profit publishers and by individuals selling and promoting use of specific screening instruments from commercial publishers.

3. Relationship of teacher preparation to implementation of integrated curriculum in the primary grades would be of further interest, as would teachers' knowledge of more recent curricular recommendations for appropriate reading instruction involving shared reading, children's literature, and child-dictated books. Of particular interest might be a comparison of early childhood teacher preparation versus elementary education teacher preparation and its relationship to implementation of integrated curriculum.
4. Establishment of transition programs and other nonproductive policies are viewed by some researchers as an indicator of inappropriate curriculum in other grade levels necessitating 'adjustment' of curricular content within the school structure in order to maintain school structure equilibrium. An investigation of the relationship of escalating curricular expectations at various primary grade levels, especially as compared to historical practice, might be insightful. Of special interest might be the later provision of educational services and placement decisions for children previously placed in transition programs.
5. Few investigations have been conducted in which children's and parents' views of the transition grade experience have been addressed. In particular, few studies have utilized qualitative methodology and systematic interviews of children's perspectives of the transition grade experience (see Byrnes, 1989). As those most affected by transition programs, it would seem appropriate to examine feelings and perceptions of the actual participants in transition first grade. Of particular interest might be the parent's and child's understanding of the rationale and process of the placement decision, perception of the effects of such placement on the transition child's friendships and school attitude, and anxiety and/or anger caused by transition grade

placement. Such a study would provide greater insight if contrasted with viewpoints of students recommended for transition placement but who declined such placement and with viewpoints of those students not considered for the transition program.

6. Since the extent and location of transition grade programs in the state in which the current study was conducted is unknown, it would seem appropriate that the state's Department of Education initiate an immediate survey to identify districts implementing transition placement. Such a survey would be in keeping with those reportedly begun in other states concerned about the apparent escalation of nonpromotion rates, especially as related to existence of transition programs (see Cohen, 1991; Ostrowski, 1988; Stroud, 1989; Williams, 1987). Such a fact-finding survey might address numbers and locations of transition programs, numbers of children tracked in such programs, numbers of children nonpromoted in adjacent grade levels, demographic information related to children tracked and/or nonpromoted, and cost to the taxpayers for such educational practices in the state. The information provided in such a study might prove useful in assessing the economic, if not emotional, cost of nonpromotional practices and lead to efforts to consider alternative approaches in providing educational services to the state's school children.

Summary

The results in the current study of an examination of a southwestern school district's transition first grade curriculum indicated that the curriculum used with transition children differed little from instructional materials or teaching strategies used in the district's regular first grade program. Although the district promoted the transition program as a beneficial educational placement for children by virtue of being developmentally appropriate, results

from the current study did not support such assertions. Review of available materials, daily schedules, personal interactions, integration of curriculum, and curricular content indicated that the transition program is incongruent with recommended professional guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice in primary grades. Further, review of adjacent grade level practice revealed progressively inappropriate practice during the schooling progression in kindergarten, transition first grade, and first grade programs. Educational practice in adjacent, later grade levels may be the origin of perceived need to nonpromote high numbers of children through transition program placement. The expansion of the program since its inception a decade ago may also reflect increasingly high academic standards in lower primary grades, as has been reported in earlier studies of early childhood programs.

The transition program curriculum appeared to differ little from the district's regular first grade and may simply reflect a form of nonpromotion more palatable to parents than repeating kindergarten. Because of the stated beliefs of educators associated with the transition program--that transition room placement was a way to allow children to cope successfully with first grade by delaying entry and gaining a year of physical and emotional growth--the transition program as an educational policy may reflect philosophic beliefs of educators about maturational readiness of children rather than a means of providing alternative educational services for children with specialized needs. Thus, children in the transition program may be undergoing a waiting period rather than engaging in curriculum differing substantially from regular first grade.

Transition room enrollment in the program indicated unequal placement of male students, and transition students were denied further diagnostic assessment until they entered first grade. Further, parents of some (but not all) transition room students were required to provide transportation made available to other students in the district. Such educational policies are subject to criticisms of discrimination.

Educators associated with the transition program stated they believed it was not a form of nonpromotion. Students placed in the program, however, were required to spend an additional year in school prior to advancement to regular first grade and were not promoted on the basis of individualized evaluation at the end of the school year. Findings from the study indicated that the transition program provides a highly structured educational setting with a narrow curricular focus incongruent with the knowledge base about how young children learn, and the program appears to reflect inappropriate expectations for primary age children in first grade.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTEGRATED COMPONENTS OF APPROPRIATE
AND INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE IN
THE PRIMARY GRADES

Appendix A contains information regarding primary grade practice and is from Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8 ©1987 and is reprinted with permission of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

PART 7

NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Primary Grades Serving 5- Through 8-Year-Olds

The current trend toward critical examination of our nation's educational system has recently included concerns about the quality of education provided in elementary schools (Bennett, 1986; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1986). Concerns have been raised because, in response to calls for "back to basics" and improved standardized test scores, many elementary schools have narrowed the curriculum and adopted instructional approaches that are incompatible with current knowledge about how young children learn and develop. Specifically, rote learning of academic skills is often emphasized rather than active, experiential learning in a meaningful context. As a result, many children are being taught academic skills but are not learning to apply those skills in context and are not developing more complex thinking skills like conceptualizing and problem solving (Bennett, 1986).

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators, defines early childhood as the years from birth through age 8. NAEYC believes that one index of the quality of primary education is the extent to which the curriculum and instructional methods are developmentally appropriate for children 5 through 8 years of age. The purpose of this position statement is to describe both developmentally appropriate and inappropriate practices in the primary grades. This position statement reflects the most current knowledge of teaching and learning as derived from theory, research, and practice. This statement is intended for use by teachers, parents, school administrators, policymakers, and others who make decisions about primary grade educational programs. (NAEYC's Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Programs for 4- and 5-Year-Olds specifically defines appropriate practices for prekindergarten and kindergarten programs pp. 51-59.)

Background information

Classrooms serving primary-age children are typically part of larger institutions and complex educational systems with many levels of administration and

supervision. Classroom teachers may have little control over the curriculum or policies they implement. However, ensuring developmentally appropriate practice in primary education requires the efforts of the entire group of educators who are responsible for planning and implementing curriculum—teachers, curriculum supervisors, principals, and superintendents. At the same time, ensuring developmentally appropriate practice is the professional obligation of each individual educator. No professional should abdicate this responsibility in the absence of mutual understanding and support of colleagues or supervisors. This position statement is intended to support the current appropriate practices of many primary-grade programs and to help guide the decisions of administrators so that developmentally appropriate practices for primary-age children become more widely accepted, supported, and followed.

Curriculum derives from several sources: the child, the content, and the society. The curriculum in early childhood programs is typically a balance of child-centered and content-centered curriculum. For example, good preschools present rich content in a curriculum that is almost entirely child-centered. As children progress into the primary grades, the emphasis on content gradually expands as determined by the school, the local community, and the society. The challenge for curriculum planners and teachers is to ensure that the content of the curriculum is taught so as to take optimum advantage of the child's natural abilities, interests, and enthusiasm for learning.

Development and learning in primary-age children

Integrated development and learning

In order to provide developmentally appropriate primary education, it is essential to understand the development that typically occurs during this period of life and to understand how 5- through 8-year-old children

learn. We can then derive principles of appropriate practice for primary-age children. One of the most important premises of human development is that all domains of development—physical, social, emotional, and cognitive—are integrated. Development in one dimension influences and is influenced by development in other dimensions. This premise is violated when schools place a great emphasis on the cognitive domain while minimizing other aspects of children's development. Because development cannot be neatly separated into parts, failure to attend to all aspects of an individual child's development is often the root cause of a child's failure in school. For example, when a child lacks social skills and is neglected or rejected by peers, her or his ability to work cooperatively in a school setting is impaired. As interest lags, the child's learning may also be impaired, and she or he may become truant or eventually drop out (Burton, 1987). *The relevant principle of instruction is that teachers of young children must always be cognizant of "the whole child."*

Children's learning, like development, is integrated during the early years. One of the major pressures on elementary teachers has always been the need to "cover the curriculum." Frequently, they have tried to do so by tightly scheduling discrete time segments for each subject. This approach ignores the fact that young children do not need to distinguish learning by subject area. For example, they extend their knowledge of reading and writing when they work on social studies projects; they learn mathematical concepts through music and physical education (Van Deusen-Henkel & Argondizza, 1987). *The relevant principle of instruction is that throughout the primary grades the curriculum should be integrated* (Katz & Chard, in press).

Integration of curriculum is accomplished in several ways. The curriculum may be planned around themes that are selected by the children or by the teacher based on the children's interests. For example, children may be interested in the ocean because they live near it. Children may work on projects related to the ocean during which they do reading, writing, math, science, social studies, art, and music. Such projects involve sustained, cooperative effort and involvement over several days and perhaps weeks.

Integrated curriculum may also be facilitated by providing learning areas in which children plan and select their activities. For example, the classroom may include "a fully-equipped publishing center, complete with materials for writing, illustrating, typing, and binding student-made books; a science area with animals and plants for observation, and books to study; and other similar areas" (Van Deusen-Henkel & Argon-

dizza, 1987). In such a classroom, children learn reading as they discover information about science; they learn writing as they work together on interesting projects. Such classrooms also provide opportunities for spontaneous play, recognizing that primary-age children continue to learn in all areas through unstructured play—either alone or with other children.

Physical development

During the primary years, children's physical growth tends to slow down as compared to the extremely rapid physical growth that occurred during the first 5 years of life. Children gain greater control over their bodies and are able to sit and attend for longer periods of time. However, primary-age children are far from mature physically and need to be active. Primary-grade children are more fatigued by long periods of sitting than by running, jumping, or bicycling. Physical action is essential for these children to refine their developing skills, like batting a ball, skipping rope, or balancing on a beam. Expressing their newly acquired physical power and control also enhances their self-esteem.

Physical activity is vital for children's cognitive growth as well. When presented with an abstract concept, children need physical actions to help them grasp the concept in much the same way that adults need vivid examples and illustrations to grasp unfamiliar concepts. But unlike adults, primary-age children are almost totally dependent on first-hand experiences. *Therefore, an important principle of practice for primary-age children is that they should be engaged in active, rather than passive, activities* (Katz & Chard, in press). For example, children should manipulate real objects and learn through hands-on, direct experiences rather than be expected to sit and listen for extended periods of time.

Cognitive development

The learning patterns of primary-age children are greatly affected by the gradual shift from preoperational to concrete operational thought, a major dimension of cognitive development during these years (Piaget, 1952; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). Between 6 and 9 years of age, children begin to acquire the mental ability to think about and solve problems in their heads because they can then manipulate objects symbolically—no longer always having to touch or move them. This is a major cognitive achievement for children that extends their ability to solve problems. Despite this change in approach to cognitive tasks, however, primary-age children are still not capable of thinking and problem solving in the same way as adults. While they can symbolically or mentally manipulate objects, it will be some time before they can mentally manipu-



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Provide opportunities for 5- to 8-year-olds to do real things and to write, read, and play in relation to the learning activity.

late symbols to, for example, solve mathematical problems such as missing addends or to grasp algebra. For this reason, primary-age children still need real things to think about. Accordingly, while children can use symbols such as words and numbers to represent objects and relations, they still need concrete reference points. *Therefore, a principle of practice for primary-age children is that the curriculum provide many developmentally appropriate materials for children to explore and think about and opportunities for interaction and communication with other children and adults. Similarly, the content of the curriculum must be relevant, engaging, and meaningful to the children themselves* (Katz & Chard, in press).

Young children construct their own knowledge from experience. In schools employing appropriate practices, young children are provided with many challenging opportunities to use and develop the thinking skills they bring with them and to identify and solve problems that interest them. In addition, appropriate schools recognize that some thinking skills, such as understanding mathematical place value and "borrowing" in subtraction, are beyond the cognitive ca-

capacity of children who are developing concrete operational thinking and so do *not* introduce these skills to most children until they are 8 or 9 years of age (Kamii, 1985).

Children in the stage of concrete operations typically attain other skills that have important implications for schooling (Elkind, 1981). Among these is the ability to take another person's point of view, which vastly expands the child's communication skills. Primary-age children can engage in interactive conversations with adults as well as with other children and can use the power of verbal communication, including joking and teasing. Research demonstrates that engaging in conversation strengthens children's abilities to communicate, express themselves, and reason (Nelson, 1985; Wells, 1983; Wilkinson, 1984). Research also indicates that adults can help prolong and expand children's conversations by making appropriate comments (Blank, 1985). *Therefore, relevant principles of practice are that primary-age children be provided opportunities to work in small groups on projects that "provide rich content for conversation" and that teachers facilitate discussion among children by making comments and soliciting children's opinions and ideas* (Katz & Chard, in press).

Social-emotional and moral development

Children of primary-grade age are becoming intensely interested in peers. Establishing productive, positive social and working relationships with other children close to their age provides the foundation for developing a sense of social competence. Recent research provides powerful evidence that children who fail to develop minimal social competence and are rejected or neglected by their peers are at significant risk to drop out of school, to become delinquent, and to experience mental health problems in adulthood (Asher, Hymel, & Renshaw, 1984; Asher, Renshaw, & Hymel, 1982; Cowen, Pederson, Babigian, Izzo, & Trost, 1973; Gronlund & Holmlund, 1985; Parker & Asher, 1986). Research also demonstrates that adult intervention and coaching can help children develop better peer relationships (Asher & Williams, 1987; Burton, 1987). *The relevant principle of practice is that teachers recognize the importance of developing positive peer group relationships and provide opportunities and support for cooperative small group projects that not only develop cognitive ability but promote peer interaction.*

The ability to work and relate effectively with peers is only one dimension of the major social-emotional developmental task of the early school years—the development of a sense of competence. Erikson (1963) describes this major developmental challenge as the child's struggle between developing a sense of industry

or feelings of inferiority. *To develop this sense of industry or a sense of competence, primary-age children need to acquire the knowledge and skills recognized by our culture as important, foremost among which are the abilities to read and write and to calculate numerically.* If children do not succeed in acquiring the competence needed to function in the world, they develop a sense of inferiority or inadequacy that may seriously inhibit future performance. The urge to master the skills of esteemed adults and older children is as powerful as the urge to stand and walk is for 1-year-olds. Yet when expectations exceed children's capabilities and children are pressured to acquire skills too far beyond their ability, their motivation to learn as well as their self-esteem may be impaired. A major cause of negative self-image for children this age is failure to succeed in school, for instance failing to learn to read "on schedule" or being assigned to the lowest ability math group.

At about age 6, most children begin to internalize moral rules of behavior and thus acquire a conscience. Children's behavior often shows that they find it difficult to live with and by their new self-monitoring and that they need adults' assistance. *Teachers and parents need to help children accept their conscience and achieve self-control.* In appropriate classrooms, teachers use positive guidance techniques, such as modeling and logical consequences, to help children learn appropriate behavior, rather than punishing, criticizing, or comparing children. In addition, teachers involve children in establishing and enforcing the few, basic rules necessary for congenial group living. Sensitive teachers ask children what they think of their work or behavior. The teacher points out how pleased the child must feel when a goal is accomplished. If achievement is lacking, the teacher empathizes with a child's feelings and solicits her or his ideas as to how to improve the situation.

Children at this age also begin to make more accurate judgments about what is true and false and to rigidly apply their newfound understanding of rules (Elkind, 1981). Their newly formed consciences are often excessively strict. For example, they may treat every little mistake as a major crime, deserving of terrible punishment. Adults help children assess mistakes realistically and find ways of correcting them. Children's developing consciences especially insist on fairness and adherence to rules. They closely observe adult infractions so it is very helpful for adults to be fair and obey rules. Sensitive teachers appeal to children's respect for fairness and rules when it comes to their interactions with others or when it is necessary to deny their requests, for example, "If I allow you to do that, I would be unfair to the others and you couldn't

trust that, some other time, I wouldn't also be unfair to you" (Furman, 1980, 1987a, 1987b).

Despite their increased independence and developing consciences, 5-, 6-, 7-, and even 8-year-old children still need supervision and the support of trusted adults. As a result, children in this age group should not be expected to supervise themselves in school or after school for extended periods of time. Teachers and parents provide opportunities for children to develop independence and assume responsibility but should not expect primary-age children to display adult levels of self-control.

Individual differences and appropriate practices

Knowledge of age-appropriate expectations is one dimension of developmentally appropriate practice, but equally important is knowledge of what is individually appropriate for the specific children in a classroom. Although universal and predictable sequences of human development appear to exist, a major premise of developmentally appropriate practice is that each child is unique and has an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. Children's sense of self-worth derives in large part from their experiences within the family. When children enter school, their self-esteem comes to include the school's opinion of their family. When children sense that teachers respect and value their families, and respect the particular cultural patterns by which their family lives, their own sense of self-esteem and competence is enhanced. It is developmentally appropriate to view parents as integral partners in the educational process. Teachers should communicate frequently and respectfully with parents and welcome them into the classroom. Teachers need to recognize that cultural variety is the American norm and that children's abilities are most easily demonstrated through familiar cultural forms (Hilliard, 1986).

Enormous variance exists in the timing of individual development that is within the normal range. Developmentally appropriate schools are flexible in their expectations about when and how children will acquire certain competencies. Recognition of individual differences dictates that a variety of teaching methods be used (Durkin, 1980; Katz & Chard, in press). Because children's backgrounds, experiences, socialization, and learning styles are so different, any one method is likely to succeed with some children and fail with others. *The principle of practice is that the younger the children and the more diverse their backgrounds, the*

wider the variety of teaching methods and materials required (Durkin, 1980; Katz & Chard, in press; Katz, Raths, & Torres, undated).

Developmentally appropriate schools are also flexible in how they group children. Rigid adherence to chronological age/grade groupings or ability groupings is inappropriate. For this reason, some schools provide ungraded primary or several alternatives such as 2- or 3-year combination classrooms of 5-, 6-, and 7-year-olds or 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds. Some schools recognize that many 8-year-olds are developmentally more like 9- and 10-year-olds and others more like 6- or 7-year-olds. Such combination classrooms or ungraded primary schools provide a vehicle for preserving heterogeneous groups while also providing more time for children to develop at their own pace and acquire early literacy and mathematical skills.

Most children have individual, personal interests and needs just as adults do. Most children are motivated to learn by an intense desire to make sense out of their world and to achieve the competencies desired by the culture. Children are learning all the time although they may not be learning the prescribed curriculum presented by the teacher (Elkind, 1981). For example, some children learn quickly that they are not smart (in the eyes of their teacher) or that their ideas are unimportant; other children learn that they are not effective group members. The learning that takes place in the primary grades far exceeds the knowledge and skills designated in the written curriculum. Research (Covington, 1984; Stipek, 1984) shows that unless they have a physical disability or illness or have been abused, preschool and kindergarten children are optimistic about their own powers and arrive at school confident that they will achieve. They are developing and acquiring skills so rapidly that they naturally assume that what they cannot do today will be possible tomorrow (Hills, 1986). As children get older, they begin to understand the limits of their own abilities and they also become more aware of social comparison. In the normal course of development, children compare themselves to others favorably and unfavorably. This information becomes part of their self-concept and can affect their motivation for activity. For example, children learn whether they are better at science or art or baseball and such learning influences life decisions. *Unfortunately, when schools unduly rely on competition and comparison among children, they hasten the process of children's own social comparison, lessen children's optimism about their own abilities and school in general, and stifle motivation to learn* (Hills, 1986).

During the early years, children are not only learning knowledge and skills, they are acquiring dispositions

toward learning and school that could last a lifetime (Elkind, 1987; Gottfried, 1983; Katz, 1985; Katz & Chard, in press). Dispositions are "relatively enduring habits of mind and action, or tendencies to respond to events or situations," for example, curiosity, humor, or helpfulness (Katz & Chard, in press). *Longitudinal research indicates that curriculum and teaching methods should be designed so that children not only acquire knowledge and skills, but they also acquire the disposition or inclination to use them.* Compelling evidence exists asserting that overemphasis on mastery of narrowly defined reading and arithmetic skills and excessive drill and practice of skills that have been mastered threaten children's dispositions to use the skills they have acquired (Dweck, 1986; Katz & Chard, in press; Schweinhart, Weikart, & Lerner, 1986; Walberg, 1984). It is as important for children to acquire the desire to read during the primary grades as it is for them to acquire the mechanics of reading. Similarly, it is as important for children to want to apply math to solve problems as it is for them to know their math facts.

The primary grades hold the potential for starting children on a course of lifelong learning. Whether schools achieve this potential for children is largely dependent on the degree to which teachers adopt principles of developmentally appropriate practice. The principles of practice described here have historical roots that include Dewey's progressive education (Biber, Murphy, Woodcock, & Black, 1942; Dewey, 1899), and the open education movement of the 1960s (Barth, 1972; Weber, 1971). Although the principles are similar in many instances to principles espoused by both those movements, this position statement does not advocate a return to practices of the past but rather builds on previous experience and reflects the knowledge acquired in the interim. Theory and research regarding effective curriculum and instruction have increased enormously in recent years and have contributed to our greater understanding of the teaching/learning process. This position statement reflects the most current knowledge of teaching and learning as derived from theory, research, and practice.

The components of a primary grade educational program are described here both in terms of what is appropriate, or ideals to strive for, and what is inappropriate because people develop concepts from exposure to both positive and negative examples. While it is true that most elementary schools and classrooms exhibit some characteristics described here as inappropriate, many schools and classrooms incorporate elements of appropriate practice while many others are models of what is deemed professionally appropriate. (Integrated program components overlap considerably and are identified here separately for purposes of clarity only.)

INTEGRATED COMPONENTS OF APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE PRACTICE IN *THE PRIMARY GRADES*

<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Curriculum goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum is designed to develop children's knowledge and skills in all developmental areas—physical, social, emotional, and intellectual—and to help children learn how to learn—to establish a foundation for lifelong learning. ● Curriculum and instruction are designed to develop children's self-esteem, sense of competence, and positive feelings toward learning. ● Each child is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth. Curriculum and instruction are responsive to individual differences in ability and interests. Different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted, and used to design curriculum. Children are allowed to move at their own pace in acquiring important skills including those of writing, reading, spelling, math, social studies, science, art, music, health, and physical activity. For example, it is accepted that not every child will learn how to read at age 6; most will learn to read by 7; and some will need intensive exposure to appropriate literacy experiences to learn to read by age 8 or 9. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum is narrowly focused on the intellectual domain with intellectual development narrowly defined as acquisition of discrete, technical academic skills, without recognition that all areas of children's development are interrelated. ● Children's worth is measured by how well they conform to group expectations, such as their ability to read at grade level and their performance on standardized tests. ● Children are evaluated against a standardized group norm. All are expected to achieve the same narrowly defined, easily measured academic skills by the same predetermined time schedule typically determined by chronological age and grade level expectations.
Teaching strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The curriculum is integrated so that children's learning in all traditional subject areas occurs primarily through projects and learning centers that teachers plan and that reflect children's interests and suggestions. Teachers guide children's involvement in projects and enrich the learning experience by extending children's ideas, responding to their questions, engaging them in conversation, and challenging their thinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum is divided into separate subjects and time is carefully allotted for each with primary emphasis given each day to reading and secondary emphasis to math. Other subjects such as social studies, science, and health are covered if time permits. Art, music, and physical education are taught only once a week and only by teachers who are specialists in those areas.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Teaching strategies (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The curriculum is integrated so that learning occurs primarily through projects, learning centers, and playful activities that reflect current interests of children. For example, a social studies project such as building and operating a store or a science project such as furnishing and caring for an aquarium provide focused opportunities for children to plan, dictate, and/or write their plans (using invented and teacher-taught spelling), to draw and write about their activity, to discuss what they are doing, to read nonfiction books for needed information, to work cooperatively with other children, to learn facts in a meaningful context, and to enjoy learning. Skills are taught as needed to accomplish projects. ● Teachers use much of their planning time to prepare the environment so children can learn through active involvement with each other, with adults and older children serving as informal tutors, and with materials. Many learning centers are available for children to choose from. Many centers include opportunities for writing and reading, for example a tempting library area for browsing through books, reading silently, or sharing a book with a friend; a listening station; and places to practice writing stories and to play math or language games. Teachers encourage children to evaluate their own work and to determine where improvement is needed and assist children in figuring out for themselves how to improve their work. Some work is corrected in small groups where children take turns giving feedback to one another and correcting their own papers. Errors are viewed as a natural and necessary part of learning. Teachers analyze children's errors and use the information obtained to plan curriculum and instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructional strategies revolve around teacher-directed reading groups that take up most of every morning, lecturing to the whole group, total class discussion, and paper-and-pencil practice exercises or worksheets to be completed silently by children working individually at desks. Projects, learning centers, play, and outdoor time are seen as embellishments and are only offered if time permits or as reward for good behavior. ● Teachers use most of their planning time to prepare and correct worksheets and other seatwork. Little time is available to prepare enriching activities, such as those recommended in the teacher's edition of each textbook series. A few interest areas are available for children who finish their seatwork early or children are assigned to a learning center to complete a prescribed sequence of teacher-directed activities within a controlled time period.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Teaching strategies <i>(continued)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual children or small groups are expected to work and play cooperatively or alone in learning centers and on projects that they usually select themselves or are guided to by the teacher. Activity centers are changed frequently so children have new things to do. Teachers and children together select and develop projects. Frequent outings and visits from resource people are planned. Peer tutoring as well as learning from others through conversation while at work or play occurs daily. ● Learning materials and activities are concrete, real, and relevant to children's lives. Objects children can manipulate and experiment with such as blocks, cards, games, woodworking tools, arts and crafts materials including paint and clay, and scientific equipment are readily accessible. Tables are used for children to work alone or in small groups. A variety of work places and spaces is provided and flexibly used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During most work times, children are expected to work silently and alone on worksheets or other seatwork. Children rarely are permitted to help each other at work time. Penalties for talking are imposed. ● Available materials are limited primarily to books, workbooks, and pencils. Children are assigned permanent desks and desks are rarely moved. Children work in a large group most of the time and no one can participate in a playful activity until all work is finished.

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Every day, individual children or small groups are expected to work and play cooperatively or alone in learning centers and on projects that they usually select themselves or are guided to by the teacher.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Integrated curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The goals of the language and literacy program are for children to expand their ability to communicate orally and through reading and writing, and to enjoy these activities. Technical skills or subskills are taught as needed to accomplish the larger goals, not as the goal itself. Teachers provide generous amounts of time and a variety of interesting activities for children to develop language, writing, spelling, and reading ability, such as: looking through, reading, or being read high quality children's literature and nonfiction for pleasure and information; drawing, dictating, and writing about their activities or fantasies; planning and implementing projects that involve research at suitable levels of difficulty; creating teacher-made or child-written lists of steps to follow to accomplish a project; discussing what was read; preparing a weekly class newspaper; interviewing various people to obtain information for projects; making books of various kinds (riddle books, <i>what if</i> books, books about pets); listening to recordings or viewing high quality films of children's books; being read at least one high quality book or part of a book each day by adults or older children; using the school library and the library area of the classroom regularly. Some children read aloud daily to the teacher, another child, or a small group of children, while others do so weekly. Subskills such as learning letters, phonics, and word recognition are taught as needed to individual children and small groups through enjoyable games and activities. Teachers use the teacher's edition of the basal reader series as a guide to plan projects and hands-on activities relevant to what is read and to structure learning situations. Teachers accept children's invented spelling with minimal reliance on teacher-prescribed spelling lists. Teachers also teach literacy as the need arises when working on science, social studies, and other content areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The goal of the reading program is for each child to pass the standardized tests given throughout the year at or near grade level. Reading is taught as the acquisition of skills and subskills. Teachers teach reading only as a discrete subject. When teaching other subjects, they do not feel they are teaching reading. A sign of excellent teaching is considered to be silence in the classroom and so conversation is allowed infrequently during select times. Language, writing, and spelling instruction are focused on workbooks. Writing is taught as grammar and penmanship. The focus of the reading program is the basal reader, used only in reading groups, and accompanying workbooks and worksheets. The teacher's role is to prepare and implement the reading lesson in the teacher's guidebook for each group each day and to see that other children have enough seatwork to keep them busy throughout the reading group time. Phonics instruction stresses learning rules rather than developing understanding of systematic relationships between letters and sounds. Children are required to complete worksheets or to complete the basal reader although they are capable of reading at a higher level. Everyone knows which children are in the slowest reading group. Children's writing efforts are rejected if correct spelling and standard English are not used.

THE PRIMARY GRADES**Component****Integrated curriculum
(continued)****THE PRIMARY GRADES****APPROPRIATE Practice**

- The goal of the math program is to enable children to use math through exploration, discovery, and solving meaningful problems. Math activities are integrated with other relevant projects, such as science and social studies. Math skills are acquired through spontaneous play, projects, and situations of daily living. Teachers use the teacher's edition of the math textbook as a guide to structure learning situations and to stimulate ideas about interesting math projects. Many math manipulatives are provided and used. Interesting board and card, paper-and-pencil, and other kinds of games are used daily. Noncompetitive, impromptu oral "math stumper" and number games are played for practice.
- Social studies themes are identified as the focus of work for extended periods of time. Social studies concepts are learned through a variety of projects and playful activities involving independent research in library books; excursions and interviewing visitors; discussions; the relevant use of language, writing, spelling (invented and teacher-taught), and reading skills; and opportunities to develop social skills such as planning, sharing, taking turns, and working in committees. The classroom is treated as a laboratory of social relations where children explore values and learn rules of social living and respect for individual differences through experience. Relevant art, music, dance, drama, woodworking, and games are incorporated in social studies.

THE PRIMARY GRADES**INAPPROPRIATE Practice**

- Math is taught as a separate subject at a scheduled time each day. A math textbook with accompanying workbooks, practice sheets, and board work is the focus of the math program. Teachers move sequentially through the lessons as outlined in the teacher's edition of the text. Seldom is time available for recommended "hands-on" activities. Only children who finish their math seatwork are permitted to use the few math manipulatives and games in the classroom. Timed tests on number facts are given and graded daily. Competition between children or groups of children (boys vs. girls, Row 1 vs. Row 2) is used to motivate children to learn math facts.
- Social studies instruction is included occasionally after the reading and math programs are completed. Social studies projects, usually related to holidays, consist of completing brief activities from the social studies textbook or reading a commercially developed weekly newspaper and doing the accompanying seatwork.

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There are many ways to learn to read, write, and spell other than basal readers, workbooks, and spellers.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Integrated curriculum (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discovery science is a major part of the curriculum, building on children's natural interest in the world. Science projects are experimental and exploratory and encourage active involvement of every child. The science program takes advantage of natural phenomena such as the outdoors, and the classroom includes many plants and pets for which children provide care daily. Through science projects and field trips, children learn to plan; to dictate and/or write their plans; to apply thinking skills such as hypothesizing, observing, experimenting, and verifying; and many science facts related to their own experience. ● A variety of health and safety projects (such as nutrition, dental health, handwashing) are designed to help children learn many personalized facts about health and safety; to integrate their learning into their daily habits; to plan and to dictate and/or write their plans; to draw and write about these activities; to read silently and aloud; and to enjoy learning because it is related to their lives. ● Art, music, movement, woodworking, drama, and dance (and opportunities for other physical activity) are integrated throughout each day as relevant to the curriculum and as needed for children to express themselves aesthetically and physically and to express ideas and feelings. Specialists work with classroom teachers and children. Children explore and experiment with various art media and forms of music. ● Multicultural and nonsexist activities and materials are provided to enhance individual children's self-esteem and to enrich the lives of all children with respectful acceptance and appreciation of differences and similarities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Science is taught mainly from a single textbook or not at all. Children complete related worksheets on science topics. Science consists of memorizing facts or watching teacher-demonstrated experiments. Field trips occur rarely or not at all. A science area may have a few plants, seashells, or pine cones that have been there many months and are essentially ignored by the children. ● Health is taught with the aid of posters and a textbook. A health lesson is scheduled once a week or a unit on health is completed once a year. ● Art, music, and physical education are taught as separate subjects only once a week. Specialists do not coordinate closely with classroom teachers. Representational art, evaluated for approximations to reality is emphasized. Children are expected to follow specific directions resulting in identical projects. Crafts substitute for artistic expression. ● Cultural and other individual differences are ignored. Children are expected to adapt to the dominant culture. The lack of a multicultural component in the curriculum is justified by the homogeneity of the group, ignoring the fact that we live in a diverse society.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Integrated curriculum (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdoor activity is planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves freely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdoor time is limited because it is viewed as interfering with instructional time or, if provided, is viewed as recess (a way for children to use up excess energy).
Guidance of social-emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers promote prosocial behavior, perseverance, industry, and independence by providing many stimulating, motivating activities; encouraging individual choices; allowing as much time as needed for children to complete work; and ensuring moments of private time alone with the teacher or with a close friend. ● Children have many opportunities daily to develop social skills such as helping, cooperating, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Teachers facilitate the development of social skills at all times, as part of the curriculum. ● Teachers promote the development of children's consciences and self-control through positive guidance techniques including: setting clear limits in a positive manner; involving children in establishing rules for social living and in problem solving of misbehavior; redirecting children to an acceptable activity; and meeting with an individual child who is having problems or with children and their parents. Teachers maintain their perspective about misbehavior, recognizing that every infraction does not warrant attention and identifying those that can be used as learning opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers lecture about the importance of appropriate social behavior and use punishment or deprivations (such as no recess) when children who become restless and bored with seatwork whisper, talk, or wander around or when children dawdle and do not finish their work in the allotted time. Teachers do not have time for private conversations with children and only the most able students finish their work in time for special interests or interaction with other children. ● Little time is available for children to practice social skills in the classroom because they are seated and doing silent, individual work or are involved in teacher-directed groups. The only opportunities for social interaction occur on the playground, but the teacher is not present unless it is her playground duty day; therefore, children don't have a consistent, familiar adult to help them with problems. ● Teachers place themselves in an adversarial role with children, emphasizing their power to reward acceptable behavior and punish unacceptable behavior. Their primary goal is maintaining control of the classroom. Teachers spend considerable time enforcing rules, giving external rewards for good behavior, and punishing infractions. When social conflicts arise, the teacher intervenes, separating and quieting participants, avoiding the social issue. Whether or not the teacher intends, her attitude often feels demeaning to the child.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Guidance of social-emotional development <i>(continued)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers limit or contain overexposure to stimulation such as exciting, frightening, or disturbing real or fantasy events (including holidays, television programs or films, overwhelming museum exhibits, and depictions of disasters). When such events occur, teachers help children deal with excitement or fear and express feelings. Teachers know that although schoolchildren can discriminate between fantasy and reality, their capacity for absorbing stimulation is limited. Teachers recognize signs of overstimulation such as when children become silly, overly excited, and carried away in chasing or wrestling; when children try to unduly scare others by relating dramatic accounts of events or experiences; when children are unable to calm down and focus on the activity at hand; or when they become preoccupied with a frightening event. Teachers' strategy is to prevent these behaviors rather than punishing them and to provide an alternative calming activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers are not sensitive to signs of overstimulation in children and treat such demonstrations as misbehavior that must be punished or teachers escalate the situation by encouraging children to release pent-up energy in uncontrolled activity.
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers build on children's internal motivation to make sense of the world and acquire competence. The teacher's role is to work with the child in a supportive way toward shared goals, such as reading, writing, learning about the world, exploring science and math, and mastering the rules and skills of sports. Teachers guide individual children to see alternatives, improvements, and solutions. ● Through the relationship with the teacher, the child models her or his enthusiasm for learning, identifies with the teacher's attitudes toward conscientious work, and gains in self-motivation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers attempt to motivate children through the use of external rewards and punishments. The teacher's role is to correct errors and make sure the child knows the right answer in all subject areas. Teachers reward children for correct answers with stickers or privileges, praise them in front of the group, and hold them up as examples. ● The child, sensing that the teacher is struggling to keep her composure and get through the day, identifies with this attitude and emulates it.

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<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Motivation (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers point out how good it feels to overcome a hurdle, to try hard to achieve success, and to live up to one's own standards of achievement. The reward for completing a task is an opportunity to try something even more self-challenging, for example "Now that you've finished this book, you can choose another book you want to read." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers try to motivate children by giving numerical (85%) or letter grades, stickers, gold stars on charts, candy, or privileges such as extra minutes of recess.
Parent- teacher relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers view parents as partners in the educational process. Teachers have time for periodic conferences with each child's parents. Parents' visits to school are welcomed at all times and home visits by teachers are encouraged. Teachers listen to parents, seek to understand their goals for their children, and are respectful of cultural and family differences. ● Members of each child's family are encouraged to help in the classroom (sharing a cultural event or language, telling or reading a story, tutoring, making learning materials or playing games); to help with tasks related to but not occurring within the classroom (sewing costumes, working in the school library); and to assist with decision-making where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers are not given time for work with parents although many exceptional teachers do it on their own time. Subtle messages convey that schools are for teachers and children, not parents. Teachers view parents' role as carrying out the school's agenda. ● Schedules are so tight that parents are seen as one more frustration to teachers who need to cover the curriculum. A policy exists for parent participation, but it receives little time or effort. Teachers go to occasional PTA/PTO meetings and sit quietly in the audience. Teachers make formal contacts with parents through report cards and one yearly conference.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No letter or numerical grades are given during the primary years. Grades are considered inadequate reflections of children's ongoing learning. ● Each child's progress is assessed primarily through observation and recording at regular intervals. Results are used to improve and individualize instruction. No letter or number grades are given. Children are helped to understand and correct their errors. ● Children's progress is reported to parents in the form of narrative comments following an outline of topics. A child's progress is reported in comparison to his or her own previous performance and parents are given general information about how the child compares to standardized national averages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grades are seen as important in motivating children to do their work. ● Children are tested regularly on each subject. Graded tests are sent home or are filed after children see their grades. To ease children's stress caused by the emphasis placed on test scores, teachers "teach to the test." ● Children's progress is reported to parents in letter or numerical grades. Emphasis is on how well the child compares to others in the same grade and to standardized national averages.

THE PRIMARY GRADES THE PRIMARY GRADES THE PRIMARY GRADES

<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Evaluation <i>(continued)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children are not “promoted” nor do they “fail.” Because children progress through sequential curriculum at different paces, they are allowed to progress in all areas as they acquire competence. Retention is avoided because of its serious impact on children’s self-esteem and the fact that the practice of retaining children in a grade for another year disproportionately affects male, minority, very young, and low-income children. The program is designed to serve the needs of the children; the children are not expected to change to fit the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children repeat a grade or are placed in a special “transition” grade if they have not mastered the expected reading and math skills. It is assumed that their performance will improve with repetition or as they mature. Placement decisions are based on children’s ability to sit still and complete paperwork, follow directions, and read at or near grade level.
Grouping and staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Size of classroom groups and ratio of adults to children is carefully regulated to allow active involvement of children and time for teachers to plan and prepare group projects that integrate learning and skills in many subject areas and relate to children’s interests; to plan for and work with individual children having special needs or interests; to plan and work with parents; and to coordinate with other teachers, teams of specialists, and administrators involved in each child’s school experience. Groups of 5-, 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds are no larger than 25 with 2 adults, one of whom may be a paraprofessional, or no larger than 15 to 18 with one teacher. ● Classroom groups vary in size and composition depending on children’s needs. Some groups consist mostly of 5- and 6-year-olds or 6- and 7-year-olds, while others span 3 chronological years (5-, 6-, and 7-year-olds or 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds) or are composed mainly of same-age children. Children are placed where it is expected that they will do their best, which may be in a family grouping and which is more likely to be determined by developmental than by chronological age. Persistent difficulties of individual children are handled in small groups with more intensive help and the composition of these groups is flexible and temporary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Groups of 25 to 35 children with one teacher are considered acceptable because they are economical and possible with strict scheduling and discipline, use of prepaced textbooks and workbooks, and devoting little attention to individual needs or interests, allowing minimal parent involvement, and allowing no time for coordination among teachers and specialists. Kindergarten teachers must teach a total of 50 or more children in separate morning and afternoon sessions without the assistance of a paraprofessional. ● Classrooms consist of 25 to 35 children without opportunity for teachers to place children in smaller classes when needed (except children diagnosed as eligible for special or remedial education). Children are grouped by chronological age whenever possible, although inconsistencies arise due to dates of birth and the retention of some children. Children are tracked into homogeneous groups according to ability level.

THE PRIMARY GRADES THE PRIMARY GRADES THE PRIMARY GRADES

Component

APPROPRIATE Practice

INAPPROPRIATE Practice

**Grouping and
staffing
(continued)**

- Five- through 8-year-old children are assigned a primary teacher and remain in relatively small groups of 15 to 25 because so much of their learning and development is integrated and cannot be divided into specialized subjects to be taught by special teachers. Specialists assist the primary adult with special projects, questions, and materials.
- Care is taken to integrate special needs children into the mainstream classroom socially as well as physically. Care is taken to avoid isolating special needs children in a segregated classroom or pulling them out of a regular classroom so often as to disrupt continuity and undermine their feeling of belonging to the group.

- Departmentalized settings and groups of 80 or more children with a team of teachers are common. Teachers teach their special areas of interest and what they know best in isolation from one another and children rotate among different teachers.

- Special needs children are nominally assigned to a regular class, but almost all their instruction occurs with special teachers elsewhere in the building. These children have only a vague sense of what is happening in their regular classroom and the classroom teacher spends little time with them because she assumes they are getting intensive treatment from the special education teacher. Special needs children may be seated together in a designated area of their regular classroom.

**Teacher quali-
fications**

- Teachers are qualified to work with 5- through 8-year-olds through Early Childhood Education degree programs or Elementary Education degree programs with a specialty in Early Childhood Education that includes supervised field experience with this age group and required coursework in child development and how children learn, in integrated curriculum and instructional strategies, and in communication with families.
- Ongoing professional development opportunities are provided for primary grade teachers to ensure developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction and to help teachers become more competent, confident, and creative.

- Elementary or secondary teachers with no specialized training or field experience working with 5- through 8-year-olds are considered qualified because they are state certified regardless of the grade level for which their coursework prepared them.
- Teachers participate in continuing professional development to maintain certification although development opportunities are not necessarily related to the primary age group.

THE PRIMARY GRADES THE PRIMARY GRADES THE PRIMARY GRADES

<u>Component</u>	<u>APPROPRIATE Practice</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE Practice</u>
Before- and after-school care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The before- or after-school program is staffed by people trained in early childhood education, child development, and/or recreation. The program offers a wide variety of choices for children (including nutritious snacks) and features private areas, good books, sports, expeditions, clubs, and many home activities like cooking and woodworking. Children may do homework for a short period of time if they choose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The before- or after-school program is staffed by unqualified persons with little or no training in child development or recreation. The before- or after-school program is operated as an extension of the structured school day with children expected to do homework or occupy themselves with paper-and-pencil activities OR the program is considered babysitting and children are warehoused in large groups with few available materials.
Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children are assisted in making smooth transitions between groups or programs throughout the day by teachers who provide program continuity, maintain ongoing communication, prepare children for the transition, involve parents, and minimize the number of transitions necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A child's day is fragmented among many different groups and programs with little attempt by adults to communicate or coordinate successful transitions.



Daria Cole

Good after-school programs offer a wide variety of choices for children (including nutritious snacks) and feature private areas, good books, sports, expeditions, clubs, and many home activities like cooking and woodworking.

APPENDIX B

**CHECKLIST FOR RATING DEVELOPMENTALLY
APPROPRIATE PRACTICE IN
PRIMARY CLASSROOMS**

CHECKLIST FOR RATING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE
PRACTICE IN KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

Based on S. Bredekamp (Ed.) (1987) Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age eight (exp. ed.). Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children. Section on the Primary Grades, ages 5-8.

Five points are listed for rating each item. Under 5 the most appropriate practice indicators are listed, under point 1 the most inappropriate practice indicators are listed. Point 5 indicates close to 100% appropriate, point 4 indicates more appropriate than inappropriate. Point 3 indicates a fairly even split between appropriate and inappropriate. Point 2 indicates more inappropriate than appropriate. Point 1 indicates close to 100% inappropriate. Below each item there is a space for a brief description of what you observed or found out by questioning the teacher that underlies your rating.

Developed by Rosalind Charlesworth, Jean Mosley, Diane Burts, Craig Hart, Lisa Kirk, and Sue Hernandez, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, (1988).

CURRICULUM GOALS

1. Range of Curriculum Areas for Which Program is Designed

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| •physical | •narrow focus |
| •social | •intellectual emphasis |
| •emotional | •discrete academic |
| •intellectual | skills emphasis |
| •learning how to learn | |

Description:

2. The Place of Children's Self-esteem, Sense of Competence, and Positive Feelings Toward Learning in the Curriculum and Instruction

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|--|--|
| •Each child is given an equal amount of positive attention | •Children who conform receive more attention |
| | •Children are given attention according to their level of academic performance |

Description:

3. View of Growth and Development

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| •Work is individualized | •Evaluated against a group norm |
| •Children move at their own pace | •Everyone is expected to achieve the same narrowly defined skills |
| | •Everyone does the same thing at the same time |

Description:

TEACHING STRATEGIES

4. The Emphases in the Curriculum

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning occurs through projects and learning centers • Children's ideas are extended, questions are encouraged, and interests are developed • All subjects are integrated into units | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum is divided into discrete subject and time units • Emphasis on reading first and math second • Social studies, science, health are included only if time permits • Art, music, and physical education are taught once per week by specialists. |
|---|---|

Description:

5. Organization of the Curriculum

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities center on topics such as in science or social studies • Topic activities include story writing and story telling, drawing, discussion, hearing stories and informational books, and cooperative activities • Skills are taught as they are needed to complete a task | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher directed reading groups • Lecturing to the whole group • Paper and pencil exercises, workbooks, worksheets • Projects, learning centers, and play are offered if time permits or as a reward for completing work |
|---|---|

Description:

6. Teacher Preparation and Organization for Instruction

5 4 3 2 1 .

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning centers are set up which provide opportunities for writing, reading, math and language games, dramatic play • Children are encouraged to critique their own work • Errors are viewed as normal and something from which children can learn | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little time for enrichment activities • May be interest centers available for children who finish their seatwork early • May be centers where Children complete a prescribed sequence of teacher-directed activities within a controlled time period |
|---|--|

Description:

7. Instructional Activities

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children work and play cooperatively in groups • Projects are self selected with teacher guidance • Activity centers are changed frequently • One or more field trips • Resource people visit • Peer tutoring • Peer conversation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children work alone, silently on their worksheets or workbooks • Little, if any, peer help is permitted • Penalties for talking |
|---|---|

Description:

8. Learning Materials and Activities

5 4 3 2 1

- Concrete, real, and relevant to children's lives
- Blocks, cards, games, arts and crafts materials, wood-working tools, science equipment, etc.
- Flexible work spaces (tables, carpet, etc.)
- Limited primarily to books, workbooks, and pencils
- Permanent desks that are rarely moved
- Mostly large group instruction
- Playful activity only when work is done

Description:

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

9. Language and Literacy

5 4 3 2 1

- Technical skills are taught as needed
- Generous amounts of time are provided to learn through: literature and nonfiction reading; drawing, dictating, and writing stories; bookmaking; and library visits
- Daily reading aloud by teacher
- Subskills such as letters and phonics are taught individually and in small groups using games
- Literacy is taught through content areas such as science and social studies
- Children's invented spellings are accepted
- Teaching is geared to passing standardized tests
- Reading taught through skills and subskills
- Reading taught as a discrete subject
- Silence is required
- Language, writing, and spelling instruction focus on workbooks
- Teaching focuses on reading groups with other children having adequate amount of seatwork to keep busy
- Phonics instruction stresses learning rules rather than relationships
- Everyone must complete the same basals no matter what their abilities
- Everyone knows who is in the slowest reading group
- Acceptable writing has correct spelling and is standard English

Description:

10. Math

5 4 3 2 1

- Children encouraged to use math through exploration, discovery, and solving meaningful problems
- Integrated with other areas
- Skills acquired through play, projects, and daily living
- Math manipulatives are used
- Math games are used daily
- Taught as separate subject
- Taught at a scheduled time each day
- Focus on textbook, workbook, practice sheets, board work
- Lessons follow text sequence
- Seldom any "hands on" activity
- Must finish work in order to use games and manipulatives

Description:

11. Social Studies

5 4 3 2 1

- Themes may extend over a period of time
- Learned through playful activities, discussion, trips, visitors, writing, reading, social skills development, (planning, sharing, taking turns)
- Art, music, dance, drama, woodworking, and games are incorporated
- Included occasionally if reading and math are completed
- Mostly related to holidays
- Brief activities from the social studies textbook or commercially developed newspaper (i.e. Weekly Reader) and doing dittoed seatwork

Description:

12. Science

5 4 3 2 1

- Discovery, built on the children's natural interest in the world
- Projects are experimental and exploratory, encourage active involvement of every child
- Plants and pets in the classroom
- Through projects and field trips children learn to plan, apply thinking skills, hypothesize, observe, experiment, verify
- Learn science facts related to their own experience
- »Taught from a single textbook or not at all
- Complete worksheets
- Watch teacher demonstrations
- No field trips
- Materials in the science center are rarely change

Description:

13. Health and Safety

5 4 3 2 1

- Projects designed to help children use personalized facts
- They learn to integrate facts into their daily habits
- Dictate or write their own plans
- Draw and write about these activities
- Read about these activities
- Enjoy learning because it is related to their lives
- Posters and textbooks are used
- Once a week lessor or once a year unit on health

Description:

14. Art, Music, Movement, Woodworking, Drama, and Dance

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Integrated throughout the day •Specialists work with teachers and children •Children explore a variety of art media and music •Children design and direct their own products and productions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Taught as separate subjects once a week •Specialists do not coordinate closely with classroom teachers •Representational art is emphasized •Crafts substitute for artistic expression •Coloring book type activities •Use patterns and cut-outs |
|--|---|

Description:

15. Multicultural Education

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Materials and activities are multicultural and nonsexist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Materials and activities lack evidence of attention to cultural diversity and a nonsexist point of view |
|---|--|

Description:

16. Outdoor Activity

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves freely on a well designed playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Limited because it interferes with instructional time or •Provided as a time for recess to use up excess energy |
|---|---|

Description:

GUIDANCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Prosocial Behavior, Perseverance, and Industry

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stimulating, motivating activities are provided that promote student involvement •Individual choices are encouraged •Enough time is allowed to complete work •Private time with friend or teacher is provided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lectures about the importance of appropriate social behavior •Punishes children who become bored and restless with seatwork and whisper, talk, or wander around •Punishes children who dawdle and do not finish work in allotted time •No time for private conversations •Only the most able students finish their work in time for special interests or interaction with other students |
|---|---|

Description:

18. Helping, Cooperating, Negotiating, and Solving Social Problems

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Daily opportunities to develop social skills such as helping others, cooperating, negotiating, and talking with others to solve problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Little time to develop social skills--mostly independent seatwork and teacher directed activities •Only social opportunity is on the playground but no consistent adult is available to provide guidance |
|---|--|

Description:

19. Guidance Techniques

5 4 3 2 1 .

- Positive guidance techniques are used:
 - Clear limits are set in a positive manner
 - Children involved in establishing rules
 - Children involved in problem solving misbehavior
 - Redirection is used
 - Meets with child who has problems (and with parents)
- Recognize that every infraction doesn't warrant attention and identifies those can be used as learning opportunities
- Teacher is in adversarial role
- Emphasis on power to provide rewards and punishments
- Maintaining control of the classroom is primary goal
- Teachers:
 - enforce rules
 - give external rewards for good behavior
 - punish infractions
- When there is social conflict, participants are separated and quieted--social issue is avoided
- Teacher attitude is demeaning to child

Description:

20. Facilitation of self esteem by expressing respect, acceptance, and comfort for children regardless of their behavior

5 4 3 2 1

- Children are trusted to make some of their own decisions
- Children are encouraged to develop their own self control
- Teacher is warm and accepting
- Teacher provides understanding and nurturance
- Teacher adapts to children's needs
- Teacher screams in anger
- Teacher neglects children's individual needs
- Physical or emotional pain is inflicted
- Criticizes, ridicules, blames, teases, insults, name-calls, threatens, frightens, and/or humiliates
- Laughs at children in derogatory manner

Description:

MOTIVATION

21. Internal vs External Sources of Motivation and Rewards for Achievement

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Encourages development of internal rewards and internal critique •Guide children to see alternatives, improvements, and solutions •Guide children to find and correct own errors •Teacher points out how good it feels to complete a task, to try to be successful, to live up to one's own standards for achievement •The reward for completing a task is the opportunity to move on to a more difficult challenge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Uses external rewards and punishments •Corrects errors; makes sure children know right answers •Rewards children with stickers, praises in front of group, holds children up as examples •Motivation is through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -percentage or letter grades -stickers -stars on charts -candy -privileges |
|--|--|

Description:

22. Teacher as a Model for Motivation

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Through relationship with teacher, child models teacher's enthusiasm for learning, identifies with teacher's conscientious attitude toward work, and gains in self motivation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Children identify with teacher's lack of enthusiasm and interest in his or her work and emulate it |
|--|---|

Description:

TRANSITIONS

23. Transitions Within the School

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Children are assisted in making smooth transitions between groups or programs throughout the day by teachers who: -maintain continuity -maintain ongoing communication -prepare children for each transition -involve parents -minimize the number of transitions necessary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Day is fragmented among many different groups and programs with little attempt by adults to communicate or coordinate successful transitions |
|---|---|

Description:

24. Transitions Within the Classroom

5 4 3 2 1

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •transition activities (i.e. special song) •warning signals are given •ample time is allowed •next activity is intrinsically enticing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •single announcement •abrupt changes •wait for all to arrive before begin next activity •individuals singled out for being slow or distracted |
|--|--|

Description:

APPENDIX C

GUIDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

GUIDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of needs do you believe the transition first grade program meets?
2. What kind of school policy do you believe should be used when a child is unable to meet academic expectations for the grade level in which he or she is enrolled?
3. How would you describe a typical day in a transition first grade classroom?
4. Can you compare the transition first grade program with the transition first grade program as it was five years ago? How do you think it may have changed? What do you think the transition first grade will be like five years from now?
5. When you are talking with parents about the transition first grade program, what are the questions that parents usually raise?
6. Are any special materials, equipment, or resources used by the students in transition first grades in your school (district)?
7. Different transition first grade programs use different methods for recommending placement of a child in the program. How are children selected in your school (district)?
8. What would you describe as major differences between kindergarten, transition first grade and first grade programs in your school district?

APPENDIX D

TRANSITION FIRST GRADE PRIORITIZED
CURRICULUM QUESTIONNAIRE

Transition First Grade Prioritized Curriculum Questionnaire

Directions

For Parts I-V, please use Column 1 to check (√) those items which you personally believe are important for a transitional classroom between the regular kindergarten and first grade program. Within each section (goals, content, learning activities, evaluative procedures, program characteristics) please use Column 2 to prioritize the items you believe to be the five (5) most important items which you have checked in Column 1. That is, 1=most important item, 2=second most important item, 3=third most important item, etc.

Column 1	Column 2	Item
√ = important	1,2,3,4,5 most important	XXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[3]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[4]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[1]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[5]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[2]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
[√]	[]	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

PART I: GOALS FOR THE TRANSITION FIRST GRADE

When considering each item suggested as a goal for the transition first grade, please refer to the following definition:

GOALS: Desired outcomes for an educational program

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	GOALS
√ = important	1,2,3,4,5 most important	
[]	[]	small muscle development
[]	[]	large muscle development
[]	[]	empathy for feelings of others
[]	[]	concern for the rights of others
[]	[]	multicultural and gender awareness
[]	[]	share space and materials with others
[]	[]	learn courtesy and acceptable conduct
[]	[]	establish good work habits
[]	[]	take care of books, supplies, school environment
[]	[]	establish good hygiene habits
[]	[]	express needs and emotions in acceptable manner
[]	[]	foster positive self-concept
[]	[]	auditory discrimination
[]	[]	visual discrimination
[]	[]	remember and follow oral directions
[]	[]	oral vocabulary development
[]	[]	acceptable speech patterns
[]	[]	prereading skills
[]	[]	beginning math skills
[]	[]	problem solving ability

PART II: CONTENT FOR THE TRANSITION FIRST GRADE

When considering each item suggested as appropriate content in the transition first grade program, please consider the following definition:

CONTENT: Any subject matter which includes knowledge and/or skills, which may or may not be specifically planned and/or supervised by the classroom teacher

COLUMN 1 √=important	COLUMN 2 1,2,3,4,5 most important	CONTENT
[]	[]	art (including crafts projects)
[]	[]	computer literacy
[]	[]	cooking activities
[]	[]	creative movement (dance)
[]	[]	drama
[]	[]	handwriting
[]	[]	health
[]	[]	mathematics (skills: addition, subtraction, etc.)
[]	[]	math readiness (recognizing shapes, numerals etc)
[]	[]	music (including singing)
[]	[]	nature appreciation, environmental awareness
[]	[]	oral language
[]	[]	phonics instruction
[]	[]	physical education and exercise
[]	[]	reading (sight words, decoding skills, etc.)
[]	[]	reading readiness (letter recognition, left-to right progression, etc.)
[]	[]	science
[]	[]	social studies
[]	[]	spelling
[]	[]	woodworking

PART III: LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR THE TRANSITION FIRST GRADE

When considering each item suggested as an appropriate learning activity for a transition first grade, please consider the following definition:

LEARNING ACTIVITIES: Educational tasks or projects designed to achieve desired program outcomes

COLUMN 1 √=important	COLUMN 2 1,2,3,4,5 most important	LEARNING ACTIVITIES
[]	[]	drawing, painting, using colored chalk
[]	[]	coloring, cutting and pasting
[]	[]	stringing beads or sewing
[]	[]	listening to stories
[]	[]	doing workbook pages
[]	[]	repeating fingerplays or rhymes
[]	[]	playing with sand, water or mud
[]	[]	singing songs
[]	[]	going on field trips
[]	[]	playing with dolls
[]	[]	using play housekeeping toys
[]	[]	using a computer
[]	[]	using woodworking tools
[]	[]	playing musical instruments
[]	[]	reading orally from a basal reader
[]	[]	writing/reading his/her own stories
[]	[]	building with blocks
[]	[]	using wheeled toys outdoors
[]	[]	using swings, slides, climbing structures, jump ropes, balls, etc., outdoors
[]	[]	writing on lined paper
[]	[]	copying letters, words, or phrases
[]	[]	participating in 'show and tell'
[]	[]	using magnets, scales, or magnifying glass
[]	[]	using construction toys (Lego, tinkertoy, Lincoln logs, etc.)
[]	[]	using clay, playdough or modeling plasticene

PART IV: EVALUATIVE METHODS

When considering each item suggested for evaluative method, please keep in mind the following definition:

EVALUATIVE METHOD: any procedure used to assess and report and/or record student progress

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	EVALUATIVE METHOD
√=important	1,2,3,4,5 most important	
[]	[]	teacher observation
[]	[]	parent report, oral or written
[]	[]	administrative observation
[]	[]	teacher aide observation
[]	[]	other teacher observation (music, PE, speech, etc)
[]	[]	screening test or readiness test
[]	[]	basal reading series test
[]	[]	standardized test (eg., achievement)
[]	[]	intelligence quotient test
[]	[]	teacher-made tests
[]	[]	subject area tests (math, spelling, etc.)
[]	[]	grades on homework or assignments
[]	[]	checklists of skills
[]	[]	checklists of activities or materials used
[]	[]	anecdotal records made by teacher
[]	[]	notations made at parent conference
[]	[]	narrative reports to parent
[]	[]	progress report with letter grades (A, B, C, etc.)
[]	[]	progress report with marks (√+, √-, S, U, etc.)
[]	[]	portfolio of child's art, written work
[]	[]	telephone report to parent of progress
[]	[]	videotape, cassette, photographic or film report
[]	[]	student's own evaluative report

PART V: TRANSITION FIRST GRADE PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

When considering each item suggested as a characteristic of a transition first grade, please keep in mind the following definition:

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTIC: Any attribute, factor or element revealing a quality specific or identifying to a group of students enrolled in an educational program.

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	CHARACTERISTIC
√=important	1,2,3,4,5 most important	
[]	[]	all day, full year school program
[]	[]	small class size
[]	[]	teacher aide provided
[]	[]	speech or language therapy provided pupils
[]	[]	health check-up provided pupils
[]	[]	eye examination provided pupils
[]	[]	psychometric referral automatic for pupils
[]	[]	psychometrist services available for pupils
[]	[]	teacher has early childhood certificate
[]	[]	teacher has special education certificate
[]	[]	teacher has reading certificate
[]	[]	teacher has advanced degree
[]	[]	teacher has had several years teaching experience
[]	[]	teacher qualified to administer screening tests
[]	[]	adaptive physical education available for pupils
[]	[]	home visits made by teacher
[]	[]	parent conferences held frequently
[]	[]	parents fully informed about program
[]	[]	parents participate as volunteers in program
[]	[]	parent meetings held frequently
[]	[]	special supplies, materials or equipment provided
[]	[]	multiple criteria used for pupil selection
[]	[]	age cut-off for pupil eligibility
[]	[]	students segregated from other first grade classes

APPENDIX E

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES FREQUENCY
QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following items by circling the number that most nearly represents how often your students participate in the following list of activities, on the average.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Almost Never (less than monthly)	Rarely (monthly)	Sometimes (weekly)	Regularly (2-4 times per week)	Very Often (daily)
1. building with large blocks	1	2	3	4	5
2. children selecting centers (housekeeping, math, library books, science, art, writing, etc.) to use	1	2	3	4	5
3. participating in dramatic play	1	2	3	4	5
4. listening to phonograph records and/or tapes	1	2	3	4	5
5. doing creative writing (combining symbols, invented spelling and drawing)	1	2	3	4	5
6. playing with boardgames, cardgames	1	2	3	4	5
7. exploring animals, plants, magnets and/or wheels and gears	1	2	3	4	5
8. singing and/or listening to music	1	2	3	4	5
9. creative movement	1	2	3	4	5
10. cutting their own shapes from paper	1	2	3	4	5
11. playing with manipulatives such as pegboards, puzzles, stringing beads, sewing cards	1	2	3	4	5
12. using construction play materials such as Lego bricks, Lincoln logs, or Tinkertoys	1	2	3	4	5
13. coloring and/or cutting predrawn forms	1	2	3	4	5
14. children reading in ability level groups	1	2	3	4	5
15. circling, underlining, and/or marking items on worksheets	1	2	3	4	5
16. using flashcards with sight work and/or math facts	1	2	3	4	5
17. rote counting	1	2	3	4	5

	1 Almost Never (less than monthly)	2 Rarely (monthly)	3 Sometimes (weekly)	4 Regularly (2-4 times per week)	5 Very Often (daily)
18. practicing handwriting on lined paper	1	2	3	4	5
19. reciting the alphabet	1	2	3	4	5
20. copying from the chalkboard	1	2	3	4	5
21. sitting for longer than 15 minutes	1	2	3	4	5
22. waiting for longer than 5 minutes between activities	1	2	3	4	5
23. large-group, teacher-directed instruction	1	2	3	4	5
24. children coordinating/planning their own activities	1	2	3	4	5
25. tangible rewards given for appropriate behavior and/or performance; eg., stickers or food item	1	2	3	4	5
26. losing special privileges (trips, recess, free time, parties, etc.) for misbehavior	1	2	3	4	5
27. social reinforcement (verbal praise, approval, attention, etc.) for appropriate behavior and/or performance	1	2	3	4	5
28. using isolation (standing or sitting in a corner or outside the room) to obtain child compliance	1	2	3	4	5
29. games or activities directed by or made by parents	1	2	3	4	5
30. specifically planned outdoor activities	1	2	3	4	5
31. multicultural and/or nonsexist activities or materials	1	2	3	4	5
32. competitive or timed math activities to learn math facts	1	2	3	4	5
33. health and/or safety activities	1	2	3	4	5
34. drawing, painting, clay, marking pens, etc. (art media without teacher direction as to end product)	1	2	3	4	5
35. math or reading incorporated with other subject areas	1	2	3	4	5
36. using water, playdough, salt, sand, fingerpaint, or other sensory materials	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS INVENTORIES
FOR INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOMS

CEDARDALE TRANSITION FIRST GRADE

PAPER AND ART

floor art easel	colored construction paper	recycled scrap paper
tempera paint	large paint brushes	communal crayons
scissors	discarded magazines for collage	individual glue bottles

MATHEMATICS

teacher-made tally chart of number of days in school thus far
 Addison Wesley (1979) Workjobs II by Baratta-Lorton teaching guide
 Workjobs teacher-made learning activities, set of 22
 small plastic colored stringing beads and strings
 Milton Bradley Connect Four game
 Milton Bradley Operation game
 Lauri foam rubber floor-sized dominoes
 Unifix cubes with laminated pattern cards
 colored plastic geometric shapes (parquetry tiles) with laminated pattern cards
 wooden kindergarten unit blocks (partial set)
 large set of colored wooden blocks
 Lincoln Log construction set
 DML parquetry pieces and pattern designs
 Milton Bradley parquetry pattern designs
 6" square pegboards and pegs
 Ohaus balance beam mathematics scale for addition and subtraction, with pieces
 colored plastic counting discs
 commercial lacing picture cards with laces
 wooden puzzles with trays, set of 12
 collection of die
 addition and subtraction fact flashcards
 Milton Bradley The Happy Little Train Game
 Creative Publications (1986) pattern parquetry blocks; 2 sets
 commercial wall calendar for daily activities
 teacher-made geoboards with rubber bands
 teacher-made covered cubes to make six-sided puzzle
 Lakeside Barrel O Monkeys, 2 sets
 Parker Brothers Blockhead game
 1" colored ceramic tiles
 teacher-made puzzles from laminated magazine pictures
 Lite Brite
 collection of marbles
 Golden Money Sums (puzzle in which child inserts coins to equal correct sum of money)
 Whitman Walt Disney cardboard puzzles (set of 5)
 Sesame Street cardboard puzzle
 collection of card games, some teacher-made

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

collection of trade books, approximately 300; teacher-owned

Lippincott (1971) Beginning Reading Program (with teacher guide, flashcards, wall charts, listening cassette tapes, individual student workbooks, supplementary handwriting worksheets, etc.)
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian wall display cards of alphabet depicting object with initial sound of letter
 The Wright Group (1986) collection of big books; approximately 12
 Milton Bradley Pin the Tail on the Donkey game
 Ravensburger Guess My Name game
 collection of teacher-made laminated flipchart poetry and nursery rhymes
 collection of teacher-owned cassette tapes with accompanying storybooks
 Playskool Match-Ups
 Richard Scarry's Best Mother Goose sewing cards
 Trend Mix and Match puzzles: Things of a Kind
 Trend Mix and Match puzzles: Sequence, level 1
 set of commercial 3-piece puzzles of word with picture cues
 collection of teacher-made folder games for letter recognition, color names, beginning consonant sound, etc.; approximately 100
 Trend Rhyming Bingo game
 teacher-made sentence strips coordinated with Beginnings basal reading program
 collection of teacher-owned trade big books (storybooks, songbooks, Christmas theme, and coloring books)
 collection of copies of National Geographic magazines
 collection of reproducible worksheet books (Golden, Whitman, etc.)

SCIENCE

teacher-made unit box with dinosaur theme
 teacher-made unit box with magnet theme
 teacher-made sound boxes (child matches 2 like sounds)
 kaileidoscope

SOCIAL STUDIES

teacher-made unit boxes with monthly or holiday theme
 Economy Little Trolley set of books (some with cultural, ethnic or social studies theme)

MUSIC

collection of teacher-made flip-chart songbooks
 set of kindergarten rhythm instruments
 collection of teacher-owned cassette tapes of music and exercise tapes

OTHER

collection of 18"x24" carpet samples	television	cassette tape player
listening headphones	trampoline, approx. 36"	red rubber PE balls
wooden walking balance beam	phonograph record player	filmstrip projector
plastic wading pool, approx. 42" diameter	manual typewriter	overhead projector
clothespins labeled with numerals or letters		

CEDARDALE FIRST GRADE INVENTORY

PAPER AND ART

colored construction paper	crayons	plastic drinking glasses
Chunk-O-Crayons (oversized crayons)	paper plates	styrofoam drinking glasses
scissors	Ziploc bags	glitter
cotton balls	aquarium gravel	modeling clay
individual student glue bottles	clothespins	paper lunch sacks
teacher-cut 1" square construction paper	recycled grocery bags	colored yarn scraps
letter-sized envelopes	Q-tips	fingerpaint
dry tempera paint	large paint brushes	teacher-made tempera cakes
spray enamel	recycled computer paper	manuscript paper
recycled paper scraps	watercolor refill cakes	small paint brushes
colored pencils	pencils	chalk and chalkboard erasers

MATHEMATICS

table sized abacus
 teacher-made die
 6" square plastic and wooden pegboards with pegs, set of 31
 colored plastic counting chips
 addition and subtraction fact flashcards
 teacher-made magnetboard coin magnets (using real coins attached to magnets)
 set of transparent plastic containers marked by volume
 set of measuring cups
 12" and 6" rulers; classroom sets of paper and classroom sets of wood
 commercial teaching clock with moveable hands, 4" diameter
 individual student teaching clocks with moveable hands
 ORDA Industries (1975) Fraction Game, for 1-4 players age 5-10
 classroom set of individual student abacus
 snap together colored plastic beads for counting, patterning, and addition
 numeral recognition flashcards
 wooden counting pieces in geometric and object shapes (used during teacher instruction with overhead projector)
 plastic parquetry tiles and laminated pattern cards
 red wooden counting rods in sets of 10 (banded with rubber bands)
 colored plastic 1" counting cubes
 Cuisenaire rods set
 Milton Bradley design blocks for parquetry
 teacher-made die
 teacher-made counting rods
 Ideal Quiet Counting Discs #751P, 5/8" diameter
 blue plastic counting tiles, 1" square
 cardboard punch-out money from consumable workbooks in sets
 Learning Resources money pieces for overhead projector use
 Cuisenaire Company of America Cuisenaire Rods for overhead projector use (#20295)
 Learning Resources Fraction Circles for overhead projector use
 classroom set of paper money
 teaching abacus frames with handles for group instruction (set of 3)
 flannelboard numerals flannel pieces

flannelboard geometric shapes flannel pieces
 New Math Flip Flask (flashcards)
 Quizmo Addition and Subtraction game, #9309
 Trend Number Bingo
 Heath Mathematics, Grade 1 teacher manual
 1" square graph paper
 5/8" square graph paper
 3/16" square graph paper
 picture string cards with strings
 cardboard puzzles with trays, set of 6
 jigsaw puzzles, 100-piece sets; approximate 30 puzzles
 Etch-A Sketch
 card games, 3 sets
 commercial counting chart 1-100
 Unifix cubes
 counting charts by 2s, 5s, 10s
 calendar with day of months
 commercial number line 1-100 for wall display

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

Open Court (1989) Phonics Kit for Grade 1, Level B (complete set of basal reading books, workbooks, Big Books, posters, listening tapes, wallcharts, blackline masters, flashcards, teacher guide, gameboards, testing materials, matching word cards, story book sets, etc.)
 white lined sentence strips
 trade coloring books (approximately 65)
 paperback trade books with accompanying phonograph records, teacher-owned; approximately 40
 paperback trade books with accompanying cassette tape, teacher-owned; approximately 75
 collection of phonograph records, including poetry and instructional reading records
 SRA Reading Laboratory, Level IA
 flannelboard alphabet flannel pieces
 flannelboard word flannel pieces
 Basic Sight Word Bingo game
 individual student chalkboards, set of 20-25
 Milton Bradley Phonetic Quizmo (lotto game)
 Riverside Reading Program phonics bulletin or wall display charts
 Memory Match-Up game (2 sets)
 commercial charts with long vowels, short vowels, consonants
 collection of trade books and basal readers, approximately 300
 Doubleday (1976) Apples to Zippers encyclopedia set
 teacher-made folder games using reproducible worksheets (eg., Carson Dellosa); approximately 100
 Ting-A-Ling Bingo game
 Riverside Reading (1986) basal readers with teaching guide and reproducible worksheets, levels 1-3; set of 25
 Scott Foresman (1975) My Picture Dictionary; set of 8
 Scott Foresman (1964) My Little Dictionary, set of 2
 Danbury Press (1971) Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Knowledge Encyclopedia set
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian display cards of alphabet
 Open Court Reading Program display cards of alphabet, vowel and consonant sounds

SCIENCE

Benefic Press (1963) Animal Adventures (set of 6 basal books with accompanying phonograph record; 3 titles)
 collection of small seashells
 Instructo flannel pieces for flannelboard: How We Dress for Weather; Seeds and Their Travel; Water Cycle
 cardboard puzzles with trays depicting animals realistically, set of 4
 Singer Science basal readers (2)
 Silver Burdett (1984) Science basal series, level 1
 commercial bulletin or wall display chart with color names
 collection of paperback trade books, some in multiple sets; approximately 300; teacher-owned
 Scott Foresman Reading Collection (3 sets of storybooks with 8 copies per set)
 Guinn (1961 Revised; original 1953) basal readers
 Macmillan (1968) basal readers
 SWRL Learning Center Resources Reading Series
 Addison Wesley basal readers
 SRA basal reading series

SOCIAL STUDIES

Benefic Press (1963) Social Studies basal series (4 copies each of topics concerning food, families, communities)
 flannelboard holiday cut-outs
 NAESP Quest Skills for Growing, Grade 1
 collection of teacher-owned safety and health coloring books
 SRA Social Studies basal readers (2)
 assorted bulletin board display pieces with holiday themes

MUSIC

Wee Sing for Christmas cassette and book
 collection of phonograph records
 set of 28 cassette tapes; box labeled "Tapes of Records"
 Silver Burdett (1985) basal music series
 set of wooden dowels used as rhythm sticks
 Follett (1970) Discovering Music Together, Level 1 Revised basal set of 25

COOKING AND FOOD SUPPLIES

popcorn popper	dry cereal	miniature marshmallows
sunflower seeds	teacher-sized apron	sugar
waxed paper	flour	salt
plastic forks		

OTHER

television	overhead projector	cleaning supplies
paper cutter	flower vases	table-sized magnet board
bulletin board trim	listening headphones	cassette tape player (2)
collection 18"x24" carpet samples	Christmas Tree	Christmas ornaments
collection of small plastic toys (rewards)	Hoola Hoops, set of 15	floor pocket chart stand
assorted bulletin board display items	red rubber PE balls (2)	jumppropes
Open Court (1984) testing materials	electric fan	

ELMWOOD KINDERGARTEN INVENTORY

PAPER AND ART

fingerpaint	dry tempera paint	large paint brushes
spatter paint screens, framed	modeling clay	Q-tips
colored Chennile craft pipe cleaners	cotton balls	colored construction paper
manuscript writing paper	recycled computer paper	manilla paper
white drawing paper	individual sets of crayons	wallpaper sample books
collection of 4" square ceramic tiles	set of dishpans	chalk and chalkboard erasers
collection of 12" square carpet squares	6" square yarn looms	discarded magazines for collage

MATHEMATICS

set of die (some with numerals, dots, letters, etc.)
 6" red square Stepping Stones alphabet floor set, upper and lower case
 wooden puzzles in trays, set of 23
 Sifo large wooden floor puzzles, set of 3
 cardboard puzzles in trays, set of 36
 12" square wooden pegboards with pegs, set of 6
 Ideal plastic 8" square pegboards with pegs, set of 19
 Parcheesi game
 Numberland Counting game
 commercial counting wall chart, 1-100
 reproducible worksheet books with math concepts (eg., trace numerals 1-10, color 10 bees)
 punch-out cardboard money from consumable workbooks
 telling time flashcards
 Bowman (1982) reproducible worksheets for mathematics
 Trans-Atlantic Video (1987) Learning About Arithmetic (set of 4 videotapes
 Oklahoma State University (1988) videotape: Computers in the Classroom
 flannelboard pieces (geometric shapes, numerals)
 Media Materials large parquetry pieces and laminated pattern designs
 set of sewing cards and plastic sewing needles with yarn
 large wooden colored stringing beads and strings, with pattern cards
 shape cubes (matching shape to silhouette and dropping into container; set of 2)
 wooden table-sized abacus
 large teacher-made die
 teacher-made geometric shapes game made with pizza rounds
 floor abacus
 Lauri foam parquetry pieces
 colored 1" wooden counting cubes
 checkers game
 Playskool wooden parquetry blocks
 Number Match-Ups (two-piece puzzle matching number/numeral; 2 sets)
 Tinkertoy construction set
 Lego construction pieces (incomplete set)
 Lincoln Logs (large collection) construction set
 wooden shoe to teacher bow tying
 large wooden floor dominoes game
 Milton Bradley Stay Alive game (play with marbles)

commercial teaching clock with moveable hands
wooden kindergarten unit blocks, incomplete set

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

foam alphabet letters in frames
set of wooden 2" alphabet blocks
Cootie game
plastic colored magnetic alphabet set
teacher-made alphabet letter matching game made with pizza rounds
Lauri foam alphabet puzzle in tray
reproducible worksheet books (eg., color pages for rhyming, beginning sound)
spelling concentric ringed toys (2)
Book of Knowledge encyclopedia set
individual student chalkboards
alphabet books, collection of 10
sentence strips
Doubleday (1976) Apples to Zippers set of encyclopedia
Scrabble for Juniors game
ABC Scrabble game
non-reading boardgame set (5 games)
Weekly Reader subscription (classroom set)
Weekly Reader dictionary
Scott Foresman (1974) The New Open Highways Starter Concept Cards
sight word flashcards
assorted flannelboard pieces (letters, objects)
assorted trade and basal reader books, some discarded from school library; approximate 100
Macmillan Early Skills Program Language Development Cards
Economy Language Development Cards
Holt Basic Reading (1986) Levels 1-2 teaching guide
Riverside Reading (1986) Get Set reading program with teaching guide and reproducible worksheets
Macmillan Instant Activities (3 sets of reproducible blackline master worksheet books)

SCIENCE

collection of pine cones
classroom pet: hamster in a cage
tropical fish aquarium with guppies
Scholastic (1977) Beginning Concepts in Science sound cassettes and filmstrips (set of 6)
Troll (1979) Science filmstrips (set of 2)
large magnets and accompanying laminated poster
box of Ranger Rick materials (1985) set of 6 books
Playskool animal pieces
Lego gear set
Project Wild teacher guide
Dairy Council of California (1973) Early Childhood Nutrition Education Program kit
Oklahoma Nutrition Education program

SOCIAL STUDIES

commercial bulletin board displays, holiday theme

pretend cash register
 set of fire fighter hats, red plastic
 two large Judy floor puzzles, train and school bus
 Troll (1979) social studies filmstrips (set of 3: School Manners, Home Manners, Community Manners)
 housekeeping furniture: Tyco stove, cabinet, sink/stove
 2 dolls, white
 pretend telephone
 assortment of dress-up clothes
 Oklahoma State Department of Education Drug Free School Curriculum, K-2
 assorted holiday bulletin board displays

MUSIC

large drum
 assortment of phonograph records (appear to be old)

OTHER

set of walking stairs	manual typewriter	rubber horseshoe set
popcorn popper and corn	laminating film	bulletin board trim
heart-shaped candles (approximately 50)	flannelboard	teacher-made beanbags
table-sized chalkboard	television with videoplayer	listening headphones
set of 18 dishpans	bathroom scales	red rubber PE balls
phonograph player	cassette player	filmstrip projector
football	filmscreen	Brigance testing materials
electric iron		
Oklahoma State Department of Education Learner Outcomes, K-8		

ELMWOOD TRANSITION FIRST GRADE INVENTORY

PAPER AND ART

watercolors	small paint brushes	large paint brushes
dry tempera paint	colored construction paper	recycled paper scraps
laminating film	individual glue bottles	paste in 1-gallon containers
communal crayons	popsickle sticks	wooden floor easels (2)
fingerpaint	modeling clay	discarded styrofoam meat trays
collection of margarine containers	chalk and chalk erasers	discarded magazines used for collage
recycled grocery bags	communal scissors	glue sticks
colored art tissue		

MATHEMATICS

commercial wall displays of number/numeral sets
 Unifix cubes with pattern cards
 teacher-made geoboards with rubber bands
 wooden colored stringing beads and strings
 metal nuts and bolts set
 button collection for counting, sorting
 collection of lids for counting
 wooden pegboards with pegs
 teacher-made wall tally of number of days in school thus far
 teacher-made graph chart with number of days sunny, rainy, windy, cloudy, etc.
 commercial teaching clock with moveable hands
 Math Their Way teaching guide
 reproducible worksheets, dot-to-dot numeral
 Workjobs (set of 2)
 set of measuring cups
 teacher-made big book
 teacher-made stringing cards (teddy bears; set of 2)
 reproducible math worksheet books
 pegboards in small, medium and large sizes (sets of 7 small, 4 medium and 24 large) with pegs
 parquetry pieces and laminated pattern sheets

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

Lippincott (1971) Beginning Reading Program (with teacher guide, flashcards, wall charts, listening cassette tapes, individual student workbooks, supplementary handwriting worksheets, etc.)
 collection of trade books (paperbacks, discarded library books; approximately 20)
 collection of trade books (teacher-owned and not used by children)
 Holt Rinehart and Winston Bill Martin Big Book set with accompanying sets of 6-8 small paperbacks (set of 5)
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian display cards of alphabet and objects beginning with letter sound
 commercial display of color names
 flannelboard alphabet set
 Rigby Education big book (1)
 Scott Foresman dictionary (classroom set)
 erasable "Magic Slate"
 Ring A Ring O Rosies fingerplay and song teacher guide
 teacher-made set of laminated picture opposites

Addison Wesley body movement sequence cards for group use
 teacher-made color names game
 The Wright Company (1988) big book (1)
 reproducible worksheet books (eg., letter matching, beginning sound, rhyming, color names, etc.)

SCIENCE

commercial growth chart (measurement)
 collections of rocks, seeds, seashells and acorns
 commercial weather bulletin board display charts for daily calendar activities
 poster of photograph of earth from space
 teacher-made tactile "feely" box
 collection of sensory materials (beans, rice, macaroni)

SOCIAL STUDIES

oversized coloring books (set of 7 Christmas theme)
 collection of life-like food models for pretend play
 discarded camera used for pretend play

MUSIC

cassette listening tapes (assortment including exercise, lullaby, and story tapes)
 collection of Hap Palmer records

OTHER

electric skillet	cooking mixing bowls	measuring cups set
hot air pop corn popper	cassette player	phonograph record player
wooden walking balance beam	table-sized flannelboard	listening headphones
set of jumpropes for outdoor play	television	small red rubber PE balls (3)
MacGruff dog doll		

ELMWOOD FIRST GRADE INVENTORY

PAPER AND ART

modeling clay	colored yarn scraps	styrofoam drinking cups
straws	clothespins	Ziploc bags
paper plates	plastic forks	tongue depressors
white drawing paper	colored construction paper	manilla paper
manuscript paper	dry tempera paint	premixed tempera paint
chalk and chalkboard erasers	colored marking pens	collection of microwave dishes
colored art tissue	paint brushes	communal crayons

MATHEMATICS

12" rulers, classroom set
 cardboard punch-out money set from consumable workbooks
 balance beam scale
 1" square graph paper
 Milton Bradley plastic counting discs
 Ideal pegboards and pegs
 Counting rods
 teacher-made tongue depressor counters made with beans
 addition and subtraction flashcards
 teacher-made die
 Sesame Street Numeral/Set Match-up game
 Playskool counting set, 1-20
 Trend wipe-off cards, sets 1-20
 Whitman Bingo Numbers game
 teacher-made bicolored counting beans
 Ideal addition and subtraction fact flashcards (8 sets)
 Ideal math relationships flashcards
 Milton Bradley addition and subtraction fact flashcards
 collection of money (pennies)
 addition and subtraction dice game
 teacher-made hangtags with numerals 1-100
 teacher-made folder games (includes numeral/number match from 1-10, sequencing numerals 0-50, addition facts, numeral recognition 1-20, number words)
 numeral recognition flashcards
 commercial teaching clock with moveable hands
 individual student teaching clocks with moveable hands
 Unifix cubes
 jigsaw puzzles (up to 100 pieces; set of 9)
 Candyland game
 Hi! Ho! Cherry-O! game
 Milton Bradley Tiddley Winks
 wooden puzzles with trays (set of 13)

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

Open Court (1989) Phonics Kit for Grade 1 (complete set of basal reading books, workbooks, Big Books, posters, listening tapes, wallcharts, blackline masters, flashcards, teacher guide, gameboards, testing materials, etc.)

cassette tapes with accompanying story books, teacher-owned assortment
 set of Humpty Dumpty books
 large collection of basal readers classified from 1.1 to 3.0 grade reading level (approximately 300 books)
 set of Mother Goose books
 sentence flashcards set
 sentence strip roll
 reproducible spirit masters for reading
 Baldwin Specific Skills Series worksheets (following directions, beginning sounds, locating answers)
 large collection of trade (mostly Scholastic paperbacks)
 collection of Paddington paperback books, teacher-owned
 set of C. S. Lewis paperback books
 Macmillan alphabet cards
 Scholastic Big Book (set of 5 stories)
 Playskool Match-Up puzzles for alphabet
 Playskool Match-Up puzzles for rhyming words
 Trend Wipe-Off cards for beginning sounds, blending sounds, rhyming words
 Trend long and short vowel flashcards
 Texas Instruments Speak and Spell game
 GAF Viewmaster with reels
 Woodgoods Nuts and Bolts Speller
 teacher-made color names game
 teacher-made folder games (alphabet lower and upper case match, rhyming, beginning sound, short and long vowel, vowel in middle of word, alphabet letter recognition)
 Modern Curriculum Press (1986) phonics Practice Charts
 Playtown Learning Board game with moveable letters of alphabet
 Milton Bradley Simon (auditory sequence game)
 teacher-made word sets on shower curtain rings
 Childcraft encyclopedia set
 set of 2" wooden alphabet blocks
 set of styrene alphabet letters
 Big Bird Sesame Street Dictionary set

SCIENCE

collection of Ranger Rick magazines
 Silver Burdett Science basal series

SOCIAL STUDIES

teacher collection of materials for unit themes (holiday and monthly themes)
 collection of National Geographic World
 various bulletin board displays with holiday themes
 thematic teaching unit on Cowboys, teacher-made
 Macmillan heavy cardboard fold-out scenes of community helpers
 Raggedy Ann doll
 set of National Geographic books (56 book set about animals, people, places, etc.)
 United States map
 Heath Social Studies teacher guide for Homes and Neighborhoods

MUSIC

cassette tapes of songs, music (large teacher-owned collection)
collection of 45rpm phonograph records
upright piano

OTHER

filmscreen

videotapes of television specials

Make-An-Ornament kits

Sharp cassette tape recorder

collection of 12"x24" carpet samples

bulletin board borders

cassette tapes, indoor exercise

teacher-made beanbag set

listening headphones

MacGruff dog doll

cassette players (2)

Gesell testing materials

computer

overhead projector

MAPLECREST KINDERGARTEN INVENTORY

PAPER AND ART

crayons, 12-count box small	crayons, 8-count kindergarten size	fluorescent crayons
Mr. Sketch scented marking pens	dry marking pen erasers	pencil erasers
pencils, #2 primary	overhead projector Vis-a-Vis pens	marking pens, colored
tongue depressors	cotton tipped Q-tips	fabric crayons
Prang Payons	rubber bands	chalk and chalk erasers
craft sticks	glitter	plastic spoons
premixed tempera paint	modeling clay	individual glue bottles
collection empty margarine containers	paint brushes, large	dry tempera cakes (8 sets)
empty styrofoam egg cartons	paper plates	construction paper 12"x18"
discarded, recycled paper	cellophane "Easter grass"	clothespins
aquarium gravel	collection of pine cones	colored art tissue
sequins	toothpicks	assorted fabric scraps
colored Chennile Kraft sticks	white drawing paper, 12"x18"	cotton balls
Chartpac colored tape (several colors)	cardboard pizza rounds, 12" diameter	white 12"x18" tag paper
12"x18" manilla paper	12"x18" colored newsprint	individual glue bottles
paint shirts (old men's dress shirts)	plastic knives, forks, spoons	modeling clay, commercial
scissors	crayons for each child	
linoleum scraps (used with playdough)		

MATHEMATICS

1" graph paper
 5/8" graph paper
 3/16" graph paper
 Lauri foam counters
 sets of dominoes (enough for whole-class use)
 flannelboard felt geometric shapes
 pegboard game, What Would Happen If?
 plastic counting links
 wooden geometric shapes
 round sponges
 teacher-made game using containers labeled with numerals and sets of straws
 sets of numerals written on laminated pieces and held on keyrings
 various bulletin board/group time materials for calendar, days of the week, months in the year
 bulletin board display of numerals tallying days in the school year thus far
 counting sets from 1-20
 wooden puzzles with trays (24)
 Lego construction set
 Lincoln log set
 individual teaching clocks
 flannelboard felt money set with coins, denominations
 colored plastic counting teddy bears
 teacher-made addition game using tongue depressor and small paper milk cartons
 tactile game for number sets 1-10 using red pegs
 magnetic primary shapes, colored plastic
 collection of die (some teacher-made, some commercial; some depicting number, some depicting numeral)

"Chinese Jacks" counting links
commercial punch-out geometric shapes in sets (from consumable workbooks)
wooden number match-up game
teacher-made laminated sentence strips for wipe-off use for patterning activities
Lauri foam puzzle with numerals 1-10
collection of metal keys
checkers game
counting/sequencing snap-together colored plastic beads
Barrel-O-Monkeys game by Lakeside
collection of buttons
nested wooden barrel dolls
set of commercial bulletin board display posters for numerals and sets, 1-10
Whitman sewing dolls with stringing yarn
parquetry pattern pieces and laminated patterns
collection of buttons for sorting, counting
collection of bottle caps for sorting, counting
teacher-made geoboard and rubberbands
floor-sized teacher-made, fabric-backed vinyl graph
set of 12" square pegboards, set of 5 with pegs
wooden colored stringing beads
floor sized abacus
Heath (1981) Mathematics Kit, Level 1
Milton Bradley Candyland game
Selchow and Richter The Old Shoe game
frog race party game
Whitman Hi! Ho! Cherry-O! game
Watkins sewing cards, animals (set of 8)
Presman Picture Tri-Ominos
SelRight Numberland game
Lauri Fit-A-Space puzzle set
/trend number bingo game
Trend color and shape bingo game
Discovery Toys: Design discoveries game
7" square wooden pegboards (set of 22)
Ideal paper weaving mats
Ideal large pegboard pattern cards, laminated
primary wooden pegs (7 boxes with 144 in each box)
Judy floor puzzles: Fire engine and school bus
Playskool lace-up wooden shoes
wooden pegs for large pegboards (box of 1000)
Playskool puzzle holder with 13 wooden puzzles
cardboard puzzles, set of 25
plastic pegboards, set of 3
plastic colored pegs for pegboards
Unifix cubes with pattern cards
1" ceramic tiles
collections of things to count: keys, rocks, seashells, macaroni, buttons, nuts and bolts
1" wooden colored counting blocks with laminated pattern cards

parquetry pattern tiles and laminated pattern cards
 colored plastic snap together counting and patterning beads
 sets of stencils for geometric shapes

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND WRITING

videotapes of stories, approximately 25 (eg., Berenstain Bears, taped television specials)
 cassette story tapes, approximately 100 (from Troll, Scholastic, etc.)
 filmstrip with cassettes of stories, some with holiday theme; approximately 22
 commercial manuscript paper with colored lines and "traffic light" cue for space to begin writing
 sentence strip roll, manilla
 sentence strip roll, colored
 wipe-off wooden writing boards, set of 6
 commercial dramatic play discussion cards: At School, In the Clinic, Supermarket, Big Store, Farm, Playground
 Selchow and Richter Alphabet Scrabble game
 Milton Bradley memory game
 Jagmar ABC and Number floor puzzle
 teacher-made laminated 7" sentence strip for wipe-off writing use emphasizing spacing and patterning
 wooden dominoes with alphabet
 wooden dominoes with initial sound
 cardboard alphabet puzzle
 set of commercial "magic slates" erasable individual writing boards (set of 12)
 picture/word match-up game
 6" foam alphabet with tray match-up set
 commercial bulletin board display posters of alphabet and initial sound pictures
 Lauri alphabet puzzle
 funny faces rubber stamp set with inkpads
 Milton Bradley alphabet flashcards
 teacher-made game using plastic drinking glasses labeled with alphabet
 Alpha Time playing cards
 set of magnetic alphabet letters, upper and lower case
 laminated manuscript paper for wipe-off use
 set of vowel poster cards for group use or bulletin board display
 alphabet poster cards for group use of bulletin board display
 Ideal sight words flashcards
 Ideal Action pictures for flannelboard use
 blue foam alphabet letters with trays
 ABC match-up game
 Viewmaster with set of reels
 teacher-made game with laminated pictures in Ziploc bags (match, sort, rhyming, etc.)
 Ideal sequence card game: What Follows Next?
 Milton Bradley alphabet flashcards
 Kenworthy Educational Services (1967) phonics "Say the Sounds" flashcards
 alphabet wooden worm puzzle
 word/picture match-up game
 Houghton Mifflin Reading Animated Key Cards (1971) flashcards
 Macmillan Early Childhood Discover Materials (1969) series of 4 (posters, puzzleboards, sequence cards, 5 books)
 Economy Language Development Cards (words and concepts)
 Economy Kindergarten Keys Language kit
 magnetic letters of the alphabet, upper and lower case

Stepping Stones, 7" red foam squares labeled with alphabet, upper and lower case
 Trend Alphabet Bingo
 Whitman Go Fish card game
 set of laminated Scott Foresman D'Nealian letter flashcards
 commercial Big Books (set of 7, purchased by teacher)
 teacher-child made big books (set of 9 laminated)
 floor display easel used by teacher during group time
 floor-sized pocket display teaching chart
 Scott Foresman My First Picture Dictionary, classroom set
 teacher-made attendance chart with child completing sentence by inserting name: "----- is here today."

SCIENCE

teacher collection of objects and magnet
 birdnest
 collection of seashells
 collection of river rocks
 collection of nuts (eg., pecans, walnuts, etc.)
 animal cage, portable
 dramatic play kit: health
 Little Ideas (1973) Dairy Council of America Early Childhood Nutrition Program
 The Heart Treasure Chest (1984) American Heart Association Learning Kit (reproducible worksheets, stethoscope)
 Macmillan Journeys in Science (1988) Level K teaching kit
 Merrill Science (1989) Level K teaching kit
 Preschool Smoking Prevention Package
 set of small hand-held mirrors
 commercial weather chart and display cards for bulletin board
 classroom pets: pair of gerbils in glass aquarium with screen lid

SOCIAL STUDIES

xerography boxes filled with items for various holiday themes
 collection of plastic colored Easter eggs with a list of where they might be hidden in the classroom
 large wooden doll house
 Houghton Mifflin (1971) Amazing Life Games Theatre File Box teaching guide
 set of small building blocks used with floor mat depicting street scene
 inflatable world globe
 flannelboard stories (2)
 Big Book with Christmas theme
 collection of trade books with holiday themes

MUSIC

set of kindergarten rhythm instruments
 collection of cassette tapes
 phonograph records

OTHER

television and videotape player	cassette player	computer
filmstrip projector	kitchen cutting board	Contact adhesive-backed paper
tissue	cleaning supplies	set of 24" hoops (24 in set)

empty containers of various types
red rubber PE ball for outdoor use (1)
jumpropes, assorted lengths (12)
wooden 12" laminated squares (set of 21)
filmscreen

manual typewriter (2)
bulletin board borders
wooden balance beam
7" styrofoam squares (set of 6)

listening headphones
cafeteria trays (13)
multiple electric outlet
flannelboards with stand (2)

MAPLECREST TRANSITION FIRST GRADE (1)

PAPER AND ART

paper plates	colored construction paper	manuscript paper
manilla paper	large paint brushes	dry tempera paint
Macmillan Early Skills (1983) art/craft guide	premixed tempera paint	white drawing paper
collection of discarded grocery bags	individual glue bottles	large bottle of rubber cement
discarded magazines used for collage	discarded computer paper	cotton balls
manuscript paper with color coded lines	tongue depressors	scissors
Tupperware Stencil Art (1987) stencil set	collection paper lunch sacks	assorted yarn scraps
Sweetheart 1-ounce paper portion cups		

MATHEMATICS

Unifix Cubes and patterning cards
 Unifix: Developing Number Concepts teacher guide
 commercial bulletin board display of clowns/balloons, matching number, numeral, number name
 commercial growth chart (measurement)
 teacher-made wall display of laminated birthday cakes with dates of children's birthdays
 wall chart with days in school year
 flannelboard numeral set
 Math Their Way blackline masters
 Ideal Kaleidoscope puzzles #6010, shapes
 Milton Bradley cardboard puzzles
 individual student abacus (1)
 teacher-made folder games (concepts 1-10, 11-20 and number words)
 Carson Dellosa teacher-made games using reproducible worksheets
 teacher-made bicolor bean counters
 plastic colored join-together beads for counting, addition, sequencing
 teacher-made wooden building pieces (scraps of wood, not unit blocks)
 Carson Dellosa reproducible worksheets
 teacher-dyed macaroni and stringing yarn
 Addison Wesley (1979) Workjobs II by Baratta-Lorton teaching guide
 DML colored plastic counting chips
 1" graph paper
 Whitman 12-piece cardboard puzzles and tray (2)
 Owen Publishing Company (1978) Kindergarten Number Concept Charts (eg., addition, subtraction)
 measurement chart for the primary grades
 Lauri foam puzzles with trays (3)
 Ideal paper weaving mats
 teacher-made bulletin board pockets for daily calendar activities

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND WRITING

Lippincott (1971) Beginning Reading Program (with teacher guide, flashcards, wall charts, listening cassette tapes, individual student workbooks, supplementary handwriting worksheets, etc.)
 Instructo flannelboard flannel cut-outs, primary set
 teacher-made flip book with color names
 Scrabble Alphabet game
 individual student chalkboards (set of 4)

Ideal Groovy Letters (tactile lower case alphabet set)
 teacher-made alphabet bingo game
 DLM Beginning Consonant ABC cards with accompanying picture of object beginning with letter sound
 set of tactile foam letters of alphabet
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian bulletin board or wall display charts with alphabet, initial sound picture
 commercial bulletin board display of color name cut-outs
 commercial bulletin board display, names of months in the year
 Childcraft set of encyclopedia
 The Wright Group Integrated Learning Workshops: The Balanced Reading Program teacher guide
 set of plastic magnetic alphabet letters
 collection of Scholastic paperbacks with accompanying cassette tapes (approximately 12)
 Weekly Reader subscription for each child
 collection of teacher-laminated magazine pictures
 Eye, Ear, Hand Phonics Kit, Initial Consonant
 Scott Foresman (1989) My D'Nealian Handwriting Word Books, Grades K-1 (classroom set)
 Trend (1984) Bulls Eye Long Vowels #T-179
 Colet Sentence Building Word Cards

SCIENCE

classroom pet: 2 gerbils in glass aquarium with screened lid
 commercial cut-out leaf mobile
 commercial leaf bulletin board display
 David C. Cook (1981) Plants and Seeds Teaching Pictures
 commercial bulletin board weather display charts and daily calendar activities

SOCIAL STUDIES

Houghton Mifflin (1971) The Amazing Life Games Theater file box teaching guide for classroom drama
 Harcourt Brace Nova Edition of Science picture cards

MUSIC

teacher-made song flip charts for group singing
 Troll, Sesame Street cassette tapes
 Early Childhood Discovering Music Together phonograph record set

OTHER

commercial bulletin board display	listening center headphones	table size flannelboard with stand
table size chalkboard with stand	cassette tape recorder	bulletin board borders
teacher-made "TV" with dowels, paper roll		

MAPLECREST TRANSITION FIRST GRADE (2)

PAPER AND ART

floor wooden art easel	fingerpaint paper	fingerpaint
large paint brushes	manilla paper	colored construction paper
dry tempera paint	individual glue bottles	scissors
colored marking pens	recycled paper scraps	computer paper
wallpaper sample books	empty styrofoam egg cartons	styrofoam packing pieces
Sweetheart 1-ounce paper portion cups	Vis-a-Vis marking pens	chalk and chalkboard erasers
styrofoam meat trays	large group chart books	discarded magazines for collage
empty paper 1/2 gal. milk cartons	white drawing paper	collection of soda bottle caps
crayons	gallon containers of glue	glitter
chennile craft pipe cleaners	dry tempera cakes	small paint brushes

MATHEMATICS

colored plastic join-together beads for counting, addition, patterning
 set of 12" rulers (classroom set)
 Milton Bradley addition and subtraction fact flashcards
 teacher-made wall display chart for number of school days in year
 teacher-made wall display chart for counting by 2s, 5s, 10s
 collection of bottle caps for counting
 individual student learning clocks with moveable hands (set of 6)
 commercial wall display chart, counting from 1-100
 commercial bulletin board display of geometric shapes
 teacher-made bulletin board display of sequence, yesterday-today-tomorrow, for daily calendar activities
 commercial teaching clock with moveable hands for large group instruction
 Unifix cubes
 commercial display cards with math concepts (ordinal number, number/numeral match, number names)
 wooden alphabet blocks in laundry basket (large set)
 Judy Moveable Teaching Clock
 geometric shapes stencils
 Media Materials Teddy Bear Counters (small colored plastic bears)
 collection of buttons for sorting, counting
 Ideal pattern blocks (set 250 small colored plastic blocks in 1-gallon bucket)
 dominoes game
 Lauri geometric shape puzzle set
 Discovery Toys Amagon construction set
 Tinkertoy construction set
 Lincoln Log construction set
 McGraw Hill (1987) Mathematics workbooks, level K (classroom set)
 McGraw Hill (1987) Mathematics learning kit, level K
 Workshop Way (1976) teacher-made learning materials (classifying, puzzles, geometric shapes, number words, counting 1-10, forming sets 1-20, number order, size sequence, alike-different, etc.); approximately 20
 Trend lotto games (set of 5)
 Whitman, Ravensburger and Playskool cardboard puzzles (10-34 pieces); approximately 14
 teacher-made geoboards with rubber bands
 Educational Insights addition and subtraction facts flashcards
 reproducible worksheet books (Carson Dellosa, Frank Schaffer, etc.)

1" graph paper
 checkers game (3 sets)
 Teaching Resources (1977) Letter and Number Wheel
 Candyland game
 commercial sewing cards and strings
 teacher-made die
 balance beam scale, small plastic
 Ramagon Construction toy set

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

Lippincott (1971) Beginning Reading Program (with teacher guide, flashcards, wall charts, listening cassette tapes, individual student workbooks, supplementary handwriting worksheets, etc.)
 commercial bulletin board display chart of color names
 Lakeshore Learning Lotto game
 Weekly Reader subscription (classroom set)
 Creative Teaching Press (1982) short vowel poster chart
 Creative Teaching Press (1982) long vowel poster chart
 Creative Teaching Press (1982) consonant poster chart
 commercial posters for room display: short vowels, long vowels, consonants
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian display cards of alphabet with pictures of objects beginning with letter sound
 Macmillan Early Skills Program
 Peabody Language Development Kit, Revised Level 1 (for kindergarten)
 Lippincott (1971) Beginning to Read, Write and Listen , Level 1 language and reading kit
 Childcraft (1990) set of encyclopedia
 Macmillan Phonic Picture Cards set
 set of individual student chalkboards (17)
 reproducible worksheet books for cut-paste letter matching, beginning sound, rhyming, handwriting practice, etc.
 teacher-made folder games
 Scholastic Big Books, set of 12
 collection of Scholastic paperback books, teacher-owned
 Workshop Way (1976) teacher-made games (color words, letter matching, beginning sound, rhyming, etc.); approximately 20
 cassette tapes with accompanying storybook (set of 18)
 Discovery Toys (1988) Tall Bird, Short Bird game
 Little Learners Memory Match (card game sets for individual use or 2-4 people; set of 6 games)
 teacher-made big book with poems
 Ideal Groovy Letters (tactile alphabet set)

SCIENCE

commercial bulletin board weather display for daily calendar activities
 Oklahoma State Department of Education nutrition guide
 Harcourt Brace science teaching guide
 Marvel Educational dinosaur posters/discussions 12"x17" with 32-page teaching manual (set of 16)
 Addison Wesley Science, Level K
 DLM (1980) Match Ups (animals with adult/infant and habitat; 3-piece puzzle)
 flannelboard pieces, dinosaurs

SOCIAL STUDIES

wooden doll house
 housekeeping furniture (stove, sink, table, chest of drawers)
 Macmillan Seasonal Activity Packs (1985) reproducible worksheets and suggested activities
 Quest International (1990) Skills for Growing, Level K (teaching values and personal skills such as self discipline, getting along with others, making decisions, using good judgement, etc.)
 collection of small stuffed dolls and animals in housekeeping area
 play cash register

MUSIC

Hap Palmer phonograph records, assorted
 Wee Sing Christmas songs cassette tape and book (1986)
 Wee Sing Silly Songs cassette tape and book (1986)
 Wee Sing Songs and Fingerplays cassette and book (1985)
 Funny Tunes (1985) cassette tape
 Human Technology Instructional Materials (1985) Five Senses listening tapes
 Stafford Fingerplays and Rhymes listening cassette tape
 fitness cassette tapes (set of 3)

OTHER

individual folding kindergarten rest mats	television	phonograph record player
bean bags, teacher-made (large set)	Christmas tree ornaments	cassette player
bulletin board borders	electric iron	
set of jumpropes for outdoor play		

MAPLECREST FIRST GRADE

PAPER AND ART

newsprint, 12"x18"	scrap paper	discarded paper towel tubes
empty plastic 1-gal. milk containers	set of plastic dishpans	dry tempera
chalk and chalkboard erasers	wooden popsickle sticks	Chennile Craft pipe cleaners
tongue depressors	masking tape	notepads
discarded computer paper	manuscript paper	colored construction paper
6" square individual yarn looms	colored art tissue	Prang Payons
colored marking pens		

MATHEMATICS

Heath (1987) Big Book Mathematics kit (complete set with charts, disposable student books, flashcards, etc.)
 Milton Bradley addition and subtraction flashcards
 Milton Bradley and Whitman cardboard jigsaw puzzles, 100-piece sets (9 boxes)
 Touch Math (1990) teaching charts
 Lawrence Hall (1986) Family Math kit
 Frank Schaffer reproducible mathematics worksheets
 teacher-made die
 Pressman Tiddily Winks game
 collection of teacher-made 1" square red construction paper
 teacher-made fabric numerals mounted on wall
 1" square graph paper
 5/8" square graph paper
 individual number lines for mounting on student desks
 Instructo flannelboard numeral flannel pieces
 Davidson (1988) Math and Me computer software with reproducible worksheets (shapes, addition facts, number names, matching set of objects and numeral, etc.)

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND WRITING

Open Court (1989) Phonics Kit for Grade 1 (complete set of basal reading books, workbooks, Big Books, posters, listening tapes, wallcharts, blackline masters, flashcards, teacher guide, gameboards, testing materials, etc.)
 chalkholder that will make writing lines on chalkboard
 teacher-made laminated flash cards in sets of word accompanying Open Court reading program
 1" lined 24"x16" spiral bound chart books
 Carson Dellosa reproducible worksheets
 Heath (1986) Reading and Language Arts, Grade 1 basal reading series
 Real Phonics Workbook B (author unknown; teacher reports from previous series)
 Frank Schaffer Easy Sight Word #3203 set of 100 flashcards
 wall charts: alphabet, consonant with pictured initial sound, and color names
 Scholastic paperback books with cassettes (set of 12)
 Riverside (1960) Education Enrichment reading series
 teacher-made laminated flashcards from disposable workbooks
 Lippincott (1954) Reading With Phonics basal reading series
 Trend Spin and Learn flashcards, beginning consonants
 Heath Review Kit, Level 1 Reading
 set of 10 small plastic baskets filled with teacher-made laminated word flashcards on notebook rings
 Riverside (1981) Discovering Phonics We Use consumable workbooks (about 40)

collection of laminated pages from individual basal readers
 collection of Weekly Reader books (obtained with teacher bonus points)
 Whitman Old Maid card game, large size format
 paperback books with accompanying phonograph records (set of approximately 50) from Scholastic, Walt Disney
 Riverside (1986) Reading Program Grade 1, Level 6 basal reading series
 Prentice Hall (1973) Charlie Brown Dictionary (set of 24)
 Childcraft encyclopedia set
 Scott Foresman (1951) basal reading series, level 1
 commercial bulletin board and wall charts with alphabet and phonetic notations
 teacher-made fabric color names mounted on wall
 World Book (1990) encyclopedia
 Webster's 9th Collegiate Dictionary (1985)
 set of various trade books and old basal readers, approximately 400
 rhyming bingo game
 colored sentence strips
 Instructo flannelboard words and symbols flannel pieces

SCIENCE

Merrill (1989) science basal kit with 10 topic sets (senses, living things, life long ago, your body, plants, etc.)
 Macmillan (1988) Journeys into Science basal series set of 25
 Addison Wesley (1989) Science basal series (set of 25)
 Silver Burdett (1984) Science basal series (set of 21)

SOCIAL STUDIES

boxes with teacher supplies of materials, displays for various holidays
 teacher-made stick puppets
 map of the United States
 map of the world (2)
 Heath (1985) Homes and Neighborhoods Social Studies kit (maps, posters, flashcards, tests, reproducible
 worksheets, blackline masters, etc.)
 Scholastic (1973) Let's Pretend It Happened to You guide (didactic dramatic plays; eg., jumping to conclusions)

MUSIC

upright piano
 cassette entitled "Merry Fitness"
 set of wooden rhythm sticks
 Troll Peter and the Wolf set of phonograph records (set of 12)
 cassette of waltzes
 Silver Burdett (1985) music basal series

OTHER

phonograph record player	television with videorecorder	floor chart stands (2)
computer	filmstrip projector	rubber stamp set for grading (50?)
dormitory refrigerator	Gesell testing materials	cassette tape player

OAKLAWN TRANSITION FIRST GRADE

PAPER AND ART

stencil sets: dinosaurs, train, shapes	acrylic paints	1" graph paper
construction paper	manilla drawing paper	white drawing paper
discarded paper	reproducible patterns for crafts	small paint brushes
large paint brushes	scissors	crayons
pencils	Mr. Sketch scented marking pens	primary paper
typing paper	Prang Pastel Crayons	3x5 file cards (unlined and lined)
5x8 file cards (unlined and lined)	tracing paper	styrofoam meat trays
teacher-made playdough	set of cookie cutters (26)	wallpaper sample books
collection of magazines for collage		

MATHEMATICS

Math Their Way blackline masters
 ceramic colored tiles 1" square
 commercial bicolored counting "beans"
 stringing beads
 commercial plastic counting links
 commercial plastic bicolored counting "tiles" 1" square
 Nathan (1983) Bingo game
 Nathan (1983) Fun to Learn Numbers game
 Nathan (1983) Fun to Learn Colors and Shapes game
 teacher-made egg carton games made from Carson Dellosa reproducible worksheets (shapes, number match)
 Unifix cubes and accompanying pattern cards and reproducible worksheets
 small wooden blocks
 commercial "money" set
 Unifix cubes (sets of 10 colors)
 12" square pegboards with pegboard knobbed pegs (set of 4)
 set of dried apricot seeds for counting
 formica sample chips for counting or patterning
 pattern tiles and parquetry pattern cards
 wooden colored counting cubes
 set of 20 teacher-made Math Workjobs games
 large vinyl fabric-backed, teacher-made floor graph marked in 6" squares (approximately 36"x72")
 laminated counting lines
 6" square wooden pegboards (set of 7)
 box of large wooden dowel pegs (set of 100) painted red
 set of paper Sweetheart 1-ounce portion cups
 teacher-dyed macaroni
 large pegboard in case (closes, latches, has carrying handle)
 Singer Beginning Math Concepts Geometric Shapes (1973) sound/filmstrip with accompanying teacher guide
 dishpan filled with red plastic milk bottle caps for counting
 Playskol wooden block set in assorted sizes
 5/8" wooden counting cubes
 Lego construction set
 floor-sized dominoes game
 Chutes and Ladders game

collection of cardboard puzzles (approximately 40)
 partial set of Cuisenaire rods
 box of activities, labeled as dealing with math activities for 1-10, 1-20, and 10-20
 teacher-made addition and subtraction games
 teacher-made number word games
 sequence games from 1-50

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND WRITING

Lippincott (1971) Beginning Reading Program (with teacher guide, flashcards, wall charts, listening cassette tapes, individual student workbooks, supplementary handwriting worksheets, etc.)
 Skills for Growing Activity Book (reproducible worksheets)
 flannelboard letters of alphabet
 flannelboard tape
 Nathan (1983) Fun to Remember game
 cassette tape and story book sets, approximately 30-40 (teacher-owned)
 Macmillan reading program picture phonics flashcards
 Ideal picture vowel cards for pegboards
 sets of multiple copies of trade paperbacks, many with cassette tapes; has 2-6 books per set; approximately 100
 collection of old Highlights for Children
 Holt, Rinehart and Winston Bill Martin (1986) series big books: set of 3
 The Wright Group (1984) big books: set of 2
 Scholastic big books: set of 9
 filing cabinet with a folder for each letter of the alphabet and collection of suggested learning activities
 large collection of rubber stamps with various animals, objects, letters, etc.
 set of fit-together plastic cubes with beginning consonant and pictures
 puzzle construction set: each forms beginning consonant and picture with beginning sound
 Ideal Sea of Vowels game
 Pin the Tail on the Donkey commercial game
 Milton Bradley Smurfs Ship Ahoy! game
 Learning Can Be Fun game
 Viewmaster and 2 reels
 Workshop Way teacher-made games stored in envelopes (large collection of approximately 40-50 games)
 collection of 50-60 teacher-made laminated matching games (ending sounds, writing skills, rhyming, etc.)
 teacher-made games using reproducible worksheets (eg., Carson Dellosa)
 Upper-Lower Case Letter Match-Ups
 Alphabet Bingo game
 Assortment of teacher-made Bingo games
 collection of baby food jars labeled with letters of alphabet
 set of 8x11" individual student chalkboards
 matching color/color word game
 box of teacher-made color activity games (mostly folder games)
 xerography box filled with teacher-made folder games, all language activity using reproducible worksheets
 collection of spirit masters for making reproducible ditto worksheets for language activities

SCIENCE

magnet and objects set
 set of magnifying glasses
 set of 6 teacher-made "feely" boxes (tactile sensory perception)

SOCIAL STUDIES

January Productions (1975) Feeling Fine (health, nutrition, body parts)
 January Productions (1975) Feeling Fine (values, decision making)
 books and accompany cassette tapes for various holidays
 Matchbox cars (set belongs to teacher)
 holiday stencil set
 Adam Walsh Resource Center (1985) Child Awareness Game (personal safety)
 Milton Bradley Let's Be Safe game (personal safety)
 teacher-made collection of grocery bag, Contact paper covered dramatic play characters

MUSIC

assorted phonograph records (approximately 40-50); teacher-owned
 music ideas (commercial teaching guide)
 assorted cassette tapes, music and exercise; teacher-owned

OTHER

phonograph player	cassette tape recorder	television
Apple II computer	jumpropes	red rubble PE balls for outdoor play
tissue	Gesell testing materials	tracing light frame
paper cutter	teacher-made bean bags	electric skillet
gym games (teaching guide)	cafeteria trays	old towels
cleaning supplies	newspapers	flower vases
Christmas tree ornaments	Christmas tree stand	balloons
table size flannelboards (2)	laminating film rolls	set of small cloth dolls, assorted sizes
collection of small stuffed animals	assorted handpuppets (10-12)	coil of 5/8" black tubing
2 ping pong paddles and foam ball		

WILLOWPARK KINDERGARTEN

PAPER AND ART SUPPLIES

teacher-made colored macaroni	crayons (in cans, labeled with each child's name)
floor easel	scrap pads made from discarded computer paper
crepe paper	pencils
wooden thread spools	lunch-sized paper bags
gift ribbon	cotton balls
colored pipe cleaners	individual student glue bottles
dry tempera paint	fingerpaint
premixed tempera paint	large paint brushes
colored art tissue paper	wallpaper sample books
magazines for collage	construction paper
chalk and chalk erasers	

MATHEMATICS

caterpillar wooden puzzle and tray (numerals 1-12)
 colored wooden 1" counting cubes with patterns
 wooden cubes and cylinders with pattern sets
 Laidlaw Mathematics Teaching Guide
 colored counting bears
 teacher-made counting sets: orange juice cans with numeral and set of straws
 large wooden colored stringing beads
 small colored wooden stringing beads
 1/2 " wooden counting cubes
 plastic 6" square pegboards with pegs, set of 12
 plastic 12" square pegboards with pegs, set of 2
 string shapes with strings
 McGraw Hill Mathematics, level K
 teacher-made fish cut-outs with matching numerals/number
 wooden puzzles in trays (6-12 pieces), set of 24
 cardboard puzzles in paper trays (6-20 pieces), set of 8
 teacher-made egg carton ABC games using Carson-Dellosa reproducibles (matching upper/lower case, set of 6)
 Unifix cubes in several colors
 Playskool play tiles (colored plastic tiles)
 Ideal Number Match-Ups
 teacher-made money match-up (matching set of pennies with numeral depicting amount)
 DLM Halves to Wholes card set (fractions)
 pattern parquetry pieces and pattern cards
 beans for sorting
 paper coins (punch-outs from workbook sets)
 Trend Color And Shape Bingo (#101)
 teacher-made matching game made from Formica samples for pegboard (numerals 1-12)
 beans for sorting
 teacher-made matching game made from wallpaper samples (match like patterns)
 teacher-made geoboards with rubber bands
 commercial bi-colored foam 'beans' for counting
 commercial be-colored foam 'tiles' for counting

ceramic colored tiles in small baskets for counting
 commercial geometric tiles in assorted colors (diamond, square, triangle, hexagon)
 metal nuts and bolts set
 set of wooden floor-sized unit blocks
 wall display numerals, 6" black; 1-20
 floor-sized puzzles, set of three dinosaur theme
 Milton Bradley floor-sized puzzle, Sesame Street theme
 commercial color names for wall display
 floor-sized abacus
 floor-sized wooden dominoes
 wooden domino pegboards with pegs
 commercial geometric shapes for wall display
 counting beads in frames
 commercial, flat colored counting discs
 snap-together counting beads
 balancing math beam
 flannelboard pieces: fractions
 flannelboard pieces: shapes
 DLM design cards for parquetry pieces
 Cuinsenaire rods set
 teacher-made bicolor beans (made using real beans)
 styrofoam counting cubes
 Playskool block set, table-sized
 Pente game board sets
 Tinkertoys construction set
 dominoes
 stringing set of commercial "straw" pieces and strings
 Lego starter train construction set
 large assortment teacher-made folder games using reproducible book patterns (eg., shapes, numeral recognition)
 set of reproducible books from Frank Schaffer, Carson Dellosa, etc., (7 for mathematics)

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND HANDWRITING

flannelboard pieces for rhyming words
 Trend Body Movement (T-321)
 set of plastic alphabet pieces
 sequence story card set (sequence sets of 3 or 4 cards to "tell a story")
 set of opposites match-up cards
 flannelboard pieces for opposite concepts (eg., inside, outside)
 Color Words Match-UP
 sentence strip roll
 Lotto reading game
 Go-Together Game (match words and pictures)
 nursery rhyme match-up card set (3 sets)
 Trend Following Directions (T-324)
 Economy Picture Vocabulary Game
 teacher-made individual chalkboards for desk or lap use
 Ideal Opposites game
 DLM Motor Expression Card Set (3 sets)

Ideal Consonant Picture Game (beginning consonant and picture match)
 Old Maid card game
 wooden rhyming puzzle with tray
 Wooden ABC blocks (set of wooden alphabet 2" blocks)
 DLM Sequential Picture Vocabulary Cards
 Sweet Pickles Activity Cards (preschool level)
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian Handwriting Kit
 Oklahoma State Department of Education Teaching Guide Listening Skills
 Riverside Reading Program Teaching Guide, Level K-1
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian wall display cards for alphabet and beginning initial consonant pictures
 Beginning Sound Match-Ups
 set of 3 1/2" x 5" foam alphabet letters with puzzle trays
 Economy Kindergarten Keys Language Kit
 trade books, approximately 200-400 (teacher says discards from library assigned to classroom)
 ABC Stepping Stones (set of red 8" foam squares labeled with letters of alphabet, upper/lower case)
 Macmillan Early Skills Learning Kit
 Milton Bradley (1966) Twister floorgame (2 sets)
 Milton Bradley Operation boardgame
 Milton Bradley Goldilocks and the Three Bears boardgame
 Selchow and Recher Scribble Alphabet boardgame
 Kenner Spirograph game
 Scott Foresman (1967) card set for easel with sight words for phonics and beginning consonant sound
 Ideal pegboard sequence cards, beginning reading level
 Lauri Alphabet Avalanche (set of foam alphabet pieces with multiple letters)
 individual student wipe-off boards with dry marking pens and erasers (set of 5)
 set of plastic drinking glasses labeled A-Z
 VHS videotape: Kid Stuff Letters, Sounds and Words
 VHS videotape: Richard Scarry Animal Nursery Tales
 multiple sets of paperback trade books (sets of 4-6, 9 titles)
 large assortment teacher-made folder games using reproducible book patterns or ditto sheets
 set of activities for each letter of the alphabet (stored in teacher filing cabinet)
 set of reproducible books from Frank Schaffer, Hayes, Workman, Carson Dellosa, etc. (set of 22)

SOCIAL STUDIES

map of United States
 doll and dollbed
 housekeeping area equipment: mirror, stove, refrigerator, telephone
 metal train (large, four pieces)
 On the Farm game, level K
 set of laminated telephones for teaching telephone numbers
 VHS videotape: The Berenstain Bears Learn About Strangers
 a block accessory vehicle (truck)
 Oklahoma State Department of Education Oklahoma Coloring Book (reproducible book)

SCIENCE

Oklahoma State Department of Education Teaching Guide, Mix Stir, Blend: Cooking
 Holt Science Teaching Guide
 animal dominoes set
 birdnest

pair of binoculars
 magnifying glasses (set of 10)
 teacher-made "bughouses" (2)
 microscope
 About Our Heart teaching set with stethoscope
 eyedroppers
 empty aquarium
 empty hamster/gerbil cage
 Nelson (1959) Science Activities teaching guide
 Carin (1985) Modern Science teaching guide

MUSIC

Wee Sing Bible Songs cassette tape and book
 Wee Sing Nursery Rhymes and Lullabies (1987) cassette tape and book
 set of rhythm instruments
 set of rhythm sticks

OTHER

Oklahoma State Department of Education Teaching Guide, <u>Safety</u>	
Oklahoma State Department of Education Teaching Guide, <u>Health</u>	
Tracing table (electrified table with glass for use by three children); made by Willowpark PTA	
table-sized flannelboard and stand	
table-sized wipe-off chalkboard and stand	balance walking beam, wooden
Lite Brite (4)	holiday decorations
set of Hoola Hoops (4)	set of carpet samples
library book display cart, portable	set of jumpropes
set of red rubble PE balls for outdoor use	boxes of tissue
Little Ideas Nutrition teaching set	empty glass baby food jars
empty liter-sized soda pop containers	cleaning supplies
hamster food	lace-up wooden shoe to teach bow tying
box of flannel pieces, mixed (contains alphabet, numeral, shapes)	phonograph player
cassette tape player	filmstrip projector
assorted commercial bulletin board displays, holiday theme	bulletin board border sets
empty gumball machine	
collection of assorted textbooks and teaching guides (teacher reports they "came with the room" and are unused)	

WILLOWPARK TRANSITION FIRST GRADE

PAPER AND ART SUPPLIES

collection of discarded magazines for collage
 set of holiday patterns for tracing
 wallpaper sample books
 premixed tempera paint
 teacher-dyed macaroni
 assorted discarded yarns
 chalk and chalk erasers

student crayons (kept in desks)
 individual size glue bottles
 construction paper
 2 sets of water colors
 discarded styrofoam packing peanuts
 paper plates
 paintbrushes

MATHEMATICS

stringing beads set (no strings)
 button collection
 set of bicolored tiles 1" square
 set of bicolored tiles 2" square
 commercial bulletin board display of geometric shapes and shape names
 cardboard puzzles with trays (8-12 pieces); set of 8
 teacher-made geoboards (4)
 Trend Numbers 0-25 Match Me game
 Learning Resources Bean Counters (bicolored foam 'beans' used for counting)
 Ideal small plastic stringing beads
 stringing laces (unopened; 2 packages)
 set of rubber money stamps with inkpads
 Ideal weaving mats (set of 30)
 Media Materials sewing cards with different pictures (set of 18 cards with yarn)
 set of transparent colored 5/8" counting discs
 snap together colored plastic counting beads
 Trend Match Up Colors and Match Up Shapes wipe-off cards
 Unifix cubes
 Mickey Mouse dominoes
 Trend Color and Shape Bingo game
 partial assortment of unit blocks; set is incomplete
 Math Their Way blackline ditto masters
 School Zone Publishing Counting 1-10 (reproducible book)
 Friederwitzer and Berman (1985) Color Tiles Activities (reproducible book)
 commercial wall display chart with numerals 1-100

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND WRITING

Lippincott (1971) Beginning Reading Program (with teacher guide, flashcards, wall charts, listening cassette tapes, individual student workbooks, supplementary handwriting worksheets, etc.)
 Scott Foresman D'Nealian wall display cards with alphabet and beginning initial consonant pictures
 commercial display cards with color names
 various commercial bulletin board displays (eg., I Know My Colors; I Can Print Neatly)
 Oklahoma State Department of Education teaching guide, Kaleidoscope
 Oklahoma State Department of Education teaching guide, Growing
 Oklahoma State Department of Education teaching guide, Reading, Parents, Kids, Teachers (K-6)
 assorted reproducible books; eg., Carson Dellosa

assorted teacher-made folder games using reproducible workpages (about 20)
 assorted trade books (some from Scholastic, some discarded from school library; set of 53)
 collection of teacher-owned trade books (not used by children, according to teacher)
 Trend Match Me Alphabet cards
 Trend Math the Letters wipe-off cards
 Milton Bradley Memory Matching Game
 Frank Schaffer Bingo Sight Word game
 set of Golden Book encyclopedia
 manuscript paper
 teacher-made reproducibles for practicing handwriting (not D'Nealian)
 9"x12" ruled manilla drawing and writing paper
 teacher-made letter display cards, upper and lower case (8"x10")
 Fearon Teacher Aids Alphabet Activities (reproducible worksheets)
 alphabet floor sized cardboard puzzle
 beginning reading flash card set
 Ginn set of reading phonics posters/wall charts
 set of magnetic alphabet letters
 assorted reproducible worksheets (eg., Carson Dellosa) for rhyming, letter recognition, etc.; set of 17 books
 Milliken (1988) Primary Spelling K-1 (reproducible worksheets for phonics including blends, word endings, etc.)
 Frank Schaffer Initial Consonants Cut and paste (reproducible worksheets)
 Frank Schaffer Beginning Phonics Preschool-1 (reproducible worksheets)
 Carson Dellosa egg carton game to match color and color names (made from reproducible worksheets)
 Carson Dellosa egg carton game to match upper/lower case letters of alphabet (made from reproducible worksheets)
 teacher-made game of opposites using reproducible worksheets

SOCIAL STUDIES

world globe
 various commercial bulletin board displays (eg., I Know My Telephone Number, I Know My Address)
 Oklahoma State Department of Education teaching guide, Celebrate Learning: Holidays in the Classroom (K-6)
 assorted holiday theme commercial bulletin board displays
 cardboard floor-sized puzzle: The City
 Bowmar Social Studies Discussion Pictures (photographic; set of 9)
 Tuppertoys School Bus
 Darling (1990) Holiday Hoopla: Flannelboard Fun (reproducible flannelboard patterns)
 assorted reproducible holiday worksheets
 Darling (1990) Holiday Hoopla: Plays, Parades, Parties (includes some ideas for multiethnic activities)
 commercial photographic discussion cards (1971): Farms and Towns and Cities and Finding Places (simple maps)
 Davis (1971) Learning About School
 Davis (1971) Living in America

SCIENCE

water table with lid
 set of measuring cups
 cardboard floor-sized puzzles (2 dinosaur theme)
 Milton Bradley Memory Matching Game: Animal Family
 Henry (1986) Nature Study Mini Units: Otters, Ducks, Whales, Rabbits, Pandas (reproducible worksheets)
 MacDonald (1988) We Learn All About Dinosaurs blackline masters (reproducible worksheets)
 commercial bulletin board display weather charts

sets of 4-5 individual students books on science topics (eg., machines, air, animals and plants, etc.); 5 topics

MUSIC

assorted phonograph records (eg., Hap Palmer, Melody House, Walt Disney)

Bean Bag record (no bean bags)

OTHER

phonograph player

listening headphone set

extension cord

Ring Toss game

cassette tape player

set of carpet samples

cleaning supplies

vertical nonbreakable mirror

WILLOWPARK FIRST GRADE

PAPER AND ART SUPPLIES

4"x6" paper pads	white bond	file folders	projector transparencies
3x5 cards	library book pockets	sentence strip roll	laminating film
adhesive backed paper	8" sentence strip, commercial	Discarded paper	8 1/2x11 manuscript paper
manilla paper	colored unlined sentence strip	fingerpaint paper	blank calendars on heavy stock
newsprint	scrap colored stock	1" graph paper	large clasp envelopes
construction paper	powdered tempera paint	large paintbrushes	glue
yarn	paper cups	clothespins	paper plates
sequins	straws	cellophane "Easter grass"	plastic zip-lock bags
papercutter	floor easel	chalk and chalk erasers	

MATHEMATICS

Heath Mathematics (1979) workbooks and enrichment worksheets duplicating masters
 Heath (1987) Mathematics Level 1
 Holt mathematics (1981) consumable workbooks
 Whitman Disney Dominoes (2 boxes)
 Milton Bradley (1958) Quizmo addition and subtraction cards for children in grades 2-6
 Trend (1984) Spin 'N Learn addition game
 teacher-made game for addition of three 1- and 2-digit numerals (eg., $11+3+3=$; child matches problem with sum)
 Milton Bradley (1978) Math Facts flashcards
 Milton Bradley (1978) Math Related Facts flashcards
 Ideal (n.d.) Pyramid Puzzles (patterning)
 Teacher-made folder games using Carson-Dellosa reproducibles
 wooden pegboards (2, approximately 6"x6")
 jigsaw puzzles (with 63-200 pieces; approximately 23 sets)
 Cuisinaire rods set
 Lite Brite with pegs
 button collection
 Heath (1987) Mathematics Big Book (for shared reading; uses table easel)
 counting beads
 reproducible workpages from Frank Schaffer, Milliken, Hayes and Carson Dellosa (set of 23 for mathematics)
 teacher-made individual abacus for desk use (all beads same color)
 sets of basal readers (6 sets of 5-6 books each)
 teacher-made phonics, sight word and reading folder games (large collection of 300-400 games in 3 xerography)

READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND HANDWRITING

Open Court (1989) Phonics Kit for Grade 1 (complete set of basal reading books, workbooks, Big Books, posters, listening tapes, wallcharts, blackline masters, flashcards, teacher guide, etc.)
 Modern Curriculum Press (1988) phonics workbooks, Level A
 Macmillan English (1982) Series E consumable workbooks
 Riverside Reading Program (1986) basal series, levels 1, 2 and 3
 Scott Foresman (1983) D'Nealian manuscript kit
 Writing Across the Curriculum, Kindergarten-Second Grade Teacher Guide (no date)
 Modern Curriculum Press (1988) Phonics A and Phonics B
 phonics word drill cards (3 boxes)
 Scholastic Magazine punch out card games

St. Regis Picture-Word Matching Game for Grades 1-4 (includes initial sounds, consonant; final sounds, consonants; initial consonant blends; initial consonant digraphs; long/short vowels; vowel diphthongs; word recognition)

Milton Bradley Sequence Cards, #7524

Childcraft (1987) set of encyclopedia

World Book (1975) set of encyclopedia

Trend Intermediate Level 1 picture and sequence cards

Garrard (1980) Dolch basic sight word flashcards

Garrard (1980) picture word flashcards

Ideal initial consonant picture cards for pegboard

Milton Bradley Phonetic Quizmo, #9357

Ideal Vowel Pictures for Pegboard

Trend (1984) Bulls Eye Beginning Consonant

Trend (1984) Bulls Eye Long Vowels

Trend (1977) Final Consonant

Trend (1984) Spin 'N Learn flashcards, long vowels (self-checking)

teacher-made fishing game with letters and words

Kenworthy Educational Services (1972) phonetic word drill cards, primary level (set with 240 words)

Whitman Sesame Street (1978) flashcards (2 sets)

Western Publishing Company (n.d.) wordless card game called "Snap"

Milton Bradley (n.d.) You Can Read dominoes ("teaches reading by spoken sounds")

teacher-made magnetic game for final consonant

felt picture-word matching game

Scholastic phonograph records and accompanying books (set of 44)

flashcards with initial consonant-sound pictures (no date or publisher)

teacher-made reading word recognition cards

teacher-made wipeoff cards for plurals (made with Carson-Dellosa reproducibles)

reproducible workpage books from Frank Schaffer, Milliken, Hayes and Carson Dellosa (set of 49 for reading)

SOCIAL STUDIES

SRA Families (set of textbooks)

Understanding People (set of textbooks)

Heath (1985) Homes and Neighborhoods (set of textbooks)

Oklahoma State Department of Education (1981) Oklahoma Coloring Book

phonograph album, "Our Working World"

Instructo flannelboard holiday cutouts, set #25

MUSIC

Silver Burdett (1985) set of songbooks

set of rhythm instruments

phonograph album, "Rusty in Orchestraville"

cassette tapes (large assortment; teacher-owned)

SCIENCE

Silver Burdett (1984) Science, Level 1

OTHER

spinners for board games (blank and with numerals 1-9)

teacher-made die

small plastic baskets
pictures letters in alphabet cut from workbooks
cassette tape player and listening headphones
television with videorecorder
cleaning supplies
3 xerography boxes filled with bulletin board supplies
portable electric fan
stepstool

phonograph record player
filmstrip projector
overhead projector
flower vases
bulletin board letters, commercial
carpet samples (set of 25-30)
table size chalkboard easel
tissue

Oklahoma State Department of Education teacher guides (collection varies; teacher states she does not use any)

APPENDIX G

**DISTRICT HANDOUT FOR PARENTS OF
PROSPECTIVE TRANSITION
PROGRAM STUDENTS**

[The following is a district handout provided to parents of prospective transition first grade students. Deletions have been made to eliminate the name of the school district and community. In addition, two articles photocopied and included in the district handout have been omitted to avoid infringement of copyright laws. No editorial corrections have been made for grammar or spelling.]

Parents' Concerns

Parents want:

1. To provide what is best for their child.
2. To be proud of their child.
3. To know their child is happy and free of stress.
4. To understand any change in plan or program.
5. To avoid family stress. (Sometimes parents do not agree with each other on child's placement.)

Most parents feel:

1. Wary about changes that affect their child.
2. Skeptical (at least a little) about screenings and examiners.
3. Insecure regarding any change from customary procedure.
4. Pressured to "go along with the program."
5. More secure with the old method of school entrance.

Most parents think:

1. The "old way" regarding school entrance is all right.
2. Intelligence is the main aspect of school success.
3. A child who can read is successful.
4. Child can be made to learn.
5. What children know is a measure of school readiness.
6. Children learn only when they are taught.

Most parents need to know that:

1. School readiness is much more than reading readiness. It is the ability to cope with the school environment physically, socially, and emotionally as well as academically, without undue stress.
2. Unready children do not usually "catch up." They may seem to because they push their intellectual growth. A child may catch up as a student, but fall behind as a person.
3. Readiness is only strengthened by time. Waiting will not hurt the child. A readiness program actually allows a gift of time and a privilege of moving in a forward direction. On the other hand, pushing can do irreparable harm.
4. No one is to blame. The best of parents, the best of environment still produce children who need growth time.

Purpose

The purpose of the Developmental First grade class is to provide the identified students with the educational environment in which to further assimilate kindergarten skills

and to prepare for the first grade curriculum at a pace by which the students can gain confidence and a positive self-concept.

Philosophy

We believe that children are individuals and develop at varying rates. We believe that some children require more time to master developmental stages than others. We believe that the learning process includes academic, social, emotional, and physical development. We believe that learning is often a sequential developmental process. We believe that a child can flourish in an environment in which a positive self-concept is encouraged. We believe that education should be a pleasant, motivating experience to the extent that the child will want to pursue learning.

Placement

For a child to find the first grade year a positive and valuable experience, they should be developmentally 6 to 6 1/2 years of age at the time of entry to school. The Developmental age may or may not be consistent with the chronological age.

During the kindergarten year your child's kindergarten teacher observed, worked with, and taught your child many things. They also had some uneasy feelings about your child going into first grade. They may have noticed your child exhibiting some of these behaviors:

- often not part of the group
- unable to stay on the subject
- short attention span
- fails to complete work
- complains of being ill; i.e., stomachache, earache, headache
- cries easily
- insecure about anything new
- flighty around room
- does not like school
- does not like teacher
- daydreams
- may wet bed
- tire easily (especially after school)
- few friends
- lash out angrily
- relate better to and play with children who are younger
- erratic school achievement

The teacher makes a list of students that may not be ready for first grade. The children on the list are then administered the Gesell School Readiness Test. The test confirms the kindergarten teacher's feeling that the child is not ready for first grade.

The test is administered in about 30 minutes with parents in attendance. The test itself is a pleasurable experience for the child. It is non-threatening; the child does not feel much frustration. It yields a developmental age. The test itself is broken down into subtests that define a child's fine motor coordination (use of small muscles), language usage, social and emotional maturity, level of organized thinking and overall potential and interests. It is not unusual or abnormal for a child to be six months or more younger than

his or her chronological age. Not every normal child functions exactly at the supposed "average" level. Any child who after testing was diagnosed as obviously being learning disabled or an emotionally handicapped child should not be placed in the Developmental First grade class. The class is designed for all children who are developing or maturing at the rate nature is directing. The developmental first grade students should have at least a normal potential to learn (above 90 I.Q.).

Once the test results are available, the kindergarten teacher contacts the child's parents to share information and discuss the best possible placement.

The recommended placement may be one of the following:

1. That the child repeat kindergarten.
2. That the child, after the kindergarten year, attend the Developmental First grade class. Then, after Developmental First grade class, continue into regular first grade the following year.
3. That the child may have special learning needs and need further testing.
4. That the child continue into regular first grade.

Developmental Class

Class is structure for some freedom and little stress or pressure. Activities are developed without textbooks or workbooks for individual and group exploration or experimentation. There is no emphasis put on grades. Every attempt is made for a child to be successful! The grade card is for parent information and teacher communication.

The curriculum for Developmental First is completely different than a regular First Grade setting. The students progress at a more relaxed rate without the pressures of completing an assigned number of books or pages. More time is spent on readiness skills, language development, and social experience than would normally be allotted for in a regular First Grade class. Development First provides more individualized learning than kindergarten or First Grade.

The curriculum emphasizes the development of perceptual skills, motor skills, language, and readiness skills for reading and mathematics. They will progress on a continuum of skills as far as they are able to proceed. They will be enrolled in the first grade the following school term.

Reading and Phonics

Each week a letter and sound is studied using Lippincott "Beginnings" kit for reading and additional manipulative letter activities. A listening/following directions training skills is developed.

A language experience story is written and read during the week.

It is believed:

What I think, I can say.

What I say, I can write (or someone can write for me).

What I write I can read.

Math

Using the text "mathematics Their Way", math time is very structured with progressive skills from patterning, number concept, quantity, geometry, classification, sets, operations, measurement, position, seriation, and logical sequence. The activities and materials were made by the teacher from Workjobs II.

Units of study are developed throughout the year. Some of these units are: "Me"

unit, color, eskimo, zoo animals, dinosaurs, patriotic, rocks, circus, farm animals, community helpers, volcanoes, snake and other.

The curriculum will include:

Physical Exercise

- movement activities
- relaxation
- balance

Art and Music

- has imagination through art material
- completes an artistic project
- demonstrates enjoyment in singing
- plays various rhythmic instruments

Goals and Objectives

Developmental First will give the child time to grow.

Help the child develop a strong sense of self--to allow him to "blossom from within."

Provide an environment rich in equipment and materials, where experiences are direct and concrete, to build the foundation for later, more abstract experiences.

Provide movement experiences for development of physical and motor skills.

Promote growth in visual, auditory, and tactual perception...to sharpen senses.

Provide an opportunity to learn and practice patterning of all kinds....visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and concrete objects.

Provide listening activities for auditory training and following directions.

Provide nutritional snacks and information for health and knowledge.

Build a foundation for abstract math concepts through manipulation of concrete materials.

Build a foundation for science through discovery and play with blocks, and natural materials such as sand, water, twigs, shells, and common objects such as buttons, bottle lids, and rubber bands.

Help the child relate to others socially and to be a part of a group.

Help the child develop problem solving techniques.

Promote creative expression through art, dance, music, cooking and story telling.

Help the child develop the habit of success.

Help the child establish an environment of beauty, order and stability.

Reading

The child will:

- match upper and lower case letters, and give sound symbol association.
- write or match beginning letter to pictures or words.
- when presented with a picture, tell or write the short vowel.
- be able to read a list of short vowel words.
- read the group language story or their own language story.
- choose and read stories presented in class.

Language Arts

The child will:

- be able to supply one or more additional rhyming words when given a pair of rhyming words
- listen to and follow direction.
- after listening to a story be able to interpret and relate what happened in the story.
- shows their ability to speak in well formed sentences when given opportunities for speaking.
- when given a word be able to give a synonym.
- write correctly letters and numerals on lined paper.
- participate in group story writing.
- tell or write their own story.
- match pictures to beginning letter.
- match upper and lower case letters.

Math

The child will:

- be able to reproduce a given pattern using a variety of materials.
- be able to recognize and write numerals 0 to 50; and rote count 0 to 100
- match 0 to 20 with a given number of objects.
- be able to identify pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters, and each value.
- be able to add or subtract facts to 10 using concrete materials.
- correctly match numeral to number word.
- demonstrate the awareness of position words such as above, below, on, under, left, right, top bottom.

Social Studies

The child will:

- realize their self-worth.
- understand the contribution of community workers to their daily life.
- demonstrate their ability to use materials in the room with others.
- participate in discussion and celebration of the traditional holidays.

Science

The child will:

- identify objects in their natural environment.
- use the five senses to interpret their environment.
- classify objects as living or non-living.
- identify and match primary and secondary colors as well as black, brown, white, gray, and pink.
- identify by sight circle, square, rectangle, triangle, and oval.

Music

The child will:

- participate in songs presented.
- be able to accompany a song using rhythm instruments.
- responds appropriately to musical interludes.
- be able to listen to songs with attentiveness.

Art

The child will:

- demonstrate an ability to use a variety of art media to express their creativity.
- demonstrate proficiency in the use of various tools of construction.
- be able to complete an activity and have a product.

Physical Education

The child will:

- participate in activities for gross motor skills.
 - a. running
 - b. jumping
 - c. hopping
 - d. climbing
 - e. skipping
- demonstrate an ability to balance while:
 - a. catching a large ball
 - b. walking on a balance beam
 - c. jumping a rope
 - d. hopping on one foot
- be able to show directionality while participating in a game.
- maintain their body in a limited area for short periods of time.
- will participate in movement activities and games.

The Developmental Point of View

The Developmental Placement Program is an effort to make school a valuable and successful experience for a child. The program is based on the concept that the time of school entrance and of any further promotion should be based on the child's developmental or behavior age rather than birthday age alone.

Every child should enter kindergarten only when he or she has reached a developmental age of five years, in addition to the usual criterion of being five years of age chronologically, and first grade at a developmental age of at least six years.

Law dictates that a child be in school by the age of six, it is impossible to legislate when a child is ready for school just as it would be impossible to legislate when they shall erupt their first tooth or take their first step. There is a great deal of variation among children regarding the time when they are ready for school.

Laws of this sort often cause perfectly normal children to go to school too soon, and thus spoil their chances of becoming educated. Unready children are trapped in situations where they are humiliated in front of their friends everyday and survival becomes a matter of escape by daydreaming or clowning to solicit acceptance by peers; or when this is not enough, avoiding school as much as possible by developing psychosomatic illnesses.

Over-placement can impede the natural development of the child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. Because society smiles fondly on the intellectual child, they soon learn to put the major part of their energy into intellectual growth at the expense of physical, emotional or social growth. Because they are in over their heads, something has to give. This means that one of two areas of the child's development grow at a faster rate than other areas of his development. With each passing year, the gap grows wider until a distorted, one-sided, limited personality has developed. The child who enters school before they are developmentally ready cannot cope with the environment and they are forced to simplify their relationship to it and deal with it in a few areas only.

The Developmental point of view means Understanding that growth is orderly structured and predictable. Because a child is a living organism, they are subject to the same laws of growth as every other species in nature and has a cycle of development peculiar to humans in general. This child is like every child.

Children walk before they run.

They think concretely before abstractly. The Developmental point of view means Respecting the fact that every child has their own rate and pattern of growth peculiar to themselves. This child is different from every other child.

Children learn to walk at different ages.

Some toe in, and some toe out.

Who dares to legislate the age children shall walk, or which is better toeing in or toeing out. The Developmental point of view means Accepting the child as a total action system: their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual components depending upon and supporting each other. These components are not separate and one cannot be stretched ahead of the others without upsetting an intrinsic and intricate balance.

A child tends to seek balance necessary for their time and space at any given moment.

The Developmental point of view means Appreciating that readiness for any given task has its roots in the biological-maturational make-up of the child. You can neither PRODUCE IT, HURRY IT, nor IGNORE IT.

When a child is ready they will...

...be born

...walk

...talk

...read

The Developmental point of view means promoting educational programs for children in terms of development as it IS, NOW, not in terms of what one thinks it ought to be.

Development and intelligence are separate. Intelligence is not all one needs to have in order to be a school success. Development can not be taught or pushed. Time will take its course and the development will happen naturally.

School Readiness means a child's total ability to cope and learn in a school setting. Readiness depends on physical, neurological, emotional and social maturity. A "ready" child enjoys his learning and enjoys school. "School readiness" is like a loaf of bread. But if the yeast has been omitted, the bread won't rise. Unconditional love, trust, an average intelligence, and birth date that falls on or before September 1 are some of the ingredients any child needs in order to experience school success. But when the developmental age of 5 has been omitted, the child may not be able to "rise" to the expectations of parents and teachers. The child will not be able to function optimally.

The Developmental First grade class gives the child an opportunity to develop naturally (Time) while being exposed to appropriate learning experiences. This endeavor will enhance the child's potential of becoming the whole person they were meant to be.

The class is designed for children who have a developmental lag, which can likely be remedied by time and educational experiences on a level where they can be successful--children who are not ready for the skills taught in the regular first grade are like to fail if placed there.

As Rousseau stated in Emile, 1762, "Hold childhood in reverence and do not be in any hurry to judge it for good or ill....Give nature time to work before you take over her task lest you interfere with her method...A Child ill taught is further from virtue than a

child who has learned nothing at all."

Since 1980 the Developmental First grade class in _____ believes in the developmental point of view of J. Piaget, C. Gillespie, Gesell Institute, and D. Elkind. That is, it is highly unlikely that anyone without a developmental point of view can really take part in a successful Readiness Program. This is not a program for those who feel that a child is like a piece of clay which can be pushed and pulled to fit a pre-determined form. Nor is it a program for those who feel that a child is like a computer for which information is broken up into little pieces and fed in bit by bit, to be retrieved at a later date. It is a program for those who have faith in the orderliness of nature and who trust a child to know their own needs!

Common Misconceptions about the Development Program

That School Readiness is readiness to learn or readiness to read. School readiness is the ability to learn and to cope with the school environment without undue stress, and to sustain this level of learning and coping. Many children who are ready to read are still not ready for the school situation. They may manage the academics, but usually at great expense to another part of their being...social, emotional, or physical. They may actually turn off real learning and compensate by rote learning or memorizing.

That intelligence must be considered before other aspects of growth. Intelligence is not used in isolation, neglecting other aspects. No matter how intelligent the child is, they cannot use their capacity to the fullest if they have no friends, are physically ill, or are emotionally troubled. In fact, stress in any area can impede learning, and prolonged stress has the effect of reducing intelligence. The child is a total being, made up of an emotional, physical, social, and an intellectual aspect. Their potential is achieved only by the smooth functioning of every aspect.

That school success is academic success. School success might better be defined as learning academics and having enough energy left over to live a well-rounded life. Thus many "Straight A" students may be considered school failures because they have never developed the forces necessary to cope with the environment in self-enhancing ways. They shun personal contacts, sports, have fewer creative outlets, and in general, live rather narrow lives.

That readiness must be immediately nurtured. There need be no worry that if readiness occurs and is not instantly fed it will disappear forever. Readiness only becomes stronger with time, and in fact, can become so strong that the child will teach himself.

That a Developmental First Grade is a place to "get" children ready for first grade. There is no attempt to "get" children ready in this room, in fact, there is no evidence that there is any way to "get" them ready. In Developmental First, readiness is allowed to emerge as nature intended it to. There is a respect for nature's timing. An activity-oriented environment is provided; both for enhancing or enriching growth, and for providing a foundation on which future, more abstract learnings can be built.

That the Developmental First grade class is a place for slow learners. Many so called "slow" children are really smart young children. If the readiness program is handled well,

some of the brightest children in the school will be in the developmental first grade room. That unready children are abnormal. There may be as much as two years difference in the maturity of normal children at the same chronological age. Approximately half of the entering first graders are not ready for that situation, and these children are perfectly normal.

That the developmental program is a "holding back." The developmental program actually allows a gift of time and a privilege of moving in a forward direction. When a child is put in a situation they can't handle, they are immobilized. What may seem to be a "holding back" may actually allow them to move ahead.

That children "catch up." This has been a age-old hope of parents and teachers of slower-maturing children, but most of these children never do "catch up" to the children their same age. Some may seem to (the late bloomer) but they usually do this at the expense of some aspect of their being, or by using compensating techniques...learning to play the game.

That the parents are to blame if their child is unready. Considering the deluge of written material being circulated today advising parents that they can raise a superior child by intellectual stimulation, the push toward early reading, and the current television shows purporting to produce readiness, it is no wonder that parents feel responsible and guilty if their child is not ready. No one is to blame. The best of parents, the best of environments, still produce children who need growing time. Parents need educating to the concepts of school readiness and reassurance on this point.

That the developmental program is a form of non-grading. In actuality, it adds another grade...before first grade.

That the developmental program is a cure-all. It is not, but if handled well it can help alleviate many future school problems for a great many children, teachers, and parents.

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