

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 110 424

95

SP 009 413

AUTHOR Weiss, Carol N.; And Others  
 TITLE An Assessment of the Impact of the EDC [Educational Development Center] Follow Through Advisory Approach.  
 INSTITUTION Education Development Center, Inc., Newton, Mass.  
 SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.  
 PUB DATE 74  
 NOTE 284p.; A study based on interviews with teachers, aides, administrators and parents in the EDC Follow Through Program (Paterson, New Jersey, 1973-74); For related documents, see SP 009 414  
 AVAILABLE FROM Open Education Follow Through Program, Education Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02160 (No price quoted)

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.76 HC-\$14.59 PLUS POSTAGE  
 DESCRIPTORS Administrator Attitudes; \*Advisory Committees; Community Role; \*Evaluation Methods; Parent Attitudes; \*Program Evaluation; \*Questionnaires; School Role; Surveys; Teacher Aides; Teacher Attitudes  
 IDENTIFIERS \*Follow Through

## ABSTRACT

This report was written as part of the sponsor evaluation of the Educational Development Center (EDC) Open Education Follow Through Program under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education. In this study four groups of adults (teachers, aides, administrators, and parents) who are involved with the growth and development of children in the EDC Follow Through program in Paterson, New Jersey were interviewed. This report is divided into 11 chapters concerning the following: (a) an overview of evaluation research procedures, (b) background information, (c) an overview of classroom activities, (d) how the teachers view their role in the school, (e) an overview of administrator activities, (f) the issue of parent involvement, (g) views on children's learning, (h) opinions of teachers concerning the EDC approach to learning, (i) responses to questions concerning EDC advisors, (j) satisfactions and difficulties in Follow Through, and (k) opinions concerning what will happen when Follow Through leaves Paterson. Each chapter includes an introduction, a summary of responses, an analysis of responses, and a detail of responses for each group interviewed. An appendix is attached which includes the interview questionnaires. Also attached are a teacher questionnaire and the background and methodology for that questionnaire. (PC)

ED110424

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT  
OF THE  
EDC FOLLOW THROUGH ADVISORY APPROACH

A study based on interviews with teachers,  
aides, administrators and parents in  
the EDC Follow Through Program  
in  
Paterson, New Jersey

1973-74

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## PREFACE

This report was written as part of the sponsor evaluation of the EDC Open Education Follow Through Program under a grant from the U. S. Office of Education. It was based on the recognition of a need to share information about how the adults who work with children in this program view their work. We hope it will be helpful to the people in the Paterson Follow Through community to share each other's perceptions about their work. We also hope that the information presented in this report will be helpful to others who are working towards improving the opportunities for the growth and development of children.

In this study, we interviewed four groups of adults - teachers, aides, administrators and parents - who are involved with the growth and development of children in the EDC Follow Through program in Paterson, New Jersey. They responded to questions about their views on children's learning, their roles in the school, their work with EDC advisors, and the difficulties and satisfactions they have experienced while working in the Follow Through program.

This study was conducted at a particular time in the program's development, in a particular community. It does not provide a basis for drawing conclusions about matters beyond the particular community studied and some clearly similar situations. It does provide detailed information about the beliefs and attitude of the adults interviewed as they worked with children, with each other, and with EDC advisors, in the Follow Through program.

This report came into being as a result of the commitment, involvement and participation of many people.

We would like to thank the members of the Paterson Follow Through community - teachers, aides, administrators and parents - for sharing their responses with us and for making us welcome in their community. We appreciate the assistance of the project director, local advisors, and Follow Through staff in scheduling interviews and facilitating communication during our visits to Paterson. We also wish to thank the parent-interviewers who took responsibility for collecting the parent data.

We would like to thank Ted Chittenden of the Early Education Group at Educational Testing Service for permission to use their interview format and selected questions from A Study of Teachers in Open Settings as a basis for constructing our interview schedules.

The EDC advisory staff, directed by Grace Hilliard, offered their thoughtful reactions and support throughout the course of this study. We are particularly grateful to Posie Churchill, EDC liaison advisor to Paterson in 1973-74, for her constructive comments and her encouragement of our research. We appreciate the untiring efforts of our able support staff - Dorothy Glacken, Alice Keeping, Barbara McKinley and Winifred Regan, in typing many drafts as well as the final report. We thank Jeanne McDonald for her help in coordinating the preparation of the report.

In closing, we also wish to thank Judith Lemon for her sensitive and competent editing draft sections of the report and Mary Jane Neuendorffer for her careful proofreading of the final report. Dale Allen and Carol Ann Weissman, members of our current research staff, provided invaluable editorial assistance and support in the final stages of this project.

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## CHAPTER 3

### OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION RESEARCH PROCEDURES IN PATERSON

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The distinctive feature of the EDC Follow Through approach is its advisor system. The advisory is working to assist teachers, aides, administrators and parents to broaden their perception of the teaching/learning process. We believe that as these adults increase and enrich their range of responses, they will become better able to respond effectively to the needs and resources of children.

At times, EDC advisors focus on working with teachers and aides in order to effect educational change in the classroom; at other times advisors emphasize the importance of school and community support for the EDC Follow Through approach. These classroom/community focuses are complimentary.

Selected teachers, aides, administrators and parents at the EDC Follow Through site in Paterson, New Jersey were interviewed to determine their attitudes and opinions about the EDC advisor system; the teaching/learning process; and the role of school and community in implementing the Follow Through program. The function of this report is to present the findings of those interviews. We have identified issues that seemed central to the functioning of the program. We have also reported the detail and variety of responses to each question, so that readers of this report will have the background information with which to make their own inferences.

## 1.2 SITE SELECTION

Following the time sequence established in the 1973-74 research proposal, we selected two of the ten EDC Follow Through communities as research sites. Two sites were chosen to make possible in depth research within the constraints of a limited research budget and staff. For 1973-74, the criteria for site selection were:

- The sites should include one metropolitan and one non-metropolitan community.
- The sites should approximate the average size of EDC-Follow Through communities, i.e., having about sixteen Follow Through classrooms.
- The sites should be public schools.
- People in the sites should not see the research as threatening their program.
- The liaison advisors should be willing to cooperate with the researchers.

Based on these criteria, we suggested the EDC Follow Through sites in Burlington, Vermont and Paterson, New Jersey. We then conferred individually with all EDC advisors to learn:

- Which EDC-Follow Through communities each advisor was familiar with;
- Which communities each advisor expected to be working in during the following year;
- Whether each advisor agreed with the criteria set out by the researchers;
- Whether each advisor felt that Burlington and Paterson were appropriate sites for the proposed research.

Most EDC advisors found Burlington and Paterson \* acceptable

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\* See separate report on EDC follow through program in Burlington, Vermont.

choices as 1973-74 research sites. In the meantime, the liaison advisor for Paterson assured us of her willingness to cooperate with the research effort and we were then ready to talk with Follow Through administrators in Paterson.

The liaison advisor who traveled to Paterson in August, 1973, initiated discussion of the proposed research with the project directors and principals in those communities. Since their reactions were favorable, we followed up with telephone calls to confirm their interest and to arrange for an introductory visit by researchers in September. On the basis of these telephone conversations, we proceeded with planning and sent the following letter to the project director, principals, local advisors, Policy Advisory Committee chairpersons and "Follow Through Community."

We are writing to give you a general overview of our Research Plan for the 1973-74 school year. We will be working to document and develop a fuller understanding of the role of the EDC liaison advisor and the ways in which advisors affect Follow Through in communities. We would like to work with you on a study of how the EDC Advisory functions in Paterson.

Our purpose in looking at the impact of EDC advisors is to find out: how the advisory role is seen; what it has included in the past; how it is functioning in the present; what are its strengths and its weaknesses. We hope that such information will contribute to a growing understanding of what advisors have and have not been able to accomplish in the context of a particular community and of what needs the community has which are not being or perhaps cannot be met by the advisory system. The function of this research will be to provide the people engaged in the task of implementing Follow Through with information on the basis of which they can consider modifying their goals and/or their procedures.

To gather this information we plan to interview the liaison advisor and other advisors who travel to the community, relevant administrators, some teachers and aides and some parents. This will give us several different perspectives on the advisors' functions.

We hope that the research effort will prove to be a constructive model in developing ways of working together.

An important part of our project will be to share our findings with the people who talk to us. We plan to make the kinds of things we write about available to the people we interviewed before we share them with others. We will then be able to incorporate into our written reports both the original data with our interpretations and the reactions by the people interviewed to that data. All individual responses will be confidential. No person will be identified by name. Reference to role (administrator, teacher, aide, parent, advisor) will be the method of categorizing and reporting responses.

The form in which we will report our findings will be case studies. Case studies do not provide a basis for drawing conclusions about matters beyond the particular cases and clearly similar cases. Our research will not allow us to make definitive statements about other sites or about EDC advisors in general. Rather, the cases suggest questions and ideas about the interaction of elements within the case that may be relevant to other cases as well.

We would like to conduct our research in Paterson with representatives of the Paterson Follow Through community. We hope that you will be willing to work with us on this project.

We have spoken with your project director who has offered to schedule appointments for us to meet with you on our visit to Paterson in September, 1973. With your interest and support, we hope to develop a plan for cooperative work for the 1973-74 school year.

We look forward to discussing this project with you.

This letter outlined the research focus that had been developed during the planning time. We decided that the unifying thread for

interviews of administrators, teachers, aides and parents should be the experiences those groups had had with EDC advisors and their opinions about EDC advisors' work. Additional questions would be designed to provide us with information about the context in which EDC advisors worked. We also wanted the interview questions to yield information of interest to people in the communities.

While work on the interview format proceeded we made the introductory visit to Paterson. We talked with the Follow Through administrators and with some of the teachers to explain our purpose in interviewing them.

### 1.3 SELECTION OF INTERVIEW SAMPLE

Since our research was exploratory and we planned to interview people with several different roles in the Follow Through program, we had to make some choices about which members of particular groups to interview. We felt that all of the administrators who were directly involved with EDC advisors and the Follow Through program should be interviewed. In Paterson, the project director, two principals and two local advisors were the relevant administrators.

#### Method of Sampling

The method of modified random selection was utilized in these two sites in order to select manageable numbers of people to interview without relying completely on recommendations.

In Burlington, we were able to talk individually with all eleven pairs of teachers and aides in the Follow Through program,

whereas in Paterson, we were able to talk individually with nine out of eighteen pairs of Follow Through teachers and aides.

Since Paterson had eighteen Follow Through classrooms, our time schedule did not allow for extended interviews with all Paterson teachers and aides. Therefore, we asked the local advisors and project director to give us the names of those teachers who they felt had worked most closely with EDC advisors in the past. We then took a random sample of teachers, selecting four from School #6 and four from School #28. We were concerned about getting a range of grade levels and of years of experience in Follow Through, but did not feel that a stratified random sample would be appropriate because of the small number of teachers included in our research. Therefore, we rejected the first random sample on the grounds that it did not offer the range of diversity we desired and drew a second random sample that happened to include all but one of the recommended teachers and at least one teacher at each grade level. The sample included four first-year teachers, which was equivalent to the proportion of first-year teachers in the program. The random samples were drawn by taking the names of teachers from a hat and matching them with numbers drawn from another hat. The first eight were selected to be interviewed. The one teacher who had been recommended to us but not included in the random sample was added to the list to be interviewed, making a total of nine teachers. We then interviewed the aides who worked with these nine teachers.

Because of limited resources, we were able to arrange for interviews with only fifteen parents. We used a combination of recommendations and random sampling in order to choose our sample.

In Paterson, parents' names were obtained from the class lists of the nine selected teachers. This meant that parents with children in more than one of these classes would appear more than once. No consistent effort was made to eliminate multiple representation of parents in Paterson. This simply means that a parent with more than one child in Follow Through would be more likely to be selected than a parent with only one child in Follow Through. We assumed that the recommended parents would agree to be interviewed, but made provision for randomly selected parents to be replaced from a second list of randomly selected parents if parents in the first group selected could not be reached or if they chose not to be interviewed. The procedure for replacing parents from the primary random list was not totally workable, with the result that two out of the fifteen parents interviewed in Paterson were not from the random list.

#### 1.4 CONSTRUCTION OF INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

We began work on the interview schedules by concentrating on the questions for teachers. We relied heavily on the interview format for A Study of Teachers in Open Settings separately prepared by researchers at Educational Testing Service, modifying it for our purposes. We then constructed a shorter interview schedule for

aides by eliminating some of the questions asked of teachers, making some slight modifications in the remaining questions, and adding a few questions solely for aides. Many of the questions prepared for administrators were modified to suit the different functions administrators perform. The administrator interview questionnaire was left more open-ended than the teachers' and aides' because we expected greater variety in perspectives from the administrators based on the differences in their jobs. The parents' questionnaire was devised to probe issues that seemed to be relevant and important for parents. It was constructed for use by parent interviewers rather than the EDC researchers themselves and was to be administered without a tape recorder. Parent interviewers would record responses by hand. Therefore, it was considerably simpler and more closed-ended than the other schedules.

### 1.5 INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

Following our introductory visit to Paterson, interviews were scheduled with the people selected. We arranged to have two-hour blocks of time for interviews with each teacher and administrator and one hour with each aide. In general, interviews with teachers lasted from one to two hours, while interviews with aides lasted between thirty minutes and an hour. The interviews occurred in a variety of settings to utilize available space - offices, libraries, teachers' lounges, storerooms, unused classrooms, etc.

All interviews conducted by the researchers were tape recorded

to allow the interviewers to concentrate on asking appropriate probing and follow-up questions. The interviews conducted with parents occurred in private homes and were arranged by the parent-interviewers. Responses to parent interviews were recorded on the question sheets by the parent interviewers, by filling in blanks on closed-ended questions and by writing brief summary statements for open-ended questions or additional comments.

The parent-interviewers were chosen by the project director and local advisors in Paterson. Parent-interviewers' training consisted of two evening sessions, each an hour-and-a-half long. The first session had two purposes: to introduce the prospective parent-interviewers to the project and to the researchers and to give them a chance to look at the questions and suggest improvements. During the introduction, the purposes of the study were set out and the method of selection of interviewees was explained. We also clarified the terms of payment for their work as parent-interviewers. In Paterson, three parent-interviewers were paid fifty dollars each for their work. The payment was intended to cover the time required for the training sessions, setting up and traveling to interviews, and the interviews themselves. The discussion of the questions familiarized the parent-interviewers with the content and layout of the question sheets and gave them an opportunity to identify questions that seemed inappropriate or poorly phrased. Changes were made in the interview questions as a

result of suggestions made by parent interviewers.

The second training session focused on the interviewing and recording process. It began with brief instructions from the researchers on interviewing and recording techniques. For example, parent-interviewers were instructed to repeat questions that interviewees did not understand and to write down interviewees' exact words when summarizing responses to open-ended questions. The next step was for one researcher to interview one of the parent-interviewers, using the question sheets but also tape recording the interview. Parent-interviewers, except the one being interviewed for demonstration purposes, recorded responses as the interview progressed. At the end of this demonstration interview the researchers and parent-interviewers compared their records of the responses. When agreement on the most accurate record could not be reached by comparison, the tape was used to replay the exact response. This process also provided opportunities for discussion of the interviewing techniques demonstrated by the researcher. Parent-interviewers were then instructed to conduct at least two practice interviews, with each other or with friends who had children in Follow Through, before conducting interviews with the selected parents.

#### 1.6 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The first step in dealing with the data on the interview tapes was to listen to the tapes and put the relevant responses into

written form. Transcription would have been the most desirable method, but was not feasible because of the costs involved. Therefore, the researchers listened to the tapes and recorded data on protocol sheets. These sheets simply restated the questions with space for filling in responses. Some of what was said during an interview was not recorded. Most responses were paraphrased. When several points were made on the same topic, they were listed. Particularly relevant and interesting statements were quoted exactly. The major effort at establishing reliability among the three researchers in recording responses was an initial independent recording by researchers of the same interview and comparison of what was recorded and how it was written. A few more interviews were recorded by one researcher and then listened to by a second researcher who checked the protocol. Occasional checks of the tapes during the report-writing stage indicated a high level of accuracy in the protocol material.

The second step, following the conversion of the taped interviews into written protocol form, was to aggregate responses. This was done by putting together the responses to each question of all members of a single group in one community. For example, all teachers' responses to the question on what they thought children should be learning (chapter 7, question 1) were combined. This procedure allowed us to examine the responses of all members of a group to the same question, making the group - teachers, aides,

administrators - the main unit of analysis.

The third step was summarizing responses of all members of a group to a particular question. Categories were developed and the number of people whose responses fell into each category was reported. Care was taken at the summarizing stage to report as fully as possible the variety of responses, including mention of many points made by single individuals. Categorizing always simplifies individual responses by combining them with others that are only similar, not identical. In addition, categories are usually less specific than the statements actually made by respondents. For example, when a certain number of teachers are reported as having included "helping children become more independent" as one of their goals for teaching, a number of more specific statements about what that means to individual teachers, and the examples given to illustrate, are glossed over. For this reason, there is a tendency in summarizing responses to give more detail in describing an unusual response than in describing a uniform response from several people. The bulk of the text of this report is devoted to a fairly straightforward reporting of what people said, in summary form.

The foregoing description of methods of processing the interview data dealt with the taped interviews with teachers, aides and administrators. Since the parent interviews were recorded in written form, and many response categories had been developed

before these interviews were conducted, they were much easier to process. The report on the parent interviews is mainly a tabulation of responses to closed-ended questions and a summary of responses to open-ended questions.

Actual analysis of the data followed the summarizing stage. Two forms of analysis were applied, both closely tied to the data in its summary form. One involved comparing the responses of different groups to the same question and drawing inferences for making recommendations based on the differences or similarities among groups. This, of course, applied only to those questions asked of more than one group. The other form of analysis involved drawing inferences, speculating, or making suggestions based on the responses of people in one group to one question or set of questions. The major function of analysis was to identify issues that seemed relevant to the functioning of the program and that would reward further attention, either by the researchers, the EDC staff, or the people in the communities.

There were some difficulties in analyzing responses that should be noted. This was due in part to the different roles of the members of the administrator group, as well as to the different mode of interviewing the parent group. With teachers and aides, the numbers were equal and the context for working the same - the classroom. There were fewer administrators and their roles were more diverse. In reporting administrators' responses, less aggregation was possible, which, in turn, made it hard to compare the responses

of administrators as a group with those of teachers or aides. It was difficult to compare responses of parents with other groups because the method of interviewing them and recording their responses was different. The difficulties have not prevented us from attempting comparisons, but readers of the analysis sections of the report should take them into account.

### 1.7 PROGRESS REPORTS TO THE COMMUNITY

Two progress reports were made to Paterson before the completion of the final report. Written drafts of selected sections of the final report were distributed to the community and the researchers talked with the people there about the material. The progress reports had several purposes. One was to give the people we interviewed an opportunity to participate in the revision of some sections of the final report before it was completed. We had promised them this opportunity when we first arranged to do the interviews in order to avoid the kind of situation where people cooperate with a research endeavor and then see the publication of its findings with very little on-going knowledge of its process and results. We did not promise to totally revise the report according to the community's suggestions, but did promise to take all suggestions into account and at least to note desires for revision in our final report. Another purpose of the progress reports was to receive comments and suggestions on our work that could be incorporated into the final report to make it a more useful and

relevant document. A third purpose of the progress reports was to give the people interviewed a clear understanding of how we were dealing with the materials included in this study so that they could knowledgeably assess its strengths, weaknesses, and applications.

The first progress reports took place in March, 1974. The parent reports had been completed in draft form by this time, so they were presented in their entirety to the parents who had conducted the interviews and to other interested parents and staff. The section of the staff interviews that was reported included questions about opinions on what children should be learning, assessments of the degree to which children in the program were learning those things, and opinions about the value and extent of parent involvement in the school. Conferences were held with Paterson administrators. We met only with the teachers and aides who had been interviewed, and we saw them in four small groups, one group for teachers and one for aides, in each of the two schools.

The meetings began with an overview of the research project, outlining who had been interviewed, what topics had been explored, and a description of the method we were using for summarizing and reporting the data. This description was illustrated by a written document containing actual summaries from the protocol material of responses to one question. Comparison of the summaries with the draft of the section of the report that was based on those summaries provided a clear picture of how the researchers were working with

the material. Small group discussions allowed people to say whether they felt the reporting was accurate and whether they felt it warranted revision. We found by going through this process that there were some points at which our interpretation of the data was different from that of the people we had interviewed. In Paterson, for example, we agreed to add a category suggested by a group of aides to our final report.

We scheduled a second progress report for early June. This time draft copies of the section we planned to discuss had been sent before we arrived so that they could be read in advance.

In Paterson, the time pressures of the end of the school year made it difficult to schedule meetings with us. Therefore, the researchers did not visit Paterson at that time but requested that any questions or suggestions about our draft report be reported to us through the local advisors.

The full report was sent to Paterson in November, 1974. We requested that the people who had participated in the research review the completed study and send us their comments and suggestions. The discussions and exchange of views between community participants and EDC Follow Through staff which followed proved to be a complex and very important phase of the total research process. Each comment and suggestion by the community was most carefully considered. Numerous changes were made which reflected the community's concerns and EDC Follow Through's commitment to the integrity of the research process. We feel that a productive balance has been achieved in this final report. This process was

completed in March, 1975. The final report will now be distributed to the U.S. Office of Education and shared with EDC Follow Through communities and others interested in the development of Follow Through and open education.

### 1.8 CRITIQUE OF RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The research procedures for this study were chosen to fulfill two purposes: 1) to develop a broad data base, with a focus on the work of EDC advisors, as well as to describe the EDC Follow Through program in two communities, and 2) to provide useful formative information to the people at the two community sites.

With regard to our first research purpose, as listed above, open ended interviews were chosen as the method for data collection. This was done to allow issues to emerge that were of concern to the groups interviewed. We feel we have been successful in developing a broad data base and in identifying many issues of importance to the community groups.

A reporting procedure that proved to be particularly effective was the aggregation of responses of all members of a group to the same question. The advantage of this approach was identification of areas of agreement and disagreement among members of a group and the possibility for generalizations about the opinions and experiences of people in each group. Aggregated responses also facilitated comparisons across groups on those questions asked of more than one group. A disadvantage of this approach was that it concealed some of the important points developed by an individual throughout that person's whole interview. Some individuals interviewed stated themes that recurred throughout their interviews,

indicating their importance and providing a wealth of detail on selected issues. Aggregating responses diluted this kind of information.

Another procedure that merits further comment was the training of parents to interview other parents. This was worthwhile both in facilitating data collection for this research project and in confirming our belief that other groups, not only researchers, can collect valuable information. Given the modest amount of training provided and the lack of on-site supervision, the results of these procedures were quite good. The parent-interviewers proved capable and responsible. We were assured that our decision not to try to tape record interviews with parents was a wise one, even though the lack of such recording made independent verification of responses impossible. Such verification would have been helpful when more information about a specific comment was needed. In addition, such verification would have been helpful in assessing the degree of interviewer influence, as in the case where three of the four parents who had several negative things to say about Follow Through were interviewed by the same parent-interviewer.

With regard to our second research purpose - to provide useful formative information, we had hoped to make our findings immediately available to people in the communities by providing feedback at regular intervals during the school year. The need to travel some distance to the community sites limited our ability to develop the kinds of on-going personal relationships and informal reporting procedures we had intended to be an integral part of the process of this research. As the research proceeded, we began to realize that our commitment to detailed interim reports locked us into a

kind of writing style that at times became too lengthy and repetitive. This final report would have been more cogent and immediately relevant to community needs had it been shorter and more selective. For example, a few issues could have been singled out as especially important and evidence marshalled from whichever parts of the interview were appropriate. Instead, we tried to report the detail of what was said in response to all questions, so that readers of the report could have the background information to identify issues and make their own inferences, at each stage of the reporting procedure.

We had assured the people at the site that anything said in the interviews would be reported in such a way as not to identify individuals. We learned that this was impossible to do in all cases. We now believe that the definition of confidentiality must be spelled out more carefully in advance. It also seems that less rather than more confidentiality should be promised. That is, respondents should be assured that their names will not be attached to statements but should be made aware that some statements will be quoted and that they may be characterized in ways that make them identifiable to others at their site. This would be less of a problem if data collection methods other than interviewing were used.

Lastly, another problem we encountered that limited the formative use of our research was the unexpectedly large amount of time required to process the open-ended interview data. Instead of going through two complete cycles of data collection and reporting, we were able to complete only one cycle, with the final reporting coming late in the year. In order to be used formatively, research

and feedback needs to be conducted in shorter cycles, perhaps a few months in duration.

In conclusion, in looking back at the process and development of the actual research project, we feel we have gained a good deal of practical research knowledge, as well as more detailed information about what two actual Follow Through sites are like and how groups at those sites view the work of EDC advisors. We can now realistically consider other research approaches.

Another way of describing what now seems to be a potentially superior research design involves making a sharper distinction between the two functions of (1) providing useful formative information to people in the sites and (2) developing analyses of important issues based on the data. The first function needs short cycles of data collection and reporting in order for the data not to seem out of date to the people who provided it. The second function needs more time and a variety of data to be done well. Therefore, a more promising design might begin with simple data collection procedures designed to reveal some important issues. An example of such a procedure is the one described by Rippey (Studies in Transactional Evaluation 1973, pp. 14-66). He explains how questionnaires may be constructed out of comments written by the "subjects" of the research. The questionnaires provide a quick and efficient means of assessing the amount of agreement or disagreement about issues raised by the people in the sites themselves. Researchers could then select from the issues raised, ones that seemed especially important and amenable to further research. We have identified such issues in the research reported here, but it required a full year's exploration.

The process of identifying and exploring issues in a variety of ways can make it possible for the researchers to develop a careful analysis of several of those issues, backed by various kinds of data, during and after the time when they are collecting and reporting data in the sites. The analysis would not have to be reported with the same speed or in the same form as the raw data. It might, for example, come out several months after the data collecting had ceased and take the form of a brief article addressed to a wide audience, including the people in the sites and others concerned about Follow Through and Open Education. We hope to move in this direction with future EDC Follow Through research.

The final report on the 1973-74 EDC Follow Through research will be shared with the people in the Paterson Follow Through program, the EDC advisory staff, the U. S. Office of Education, people in the other nine EDC Follow Through communities and others interested in the development of Follow Through and Open Education. It will be distributed in October, 1974.

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION: PATERSON TEACHERS, AIDES, ADMINISTRATORS AND PARENTS

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

We asked a few background questions of all groups we interviewed in order to get a picture of their previous work experience, educational background, length of service in Follow Through, and the way they learned about and became involved in Follow Through. The responses to these questions are summarized here to give a picture of the people we interviewed. Some of this background information was useful to the researchers in understanding differences in responses to the succeeding questions in the interview. For example, experienced teachers tended to respond to some things differently from teachers who were just beginning their teaching careers. However, the major function of this information is to suggest that the backgrounds of the people we talked with are similar to those of school personnel and parents who are not involved in Follow Through.

#### 2.2 TEACHER BACKGROUND

Experience. The nine Paterson teachers who were interviewed had taught an average (mean) of 4.4 years, counting the current year. The newest teacher was in her first year of teaching; the most experienced teacher was beginning her twelfth teaching year. The teachers had been in the Follow Through program for an average of 2.1 years. The teacher with the longest experience in Follow Through was beginning her third year. Two teachers had taught in pre-school, one of those in Head Start.

Education. Eight teachers had bachelor's degrees. One had a master's degree. Four teachers said they were taking courses toward master's degrees. A fifth teacher had taken several non-degree courses beyond the bachelor's.

Non-teaching Experience. Four of the teachers had worked in non-teaching jobs, including business, sales, library, and factory work.

Entry into Follow Through. Three teachers said they were attracted to Follow Through because they agreed with the open classroom approach. One of those teachers had taught previously in an open classroom. Two other teachers mentioned having experience in open classrooms. Two teachers said they had applied to teach in the Paterson school system and had learned about the Follow Through program later. One teacher came to Paterson because she had been teaching in a white suburb and wanted to teach black children. Another came from a rural area to be in the city. One had already been teaching in School #28 and entered Follow Through to explore new ways of teaching. One teacher was recommended to the project director by her college.

### 2.3 AIDE\* BACKGROUND

Education. All nine aides had completed high school or held a high school equivalency certificate before becoming Follow Through aides. In addition, one aide had post-high school training as a secretary and as a

\* We have used the term "aide" consistently in this report, because that is the official National Follow Through term for this position. In the Paterson school system, an aide becomes an "assistant teacher" and then an "associate teacher" as she accrues college credits. Six "aides" were considered assistant and associate teachers in Paterson.

beautician. Another aide had earned some college credits before working in Follow Through. All nine aides have been attending college courses since becoming Follow Through aides.

Experience in Follow Through. The average (mean) number of years of experience in Follow Through for the nine aides who were interviewed was 3.4 years, counting the current year. The range was from two to four years. Five had been aides for four years.

Experience before Follow Through. Five of the aides had taught pre-school or Sunday school before becoming aides. Two more had done volunteer work with children. Six aides had done non-teaching work, three in factories, three in offices.

Entry into Follow Through. Five aides became involved in Follow Through because their children (or grandchildren) were in Follow Through classes. Two of these spoke of participating in parent activities and one said she had volunteered in her child's class. Three aides first heard about Follow Through through friends or members of their families. One was asked to apply by the project director.

A Comparison of Teachers' and Aides' Experience in FT

Teachers		Aides
Years Teaching	Years in FT	Years in FT
mean=4.4	mean=2.1	mean=3.4
range=1-12	range=1-3	range=2-4

## 2.4 ADMINISTRATOR BACKGROUND

Education. The five Paterson administrators all had bachelor's degrees and teacher certification. The two principals had master's degrees and principal certification. The project director was certified as a guidance counselor, and the two local advisors were taking courses and hoping to arrange course credit for an EDC workshop series.

Teaching Experience. The principals said they had taught 16 and 18 years. One had spent four of those years as learning disabilities specialist for the school district. The local advisors had both been teachers in School #28 (for 7 years and 5 years) before working in Follow Through; both also had worked as Follow Through teachers. The project director said that she had been a teacher and guidance counselor in the school system for many years before becoming involved in Head Start and being assistant director of a Title I program in Paterson.

Follow Through Administrative Experience. The average (mean) length of time as an administrator in Follow Through, counting the current year, was 3.8 years, with a range from two to six years.

Non-teaching/Administrative Experience. Three administrators mentioned previous employment outside the area of education. Their jobs included serving in the army, industrial and factory work, civil service, and work with mental institutions.

Entry into Follow Through. In one case the principal said Follow Through was put in his school; the other said Follow Through was already in the school when he was transferred there. The project director was chairman of the Follow Through planning committee in 1968 while she was a guidance counselor and working with Follow Through. She

became project director in September 1969. One local advisor was among the four Follow Through teachers of 1968; in September 1970 she became local advisor when the position was created. The other local advisor was a Follow Through teacher for one year, an advisor-in-training for one year, and then became the second Paterson local advisor. As local advisor-in-training she became familiarized with the potential of the Follow Through program and broadened her background. The year following this training, she became a regular local advisor.

## 2.5 PARENT BACKGROUND

### Responding parents:

15 mothers of Follow Through children  
School #28 10 mothers  
School # 6 5 mothers.

### Current employment:

School #28:  
4 mothers reported working at this time  
3 full-time  
1 part-time  
6 mothers reported not working at this time

School #6:  
4 mothers reported working at this time  
2 full-time  
2 part-time  
1 mother reported not working at this time

### Education:

School #28  
None reported 8th grade or less  
5 reported some high school  
3 reported completed high school  
2 reported some college

School #6:  
None reported 8th grade or less  
3 reported some high school  
2 reported completed high school  
None reported some college

Number of children in  
parent's care:

School #28: ranged from 1-6 children  
2 mothers: 1 child  
1 mother: 2 children  
2 mothers: 3 children  
4 mothers: 5 children  
1 mother: 6 children

School #6: ranged from 1-3 children  
1 mother: 1 child  
4 mothers: 3 children

Ages of children:

School #28: ranged from 1 yr. to 15 yrs.  
School #6 up to 16 years of age

Children who had  
participated in  
Head Start:

School #28: 7 mothers reported having had  
children in Head Start

School #6: 5 mothers reported having had  
children in Head Start

## CHAPTER 3

### OVERVIEW OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PATERSON TEACHERS AND AIDES

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers and aides were asked to describe a "typical day" in their classroom. This section was included to elicit a broad description of the teaching day. The focus of the questions was on how teachers and aides worked together and how they worked with children.

#### 3.2 and 3.3 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER AND AIDE RESPONSE

##### How Teachers and Aides Worked Together

The descriptions of how teachers worked with their aides and how aides worked with their teachers are strikingly complementary. Teachers valued aides taking initiative in classroom activities and aides valued their freedom to do so. Teachers and aides noted the importance of working together on a sharing basis. Those teachers new to the program stressed the helpful aspects of working with an experienced aide.

Although time for formal planning between teachers and aides seemed to be limited, teachers and aides still managed to talk together about the classroom. Generally, teachers seemed to take responsibility for making overall plans for the classroom. Aides were asked for suggestions and the aides felt that their suggestions were valued and utilized.

In terms of activity within the classroom, aides seemed to

value the independence to carry out their own ideas while working with the teacher. They were most satisfied when the teacher gave them the freedom to choose activities according to their own interests and abilities. Several aides mentioned that they and their teachers each worked with groups, shared responsibilities, and alternated in the leading of activities. An aide experienced in Follow Through talked about the value of her experience working with children and with a teacher. She was sensitive to the need to work together with her teacher, who was new to the program, so that the teacher could gain experience in her own way. In general, the complementary emphasis of teacher and aide responses seemed to indicate that a satisfying and productive balance was being achieved.

#### How Teachers and Aides Work with Children

Most teachers stressed the need to view children as individuals with different needs and abilities. They also spoke of the children's need for adult guidance in completing work responsibly and in making choices. The issue of children's choices was a common theme throughout all teachers' responses and was often combined with discussion of the degrees of "openness" that are considered appropriate in the classroom. Teachers' responses indicated that various styles of organizing the classroom were used during a teaching day: working together as a whole group, in small groups, individually, and in different combinations. Dividing the room into "areas" was also

a common method of classroom organization. Finally, the importance of reading was stressed.

In describing the ways they worked with children, aides stressed their belief that children want to learn. They felt that children learn best when they have opportunities to express themselves and to work at their own pace. Aides talked about the need for adults to encourage children's independence and to develop children's ability to make meaningful choices. Most aides said that their classrooms were divided into "areas" for learning. The children often chose what they wanted to do and the aides provided constructive limits and direction. They worked with children individually, in small groups, and sometimes with the class as a whole. Several aides stressed the fact that they (the aides) could choose to go into any area with a group of children. The desire to build learning activities around the children's interests was evident. Children had freedom to move while the aides supervised, helped, and set limits. The need for structure in an open classroom was stressed. Aides described their roles in working with children as helping the teacher, helping the children, and helping themselves to learn and to grow.

The basic goals towards which teachers and aides worked with children were similar, with some differences in emphasis and perspective. Both groups felt it was important to view children as individuals with interests and abilities. Promoting opportunity for children to make choices, with adults setting limits, was a

common goal.

Dividing the classroom into "areas" was a usual method of organizing activities. Teachers and aides both worked with individuals and groups. Teachers discussed appropriate degrees of "openness," while aides stated the need for structure in an open classroom.

Although both teachers and aides seemed to view themselves as learners as well as teachers, the aides placed special emphasis on the value of their own opportunities to make choices and to develop their ideas and abilities. They seemed to value most the same opportunities for children that they valued for their own continuing development.

### 3.4 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

#### How teachers Work With Their Aides

Six teachers specifically commented that the teacher and aide shared the same things. The teacher worked with one group while the aide worked with another. They alternated leading activities, working with individuals, and getting materials together. One of these teachers said, "We talk things over to understand each other's styles." They met at intervals to consider interactions within the class and regrouped from time to time. Another teacher noted that her aide was experienced in the program and was a big help in setting up the classroom. The following quotes by two of these teachers illustrate qualities they valued in their relationship with

their aides:

I have a beautiful aide. She's just so together. It's not a teacher-aide situation in my classroom. It's just two people working... If she's working with a group and she (makes a suggestion) alright, then we'll do it.

I happen to have a very good aide - she's very independent. She can initiate several other things in the classroom (while the teacher is working with a group).

These comments indicate that these teachers valued working together on a sharing basis. They appreciated their aides independent qualities and also valued their ideas and experience.

Several other teachers expanded on those themes. One teacher said, "We work together really well. I don't tell my aide what to do - she figures out her own activities and she likes it this way." Another teacher felt her aide had "fantastic ideas," and the teacher tried very hard to make those ideas work. She added, "She's there - she's not like a silent partner. She has her contribution to whatever is going on."

Another teacher said of her aide, "She has a wealth of experience that she relates to children." Another teacher said she usually asks her aide if she likes to do one thing or another, and the aide will choose. "If she wants to try something, then we usually work it out the next day."

Of the teaching staff interviewed in the Paterson Follow Through program, aides (including assistant and associate teachers) were more experienced in the program than teachers. Four teachers

are in their first year in Follow Through; the aides who work with those teachers have from two to four years experience in the program. Working with an experienced aide can be most helpful to a new teacher. It can also pose some difficulties, such as an aide seeming to take over the class and the teacher being concerned that her own training and experience were not being valued by her aide.

### Planning for the classroom

Five teachers commented that time for planning together with their aides is limited. As one teacher said:

Planning is really limited - organized planning.  
We have an hour a week but not much happens then.  
But we work together really well.

This teacher added that during rest time, the teacher and aide talk together about the morning. "We'll tell each other who we worked with and she puts things that we learned about the children in a notebook." Another teacher said, "We don't plan together as much as I'd like but after a few years of working together my aide sends notes to me about the kids. We get together and talk once a week when the kids go to gym." Another teacher said, "planning together is very brief. We only discuss specifics." She added that in a traditional classroom she could plan ahead and really stick to her schedule, but can't do that now in an open classroom. One teacher said that it would be better if they could plan together, but her aide has to pick up her own children as soon as school is over.

A teacher who does a lot of planning at home on weekends brings the plans in to show her aide. She says she has to do a "rigid" planbook for the school, so the plans are tentative for their actual day.

"I have been given an hour once a week and my aide and I sit and talk. She's now in college and brings back ideas. She makes wonderful suggestions."

Although there may not have been enough regular planning time, teachers mentioned that they often talked together with their aides... "We'll talk about it, and she tells me what she'd like to do and what she suggests, and I'll tell her, and we sort of come up with something."

One teacher stated that she, as the teacher, took overall responsibility for planning. She put it this way: "I make lesson plans. That's my job." She then told her aide what she had planned so the aide could make suggestions. That teacher had teaching experience and was described as a good open teacher who really cared about the kids in the program. "We worked together." This aide was experienced in Follow Through and was sensitive to the needs of her current teacher, who was new to the program. She said:

My teacher and I work together. I knew she was afraid because I was afraid....She's young but she's a good open teacher. She can't do it all in one day.

This aide valued her own experience working with children, both in the classroom and with her children at home, and realized that

she had a lot to offer others. She also respected the right of others to develop in their own time and ways.

### How Teachers Work With Children

Six teachers addressed the need to view children as individuals with different interests and abilities. As one teacher phrased it:

My idea is to find where the child is and to carry him (or her) as far as possible by giving him various...experiences, creative ideas. I feel that each child is a different individual and that he should be allowed to develop according to his abilities.

She added that she tried to motivate children from their own experiences, not from textbooks.

Another teacher talked about the importance of knowing the children she worked with:

I know the children, and that's saying an awful lot. I know which children will seek help first, knowing the nature of the task I assign, and knowing the children and watching to see what they elect to do themselves that is not assigned. I move around...try to get to all of the children.

Another teacher said:

I want them to develop as individuals, not just say I'm the teacher and you have to do what I say. I want them to respect other children at the same time and develop their own ideas.

Listening to children's comments helps a teacher to know their interests. The teacher learns a lot about children's lives from the activities they choose to do.

Five teachers spoke of the children's need for guidance. One

teacher described keeping a record of which children needed direction and which could go on by themselves. She directed activities in "paced work" and saw that children were progressing in an orderly pattern. Another teacher said she planned for each child each day, knowing what each liked to do. In another class, children moved from one area to another and asked the teacher and aide for help when they needed it. Another teacher began the day by listing things to do, such as language, math and reading.

Grouping is one method used to guide children's learning. One teacher said the children know that they have to do a certain amount of "academic work" and it comes in many forms. Every group didn't meet every day in her class. She felt that some children didn't fit in a group, so they became their own group of one. The adults grouped the children for certain skills and tried to find each child's "learning pattern." They regularly regrouped to help each child find himself. Another teacher said, "I have a thing about groups." She gave children the choice of working individually as well as in groups, and she varied the combinations. Groups were not always separated by ability. The children could move as they were ready. Another teacher grouped her class for reading and math according to their abilities. One teacher said that at the beginning of the year she tried to assess children's abilities by looking at their test scores. In this case "the tests and the abilities did not agree." She felt that the test scores were much higher than the children's abilities, and she worked to adjust her teaching

to what the children showed they were able to do in her classroom. Another teacher started the school year with everyone divided into reading groups; now individual children read with either the teacher or the aide while the children who are not reading have choices about what to do. The children had to report on what they chose to do.

One teacher mentioned that she corrected papers with the children as soon as they finished assignments so that they could correct their mistakes right away. This helped them to do responsible work and not to just throw anything together in order to be able to move into the activity areas.

Four teachers mentioned that they tried to meet with each child every day. One teacher said that she felt this was impossible - that there was just not enough time in the day, but that she was trying. One reason that she was trying to do this was that she felt that there was pressure from parents to know just what their children were doing. She did meet with the children on the lowest reading level every day and with others, for reading, twice a week. She felt that the brighter kids got more privileges. Another teacher met with every child each day. The children initially chose their activities and the teacher made individual suggestions. Another teacher felt that it was important for children to have "contact time" with the teacher as they needed it. She moved around to try to talk to all of the children, to see if a child needed help and to stay and help that child if necessary.

Seven teachers mentioned the importance of reading. As one teacher phrased it, "reading is most vital." Most classes had a specific time each day when they concentrated on reading skills. Sometimes this was a group activity and sometimes teachers worked with individuals. One teacher said she felt there was pressure from "outside" people that an hour and a half of reading be provided every day. She said, "Reading is very important in our district now." She added that "we're also doing reading with math and other activities." Another teacher said that children learned the disciplines, such as reading, math, science, health, and language through their activities.

The issue of children's choices was a common theme throughout all teachers' responses. This was often combined with discussion of degrees of "openness" that were considered appropriate in the classroom.

One teacher in her first year with Follow Through said that she started off the year "very closed" because the children were hyperactive. She was trying to open up gradually. She wanted to work toward having more choices but was trying not to make it too complicated. Another teacher said they began the day together by talking about the things they would do. The first period of the day was spent in areas. The children chose which areas they would work in--blocks, art, math games, and library. She added, "I've been introducing things little by little. In the beginning, I had too many things out." Another teacher assisted individual choices,

giving direction when needed.

Three teachers talked about the children choosing "areas" when they have finished their assignments. One teacher concentrated on group activities in the morning and had an "area time" in the afternoon when children could use blocks and the house and had more freedom to move around than in the morning. Another teacher said the children could choose areas as they finished the things listed for them to do. "It has to be something meaningful. They cannot play." Children were asked to tell about what they chose to do, and that makes it serious. She said that for a while "we had to close up all the areas" because children couldn't tell about what they were doing. In another classroom, the children could choose activities after they had met with their reading groups. Their choices included math, reading games, and drawing--"no noisy things." The children had to indicate to the teacher which areas they were going to. They were free to make changes. The teacher kept a record of what area each child chose.

Children seemed to make choices about many aspects of their school day, such as: whether to work in a group or individually; which area to work in; or which book to read. Choices were often guided by the teacher's assessment of the child's readiness and needs.

Styles of organizing the teaching day varied. Four teachers mentioned that they started their day with the whole class as a

group - writing a story together, talking, singing, or discussing the day's plans. One teacher said, "Every day is so different." Another specified that the days were different because they had to adjust to the pace of the children. Some classes seemed to have a rhythm of activities moving back and forth from large groups to individual activities. Others had directed group and individual learning activities in the morning with more choices of activities in the afternoon. One class could begin the day with a choice of areas, another with assigned activities. Three teachers mentioned that they each brought their class together for a story or a sharing time at the end of the day.

Six teachers mentioned children's responsibilities. In one class they had a "buddy system," where children who were good at something helped others who were having difficulties. Children were responsible for completing assignments and correcting their work, often with the teacher's guidance. In some classes children were responsible for the care of the areas - they set up materials, cleaned-up, and kept a sign-up sheet for other children using the area. One teacher said, "They have responsibility for everything in the classroom." Children were often responsible for describing what they did during choice time. One teacher mentioned that the children were aware that they were thought of as Follow Through children within the school, and that they should behave or Follow Through would be blamed. The range of children's responsibilities was broad and varied.

In closing this section, we would like to report the thoughtful comments of one teacher about some difficulties of being an open classroom teacher. She felt that there was not enough time in the day to get to all of the children individually, and found it difficult to "carry things through" in an open classroom. She said, "I think I'm not structured enough myself." She felt you have to be a very ordered person to even run an open classroom. She said, "There has to be a sense of structure" and added that a lot of people disagreed with her. She viewed getting back to things and continuity as her greatest weaknesses and said, "You can definitely have that in a structured classroom."

### 3.5 - DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

#### How Aides Worked With Their Teachers

Aides valued the independence to carry out their own ideas, while working with the teacher. As one aide put it, "We work pretty close together." The teacher let her aide work in the areas she wanted to. The aide backed the teacher up and also carried out her own ideas.

She doesn't tell me what I should or shouldn't do...if there's any specific thing that she (the teacher) wants me to do, then I do it. Other than that I go into any area with a group of children that I want to.

Four aides mentioned that they and their teachers each work with groups and alternate leading activities and sharing responsibilities. The aide would be working with the children or helping

the teacher. One aide commented, "I'm never idle." Another said, "We take each other's advice."

In response to the question, "Are you generally satisfied with your part in the classroom?", one aide said:

Now that's one question that I can answer, you know, for myself. I have never worked with a teacher that said, 'you have to do this' or 'you have to do that.' I have no limits in that classroom. Anything that I feel that I'm capable of doing, I have done it.

Another aide stated her satisfaction saying, "I'm pretty free to do what I want to do. The teacher lets me do projects on my own." One aide said she and the teacher worked together, grouping the children and checking their progress. She felt that her ideas were acted upon and said she was satisfied with her part in the classroom "maybe because of the person I work with...we work well."

One aide with experience working in Follow Through spoke of how much she had learned from the first teacher she had worked with in the program.

#### Planning For The Classroom

Four aides responded in detail to this question. Three stressed that the teacher made the plans.

In one class, the teacher had the schedule made out for the day. The aide said, "We discuss what she wants to do so that I can back her up....If we have any differences, we talk them out." She went on to say that in her role as an aide she chose the things she

liked to do.

Another aide said that, as a rule, the teacher made the plans and she (the aide) gave her opinion. She felt that her opinions were used. "Anything she plans, I'll go along with her...she'll do the same with me." She added that they didn't get time to talk before school, and sometimes had to make time later.

Another aide said forcefully:

No, I do not plan. I just follow the plans. Because I feel it's her (the teacher's) job...I wouldn't want to do planning. I'm not getting paid for that. I'm dedicated but...I really don't have the time to go home and plan. I'm attending school. I have children.

In this aide's classroom, the teacher had the plans written up and the aide made suggestions which she felt were incorporated into the plans by the teacher. In the morning, the teacher showed her aide what the children would be doing.

The issue addressed here is one of choice. For a number of reasons, mentioned above, this aide had chosen to respond to and add to the teacher's plans rather than making the plans herself. She was active in the planning and involved in her work, but identified planning as part of the teacher's "job" and chose her own priorities.

Another aide said that she and the teacher went over the day's accomplishments together and planned ahead. She usually made up her own curriculum for what she wanted to do with her group of children, and the teacher planned for another group. They had to make formal plans "for the office" in order to have them checked off.

## How Aides Work With Children

Paterson aides emphasized their belief that children want to learn. They felt that children learned best when they had opportunities to express themselves and to work at their own pace. In describing their work with children, the aides talked about adult guidance and the encouragement they give to children to be independent and to make meaningful choices.

As one aide put it:

I find that if you don't push children, they will get it...If you don't stand and say, 'you have to do this right now,' then they will get it. They're going to get it anyway because they want to learn to do it.

Another aide said:

We don't give too many orders...if you give them a feeling of independence, a feeling that they can express themselves, you can get a lot from them...let them know they can have a voice. They will learn much quicker...they won't have nervous breakdowns, like with so many pressures at home. We live in a ghetto area. They come with a lot of problems at home...you have to try to help them forget those problems at school. It helps a lot!

Seven aides mentioned that their classrooms were divided into "areas" for such activities as reading, listening, math, science, blocks, and art. One aide said "the children choose what they want to do" in the areas. The teacher and aide moved around the areas, working with individual children and checking their progress. Sometimes the aide told a child not to go to an area, rather, to do some writing. She added that there was "no special time when everyone is doing the same thing" in her class..."as long as you do

it, you can do it when you want to." This implied that the adults had definite expectations of what each child should accomplish. Children could choose when to do their work, not if they would do it.

Another aide said "I just work all day" with two or three children at a time, on reading, with math materials, music, coordination, and art. She especially liked block building because "you can do so many things...In fact, you can make a whole curriculum on block building." Children obtained skills through the activity. When the teacher and aide were busy, the children worked on their own. "They choose what they want to do, we don't choose it for them." The aide supervised and went around to see if they needed help. When the children got a little noisy, the teacher and aide called "circle time." This could happen five times a day... "to calm them down, we bring them together."

Another pattern of organizing the day included starting the day as a whole class, saluting the flag, and sharing. Then there were groups for reading, writing, and math. The teacher and aide each had a group. Children who were identified at the beginning of the year as being able to work on their own, worked independently. The afternoon was designated as "choice time" when children could choose areas.

One aide described her desire to build learning activities around the children's interests. On some mornings, she led the

writing of the class news - "what they want to say." She added:

I try to make it interesting...I really get in there and I get silly with the kids, you know. I just get down with them and talk their language. Anything they want to say, I put it on the board, and that way, they don't mind copying it and don't mind reading it.

The children in her class were not all on the same level in reading. The teacher and aide moved around to different groups and helped. They read with children in story books, funny papers -- whatever is interesting to them." In the afternoon "it's open" -- the children were doing whatever they felt they wanted to do. This aide communicated her excitement and personal involvement with the learning taking place in her classroom. She played records which she felt the children could relate to -- singing and different kinds of music.

Several aides stressed the fact that they could chose to go into any area with a group of children. The teacher worked in one area and the aide chose the area that she wanted to work in. One aide said she liked to help the slower children who needed some extra help. Another aide said that she didn't care for math herself, but the children were very interested in things like measuring, so she went to that area frequently. She added that she loved to read stories and would put a child's name into the story to help the child become a better listener. Another aide mentioned bringing her own interests into the class by talking with the children about her hobbies -- cooking and sewing. These aides

valued their freedom to make choices based on their own interests, as they supported the need for children to become aware of their own interests and to be able to make choices.

It was clear that the aides and the teachers worked to direct and guide the children's activities. The aides frequently described their own work by saying, "I supervise" and "I go around to see if they need help". Another aide said, "We set limits on the numbers in each area". One said she and the teacher asked the children to work with them at assigned times. Another aide said that assignments were on the board, although the children could choose the order in which to do them. In one classroom, the teacher and aide alternated working with each group so that both knew where the children were. In another class, the aide mentioned that she and the teacher observed the children to see where they needed help and practice. Another aide said, "We check every paper when they're finished" and then they could do something by themselves.

Addressing the need for structure in an open classroom, one aide said, "We (aide and teacher) decided to have things a little more structured than last year, just for the beginning." This would allow the children to "know where things are and what we expect them to do in the classroom." She added "we're hoping, as we go on, we can put them in more groups (more activities) and put out many things, and the children will know the rules so they will not destroy them (things)." They made up rules and went over them

every day. They tested the children and then made up reading groups. One adult worked with reading and the other with writing. In the afternoon children had "free time" and picked whatever they wanted to do -- drawing, blocks, reading, or workbooks.

"We try to praise all the children, not only the ones that are ahead, also the ones that are just getting it...that makes them feel good."

Aides described their roles in working with children as helping the teacher, helping the children, and helping themselves to learn and to grow.

As one aide phrased it:

"I like the open classroom because kids don't have to do things when they don't feel like it and neither do I."

## CHAPTER 4

### PATERSON TEACHERS: WHO THEY WORK WITH AND HOW THEY VIEW THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE SCHOOL

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers were asked a series of questions about the people they worked with and their roles in the school. The first question asked them to list the adults they worked with, other than EDC advisors and their own aides. The next question asked was who teachers turned to with problems they couldn't solve on their own. The third and fourth questions probed teachers' feelings about whether they had enough influence over their own classrooms and over their school and the Follow Through program.

The purpose of these questions was to elicit information about whom teachers worked with, other than EDC advisors and their classroom aides, and to get an idea about how the teachers felt about their place in the school. This information is important in assessing how the work of EDC advisors fits into the school and the Follow Through program as a whole.

The questions about teachers' assessment of their ability to influence what happens in their own classrooms, their school, and the program as a whole were intended to get a sense of whether the teachers felt independent and effective or whether they felt they must always do what someone else told them to do.

#### 4.2 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

The Follow Through local advisors received particular mention as people the teachers worked with and whom they could turn to with problems. The teachers said they relied upon the local advisors for suggestions and moral support. The teachers also felt free to call on others, such as the principals and the project director. In addition, there seemed to be a feeling of cooperation among the Follow Through teachers.

In general, most teachers felt themselves the primary influence in their classrooms. The more experienced teachers seemed to feel that they had more influence than the inexperienced teachers.

#### 4.3 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

On the basis of teachers' responses to the questions about who they worked with, it would seem that the introduction of the Follow Through program has substantially increased the number of people available to work with Paterson teachers. The two local advisors and the project director were described as important sources of support, and other teachers were seen as more accessible because of the opportunities for working together provided by the Follow Through program. This suggests that one effect of Follow Through has been to reduce the isolation of teachers.

Four points can be made about teachers' feelings of influence in the school and the Follow Through program. (1) Experienced teachers felt they had more influence than new teachers. This seems understandable, especially since the interviews were conducted early in the school year. (2) Teachers at School #6 seemed to have less confidence in their ability

to influence the school then teachers at School #28. This may be merely a result of the fact that four of the five teachers at School #6 were first-year teachers, but it may also reflect the resistance of the principal of School #6 to open classroom teaching. (3) Teachers seemed to feel they could exert more influence over the Follow Through program than over the school. Once again this may be merely a consequence of the views of the first-year teachers, but it could be related to the smaller size of the Follow Through staff, the frequency of meetings, and the relative informality of operation. (4) The limited nature of the influence teachers felt they had is the most important point to emerge. Even those teachers who responded most affirmatively that they could influence both their school and the Follow Through program talked of influence in terms of the freedom to express opinions, not the ability to get things done. This response is consistent with the responses to the question about influence over classrooms, where teachers said they could do most of what they wanted to do within a range of restrictions, but defined having freedom as being able to teach in a variety of ways, not as being able to make potentially far-reaching changes. In this, the Paterson Follow Through teachers are like most teachers. The point to be made is that Follow Through does not seem to have given teachers substantially more power outside of their own classrooms.

#### 4.4 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

##### QUESTIONS ASKED:

1. Which adults, other than EDC advisors and aides, do you work with (fellow teachers, principal, local advisor, project director, supervisors, specialists, volunteers, others)?

What do you do with each of these people?

2. When you have a problem you can't seem to solve on your own, who do you turn to?

The teachers were asked the first question in an open-ended manner. Then further probes were made about specific people. The second question gives a slightly different perspective to the overall question of who is available to help teachers. The results are summarized in the Table below.

Responses to Questions: "Which adults do you work with other than your aide and the EDC advisors?" and Who do you turn to for help with a problem?" (Figure I.)			
Category:	Work With	Responses to Probes	Turn to With Problems
Local Advisors	7	1	5
Principals	4	4	1
Project Director	3	3	3
Other Teachers	3	3	1
Others (e.g. school psychologist, social worker)	8	0	3

(Note. The numbers in this case are unsuited for drawing final conclusions. The categories of people mentioned have various numbers of individuals in them--two local advisors, six principals and vice principals, and one project director. Furthermore, one teacher only mentioned one category while another listed nine. The numbers should be taken only as suggestive, and the strongest suggestion is the importance to teachers of the local advisors.)

The responses indicate that the two local advisors were seen as people able to provide the kind of support teachers want. Only two teachers failed to mention the local advisors, and the local advisors were the ones that the largest number of teachers said they turned to for help with difficult problems. The principals, including two principals and four vice principals, were mentioned by eight teachers, but four of those were in response to probing by the interviewers. Six teachers mentioned the project director, three voluntarily and three with probing. The same numbers apply to other teachers. No other category of person received more than one mention. Included among "Others" in the table are the school psychologist, Follow Through social worker, parent coordinator, gym teacher, nurse, custodian, parents, and a friend.

Teachers were further probed as to what they did with people they worked with. Referring to the local advisors, the most common response was that they came into the classroom, observed, and made suggestions (six teachers). This practice was generally seen as helpful, even when it was presented by one teacher as "giving their opinions about what was right and wrong about a room. A new teacher specifically noted that the local advisors had not worked with her in the classroom. Four teachers said that the local advisors led meetings of the Follow Through teachers and aides. Some mentioned "staffings," highly structured meetings designed to consider individual children and make recommendations for working with them. One teacher, noting that the staffings were still new, said, "They really don't give me much help in so far as suggestions go." However, she valued the group support and sharing among teachers who had the

same problems she was experiencing. Four teachers spoke of local advisors giving them encouragement when they needed it or helping them solve particular problems. Two said the local advisors provide materials and resources for them to use.

The principals (and vice principal) were said to visit classrooms, lead meetings, and bring in materials. One teacher said that the principals were conscious that she was new to the school and were helpful to her. Two teachers were unhappy with the way the principals worked with them.

Three teachers who mentioned the project director included general comments of a favorable nature. For example, they said they felt she was helpful and that she knew what she was doing. Three teachers said that she visited their rooms and offered suggestions. One said she was very helpful to talk to, especially when things were getting discouraging.

Five teachers said that the main way they worked with other teachers was to share ideas. Much of this was said to be informal: talking about problems over lunch; sharing plans or materials in the teachers' lounge. One teacher said she thought Follow Through teachers had more contact among themselves than non-Follow Through teachers. Another teacher said she worked with other teachers in "mini-workshops" in the resource room. She added that in her first year, one teacher had been very helpful to her by warning her about things to watch out for.

#### QUESTIONS ASKED:

3. Do you think you have enough influence over what happens in your classroom to be able to do what needs to be done?

If not: Why Not?

4. Do you think you have as much influence over your school and the Follow Through program as you would like to have?

If no  
Why Not?  
Who does have influence?

Eight teachers answered positively to the third question though five expressed some reservations. Four of these five were new teachers. One of the three teachers who expressed reservations said that she had influence within a certain range, and defined that range as including what she actually did in the classroom, apparently meaning her teaching style and specific activities. However, she pointed out that when she ordered materials she could never be sure when they would come, or if they would come at all. Another new teacher in the same school said that the only problems she had in this area were the insistence on quiet and neatness by the principals. She said that she and her aide took extra pains to make the room neat and orderly but that she refused to force her children to be quiet before they were ready. Another teacher said that she had been told she had the freedom to do as she wanted in the classroom and had seen nothing to contradict that claim. However, she had previously expressed dissatisfaction about not having a petty cash fund for the purchase of classroom materials. Another teacher said that she controlled the classroom even though her aide tended to want to be in charge. She had spoken earlier of the tensions involved in being a first-year teacher with a strong, experienced aide. The experienced teacher who had some reservations said she had enough influence over what happened in her classroom 90 per cent of the time, and that problems only developed when children acted violently.

The last question addressed the matter of influence in the school and the Follow Through program. One teacher said she didn't know because she was new to this setting. Another first-year teacher said she couldn't answer because she was new and, "I'm only a teacher." Two teachers said that they felt they could exert influence in Follow Through meetings but not over the school as a whole. One said, "I feel that my influence over the school as a whole is zero," and went on to say that she didn't see how it could be any different under the circumstances since she was new to this position and had a different approach to teaching. The other teacher also felt that her style of teaching set her so far apart from other teachers and the school's administrators that the only thing she could do in school staff meetings was to keep quiet.

In general, teachers' interpretation of what it means to have influence over the Follow Through program and over the school involved the ability to express themselves and be heard. Teachers spoke of being able to disagree, to make suggestions they felt strongly about, to express opinions in meetings, to try to make changes, to work with people, and to engage in mutual criticism. The obvious limits to this form of influence were clearly expressed: "Yes, well, you know, how far can you go as a classroom teacher?" and "I'm not interested in influence. I'm interested in being able to work with people."

## CHAPTER 5

### OVERVIEW OF PATERSON ADMINISTRATOR ACTIVITIES

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Administrators were asked to give an overview of activities related to their jobs. In particular, each of the five Paterson administrators (two principals, a project director and two local advisors) described his/her job in relation to other people or groups in the school.

Questions were asked to give us an idea of what each administrator does from day-to-day, how he or she defines his or her job, and how the work of EDC advisors relates to each job.

#### 5.2 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The project director saw herself as the coordinator of the Follow Through Project, with a myriad of responsibilities. The local advisors emphasized their direct work on staff development with teachers and aides and their work with parents. The principals talked about their administrative responsibilities to the whole school, one especially mentioning his responsibility to see that school board policies are followed, especially as they relate to instruction; the other principal mentioned specific responsibility for instruction, public relations, and in-service training.

#### 5.3 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

There seems to be a clear progression of EDC advisors' involvement with administrators. EDC advisors have been most involved with the things the local advisors do, next most involved with the work of the project

director, and least involved with the work of the principals.

It is clear that the principals see themselves as involved only peripherally with the Follow Through Program. In fact, one principal's responses to other questions establish that he strongly opposes the educational approach of the EDC Follow Through Program. In contrast, the project director sees herself as actively supporting and promoting the EDC Follow Through Program among parents and with the School Board.

#### 5.4 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

1. Would you describe the kinds of things you do as (role)?
2. Could you list the most important people and groups you work with and tell me what you usually do with them?
3. Of all the people you work with, which contribute most to helping you carry out your job?

(Note: Since the answers to the three questions depended on each other, and since the roles of the administrators were so different, responses to the questions asked are combined for each position.)

##### Project Director

The Paterson project director said, "I coordinate all the activities of the program." She went on to mention working with parents, teachers, aides, local advisors, the social worker, the psychologist, and the nurse on such varied things as curriculum, ancillary services, child development, parent involvement, teacher and aide evaluations for the district, a particular child's problems, and the general "goings on" of the program. It is clear from this description that the project director plays a wide-ranging part in the functioning of the Follow Through program. Though her role was difficult to describe fully, the project director gave examples of the things she does to meet her responsibilities.

For instance, she mentioned meeting with "teams" to discuss what various individuals and groups in the program are doing. She explained that a team includes the project director, one or both of the local advisors, teachers, aides, parents, and others. Other people came to team meetings when their fields of expertise were appropriate. For example, the nurse is invited when there is a medical problem; the psychologist comes when a problem involves a child's development. She also mentioned visiting classrooms to see what's going on. One reason she visits the classrooms is because, "if parents are not happy about it (the classroom), they're not going to go to a teacher or to your EDC advisors, they're going to come to me. So I have to know what's going on." Another reason she visits classrooms is because she is responsible for evaluating not only the program as a whole, but teachers and aides individually, for the Superintendent of Schools. She said that she couldn't do evaluations only from conversations with local advisors; the superintendent is interested in "cold data" on how children have progressed from September to December. She has tried to institute some record keeping in the classrooms through the local advisors.

While these two examples of activities of the project directors' activities are not exhaustive, they do illustrate two primary responsibilities as defined by this project director: (1) knowing first-hand what's going on in the program and (2) being accountable to the superintendent and to parents. Without going into more detail about her job, the project director summarized an important aspect of her job by saying that everyone brings problems to her, which is part of her job.

#### Local Advisors

The two local advisors in Paterson described similar kinds of things

they do in the EDC Follow Through schools and both said they worked with the same groups of people in doing their jobs.

First, both mentioned that local advisors are responsible for staff development of teachers and aides. They felt that without local advisors there would be no one for teachers and aides to talk with about problems and ideas for the classroom, no one in the school to help teachers and aides grow as people. They said that when the EDC Follow Through program started, staff development was considered a priority by the project director, the EDC advisor, and the local advisor. The local advisors were charged with finding out what problems and ideas teachers and aides had and helping them solve those problems and expand on those ideas. They said the staff-development process includes: breakfast meetings with teachers and aides, staff meetings, individual meetings with teachers and aides, classroom observations and workshops.

The breakfast meetings, held weekly during the children's breakfast hour, were described as times when the local advisors present ideas they want to introduce into the classroom. This may include the introduction of new reading and math techniques or it may be a presentation on child development and children's learning styles. Many of the ideas on what to present at breakfast meetings come from teachers and aides. The local advisors try to introduce ideas which stem from what's happening in the classroom. Individual meetings supplement breakfast meetings, focusing on individual problems and ideas. Staff meetings cover a broader range of issues and are open to all persons working in the EDC Follow Through Program.

The local advisors said they visit every classroom in the Follow Through Program during the week. They visit everyone, because previously

they had gone only to classrooms into which they had been invited and some teachers felt this showed favoritism. Along with following up breakfast meeting ideas, the local advisors are involved with teachers; (a) in "staffings"; a "staffing" is a tightly organized meeting of the teachers, aides, and local advisors for the purpose of examining case studies of individual children and making recommendations about how teachers should handle their behavior. The local advisors also observe children in a classroom and make recommendations on how particular children should be treated. In addition, the local advisors respond to particular requests of teachers and aides. Sometimes, they said, they observe classrooms to help on scheduling activities and extending the use of classroom materials. Sometimes, they added, they are asked to observe a particular area of the classroom, view how a teacher uses her time, describe teacher-student and student-student interactions, or watch a child with whom the teacher and aide have been having trouble. The local advisors also use visits to the classroom to look for problems that teachers have in common. Each Friday the two local advisors share their observations for the week, primarily for the purpose of identifying common teacher problems, but also to work together in trying to solve individual problems.

In saying that they work with teachers and aides, both local advisors emphasized that they do not make a distinction between teachers and aides. Although there are school district distinctions, the local advisors often referred to both teachers and aides as teachers.

The local advisors mentioned that common problems and ideas which are found and discussed among the teaching staff might become the content for a workshop. If they (the local advisors) did not feel that

they had the expertise to respond to these teaching needs they would ask the EDC advisors or consultants for assistance in identifying people who could help. It was added, however, that not all EDC advisors and consultants could come to Paterson. As local advisors they felt that they needed to know a good deal about consultants, since previous experiences with consultants had often been disappointing. They also mentioned that joint workshops with other Follow Through sites were of interest to them since visiting other sites could broaden the experiences of Paterson teachers.

Second, both local advisors mentioned that they act as liaison between the teaching staff (teachers and aides) and the project director and principals for the schools. They said that sometimes, as liaison, they handled red-tape issues like delivering supplies to teachers, getting permission to do something, and setting up schedules. Local advisors reported to the project director on a regular basis on what was happening in the classroom, what particular problems were arising, and what a particular child was experiencing. They also added that the project director and the principals often had questions about the teaching staff that could be best answered by the local advisors.

Third, both local advisors mentioned that they worked with parents. The local advisors wanted parents to be in touch with classrooms. In particular they were responsible for any kind of training that parents received in the area of curriculum. Curriculum workshops were held in which the EDC Follow Through program was explained to parents by describing what children were doing in reading and mathematics. They said that if people were satisfied with those two areas, they would be generally satisfied with the program. The local advisors also tried to

involve parents in the resource center in the collection of raw materials for the classroom, and in collaborative work with teachers in the classroom. The local advisors added that they plan to work with the parent coordinators to get parents more involved in the classroom.

Fourth, both local advisors mentioned that they worked with the social worker and the nurse. When appropriate, the social worker and the nurse were invited to breakfast meetings, staff meetings, and individual conferences with the teaching staff. The social worker and the nurse also asked the local advisors for information about particular children.

Separately, each local advisor mentioned other things. One local advisor put documentation of the EDC Follow Through Program high on her list of responsibilities. She felt, along with the project director, that in order for open education to survive as a system, the program must "show something" for its five years of existence. Through a former EDC advisor, she was put in contact with a consultant on documentation. She works with this consultant on ways of documenting aspects of open education. The second local advisor felt that she was seen as the reading specialist and that the other local advisor was seen as the math specialist. Moreover, she suggested that she works more with the resource center and the newsletter than the other local advisor, who is more responsible for documentation and covering School #6. Each local advisor has primary responsibility for Follow Through classes in one school.

Both advisors mentioned each other as most important to helping them carry out their job. One local advisor expanded on this saying,

"We complement each other. We both have weaknesses and strengths. Our personalities are very different, our attacks, our approaches are different. That's been helpful in dealing with classrooms, because you can usually tell when you're not going to be able to deal with a certain type of person or problem."

Both local advisors also mentioned the project director as a major contributor to helping them carry out their job, because she is responsible for the overall program and very supportive of open education and the local advisors.

One advisor added that certain teachers are among those who contribute most to helping her carry out her job. Certain teachers would give a new idea, no matter how unusual it was, a try and would give a fair evaluation of the idea. This advisor also mentioned a former EDC advisor as very important in supporting the development of local advisors.

### Principals

The principals of the two schools housing EDC Follow Through programs, unlike the project director and local advisors, are not directly related to the Follow Through programs. In this section, each principal's overview of his job and then his relation to Follow Through will be discussed.

The principal of one school said that he is responsible for seeing that all school board policies are adhered to by the teachers. As such, he supervises teachers by going into the classrooms to see what's happening. If a teacher needs help, he suggests methods or materials for the teacher to use or has that teacher observe a more experienced teacher. Moreover, he checks lesson plans for adherence to board policies. Put in one sentence, this principal said his job is to improve instruction.

This principal went on to mention several groups that he works with. There is a "mini-team" in his school which consists of the principal, the social worker, the guidance counselor, the assistant social worker, the nurse, the psychologist, and the director of special services. This mini-team deals with questions referred to the principal by a teacher. Such questions involve children with discipline problems - children who are not keeping up with grade level work, children who are behind in work. This team discusses what can be done to help such children; often recommendations are made to the special services team. The special services team consists of the director of special services, the psychologist and others. They meet once a week on answering the recommendations made by the mini-team, through testing children, counseling children, etc. The principal also meets with the Title I team: reading specialist, team teachers, and three associate teachers. They meet once a month on federal guidelines, implementation of actions suggested from testing and effectiveness of Title I services. This principal is also on the executive committee of the PTA and works directly with them. However, the Follow Through parent group is a separate entity, and he works with them indirectly through the project director.

Speaking more about Follow Through, he said that since the Follow Through program is housed in his building, he works with the project director and the two local advisors. He said that he tries to keep the two programs (Follow Through and non-Follow Through) together, because he doesn't want the Follow Through program to be separate and distinct from the regular program. This is important, because often the third grade Follow Through children go into the regular program.

On specific relations to Follow Through, he added, that insofar as everyone must follow board policies, he is responsible for Follow Through teachers and works with them to adhere to such policies. On other issues pertaining to Follow Through teachers, he said he works through the project director because she is best versed on what the program is trying to achieve.

This principal said that he couldn't pick out any one group that contributes most to helping him carry out his job; however, "if something.. needs to be done in the building that I could ask the board for, .. a strong PTA.. (increases), the possibility of it being granted."

The second principal first described how he divided the administrative work among himself and the two vice-principals at his school. The two vice-principals are in charge of pupil control and personnel management (direct relationships with children and teachers, responsibility for maintaining control over records); and the plant and supplies in relation to instruction (supplying teachers with materials, upkeep of the building and grounds). The principal himself has taken responsibility for instruction, public relations, in-service training, and "some of the less important tasks and functions essential for running the school." For example, he mentioned transmitting the problems and concerns of the central office to the staff, visiting teacher's classrooms to develop information for specialists on the staff, and working with specialists on identifying problems. In particular, he mentioned monthly meetings with the reading specialist on children's progress in order to make certain that children are being instructed. He further mentioned that he meets with parents and discusses problems affecting their children.

This principal also mentioned meeting with teachers regularly to review the content and techniques of instruction. From time to time, children are regrouped to maximize their learning, based on recommendations of these meetings. Another important aspect of these meetings is continuity of instruction. By meeting regularly, teachers in subsequent grades will know what children have learned in the next lowest grade.

With respect to Follow Through, the principal mentioned only that he is concerned with the skill performance of Follow Through children when they reach the third grade. Last year, it was recommended that Follow Through teachers maintain contact with fourth grade teachers to provide continuity of instruction.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE ISSUE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT AS SEEN BY PATERSON TEACHERS, AIDES, ADMINISTRATORS AND PARENTS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

All Follow Through personnel were asked whether they thought parents should be involved in their children's school. They were expected to answer, "yes," since increasing parent involvement is one of the major goals of the national Follow Through program and of EDC as a Follow Through sponsor and since it is hard to argue that parents should not be involved in their children's school. Therefore, the follow-up question, "In what ways?" was expected to elicit the most interesting responses. Parents were asked a number of questions about their own involvement in their child's school. The purpose of this chapter is to report and compare the attitudes and opinions which people in the Follow Through program expressed concerning parent involvement. We have identified 1) the ways in which parent involvement is defined, 2) the nature of agreement and disagreement about those definitions and 3) some issues mentioned by the people interviewed which would merit further discussion to clarify the program's overall approach to parent involvement.

Teachers, aides, and administrators were asked the following questions: "Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school? If so, in what ways?" Parents interviewed were asked a series of questions relevant to this issue. The questions probed both attitudes and reported behavior. The responses of the ten

parents whose children attended School #28 are separated from responses of the five parents whose children were in School #6.

#### 6.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDES, ADMINISTRATOR, AND PARENT RESPONSE

Nearly all members of all four groups agreed that parent involvement was desirable. The reason cited most often for involving parents was that it would help children learn. Some also said that parents could support the Follow Through program politically, and several parents said their involvement in the school was personally rewarding, in addition to being helpful to their children. Although the interviewed parents said they had been active in their children's schools in a variety of ways, nearly all of the school personnel said parents were not involved enough.

#### 6.3 OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE, ADMINISTRATOR, AND PARENT RESPONSE

A question that arises over and over from these responses is how to make it possible for more parents to be involved. The parents who were interviewed tended to be more involved than average parents because of the method of selection. Even then, these parents mentioned barriers to their involvement, such as working and the need for child care. Since agreement is so widespread that parents should be more involved, it seems important to address the questions of how the schools and the Follow Through program could make it possible for more parents to be involved. EDC advisors should contribute to this effort.

#### 6.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Teachers seem to agree that the primary purpose for involving parents is to help the children, rather than, for example, to give the parents themselves a sense of accomplishment or a sense of belonging to a group. Teachers see visiting as participating in the classrooms as the major way for parents to be involved. The teachers stressed the importance of parents coming to the school, but several comments indicated that not enough parents do so.

#### 6.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

The major question arising from the teacher response is why more parents are not involved in the school. If teachers agree on the desirability of parent involvement but feel parents are not involved enough, then it is important to ask why not. There are certainly some reasons that have nothing to do with the school, but there are probably things that could be done within the program to make involvement in the school more attractive to parents. Since parent involvement is one of the goals of the national Follow Through program and of EDC as a sponsor, EDC advisors should be expected to provide assistance in this area.

#### 6.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

All nine teachers answered "yes" to "Do you feel parents should be involved in their children's school?" However, our primary interest was in the follow-up question, "In what ways?" "In what ways?" was interpreted by teachers to mean not only what parents can do in their classrooms, but what parents should do and/or are known to be involved

in. The following table, combines what parents are actually doing with what teachers think they should be doing.

"In what ways should parents be involved in children's school?"

Categories	Mentions
Visit & observe in classroom	7
Help in classroom	5
Teach or share skills & experience	3
Communicate with teacher	3
Attend meetings	1
Help or encourage child	5

The distinctions made among the three categories of visiting and observing the classroom, helping in the classroom, and teaching or sharing a skill or experience, reflect what seemed to be different levels of involvement for parents as seen by the teachers. Almost all expressed willingness to have parents come into the classroom to see what and how their children are learning. Nearly as many added that parents could, in addition to looking around, work with the children. Reading stories and going on nature walks were examples of this kind of work. Some suggested a more formal way for parents to work in the classroom. The parents might function as instructors in an area they know well, such as sewing, painting, weaving, and construction, rather than just helping out. One teacher said that parents could offer "mini courses." It was stressed that fathers would be especially welcome

to teach in the classroom. One teacher told of a father who showed a group of boys how to lay bricks.

Although they were not asked why they thought parents should be involved in their children's school, several teachers volunteered reasons. Most of the reasons were related to the effects that such involvement would have on the parents' knowledge and attitudes toward the school. Teachers wanted parents to know what was happening in the school and how their children are learning. They believed that if parents had a favorable attitude toward the school, the children would have more favorable attitudes. Three teachers said that parent involvement affects children's work. One said children are proud and happy when parents visit the classroom and a child will work harder when she or he knows that "my parents care enough to see what I'm doing." One teacher made the point that the extra help parents provide in the classroom makes it possible to reach even more children.

#### 6.7. SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

The major issue mentioned by aides had to do with the problems of attracting parents to come to the school, especially in view of parents' jobs outside of school and security measures within the school. Everyone agreed that parents should be involved and several aides spelled out

ways for them to be involved and reasons why their involvement is important; much was also said about problems and barriers interfering with parent involvement. Responses to this question seem particularly interesting because so many of the aides spoke as parents and as neighbors of the children's parents.

#### 6.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

The comments of aides on parent involvement in the school seem especially significant because four of the interviewed aides are parents of Follow Through children. Their belief that parents can help children by visiting and working in the classroom must reflect their own experience as parents working in classrooms. In this light, the aides' comments about barriers to parent involvement are also significant. Since the aides have demonstrated that parents in paid positions can be usefully involved in the classroom, a question for Follow Through personnel is how to make it possible for more parents to be meaningfully involved in classrooms. The aides might be especially helpful in developing this possibility.

#### 6.9. DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

All Paterson aides interviewed said they thought parents should be involved in their children's school. Four aides went on to say why they thought parents should

be involved. One said the Follow Through program needs parent involvement because parents could exert political influence on the Board of Education to get what their children need. Apparently this was in the context of the impending end of federal support for Follow Through. She said, "In order to keep a program going, you need those parents." Two aides said that parents' interest helps children learn. One said, "they say charity begins at home. Learning begins at home too...you can tell children whose parents care." She added, "They should have a feeling that their child's education is very important...especially for black children." Another said that she knew it was important to children for their parents to take an interest in their school. She said that she went whenever she could take some time off from her job. The fourth aide said that parents learned from involvement in the school, because public schools not only include people of different religions but also people who differ in other ways, and exposure to these different people leads to greater understanding.

Four aides talked about barriers to parental involvement. All four mentioned that many parents in the area work, sometimes at two jobs. One aide said that she had previously taken time off from her job to volunteer as a class parent. But two also said that some parents just didn't seem to be interested.

Two aides were disappointed with the level of parent involvement. One said, "I think that's one problem that we really have with the Follow Through program. I really think that the parents, for the last couple of years, haven't been so much involved like they should be." She went on to say that the Follow Through Director had tried to get parents involved, but that parents just didn't "come out" in large numbers. The result, she said, is that few parents understand and appreciate what the program is about. Another said:

"Some parent's kid is in the first grade and they don't even know what Follow Through is all about. They don't even know what their kids are learning in school, don't even know (the Follow Through Director) or staff or anybody...Some don't care. Some don't know, but they would know if they came out to visit the school."

Paterson Aides' Responses to, "In what ways should parents be involved?"

Categories for Parent Involvement	Frequency of Mention
In the classroom (visits or helping)	6
Communications (conferences, calls, etc.)	3
Parent activities (meetings, special events)	3

The follow-up question was "In what ways do you think parents should be involved?" When talking about parent visits or volunteering in the classroom, three aides talked about what parents should be doing, not what they were actually doing. Furthermore, there seemed to be a disagreement between two aides in the same school over whether parents felt welcome. One said, "In this program, parents

are free to come in anytime they want to, anytime of the day. They don't have to have an appointment to come into the classrooms." The other said that parents should be able to come into the classroom whenever they want to, but that they couldn't do that now because of security precautions. They have to go to the office to sign in and give a reason for their visit. She allowed that this might be wise for safety but said fewer parents come as a result. While these two statements are not necessarily at odds -- parents could be welcomed in spite of being required to report to the office -- they imply two different views of the school's attitude towards parents.

More positively, one aide invited parents to visit the classroom if they wished to do so. One child's father had come to school and shown some boys how to lay bricks. Another aide said that many times parents who don't have children in Follow Through misunderstand what involvement in the classroom means; they think it means taking over the class. She made it clear that Follow Through parents don't do that, and, in fact, that they usually make a point of not even working in the area where their child is, so as not to disrupt the class. Another aide followed the same theme by saying that parents should help in the classroom as long as they do what the teacher tells them to do.

Another kind of involvement, mentioned by three aides, is communication about the children, including conferences, phone calls, and visits. One complained that parents don't seem to come when things are going well, only if their child gets into trouble. She said that

parents could help their children a lot if they would "get after" them after receiving a call from the teacher because this would let the children know that teacher and parent are working together. Another aide talked about visiting the homes of parents and trying to get to know them.

The third category of involvement covers parent activities at the school. Three aides included a range of activities from PTA meetings to a fashion show to making costumes for an African dance group.

When this information was reported to aides in Paterson during a progress report in March, 1974, several aides agreed that there was another way in which parents could be involved: by helping their children and encouraging them at home. Two aides had suggested this form of involvement in their interviews. It seems to be the same as the category, "Help or encourage child," reported above for teachers.

#### 6.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Regarding parent involvement, all three Follow Through administrators and one of the two principals seemed to agree that parents should be active in the school, helping in classrooms and maintaining communication with the teacher about their children. Even the principal who said that parents' involvement should be limited by their levels of understanding left a place for parents in planning the curriculum to reflect the community. The Follow Through administrators did not mention this, but the principal did, when he described a dialectical process of conflict and compromise between professionals

and non-professionals. There seems to be general agreement that more parent involvement would be desirable, an opinion that is shared by the teachers and aides.

#### 6.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

With so much agreement on the desirability of parent involvement, it is appropriate to ask why more parents are not involved and what could be done, with EDC advisors' cooperation, to increase parent involvement. It would be especially interesting to know whether the attitude expressed by one principal, that professionals should take responsibility for making educational decisions, has any effect on the level or kind of parent involvement. The workshops run by local advisors to make parents more aware of what open education is about would seem to be a promising effort toward making the school a more involving and comfortable place for parents to be.

#### 6.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

All the administrators indicated that they thought parents should be involved in their children's school, though one was not asked directly and one expressed reservations. The responses of Follow Through administrators to the question about how parents should be involved revealed that one of the responsibilities of the local advisors is to help parents understand what Follow Through is about. The local advisors have given workshops for parents to explain the curriculum. These workshops concentrated on reading and math because "if people are satisfied with those two areas, they're generally satisfied with the program." Other forms of parent involvement mentioned

by Follow Through administrators included collecting raw materials for the classrooms and being involved as resource people in the classroom. There was also talk of the benefits of greater parent involvement in the classroom and of what parents should be going. The foci were on the need for parents to know what their children are doing in school and the hope that more involved parents would come to more meetings. This may have been related to another Follow Through administrator's point that parents are essential to changing the school because they can put pressure on the Board of Education. Another benefit of parent involvement was that more parents learn to use available social agencies since the school asks parents to take their children to these agencies instead of letting the school do it. A nurse was singled out as being very effective at helping parents do this.

The two principals had rather different responses to this question, after their initial agreement that parents should be involved. One stressed the importance of parent involvement and said that parents should help educators set up curriculum that reflects the community. He thought children would learn more if parents came to the classroom since that would demonstrate that the parents care. He also wanted to see parents who have something to share help out in the classroom. He expressed dissatisfaction with the level of parent involvement, saying that he saw most parents only once a year at back-to-school night. He was unhappy that most parents came to see him only when their children were in trouble. The other principal took a different tack, saying that parents should be involved to the level of their understanding. He

elaborated by saying that their wishes should not be paramount because competent professionals should be able to strike out in the directions they think will succeed in training young people. He said that professionals these days do not know whether to make decisions or execute decisions that are made for them.

#### 6.13 SUMMARY OF PARENT RESPONSE

The parents interviewed indicated a high level of interest and activity in their children's school. The largest number talked about helping in the classroom. Smaller numbers mentioned visiting classrooms, talking with teachers, and attending parent activities and meetings. The paraphrases of parents' comments as recorded by the interviewers reveal a wide variety of experiences and feelings about parent involvement.

#### 6.14 ANALYSIS OF PARENT RESPONSE

If the parents interviewed are a representative sample of all parents of Follow Through children and their responses are accepted at face value, then there would be reason to wonder why teachers, aides, and administrators thought there should be more parent involvement. These parents reported a great deal of involvement in their children's schools. It is important to remember that the interview selection procedure favored the more involved parents, particularly when one interviewer was unable to follow the random list and made her own selection of two interviewees. In addition, the situation of talking with another parent (parents did the interviewing) undoubtedly led some interviewees to say more about what they felt they should be

doing, they were talking about the same kinds of involvement that teachers, aides, and administrators would like to see.

It is interesting and potentially important that the reasons parents gave for their involvement included the reason most often mentioned by people in the other groups -- helping children learn -- but also included the opportunity for parents to socialize and to learn more themselves. These personal motives should not be overlooked when opportunities for parent involvement are planned.

#### 6.15 DETAIL OF PARENT RESPONSE

From the questionnaire (see appendix) given to fifteen Paterson parents, the following questions seem relevant to parent involvement:

##### Questions Asked:

1. What do you know about how parents can take part in the Follow Through Program?

School #28: A total of 7 parents responded.

4 parents mentioned participation in the classroom:

- Parents are allowed to come into the classroom and attend trips with children. If problems arise, they can come in to observe.
- Parents are allowed to participate in class activities; parents can go on trips and help care for children.
- Not too sure, but feels that the materials used in the classroom can be purchased for home use so there would be an on-going learning process with the things the child is familiar with. The parent would have to observe the classroom more than once in order to see this and understand it.
- Parents participate on trips with class; parents participate in the classroom.

2 parents mentioned meetings and visiting the school:

- Most of all they can come to meetings. They are allowed to meet with teachers at their (the parents') convenience.
- Parents can take part in the PTA programs. I can visit at any time I choose during the day.

3 parents (two who mentioned some of things above. one who only commented in this area) mentioned being a real part of the program:

- Parents help in even planning the program itself.
- Parents share their ideas with the teachers and others in the program.
- Parents are a part of the program.

3 parents didn't know anything about parent participation in the Follow Through program:

- One said she was not aware of the parents' role because she works all day and cannot participate or learn of what's happening in the program.

School #6:

5 (all parents interviewed) mentioned going and helping in the classroom:

- By going to the classroom and helping with groups of children.
- Parents have the privilege of visiting the classroom and participating in activities.
- Visiting the class and helping the teacher out.
- Visiting and helping in the classroom.
- By going to the classroom and working with the teacher and children.

2. Can you tell me the ways you learn about how your child is doing in school?

School #28    School #6

10	5	Talk with teacher
6	5	Talk with child
5	4	Watch child
0	2	Talk with others at school (person not specified)
2	0	Talk with Follow Through director at school
1	0	Talk with aide at school
1	0	Talk with social worker at school
1	0	Talk with parent coordinator at school
1	0	Teacher sends note

The following questions (3 and 4) were asked of the parents who said they talked with the teacher:

3. Would you say you have talked with your child's teacher:

School #28    School #6

1 once	0 once
2 a few times	4 a few times
7 often	1 often

4. Does the teacher ask for a meeting or do you ask to talk with the teacher?

School #28    School #6

1 teacher asks	0 teacher asks
1 parent asks	1 parent asks
8 both	4 both

One parent said that she comes to school during her free time. Another parent said that she has an understanding with the teacher. "If my daughter is not up to par, she lets me know. Once every two weeks or so, we consult each other."

CONTACTS PARENTS HAVE HAD WITH FOLLOW THROUGH CHILD'S SCHOOL

5. Have you ever visited your child's school?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
10	5	yes
0	0	no

All parents interviewed indicated that they had visited the school of their child in the Follow Through program.

(If yes) have you visited once, a few times, or often?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
0	0	once
3	2	a few times
7	3	often

6. Have you ever helped as a volunteer at school?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
5	5	yes
5	0	no

(If no) would you like to volunteer at school?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
2	(not applicable)	yes
3		no

(If yes) what would help you to do this? (Probe for things like child care, being asked by teacher, etc.)

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
2	(not applicable)	child care

-- Of the parents (10: 5 from School #28, 5 from School #6) who said they have helped as volunteers, we asked the following questions (7 - 11)

7. How often would you say you have helped; once, a few times, or often?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
0	0	once
2	2	a few times
3	1	often
	1	no answer

-- The mother at School #6 who gave no answer said that she hadn't volunteered this year but had volunteered before.

8. Did the teacher, or someone else, ask for your help, or did you offer your help?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
0	4	parent offered
2	1	someone asked
3	0	both of the above

9. What did you do as a volunteer?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
3	3	helped in classroom activities
2	1	went on field trips
1	0	helped with parties
0	1	helped with evening activities

-- Additional comments to "helped in the classroom" included: working with small group of children and helping with reading, writing and art work.

10. Was volunteering at school a good experience for you?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
5	5	yes
0	0	no

-- All ten parents who had volunteered at school said it was a good experience for them. The following reasons were given:

School #28

- Helped to see how my child acts around other children.
- Helped me to know how he/she acts around other adult supervision.
- Got to know children within the classroom better.
- Influenced other children to ask their mothers to come to school.
- Enjoy being with children.
- Got an understanding of how children are taught today.

- Saw how my child and other children work together.
- Saw materials and resources of the classroom.

School #6:

- Helped me help my children at home.
- Saw that children in Follow Through help each other.
- Learned a lot.
- Learned a lot about myself.
- I like it.

11. Do you plan to do this kind of thing again?

School #28

School #6

5	5	yes
0	0	no

- When asked why they planned to volunteer again, the 10 parents responded with the following comments:
  - Only then can I see her behavior.
  - I enjoy being in the classroom working with children.
  - Anything I can do to help when it comes to my child's education, I will do so.
  - It's interesting and helpful to me.
  - I like to try and help out as much as possible.
  - I like it.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARENT ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL

12. Have you ever attended a meeting of the PTA?

School #28

School #6

10	yes	4	yes
0	no	1	no

(If yes) have you attended once, a few times, or often?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
2 once	0 once
7 a few times	2 a few times
1 often	2 often

13: Have you attended a monthly unit meeting of Follow Through?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
6 yes	5 yes
4 no	0 no

(If yes) have you attended once, a few times or often?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
0 once	1 once
3 a few times	2 a few times
3 often	2 often

14. (For those who have attended parent meetings) What are some of the reasons you go to parent meetings?

All 15 parents said they have attended either a PTA or monthly unit meetings of Follow Through. The reason parents said they go to meetings are as follows:

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
5	2	To find out what's going on in the school.
4	2	To find out what's going on in the program.
1	0	As a mother, it's expected of me.
1	0	Wanted to know the teacher.
1	0	Wanted to know other teachers and people in the school.
1	0	To find out more about Follow Through funds.
1	0	To show interest in my children's work.
1	0	To see how I can become more involved.
0	1	To plan things for the future.
0	1	To find out what's going on in our neighborhood.

School #28

School #6

1

0

To find out what's going on in the classroom when parents are there.

1

0

To learn how other parents think about Follow Through.

1

0

Because I have children in the program.

4 parents in School #28 did not attend any monthly unit meetings and 1 parent in School #6 did not attend any PTA meetings. These 5 parents answered the following questions:

15. Would you like to attend parent meetings?

The one parent at School #6 who has never attended a PTA meeting said she'd like to.

Of the 4 parents at School #28 who hadn't attended monthly unit meetings, one said that she'd like to--the other three did not respond.

The (5) parents who had not attended one of two kinds of parents' meetings also responded that they had not participated in any other parent activities either. But 4 of the 5 said that they'd like to. However, 3 of these parents said that they work in the daytime - one would need child care in the evening. One parent works nights, and one parent would need child care in the daytime.

16. Have you participated in any Follow Through parent activities (other than meetings) such as parent workshops and orientation?

School #28

School #6

6 yes

4 yes

4 no

1 no

(If yes) which ones?

School #28

School #6

4 workshops

--reading & math

1 Christmas shopping ; PAC

--reading(2)

2 Workshops in reading and candlemaking

--reading,

math and summer workshop

--simple equipment building

(If no) would you like to participate in other activities?

<u>School #28</u>		<u>School #6</u>	
3	yes	1	yes
1	no	1	no

One parent said that she'd like to participate when she's not working.

17. How do you hear about parent activities?

<u>School #28</u>		<u>School #6</u>	
0		0	haven't heard
9		4	notices
5		4	telephone calls
2		1	talking with other parents
0		2	bulletin board in Follow Through office
4		4	parent coordinator
1		0	regular unit meetings
1		0	child

No one indicated that they had not heard about parent activities. Notices seemed to be the way most parents heard about such activities.

18. How is it best to notify you about activities for parents?

<u>School #28</u>		<u>School #6</u>	
2		0	child
8		5	notices
2		0	mail-notices
4		1	telephone

19. Do you have any difficulties in arranging to come to parent activities?

<u>School #28</u>		<u>School #6</u>	
7	yes	3	yes
3	no	2	no

Ten of the fifteen parents interviewed indicated that they had difficulties in arranging to come to parent activities. (List, for example, child care, transportation, time when activities take place.)

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
2	1	Need general child care; babysitting.
1	1	Need babysitting at night.
4	1	Work full-time/part-time.
1	1	Time when activities take place.

20. Are there activities that have not been mentioned which you would like to see available for parents?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
4 yes	4 yes
6 no	1 no

(If yes)

a. Can you tell me your suggestions?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>	
3	0	Parent development to further or complete education
2	2	Sewing
0	1	Child Care
0	2	More parents in the classroom and on trips.

b. Would you be willing to help make these activities possible?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
4 yes	5 yes
0 no	0 no

21. Have you ever taken part in an activity or talked with an EDC Follow Through advisor?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
6 yes	3 yes
4 no	2 no

22. Do you know what EDC advisors do?

School #28

4 yes  
6 no

School #6

4 yes  
1 no

QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW PARENTS VIEW THEIR ROLE IN THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

23. Do you feel that your involvement can help your child to learn?

School #28

10 yes  
0 no

School #6

5 yes  
0 no

All parents interviewed felt that their involvement can help their child to learn.

How?

- Helping them with their work at home. (3 parents, School #28)
- My learning and understanding new techniques. (1 parent, School #28)
- If I show my interest, it will help my child's progress. (5 parents, School #28; 3 parents, School #6)
- By involvement, helping in the classroom, taking part in classroom activities, the child is happy and knows that the parent is interested in his/her work.
- By talking with and listening to what they (children) have to say. (1 parent, School #28)
- Teacher-parent relationships help children to learn. (1 parent, School #28)
- Awareness of what my child is learning makes it easier for the parent to relate to the child on the child's level. (1 parent, School #28)

24. Do you see any benefits for you, personally, in being active in the school?

<u>School #28</u>	<u>School #6</u>
8 yes	5 yes
2 no	0 no

(If yes) what are they?

- It was the main reason for my continuing my education. (1 parent, School #28)
- It gave me more of a will to help my children at home. (1 parent, School #28)
- I'm getting to be well-known in the school. (1 parent, School #28)
- I know what's being taught and what my child is doing. (1 parent, School #28)
- You learn from children by being around them. (2 parents, School #28)
- I have contact with other people, views, and ideas; I enjoy it. (1 parent, School #28)
- I learn more myself, along with the children. (2 parents, School #28; 1 parent, School #6)
- Like new methods and ways of doing things. (1 parent, School #6)
- I learned how to estimate distance, width, length, etc., which I can use in my home life as a mother. (1 parent, School #28)
- I can see my child grow intellectually, watching her reach full potential. (1 parent, School #28)
- I like social gatherings. (1 parent, School #28)

(If no) please explain.

- 1 parent who answered "no" did not explain.
- 1 parent said, "I have not had a chance to be active."

## CHAPTER 7

### VIEWS ON CHILDREN'S LEARNING: PATERSON TEACHERS, AIDES, ADMINISTRATORS, AND PARENTS

#### 7.1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers, Aides, Administrators and Parents were asked questions designed to determine 1) what they thought were the most important goals for children in school, 2) which areas were being satisfactorily dealt with in the school and 3) which areas needed improvement.

Our purpose in asking about goals for children's learning was to learn about differences and similarities in the opinions of people in various groups and to compare their statements on goals for children's learning with those made by EDC Follow Through. The questions about which goals were being met and which needed improvement were included to show how people in the four groups felt and to identify areas for attention by EDC advisors.

#### 7.2 and 7.3 OVERALL SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE, ADMINISTRATOR AND PARENT RESPONSE

Members of all four groups involved in the interviews - teachers, aides, administrators, and parents - expressed belief in the importance of both academic learning and learning of attitudes and behaviors. However, there were some important differences in emphasis. Teachers and Follow Through administrators saw academic learning and learning of attitudes and behaviors as closely related and equally important. Aides and parents seemed to place more emphasis on academic learning. One principal disagreed with the kinds of attitudes and behaviors fostered

in open classrooms but apparently believed that children should be taught different attitudes and behaviors, not that they should be learning academic skills only.

It seems significant that the aides, most of whom are parents, emphasized academic learning more than the teachers and Follow Through administrators. But aides also spoke of the importance of other kinds of learning. Three aides saw non-academic learning as a necessary pre-condition for academic learning. The differences in emphasis among the groups might be a good topic for discussion among the groups. If methods of communicating on this topic can be worked out, the aides' responses suggest that it would be important for teachers and Follow Through administrators to stress the interrelations between academic learning and the learning of attitudes and behaviors. The parent responses suggest that their goals for children's learning may be more focused on academics than those of people in the other groups. Understanding could be increased by more communication on these matters, and the aides might be an ideal bridge between the parents and school personnel.

#### 7.4 and 7.5 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

The Paterson teachers considered both academic and non-academic goals important. Basic skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic were frequently mentioned, as was helping children to become independent learners, to learn cooperation, and to feel comfortable with themselves. The teachers expressed satisfaction with their achievement of the goals they listed as important. The areas they wanted to improve included improving relationships between girls and boys, meeting school requirements

in mathematics, learning more about dramatics and role-playing, and getting children to follow the discipline rules the children made themselves.

The teachers' equal emphasis on social and academic development is consistent with the goals of the EDC Follow Through program. Paterson teachers mentioned the following goals, which also appear in the EDC goals for children listed in the 1974-75 Proposal for Continuation of EDC Open Education Follow Through Program, Part one, pp. 20-21:

- (a) Children taking responsibility for their own learning -- showing initiative, self-reliance, self-motivation.
- (d) Children expressing themselves freely and intelligibly through spoken language.
- (h) Emotional development -- a sense of self-worth and trust.
- (i) Social responsibility and respect for others.

The fact that all teachers expressed some satisfaction with their accomplishments of their goals for the classroom may be considered an indicator of a fairly high level of satisfaction in their teaching. It may also be interpreted to mean that teachers tend to work hardest and therefore succeed most at the things they value most.

#### 7.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question asked:

1. What are the most important goals you are trying to accomplish in your teaching?

In response to this question, all nine teachers mentioned goals for children's learning while two also talked about goals related to their own teaching style.

#### Goals related to teaching style

One teacher said she came to Paterson wanting to be accepted as a person with something to give; she did not feel "needed" in previous teaching experiences in white suburban districts. She wanted to share what she had to offer. She felt this need of hers was being met by the children, teachers, and the Follow Through staff. Another teacher's personal goal was to be a successful teacher, which meant to "get across what I'm supposed to be teaching." When she first started teaching, this meant teaching "subject matter in a structured setting." However, with the open classroom, she felt her goals were fostering responsibility and independence in children.

#### Goals related to children's learning

Responses dealing with children's learning can be placed into four broad and often overlapping categories: (a) helping children become more independent; (b) getting children to like and accept themselves; (c) encouraging children to be able to work well together and (d) academic goals.

##### (a) Helping children become more independent

Seven of the nine teachers said they wanted children to become more independent, but they gave different examples of independence. Four teachers described independence in terms of independent thinking. One teacher said that teaching children to learn how to learn was very important: "trying to direct children to ask questions, to know that

a way to know is to ask questions"; and "to be able to take in information and use it." Another teacher talked of helping children to develop "open minds" and the ability to reason clearly and decide priorities. Helping children to be responsible to themselves and for themselves was also seen as important. A third teacher, in talking about children's independence as a goal, stressed children developing and executing their own ideas. The fourth teacher wanted children to learn the following process: get an object, look at it, think about it and its possible uses, discover things which are close to your senses. She went on to say that children should start to think for themselves, to learn from themselves and not to be told so much, to be more aware of themselves and the world around them.

Three teachers viewed encouraging children's interests and building on them as a means towards independence. Two teachers wanted children to become independent enough to recognize what they want to do and follow through on it. The third teacher saw getting children into music, art, reading and sciences as a road toward independence.

Finally, one teacher talked of reading (through plays, poetry and drama) as her most important goal--but went on to say that "then children will be ready to go further on their own, implying reading is more a means than an end.

(b) Getting children to like and accept themselves

Two teachers who did not mention independence did mention this second category. One teacher wanted to see children retain whatever security they're getting from Follow Through, to be pleased with themselves and not to fear failure: "Being able to work with what's there, within yourself." She described a practice in her classroom of having children

wear signs saying, "I'm loving and capable." If someone did something unkind to a child, the child was supposed to tear off a piece of the sign to remind others that they were responsible for their actions. The other teacher mentioned, with less description, the need for self-confidence.

(c) Helping children to be able to work well together/socialization

Five teachers mentioned working well together or socialization as important goals. The one teacher who did not mention independence or liking oneself did mention socialization. She said that she wanted to be able to educate the total child to be able to adapt to all situations in his or her environment. This definition probably encompasses the first two categories--helping children become more independent, and getting children to like and accept themselves. One other teacher also talked in these terms: she wanted children to be able to adjust in any given situation, academically and socially. Two other teachers talked more about children working well with others. One said that children should be able to work with each other and be around people without striking out. Another said that she wanted to see children develop into social beings who can get along with people outside the classroom. Part of this, she said was learned by developing respect for others and others' materials in the classroom.

(d) Academics

Four teachers mentioned academics as important goals. For one teacher, reading, writing, and following directions are the three things she tells children they will learn. A second teacher mentioned fluency in reading, writing, and arithmetic. A third talked of making progress from where the children start in math, reading, and writing. The fourth

said she tried to teach basic concepts, sometimes through repetition of facts presented in different ways.

Question asked:

2. What kinds of things do you think it is important for children to be doing and learning in school in the early grades.

Three kinds of responses to this question have been identified: (a) Learning basic skills; (b) learning attitudes and behaviors; (c) learning to learn independently.

Responses to 2: What kinds of things do you feel children should learn and do?

Category	Mentions
(a) Learning basic skills	6
(b) Learning attitudes or behaviors	4
(c) Learning to learn independently	3

(a) Learning basic skills

The six teachers who spoke of learning basic skills as one of the most important things for children to be doing and learning in school talked about (a) particular subjects children should be learning; and (b) ways this learning should be taking place.

Reading and writing were the most often mentioned subjects, five teachers mentioning each one. Other subjects or skills were listening, speaking, arithmetic, and science, each mentioned by one teacher. One teacher said that math was not an area of concern. Ways this learning should take place included manipulating concrete materials, having a consistent set of books from kindergarten through third grade, making

learning fun, role-playing stories, and repetition.

(b) Learning attitudes or behaviors

One teacher mentioned that children should have social experiences. Another said that children should learn to maintain their own peace of mind. Another teacher mentioned that children should learn to follow simple directions and work together. One teacher felt that children should "know that things that you do affect other children," and "learn that there's another way to do it that won't hurt others." This teacher had children role-play to learn about dealing with problems. When some blocks were stolen from the classroom, she had the children re-enact the "crime" and all of its consequences.

(c) Learning to learn independently

Three teachers talked about exposing children to new things as a means for children to learn independently. One teacher said that she started with concrete materials, nature walks, and visits in order to have children see, feel, touch, and compare things.

Another spoke of children needing to feel a lot of independence with direction. She suggested that learning to apply what was learned in one area to another aided this process. The third teacher thought that experience with music, art and role-playing would help children to continue learning throughout their lives.

Questions Asked:

3. Which of the things you think children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?
4. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?

All teachers expressed satisfaction with at least some of their goals, many with all the goals they had emphasized. One teacher who emphasized reading independently noted satisfaction that children were starting to pick up books "without my directing them." Another teacher, who emphasized independence and applying what is learned in one area to another, was pleased with the "good feeling they have when they accomplish things like estimating lengths in other classrooms by themselves." A teacher who stressed following directions and phonics was satisfied with the progress of most children. Another teacher, who encouraged children to work together and to take responsibility for their actions, said that the children she works with were learning to work well with other people.

Seven teachers gave brief responses to the question about improvements. One teacher gave a detailed answer, and one teacher did not respond. Specific areas for improvement included: (1) improving relationships between boys and girls; (2) learning more about dramatics and role-playing; (3) meeting school requirements in mathematics; (4) getting children to work together; (5) getting children to abide by the rules they make themselves; (6) getting children to spend more time in activities; and (7) extending/stemming activities. A detailed response came from a teacher new to Follow Through. She explained that she was not fully satisfied with anything, including herself: "Any small improvements are appreciated." She noted that academic resources were lacking, that she doesn't "have guidelines for what needs to be taught, how to build on basics."

## 7.7 and 7.8 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

All nine aides expressed satisfaction with at least one goal that each had mentioned as important. Little specific dissatisfaction was reported. The Paterson aides' responses are congruent with those of the teachers and with EDC's goals as a sponsor in including both academic and social learning. However, there is a difference in emphasis: The aides emphasized the learning of basic skills, especially reading. Only two of the nine aides interviewed stressed non-academic learning.

If this difference is real, it would be interesting to learn what accounts for it. There may be distinctions between the tasks teachers do and those done by aides that would make the aides more concerned with the learning of basic skills. For example, if the aides spend most of their time helping children learn to read, they could be expected to see that as a crucial goal. Another possible explanation might be the aides' identification with parents of the children. In many cases the aides were parents themselves and in all cases they lived in the neighborhoods where the schools were located. In contrast, the teachers lived outside of the immediate neighborhoods of the schools. Perhaps the aides feel the need for "survival skills" more intensely than the teachers and therefore emphasize learning basic skills in school more than social learning. There is evidence for both of these explanations in the data on the Paterson aides and what they do.

As in the case of the teachers, the fact that the aides expressed considerable satisfaction about the achievement of their major goals indicates a fairly high level of satisfaction with their work in the Follow Through program.

## 7.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

### Question Asked:

1. What kinds of things do you think it is important for children to be doing and learning in school in the early grades?

When asked what kinds of things they thought children should be doing and learning in the early grades, all nine Paterson aides mentioned reading or the alphabet. Five stressed reading as especially important. Four aides explained why they thought reading was important, saying either that reading was essential to further learning or, more generally, that reading would be useful in the lives of the children. Five aides also took the opportunity to say something about how reading should be taught. Comments included the importance of gaining readiness skills, emphasizing reading from kindergarten through the grades, and learning to observe and make distinctions as a prelude to reading. Some aides said children should read things they enjoy rather than just basal readers, and could be taught reading in a variety of ways -- including songs, dramatic play, block building, art, and writing stories.

After reading, aides mentioned math most often as a subject important for children to learn in the early grades. Six aides said something about the importance of math, but only one stressed it. One aide said that math was "easier to conquer" than reading. Another said that she found everyone could count his or her money, even if he or she couldn't read. Two aides said math was not as important as reading, and that reading would help a child learn math. One aide talked enthusiastically about her own recent experience learning math in a summer school course she was taking. She said that she had always disliked math before, but had discovered that her dislike resulted from the way she had been taught.

Contrasting her summer school teacher's methods with those she had experienced before, she said: "He taught me math...and it's fun. And I can make my own things and I can use the Cuirenaire rods and I can use the Dienes sticks and make them myself...and it's fun to do that." She added that the children liked that approach better too. Her opinion was that if children could learn reading and math, "I think the rest of it (will) fall into line."

The few remaining things were mentioned only by individual aides. One said that it was important to meet children's immediate needs for what is important and helpful to them, giving as examples eating a good breakfast and wearing proper clothing. Another said that it was important for children to learn to understand what the teacher tells them to do. One aide included phonics, art, and dramatic play with reading and math as things that would be of use to children. She added that she didn't think science needed to be taught separately since it came out in many activities.

One aide mentioned first that children should be aware of themselves. Another said it was important for children to learn to relate to other people, especially their classmates, and to get along with each other.

#### Questions Asked:

2. Which of the things you think children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?
3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?

All nine aides expressed satisfaction with at least one of the things they had stressed as being important. Four mentioned reading, one math, and one, "academics." Aides mentioned few of their goals as areas needing

improvement. Two aides said there was nothing that they felt required improvement, perhaps interpreting the question to imply that things weren't going well, an implied criticism that was not intended. Only one aide listed all of the things she had mentioned being important as needing improvement. She listed reading and writing, then added behavior, knowing how to take care of things, and "really wanting to learn." Her approach to that entailed making the children respect her so that they would do what she knew was best for them.

#### 7.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

All administrators stressed academic skills, with the local advisors also mentioning non-academic goals such as fostering self-esteem, independence and curiosity more frequently than the principals. Most administrators expressed general satisfaction with the schools but all had specific ideas for improvement. These included dealing with local politics and bureaucracies, more effective use of the community, and the establishment of a pre-kindergarten program.

#### 7.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

This section of the report is somewhat different from the preceding sections because there was more diversity among the respondents. There is an important distinction to make between the two public school administrators (the two principals) and the three Follow Through administrators (the project director and local advisors). The principals are, of

necessity, involved in the whole school and concerned about things that are not directly relevant to Follow Through. The Follow Through administrators, on the other hand, spend all of their time with Follow Through concerns. The differences in perspective and attitudes are therefore not surprising.

The emphasis of the three Follow Through administrators on the importance of developing self-confidence and interest in learning in addition to basic skills seems significant. It is consistent with the statements of the teachers and aides and with EDC's goals.

#### 7.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. What kinds of things do you think it is important for children to be doing and learning in school in the early grades?

All five administrators mentioned basic academic skills as important in the early grades. Reading and math were specified. One stressed the importance of learning concepts, not just facts. Another said that if reading and math are learned the other academic skills will follow. The need for a good early foundation was emphasized by one administrator.

One principal believed skills were important because of what they make it possible for the child to do. He said that the important skills were the ones that lead to discipline. This discipline, he said, becomes self-discipline, which makes it possible for people to discriminate between what is relative and what is absolute in reality. This principal also stated a strong belief in the importance of black children developing the capacity and commitment to contribute to the elimination of oppression.

Along with basic skills, the Follow Through administrators all stressed the importance of non-academic areas. One talked about developing the person, helping individuals know who they are and what their basic strengths are, enabling them to grow. Another said children need to get a sense of being worth something and to have confidence in themselves. The third spoke of developing interest in learning, in books, words, and talking. She said that children need to develop the confidence to talk and to ask questions. She wanted children to be involved and working with things. She said the classroom environment needs to be rich and stimulating for this to happen.

Questions Asked:

2. Which of the things you think children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your school?

3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your school?

All the administrators expressed satisfaction with the things they felt were important for children to be doing and learning in school. One Follow Through administrator said that nothing was completely satisfactory, but added that it was sometimes surprising how well the children do. Another Follow Through administrator said the majority of the children were doing quite well and that she was pleased with the way the teachers feel about the children. The third Follow Through administrator said that the children's sense of personal worth comes through clearly and that the children don't compete with each other but are ready to tackle almost anything. She also said that she saw non-Follow Through teachers beginning to deal with children differently and recognize that children are capable of thinking for themselves. The principals were satisfied with the reading programs. One said children were learning math concepts, such as countable values and relationships, and how to manipulate skills through language.

Every administrator had several things he or she wanted to improve upon concerning what children are doing and learning in school. One Follow Through administrator said simply that there was so much to work on that everything couldn't be mentioned. The other Follow Through administrators talked about the importance of dealing effectively with "political hangups," which were

seen as caused by bureaucratic red tape or by people who opposed the program. They wanted more use of the community for field trips. They felt that areas like science and music needed work. One administrator also talked about the need for better communication to work out problems and so that teachers could know more about what teachers have done with children in the previous grade in order to avoid starting over at each grade.

#### 7.13 SUMMARY OF PARENT RESPONSE

The Paterson parents emphasized the basic skills almost to the exclusion of social and emotional concerns. They seemed generally satisfied with how the school dealt with the areas they deemed most important, although there was some desire for more academic work. The parents also seemed content with the staff, the school atmosphere and the program's effort.

#### 7.14 ANALYSIS OF PARENT RESPONSE

Parents' emphasis on basic skills seems to be somewhat different from the emphasis of the teachers and Follow Through administrators, who talked about basic skills combined with social and emotional learning. The parents expressed attitudes that were similar to those expressed by aides, which is understandable, since most aides were also parents.

## 7.15 DETAIL OF PARENT RESPONSE

### Question Asked:

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for (Follow Through child) to be doing and learning at school at this time?

### SCHOOL #28

- 4 responses mentioned only the following academic areas:

alphabet	counting numbers
understanding words	arithmetic
reading	times tables
making up sentences by himself	
writing	

These responses from parents seem to reflect the different grades that Follow Through children are in.

- 1 response included only areas of a child's social and emotional growth:

-- Should be learning obedience, discipline, and manners,

- 4 responses stated combinations of academic, social and emotional growth as important for their child in Follow Through to be doing and learning in school:

-- Child should be learning to give more attention, to be more careful with others' property, to have self-control. More instruction should be given in cursive writing rather than printing all the time.

-- Child should be learning how to count and phonics. Also getting along with other children and being attentive with the teacher, other children, or whomever.

-- Child should be reading and doing basics. Learning how to adjust in the classroom situation.

-- He should be learning how to communicate with other people and talking more. He should be doing more work because he is kind of slow.

- 1 response included social-emotional growth along with a broader statement:

- Child should be making use of the available materials, getting as much learning out of her play as possible, and having the will to learn.

In summary, all ten parents whose children attend school #28 responded to question 1.

Two parents mentioned basic academic areas, without giving specifics, five parents included reading/language arts areas as important and four parents specifically mentioned arithmetic areas.

#### SCHOOL #6

1 response was very general:

- the things he is already doing.

3 responses mentioned only academic areas:

- all subjects, spelling doing more homework  
math, reading.

1 response mentioned social, emotional, and academic growth areas:

- spelling, math, and expressing herself better.

In summary, five parents from School #6 responded to question 1. Three parent responses included math; three included reading/language arts (particularly spelling).

Question Asked:

2. Of the things you have mentioned, which ones do you feel get enough attention at your child's school?

#### SCHOOL #28

5 parents felt everything they mentioned was getting enough attention.

3 parents specified academic areas which they feel get enough attention:

- Everything else except times tables;
- alphabet and numbers;
- arithmetic

1 parent mentioned that her child's learning "attentiveness" was getting enough attention at school.

1 parent said that she didn't know what was getting enough attention.

Question Asked:

3. Which things seem to be getting too little attention?

SCHOOL #28

4 responses indicated none

1 parent said not aware

4 responses indicated academic areas: time tables; cursive writing; reading and understanding words; reading.

1 parent said using time in school to the fullest and getting work done with a little more speed.

SCHOOL #6

5 parents (all those interviewed) indicated none.

Question Asked:

4. What are the things you like most about School #6/#28? (including Follow Through)

SCHOOL #28

9 parents offered favorable responses to this question.

1 parent said that she couldn't answer because she didn't know any other school.

Most responses to this question seemed to divide themselves into three categories:

a) staff, b) school atmosphere, c) programs School #28 offers for children and for parents. Comments also reveal advantages which parents feel are inherent in different aspects of the School #28 program.

a) Staff:

3 parents specified things they liked about the staff at School #28

- I like the way the teachers help in the classroom.
- The school has very good teachers and a very good school system.
- I like the teachers and the staff. The supervision is good.

b) School atmosphere:

3 parents specifically commented about the atmosphere at School #28:

- Open classroom & open structure are very good. "Without this type of openness, he wouldn't like school at all."
- Children are usually quite orderly.
- My children like going there better than any other school.

c) Programs:

5 parents referred to this category:

- The lunch program is excellent.
- Parents can visit when they feel like it (2 parents)
- Lower grade children cannot come home by themselves without permission (2 parents)

Only one kind of response did not fit into these three categories. Two parents said that they like the short walking distance from home to school.

SCHOOL #6

Parent responses included the same three categories.

1 parent mentioned teachers in the Follow Through program.

1 parent mentioned the friendly atmosphere.

4 parents mentioned programmatic features:

- 2 mentioned Follow Through program

-- 2 mentioned lunch program

Question Asked:

5. What are the things you like least about School #6/#28?  
(including Follow Through)

SCHOOL #28

- 4 parents said "nothing."
- 3 parents said that they don't know.
- 1 parent said, some children don't show respect towards adults.
- 1 parent said that there is a lack of order in the halls.
- 1 parent said the library is not being used as it should be.

SCHOOL #6

- 4 parents said "nothing."
- 1 parent said School #6 needs better teachers.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE EDC APPROACH TO LEARNING: OPINIONS OF PATERSON TEACHERS

#### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The questions in Chapter 8 concern ideas about children's learning that have been promoted by EDC advisors. The four questions that were asked of Paterson teachers all related to basic principles. The principles were stated in broad enough form that we did not expect substantial disagreement. They were used as starting points for delving into each teacher's interpretation of the principle.

The first question about (1) the teacher's opinion of EDC Follow Through's goals was added to the interview questions after interviews in Burlington had suggested that some teachers felt EDC's purposes were unclear. The remaining questions were about (2) encouraging open expression of children's needs and feelings in the classroom; (3) building on children's interests as a starting point for teaching; (4) giving children a greater amount of choice in what they do; and (5) evaluating children's progress on the basis of their own abilities. Each of these questions was followed-up by more specific questions about how the teacher applied the principle in her classroom.

#### 8.2 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

##### EDC Goals:

All but one of the teachers said they understood what EDC had tried

to accomplish. They associated EDC's goals with open education generally, and more specifically with freedom for children and individualization. All of these teachers agreed with what they saw as EDC's goals and said they were trying to accomplish similar goals. The one teacher who could not say what EDC had tried to accomplish was new to the program and did not feel that the materials she had read and the things she had heard added up to a coherent philosophy yet.

### Open Expression

All the teachers shared this goal. They cited benefits of open expression for both children and teachers. Two pointed out that teachers can learn what children need and how they learn by allowing them to express themselves. Others stressed the opportunities for learning on the part of children provided by open expression. Some teachers talked about establishing guidelines for children's expression. None said they encouraged talk about sensitive topics that parents might disapprove of, but most said they would deal with such topics if and when they arose.

### Building on Children's Interests

All nine teachers said they agreed with this principle. All mentioned observing children as a method of learning what their interests are. Four of the teachers said they were dissatisfied with their ability to build on children's interests and wished they could do it more.

### Children's Choices

All of the teachers tried to give children more choices in their classrooms. The kind of choice mentioned most often was the choice of an area to work in, area being parts of the room provisioned for certain kinds of activities. Teachers had different ways of organizing their

classrooms which meant different kinds of choices and different times for choice. All teachers who were asked said they exert some control over children's choices, either by making demands or suggestions or by regulating the kinds and numbers of choices available.

### Evaluating Children's Progress

All nine teachers said they evaluated children according to the children's own abilities. The methods of diagnosing children's abilities mentioned were: using forms or check lists; observing; and testing. Notes and checklists were used for recording progress or both.

## 8.3 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

### EDC Goals

Teachers' responses to this question suggest that they felt that they understood EDC's goals at least on a very general level. Paterson teachers did not express great dissatisfaction with the lack of specificity in EDC's goals.

### Open Expression

The most interesting point made by teachers in responding to the question about open expression is the strictly educational function served by such expression. Teachers saw open expression as contributing significantly to the children's growing self-knowledge and self-confidence and as making it possible for teachers to understand and teach the children better. Although an argument could be made for open expression on purely humanistic grounds, i.e., on the grounds that children have a right to

and a need to express themselves as human beings, the direct effects of open expression on children's learning may be more persuasive to some people.

### Building On Children's Interests

This principle would appear to need some direct attention from EDC advisors since all the teachers agreed with it but several felt unable to apply it adequately.

### Children's Choices

Two major points seem to emerge from this question. The first is that children's choices seem to be a key to teachers learning about children's interests. The conditions teachers described when asked how they find out about children's interests nearly all involve some opportunities for children to make choices. The second point is that many teachers seem to feel the need to improve their ability to build on children's interests. A number of teachers said that they were unable to do much in this direction in spite of the fact that they believe it is important. One teacher even said, "This is what makes a teacher." This would appear to be a good area for advisors to concentrate on.

From these comments and by referring to Chapter 2, it seems that most of the classes of teachers we talked to allow similar kinds of choices for children. For the most part those choices are for various kinds of activities that may be engaged in after assigned work in basic skills has been completed. In some cases there is a choice of when assigned work might be done, i.e., children might choose to engage in an activity in one of the areas before doing assigned work, but in no cases did a teacher say all work was done according to children's choice. One teacher seemed to

interpret choice somewhat more broadly, saying that children made choices all day, but it was not clear that children in her room actually made more choices than those in the others.

A few generalizations might be drawn from the statements about children's choices made by the teachers interviewed. First, it seems that although choosing is an important part of the classroom it is not the center. Children were described as making choices within structures set up by the teachers. Furthermore, choices were allowed after assigned work was completed or about when to do assigned work, but in all cases the teachers said they required a core of work on basic skills. Second, choosing was seen by these teachers as something that children have to learn to do. They said that they help children choose and explained that children are not all able to make intelligent and productive choices simply by being given the opportunity; some guidance is necessary. Third, teachers seem to have some ideal in mind about how much children should concentrate on a single area or activity. If children spend all their time with one choice, teachers encourage them to try something else; but teachers also use the children's persistence in coming back again and again to the same activity as a measure of interest in that activity. Apparently a distinction is made between doing the same thing out of fear of trying something new and doing the same thing out of intense interest and enjoyment.

#### Evaluation Of Children's Progress

One fact that emerged from this question is that some instruments can serve multiple duty. Check lists of children's abilities, for instance, were mentioned as methods of diagnosing children's abilities, ways of keeping track of their progress, and something to show parents when sharing

the teacher's evaluation of the child's progress.

We were intrigued to discover substantial connections among the responses to the four questions about specific principles promoted by EDC advisors. We derive questions two through five mainly from an interview schedule used in another study. ("Teacher Interview for 'A Study of Teachers in Open Education Settings'" by the Early Education Group at Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, Spring, 1972.) They were selected because they seemed to be broad enough that teachers in many kinds of classrooms would agree with them. They were not intended to define open education or to represent a coherent set of principles.

Therefore, the interrelations discovered among teachers' responses to the questions were interesting because they tended to establish at least a beginning of a coherent set of principles that guide EDC Follow Through teachers' practices. Free choice and open expression by children, in addition to promoting children's learning, gives teachers the opportunity to observe what they are interested in and what their abilities are. Records of these observations help them evaluate children's progress and to build on their interests.

#### 8.4 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

##### QUESTION ASKED:

1. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through program tried to accomplish?

Do you share those goals? Why or why not?

Do you feel those goals are being accomplished?

Why or why not?

Eight teachers who responded to this question characterized the EDC approach as (1) "open education", (2) stressing freedom for children and (3) individualization. All of the EDC goals mentioned by the eight teachers could fit under the term open education, even when that term was not used. Five teachers talked about freedom for children or the opportunity for them to have direct experiences. One teacher said that children learn concepts under these conditions better than when they are told things. Another said that learning was not so much by rote. Four teachers stressed individualization as a goal of the EDC Follow Through program. They talked about the importance of allowing children to learn at their own rate and of responding to children's interests. A teacher who included both freedom for children and individualization said:

I don't think kids should be bound to a desk. The world is right here (in the classroom) and they should be able to walk around and learn. And as far as group learning... I just got caught up in groups when I was in school and I just think we're individuals and we should be learning as individuals and not as the bluebirds, or group number one, or the high group or the low group. I see open education and Follow Through as a hope in getting that.

This teacher began by identifying EDC with open education and saying that, "Everything I want in education is open ed." Another teacher made the same connection between EDC Follow Through goals and her own goals: "I hope it's the same thing that I'm looking for. I feel like I'm following the philosophy of EDC."

Only one Paterson teacher, new to the program, said she was unclear about EDC goals. She said she had read a lot of material from EDC and talked with the project director but still hadn't been able to put together the basic philosophy.

Four teachers mentioned different problems related to EDC's goals. Two said that although they agreed with the goal of individualizing instruction, they found it difficult to do in a city classroom with many children. They thought it was important to adapt goals to the real situation and they saw this happening. Another teacher said that when EDC started in Paterson there had been too much openness: "I feel that at times the ends were too loose. There should have been a little more direction." She felt that opening up needed to be gradual and tied to the development of the program in the school. She explained that there had been progress in this area, that the teachers now understood better where they were going, and said, "It's a two-way situation. I think we have met each other," meaning that EDC had changed too.

QUESTION ASKED

2. EDC Follow Through encourages open expression of children's needs and feelings in the classroom. Do you share this goal?

If yes: What benefits do you see in open expression? Does open expression create any difficulties (for teacher, for children)? Do you encourage talk about things like sex, death, birth, race, and the fears children have?

All nine teachers said that they shared the goal of having children express their needs and feelings openly. The first follow-up question was, "What benefits do you see in open expression?" One teacher apparently misunderstood the question. Of the remaining eight, two mentioned benefits to the teacher, i.e., open expression allows the teacher to understand the child better. The other responses all had to do directly with benefits to children. Three teachers said that open expression helped children learn about themselves.

One put it,

It's real important to a child to develop himself, have his own ideas and thinking. And a lot of times in a class they just never have a chance to do that. Even when they get out of high school they never really had a chance to grow on their own, grow as an individual.

Another made the same point by asking, "...how can you live if you don't? How can you be happy? How can you know what your feelings are if you don't express feelings?"

The contribution of open expression to the growth of individuality mentioned at the end of the first quote was cited by another teacher. Two teachers also spoke of the value of open expression in helping children to relate to other people, one stressing the desirability of expressing anger verbally rather than physically. One teacher said that open expression helped children talk fluently. Another said that it developed children's thinking.

The second follow-up question was, "Does open expression create any difficulties?" No general patterns emerged in response to this question except that three teachers mentioned the importance of establishing guidelines. One of those three said it was best to set the guidelines as a group. Another said that some children don't appreciate openness and work better with direction, though she allowed that some could learn to make choices and to follow rules independently.

One teacher said that the major difficulty with open expression was having to share. She said it was important for children to realize that they are part of a group and to learn to give others a chance. Another teacher said that her children were not used to expressing themselves verbally, that they tended to do a lot of touching, which sometimes led to fighting. Two teachers talked about adults' problems. One said adults who don't understand the importance of open expression sometimes think a child is being "fresh" when expressing her/himself. The other

said that open expression did not create problems unless she responded to it with anger or sarcasm, which would cut off the exchange.

One teacher said that open expression in the classroom could be confusing and frustrating. Another teacher responded to the question by simply saying that open expression had not caused any problems so far.

The last follow-up question was intended to probe open expression in specific areas and to reveal how active teachers are in those areas. It was, "Do you encourage talk about things like sex, death, birth, race, and the fears children have?" Two teachers were not asked this question. Of the seven who did respond, the tendency was to say that they did not initiate talk about these subjects but that they tried to deal with them when they arose.

QUESTION ASKED:

3. EDC's Follow Through program stresses "building on children's interests" as a starting point for teaching. Do you agree with this principle?

If yes: How does this work out in practice?  
First, how do you find out what a child's interests are? (examples)  
How do you build on those interests? (examples)

All nine teachers agreed with this principle, but four did not yet feel able to do it. One teacher explained why she agreed with the principle.

This is the only way you can reach some of them. I used to think, years ago, that everybody would love me as a teacher. They don't. They have their own personal feelings. (If there's) something about you that (they're) not ready to open up to, you can't reach them. And the child that's in his block area, that likes building, then this is a way you can perhaps reach him. You know, we build a tower together.

The first follow-up question was, "How do you find out what children's interests are?" Eight teachers replied and their responses fall into two categories: (1) by observing the child; (2) by talking with the child. Two teachers mentioned talking with children as a way of learning what they were interested in. One teacher said she also talked with a child's friends and with the child's mother. Most of the talking seemed to be about things children were doing in the classroom, but one teacher said she asked children what their favorite TV programs are. A fourth teacher mentioned talking to children about their interests in response to the second follow-up question.

All eight teachers said or implied that they observed children to find out their interests. Three teachers did not specify what kinds of things they looked for, though one said she kept records of what children did and noted which things they went back to. Four teachers said they looked especially at the pictures children drew or at things they made. Other teachers mentioned watching for the books and materials they picked, how they played and with whom, what they chose to do during free times, and what they wrote stories about.

The second follow-up question, "How do you build on those (children's) interests?", revealed that most of the teachers were not satisfied with their ability to do this. Four of the nine teachers were able to give some description of how they built on children's interests, but two of those descriptions were fairly general. One said that she provided new activities related to what children were interested in, and that she did this little-by-little. The other said she would talk with children about their interests and make suggestions for additional activities. Both of these teachers were in their first year of teaching, so the generality of their descriptions is understandable. Two experienced teachers gave more detailed responses: One said she tried to bring in new materials related to children's interests, giving as examples, books,

filmstrips, and sewing materials. The other said that she built on children's interests in "project-type" settings, encouraging children to do a variety of activities related to a single interest, such as asking a child who enjoyed working with attribute blocks to write about the blocks.

However, the remaining four teachers expressed their belief that they were not able to build on children's interests as well as they wanted to. One replied, "I'm not a magician. I know that." Another explained that since she was just beginning her first year in Follow Through she had not yet done much building. Another simply said, "I can't do it," and went on to say that she wanted very much to learn how and hoped that more experience would make it easier, but said that she had been told experience wasn't enough.

Another teacher's immediate response to our asking whether she agreed with building on children's interests as a starting point for teaching illustrates th's attitude.

I agree wholeheartedly. Except, I'm having trouble with it. And I think it's a really important process of open education, to build on their interest. I think that's one of the main things about open ed., but I'm having trouble with it, to be honest.

She went on to attribute her difficulty partly to the speed with which her children's interests changed.

My kids will be interested in one thing one minute and by the time I go and run and get these things, they're on (another).

QUESTION ASKED

4. EDC's Follow Through program emphasizes giving children a greater amount of choice in what they do. Is this one of your goals?

If yes: What kinds of things do they make choices about?  
On what basis do they choose: whims, what friends are doing, genuine interests, etc.?  
How do you know when a choice is based on genuine interests?  
Do you help children choose? How?

All nine teachers said they try to give children a greater amount of choice in what they do in the classroom. Several of them had listed some of the things children choose while describing their typical day. All but one listed some of the things children choose in their classrooms. The most often mentioned children's choice was "areas." Five teachers mentioned areas specifically and a sixth talked about the same idea without using the term. "Areas" are locations within the classroom designated for particular activities. Areas might be used for sand play, building, clay, a play supermarket, art, and many other activities, all of them designed to include some learning opportunities but also to appeal to children as enjoyable things to do. One more teacher talked about particular things that children could choose to do, including tinkertoys, blocks, art, and writing, but it was not clear that those activities took place in specific areas.

Other choices children have are: which special activities to do, what books to read, and when to do certain assigned work. One teacher said, "Their whole day is a choice of what to do." A teacher who had talked about areas made a distinction between choices children could make in the morning and

those limited to the afternoon. She said that children in her class could make choices after completing their reading, writing, and math work and that those choices must be of quiet activities they could do at their seats in the morning. In the afternoon, all areas were open and children could move around the room.

One teacher who detailed several kinds of choices children made in her classroom first responded to the question by saying, "I'm gradually coming to that. It will take awhile." She then talked about the problem of dealing with two separate and sometimes contrary sets of expectations - from Follow Through on the one hand, and her school on the other: "I have to pay homage to two masters." She explained that some things were required by her school and other things by the Follow Through program. She said that usually she could do both but that sometimes they were contradictory. This was one reason why she had not opened up more opportunities for children to choose.

All the teachers but one were asked if they helped children make choices and all eight said they did. Four stated that some children would always do the same thing if they weren't encouraged to try new activities. One teacher told of a boy who spent his choice time with blocks for a whole month. She encouraged him to move to another area and he wound up in the library, where he spent the whole day. "I found out wherever he goes he'll stay there all day." This is the kind of child most teachers seemed to have in mind when they said they helped children choose. The same teacher said that this was not often a problem and that she asked children to make another choice, but did not force them. Another situation which teachers said stimulated their

intervention is when children choose things that are too difficult. In order to prevent their frustration teachers said they would guide them to things that were within their capabilities. Two other teachers said that children needed some help in making choices because they had not learned to choose on their own.

Two teachers talked of controlling the choice situation in order to help children choose. One said that she would sometimes close up the areas when the choosing "gets out of hand," and then open them back up gradually, just as they were introduced in the beginning. Another said, "We decide how we choose and then we choose," going on to explain that she usually sets out the tasks, lays down guidelines for making choices, and then discusses the process of choosing with the children. She pointed out that children had to learn that they couldn't all do the same thing at the same time.

Two additional follow-up questions were asked to determine teachers' assessments of the bases of children's choices. Teachers were asked whether they thought children made choices on the basis of "whims, what friends are doing, genuine interest, or something else." They emphasized various criteria for choice, but three teachers added that children tend to choose things that are easy for them, things that they do well. Another teacher explained that she accepted choices based on what friends were doing because, "A lot of the children don't know how to say what interests them and so they follow what they see someone else has been successful at." She said she let them do this in order to give them a feeling of success to increase their confidence, but meanwhile she would encourage them to do things differently, for example, to draw their own picture rather than to copy one made by another child.

The three teachers who responded to the question about how they could tell when a choice was based on genuine interest said either that children who were genuinely interested in something would stick to it or that you could see the learning of a child who was genuinely interested in what she or he had chosen.

QUESTION ASKED

5. EDC Follow Through encourages evaluating children's progress on the basis of their own abilities. Do you try to do this in your classroom?

If yes: How do you diagnose a child's ability?  
How do you keep track of each child's progress?  
How do you share your evaluation of the child's progress with parents?

All nine teachers said they tried to evaluate children on the basis of their abilities. The follow-up questions concerned how this was done. The first was, "How do you diagnose a child's ability?" Three basic methods of diagnosing children's ability were mentioned: (1) using check lists or forms; (2) observing; and (3) using tests at the beginning of the year.

Responses to "How do you diagnose a child's ability?"

Method of Diagnosis	Number of Mentions
Check list or forms	5
Observation	5
Testing at beginning of year	3

The check lists and other methods for diagnosing children's abilities included: one check list that a teacher had made up with a former colleague; basic texts and their curriculum guides as guidelines; and forms provided by the local

advisors. One of the teachers who said she tests all children at the beginning of the year said that she had made up some tests of children's ability with numbers and letters. "Observation" included watching children in group work and as they worked in areas, seeing how children use materials, noting their coordination, sight and hearing, and diagnosing their ability on the basis of questions they ask, watching children when not working with them, watching all children perform a similar task.

Two teachers said they had some difficulty doing this. Both were first-year Follow Through teachers. One simply said that she was learning how to diagnose children's abilities "with difficulty." The other said, "This is a part I'm really struggling with. Some children don't just come up to me. I have to really watch them and reach out. I just don't feel organized in that area."

Both of these teachers said they keep notes on what children do, which relates to the next question, "How do you keep track of children's progress?" Notes and check lists were the methods of keeping track most often mentioned.

Seven teachers said they keep notes on what the children do, on "important happenings," and on progress in skill development. Another teacher uses notebooks to keep track of the children's general skills and specific problems in reading.

Three teachers mentioned problems with note-taking. One said she felt disorganized because she had no pattern. Another said she wished she could make time to "go into my little corner and record." The third pointed out that it was hectic trying to write something about each child and that this was more difficult than running an ordinary classroom.

Most of the five teachers who mentioned check lists as a way of diagnosing children's abilities also use them to keep track of children's progress. One teacher also said she keeps the children's work and reviews it to check on progress. (Two other teachers also said they keep children's work to show to parents.) One teacher said she keeps track in "my head, which I rely too much on."

Seven of the nine teachers were asked how they share their evaluation of children's progress with parents. There are no report cards given to Follow Through children in either school. Two teachers said that it was their first year so they had not yet made any report to parents. They told us how they expected to communicate. All seven of the teachers who responded to this question talked about parent conferences or other contacts with parents, such as special parents' nights. As noted above, three teachers said they used this time to share children's work with the parents. One teacher said there was a problem in getting some of the parents to come to the school for conferences. Two teachers mentioned visits during the day so that the parents could talk with the teacher as well as observe or participate in the classroom. One teacher mentioned sending letters home.

## CHAPTER 9

### RESPONSES OF PATERSON TEACHERS, AIDES, AND ADMINISTRATORS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING EDC ADVISORS

#### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

The questions reported in this section were designed to elicit responses about specific advisor activities. Teachers and aides were asked about advisors' visits to their classrooms, about advisors' work outside of classrooms - specifically about various kinds of workshops and about individual conferences, and about how they communicated with advisors. All three groups were asked both what they had done with advisors and how they felt about advisors' work. They were asked for suggestions about other things they would like to see advisors do. Administrators were also asked what they knew about EDC advisors' work with others.

Our aim in designing and asking these questions was to spell out the kinds of things we knew advisors did and then ask specifically whether each respondent had worked with EDC advisors on each kind of activity and how valuable each activity had been.

#### 9.2 and 9.3 OVERALL SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Comparison of the responses of people in all three groups indicates that teachers are seen as the major group with which EDC advisors work. Aides talked about working with EDC advisors too, but seemed to do so less than teachers. Of the administrators, only the local advisors said they had worked intensively with EDC advisors.

EDC advisors' work is seen as generally helpful, but some teachers and aides did not find it helpful and one principal opposed the whole thrust of open education. The project director and local advisors felt that the Paterson program had matured to the point where they were using EDC advisors differently than they had during previous years.

#### 9.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

This is a particularly important section, since our research focuses on the impact of the EDC advisors as seen by the people they work with. However, the responses to this section were difficult to describe because teachers with a year or more of experience in Follow Through drew on more extensive experience than teachers just beginning the program. Since four of the nine teachers we interviewed were in their third month of teaching in Follow Through, and EDC advisors had made only one trip to Paterson and led a workshop in August by this time, those four teachers had little opportunity to work with EDC advisors. Therefore, teachers' comments tended to be very specific - related to a single experience, or very general - summarizing a large number of contacts.

The local advisors take much of the initiative for putting EDC advisors in touch with teachers, although the teachers who have been in Follow Through for some time feel free to make requests of EDC advisors on their own. EDC advisors are seen as helpful, though there are limits imposed by the conditions in the two schools and by the short time that advisors are in Paterson.

EDC advisor help is valued for new classroom ideas, like learning how to use materials and suggestions for the organization of space and the planning of a day. One of the major methods used by advisors has been observation of classrooms and feedback. Some teachers said they would like more chances to watch EDC advisors and other teachers at work.

One of the findings that emerges from teachers' comments about 'EDC advisors' work is that there is great variety in teachers' needs and styles. Some want to have advisors come into their classrooms and demonstrate teaching methods; others explicitly said they did not want this type of work and preferred getting ideas from workshops.

#### 9.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

One implication of these responses is that EDC advisors should take care to communicate with teachers in order to learn what kinds of help they would like. The need for communication was also clear in teachers' comments about observations - they considered observation worthwhile only when it was followed up with conversation about what was observed.

Although the need for closer communication seems clear, achieving it is not a simple matter. Since EDC advisors visit Paterson for one week each month, or less, and have responsibility for 18 classrooms in two schools, substantial communication with all

teachers individually may simply not be possible. Perhaps some additional channels for directly exchanging information between Paterson teachers and EDC advisors would be useful, such as questionnaires and letters.

The difficulty of communicating closely is related to another implication of the teachers' comments. This is that the EDC advisors' role in Paterson is often seen as constructive, but not central to the teachers' work. This inference is based on the tendency of teachers to describe ways in which advisors helped them in their work as useful but not crucial. The descriptions which were given of what teachers do and what they are concerned about quite understandably had to do with the day-to-day business of teaching a class of children. EDC advisors were seen as able to help with some problems and to offer useful ideas, but these were described as added benefits, not necessary components of teachers' work.

One teacher's suggestion that teachers be allowed to visit another teacher's classroom with an advisor seems a reasonable and constructive one, particularly in the light of the statements that it is difficult for the teachers to watch what the EDC advisor is doing when he or she works with children in their classrooms, since the teacher is usually involved with other children. If working with children is to be an effective way of advisors helping the teachers, then the teachers must have some way of closely viewing what the advisors are doing. But most teachers seem to find it nearly impossible to be observers in their own classrooms. One

teacher explained that even if she tried to do so her children would persist in asking for her help.

The other major implication for advisors' work in these responses is the importance of giving feedback on observations. Although it may be helpful to an advisor to spend some time just watching a classroom, it does not seem to help the teacher directly unless the advisor then spends time talking with the teacher about what he or she saw. Observations that lead to concrete suggestions for improving areas and rearranging space and materials for better use seem to be greatly appreciated.

#### 9.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

##### Question Asked

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

If yes:

Who usually initiates the contact?  
What do they usually do?  
What do you do while they are in the room?  
Have you found their work helpful?  
Can you give me some examples?  
Are there other things you would like to see  
advisors do in your classroom?

If no:

Would you like them to work in your classroom?  
What do you know about what they do in other  
teachers' classrooms?

Eight of the nine teachers interviewed said that EDC advisors had visited their classrooms. The only one who said, "no," was a first-year teacher.

Seven teachers replied to the question about who initiates

the contact between teachers and EDC advisors. We were especially interested in knowing whether teachers request EDC advisor help or if the advisors come without the teachers' initiative. Five of the seven said that the local advisors arranged for visits to their classrooms by EDC advisors. One teacher implied that the EDC advisors were assigned to classrooms, saying the local advisors set up a schedule and tell the teachers that EDC advisors will visit their rooms. Two of these teachers described the local advisors' role more as giving information than as assigning, saying that local advisors let them know when EDC advisors are coming and when to expect them to visit classrooms. One of these two teachers said she was not sure that the local advisors made the arrangements but did know the local advisors told her when EDC advisors were coming. She added that the EDC advisors come by when they're in the building and say hello. Another teacher who said the local advisors arrange EDC advisor visits said that the local advisor had told the EDC advisor she was interested in science so that the EDC advisor came prepared with ideas to help her.

Two other teachers, in their second and third years with Follow Through, said that they sometimes request EDC advisor visits. One noted that sometimes the EDC advisors just drop by. The other added that sometimes they are assigned to her classroom by the local advisors.

The following table summarizes responses to the next follow-up question, namely, "What do advisors usually do when they visit your classroom?"

Responses to "What do EDC advisors usually do when they visit your classroom?"

Activity	Number of Teachers who mentioned this activity
Talk with the Teacher	7
Help with "Areas" and Materials	6
Work with a Group of Children	4
Observe	3

The activity of talking with the teacher includes an EDC advisor telling a teacher what the advisor has observed in the classroom, giving suggestions based on observation, and asking if help is desired with a particular problem. Apparently such talk usually occurs after the children have left the room but sometimes takes place while they are still there.

The "areas" referred to in the category of activities, "help with 'areas' and materials," are sections of a classroom designed to support children's work in particular academic subjects or learning activities. For example, a room might contain a block corner, a math materials area, a creative writing area, an art area, and a housekeeping area for dramatic play. Teachers said that advisors had helped them set up and improve areas. This was done by observing, in some cases making sketches of room arrangement and organization of materials, and by bringing in particular materials, such as milkweed for a science area. One teacher said that an advisor had helped her learn to use math materials and demonstrated some things in her classroom.

Four teachers told of advisors working with groups of children during class time. In one case this was tied to bringing in materials, since the EDC advisor who brought the milkweed for a science area worked with a group of children on the milkweed to demonstrate its uses. Two teachers mentioned a particular advisor by name. One said she had come into her classroom for a full day: "She blended in and got right involved and she really added a spark to the classroom." The teacher said that the children liked this advisor and got very excited about their work with her. The other teacher who mentioned this advisor by name said that she had come into her room and observed her (the teacher) working with a group of slow children and then the advisor returned in the afternoon to work with the same group herself. The teacher said she had picked up some ideas from observing the advisor at work. She went on to say that one of the boys the advisor had worked with soon began to read and when the advisor returned the following month the boy wanted to read to her. The teacher said that particular EDC advisor came back and listened to the boy read every time she visited Paterson and that this made the boy push himself to show improvement each time the advisor returned.

Observation seemed to have a special definition as used by the teachers we interviewed. Certainly EDC advisors could be said to be observing whenever they come into a classroom. However, teachers used the term, "observation," to describe a process involving the EDC advisor taking notes on the day's activities and sometimes drawing a sketch of the room arrangement and organization of materials, and then talking with the teacher about what had been observed. The

feedback step seems to be very important to the teachers. Three teachers emphasized it as part of observation. A fourth teacher whose response is not included in this category said that the EDC advisors sometimes "stand around and look." The distinction seemed to be based on whether or not the teacher had a chance to talk with the advisor about the observation after the observation took place.

Four teachers responded to another follow-up question, "What do you do while EDC advisors are in the room?" All four said that they continued their involvement with children, as usual. One said that she tried to observe what the advisor was doing but that this usually didn't work out because she was busy with other children. She suggested that she would like to have the chance to accompany an EDC advisor when the advisor went to someone else's class so that she could give all her attention to what the advisor does in a classroom.

The question, "Have you found the EDC advisors' work helpful?" elicited six teachers' responses and five said that they found this advisor function helpful.

Two of these five teachers said it had been helpful because advisors had worked with them or demonstrated teaching methods in their classrooms. Two said that the work had been useful within limits. One of those said, "Yes, more definitely...It's a learning experience for me. I feel I need it." But she also said that the amount of time EDC advisors were able to spend in the classroom of any one teacher was not enough.

...I feel that if you're in an open classroom you do need a great deal of help, and I think that to be an on-going thing. I don't think that coming down--I realize because of distance and money... I think it would be a greater learning experience if you were working under a head teacher...I think the greatest experience anyone can have is to be an aide in the classroom under a good, experienced teacher"....

The other teacher who thought the advisors' work helpful within limits wanted more depth. She wanted more information about what children should be expected to know in math and science at a particular level. She said that EDC advisors didn't really help her set up her room, but came by and gave their comments after she had set it up. She added that she thought the EDC advisors should come into classrooms and meet teachers as individuals rather than depending on the judgments of the local advisors and project director about who was in need of what kinds of assistance. Both of these teachers were experienced in Follow Through.

The one teacher who said EDC advisors had not been helpful to her also had experience in Follow Through. She is the same teacher who, in response to earlier parts of the question, told about an EDC advisor who established a long-term relationship with a boy in her class that helped him learn to read. She said:

...With me, I have not received that much help or benefit from their coming down - only one person, and that was \_\_\_\_\_ with reading....

Seven teachers responded directly or by implication to the question "Are there other things you would like to see EDC advisors do in your classroom?"

Some of their suggestions have already been reported, such as being able to observe an advisor at work in someone else's class and getting help from advisors to learn about what children should be expected to know about math and science. One teacher's suggestion had to do with a local program decision, not with the EDC advisors; she wanted to have a petty cash fund for buying materials and animals for her classroom.

One teacher, a first-year teacher who had not worked at all with EDC advisors, said she had questions about particular children, especially four unusually bright children she feared might be slowed down unless she learned how to help them progress more rapidly in her class. Another teacher, also inexperienced with Follow Through and EDC advisors, had a more general comment:

...One thing I don't like is that talk is very cheap. I just don't like to be told. Like I could tell a lot of things to you, but going in and doing it-- I would like someone to just show me how it's done. I went and I bought a book on open education, but somehow it didn't apply to my classroom. I just don't want people to tell me. Just show me how to do it...

Question Asked

2. I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside the classroom.

- (a) Have you ever attended a summer workshop in Paterson with an EDC advisor?
- (b) Have you ever attended a workshop during the year in Paterson with an advisor?
- (c) Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?
- (d) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?
- (e) Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

If yes to any of the above:

Which ways were most helpful?  
Would you like to be able to work with EDC advisors in other ways?  
What?  
Why?

If no to all of the above:

Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom?  
What do you know about what they have done with other teachers outside the classroom?

Summer Workshops

Of the eight teachers asked this question, only one had not attended a summer workshop because she had been hired at the end of the summer. Six of the seven teachers who had attended said mainly positive things about them. The emphasis was on the opportunity to learn new ideas at summer workshops. One idea that was singled out was the organizing concept of "learning trees," using one activity as a trunk for branching off into others. One teacher saw the workshops as a useful orientation for her first year in Follow Through. She enjoyed meeting the people she would be working

with and learning something about their personalities and opinions. She also appreciated the chance to see what a Follow Through open classroom looked like, although it made her wonder if she would be able to set one up herself. Another new teacher found the advice of an EDC advisor concrete and helpful, "the kind you need," when starting out.

There were some reservations though. One teacher, who liked the learning tree idea, said, "It was just a review for me. When you work on your own and read a lot of books and have gone from place to place studying, these are a review." Another said that the summer workshops had been helpful during her first year, but were not so helpful in this year, her third. She felt this may have been because many teachers have different materials in their classrooms, and trying to learn to use the same materials did not make sense.

The one teacher who found little benefit in the summer workshop was beginning her first year in Follow Through. She was already familiar with the ideas presented and she felt they were inapplicable to her school:

... In our type of situation, having the type of administration we do, and being a small program within a large school, it's just a lot of things you read in textbooks that when you get to the classroom, I think, don't apply to you. And as far as the workshops we did have, well a lot of those things were for -- I don't know,, they were just things that I had already had again, so I really didn't get that much out of the block workshop or the sand workshop, except refreshing my memory. And we went into (learning) trees. I started, you know, I wanted to get into that sort of thing. But with my class, I just don't have the time. It seems like the day just flies by...

### Workshops During the School Year

Six teachers were asked about workshops led by EDC advisors during the school year. Two said they had not yet attended such workshops because they were new teachers. Two of the four teachers who had attended school-year workshops said that the most recent workshop had not been very well organized. One of those teachers remembered earlier workshops being much better. Another teacher said that workshops were sometimes useful and sometimes not. She singled out a music workshop as having been especially good. She liked both learning to use rock-and-roll music to teach rhythm and learning to make instruments for children. The fourth teacher said that workshops during the year were an opportunity to ask questions but that many questions went unanswered. She wanted more time spent on adapting materials for use in urban areas.

### Workshops at EDC in Boston

The four first-year Follow Through teachers were assumed not to have had the opportunity to attend a workshop at EDC in Boston. One said that she would like to go. The five experienced teachers had all attended at least one Boston workshop. One said that the math workshop had been useful to her. Another especially liked the resource center at EDC because of all the equipment and materials that she could use to make things to bring back to her classroom. She also appreciated the chance to talk about problems in her classroom. A third experienced teacher enjoyed her trip to Boston because she was able to meet more EDC staff members. She was

impressed by their congeniality and their expertise and worked with several EDC advisors and workshop staff in different areas including building with tri-wall, music, and poetry. She liked having equipment out for use and having the freedom to choose what she wanted to do.

Two of the five teachers who had attended workshops in Boston said they were useful but had some reservations. One said that it had been a good experience but that she had gotten frustrated because she tried to do too much in one week. The other said that the workshop had been "wonderful" and "very useful," but said that she had spent time learning how to work with materials not available in her classroom.

#### Individual Conferences with EDC Advisors

Most teachers said individual conferences followed advisors' observations of their classrooms and included concrete suggestions for improving their teaching. Two new teachers said that one advisor had been particularly helpful to them in providing ideas on how to begin work as a Follow Through teacher. One said this advisor had sent several pages of written suggestions to her and to some other new teachers about how to handle the first few days and weeks of teaching in an open classroom. "She got me through that pretty well," was her assessment. Such conferences were seen as helpful because they offered encouragement as well as suggestions.

#### Other ways of Working with EDC Advisors

When asked if there were other ways they had worked with EDC

advisors, two teachers said they had visited the advisory center in Philadelphia. (The advisory center is available to people in the EDC-Follow Through program in Philadelphia.) One had attended a session on record-keeping led by a consultant but found it inappropriate for her own work.

The final question in this series was, "Would you like to be able to work with EDC advisors in other ways?" Two teachers said they would like to learn more about the uses of materials, one specifying demonstrations of materials. The other also wanted to learn how to make things for her classroom, how to be more effective and more resourceful, and where to go to find things for use in her room. A third teacher said she preferred building up her stock of ideas to having people doing things in her classroom. She said:

... I'm the type of person - I don't want you telling me what to do with my children, because you don't know them. You can give (suggestions) to me but I'm not saying I will use them. And that's not only with EDC, that's with anybody that I come in contact with. I'm the type of person that I like to try new things but I like to try them on my own...

Two teachers said that they wanted more opportunities to learn from other teachers. One said she wished she could visit other classrooms in places where a whole school was involved in open education and working together. She said, "I want to see it; I don't want to just be told." She also hoped for more things that were relevant to the particular kind of school she was in. The other teacher said that she would like to hear from several other teachers about how they planned their day. She said that she could

get materials and games on her own but needed help in organizing her classroom, especially when just beginning.

One teacher wanted more open criticism from EDC advisors. She seemed to view advisors as experts who should share their experience in order to help teachers.

... They can come into our classrooms, since most of them should've had experience in teaching, and work with certain areas that they see from observations. I think the teachers would welcome this - and just tell us exactly how they would go about doing it...

Another was interested in "anything that will help me grow," and suggested a workshop on science. However, she wished such help could be a continuing basis rather than having such large gaps between contacts with EDC advisors. She pointed out that sometimes she would get an idea from a workshop and then not see anyone from EDC with whom she could talk about that idea for several months. One teacher wanted help from EDC advisors on ways to report to parents about children's learning. Another expressed some uncertainty about EDC advisors and their role. She said:

... I'm not really sure I know who's an advisor and who's not...

#### Question Asked

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do (with you or with others)?

How do they usually respond?

Eight of the teachers responded to this question. The four new teachers all said that they contacted EDC advisors through the local

Follow Through staff, either the local advisors or the project director. The experienced Follow Through teachers said that they communicate personally with the advisors and by correspondence.

One of the new teachers wasn't sure what the communication channels with EDC advisors should be, but she assumed it should be through the project director. Another was unclear about what EDC advisors were supposed to do. She knew they led workshops and visited classrooms but had no idea what else she might ask them about. A third new teacher said that she had not seen the EDC advisors when they made their first visit but that she had asked a local advisor to have them come to her class on the next trip and was awaiting their visit. She had said earlier, "I wanted to talk to them (EDC advisors) in the beginning of the year because I really felt like yelling for help, but I haven't seen them. They were here but they didn't come to my room." The fourth new teacher said she had been informed that an EDC advisor would come and help her set up her room and she was pleased by the prospect, but that when the EDC advisor actually came, her only activities had been to observe and take notes, which was not what the teacher had expected. She said she would like to be able to tell EDC advisors directly what she feels she needs.

Of the four experienced teachers, one said advisors usually ask what they can do to help and another said the EDC advisors usually were able to provide assistance whenever she made a request.

## 9.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

One of the major differences between the responses of teachers and aides was that the aides had been in the Follow Through program longer (an average of 3.4 years as compared to 2.1 for teachers). Therefore, unlike the teachers, all had been exposed to EDC advisors on several occasions.

According to the aides' comments about workshops, summer workshops were a major source of ideas for the classroom and understanding about the nature of open classrooms. Some aides also said that they learned such things from their college courses. The school-year workshops were not as helpful because many aides had conflicting college and family commitments and had difficulty attending those workshops. Although most of the aides had been in Follow Through for two to four years, the fact that only two of the nine aides had attended workshops in Boston would seem to indicate that aides have not had many opportunities to come to those workshops.

Combining aides' comments about contacts with EDC advisors in their classrooms with their comments about workshops, it would seem that at least a few of the aides have found the EDC advisors helpful, both through providing ideas and teaching methods and by giving overt encouragement.

## 9.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

Two points stand out from the responses of aides to questions about EDC advisors. One is that workshops run during the year by EDC advisors have not reached many aides because of aides'

commitments to families and college courses. This may be unavoidable at some times, but it seems unfortunate that an important part of advisors' work excludes many aides because it occurs after school.

The second point is not obvious, but there is a hint in some of the comments, both about workshops and about classroom work with EDC advisors, that many of the aides see themselves in a subordinate position relative to the teachers in the context of working with EDC advisors. Statements that the EDC advisors work only with the teacher or that the teacher gets ideas from advisors and brings them to the aide imply a sharp distinction between the roles of teacher and aide. There are other questions that elicited responses with a similar implication, e.g., aides' responses to the question about planning in Chapter three. This sense of aides' subordination to teachers is probably realistic. The reason for calling attention to it is that there were also statements about teachers and aides being exactly equal, which is probably unrealistic. Clear division of responsibility between teachers and aides may require explicit acknowledgement of differences in responsibilities and authority.

#### 9.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

##### Question Asked

##### 1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

If yes

What do they usually do?

Do they work directly with you?

What do you do while they are in the room?

Have you found their work helpful? (Ask for examples)

Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in the classroom?

If no

Would you like advisors to work in your classroom?  
What do you know about what they do in other  
classrooms?

All nine aides interviewed said that EDC advisors had visited their classrooms, though two stipulated that no advisors had visited so far in the year just beginning.

The first follow-up question was, "What do they (EDC advisors) usually do in the classroom?" All nine aides said that EDC advisors sometimes work with children, e.g., "Usually they're involved with the kids." Aides talked about the kinds of things EDC advisors usually do with children, such as bringing in some materials to introduce to the children and working with small groups on reading. One EDC advisor was singled out as being especially good at talking with the children.

Five aides mentioned EDC advisors helping them and the teacher with new ideas or materials. One mentioned learning a new and effective way of teaching shapes. Another said the advisor had told her about arranging the classroom. A third said that she could ask advisors about things she didn't understand and get explanations from them. Two aides said that advisors usually met with them and the teachers they worked with. Two others said that EDC advisors worked with the teacher but not directly with the aides.

Two aides mentioned observation as an advisor activity, one of them making a distinction between "observing" and "working." One advisor was seen as unhelpful because observations were not

followed up by talks with the aide about what had been seen. The other advisor was used as a contrast because she worked with children in the classroom, especially the slower ones.

All nine aides said they continued to do their regular work when EDC advisors are in the room. There were different opinions about this procedure. Two aides seemed unhappy with it, one saying, "We're never around the advisors," and the other saying that she didn't know what the advisors do with children because she is always working with another group. On the other hand, one of the aides said she didn't pay any attention to the advisors because the advisors took care of the children just like a teacher would.

When asked whether they saw the advisors' work as helpful, seven aides said that it was helpful, two specifying very helpful. The remaining two aides did not think advisors' work was helpful. Aides found advisors' work was helpful because the advisors offered good ideas and the children liked working with advisors. The latter point was explained in terms of the break in the normal routine that an advisor visit provided, especially when advisors brought new materials or played the guitar. One of the aides who said the advisors were helpful quickly added that she didn't see them very often, and when asked what she thought EDC advisors did she said, "I don't know what their job is."

One of the aides who thought the EDC advisors' work was very helpful mentioned specific people she liked. She said of one advisor, "She seems to bring out the idea you've been looking for," and said that the children liked her very much. She said this

advisor had brought books in Spanish and said a Spanish-speaking girl had learned a lot because of the advisor's help. She then mentioned two other advisors, saying that one was especially good at getting the boys to do new things and that the other had done good work with children's writing. The second aide who thought EDC advisors had been very helpful also singled out a favorite, saying, "When he walks into the classroom he gives me encouragement." She said he had urged her to keep up with her schooling and helped improve the treatment she and other aides were given at a local college. She also mentioned that the white advisors were not phony, that they didn't come in as whites who pity black children. She said that the advisors give her ideas that she can try later herself.

Two aides did not find the EDC advisors' work helpful. One said that even though every idea helps, observation did not help her because "I've never talked with them" (the advisors). She said it was most helpful when advisors worked with children and she could watch. The other aide said, "I don't find them helpful... Maybe the teacher does." She explained that the advisors' work had no direct effect on her, although she learned what the advisors had to say from the teacher she worked with: "She always feeds it back to me."

The final follow-up to the first question was, "Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in the classroom?" Three suggestions emerged. One was, "I just wish they could come more," accompanied by the suggestions that they just keep on doing

what they're doing. Another was, "I really would like for them to come in and observe the behavior problems of some of the children, and try to give us ideas as to how to handle them." She wanted advisors to be in the room during "one of the real bad days," to see behavior problems first-hand. A third aide said she would like advisors to take over the class and let the teacher and aide observe. "It's never happened but I think it would be helpful."

#### Question Asked

2. I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside of the classroom:
- (a) Have you ever attended a summer workshop in (community) with an advisor?
  - (b) Have you attended any workshops during the year with an advisor?
  - (c) Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?
  - (d) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?
  - (e) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?

If yes to any of the above:

Have you found working with advisors outside the classroom helpful to your work?

If no to all of the above:

Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom?

What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with other aides outside the classroom?

#### Summer Workshops

Eight of the nine aides had attended summer workshops. All eight mentioned learning new things or getting ideas from the workshops. Six seemed to be very enthusiastic about the experience. Two mentioned the summer workshop they had just attended, where

they learned about using sand and blocks in the classroom. Other topics mentioned were reading, math, weaving, record keeping, and evaluation. One aide said that the summer workshops seemed to be getting better and better and that she could see changes in the school because people were really beginning to understand open education as a result of the workshops.

The two aides who seemed less enthusiastic were also positive about the summer workshops, saying that they got ideas and learned how to do things they hadn't known before.

#### Workshops During the School Year

Three aides did not respond to the question about workshops during the school year. Three talked about the workshop they had recently attended on math. One said she had gotten a lot of ideas on how to use materials. Another said that she had missed the math workshop but had heard it was interesting. One aide said of workshops in general that she learned a little more from each one she attended.

She, as well as other aides, mentioned the problem that school-year workshops are usually held after school and many aides attend college classes after school. Several aides had family responsibilities which interfered at times with their attending after-school workshops. One aide did say that an effort was being made to schedule workshops on days when aides were not attending college classes.

#### Workshops at EDC in Boston

The most common response to our question about aides' attendance at workshops in Boston was, "I haven't had the privilege to go there." Six aides said they had not been to Boston but would like to go. One explained that she had been scheduled to go twice but got sick both times. She admitted to being afraid of going on an airplane but said she really wanted to try that too! She said, "They told me the workshop is beautiful." Two aides had been to Boston and said their experiences had been good ones.

#### Individual Conferences

The researchers used the term "individual conferences" to include any time a teacher or aide talked with an advisor on an individual basis. We did not specify what this kind of talk might be about, e.g., classroom teaching, aide's professional growth, etc. Apparently in some instances we did not make clear what we meant by the term. One aide said she didn't think she had had such a conference because she had only talked with an EDC advisor about the class. Two aides said they had not had an individual conference and two did not respond. Four aides said they had been in individual conferences and that those conferences had been very encouraging to them. One aide felt that the EDC advisors "know me pretty well," and had helped her with problems.

#### Other Ways of Working With EDC Advisors

None of the aides suggested other ways that they would like to work with advisors. Two reaffirmed their appreciation for

workshops. One said, "They're helpful to me. I get involved in them. I put my whole heart in them." She also said that her college courses helped her quite a bit. Another aide said that she couldn't talk about more ways of working with EDC advisors because she didn't have any more time to see advisors as long as she was going to school. A fourth aide declined to suggest other ways of working with EDC advisors on the grounds that she felt the teacher should make such a decision. She said that the head of the classroom should know more and that she, the aide, would work with advisors only if the teacher thought it would improve the program.

One aide was asked about her reaction to the fact that the two EDC advisors she had worked with and appreciated for several years were no longer at EDC. She replied,

... I kind of hate it (that they're not here.) I got involved with them so deep. (One of the advisors) helped me quite a bit with my studies - sent to England for books. I really liked them. They worked very close with us. We had a problem we could talk with them and they would help us. I'm really going to miss them.

Another aide noted that she had once worked with EDC advisors at the Advisory Center in Philadelphia. She was able to observe some other open classrooms in Philadelphia and she was highly impressed with the Resource Center.

... We went to the Resource Center they had. It's big. It's nothing like the Resource Center they have at (School Number) 28. It's a whole building they have - materials galore to work with.

In comparison she thought the resource center in Paterson was broom closet size and she said it was used like a "broom closet", as a place to store things.

The aide who saw workshops as helping the entire Follow Through staff to understand open education better elaborated on her growing understanding of open education.

... I've grown along with the program to understand open education is not that kids do this and kids do that. Kids, they can do it, but they do it at their own rate... You can have an open classroom and still have a quiet classroom.

She said that she used to have to struggle to tell people what open education is but that now she quickly tells people her own definition - that open education means, "Learning and playing go hand-in-hand."

#### Comments on Local Advisors

In connection with the questions about EDC advisors, three aides made unsolicited comments about their local advisors in Paterson. Since the questions asked of teachers about who they work with in the school (Chapter four) were not asked of aides, we shall include those comments here.

One aide did not see the local advisors as particularly helpful. She said that what she learned in college and what she thought up on her own were more helpful in her work. She described the local advisors' work as checking on the arrangement of her classroom and on what was going on in it. She said that they had

observed this year but hadn't done anything else, "So I guess we're doing all right." She did say that the local advisors made materials available from the resource center.

The other two aides who mentioned local advisors were more positive. One said that local advisors brought materials from the resource center when she didn't have time to go there, and that one local advisor had given her good suggestions about working with a girl with serious writing problems. She also described a case when the local advisor gave her advice that she, the aide, said wouldn't work. The local advisor then observed the boy about whom the advice had been given and agreed that the aide had been right. This aide thought the local advisors did "a nice job."

The other aide who was pleased with the local advisors' work talked about the after-school workshops the local advisors ran and about their help in the classroom. She said a local advisor had suggested a science area and brought in materials to set one up. Her comments implied advisors were supervisors and did things for teachers and aides.

... They work so hard. When I see them coming I usually move 'cause I know they want you to work hard.

... There's a lot of things in our room that (the local advisors) really started. They fixed them up, you know, because we didn't know what to do.

#### Question Asked

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do? (with yourself and with others) How do they usually respond?

Three aides said that they communicate with EDC advisors through the local advisors or the project director. One also mentioned that either the local advisors or the project director sometimes brings around a sheet for aides and teachers to fill out to let EDC advisors know what they would like to see happen. She said that the aides filled theirs out together, but that she hadn't seen such a sheet for some time. She added that the local advisors tell her when EDC advisors are coming.

Three other aides said they tell EDC advisors directly what they would like. One said, "I just walk up and tell them," and explained that she tries to do this in a way that shows she respects them and said that this approach has been effective. Another of these three aides said she especially liked EDC advisors to follow up on suggestions by writing letters. A fourth aide said that she usually tells EDC advisors directly but that sometimes she goes through the local advisors. She felt that she could be very forthright about asking for help or for changes.

#### 9.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

In general, the responses indicated that EDC advisors in Paterson have worked primarily with the two local advisors, and with the project director. EDC advisors' contact with the two principals has been limited. Because of the differences in amount and quality of contact between EDC advisors and the three different kinds of administrators questioned, responses of local advisors,

project director, and principals will be reported separately for the entire series of questions.

Those administrators who approve of the open education approach to Follow Through found much of the advisors' work helpful, but the local advisors and project director also described some problems, particularly in the areas of individual advisors' competence in relation to Paterson and in the areas of organizational matters at EDC.

#### 9.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

One of the interesting implications of the responses to this section was that the roles of EDC advisors in Paterson have changed as the local advisors have become more experienced and more outspoken in stating their views. It seems that EDC advisors in Paterson are utilized in rather specialized ways, to supplement the skills of local advisors, and to deal with special problems or needs that EDC advisors can handle because of their position as outsiders with wider contact. Apparently the EDC advisor with the most extensive contact in Paterson spent his time supporting the professional development of the local advisors. They appreciate his contribution to their professional development very much and now act independently, feeling free to ask for or reject specific EDC

advisors on the basis of their own judgments about what Paterson needs. To the extent that the Paterson program has gained the ability to function without the same kind of input from EDC advisors as was felt to be appropriate at earlier stages of the program, those advisors have done their job and have helped make the Paterson program more self-sufficient.

#### 9.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

##### Questions Asked

All of the administrators involved in the Paterson Follow Through program were asked a series of questions intended to elicit their opinions about the work of the EDC advisors. The questions were different from those asked of teachers and aides because the administrators have different kinds of responsibilities.

1. What have EDC advisors done with you? In general, have you found your work with EDC advisors helpful? What else would you like to see advisors doing with you?
2. What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with others in the program?
3. What difficulties have you had in working with EDC advisors?

4. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do?
5. To what extent do you feel your needs and wishes for advisory activities and personnel have been or are being met by EDC?

The responses to the above questions were grouped into a general statement for each type of administrator involved.

### Principals

The principals had relatively little to say about EDC advisors. The principal who previously expressed strong disagreement with Follow Through and the open classroom said that he talked with EDC advisors but that this had little value because the talk remained at the level of feelings rather than being about "measurable entities." He wanted the EDC advisors to talk about what they would like to see happen and then relate that to concrete procedures. He said that he would be willing to do the same thing and then, at least, there would be something measurable to talk about. When asked about difficulties in working with EDC advisors he said that his relationship to EDC advisors had been colored by hearsay and emotionalism and that when he entered a classroom where an EDC advisor was working he could tell he was creating an emotional situation so that he tried to stay away as much as possible. His responses to the remaining questions were consistent with his not having much to do with the EDC advisors and not approving of what they were trying to accomplish.

The other principal, who expressed support for the open classroom and approval of Follow Through said that EDC advisors communicated with him and advised him about what they were trying to do in the school, but that they worked primarily with the project director. He was aware of the general things advisors do and had experienced no difficulties in working with them. He said he had never made any suggestions to EDC advisors but that if he had any suggestions he would make them through the local advisors. When asked how well EDC advisors met his needs he suggested that EDC advisors might work with all the teachers in the school, rather than just Follow Through teachers. He thought that they could recommend those Follow Through practices that had proved successful and help non-Follow Through teachers implement them.

#### Project Director

The Project Director said that EDC advisors try to keep her abreast of their work with teachers and local advisors. They have consulted her to learn what she would like them to do. She felt that EDC advisors have been helpful to teachers. She said that she would like more continuity between grade levels, which would require better records of what children were able to do. She made two comments about EDC

and the advisors that were echoed by the local advisors. She felt some of the advisors sent to Paterson by EDC have not been able to do the job that needed doing. She referred to EDC advisors who came only once or a few times for specific purposes, not to the liaison advisors. The other comment she made was that there have been too many directors for EDC as the Follow Through sponsor, saying that the turnover "weakens faith" of Paterson people in EDC.

#### Local Advisors

The two local advisors gave the most detailed responses to this question. One talked about what EDC advisors had done with her when she was a classroom teacher during the first year of Follow Through. She said this had helped her grow as a teacher. Both local advisors emphasized the training they had received from EDC advisors for their job as local advisors. They specially mentioned one EDC advisor who worked in Paterson for four years. They also talked about EDC advisors putting them in contact with people who could help them with specific needs. An example was the

two people who were eventually brought in as consultants to set up an evaluation and documentation procedure for the Paterson program. EDC advisors were described as helping work out specific problems, supporting projects, locating resources, and providing stability through organizational changes at EDC. When asked what kinds of things they know about that EDC advisors do with other people in Paterson, both local advisors stressed the work with teachers and aides in classrooms, one of them listing observation of teachers and children, helping teachers set up "areas", doing evaluations, and talking with teachers, as specific activities. The other local advisor talked about EDC advisors' work with parents, their attempts to work with principals, and their contacts with the Superintendent of Schools and people on the Board of Education in Paterson. One EDC advisor's work to help the aides with their career development program was also mentioned.

The third question,

"What difficulties have you had in working with EDC advisors?"

yielded the same kinds of comments made by the director:  
some advisors had not proven competent, and EDC  
operating procedures sometimes caused problems.

One local advisor said,

Well, we found that anyone that  
comes to Paterson ... who has  
something that they want to do,  
is usually successful.

The local advisors said they now make a point of  
getting to know the individual EDC advisors and deciding  
who they feel would be most helpful for the needs of  
their program. They felt that Paterson should be in-  
cluded in the process of making decisions which effect  
the functioning of their program.

Both local advisors said that EDC advisors have  
responded to their needs. One gave as an example  
their often-repeated request for help with some type  
of evaluation.

She said that in answer to this request, the  
EDC advisor made arrangements for them to meet two  
consultants who had extensive background in evaluation.

They selected one of these consultants who then worked with them in preparation for doing an extensive documentation of the Paterson program.

## CHAPTER 10

### SATISFACTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES IN FOLLOW THROUGH AS REPORTED BY PATERSON TEACHERS, AIDES AND ADMINISTRATORS

#### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

The questions reported in this chapter were designed to allow respondents to talk about aspects of their experience in the Follow Through program that they considered important but which we had not asked about specifically.

All three groups were asked about their greatest satisfactions and greatest difficulties working in the Follow Through program in order to elicit statements about what it means to be a teacher, aide or administrator in Follow Through. Teachers and aides were asked what tips or suggestions they would give to a person considering entering the program. Aides were asked an additional question about the impact of their experiences as aides on their personal goals. We expected that the opportunity to become an aide and work toward certification as a teacher would be significant to many of the aides, and wanted to give them a chance to talk about that. Administrators were asked three questions specifically about EDC Follow Through, their opinion about its' goals, and about the positive and negative aspects of EDC Follow Through in their community. We hoped these questions would be relevant for administrators who had responsibilities for whole programs or schools, as well as for administrators primarily

concerned with Follow Through

#### 10.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The greatest satisfactions expressed by all of the Follow Through staff members concerned the growth fostered by the Follow Through program in staff, children and parents. The principle difficulties mentioned by all three groups had to do with trying to implement Follow Through within a large school system.

#### 10.3 OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Responses to these questions indicate a widespread feeling that EDC Follow Through has had a strong and beneficial impact on the people involved in it. The problems with the school system, and one school in particular, raise again the feasibility of locating a Follow Through program in a school where it is unwanted. It would seem wiser to match educational approaches with administrators who believe in those approaches so that a variety of teaching styles could be fostered within the same system. Under the circumstances described, both Follow Through staff members and public school personnel seem to be using energy in fruitless struggles that could be avoided.

#### 10.4 and 10.5 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Follow Through teachers in Paterson seemed to be relatively well satisfied with their situation. Most often teachers mentioned

their feeling of being able to learn personally and being able to see the children learn. On the other hand, there was little agreement on specific difficulties, suggesting that problems are manageable on an individual basis. The one exception is the opposition of one school to Follow Through practices, which has been discussed elsewhere. (See Administrators Section of Chapter 7). The positive slant of teachers' comments should be tempered by recognition of the limits of our data-collecting. The interviews were conducted by relative strangers who were associated with the sponsoring organization, so potentially damaging information could have been withheld as being inappropriate under the circumstances.

Another implication suggested by the mention of difficulties in dealing with classroom situations is that the work of the EDC advisors and local advisors is still in progress. This is brought home strongly by the fact that four of the teachers interviewed were in their first year in Follow Through and three of those were teaching full-time for the first time. It is not surprising, then, that they still encounter problems in handling classes with children at different ability levels. The suggestions and tips offered to incoming Follow Through teachers were mainly about how to

handle various aspects of open classroom teaching, not about problems they had confronted or potential difficulties to avoid. The strongest impression from these responses is that the Follow Through teachers we talked to saw themselves as open classroom teachers and had a strong sense of the differences between open classrooms and conventional classrooms. The teachers told about the positive sides of their experience. Combined with the comments on their satisfactions and difficulties, the teachers seemed favorably disposed toward Follow Through and see it as superior to conventional schooling.

#### 10.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

##### Question Asked

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through teacher?

Probe: Do you think that is different from non-Follow Through teaching?

##### Satisfactions

The responses of eight teachers can be divided into two categories: satisfactions related to the teacher's situation; and satisfactions related to the children. Five comments fell into each category. The other teacher in her first year of Follow Through and full-time teaching said that she couldn't say what her greatest satisfactions were yet because she hadn't been there long enough.

Two of the teachers who talked about their satisfactions

related to the Follow Through teaching situation said that they liked the cooperation among the Follow Through staff. One felt she had the support of other people who knew her goals and that she could go to them for suggestions and help. Two other teachers spoke of the learning they have done because of their involvement in Follow Through. One of those said she was much better able to do a number of things this year than last. The other stressed the possibilities for growth related to demands for change. She felt that being required to work with constant change was a learning experience for her. Another teacher singled out the opportunity she had to explore children's learning on her own, without the restrictions of a curriculum guide, as the most satisfying aspect of Follow Through for her.

Three teachers mentioned the learning they saw in children as giving them the most satisfaction. One described this in terms of liking to be in the classroom on a good day, when children were alert, asking her questions that she couldn't always answer, and pleased with what they were doing. Another derived great satisfaction from having the opportunity to continue to introduce new things into the classroom and seeing children learning, experimenting, discovering, and feeling. Two more teachers mentioned things directly related to learning. One said she appreciated the individualization that was possible in Follow Through. The other spoke of the "really good feeling that a lot of the kids have about themselves."

Five teachers were asked whether they thought the things that satisfied them were different from what they would experience in a non-Follow Through class. Only the teacher who talked about the satisfactions of a particularly good day said that her satisfaction would remain the same. The other four felt that Follow Through was essential to their experiencing the satisfactions they had mentioned.

#### Question Asked

2. What are the greatest difficulties you encounter as a Follow Through teacher?

#### Difficulties

The difficulties teachers said they encountered in Follow Through are harder to categorize than the satisfactions. Five teachers' responses had to do with problems in dealing with the classroom situation. Three comments had to do with the diversity or numbers of children within the same classroom and how that makes it hard to individualize instruction and to appeal to children's interests. Another teacher said it was hard for her to cover everything she was expected to cover. Two of the five teachers mentioned problems connected with being new. One said she found it hard to learn what materials were available for her grade level and that she needed money to buy some materials. However, she said that her difficulties tended to be short-lived and said, "I've got time to work things out." The other, a first-year teacher, said she found it difficult to get adjusted to the classroom situation.

Two teachers said that there were difficulties associated with teaching in their particular school because of the differences between Follow Through policies and the policies of the school. One example given was the Follow Through practice of not giving report cards coupled with the demand for report cards to be kept on file in the school office. This entails double work because teachers are required to report children's progress to parents informally as Follow Through teachers but, to make out report cards for the files. (See report on Administrators.)

Two other teachers said they had difficulty explaining their work to others. One included many people, saying, "Getting people to understand me and what I'm trying to do," was her greatest difficulty. The other limited it to parents. She said that parents want structure and discipline and wonder why they don't receive report cards for their children, but, she added that she was becoming better able to explain Follow Through practices.

One teacher said one of her greatest difficulties was trying to work well with her aide. Her description of this situation is included in Chapter 3.

#### Question Asked

3. If you were talking to another teacher who was considering entering the Follow Through program, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?

Five teachers included in their response the opinion that what they would say would depend very much on the ideas and experiences of the prospective Follow Through teacher. One went into some detail, saying that her tips would depend on whether the teacher she was talking

to had come from a conventional classroom, from one in which instruction was individualized, or from an open classroom. She said that if the teacher was used to a conventional classroom, she would recommend some reading on individualized instruction, and if the teacher knew about individualizing, she would tell her to collect all kinds of materials to bring to the classroom. She felt that a teacher who was familiar with the open classroom would know what to do, and concluded with the statement, "Open is as the teacher is. Every open classroom is different." One teacher's response was, "If they were really excited about open education, I would say, 'Come, be part of the program'" implying that the teacher's enthusiasm toward open education would make an important difference. This point was summarized by a teacher who said, "I'd try to find out where her head is at in education, because I think the program can be ruined by teachers who try to be open, but who, in philosophy, really aren't open and in action really aren't open."

Five teachers said their tips would concern their own experience in running an open classroom. Three of these talked about the importance of "opening up" slowly, or introducing new areas for free activity one-at-a-time rather than having too much material available all at once. A related point was the suggestion that the teacher start off in a "structured" way and move toward openness. Other teachers said they would tell about how they ran their classrooms and what they had learned. Two teachers would warn them that it is very

difficult to keep records on each child, but that records were essential to running a good open classroom and reporting on children's progress.

One teacher said she would tell a teacher who was considering entering Follow Through that Follow Through was more stimulating, more creative, and less rigid than a regular classroom. Another said she would recommend that a new teacher try to get to know the other people in the program in order to find out who could give them the best ideas.

#### 10.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

Aides talked about satisfactions in three areas: being able to work with children and help them learn; their working relationship with members of the Follow Through staff; and the opportunity to do worthwhile work. They expressed less agreement about difficulties, but made it clear that there were some problems. For example, aides spoke of their fear of the program being phased out, their resentment at biased attitudes toward the children they work with, and the lack of respect sometimes shown them because of their para-professional status. The last point was balanced by expressions of satisfaction with the changes in personal goals accompanying the experience of becoming aides, even when the burdens of working as an aide, taking courses, and being a mother were described as overwhelming. Tips for new aides included how to do the job, how to deal with differences among children, and the opinion that each aide would have to learn the

most important things individually.

#### 10.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

Many of the aides' responses to these questions imply that the aide's relationship with a teacher might be a source of difficulties. The statement that many people other than teachers who work with aides do not respect the aides indicates an area of concern regarding the positions and functions of aides in the Follow Through program. Perhaps, if we had been better known by the aides, we could have learned even more about this. However, simply on the basis of the way schools normally operate, it is possible to see why this problem might arise. The nearly universal pattern of American schooling is to have one adult in each classroom and for that adult to be a college graduate. The introduction of an additional adult, and one who has less formal education, is a significant change that could be expected to arouse some resistance and to pose some new problems for people in the situation. Most teachers' training does not include anything about how to work with another adult, so both teachers and aides are faced with a new personal and professional situation. It is not surprising that there would be some uneasiness in the relationship. Neither is it surprising that there would be some questions about the competence of aides to work with children, since they do not have conventional credentials.

Such expected and reported difficulties should not overshadow the degree of satisfaction expressed by the aides. It seems particularly

significant that aides seemed to derive satisfaction both from the immediate experience of working with children and from the more intangible feeling that they were able to do something worthwhile.

The personal impact of working was the focus on the third question asked of aides. The aides' comments are a clear indication that they view their own opportunities to develop new careers as a significant outcome of Follow Through. They appreciate the chance to work with children and to work toward a college degree. From the information collected about their backgrounds, it seems unlikely that most of the aides would have had such an opportunity without Follow Through. However, the amount of time and energy required of the aides who attend classes and keep house, and work full time is clearly a burden. If career development for aides is intended as an explicit goal of Follow Through, it would be wise to make accommodations to reduce this burden, such as providing money for child care and house-keeping help and limiting the work load.

#### 10.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

##### Question Asked

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through aide?

The most frequent response to this question was that the greatest satisfaction came from working with children and helping them learn. One aide said, with a great deal of feeling, "I really feel that they're a part of me and I'm a part of them. And, I have something, you know, to

really give them." She went on to say that she doesn't like to have to take time away from them, and she said that it bothers her to hear some teachers say they don't like the children because they can't learn. She spoke at length about how difficult it is to help children learn, giving her own child as an example. Another aide said she enjoys working with a child who has been called difficult and seeing him or her improve. Another said, "I'm pleased when I see the children making progress - any type of progress." One of the aides who said she received her greatest satisfaction from working with the children tied her satisfaction to the open classroom, which she described as, "beautiful". She felt that the opportunity the children had to work with a variety of materials and have different experiences was particularly important because of the disadvantages they have outside of the classroom.

Two aides said that they were most satisfied by the working relationships they had with Follow Through staff. One of these said that the staff had "Begun to understand and see the real true meaning of open education," which to her meant understanding that you can use some of the old with the new. She was pleased that the staff had grown together in their understanding and application of open education.

Finally, two more aides said their satisfaction came primarily from doing something worthwhile. One made this point by saying that it was hard for her to answer the question: "I really like my job, and for me to pick out one particular thing would be very difficult for me to do." The other expanded on the idea of working with the children by saying that this work gave her a personal sense of accomplishing

something worthwhile. She said that teachers are very important and that her role in motivating children and shaping their lives gave her the sense that she was really doing something. She concluded by saying, "The feeling I have as far as really contributing myself, and contributing something to these children, it seems to overcome the problems."

#### Question Asked

#### 2. What are your greatest difficulties as a Follow Through aide?

Five aides said that they had no problems with their jobs or that they were able to work them out when they arose. Two of these said that they had experienced difficulties previously in the program, but that those difficulties had been overcome. One said that discipline had been a serious problem in one teacher's class, but that teacher had decided open education was not for her and left the program. The other said that she had some problems with the college courses she was taking when the program first started, but that a member of the Follow Through staff had helped to improve that situation.

One aide said that her major problem was working in a school that did not support open education. Another said her classroom was too small. One aide responded by saying, "The dissatisfaction I get from this program (is) knowing it's going to phase out." The basis of her concern seemed to be the aides' positions and the educational opportunities accompanying the position. She was particularly worried about those aides who had made sacrifices in order to attend school,

but had not yet received degrees. She said that a group of aides had been talking about what might happen and had even discussed the possibility of starting a day care center in order to use their newly developed skills and provide enough income to support their continuing education. She asked, "What can you do but go back to a factory or something?"

In the context of this question another aide made a statement about her feelings regarding the kinds of children she teaches. She was not talking specifically about Follow Through. She said she resented the labelling of children as "ghetto kids," saying that if children in a ghetto area have a temper tantrum it is explained by saying they have some "learning disability", whereas middle class children are considered normal under the same conditions.

Only one aide spoke at length about the difficulty of being a para-professional. However, her statement points to an area that may be more of a problem than was brought out in our interviews. She said:

My dissatisfaction is I really think people look on aides as nothing. A lot of people feel we shouldn't be in the classroom. They feel that we shouldn't have any say-so. This disturbs me because I'm going to school and I have a family. I work all day and I go to school at night. and it's depriving my family of me. And then to hear people come in and say, "She's nothing..." A lot of people feel we should be in there to help the kids put on their coats and that's it....I think there should be a better understanding about the aides....I want to be recognized as being something. I'm doing a job.

When asked who the people were who thought this way about aides, she said they were teachers who didn't have aides, a large majority of the

parents, and high ranking people in the community who feel the schools should be more structured, but have their own children in private schools. She also said that the distinction between aide, assistant teacher, and associate teacher - based on the number of hours of credit completed - did not help because people in the community considered all aides the same.

Other aides also expressed concern with this problem. The same aide who expressed concern about the program phasing out also commented that people joked about the word, "aide," but that she didn't care what she was called as long as she was able to help children, as she had always wanted to do. Three of the five aides who said that they had no problems suggested that the reason they had no problems was that they got along well with the teacher they worked with. One talked in some detail about not taking over the class but doing both what she wanted to do and what the teacher wanted her to do. The implication of these three aides' remarks is that they think the most likely source of difficulties would be relations with the teacher they worked with and that they were fortunate in not having such problems.

Question Asked:

3. Have your experiences as an aide in Follow Through made any changes in your personal goals? What kinds?

This question was asked only of aides. It reflected our expectation that Follow Through offered aides unique opportunities not found elsewhere. This expectation was justified by the responses to the question.

One aide, taking the question quite literally said that being in Follow Through had not made a difference because she had begun work as

an aide in order to become a teacher and that was still her goal. The remaining seven said that being aides had changed their personal goals and that they were pleased with the changes. One aide was not asked that question.

Two aides said that being in classrooms had helped them understand their own children better. One of those aides and the remaining five all mentioned either becoming a teacher or continuing their education as goals they had adopted since becoming aides. Much of what was said in this connection seemed to be important to the aides and it was often stated powerfully. For this reason, we shall quote extensively.

Unless you continue with education when you finish high school, you seem to get away from that. You have no involvement with education anymore-no more than your kids, if you have children....But now I find myself seeing things that I want, as an individual and as a parent for kids. Like when I go into that classroom. I'm not just walking in there saying that I'm going to get paid on the 15th and the 30th. I'm going in there with the idea of saying, "Well, maybe there's some way that I can help this little boy." Or maybe later on in life I'll be able to go into certain areas that I would like to feel free. It has made a great change in my life, because it's not that I was - I was never a person that wasn't interested in things - but it gives me a better idea on life. And it also seems like to me it encourages my own kids.

She went on to say that her son was very proud of her being a "teacher" and that her work in the school had made a difference in his school work. She added that many of the children in her class have relatives in the housing project where she lives and that this makes them feel better about where they live themselves.

Another aide expanded upon the implication that the aides may be particularly well-suited to helping the children in these schools because they live in the community.



Yes, I really want to keep going because I see - every day I work in this building - see so many children walking the halls, not learning anything. The regular school teachers put them out, you know. They can't handle them. I see so many kids just losing out daily, until it just gives me a determination just to keep going, to keep on pushing so these kids - maybe not the ones I see walking the halls - but someone else won't have to walk the halls.

One aide said that she had hoped to open a dress shop before becoming an aide but that now she wanted to continue working with children. Another said that she had not thought about teaching before she became an aide but that now she would like to become a teacher in an open classroom. She said, "I think I would really put my whole heart into being a good teacher in open education." She added that she had enjoyed her college courses.

The opportunity to take college courses, made possible by Follow Through money for tuition and a good deal of work by the local project director in dealing with local colleges, had been important to aides, but also had created some problems. Two aides said that they were tired now from taking so many courses on top of full-time jobs and caring for a home and children. When explaining why she didn't attend all the workshops at her school, one of those aides described her schedule:

On Mondays, I have a four o'clock class. That means I've got to be there at four o'clock. So that means I got time to go home and throw some pots on the stove, and I'm on my way out. On Wednesday, I have a class from seven until eight fifteen. Now Mondays, going back to Monday's class, it's from four until eight fifteen. I have two classes on Monday....On Thursday I have geology and astronomy from six thirty until ten o'clock.

I've been going to school now continuously, year-round, for three years. The only time I miss is the four weeks pre-session. That's the only time I miss, you know, going to school. I go during the summer. I go during the year...It's beginning to play on my nerves now. And I can see it within

the classroom and I can see it at home. So I think I'm going to take it easy for a semester and then go back....I don't have the patience in the classroom and I don't have the patience with the kids at home that I used to have.

#### Question Asked

4. If you could speak to another person who was considering entering the Follow Through program as an aide, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?

This question yielded some additional comments on many themes previously sounded. For example, the same aide who had spoken at length about the lack of respect for aides by some people as a difficulty she experienced said that she would tell a prospective aide about some of the "knockdowns" aides get. The same aide whose chief dissatisfaction was the impending phase-out of Follow Through said she would tell such a person to "hold off, because it's phasing out."

Of the largest number of comments, five fit into the category of suggestion about how to do the job. Two aides spoke of the importance of committing yourself "wholeheartedly" to the work and applying your own creativity. The implication of one of those comments was that it was essential to develop a close working relationship with the teacher. The other spoke in terms of doing the best work with children: "I try to do different things that are going to benefit me and the kids."

Two of the other aides who gave advice on how to do the job talked about the relationship between aides and children. One suggested that an aide simply act like a parent. The other warned that no one should consider becoming an aide unless they like children. Another aide emphasized the social relationships among Follow Through staff members, saying that aides have to be able to get along with others because in Follow Through people work as a group rather than independently.

The second category of comments, including three aides' remarks, had to do with differences among children. One aide said she would tell a prospective aide how different children are from one another. Another stressed the tendency of children to make noise and said that an aide should be able to understand that and tolerate such noise. She said that she did not agree with the maxim that children should be seen and not heard. The third aide wanted to say that children should not be ordered about. "You're working with children, not robots...They got a say-so; they got feelings. Treat them like human beings."

The third category includes the responses of three aides who thought they would not give advice because it is important for people to learn for themselves. These aides did not say that there was nothing they could relate, just that the most important learning would come through experience. One said the advice she would give would not be to take someone else's word about particular children, but to let each child have a chance, unencumbered by another person's judgment. Another of these three aides said that she had been asked for advice about how to work with a particular teacher but that she had declined to give it on the grounds that what works for one person will not necessarily work for another. She was sure that anyone joining the program would learn a lot, but that part of that learning would be about how each individual fits into the program. The third aide in this group stated that she herself had not been ready to be an aide when she first started, but, she said, people have to come into the program and learn for themselves whether it is right for them, and leave if it is not.

... As a matter of fact, I don't think I would tell them anything. Experience is the best teacher. You can find out for yourself whether or not you're ready...or even if you're not ready, you can become ready. You can really get into it.

#### 10.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

All three Follow Through staff members mentioned the growth of teachers (probably meaning teachers and aides), as among their greatest satisfactions with Follow Through and all of them mentioned administrative red-tape problems as among their greatest difficulties. They differed somewhat on other listings of satisfactions and difficulties, but even those were similar in fundamental ways. All mentioned growth as among their satisfactions, whether personal, the school district's, parent's, or the Follow Through staff's. Similarly, although difficulties differed in specificity, they all centered on the running of the program within the context of a larger umbrella system. All three Follow Through staff members differed from the two principals who didn't list specific concerns.

#### 10.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The satisfaction of the project director and local advisors with growth among people in the Follow Through program seems positive and much in line with EDC's goals. Their difficulties are the kind that must be expected in running an innovative educational program within a traditional bureaucratic school system. The fact that the two principals had little to add in response to these questions reflects one

principal's opposition to EDC Follow Through (See Chapter 7), the other principal's newness to Follow Through, and both principals' relative isolation from EDC advisors (See Chapter 9).

#### 10.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

##### Questions Asked

1. What have been your greatest satisfactions as an administrator in Follow Through?
2. What have been your greatest difficulties as an administrator in Follow Through?

##### PROJECT DIRECTOR

The project director stated firmly that her greatest satisfaction in Follow Through has been with paraprofessionals. She said that in 1969, there had been no stated funded program for paraprofessionals; she and paraprofessionals used to search out opportunities on their own. Now there is a career development grant which serves about half the Follow Through aides.

Some federal money has been used to supplement the program. The project director added that, according to a national conference, Paterson has at least as many paraprofessionals taking college courses as other programs in the country.

She also mentioned satisfaction with the growth of teachers -- seeing where they were one year and seeing where they go. She has also been pleased with the growth she sees in parents' attitudes toward the classroom. They've learned a lot about how a classroom

works, she said, along with learning about using the social aide, nurse, and other social service people in the school. Moreover, she is pleased that parents have begun to participate in various school-related agencies. She also was proud of the children's growth.

The project director's greatest difficulties centered on having too much to do. Such things include attending many meetings and keeping contact with numerous school-related agencies. She also felt that there is much more that she would like to do, like publicizing the program better throughout the city. She also mentioned that working with the bureaucracy is difficult, for example, the amount of red tape involved in simply ordering supplies.

#### LOCAL ADVISORS

One local advisor said that her greatest satisfaction was her own personal growth: "I just don't think that again in life I'll have the experience of just coming into contact with so many people, having that give and take. Tremendous personal growth." She also mentioned two other satisfactions: (1) the subtle influence of the program on the school system and; (2) the impact of the program on teachers.

Her greatest difficulty in Follow Through involved the school system. She said she felt that the State of New Jersey itself has been working 20 years behind the times, and "the system's whole rigmarole, the red tape, legal papers, documents, it just holds everything up."

The other local advisor first mentioned the growth of the Follow Through staff members as her greatest satisfaction as local advisor. She expanded by saying that people have learned to respect and understand each other, a first step towards real growth, and have thus learned to better understand people in general, especially children. She also has appreciated the relationships that have developed among people in Follow Through. Third, she mentioned the growth in the teaching staff (aides and teachers).

Her greatest difficulties involved distributing and keeping track of materials and supplies. When she was in charge of that activity she found it exhausting and confusing. She also mentioned administrative problems, essentially having to deal with the political structure of the school district, involving the principal, the superintendent, and the Board of Education. She mentioned red-tape issues like the manner in which the school district handles petty cash. Although the money may be in the Follow Through budget, the school district handles all money, and obtaining petty cash takes far too long and defies the definition of petty cash.

#### PRINCIPALS

The two principals had little or nothing to say about satisfactions and difficulties as principals in Follow Through. One said that he just didn't know at this time; he hadn't had a chance to truly assess the Follow Through program. The other principal had already mentioned having fundamental difficulties with EDC Follow Through, since his own philosophy of education differed from the EDC Approach (See Chapter 7).

Question Asked

3. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through Program tried to accomplish? Do you share those goals? Why or why not?  
Do you feel those goals are being accomplished? Why or why not?

PROJECT DIRECTOR

The project director believed that EDC put most of its emphasis on trying to develop good local advisors, because the local advisors are "on the scene" continually. She also mentioned developing the resource center and helping teachers develop good classrooms. She felt that efforts towards those goals were satisfactory. However, she added that a fourth goal of evaluating children's accomplishments' needs more work. She suggested that EDC put out a brochure about the Paterson Follow Through Program to communicate what children have accomplished.

LOCAL ADVISORS

One local advisor in Paterson stated several goals from a paper by a former EDC staff member which she said were worth accomplishing in the school. She felt, however, that there was a difference between those written goals and the goals of some EDC staff. She felt that the inconsistency might be a function of EDC not being able to hire people who shared the written goals, or perhaps some of the staff just didn't bring the skills needed for implementing EDC goals in Paterson.

The local advisor listed several goals she thought were important to the EDC Follow Through Program. The first was the establishment of open classrooms where ...

"teaching would be going on...determined by the children's interests and styles of learning. Children would select... certain activities, because they were interested in them. There would be numerous activities available in the classroom; teachers would make use of their environment and raw materials."

The open classroom is different from the so-called regular classroom, she added, because curriculum is not pre-determined.

A second goal was to provide support for teachers because one of the program's founders felt the best way to maintain open classrooms was to have teachers themselves grow. To implement that goal there has been staff development.

Associated with support for teachers was the third goal of making communities self-sufficient. This administrator added that she believed this was a goal because early in the program EDC suggested that local advisors were important to maintain growth and stimulate change.

The fourth goal mentioned was to get parents involved. However, she added, EDC never really worked on how they were going to do this. "They didn't help people in the community see how they could be involved; and I think that was something they could have done much more with."

Generally summarized, the other local advisor said that the EDC approach is more humanistic than traditional approaches, that a main emphasis is to help people (teachers, aides and children) learn and grow in exciting and individual ways, that the concern is less with reading scores and more with viewing the whole child. She suggested that EDC should have done more on public relations to spread the word in the program. "If more had been done to really let the community know... and more had been done earlier in terms of documenting what was taking place,...We would probably have been (known as) more successful."

EDC should have set up some facility to handle publications, she added, shared an EDC advisor's poetry, poems from a teacher's class, had pictures in the newspaper. In these ways, the EDC Follow Through program would have to be struggling for a continued existence.

### PRINCIPALS

One principal did not list EDC goals, although he suggested EDC goals were no different from regular school goals. He mentioned that EDC's process involves advising the project director and staff on curriculum and testing whether the program is achieving the results set up for it. Structurally the EDC Follow Through Program adheres "to a freer atmosphere in the classrooms. Children are not relegated to fixed desks and fixed seats...you see kids all over..in a supervised setting," Moreover, there is an aide in each classroom and different teaching methods. He went on to say that this structure is different from regular classrooms which have 90 minutes of reading and 60 minutes of math daily. Although he believed the same things were covered in EDC Follow Through classrooms, he shared these structural goals only partially. He said, "I've seen the results of the lack of structure, and I like what I've seen." But, he continued to wonder whether the kids in city schools need to have structure; whether the Follow Through program is a real benefit to them. He posited a tentative view that the Follow Through program seems good in kindergarten but not so good in the third grade. However, he added that in another year or so he'd be able to make a more valid judgment on the program's goals and effectiveness.

A second principal said that he had serious objections to what he considered to be the philosophy and rationale of the Follow Through Program that he has observed and that has been interpreted to him by EDC advisors and others. He believed that the EDC approach encourages children to "do your own thing," to do things for yourself and by yourself. He suggested this approach was inappropriate for inner-city black children. He said that:

"to theorize, to fantasize that you can made an individual free who is a member of an oppressed group by putting notions in his head concerning freedom of the individual is tantamount to completely fettering this individual to fairy tales...He will spend the rest of his life struggling in his own mind against the fetters of nonsense concerning the freedom of the individual when he should be spending that energy as part of a mass of blacks struggling for individual recognition as people."

This principal argued that in the absence of recognition and equality, the first step towards filling those voids comes from a sense of self-knowledge that you can do certain things effectively. If individuals are highly skilled, self-directed through discipline, and clearly understand their roles in terms of the total power of the group, they can set courses which will help bring about those unfilled goals for all blacks.

#### Questions Asked:

4. What do you see as the most positive aspects of EDC Follow Through in Paterson?
5. How about the other side? Are there also negative aspects to EDC Follow Through? What are they?

These two questions were asked of only one local advisor and one principal. However, because the responses were informative, we included

them here.

The local advisor said that people we are working with are much more open to new ideas; they're more involved with children than with the physical set up of the classroom. This local advisor also felt that the Paterson EDC program staff has forced people in this school system to take a look at education in a different way. Some don't agree with it, she said, but at least they're looking at it. She added that she's noticed that people in the district are copying concepts started in the Paterson EDC Follow Through program and giving them other names. For example, two years ago, the school district did not have a "project team teacher." "This is a person who now goes around to people's classrooms and helps teachers and children." This advisor felt that that idea came out of seeing what happened in Follow Through with local advisors.

On the other side of the coin, this local advisor said that the only negative thing about Follow Through is that

"we just can't get the job done...like my job description on paper is beautiful, but I'm not able to carry out every aspect of that...but I keep trying for it."

One principal, though reserving an assessment of Follow Through until the children from Follow Through have completed a year in regular classrooms, said that one teacher in the upper grades has told him that she's impressed that Follow Through children are able to make decisions that regular children couldn't or didn't make.

## CHAPTER 11

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER FOLLOW THROUGH LEAVES PATERSON: OPINIONS OF PATERSON TEACHERS, AIDES AND ADMINISTRATORS

#### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

The basic question reported in this chapter is how the termination of Follow Through would affect the current Follow Through schools in Paterson. Respondents were asked specifically what, in their opinions, would be missing when the program ended and what would remain. This question was directed to the focal issue of this research project; how do the people in Paterson Follow Through view the impact of EDC advisors?

#### 11.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Teachers, aides, and the local advisors expressed the opinion that open classrooms could continue in Paterson after Follow Through leaves, provided that principals and other school officials supported them. There was general agreement that the extra resources provided by federal funds would not be continued by the school system.

#### 11.3. OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The emphasis on open classrooms, in response to this question, whether the opinion was that they would disappear or continue, suggests that the approach advocated by EDC advisors is seen as the central

feature of Follow Through in Paterson. The ancillary services, such as dental and medical care and free lunches, were seen as important too, but the emphasis was on the beneficial effects of open classrooms for children.

#### 11.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

When describing what would be missing from Paterson schools after Follow Through is phased out, most teachers mentioned open classrooms or the extra resources that are available in Follow Through classrooms. Several teachers did not agree that open classrooms would disappear after Follow Through leaves, saying that they and other teachers had learned a new way of teaching that they would continue to practice even after the program ended. However, there was substantial agreement that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to continue teaching open classrooms after Follow Through left if the school principal opposed open education.

#### 11.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

These comments indicate a belief on the part of several teachers, especially those with more experience in Follow Through, that they have learned a way of teaching that they believe in and plan to continue practicing. Even though they recognize the possible difficulties in teaching open classrooms without benefit of the Follow Through program, particularly when the principal does not support open education, they expressed a desire to continue practicing the open classroom approach to teaching.

The implied opinions of Paterson teachers about the importance of

EDC advisors seem to be: (1) EDC advisors are not seen as the most important aspect of the Follow Through program; no teacher mentioned the loss of EDC advisors after Follow Through leaves; and (2) EDC advisors have succeeded in supporting Paterson teachers' understanding and practice of open education to the point that they feel able to continue without that support. The second point is an inference based on the belief that teachers would continue to teach open classrooms and on statements reported elsewhere (e.g., Chapter 9) that the EDC advisors have been responsible for promoting the open classroom directly by working with teachers and indirectly by working with local advisors.

The relationship of the EDC advisors' importance in initiating open classrooms in Paterson with the EDC advisors' relative unimportance to the current day-to-day activities of teachers is significant. The EDC advisors' travel schedule, which brings them into Paterson for only one week out of every four, is sufficient reason why they are not and cannot be intimately involved in each teacher's regular work. This is a limitation that needs to be recognized. However, the teachers' testimony is that in spite of that limitation EDC advisors have had an important impact on Paterson schools by introducing open classrooms and that this impact will last after the Follow Through program has ended.

## 11.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

### Question Asked:

When Follow Through leaves Paterson, how will that affect the program for children in your school? What will be missing? What will remain?

When teachers were asked how the Follow Through program leaving Paterson would affect the school program, they most often responded in general terms, talking about open education and freedom for children.

Some mentioned specific aspects of the Follow Through program such as the local Follow Through staff and extra money for materials.

What will be missing after Follow Through leaves?

Four of the seven teachers who responded to this probe talked about things related to the open classroom. One teacher said she would no longer have the freedom to teach reading and math in the ways she thought best because the non-Follow Through teachers in her school were all required to use the same programmed materials. Another teacher said the end of Follow Through would be hard for children who find it difficult to sit in the same chair all day long. A third teacher said that Follow Through offered children experiences not available in regular classrooms.

Three teachers mentioned the extra money they had for buying materials. Other things cited by individual teachers included the food program, the aides, the local Follow Through administrative staff, and the support and cooperation of the entire Follow Through staff.

What will remain after Follow Through leaves?

Seven teachers responded to this second probe, four saying that some aspects of open education would remain. One said, "Being in Follow Through you've learned a lot of ways of doing things with children, it won't become a basal reader classroom." The other three had similar comments, to the effect that they had learned ways of teaching and organizing a classroom that they would continue to use. They recognized, though, that some principals would not tolerate open classroom practices and that a teacher would have to be quite strong to persist in these practices without the Follow Through program being present.

One teacher said she couldn't be sure what would remain, since she was new to the school, but that she understood it would still be possible to take many field trips. Another teacher said she would be able to make her own materials, though not having extra money and an aide would be a hardship. Another said she would continue to have areas for children to go to after they had finished their regular work. One teacher thought the State might encourage open classrooms if they proved to be effective.

Three different teachers responded to both probes by saying that the effect of Follow Through's termination would depend very heavily upon the attitude of the principal. One teacher said, "There would be no open education in this school if there were not Follow Through. The principal wouldn't hire you." She backed up her claim by saying that the principal had told her when she was hired, "We disagree, and I'll leave you alone because your program is being phased out." Another teacher said, "It will go back to where everything was before," unless the principal supports open education. She pointed out that parents who supported open education would have to send their children to traditional classrooms if no open classrooms were available and said that she would not continue teaching in Paterson unless she could work in an open classroom. She said that some principals would support open education, but that others would not. The third teacher who made this point also said that principals differed in their support of open education.

#### 11.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

The aides used this question as an opportunity to talk about the open classroom and its benefits for children. They expressed fear that

open classrooms would not continue after Follow Through ended and said this would be very hard on many children. Only one aide mentioned that the aides might lose their jobs when Follow Through ended.

#### 11.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

The fact that aides said so little about the effects on them of the end of Follow Through is partly attributable to the placement of this question in the aides' interview soon after a question about the impact of Follow Through on aides' personal goals (Chapter 10). Another reason why aides may not have thought it necessary to say more about the possibility that they might lose their jobs is that Paterson schools employ aides in non-Follow Through positions so that they might reasonably expect to continue working even after Follow Through stopped.

However, with those two facts in mind, it still seems significant that the aides were so greatly concerned about the impact on children of the end of Follow Through and that their concern was related to the benefits of open classrooms for children. The aides we interviewed in Paterson are clearly enthusiastic supporters of open education, and their enthusiasm comes from their own experiences with children in open classrooms.

#### 11.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

##### Question Asked:

When Follow Through leaves Paterson, how will that affect the program for children in your school? What will be missing? What will remain?

What will be missing?

All the nine aides interviewed related the end of Follow Through to losses for children, especially "slower children". The comments were

filled with references to the benefits of open classrooms.

One set of comments, from four aides, contrasted the benefits of openness with conventional classrooms. One aide said that many children in Paterson were very active and to be "tied down" in a regular classroom would be hard on them. Two other aides made similar comments. The fourth aide talked of her experience with her own children, saying that one child had gone from a relatively open pre-school into a conventional classroom where kids sit "like little soldiers". She said he was having some trouble adjusting to the lack of freedom.

Three aides stressed the value of having two adults in the classroom to give children individual attention. One said it would be especially difficult for slow children without that extra attention. Another believed it is important for children to have a choice of adults to go to. The third aide talked of the amount of interest a teacher and aide working together could show in a child and said she thought most of the children in Follow Through needed a "one-to-one correspondence" with an adult. "Without Follow Through they would not get this and would just get pushed on into high school without really learning".

Two aides pointed to differences they saw in Follow Through children as a result of these advantages. One said children in Follow Through were more expressive and creative. She said she could see the difference in children she had worked with in a day care center, some of whom went into open classrooms while others went into regular classes. She also saw increased expressiveness and creativity in her own grandchildren who were in open classrooms. The second aide pointed out that Follow Through children had opportunities for broader experiences than children in

regular classrooms and that this made it possible for them to learn more.

One aide talked about the end of opportunities for aides as a result of the end of Follow Through. This aide strongly stated that the aides are highly experienced from their years of work in Follow Through and that this experience makes them better qualified to teach than many first year teachers. She hoped that aides in Paterson would join forces and press the Board of Education to continue their jobs and their educational opportunities.

Another aide thought that the effects of the end of Follow Through would depend upon the principal. She said that in her school there would be no more open classrooms because the principal opposed them. Two other aides talked about the end of the extra services that are provided by Follow Through: additional money for materials, medical and dental care for children, breakfast and lunches and added Follow Through staff, such as a social worker, parent coordinator, and psychiatrist.

#### What will remain?

Seven aides talked about things that would remain after Follow Through ended. The overwhelming response was the wish that the open classroom would stay, because the aides believe children learned more in open classrooms.

Three aides thought open education would survive the termination of Follow Through because they saw non-Follow Through teachers in the school picking up ideas, even if Follow Through didn't get credit. Examples were given of regular teachers taking their classes on more trips and sitting on the floor with children. Another point made by an aide who hoped the open classroom would remain was that children who had

experience in open classrooms would stay in the schools. Another aide suggested that the children who had been in Follow Through would be easier to teach in the upper grades because of what they learned in open classrooms.

The aides' statements about the benefits of open education were quite impressive. A few examples are given to illustrate their convictions.

Really I think the open classroom is the classroom of the future...the kids like it.

It has been proven that the children learn more, and for some of the children it's better for them to be in a situation like this...because the other way it hasn't worked...They (children in open classrooms) have more things. They see more. Some children learn by sight and some children learn by feel...and when they are in an open classroom, then they usually have all these things around and then they can be aware of different things. It's a big difference.

It would really hurt me to see this program leave Paterson, because I really think the children are benefiting from it...I really think they need something like this to reach the children. We have 24 children in our class and they - none of them ever misses a day - very seldom. Because they want to come. Because they know it's not that same old sit down thing all day. They don't have a chance to get bored. They want to learn...(by ending Follow Through) they're not hurting grownups; they're hurting children, and that's the important thing, really.

If I ever become a teacher I will have to have an open classroom.

It's not going to die away. Too many people have seen it work, really work, and they like it, and feel that their children are learning more.

#### 11.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The project director and one principal stressed the loss of extra services and resources that would follow the termination of Follow Through.

The two local advisors agreed that there was some chance that the essential elements of Follow Through - the open classroom and cooperation among staff members - would continue after the program ended, but that this depended upon principals, the superintendent of schools, and even the mayor of the city. The principal who opposed Follow Through said its end would free resources for better uses.

#### 11.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The administrators agreed that extra money would not be provided to Follow Through schools after federal funds were terminated. Therefore, they talked in terms of things that might continue without funding. The two local advisors were most optimistic about the prospects, though they recognized that political decisions would affect the future of open classrooms in Paterson.

#### 11.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Question Asked:

When EDC Follow Through leaves Paterson, how will that affect the program for children in your school?

##### Project Director

The project director said that it will be a loss because there won't be any money for in-service training, consultants, and the resource center. She added that parts of the program might be maintained, but didn't go into detail.

##### Local Advisors

One local advisor's first statement was that the effect of EDC Follow Through leaving Paterson would be determined by who the next superintendent was and who the next mayor of Paterson was. With support from these

people, the open classroom concept might continue to flourish. She went on to say that children's freedom of movement would probably be curtailed some, but that depended on the principal of the school. She was sure, however, that the Follow Through open classroom curriculum would continue to be used; teachers would continue to work together; and teachers' styles of teaching would continue, even if they were transferred to other places.

She believed that there would be less parent involvement and less time provided for people to just meet and be together. Training programs and opportunities to keep abreast of what's going on in education generally would be missing from the schools.

The other local advisor mentioned that the principal was a key person in determining what would happen after EDC Follow Through leaves. However, she felt confident that the feeling of Follow Through will stay, not only with Follow Through teachers but more generally in the school. Expanding on this, she said that the feeling of Follow Through has already permeated the first and second floors of the school building including both Follow Through and non-Follow Through teachers. She also added that the position of local advisor would remain in modified form, since the school district has created a position called "Project Team Teacher" which is much like the local advisor position, although less flexible and open.

### Principals

One principal said that he would like to have EDC continue to work with Follow Through and continue to advise them. With EDC gone, he felt that the school board would not supplement the program. As far as

programmatic aspects of Follow Through remaining in the school, he said that if the principal found things that he thought successful about the EDC model, he would keep these things.

The other principal said simply: "It just means that we will have additional classrooms to carry out a vital educational program and experience for youngsters in the inner city". This principal has previously mentioned his fundamental disagreements with the EDC approach to education (Chapter 7) so it is not surprising that he would see EDC Follow Through's leaving in terms of freeing resources for his program.

APPENDICES

## TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### I. The first set of questions concerns your personal background.

1. Would you briefly describe your work experience before you came to this job?

Probes: How many years have you lived in (community)?  
How long have you been a teacher?  
Have you had any jobs outside of education?  
What grades have you taught?

2. What is your educational background?

Probes: What degree or degrees do you hold?  
Do you regularly take courses?  
Are you working toward a degree now?

3. How long have you been a teacher in Follow Through?
4. How long have you been at the \_\_\_\_\_ School?
5. How did you come to be a teacher in Follow Through?

### II. Now I'd like to get an overview of your activities as a teacher.

1. Could you give me an idea of how you work in the classroom by describing what you do during a typical day? I'm interested in knowing what you did on your own, what you shared with the aide, and what was going on in the room. Starting with when you arrived, what did you do?

Probes: What was the aide doing then?  
What were the children you weren't working with doing?  
What responsibilities did children assume?  
How did you decide what to do while children were involved in different activities?  
How do you handle disruptive behavior?

2. We would like to have a complete picture of what you do as a teacher.

- (a) Are there things you haven't mentioned that you often do?
- (b) Can you tell me more about how you work with your aide?

Probe. Do you plan together?

3. Do you spend any time outside of class time on work related to your teaching?

If yes: About how much?  
How do you spend that time?

If no: (proceed)

4. What are the most important goals you are trying to accomplish in your teaching?

Probe: Development

III. The next questions are about your views on children's learning.  
The first one is very broad.

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning in school during the early grades?
2. Which of the things you think children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?
3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?
4. We're interested in your view of parent involvement. Do you feel parents should be involved in their children's school?

If yes: In what ways?

If no: Why not?

IV. Now I'd like to ask you about your opinions on the EDC approach to children's learning.

1. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through program tried to accomplish?  
Do you share those goals? Why or why not?  
Do you feel those goals are being accomplished? Why or why not?

2. EDC Follow Through encourages open expression of children's needs and feelings in the classroom. Do you share this goal?

If yes: What benefits do you see in open expression?  
Does open expression create any difficulties (for teacher, for children)?  
Do you encourage talk about things like sex, death, birth, race, and the fears children have?

If no: What disadvantages do you see in open expression (for teachers, for children)?

3. EDC's Follow Through program stresses "building on children's interests" as a starting point for teaching. Do you agree with this principle?

If yes: How does this work out in practice? First, how do you find out what a child's interests are? (examples)  
How do you build on those interests? (examples)

If no: What do you consider the appropriate starting point for teaching?

4. EDC's Follow Through program emphasizes giving children a greater amount of choice in what they do. Is this one of your goals?

If yes: What kinds of things do they make choices about?  
On what basis do they choose: whims, what friends are doing, genuine interests, etc.?  
How do you know when a choice is based on genuine interests?  
Do you help children choose? How?

If no: What are your reasons?

5. EDC Follow Through encourages evaluating children's progress on the basis of their own abilities. Do you try to do this in your classroom?

If yes: How do you diagnose a child's ability?  
How do you keep track of each child's progress?  
How do you share your evaluation of the child's progress with parents?

If no: On what basis do you evaluate children's progress?

V. The next section is about your contact with EDC advisors and your opinions on their work. You may want to make some distinctions among different advisors if you have worked with more than one.

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

If yes: Who usually initiates the contact?  
What do they usually do?  
What do you do while they are in the room?  
Have you found their work helpful?  
Can you give me some examples?  
Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in your classroom?

If no: Would you like them to work in your classroom?  
What do you know about what they do in other teachers' classrooms?

2. I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside the classroom.
- (a) Have you ever attended a summer workshop in (community) with an EDC advisor?
  - (b) Have you ever attended a workshop during the year in (community) with an advisor?
  - (c) Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?
  - (d) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?
  - (e) Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

If yes to any of the above:

Which ways were most helpful?  
Would you like to be able to work with EDC advisors in other ways?  
What? Why?

If no to all of the above:

Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom?  
What do you know about what they have done with other teachers outside the classroom?

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do (with you or with others)?

How do they usually respond?

4. When Follow Through leaves (community), how will that affect the program for children in your school?

Probes: What will be missing?  
What will remain?

VI. The following questions are intended to give us an idea of how you as a teacher fit into the school as a whole. This will enable us to see more clearly how the work of the advisors relates to the daily operation of the school.

1. What adults, other than EDC advisors and aides, do you work with (fellow teachers, principal, local advisor, project director, supervisors, specialists, volunteers, others)?

What do you do with each of these people?

2. When you have a problem you can't seem to solve on your own, who do you turn to?

3. Do you think you have enough influence over what happens in your classroom to be able to do what needs to be done?

If not: Why not?

4. Do you think you have as much influence over your school and the Follow Through program as you would like to have?

If no: Why not?  
Who does have influence?

VII. The last few questions have to do with difficulties and satisfactions you have felt as a Follow Through teacher.

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through teacher?

Probe: Do you think that is different from non-Follow Through teaching?

2. What are the greatest difficulties you encounter as a Follow Through teacher?

Probes: Do you think that is different from non-Follow Through teaching?  
What can you do about that?

3. If you were talking to another teacher who was considering entering the Follow Through program, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?

## AIDE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### I. The first set of questions concerns your personal background:

1. How long have you been an aide in Follow Through?

Probe: What grades have you worked with as a Follow Through aide?

2. How long have you been at the \_\_\_\_\_ School?

3. How did you come to be a Follow Through aide at this school?

4. Would you briefly describe your work experience before you came to this job?

Probes: How many years have you lived in (community)?

Have you worked at a school before becoming a Follow Through aide?

Was your previous work and other experience related to your current job?

5. What was your educational background before becoming a Follow Through aide?

6. Have you been continuing your education since becoming an aide in Follow Through?

### II. Now I'd like to get an overview of your activities as an aide:

1. Could you give me an idea of how you work in the classroom by describing what you do during a typical day? I'm interested in knowing what you did on your own, what activities you shared with the teacher, and what was going on in the room. Starting with when you arrived, what did you do?

Probes: What was the teacher doing then?

What were the children you weren't working with doing?

What do you do on your own?

How was it decided that you would do those things?

How do you handle disruptive behavior?

Are you generally satisfied with your part in the classroom?

If yes: Go on.

If no: Why not?  
What would you change?

2. Do you spend any time outside of class time doing things related to your job?

If yes: About how much time?  
What do you do?

III. The next questions are about some of your views on children's learning. The first one is very broad:

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning in school in the early grades?
2. Which of the things which you feel children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?
3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?
4. We're interested in your view of parent involvement. Do you feel parents should be involved in their children's school?

If yes: In what ways?

If no: Why not?

IV. The next section is about your contact with EDC advisors and your opinions on their work. You may want to make some distinctions among different advisors if you have worked with more than one.

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

If yes: What do they usually do?  
Do they work directly with you?  
What do you do while they are in the room?  
Have you found their work helpful? (Ask for examples)  
Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in the classroom?

If no: Would you like advisors to work in your classroom?  
What do you know about what they do in other classrooms?

2. I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside of the classroom:

a. Have you ever attended a summer workshop in (community) with an advisor?

- b. Have you attended any workshops during the year in with an advisor?
- c. Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?
- d. Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?
- e. Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

If yes to any of the above: Have you found working with advisors outside the classroom helpful to your work?

If no to all of the above: Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom? What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with other aides outside the classroom?

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do? (with yourself and with others). How do they usually respond?

V. The last few questions have to do with the difficulties and satisfactions you have felt as a Follow Through Aide:

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through Aide?
2. What are the greatest difficulties you encounter as a Follow Through aide?
3. Have your experiences as an aide in Follow Through made any changes in your personal goals?

If so, what kinds of changes? Are you pleased with these changes?

4. If you could speak to another person who was considering entering the Follow Through program as an aide, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?
5. When Follow Through leaves (community), how will that effect the program for children in your school?

Probes: What things will be missing?  
What things will remain?

## ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### I. The first set of questions concerns your personal background.

1. How long have you been a (role) in Follow Through?
2. How did you come to be a (role) in Follow Through?
3. How long have you been at the \_\_\_\_\_ school?
4. Would you briefly describe your work experience before you became a (role) in Follow Through?

Probes: How many years have you lived in (community)?  
Have you had any jobs outside of education?  
(for principals) How long have you been a principal?

### 5. What is your educational background?

Probes: What degree or degrees do you hold?  
Are you working toward a degree now?  
Do you regularly take courses?

### II. Now I'd like to get an overview of the activities related to your job. (for principals) This will enable us to see more clearly how the work of Follow Through relates to the daily operation of the school.

1. Would you describe the ~~kinds~~ kinds of things you do as (role).
2. Could you list the most important people and groups you work with and tell me what you usually do with them?  
(If parents and/or teachers not mentioned): Do you work directly with teachers/parents?

If yes: What do you usually do with them?

If no: Who does work with them?

Do you support what they are doing with teachers/parents?  
How?

3. Of all the people you work with, which contribute the most to helping you carry out your job?
4. Overall, what have been your greatest satisfactions as a (role) \_\_\_\_\_ in Follow Through?
5. What have been your greatest difficulties as a (role) \_\_\_\_\_ in Follow Through?

III. The next questions are about some of your views on children's learning.

1. In general, what kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning in school during the early grades?
2. Which of those things are happening to your satisfaction in your school?
3. Which of those things would you like to improve in your school?
4. Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school?

If yes: In what ways?

If no: Why not?

IV. The next section is about your contact with EDC advisors and your opinions on their work. You may want to make some distinctions among different advisors if you have worked with more than one.

1. What have EDC advisors done with you?  
In general, have you found your work with EDC advisors helpful?  
Why or why not?  
Can you give me some examples?  
What else would you like to see advisors doing with you?
2. What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with others in the program? (teachers, aides, parents, other administrators)  
Do you see these things as helpful in general? Why or why not?  
Can you give me some examples?
3. What difficulties have you had in working with EDC advisors?
4. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do? (with you or with others)
5. Do advisors generally do the kinds of things you'd like to see them do?  
Can you give me some examples?
6. Does EDC respond to your needs and wishes in assigning advisors? Can you give me some examples?

V. Now I'd like to ask some questions about EDC Follow Through as a whole.

1. First, I'd like to know what your understanding is of how EDC Follow Through came to (community). Do you know why EDC was chosen as a sponsor?  
How did the \_\_\_\_\_ schools become Follow Through schools?  
Were you involved in those decisions?  
Who were the key people involved?
2. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through program tried to accomplish?  
Do you share those goals? Why or why not?  
Do you feel those goals are being accomplished? Why or why not?
3. What do you see as the most positive aspects of EDC Follow Through in (community)?
4. How about the other side? Are there also negative aspects to EDC Follow Through?  
What are they?
5. When EDC Follow Through leaves (community), how will that affect the program for children in your school?

Probes: What will be missing?  
What will remain?

PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, I'm a parent at the \_\_\_\_\_ School. The questions I'm going to ask are about you and your children and your experiences with Follow Through. Your answers will be kept confidential, so I hope you will answer as openly as possible. Your responses are for a study involving parents, teachers, and others in (community) Follow Through Program. If you have any questions about Follow Through, I'll be glad to try to answer them at the end of the interview.

I. The first questions are about you and your children.

1. Responding parent's name \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your relationship to \_\_\_\_\_ (Follow Through child)?  
 mother  
 father  
 other (specify)
3. Are you working at this time?  
 yes  
 no  
 (If yes)  
 full time  
 part time
4. What was the last grade you completed in school?  
 eighth grade or less  
 some high school  
 high school equivalency  
 completed high school  
 some college  
 completed college  
 other (specify)
5. Now I would like you to tell me the names and ages of all the children in your care.  
 (NOTE: If there are children over age 11 who were not in Follow Through, include supplementary questions at the end of the regular interview.)

NAME	AGE	HEADSTART
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

6. Have any of your children been in Head Start?

yes

no

(If yes, check above.)

II. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about Follow Through.

1. First, did you know that there is a program called Follow Through at the \_\_\_\_\_ School?

yes

no

(If yes)

How did you hear about the Follow Through Program?

from someone at school (specify)

from another parent

from the newsletter

other (specify)

2. Do you know which of your children are now in the Follow Through Program?

yes

no

(If yes, list names.)

(If no, tell names of children not in Follow Through.)

3. Have any of your other children been in the Follow Through Program?

yes

no

(If yes, list names)

(NOTE: If there are older children who were not in Follow Through include supplementary questions at end.)

4. What do you think of the Follow Through Program? (Write on other side if needed).

Probe: How is it different from the regular school program?

III. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) schooling.

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for \_\_\_\_\_ (Follow Through child) to be doing and learning at school? (List)

2. Of the things you have mentioned, which ones do you feel get enough attention at \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) school?

3. Which things seem to be getting too little attention?

4. What are the things you like most about the \_\_\_\_\_ School? (including Follow Through)

5. What are the things you like least about the \_\_\_\_\_ School? (including Follow Through) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Can you tell me the ways you learn about how \_\_\_\_\_ (Follow Through child) is doing in school?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ talk with teacher  
 \_\_\_\_\_ talk with others at school (specify)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ talk with child  
 \_\_\_\_\_ watch child  
 \_\_\_\_\_ don't know  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other (specify)  
 (If talk with teacher)  
 a. Would you say you have talked with \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) teacher:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ once  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a few times  
 \_\_\_\_\_ often  
 b. Does the teacher ask for a meeting or do you ask to talk with the teacher?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ teacher asks  
 \_\_\_\_\_ parent asks  
 \_\_\_\_\_ both
7. Are you pleased with \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) progress in school?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ no  
 (If no)  
 What do you feel you can do to change things?  
 (List)
8. Does \_\_\_\_\_ (Follow Through child) talk about school at home?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ no  
 (If yes)  
 What does he/she talk about?
9. Do you feel \_\_\_\_\_ (Follow Through child) likes school? (Please explain).  
 \_\_\_\_\_ yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ no
10. Do you think there are any specific ways in which the Follow Through Program has influenced \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) learning and development?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ no  
 (If yes)  
 How?

IV. Now I would like to ask about contacts you have had with  
's (Follow Through school.

1. Have you ever visited \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) school?

\_\_\_\_yes  
\_\_\_\_no

(If yes)

Have you visited once, a few times, or often?

\_\_\_\_once  
\_\_\_\_a few times  
\_\_\_\_often

2. Have you ever helped as a volunteer at school?

\_\_\_\_yes  
\_\_\_\_no

(If no)

Would you like to volunteer at school?

\_\_\_\_yes  
\_\_\_\_no

(If yes)

What would help you to do this?

(Probe for things like child care, being asked by teacher)

(If yes - you helped as a volunteer)

a. How often would you say you have helped, once, a few times, or often?

\_\_\_\_once  
\_\_\_\_a few times  
\_\_\_\_often

b. Did the teacher, or someone else, ask for your help, or did you offer your help?

\_\_\_\_parent offered  
\_\_\_\_someone asked (specify)

c. What did you do as a volunteer?

(List)

d. Was volunteering at school a good experience for you?

\_\_\_\_yes  
\_\_\_\_no

Please explain.

e. Do you plan to do this kind of thing again?

\_\_\_\_yes  
\_\_\_\_no

Could you explain why (or why not)?

V. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about Parent Activities at the \_\_\_\_\_ School.

1. Have you ever attended a meeting of the PT0?

yes

no

(If yes)

Have you attended once, a few times, or often?

once

a few times

often

2. Have you ever attended a meeting of the PAC (Policy Advisory Committee)?

yes

no

(If yes)

a. Have you attended once, a few times or often?

once

a few times

often

b. Have you ever taken part in an activity or talked with an EDC Follow Through advisor?

yes

no

c. Do you know what EDC advisors do?

yes

no

3. a. (For those who have attended parent meetings)

What are some of the reasons you go to parent meetings?

(List)

b. (For those who have not attended parent meetings)

Did you know that there are parent meetings?

yes

no

Would you like to attend parent meetings?

yes

no

4. Have you participated in any Follow Through parent activities (other than meetings) such as, the garden project, parent workshops, and suppers?

yes

no

(If yes)

Which ones?

(List)

(If no)

Would you like to participate in other activities?

yes

no

5. How do you hear about parent activities?  
 haven't heard  
 notices  
 telephone calls  
 newsletter  
 talking with other parents  
 other (specify)
6. How is it best to notify you about activities for parents?
7. Do you have any difficulties in arranging to come to parent activities?  
 yes  
 no  
 (If yes)  
 (List, for example, child care, transportation, time when activities take place.)
8. Are there activities which you would like to see available for parents that have not been mentioned?  
 yes  
 no  
 (If yes)  
 a. Can you tell me your suggestions?  
 b. Would you be willing to help make these activities possible?  
 yes  
 no

VI. This last group of questions is about how you view your role in your child's school experience.

1. Do you feel that your involvement can help your child's education?  
 yes  
 no  
 (If yes)  
 How?  
 (List)  
 (If no, please explain)
2. Do you see any benefits for you, personally, in being active in the school?  
 yes  
 no  
 (If yes)  
 What are they?  
 (List)

3. Do you think you might be more active:
- |                              |                             |                                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | If you know more about school activities?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | If child care were provided?                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | If other kinds of activities were possible? |

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS:**

(For parents who have older children in the school who have not been in the Follow Through Program.)

Since you have some children who were not in the Follow Through Program during the early grades, I'd like to ask you a few additional questions.

1. Do you think there are any differences between \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) school experience and that of your older child/children who was/were not in Follow Through?

yes  
 no

(If yes)

Can you tell me two or three ways in which \_\_\_\_\_'s (Follow Through child) school experience is different? For each difference, ask, "Do you approve of that?" (Approve) and check at left.)

yes	no	1.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.

2. Compared to when your older child/children was/were in the early grades have you had more, less, or about the same amount of contact with people at school since \_\_\_\_\_ (Follow Through child) has been in school?

more  
 less  
 about the same

3. Have you participated in more, less, or about the same number of parent activities since your child has been in Follow Through than with your older child/children?

more  
 less  
 about the same

4. Do you think there are any specific ways in which the Follow Through Program has influenced your involvement with the school?

yes  
 no

(If yes)

Can you give some examples?  
(List)

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

for

SPRING, 1975 SURVEY

of

EDC FOLLOW THROUGH COMMUNITIES

009 413

Open Education Follow Through Program  
Education Development Center, Inc.  
55 Chapel Street  
Newton, Massachusetts 02160

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THIS QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please read all of these instructions before filling out your questionnaire.

Who is being surveyed

This survey questionnaire is being administered to all teachers, aides, project directors, principals of Follow Through schools, local advisors and a sample of parents in each EDC Follow Through site.

Purpose of Survey Questionnaires

The purpose of the EDC Survey Questionnaire for Spring, 1975 is to supplement the National Evaluation of Follow Through by providing timely information about the content, process and context of the advisory approach in EDC Follow Through communities.

Choices for response

The choices for response to each question were developed from the information base collected last year with representatives from all groups in the EDC Follow Through programs in Burlington, Vermont and Paterson, New Jersey.

How to indicate your response

For each question, please circle one response number.

For example, if the question says: "How many years have you been working with the Follow Through Program?",

the response choices are:

(0-1) (2-3) (4-5) (6-8)

1      2      (3)      4

The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 appear next to or below the question. Circle only the number that best corresponds to your response. In the example above, if you have been working with Follow Through for 4 years, circle the number 3.

The numbers you circle are coding numbers, which will allow your response to be punched on a card. The punched card will then be counted by the computer, to get the total responses of all members of your group (teachers, aides, administrators, local advisors and parents) in all EDC Follow Through communities.

Next to each question you will see a column number (i.e. Col. 9). This is for computer purposes. Please disregard these column numbers.

How to  
indicate  
your response

Some questions will ask you to "circle all that apply"  
This means you can circle as many responses as apply  
for you.

After many questions, the words "other (specify)" appear.  
Circle the number next to this response if you wish to  
write in a response of your own. These will also be coded  
and counted by the computer.

Please try not to leave any question blank. This helps in  
the total counting. If the choices do not seem to apply  
to you, circle the number next to does not apply or write  
your own response in the space for other (specify).

Categories of  
Questions

The questions include the following six basic categories:

- I. Background
- II. Children's Learning
- III. Parent Involvement
- IV. Contact with EDC Advisory\*
- V. Work with School and Community Resources
- VI. Supplementary Information

\* When you see the words EDC Advisor(y), this  
means EDC Follow Through staff from Newton.

Analysis  
of Data

The information collected in this survey will be analyzed  
across sites and across groups. This means that statements  
can be made about a particular group or that group's relation  
to other groups. These statements will be based on the total  
information from all sites; no individual site data will be  
analyzed or presented.

Example of analysis:

In X number of EDC Follow Through communities, y number of  
teachers responded to question Z.

40% of all teachers responding felt that \_\_\_\_\_ was an  
important goal for children's learning. Of that 40%, 20%  
were teachers with 4-5 years of experience with Follow  
Through.

All responses will be counted by machine.

**Analysis  
of Data**

Your response to the few open-ended questions (i.e. give examples of other ways you would like to work with EDC Advisors) will be coded and counted with the responses of all others in your group. Your individual response will not appear separately in the report of information from the questionnaires. Your responses will be combined by group.

**Final Report**

The final report will combine a presentation of raw data and an analysis by the EDC Follow Through research staff. This report will be distributed in Fall, 1975.

This survey will be most meaningful if each community gives the fullest possible response.

THANK YOU FOR GIVING YOUR COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE  
YOUR THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION AND RESPONSE.

I. BACKGROUND: TEACHERSA. WORK EXPERIENCE BEFORE WORKING WITH FOLLOW THROUGHCol. 5

1. Have you worked at a school before becoming a Follow Through teacher?

Yes 1

No 2

Col. 6

2. Have you worked in a pre-school or Headstart program before coming to work in Follow Through?

Yes 1

No 2

3. How many years have you been a teacher? (0-1) (2-4) (5-7) (7-10) (Over 10)

1 2 3 4 5

Col. 7

4. For how many years have you taught in an open education approach before working in Follow Through? None (0-1) (2-4) (5-7) (7-10) (Over 10)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Col. 8B. ENTRY INTO FOLLOW THROUGH AND CURRENT FOLLOW THROUGH WORK EXPERIENCECol. 9

1. How did you come to be a teacher in Follow Through?

Was teaching in this school system and was assigned to Follow Through 1

Was teaching in this school system and asked to teach in Follow Through 2

Applied to teach in this school system and was assigned to Follow Through 3

Applied to teach in Follow Through because I was attracted to the approach 4

Other 5

(specify)

2. How many years have you been a teacher in Follow Through? (0-1) (2-3) (4-5) (6-8)  
 1 2 3 4 Col. 10
3. What grades have you taught in Follow Through? (Circle all that apply.) (K) (K-1) (1) (1-2) (2) (2-3)  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 Col. 11  
 (3) (1-2-3) Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 (specify)  
 7 8 9
4. How many years have you been at this school? (0-1) (2-3) (4-5) (6-8) (Over 8)  
 1 2 3 4 5 Col. 12
5. At this point in time, how much do you consider yourself to be using an open education approach in your work? Very Much Some A Little Not at All  
 1 2 3 4 Col. 13

C. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND PRIOR TO FOLLOW THROUGH

Col. 14

1. What degree or degrees did you hold before becoming a teacher in Follow Through? (Circle all that apply.)  
 B.A. in education 1  
 B.A. in other area 2  
 M.A. in education 3  
 M.A. in other area 4  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ 5  
 (specify)

Col. 15

2. Did you take regular courses towards a degree but did not yet have a degree before entering Follow Through?  
 Yes 1  
 No 2

Col. 16

3. If you were not working towards a degree, did you regularly take education-related courses before entering Follow Through?  
 Yes 1  
 No 2

Col. 17

4. What kind of open education training or experience did you have before working in the Follow Through program?  
 None 1  
 College course (s) 2  
 Student teacher in open classroom 3  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ 4  
 (specify)

Col. 18

5. Have you ever taught in a program with an educational approach that was different than the Follow Through approach?

Yes 1  
No 2

Col. 19

6. Do you now regularly take courses related to your work as a Follow Through teacher?

Yes 1  
No 2

Col. 20

7. Are you now working towards a degree, while teaching in Follow Through?

Yes 1  
No 2

Col. 21

8. Have you completed requirements for a degree since becoming a teacher in Follow Through?

Yes 1  
No 2

D. BACKGROUND: OVERVIEW OF CURRENT CLASSROOM & SCHOOL.

Col. 22

1. How many children have you had in your Follow Through classroom for most of this school year?

(20 or less) 1  
(21-25) 2  
(26-30) 3  
(31-35) 4  
(Over 35) 5

2. What grade (s) is the Follow Through class you are currently teaching?

(K) (K-1) (1) (1-2) (2) (2-3) (3)  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Col. 23  
(1-2-3) (Other) \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

8 9

Col. 24

3. How did you come to be teaching in this particular class?

- Assigned to teach in this class 1
- Asked if you wanted to teach in this class 2
- Asked to be assigned to this class 3
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ 4  
(specify)

Col. 25

4. Which adults have you worked with regularly in your classroom during this year?  
(Circle all that apply.)

- Full-time aide 1
- Part-time aide 2
- Another full-time teacher 3
- Another part-time teacher 4
- No other paid adults 5
- Part-time volunteers 6
- Student teacher 7
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ 8  
(specify)

Col. 26

5. In your opinion, how satisfactory is the staffing in Follow Through classrooms?

- Very 1
- Somewhat 2
- Not very 3
- Not at all 4

Col. 27

6. In your opinion how satisfactory (overall) is the current staffing in the classrooms in your school?

- Very 1
- Somewhat 2
- Not very 3
- Not at all 4

II. CHILDREN'S LEARNING: TEACHER VIEWS

There is a great deal of discussion about the need for children to learn basic skills and the need to include children's interests in the learning process.

1. Which of the following phrases best describes the way you approach basic skills and children's interests in your teaching?

	<u>Col. 28</u>
Focus mostly on children's interests	1
Focus mostly on basic skills	2
Focus mostly on basic skills and pursue children's interests as they relate to basic skills	3
Focus equally on basic skills and children's interests	4
Other (specify) _____	5

2. In this section we would like to obtain some information about what your classroom day is generally like. Each statement is followed by six possible responses: always - usually - often - sometimes - rarely - never. It might be helpful to think of these words as representing percentages. For each statement, please circle the number under the word that best describes your classroom.

Always -- about 100% of the time  
 Usually -- about 80% of the time  
 Often -- about 60% of the time  
 Sometimes -- about 40% of the time  
 Rarely -- about 20% of the time  
 Never -- almost never

On an average day, I schedule specific time periods for each subject to be covered.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 29</u>

Textbooks and accompanying workbooks are my primary resources for assigning class work in teaching basic skills.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 30</u>

I attempt to follow curriculum guidelines for my grade level.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 31</u>

During most of the day different children are working on different things simultaneously.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 32</u>

On an average day, the children's desks are arranged in rows.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 33</u>

Before leaving the classroom for any purpose, the children must ask permission of the teacher.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 34</u>

On an average day, I spend a considerable amount of my time in the classroom maintaining order and discipline.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 35</u>

How many of the children in your classroom have brought things to school that they are interested in working with or studying? (This question refers to things like animals, things from nature, games, project materials, etc.)

All	Most	Many	Some	A few	None	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 36</u>

On an average day, children move freely about the classroom without asking permission.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 37</u>

3. When you report each child's progress to his/her parents, how important do you consider each of the following criteria? (Circle one number for each of the criteria listed.)

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not Very Important</u>	<u>Not At All Important</u>	
grades on tests	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 38</u>
work on classroom assignments	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 39</u>
completion of homework	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 40</u>
general attitude towards school and class work	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 41</u>
individual progress on ungraded work and activities	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 42</u>
my own evaluation of child's work compared to what I judge him/her capable of doing	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 43</u>
my own evaluation of child's work compared to the work of other students	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 44</u>
other (specify)	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 45</u>

4. When you periodically report a child's progress to his/her parents, which of the following systems do you primarily use? Circle the appropriate letter or letters. (Circle all that apply.)

	<u>Col. 46</u> Circle response for Question 4	<u>Col. 47</u> Circle response for Question 5	<u>Col. 48</u> Circle response for Question 6
letter grades	1	1	1
satisfactory    unsatisfactory	2	2	2
comments like: progressing very well; average progress; poor progress, etc.	3	3	3
a written report describing the child's work and progress	4	4	4
a verbal report directly to parents in conference with them	5	5	5
other (specify)	6	6	6

5. Which one of the grading systems in the question above would you most prefer to use? (Circle the appropriate number.)

6. Which one do you think parents most prefer? (Circle the appropriate number.)

7. We are interested in what you think are important things children should be learning in school. For each of the statements listed below, circle the number which indicates how important you think it is as a learning goal.

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not Very Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
The child should be learning to feel important as a person	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col. 49</u>
Children should be developing the ability to work and play cooperatively	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col. 50</u>
Children should be developing basic skills, such as reading, writing and math	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col. 51</u>
Children should be learning how to think and work independently	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col. 52</u>

8. Looking again at the statements listed in Question 7, how satisfied are you with the way children are accomplishing these goals in the Follow Through Program? For each of the statements listed below, circle one number.

	<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat Satisfied</u>	<u>Not Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Not at all Satisfied</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
The child should be learning to feel important as a person	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col.53</u>
Children should be developing the ability to work and play cooperatively	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col.54</u>
Children should be developing basic skills, such as reading, writing and math	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col.55</u>
Children should be learning how to think and work independently	1	2	3	4	5 <u>Col.56</u>

9. Which of the following patterns of classroom organization comes closest to describing your classroom on a "typical day"? (Circle the number which applies.)

Col. 57

Fairly structured morning, teacher directed and focused on academic skills; afternoon includes most creative and free choice activities.

1

Each adult in the classroom is responsible for a group of children, although children may work individually or in groups. Time for projects and choice of activities tends to occur in the afternoon.

2

Emphasis is on a rhythm of activities moving back and forth from large group activities to small group and individual activities. By directing the rhythm of the day, the teacher is able to focus activities and allow time for children to choose what they would like to do.

3

Children are highly involved in planning and take responsibility for their daily activities. Although individual activity predominates, there are times for small group sessions and for the whole group to get together. Adults circulate to provide help and to remind children to complete their work.

4

10. Below are a number of statements about the open classroom. Please read each statement. (Circle the number which indicates how you feel about each one.)

	Definitely True	More True Than False	More False Than True	Definitely False	
	_____	_____	_____	_____	
In the open classroom children are given too much freedom.	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 58</u>
The open classroom does <u>not</u> adequately prepare children to work in the real world.	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 59</u>
Discipline in an open classroom situation is <u>less</u> of a problem than in regular classrooms.	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 60</u>
I would like to work in an open classroom situation.	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 61</u>
I would like to have my own child in an open classroom situation.	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 62</u>

11. It is my feeling that the open classroom approach to learning would benefit:  
(Circle one number.)

	<u>Col. 63</u>
All pupils	1
Some pupils	2
No pupils	3

III. PARENT INVOLVEMENT: TEACHER VIEWS

Col. 64

1. Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school?

Yes 1  
No 2

Col. 65

2. In which of the following ways do you feel parents should be involved in Follow Through in this school?  
(Circle all that apply.)

Ways parents should be involved

- None 1
- Visit and observe in the classroom 2
- Teach or share skills and experiences with children in the classroom 3
- Talk with school staff 4
- Participate in Parent meetings 5
- Attend workshops with school staff and parents 6
- Other (specify) 7

Col. 66

3. In which of the following ways listed in Question 2 have parents been involved in Follow Through in this school?  
(Circle all that apply. For Question 3 see column above.)

Ways parents have been involved

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

4. In your opinion, what are the most important reasons for parent involvement in Follow Through?
- Help and encourage children to learn 1
  - Develop a sense of partnership in the learning process among parent, child and school staff. 2
  - Facilitate personal growth of parents 3
  - Involve parents in educational decision making 4
  - Involved parents can help to change things 5
  - Other (specify) 6

Col. 68

5. Do you feel that enough parents have been involved in the Follow Through program in this school?
- Yes 1
  - No 2

Col. 69

6. Do you feel that it is important for parents to be continuously informed about the activities of the Follow Through program in your school?
- Yes 1
  - No 2

7. How well informed do you feel that parents are about the ongoing activities of Follow Through in your school?	Very well informed	Somewhat informed	Not very well informed	Not at all informed	Don't know	
	1	2	3	4	5	<u>Col. 70</u>

8. How often do you initiate contact with parents?	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	
	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 71</u>

9. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following makes it difficult for parents to participate in activities related to Follow Through? (Circle all that apply.)	Not enough time on the part of parents	<u>Col. 72</u> 1
	Lack of child care	2
	Meeting time inconvenient	3
	Lack of information on parent meetings	4
	Not enough interesting activities for parents	<del>5</del>
	Other (specify) _____	6

10. If it was available, would you be interested in an on-going training program for parents who would like to be more fully involved in the Follow Through program?	Very inter- ested	Some- what inter- ested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	
	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 73</u>

11. If it was available, would you be willing to participate in the development of such a program?	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 74</u>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	----------------

12. Indicate how often you have contact with each of the following individuals or groups.

	<u>Very often</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Not very often</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	
PAC Chairperson	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 75</u>
PAC Executive Board	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 76</u>
Parents at home	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 77</u>
Parents in school	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 78</u>
Non-Follow Through parents	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 79</u>
Head Start and Day Care Program	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 80</u>
Other (specify)	1	2	3	4	
<hr/>					<u>IBM Card B</u> <u>Col. 4</u>

IV. CONTACT WITH EDC ADVISORY: TEACHER VIEWS

A. CONTACT WITH EDC ADVISORS IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?  
(If no, skip to Question 10.)

yes 1

no 2

Col. 5

2. How often have EDC advisors visited your classroom during this school year?

About once or twice a year    About every other month    About once or twice a month    Not at all

1

2

3

4

Col. 6

3. Who usually initiates the contact?

.EDC advisors talk with you.

1

.EDC advisors just drop by.

2

.Teacher asks EDC advisors to visit.

3

.Teacher tells local advisor she/he would like EDC advisor to visit.

4

.Local advisor and/or project director assigns EDC advisor to visits.

5

.Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

6

Col. 7

4. What do EDC advisors usually do in your classroom? (Circle all that apply.)

.Work with a group of children.

1

.Observe activities of individuals or groups.

2

.Help with areas and use of materials.

3

.Talk with teacher after activities or observation.

4

.Talk with teacher about teacher's concerns.

5

.Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

6

Col. 8

5. Who initiated this EDC advisor activity in your classroom?

.Teacher initiated this activity.

Col. 9

1

.EDC advisor initiated this activity.

2

.Teacher and advisor initiated this activity jointly.

3

.Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

4

Col. 10

6. What do you usually do while EDC advisors are in your classroom?

.Continue to work with children.

1

.Observe what EDC advisor is doing.

2

.Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

3

7. Overall, how helpful do you feel EDC advisors' work has been in your classroom?

Very helpful

Somewhat helpful

Not very helpful

Not at all helpful

1

2

3

4

Col. 11

8. Give one or two examples of things EDC advisors do in your classroom, which you have found helpful.

Col. 12

a. \_\_\_\_\_

1

b. \_\_\_\_\_

2

9. Give one or two examples of things EDC advisors do in your classroom which you have not found helpful.

Col. 13

a. \_\_\_\_\_

1

b. \_\_\_\_\_

2



6. Generally speaking, how helpful to you were these workshops at EDC?

Very helpful    Somewhat helpful    Not very helpful    Not helpful at all    Does not apply

1

2

3

4

5

Col. 20

7. Would you like to work with EDC advisors in other ways (in the classroom or outside of the classroom)?

yes

1

no

2

Col. 21

8. If you would like to work with advisors in other ways, please give examples:

Col. 22

a. \_\_\_\_\_

1

b. \_\_\_\_\_

2

c. No suggestions

3

9. Overall, what is your opinion about the EDC advisory inservice training opportunities available to you in Follow Through?

Very adequate

Somewhat adequate

Not very adequate

Not at all adequate

1

2

3

4

Col. 23

C. OVERALL, THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE AIMED AT DESCRIBING SOME WAYS IN WHICH THE EDC ADVISORY HAS WORKED TO PROVIDE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES TO FOLLOW THROUGH STAFF.

1. Each statement is followed by six possible responses: always - usually - often - sometimes - rarely - never. It might be helpful to think of these words as representing percentages. For each statement; please circle the word that best describes your classroom.

Always	--about 100% of the time,
Usually	--about 80% of the time,
Often	--about 60% of the time,
Sometimes	--about 40% of the time,
Rarely	--about 20% of the time,
Never	--almost never.

.You have had regular communication with EDC advisors as you work in Follow Through.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 24</u>

.The EDC advisory has aided you in your understanding of the goals and values of the EDC Follow Through program.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 25</u>

.The EDC advisory has aided in the establishment of a climate of mutual respect and trust among individuals in the Follow Through program.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 26</u>

.The EDC advisory has worked toward including teachers & aides in decision-making which affects their work in the program.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 27</u>

.The EDC advisory has worked toward supporting teachers in planning their own curriculum and provisioning their classrooms.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 28</u>

.The EDC advisory has provided opportunities for the on-going development of teachers, aides, administrators, local advisors, and parents in the EDC Follow Through program.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 29</u>

.The EDC advisory has worked to support local advisors in their work as advisors (not as supervisors or administrative assistants).

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 30</u>

.The EDC advisory has encouraged parents in educational decision-making within the Follow Through program.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 31</u>

.The EDC advisory has aided in the development of networks of communication which will remain after EDC leaves as a sponsor.

Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Col. 32</u>

D. OVERALL REACTIONS OF TEACHERS TO EDC ADVISORS

1. How <u>helpful</u> were EDC advisors when you had difficulty?	Very helpful 1	Somewhat helpful 2	Not so helpful 3	Not at all helpful 4	<u>Col. 33</u>
2. How <u>sensitive</u> were EDC advisors to your feelings and concerns?	Very sensitive 1	Somewhat sensitive 2	Not so sensitive 3	Not at all sensitive 4	<u>Col. 34</u>
3. How <u>willing</u> and able were EDC advisors to respond to your feelings and concerns?	Very willing 1	Somewhat willing 2	Not so willing 3	Not at all willing 4	<u>Col. 35</u>
4. Did you feel <u>free</u> to ask EDC advisors questions or disagree with their opinions?	Very free 1	Somewhat free 2	Not so free 3	Not at all free 4	<u>Col. 36</u>
5. In your opinion, were they <u>fair</u> and impartial in their dealings with you?	Very fair 1	Somewhat fair 2	Not so fair 3	Not at all fair 4	<u>Col. 37</u>
6. At this point in time how <u>clear</u> are the objectives of the EDC approach to you?	Very clear 1	Somewhat clear 2	Not so clear 3	Not at all clear 4	<u>Col. 38</u>
7. How much have your goals in working with EDC advisors changed over the years you have worked with them in Follow Through?	A great deal 1	Somewhat great 2	Not so great 3	Not at all 4	<u>Col. 39</u>
8. How much have the roles of EDC advisors changed over the years you have worked with them in Follow Through?	A great deal 1	Somewhat great 2	Not so great 3	Not at all 4	<u>Col. 40</u>

9. In your development as a Follow Through teacher, when has working with EDC advisors been most/least helpful to you?  
(Circle one number in each column.)

Col. 41                      Col. 42  
Most helpful                      Least helpful

- (a) When you first began to work in Follow Through
- (b) After 1-3 years of experience in Follow Through
- (c) After 4-5 years of experience in Follow Through
- (d) On an on-going basis
- (e) Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

1                      1  
2                      2  
3                      3  
4                      4  
5                      5

Col. 43

10. Give two examples of kinds of EDC advisor non-classroom services which you consider to have been most helpful.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. No suggestions

1

2

3

Col. 44

11. Give two examples of kinds of EDC non-classroom services which you consider to have been least helpful.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. No suggestions

1

2

3

12. In your opinion, how adequately do the services provided by EDC advisors currently meet your needs as a Follow Through teacher?

Very                      Somewhat                      Not very                      Not at all  
adequately                      adequately                      adequately                      adequately

1

2

3

4

Col. 45

Col. 46

13. Besides EDC advisors, with whom have you had contact from EDC in Newton?  
(Circle all that apply.)

EDC Follow Through Project Director

1

Consultants

2

EDC researchers

3

Don't know

4

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

5

14. Please indicate how satisfied you were with the contact you had with each of these individuals or groups.  
 (Circle one response for each individual or group.)

Very satisfied      Somewhat satisfied      Not very satisfied      Not at all satisfied      Does not apply

EDC Follow Through Director	1	2	3	4	5	<u>Col. 47</u>
Consultants	1	2	3	4	5	<u>Col. 48</u>
EDC researchers	1	2	3	4	5	<u>Col. 49</u>
Other _____ (specify)						<u>Col. 50</u>

15. What suggestions can you offer, at this time, to make EDC advisory services more relevant to your needs as a Follow Through teacher?

Col. 51

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ 1
- \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ 2
- \_\_\_\_\_
- c. No suggestions 3

V. WORK WITH SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES: TEACHER VIEWS

1. How much influence, positive or negative, do each of the following groups or people have on your classroom? (Circle one number for each category.)

	<u>A great deal of influence</u>	<u>Some influence</u>	<u>Little influence</u>	<u>No influence</u>	
Parents	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 52</u>
Aide(s) in your classroom	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 53</u>
Other teachers & aides	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 54</u>
Specialists in school (i.e. curriculum, speech, nurse, etc)	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 55</u>
Project director	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 56</u>
Local advisors	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 57</u>
Parent coordinator	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 58</u>
Principal	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 59</u>
Superintendent	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 60</u>
Other people in the community	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 61</u>
News media	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 62</u>

2. Do you feel that you have enough influence to do what needs to be done in your classroom?

	<u>Col. 63</u>
Yes	1
No	2

3. If you wanted to significantly change what you do in your classroom, which of the individuals or groups listed below would be likely to give you the most support? (Circle all that apply for Question 3 below.)

4. Which individuals or groups would be likely to give you the least support? (Circle all that apply for Question 4 below.)

	<u>Most Support</u>	<u>Least Support</u>
	<u>Col. 64</u>	<u>Col. 65</u>
Parents	1	1
Aide(s) in your classroom	2	2
Other teachers & aides	3	3
Specialists in school (i.e. curriculum, speech, nurse, etc.)	4	4
Project director	5	5
Local advisors	6	6
Parent coordinator	7	7
Principal	8	8
Superintendent	9	9
Other people in the community	0	0
News media	X	X

5. Teachers and aides work with each other in the classroom. This question is included to get a sense of some of the qualities and conditions which teachers and aides value in working together. (Circle one number for each statement.)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not very Important	Not at all Important	
Teacher & aide share similar goals and values	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 66</u>
Each adult in the classroom takes initiative in activities	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 67</u>
Teacher and aide share classroom planning	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 68</u>
Working together with the same person for several years allows the time needed to develop a good working relationship	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 69</u>
Having another adult to relate to in the classroom	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 70</u>
Teacher & aide share work equally	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 71</u>
Teacher & aide regularly talk with one another about their work with children	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 72</u>
Teacher & aide respect each other's style and interests	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 73</u>
Each adult has the freedom to carry out his/her own ideas	1	2	3	4	<u>Col. 74</u>

VI. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: TEACHER VIEWS

This question is designed to identify the aspects of the Follow Through program which you value most. Select three of the program components listed below which you feel are most important to the continued effectiveness of the program for children in your school/community. (Circle only three.)

	<u>Col. 75</u>
Money for materials and trips	1
Medical and dental program	2
Snack programs	3
Lunch program	4
Aides in the classroom	5
EDC Advisory support on open education	6
Parent/community activities in the school	7
The open classroom approach	8
Local advisors	9
Parent coordinator	0
Project coordinator	X
Other _____ (specify)	Y

2. In order for you to improve your effectiveness in your Follow Through work, which two of the following would you like to have more of? (Circle only two numbers.)

Col. 76

- In-Service Training 1
- More monetary resources 2
- More support and encouragement from those with whom you regularly work 3
- More time to plan (on your own and with others) 4
- More time to assess accomplishments 5
- More contact with EDC advisors 6
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ 7  
(specify)

Col. 77

3. What age group are you in?
- Under 20 1
  - 20-30 2
  - 30-40 3
  - 40-50 4
  - Over 50 5

Col. 78

4. What is your current marital status?

Single	1
Married	2
Separated	3
Divorced	4
Widow or widower	5
Other _____ (specify)	6

Col. 79

5. Are you currently the head of a household with children?

Yes	1
No	2

6. Overall, how worthwhile an experience for you was the process of filling out this questionnaire?

Very worthwhile	Somewhat worthwhile	Not very worthwhile	Not at all worthwhile
-----------------	---------------------	---------------------	-----------------------

1                      2                      3                      4                      Col. 80

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION!

EDC FOLLOW THROUGH EVALUATION RESEARCH:  
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY  
FOR  
SPRING, 1975 SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

EDC Follow Through  
Evaluation Research Staff

Dale Allen  
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Carol Ann Weissman

April 18, 1975

009413

## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### A. Evaluation of the Follow Through Program

The U. S. Office of Education has required that two kinds of evaluation be conducted about all Follow Through programs:

- (1) National Evaluation of Follow Through and,
- (2) Sponsor Evaluation of Follow Through

National Evaluation of Follow Through has included the regular administration of tests to assess child outcomes and the collection and analysis of this test data. It has also included the collection of some interview data. This data is used to look at achievements of individual Follow Through sponsors (i.e. sites which are affiliated with a sponsoring agency or which are self-sponsored) and to compare the achievements of various sponsors. The National collection and analysis of this data has been contracted to Stanford Research Institute (SRI), ABT Associates and several other external groups.

The U. S. Office of Education has also required that each sponsor conduct an annual Sponsor Evaluation, to be designed by the sponsor and intended to supplement the National Evaluation. Each sponsor writes an annual proposal to USOE and is then funded to carry out specific sponsor evaluation activities. The EDC Follow Through Survey Questionnaire for Spring, 1975, to be administered to teachers, aides, administrators and parents at all EDC Follow Through sites is a major component of the sponsor evaluation which was proposed by EDC and funded by the Office of Education for 1974-75.

### B. EDC Follow Through Evaluation Research

It is a function of the EDC Follow Through evaluation team to design and carry out the annual sponsor evaluation. We currently have a staff of three evaluation researchers and a limited budget for travel, consultation, analysis and dissemination of data. The evaluation team responsibilities also include:

- Work with advisory staff to develop and support research activities in communities.
- Liaison with and response to requests for information from SRI, ABT Associates, USOE, etc.
- Collaboration with other sponsors and researchers to develop appropriate evaluative techniques for open education.

We have worked to design and carry out evaluation projects, in accordance with EDC Follow Through objectives, which will contribute data to the USOE in order to broaden their understanding of EDC Follow Through process and accomplishments. In addition, projects have been planned that are "do-able" within the scope of our resources.

The following are examples of some of our most recent sponsor evaluation projects. These examples both describe completed projects and illustrate the importance and timeliness of the EDC Follow Through Survey Questionnaire for Spring, 1975.

The EDC Follow Through open education approach is based on an advisory which works on an on-going basis in communities with teachers, aides, administrators and parents to increase understanding of how children learn and to broaden the range of approaches, methods and skills which they bring to the teaching/learning process.

In 1972-73 EDC Follow Through researchers developed a report on advisory functions, which was based on advisors' regular reporting of the kinds of activities they were involved in with EDC Follow Through communities. (EDC Follow Through Advisory in Communities, 1971-72) This study represented the advisors' perceptions of the ways in which they worked in communities.

In 1973-74 an in-depth interview study of the EDC Follow Through approach was conducted in two EDC Follow Through communities - Burlington Vermont and Paterson, New Jersey. In open ended interviews, a wide range of questions were responded to by a broad spectrum of adults in these two communities. Teachers, aides, administrators and parents were asked to comment on topics such as: views of children's learning; parent involvement in Follow Through, working with EDC advisors and the EDC approach to learning. EDC research staff interviewed local Follow Through staff in their communities and trained a group of Follow Through parents to interview other Follow Through parents. The data which was collected represents the attitudes and perceptions of the adults who were interviewed. The data was analyzed and presented in two case studies, An Assessment of the EDC Advisory Approach. These studies will be available for distribution in May, 1975.

A case study has some distinguishing characteristics. It is conducted at a particular point in time and the specific findings refer only to the particular case studied at that point in time. The findings are useful to develop generalizations and hypotheses in thinking about similar cases (i.e. the attitudes and perceptions of the adults who work in other EDC Follow Through communities.)

The questions to be asked and the issues to be explored in the EDC

Follow Through Survey Questionnaire for spring, 1975 are primarily derived from these two case studies conducted in EDC Follow Through communities. In addition, the EDC research staff developed a survey of EDC Follow Through objectives which was administered to EDC Follow Through staff in Newton in Fall, 1974. All staff were asked at that time to indicate to what degree they accepted various open education Follow Through objectives and those staff members who worked directly in communities were asked to indicate to what degree they felt that they emphasized each of these objectives in their work. The findings of this fall, 1974 survey have also contributed to the design of items for the spring, 1975 Survey Questionnaire for all EDC Follow Through communities.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT ANY PARTICULAR DATA COLLECTED REFERS SPECIFICALLY TO THE TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH IT WAS COLLECTED. WE ARE ALL CONSTANTLY GROWING AND CHANGING OUR ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS AND EMPHASES. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME BASIC THEMES WHICH HAVE BEEN CONSTANT IN THE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDC FOLLOW THROUGH APPROACH. IT IS THESE BASIC THEMES WHICH ARE TO BE SURVEYED IN ALL EDC FOLLOW THROUGH COMMUNITIES AT THIS POINT IN OUR DEVELOPMENT.

## II. METHODOLOGY - SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SPRING, 1975

### A. Purpose of Survey Questionnaire

The purpose of the EDC Survey Questionnaire for Spring, 1975 is to supplement the National Evaluation of Follow Through by providing timely information about the content, process and context of the advisory approach in EDC Follow Through communities.

To accomplish this purpose, we will gather information from teachers, aides, administrators and parents concerning their perceptions of the impact of the advisory approach in all ten EDC Follow Through communities.

### B. Design and Construction of Survey Questionnaire

The completion of the 1973-74 interview studies in two EDC Follow Through communities was an essential factor in the development of the form of data collection for the 1975 survey. The responses to the questions in the interview studies provided a basis for the construction of items which are included in the self-administered questionnaire for spring, 1975. In addition, some items from the fall, 1974 survey of EDC Follow Through objectives (see p. 3 ) are also included in the spring, 1975 questionnaire.

Structurally, the survey questions fall into six basic categories. These categories are similar to those found in the 1973-74 interview studies in two EDC Follow Through communities. Descriptions of the questionnaire categories are as follows:

#### 1. Background Information

This survey data will provide information about the abilities, training, and experiences that teachers, aides, parents, and administrators bring to their involvement in Follow Through. For example, we will ask questions about pre-service and in-service training that teachers have had, the number of children that parents have had in the Follow Through program; the number of years that aides and administrators have worked with the Follow Through program. This background information will allow us to look, in a comprehensive way, at other data collected by means of the survey. For example, it would be interesting to know if the number of children involved in Follow Through is one of the variables which influences a parents' involvement or if the number of years of teaching experience influences teachers' thinking about children's learning in any particular way.

2. Children's Learning  
We believe that it is important to continually assess the attitudes of Follow Through members concerning what and how children should be learning. For example, questions will be asked about: the grouping of children in Follow Through classes; children's behaviors which are encouraged and those which are not encouraged; the arrangement of the learning environment in the classroom.
3. Parent Involvement  
We are interested in the ways in which parents become involved in their children's education. What kinds of activities are parents involved in? This is an example of the kind of question which will be asked about parent involvement in Follow Through
4. Work with School and Community Resources  
This category pertains to the working relationships which form in Follow Through communities as people spontaneously seek assistance and consultation from one another in order to become more skilled or better informed as Follow Through administrators, parents, teachers or aides. An example which would fit into this category is "To whom do you usually turn for assistance in the classroom; in the school; in the community?"
5. Work with the EDC Advisory  
As distinct from the category of work with school and community resources, this category is concerned with the nature and content of relationships which develop as members of the Follow Through communities work with EDC advisory staff. For example, questions will be asked about participation in EDC workshops in Newton and in the communities; work with EDC advisors; and, in general, about the nature of relationships which occur simply because EDC is involved with the communities as the sponsoring agency.
6. Projections  
Questions in this category are intended to gather information about those aspects of Follow Through which community members would like to see continued as part of their program. This is a more focused way of identifying those aspects of Follow Through which hold the most value and promise for the community on an on-going basis.

### C. Groups to be Surveyed

All four community groups to be surveyed (teachers, aides, administrators, and parents) will be asked some similar questions in all six categories. However, some different questions will also be asked of each of the four groups to determine the functions and concerns unique to the members of those groups. The groups are as follows:

Teachers - All Follow Through teachers in all sites.

Aides - All Follow Through aides in all sites.

Administrators - Project directors, local advisors, PAC chairpersons, parent coordinators, and principals of Follow Through schools in all sites.

Parents - Our original intent, as we stated during the March, 1975 Administrators/Parents Workshop at EDC, was to survey a small number of parents, from the Parent Advisory Committees (PAC). Workshop participants expressed a concern that this was an unrepresentative sample and that there were other parents who had valuable information to share but who were unable, for a variety of reasons to be formally involved in the PAC. While time, budgetary, and staff constraints still do not allow us to survey all parents in all communities, we have revised our design to increase the parent participation in the survey as follows:

- For every PAC parent surveyed, two non-PAC parents of children in Follow Through should be surveyed.
- A minimum of five PAC parents and ten non-PAC parents should be surveyed in each community.
- Since some communities have many more Follow Through classrooms than others, it seems reasonable to try to make the numbers of parents surveyed in each community commensurate with the number of Follow Through classrooms in that community.

In sum, we are attempting to survey communities according to their relative size without surveying too few parents in some communities and too many parents in others.

#### D. Process of Implementation

This paper describing the background and methodology for the Spring, 1975 EDC Follow Through Survey Questionnaire is being sent to all Project Directors, Local Advisors, Principals of Follow Through schools, PAC Chairpersons and Parent Coordinators. This paper is a follow up to:

1. The memo of March 3, 1975 from Grace Hilliard, EDC-FT Director, which introduced our plans to conduct this survey,
2. The presentation about this survey by our research staff at the Follow Through Administrators and Parents workshop held in Newton in March, 1975.

An Implementation Package will be mailed to the Project Director in each EDC-FT community during the week of May 12, 1975. Each Project Director will be asked to take overall responsibility for the distribution, collection, and return of the Survey Questionnaire forms to EDC Follow Through no later than May 30, 1975.

The Implementation Package will include:

- Questionnaire Forms for all four groups to be surveyed (teachers, aides, administrators and parents)
- Envelopes for the return of individual questionnaires
- A list of the Follow Through members to be surveyed
- Directions for implementation.

The directions for implementation will request that the appropriate Survey Questionnaire Form be given to each individual, along with a blank envelope which will be provided by EDC. The individual questionnaires are to be completed anonymously and each person will be requested to seal their completed questionnaire in the envelope before returning it to the central collection location (i.e., a carton with a mail slot in the Project Director's office).

It is suggested that the Project Director distribute the Survey Questionnaire Forms to as many staff members as possible at a group meeting (i.e., staff meeting) so that directions of how to fill out the form and how, when and where to return it will be clearly understood. In addition, this Background and Methodology paper can be reviewed at this time so that all staff can be well informed about the purposes and procedures for this survey.

The parent questionnaire forms will require a different method of distribution. We recommend that the PAC chairperson be responsible for the distribution and collection of forms in envelopes from PAC members to be surveyed and that the parent coordinator assume the same responsibilities for these materials for non-PAC parents to be surveyed. The completed parent questionnaires can then be deposited in the same box by the PAC chairperson and the parent coordinator.

A separate list of the specific directions for distribution, collection and return of questionnaires will accompany each Implementation Package.

#### E. Analysis of Data

The collected information will be analyzed across sites and across groups. This means that statements will be made about a particular group or that group's relation to the other groups. These statements will be based on the total information from all sites; no individual site data will be analyzed or presented. The responses of the four surveyed groups will be tabulated (once again, across groups and sites) and correlated with basic variables such as the following: total number of years in Follow Through; amount and type of pre-service and in-service training. In this way we can begin to determine if variables such as those mentioned above have any relationship to certain aspects of the EDC advisory approach. The data will be tabulated and the results and discussion will be set forth in a final report. The final report will include tabulated data and analysis by the EDC Follow Through researchers. We will be looking for significant patterns and themes of relationships and understandings in the data.

#### F. How Data Will be Used

The final report will be disseminated to the U.S. Office of Education, to all EDC Follow Through communities, and to others who are committed to and genuinely interested in the development and furthering of open education as an important and legitimate approach to learning. It will be added to the growing body of knowledge concerning the implementation of open education programs. In addition, we believe that this study is particularly important at this point in time in terms of adding to the information base of those who make policy decisions about programs like Follow Through. In order that these decision makers be able to make fair and meaningful policy decisions, it is essential that they be broadly and currently informed. This EDC Follow Through Survey Questionnaire will contribute significantly to this information base.

## G. Summary of Major Points

1. This memo contains background and methodology information for the Spring 1975 Survey Questionnaire.
2. The purpose of the survey is to supplement the national evaluation of Follow Through by collecting information about the perceptions of teachers, aides, administrators and parents in all EDC Follow Through communities concerning the open education advisory approach to Follow Through.
3. The questions to be asked include the following categories:
  - . Background information
  - . Children's learning
  - . Parent involvement
  - . Work with school and community resources
  - . Work with the EDC advisory
  - . Projections
4. The groups to be surveyed include:
  - . Teachers - all Follow Through teachers
  - . Aides - all Follow Through aides
  - . Administrators - project directors, local advisors, PAC chairpersons, parent coordinators, and principals of Follow through schools in all sites
  - . Parents - a sample of PAC and non-PAC Follow Through parents
5. This questionnaire will be self-administered. Each response will be completed anonymously and returned to a central collection location in a blank, sealed envelope. The project director in each community will return all responses to the EDC Follow Through evaluation research team no later than May 30, 1975.
6. This survey will not identify any one community. We are interested in across site and across group analysis of the responses of the four groups surveyed.

7. This survey will give us, for the first time, an overall picture of all ten EDC Follow Through communities. The report of this survey will be disseminated to the U.S. Office of Education in partial fulfillment of our 1974-75 evaluation obligations as a Follow Through sponsor and to contribute to the current information base of those who make policy decisions about the Follow Through program.

*Please address any comments or questions about this to the EDC Follow Through evaluation research staff NO LATER THAN APRIL 30, 1975. We will then be able to consider your suggestions as we complete final preparation of the Survey Questionnaire forms and directions for implementation.*