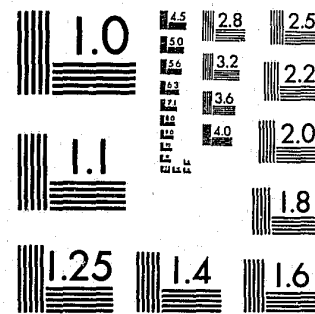


National Criminal Justice Reference Service

ncjrs

This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U. S. Department of Justice.

National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20531

Date Filmed

2/16/81

educational issues



73157

VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM
Conference Report
October 17, 1979



Oregon Department
of Education
Salem, Oregon 97310

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction to Report by Verne A. Duncan	1
List of Summit Participants	2
Discussion Group Assignments.	3
Agenda.	4
Recommendations of Discussion Groups.	5
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS	
Opening Remarks by Verne A. Duncan	7
Discussion Group I Report.	9
Discussion Group II Report	11
Discussion Group III Report.	13
Discussion Group IV Report	15
Discussion Group V Report.	19
Discussion Group Summary by Ed Fuller.	21
Closing Dialogue of Participants	23
APPENDICES	
OEA Statistical Report	27
National PTA Report.	35

NCJRS

NOV 11 1980

ACQUISITION

INTRODUCTION

The problem of discipline in school age children is one which has been with us for quite some time; however, there are indications that many of today's youths are venting their frustration and resentment through acts of violence and vandalism. This should not come as a surprise since our society tends to glorify violence in many instances, and this, coupled with changing societal mores which has lead to the de-emphasis of the family unit as the central focus in our lives, is bound to have an impact on young people seeking role models and examples as they develop attitudes to guide them through life.

While the causes for the problem can be explained, it is, nonetheless, disconcerting, and as a society we have a responsibility to correct the problem by addressing the causes.

This report is a summary of an intensive one-day "summit meeting" at which some of the best minds in Oregon expressed themselves on the issue of discipline problems among school age youth. This summit meeting was one of the few times key decision-makers from many agencies and organizations concerned with children have met together to work toward a solution to a common problem. This is a significant first step, but it is only that--a first step.

To best utilize the time available, the meeting was structured so the participants were divided into small groups for intensive discussions. Those groups are listed on page 3 of the report. The several recommendations, listed on page 5, are from the discussion groups, not the summit committee as a whole; however, I think they fairly represent the thinking of the entire body.

It is my intention to establish an executive committee from among the summit participants to review these recommendations and develop action plans. I wish to express my appreciation to those who participated in the summit meeting and all of the interested Oregonians who have since contributed ideas, suggestions and support.

If there was unanimity on any one idea at the meeting, it was that the problem of youth discipline is not attributable to, nor the responsibility of, any one group or system within our society; rather, blame must be assessed society-wide and the responsibility for addressing the problem belongs to society as a whole.

We have taken the first step necessary in any problem-solving situation--we have recognized the existence of a potential problem. Current data gathering efforts will allow us to clearly define the scope of the problem so realistic plans to address it can be formulated. I am optimistic about our success.

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

PARTICIPANTS IN SUMMIT MEETING

Boyd Applegarth
Confederation of Oregon School
Administrators

Marv Evans
Oregon Association of School
Executives

Minnie Richards
Oregon Association of Secondary School
Administrators

Bill Proppe
Oregon Association of Education
Service Districts

Leland Hall
Oregon Education Association

Elma Baker
Oregon Association of Classroom
Teachers

Carolyn Miller
Oregon Federation of Teachers

George Wenzel
Oregon Activity Advisors' Association

Cal Norman
Oregon Elementary Principals'
Association

Wilbur Jackson
Oregon Personnel and Guidance
Association

Sarah Newhall
Governor's Commission on Youth

Helen Petersen
Oregon PTSA

Frank McNamara
Oregon School Boards' Association

John Brown
Oregon School Employees Association

Glenn Knickerbocker
Oregon Department of Human Resources

Keith Stubblefield
Governor's Office

Emil Brandaw
Oregon State Police

Art Phillips
Oregon Association of School
Supervisors

Jerri Doctor, Speaker's Office
Oregon House of Representatives

Tom Throop
State Representative, District 54

Roy Holladay
Salem Chief of Police

Tom McCall
Portland

Alan Peterson
Juvenile Court Directors' Association

Ken Goin
Oregon Sheriff's Association

Tom Grigsby
Department of Higher Education

Charles Calica
Warm Springs Tribe

Rodney Page
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Hal Hart
Portland

Albin Norblad
Marion County Domestic and Juvenile
Judge

Doug Hill
Aloha High School Student

Shelly Jamison
Weston-McKewan High School Student

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Frank Dost, Chairman
State Board of Education

DISCUSSION GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

I. Boyd Applegarth
Keith Stubblefield
Shelly Jamison
George Wenzel
Emil Brandaw
Rodney Page
Larry Mylnechuk, Facilitator

III. Minnie Richards
Elma Baker
Ken Goin
Doug Hill
John Brown
Charles Calica
Charlotte Conner, Facilitator

V. Bill Proppe
Verne Duncan
Art Phillips
Helen Petersen
Roy Holladay
Alan Peterson
Glen Knickerbocker
Gary Dennerline, Facilitator

II. Marv Evans
Wilbur Jackson
Sarah Newhall
Jerry Doctor
Frank McNamara
Tom Grigsby
Les Martin, Facilitator

IV. Leland Hall
Tom McCall
Albin Norblad
Cal Norman
Frank Dost
Carolyn Miller
Dave Curry, Facilitator

SUMMIT MEETING ON VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM
 "Working Toward A Solution"
 October 17, 1979
 Salem, OR

- 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Introduction
 Verne A. Duncan, Superintendent of
 Public Instruction
- O.E.A. Survey Findings
 Bob Dahlman, Research Director
 Lee Hall, President
- National PTA Campaign Against Violence
 Melba Worth
 National PTA Region VII Vice-President
- Some Projects That Work
 Dick Pedee, Multnomah County ESD
- 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Working Groups
 Identify Extent of Problem--Share Facts
 Identify Possible/Probable Contributing
 Factors
- 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 Working Groups
 Identify Specific Programs/Plans Which Are
 Effective
 Results may be compiled for dissemin-
 ation
 Identify Current Directions for Addressing
 Problem
- 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. LUNCH (Served on-site)
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Working Groups
 Identify New Approaches
 1. Specific Activity
 2. Responsible Person & Agency/
 Organization
 3. Timeline
 4. Anticipated Result
- 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Total Group
 Development of Action Plan
 1. Each Agency/Organization's
 Responsibility
 2. How Coordination Will Be
 Accomplished
 3. Timeline
 4. Follow-up

Recommendations

1. More information should be gathered about incidences of violence and vandalism to determine:
 - a. Is there any correlation between individuals who commit offenses against persons and those who commit offenses against property?
 - b. What are the types, locations, concentrations, severity and precise causes relating to incidences of violence and vandalism?
 - c. Is there an effect on student behavior when handicapped children are "mainstreamed" into the classroom?
2. The Department of Education should collect data on incidences of violence and vandalism, on a continuing basis.
3. Schools should provide training in parenting skills for parents and students, including information on what resources are available within the community and through other jurisdictions such as state government.
4. School staff members should be better trained to address student behavior and stress.
5. More cooperation should exist between agencies and organizations on a state level to utilize all available resources in assisting local communities.
6. Local communities should make a commitment to monitor incidences of violence and vandalism locally, and develop solutions that are appropriate to local situations. This should be shared responsibility between local schools, community leadership, churches and parents; schools may be the appropriate environment in which to implement solutions and provide services to children. The Department of Education should initiate such coordination at the local level.
7. Teachers should be made aware of their rights and courses of action available to them as victims of violence and vandalism. The Department of Education should disseminate this information.
8. Programs designed to address the problems of student discipline should have evaluation components built in so effectiveness can be determined.
9. The Department of Education should collect and disseminate information on effective student discipline programs which are already in use in Oregon and elsewhere.
10. Alternatives and options for educational programs should be provided for individuals who do not function well in traditional school settings.
11. The concept of lifelong learning should be widely promoted.

12. Students should have opportunities, from an early age, to develop a respect and caring for other people and property through activities which encourage development of these attitudes.
13. There should be more interpersonal work as a regular part of daily classroom life.
14. Smaller societal units (i.e., neighborhoods, smaller schools, divisions within schools, etc.) should be developed.
15. Positive information about youth should be presented to encourage and reinforce positive community attitudes.
16. Family planning should be encouraged so parents don't become overwhelmed with responsibilities beyond their capabilities.
17. Through early childhood education and kindergarten programs, children exposed to excessive negative influences (e.g., abusive parents, nutritional deficiencies, emotional problems, etc.) should be identified and targeted for special help.
18. The efforts of state and local agencies and organizations should be proactive rather than reactive; preventative rather than corrective.
19. Some traditional assumptions about the delivery of educational services should be evaluated (e.g., is 12 straight years realistic for all, is the traditional classroom approach the best, etc.).
20. Schools should avoid spending so much time dealing with disruptive students that the group as a whole is deprived of educational opportunities.
21. Disciplinary codes should be consistently and fairly administered and maintained.
22. The summit participants, or some subgroup, should be called back together to develop definitive plans of action after the conference report is issued and additional data is available from the OEA/COSA/OSBA survey.

OPENING REMARKS BY VERNE A. DUNCAN STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

I'm Verne Duncan, State Superintendent of Schools, and I'm very glad to have you with us today. I'm also pleased to welcome our many observers. This conference has drawn a lot of attention and we've had people ask if they could join us in the audience today, so we are pleased all of you are here and hope you find this a beneficial conference.

We decided to limit the number of active participants because we wanted a group small enough to be able to talk and, hopefully, make some decisions. The participants are people who have decision-making powers. We feel each of you will be able to contribute something from your area of expertise which will help us develop some appropriate action. You have a packet of materials--one of the items you have in there is "Facts and Fictions About Crime in Oregon" that the Law Enforcement Council put together. You will be receiving other information from the OEA and National PTA.

I do want to explain one thing about this meeting...we don't know what's going to happen, I have no preconceived notion, and am not in any way going to try to direct you toward a final solution to the problem. You might say: we have a problem, we need to do these things, this is the kind of timeline we need to develop and here's what should be done, by all of us. You might say: this is what law enforcement should handle, and this is what they're going to do, or education, or...at the end of the day it's possible you'll say there is no problem and we need to forget the whole thing and we don't need to do anything else.

This morning we'll hear some brief comments from OEA and Melba Worth of the National PTA, Dick Pedee from Multnomah County ESD, and he will talk about some Oregon school projects that are working. In small groups today you'll hear of other projects.

To set the stage, the concern about vandalism has been with us for some time as it relates to the school, and I'm sure those of you who deal with the community in general have seen the same problems. About a year ago, we brought on our staff Gary Dennerline, whose job it is to work with other areas of government which have concerns and responsibilities for children. He has been dealing with student discipline. In addition to his educational background, he has worked in the field of corrections.

Problems are also brought to our attention by the release of the study of the OEA. That study--I've said I was surprised at those figures, we need to know more about that study, and we have people here today who can respond to it. That did bring into focus some major concerns that you people have had about violence. What does violence mean? You talk about a scale of 0 - 25, what happens to individuals, what happens to property, to what degree--there are all sorts of degrees of violence--, I commented in my State of the Schools address some weeks ago that it's my feeling that when we talk about physical abuse of teachers, violence in the schools in Oregon, we're probably talking about a very different degree than you might find in the East--knifings, rapes, and so

on. I doubt that much of that happens in Oregon. That may come up for discussion today. Many of the incidences, as we look at the study, involve elementary children and it could be that the student was kicking or biting a teacher. I'm not trying to downplay that, but if you're putting it in degrees with knifings, kicking is a very different thing. We still need to address the problem because it shows something is starting and what will happen in the future with that student is important.

The study dealt with what's happening in the schools. Often the things we deal with are school kids and school problems. I say that these problems go beyond the schools, and I say that not to get us off the hook. Those of us in the school business have a responsibility to share failures, but this goes beyond the school. I get upset when I hear the school blamed for so many things. Remember, I think we have to take our share of lumps, and I'm willing to do that--saw a headline the other day that said head lice were found on school children. Well, why couldn't one have said, head lice found on home children or any other place children go...Why school children? The school has to take some responsibility, but it goes beyond. That's why I asked all of you to join us and talk about this concern and responsibility. As I said, we have no preconceived notions, you take the lead and pull it together. It's a concern all society must address--communities, cities, the state--and so that's where we'll go from there.

I hope our discussion today will focus on the problem, and if there is one, on contributing factors, programs and plans which are effective, new approaches, and what, if anything, should be done differently as we look to the future.

REPORT FROM GROUP I
LARRY MYLNECHUK, FACILITATOR

Group I - Boyd Applegarth, Keith Stubblefield, Shelly Jamison, George Wenzel, Emil Brandaw and Rodney Page.

Our first and maybe most significant observation was perhaps this meeting is a little premature. There was a consensus in our group that we don't know how to solve the problem because we're not certain what the question is. This meeting is set up to deal with violence and vandalism, but: What is violence? What is vandalism? How are we defining these terms for the purposes of trying to resolve it? We came to the conclusion we don't have the information we need to come to grips with the question.

Some suggestions to help try to deal with that are:

- (1) We need far more extensive data to work with in trying to resolve the question. It needs to be based on agreed upon statistical formats so there is no question about skewing the data. It was suggested that we undertake some joint activities among the various professions involved in this issue to try to collect that data, so perhaps it might be useful on a wider basis.
- (2) Another view, perhaps violence is not an issue as much as is student misbehavior. What is most prominent now? Is violence prominent or are we more concerned these days with increased incidents of verbal abuse?
- (3) Also raised, in a form of a question, whether or not there is any true correlation between those individuals who perpetuate one kind of offense; namely, an offense against persons, and those who commit offenses against property? Should we be concerned with whatever correlation that might exist?
- (4) It was also suggested that the Department of Education should be more active in collecting data on violence and vandalism in the schools, and that this might be done in a manner which, if carried out and planned carefully, would not necessarily point the accusatory finger at any district, group, student or any other individual, but could be truly used for statistical purposes to define what our issue really is.
- (5) Other suggestions expressed were:

Schools need to continue to emphasize parental training, most directly related in student programs, to give them role models and information that will help them become better parents. As educators we've got to very clearly communicate our expectations to parents. It was pointed out that very likely many or most schools are doing this, but perhaps some are not.

Staff be better trained to deal with student behavior.

- (6) This is not a school problem, not a law enforcement problem, it's not a problem of any particular sector or group; it's a societal problem and the long-range goal is going to be just that: a long-range goal. There are perhaps no hard and fast simple solutions and we need to recognize that the large majority of students are conducting themselves very well in schools. We're talking about a small percentage of students that are taking up a larger percentage of the time of the schools, and trying to deal with their needs, their concerns and their problems.

We need to find better ways of working together between state agencies, local juvenile authorities, and schools. We still haven't, on a unified basis, addressed the students' needs, utilizing all of these resources.

Finally, we may need to deal with the question of mainstreaming handicapped children into regular programs and its effect on student behavior in the classroom. It was a common view that it does have an effect and it is a question that needs to be researched more.

REPORT FROM GROUP II
LES MARTIN, FACILITATOR

Group II - Marv Evans, Wilbur Jackson, Sarah Newhall, Jerri Doctor, Frank McNamara and Tom Grigsby.

We had difficulty coming to grips in what constitutes violence because there was a reluctance to say we are at the extreme end of personal damage or the extreme end of burning everything down. The consensus seemed to be that student misbehavior, particularly of the verbal nature, and minor vandalistic type acts were more common than the other types of extremes. We agreed with the other groups, there is a problem, but we don't know as much about it as we'd like. One of our solutions is to find out more about it.

We also talked about causal factors, and it appears that violence is learned, and learned in a variety of settings including the home, the school, the streets, the observation of interaction between adults, and through the media and so on. Which then suggests some possible avenues of dealing with it later on.

In terms of action plans, we have two kinds of plans we looked at.

- (1) Things that a specific group on our panel said "We are going to do" or are already doing, and others in terms of recommendations of what we think someone else ought to do.

In terms of what we are already doing, the OSBA, the OEA and COSA are cooperating to develop a more definitive base of information as to the parameters of the problem: what is the extent of violence, what does it really constitute? How about vandalism, what is really going on in our schools? They intend to use that base to develop an action plan. In other words, they're saying, we already know we need to know more, we've already started, the process is underway, we are committed to doing it. COSA is also extremely interested that we be as accurate as possible on the information we develop; that we don't use just "Were you physically attacked?" but "Were you attacked with an instrument, were you attacked with words, were you threatened, did you feel like you might be attacked if you did a certain thing?"

There's a strong encouragement that the local level be highly involved; that the local level make a strong commitment for knowing what is going on in our own setting...what our own extent is, because solutions are going to have to be applied locally. At the state level, we or other organizations can lend support, point direction, and so on, but the actual implementation of the solutions will take place at the local level. The Portland School Board is going to continue to strengthen the early type programs that they already have going. They mention a child development specialist type program, which they've already found to be effective, including defusing or pushing down the incidences of violence and vandalism. They all fall into primary prevention programs and the kinds of activities that go along with that. The City of Portland Youth Service Center is and will promote cooperative efforts between schools and other agencies. They say they will look for new ways to do a better job.

The recommendation was that the Department of Education spearhead inservice training for teachers regarding their rights and courses of action as victims or witnesses to violence and vandalism. There was some feeling that teachers don't really know what they can do and what their rights are. They are acting like second-class citizens because of their ignorance in that area.

Another recommendation was that each group that comes up with a particular solution, design into that solution an evaluation procedure whereby they determine what it was like before you started it and whether it really made a difference, so that we don't do things that on the surface appear to be good but don't necessarily have any real results.

Also the recommendation that we don't go off half-cocked and start doing things without a basis as to where we're going to go. So the recommendation that you utilize the results of the coalition of organizations' study in planning whatever solutions you may implement.

We also recommend that the Department of Education pull together and disseminate information regarding the programs, particularly in education, that are already working. We know the information is out there and it is distributed, but maybe it can be pulled together in a more comprehensive fashion.

REPORT FROM GROUP III
CHARLOTTE CONNER, FACILITATOR

Group 3 - Minnie Richards, Elma Baker, Ken Goin, Doug Hill, John Brown and Charles Calica.

Our group looked at where the responsibility might lie for addressing the entire problem of misbehavior in the schools.

We came up with three areas--the parents, the community, and the schools, feeling that this was a shared responsibility. We put schools last because children spend the least amount of time in the schools. That does not mean that the schools are not very important in this whole process.

For parents, training and getting knowledge about what resources and other kinds of information are available is very important.

In the community, the possibility of interagency cooperation and the providing of resources to both schools and parents.

In the schools, we talked about parent education as part of the curriculum, starting in kindergarten--that the academic skills of a person were linked with his self-concept and that there should be alternatives and options for people who do not function well in a regular school setting.

The idea that lifelong learning should be promoted, that schools are just a beginning of the learning, that learning takes place in the community, that parents are part of that learning. The entire climate of society at this time is a contributing factor and when you talk about funding programs you need to realize that you cannot buy values and you cannot buy morality.

REPORT FROM GROUP IV
DAVE CURRY, FACILITATOR

Group 4 - Leland Hall, Tom McCall, Al Norblad, Cal Norman, Frank Dost and Carrie Miller.

When group 4 addressed the initial question of the extent of the problem, we concluded that we were not sure how extensive it was. One of the things that leads to is a need for more research.

We also agreed that there was a sufficient prima facie case for the concerns that are expressed. So, we are concerned, but we aren't sure of the type, location, concentration, severity, or the precise causes, and need more of that information.

We didn't let that stop us from proceeding with ideas. We felt as if it was in a linear situation, where we were identifying the first and the faint beginnings of something that may come along and be of greater magnitude and greater seriousness and perhaps this was an excellent opportunity to convene together at this time to address these things.

We did have some specific concerns about the elementary statistics that showed up in the OEA survey. I think that came as a surprise in terms of our beliefs about where we thought we'd see preliminary research about problems.

Regardless of the extent, we felt that solutions had to be cooperative with stronger ties between school, communities and other participating groups and agencies.

On factors, we identified 23. Rather than sharing all 23 of them with you, I think in part we were talking about a society that was rapidly moving, a rapid redefinition of a variety of social contract statements and values, confusion, ambiguity and a lot of stress that results just from the speed with which all of us try to respond to all of those changes: everything from nutrition to student rights to an interesting debate on whether we were afraid to lose contact with our children or whether we were afraid of having too much contact with our children.

Implicit in that whole discussion was the fact that the problem is societal, in which the schools may play a role, but certainly not alone. We identified a variety of programs and had we had more time, I'm sure would have identified more. But, everything from programs taking emotionally disturbed children out into natural settings to work in the environment, to move away from passive life, was one of the factors we were concerned about, and into more action and more hands-on involvement. Project Trek, Project Ranger, those kinds of programs that allow youngsters with special needs to get involved in animal care, to take care of a living thing--to experience it. The Silver Threads program--an attempt to reunite elementary school youth with our senior citizens in convalescent homes, and to reknit some of those relationships that don't exist in some of the family structures that we have today. Programs in neighborhoods, for studying the geneology of the people in your neighborhood and the history of your own neighborhood. And the kinds of exciting pursuits that might be available in that direction.

The comment that with as many people and as much opportunity as there is, and with large groups of people like the Cambodians and the elderly, perhaps there are more meaningful ways to create opportunities for involvement.

We identified the City of Salem's Cooperative Program, that more precisely zeroes in on the needs of students with discipline problems, disruptive problems, and the relationships they cause between schools, families and neighborhoods. The Catch Program at Larch Mountain, and other programs which move students back into the environment.

Portland Public Schools curbing vandalism program is specifically designed for a school to address vandalism, as an individual school in its own neighborhood.

We looked on from there toward trends and we listed things we thought we saw were coming and things we wanted to see coming.

More interpersonal work as a regular part of daily classroom life.

More opportunity for teachers to (1) accept stress as a legitimate part of their existence, (2) accept the fact that learning to cope with stress is a skill, not the admission of a lack of invincibility or a lack of being perfect, and (3) rethinking of teacher expectations and self-perceptions. Back to that question of: Are you invincible? Is it an admission of weakness if you consult with other people? And that followed on with asking if "Do the professional training institutions, the training professions, teach as much consultative work for educators as they do for people in other professions just as a natural activity? Or is it somehow an admission of defeat if you can't solve your own problems in your own classroom?"

We felt that somehow smaller schools or smaller social units somehow ought to happen. Whether it is cohesive neighborhoods, smaller schools, or division within schools. We also felt that perhaps there was such a premium on negative information throughout society that somehow a frontal assault on community attitudes is needed--for telling the good news, about the marvellous successes that take place so often and in so many places, and those stories not being told, and what that does to community attitudes. We felt that all of these things in and of themselves would not have as much value as if they were united in a comprehensive plan that identified both long- and short-range solutions. We felt that somehow in that process, if life gets so real and so earnest that we lose our sense of humor, that it's going to be a pretty bleak experience.

Activities we listed were prevention activities, maintenance activities and correction activities.

We felt in prevention that the notion of family planning needs to be addressed. Does family just occur and then the responsibilities become overwhelming and what does that do to the family base in terms of the youngster and on into school?

Early childhood education, and early identification and screening, and identifying parents with abusive problems, children who are abused and may become abusers, and doing it as early as possible, and key roles that kindergartens play in that.

And I just restate what I said in the beginning, I think we identified a variety of factors and a variety of elements. Implicit in all of our discussions was the fact that we need to work together across agencies, across groups for common solutions.

REPORT FROM GROUP V
GARY DENNERLINE, FACILITATOR

Group 5 - Bill Proppe, Helen Petersen, Verne Duncan, Roy Holladay, Art Phillips, Alan Peterson, and Glenn Knickerbocker.

In the past, trends such as this issue of violence and vandalism have moved from the East Coast to California, to the Northwest, to the mid-continent. Our position must be, if this is a trend, we need to be looking at it, and in a proactive rather than a reactive posture.

The other thing that the group said is that the violence and vandalism are not problems in themselves but a reflection of a problem with society or that society is undergoing change and that it has to be viewed in this spectrum of a lot of different issues that we are addressing. It is not just a school problem, it's not just a law enforcement problem, it's not just a criminal justice problem, it's not just a social services agency problem, but it's society's problem, and those groups in themselves, or collectively, cannot solve the problem. It's going to have to be a societal effort. Going back to violence and vandalism, it was stated that a very small number of students were disruptive, a small number of students were causing the problems. This doesn't mean you ignore it because that small number of students' behavior affects the educational climate for all the rest of the students. Many times bad students cause good students to leave school.

The overall issue identified as a contributing factor was the changing society. For the last ten years, society has undergone changes that are unparalleled in recent history and some of the factors in that is the loss of the neighborhood, the loss of identity with a neighborhood, the loss of community, the breakdown of both the extended and the nuclear family, and schools that sometimes cause problems but even when they do not cause them they do not help solve them. Stated another way: we have the schools of the sixties in the society of the eighties, again reflecting the very drastic change over the last ten to fifteen years.

When we got to identifying specific programs, we looked at what kind of concepts we would find in exemplary or specific programs. What would be the central theme, regardless of whether it was a program implemented on the Oregon Coast or in Eastern Oregon? And the primary concepts of these kinds of programs are that they should be preventive and they should be at a very young stage, so you're not dealing with a sophomore in high school because you can't be as productive as you can with a first-, second- or third-grader. These programs need to involve the family, the community, the church. They cannot be just school programs, but they have to involve the casual factors. And they need to involve all of the other agencies that provide services to youth.

Current directions - Again, we went back to the identification of specific programs because I think if you identify a quality program that works, then you are also identifying a direction that people are going to follow. These

programs do need to be early, they do need to be community-based, they do need to look at all the issues. Those issues have been discussed briefly in other contexts: Is 12 straight years of schooling realistic for all students in school today? Do we need to look at some options or alternatives that a student should have? Are the changes reflecting on the school in the way that students are no longer finding it productive to stay for the full length of time? What's the reward for staying in school for 12 years? Is it that you do get a better job? That you get a higher income? More prestige in the community? When we looked at specific directions that we should be taking, it was a little difficult. Also, the context of the conversation changes; where we looked at what the schools could be doing for the students who are "good students," and how much they are allowing the rights of the individuals to overshadow the needs of the group. We are into a society where individual rights many times are destructive to the goals and benefit of the group. Schools need to really look at this and at the fact that you have to identify what's best for the group and act accordingly. Maybe you need stricter disciplinary codes, if they are consistently and fairly implemented and maintained. And maybe you do need to admit that schools can optimally only serve a certain group and that you need to find alternatives or other methods of providing services to the rest of the students. What kind of parameters do students need to be aware of in school that will carry on into society?

The summary kind of direction was that schools cannot and should not be the primary agency responsible for dealing with disruptive behavior, because they are not the primary agency for causing it. If we look at how to address this, the schools very definitely could be the place, the environment, the locale where the services are provided, but that they need to involve family, they need to involve community, they need to involve law enforcement agencies, parental, justice, social service and private nonprofit agencies that provide services to youth. In looking at the difficulty of wrapping up the group, there's an indication that people haven't said all they want to say and that there are a lot of energies that people are willing to devote toward looking at this issue.

DISCUSSION GROUP SUMMARY ED FULLER, CONFERENCE FACILITATOR

When we first started talking about where we wanted to go with this and where we would end up at the end of the day, our hope was that some direction would emerge out of this conference that suggests further activities on our part, if those seemed to be logical and reasonable. We're at a point where we need to take a look at that. What we have said is this is a pervasive problem, that we are already addressing it in some regard by beginning to get more definitive data about the nature and extent and type of problem we are dealing with; that once we have that data, it will be clear to us what some possible solutions would be.

It occurred to me when you get into the questions of prevention vs. remediation, that it is always easier to get money for remediation than it is for prevention. You want to talk about getting programming, it is much easier to remediate programming because it is so annoying to have troubles that need remediating. And so, because it's annoying, we will address ourselves to it and give some money to it. This is a simple example of how that is shortsighted. I've been involved in work with the deaf, considerably, since 1975, and my wife is involved in the early identification and rehabilitation of hearing-impaired infants. Those kids, by the time they get to age six or seven, are frequently mainstreamed and are costing very little more than the students who are in the regular educational program. However, should we have to keep them in a program which is specialized simply for the deaf, we possibly will spend three times as much money as we would spend in a preventive development of their language development acquisition. So, it's shortsighted to always be looking at remediation as a solution to problems. Most of us are saying that we need to be addressing this on a broad base and bringing together all of the resources and energies we have in preventive sort of ways. Some of the recommendations coming out of the conference will discuss some points and direction that way.

My recommendation to Verne would be that all of you will receive at least an edited transcript of the whole proceedings of this conference, along with some commitment on his part on what he is willing to do and what leadership the Oregon Department of Education is willing to take in following up on recommendations and suggestions made today.

It is relatively rare that somebody steps beyond their own mission to coordinate activities. That we have Children's Services Division, Adult and Family Services Division, we have the local school districts, we have all of the various agencies with their own individual missions and they rarely are willing to step outside that because they are already completely stressed with the requirements of and the short-handedness that they are experiencing in their own individual organizations. I am suggesting the possibility that in the local communities we develop some kind of an ongoing task force which would be coordinated and/or supported on a consultative basis by the Oregon Department of Education, at least initially. Whether or not those kinds of things are

possible remains to be seen, but it seems to me that in a vacuum, somebody has to exercise leadership if any of the things that we'd like to see happen are going to happen. If we simply come to a conference and acknowledge that we have a problem, go away congratulating ourselves on the fact that we have acknowledged that there is a problem, very little will follow and nothing will happen.

Victor Frankl, the author who wrote "Man's Search for Meaning," and other things, noted to me in conversation, "You know, the trouble with you Americans is that you went to the trouble of putting a Statue of Liberty in your Eastern harbor and neglected to build a Statue of 'Responsibility' in your Western one." That has stuck with me as really what we are talking about, exercising responsible leadership from the position we're in, getting out of the anachronistic and/or archaic procedures and moving into the eighties, where the problems exist.

We are aware that the problems do not simply exist in the schools, that they exist society wide. However, the schools need to shoulder their full responsibility for that and I think they are willing to do so.

Frequently, we are doing things simply because we have done them, not because we've recently examined the appropriateness of what we are doing. We have the technology to address this problem.

CONFERENCE SUMMATION
VERNE DUNCAN, CHAIRMAN

This was a very unstructured meeting and there's always a gamble when you have a meeting such as this that nothing will happen. I wanted to be very careful with my staff in instructing them that we were not to come up with preconceived notions and to try to set a stage. It had to be left open-ended. As I moved around from group to group, my fears were unfounded. I don't think a stage was set and you took it where you wanted to go.

I've been listening to the reports and recommendations. Some of the recommendations made to the Department of Education are things that we can tackle. I listened also to your final comments and don't want to in any way leave the feeling that education is "off the hook." That was not my hidden agenda. I made no bones about it from the very beginning that I felt that it did involve those of you beyond the school system; that's why you were invited here. If nothing else was accomplished today, the very fact that we have a judge, school administrators, parents, a news commentator; people sitting down and talking together about the problem. People did become acquainted and I feel there will be some contact between agencies now and that is a very healthy thing because something needs to happen. That's one of the main criticisms we hear; a lack of community relationships. There's always the battle of turf: "This my job, that is your job, and nary the twain shall meet." We heard examples today where that turf argument has been broken down and some exciting things were happening. People were able to relate to one another and once the "That's my responsibility, don't you tread on it" attitude was changed. That's a good message for all of us today, one that not only you can carry home. I would hope that that message could be spread far and wide. We did have good media coverage today. I hope that they spread that kind of message, that people are sitting down and talking and that that needs to go on in community after community throughout this state.

Before I say anything else, what kind of a message would you like to give me today? And remember, it isn't just us--maybe you think someone else ought to do something else, too. Something that wasn't said in the reports that were given, something as to where we go from here, if we go anywhere.

Glenn Knickerbocker: Just a comment that has already been touched on, several times. I strongly support the concept of local community groups addressing the same kinds of issues we are talking about today; at the same time, I would strongly support a continuation of this type of a process--this group, a larger group, a smaller group, I haven't thought that through--but I think we have just scratched the surface of a lot of issues. We've identified that it is not a school problem, not a police problem, not a social service problem, but a community problem. The only way we are going to really begin to address that is to collectively begin to look at it. A lot of good ideas--the community school concept, this or that concept, then each community try to adjust to their own circumstances. There are minds here today that can really begin to put some parameters around that and help stimulate local community activities.

Tom McCall: There has to be a motor...we've put some fuel in your tank today...you have to prioritize... what are the holes we studied today? Go over this and take steps that were indicated by these excellent syntheses that we got from our moderators and there is a program in fact, stretched out, and see which is most do-able, which short-term, which is emergency, which is middle term... family planning is long term, but highly necessary...early detection... lay them out according to their do-ability now, tomorrow and the next day, three different parts. Let's reduce it to what we can do, what sounds logical, maybe we're going to have some stuff out here that looks a little bit like cloud nine...let's not throw it away, let's have a task force on cloud nine. So the new ideas that were turned up are not lost. Somebody said we keep thinking over and over again, 'cause we're used to it. I think today we plowed so hard that there were some peripheral thoughts that might have been zany, but still we can look them over. Simply put them over here and look at them and see if the community has some gold down there if you pan it hard enough.

Verne Duncan: Thank you very much, Tom. By the way, Glenn made a comment that I think is interesting too--that it's important that we don't walk out of here and say "Whew, we settled the school problem!" or "It's a law enforcement problem" or we can all walk out feeling great and that it's not our problem and nothing might happen.

Marv Evans: The need for additional data has been expressed by all the groups. There has been a commitment from three educational organizations--OSEA, OEA, and COSA, to do something about that. For a number of reasons, we tend to politicize our attack on educational problems, recognizing that this is not just a school problem, it is in part a school problem, obviously. You have three groups that tend to be in adversary positions saying, "Hey, we are jointly recognizing this is a problem and we're going to sit down together and identify data and then sit down together and do something with that data, probably on a local level." It is significant that these three adversary groups are saying, "We're going to sit down together, not as adversaries, but to attack a common problem."

Verne Duncan: I should say publicly, because I haven't hesitated to publicly criticize them for not working together, that I am very supportive and I think it's a great move that they are working together on this particular issue.

Lee Hall: A further comment, speaking for the OEA. The OEA study did stimulate some contact between the administrator group and the teacher group; it was an extremely beneficial contact we had--in fact, we had some conversation on carrying out the study with both the groups. You in the Department sponsored this conference and indicated some commitment to trying to get some solutions. I'd like to ask the public question in the public meeting. One of the things we need to carry out that study is money. Will the Department participate in that way with us?

Verne Duncan: I think it's a legitimate question and obviously, if the Department of Education is interested, then we would have to give very serious consideration to that, so I'm going to take that under advisement. We'll take a good look at our budget. It seems like a worthwhile project and we're certainly committed to the cause, so we'll probably help you. If nothing else, we'll do the printing or something.

Lee Hall: We're committed, whether you have any money or not, we are going to do it. We are interested in sharing that information with local school districts. I think all three organizations agree that the center of educational activity is the local school district. We'd like to have the Department available to assist us in disseminating this information.

Verne Duncan: We'll do everything we can and I don't want to limit it just to the educational groups. If there are other areas who feel that they need some assistance or support from the Department of Education, that we can help you or you can help us, I hope you will let us know.

Tom Throop: What will we see as Department follow-up?

Verne Duncan: The report from this meeting will be put together. I want to go back through reports that were given and look for recommendations and also determine if there were any recommendations that need to go to another agency. We need to get that to you so we don't lose that.

I will look very closely at the study and we'll be involved in that. I want to follow through on the dissemination program described by Dick Pedee this morning a bit more as to what's happening around the country. It was interesting, as I moved from group to group, to hear about different activities that are happening right here in the state and how we can get something going to get that information spread around. I recognize that once in awhile you'll have an excellent program going, a fantastic program, and it's built around the personality of an individual and might not work in another district. But we ought to pull together all of those ideas. The comment that Glenn made about pulling people together again because maybe we just touched the tip of the iceberg today. This is one of the first times we've had a group together like this at the state level and it's only natural that we haven't gotten much further, so maybe we do need to pull together a group from time to time. Whether we need to pull this whole group together again or what, I welcome any comments.

Tom Throop: One of the comments Ed Fuller made was the idea of developing local task forces, interagency task forces, to make certain we attack these kinds of problems on a local level. Will the Department be in a position to provide staff resources to help that occur for the dissemination of some kind of information on the local level to help create this kind of program?

Verne Duncan: That goes along with what Glenn was saying--we might do some more things at the state level, but you're going to have to get that down so something happens at the local level. I see the Department of Education in a brokerage role. I don't know that we would always have to draw upon Department help because there is other talent available and we need to know where to tap that talent and in doing so might be calling upon your agencies or your groups to offer assistance. I think that's what we might have to do.

By the way, I don't know how you feel, but sometimes when I've been sitting in a meeting all day long, it isn't until I get away from that meeting that I think, "Say, here's an idea that should have happened," or "I got an idea and I didn't know how to put it into words"...if, after you go home from this meeting today and you do have suggestions, why don't you get those back to me as soon as possible.

I hope that those of you who represent organizations will have an opportunity to discuss this meeting, and some of the concerns brought out, with your Board of Directors, with your total memberships wherever you can, mention to them that we're not stopping here, any suggestions they might have, that they get that message to me, either through you or directly to me. We don't want to lose anything.

By the way, if you do put anything together...newsletters, that you send out...if you wouldn't mind sending a copy to me so we can see what's going out and any feedback that you might get.

Keith Stubblefield: We will send material out--summary of programs and projects that the Law Enforcement Council has funded since 1969.

Verne Duncan: Do you see any benefit in the next four or five months to bring this group back together?

Boyd Applegarth: Think it would be better to wait and see what data shows and then decide.

memo

BOB DAHLMAN, Consultant
Research and Development Department
Oregon Education Association 6900 S.W. Haines Road Tigard, OR 97223 Phone: 639-7651

October 17, 1979

MEMO TO: Summit Meeting on School Violence, Salem, Oregon

SUBJECT: Oregon Education Association Survey

The attached tables from the OEA's 1979 membership survey (numbers 134 through 138) represent that portion of the total instrument devoted to violence in the schools.

Our data was obtained from a randomly selected list of OEA members generated by computer from our membership files. 351 members were selected to be surveyed and 278 responded for a response rate of 79%. This response rate provides a 90% level of confidence with a possible error of + or - 4.4%.

The cross tabulations for years of membership in the OEA were deleted from these tables as this data was only relevant to other sections of the total survey.

Bob Dahlman B.D.

pl
attachments

TABLE 134.

23. THERE HAS BEEN MUCH PUBLICITY RECENTLY ABOUT VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS. HAVE YOU BEEN PHYSICALLY ATTACKED OR HAD YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY DAMAGED OR STOLEN BY A STUDENT AT SCHOOL DURING THIS OR THE PAST SCHOOL YEAR?

A. PHYSICALLY ATTACKED

	YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP						EMPLOYMENT LEVEL				YEARS OF AGE		
	TOTAL	1	2	3	POSITION		ELEM.	JR. HIGH	SR. HIGH	COLL. OR UNIV.	30 OR UNDER	31-49	AGE OVER 13
					TEACHER	OTHER							
YES.....	13				9	4	10	1	2	...	4	6	3
	5.3				4.8	8.0	8.4	2.1	3.2	...	6.0	4.8	6.1
NO.....	233				178	46	109	47	61	6	63	118	46
	94.7				95.2	92.0	91.6	97.9	96.8	100.0	94.0	95.2	93.9
TOTAL	246				187	50	119	48	63	6	67	124	49
	100.0				100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NO RESP.....	14				11	1	4	4	5	0	3	8	2

TABLE 135.

23. THERE HAS BEEN MUCH PUBLICITY RECENTLY ABOUT VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS. HAVE YOU BEEN PHYSICALLY ATTACKED OR HAD YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY DAMAGED OR STOLEN BY A STUDENT AT SCHOOL DURING THIS OR THE PAST SCHOOL YEAR?

B. PROPERTY DAMAGED

	YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP					EMPLOYMENT LEVEL				YEARS OF AGE		
	TOTAL 1	3	4	POSITION		ELEM. 7	JR. HIGH 8	SR. HIGH 9	COLL. OR UNIV. 10	30 OR UNDER 11	31-49 12	AGE 50 OR OVER 13
				TEACHER 5	OTHER 6							
YES.....	50			42	5	16	16	17	...	12	27	11
%	19.6			21.6	9.8	13.2	30.8	25.8	...	17.4	20.9	21.6
NO.....	235			152	46	105	36	49	6	57	102	40
%	80.4			78.4	90.2	86.8	69.2	74.2	100.0	82.6	79.1	78.4
TOTAL	255			194	51	121	52	66	6	69	129	51
	100.0			100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NO RESP.....	5			4	0	2	0	2	0	1	3	0

TABLE 136.

23. THERE HAS BEEN MUCH PUBLICITY RECENTLY ABOUT VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS. HAVE YOU BEEN PHYSICALLY ATTACKED OR HAD YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY DAMAGED OR STOLEN BY A STUDENT AT SCHOOL DURING THIS OR THE PAST SCHOOL YEAR?

C. PROPERTY STOLEN

	YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP					EMPLOYMENT LEVEL				YEARS OF AGE		
	TOTAL	3	4	POSITION		ELEM.	JR. HIGH	SR. HIGH	COLL. OR UNIV.	30 OR UNDER	31-49	50 OR OVER
				TEACHER	OTHER							
	1			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
YES.....	62			52	7	24	19	18	...	17	32	12
%	24.7			27.1	14.0	20.2	37.3	27.7	...	25.0	25.2	24.0
NO.....	189			140	43	95	32	47	6	51	95	38
%	75.3			72.9	86.0	79.8	62.7	72.3	100.0	75.0	74.8	76.0
TOTAL	251			192	50	119	51	65	6	68	127	50
	100.0			100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NO RESP.....	9			6	1	4	1	3	0	2	5	1

TABLE 137.

230. IF YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, DID YOU REPORT THE VIOLENT ACT(S) TO SCHOOL OFFICIALS?

	YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP			EMPLOYMENT LEVEL				YEARS OF AGE		
	TOTAL 1	4 TEACHER 5	OTHER 6	ELEM. 7	JR. HIGH 8	SR. HIGH 9	COLL. OR UNIV. 10	30 OR UNDER 11	31-49 12	50 OR OVER 13
YES.....	49	38	10	18	17	13	...	15	24	9
%	60.5	96.7	100.0	60.0	65.4	54.2	...	65.2	57.1	60.0
AT LEAST ONE WAS NOT REPORTED.....	32	29	...	12	9	11	...	8	18	6
%	39.5	43.3	...	40.0	34.6	45.8	...	34.8	42.9	40.0
TOTAL	81	67	10	30	26	24	...	23	42	15
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	...	100.0	100.0	100.0
NOT APP.....	179	131	41	93	26	44	6	47	90	36

TABLE 138.

23E. IF YOU DID NOT REPORT AT LEAST ONE, WHY WAS IT NOT REPORTED?

	YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP				EMPLOYMENT LEVEL					YEARS OF AGE			
	TOTAL 1	2	3	4	POSITION		ELEM. 7	JR. HIGH 8	SR. HIGH 9	COLL. OR UNIV. 10	30 OR UNDER 11	31-49 12	50 OR OVER 13
					TEACHER 5	OTHER 6							
FEAR OF STUDENT REPRISAL....	...				...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3	...				...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
FEAR OF PARENT REPRISAL....	...				...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3	...				...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
FEAR OF ADMINISTRATIVE REPRISAL.....	1				1	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...
3	3.1				3.4	...	...	...	9.1	...	12.5	...	...
TO GIVE THE STUDENT A SECOND CHANCE.....	4				3	...	3	1	...	...	2	2	...
3	12.5				10.3	...	25.0	11.1	...	...	25.0	11.1	...
A "WHAT'S THE USE" ATTITUDE.	19				18	...	6	6	7	...	4	12	3
3	59.4				62.1	...	50.0	66.7	63.6	...	50.0	66.7	50.0
OTHER.....	11				10	...	5	2	4	...	2	6	3
3	34.4				34.5	...	41.7	22.2	36.4	...	25.0	33.3	50.0
TOTAL	32				29	...	12	9	11	...	8	18	6
	109.4				110.3	...	116.7	100.0	109.1	...	112.5	111.1	100.0
NOT APP.....	228				169	51	111	43	57	6	62	114	45

TOTAL PERCENTS MAY BE GREATER THAN 100 BECAUSE
RESPONDENTS WERE ALLOWED MORE THAN 1 RESPONSE

Melba Worth, Region 7 Vice-President
National Parent Teacher Association

VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM IN THE SCHOOLS

October 17, 1979
Verne Duncan Committee

The causes of this monumental problem are complex, as are the ultimate solutions. To start with an obvious fact, many students simply do not want to be in school, but our laws make it very difficult to leave school before the age of 16 or 18, or to find work. Suspending or expelling a disruptive student may temporarily solve the schools' problem, but such actions interrupt the student's education, and harm his ability to cope with his problems constructively. Further, a great deal of violence and vandalism problems are caused by students who have either been suspended or expelled, or are truants or dropouts. Relying on exclusion as the ultimate disciplinary weapon to combat minor behavioral problems can create more serious difficulties than those it solves.

Absenteeism is a pattern that starts early, and leads to dropping out of school, truancy and behavior problems. The more a student is absent, the harder it is to return to school and the more his education suffers, the more behavioral problems he has in and out of school.

Increased use of drugs--including alcohol--by students, and the selling of these drugs in school often leads to violence and vandalism. Drug abuse contributes to poor physical and mental health, poor study habits, and low achievement, making the user ripe for more trouble.

Adults' behavior patterns in relation to law and order are also a primary factor in teenage violence. When students see adults stoning buses or striking illegally, they can't see any difference between these acts and their own setting of fires or breaking windows because they don't like the school, the principal, the teacher, or the kid across the aisle. Until the leadership in this country speaks out strongly for law and justice, peace and fairness, we shouldn't expect better behavior from our children.

Violence receives top billing in the news and entertainment media today. Whether it's part of a television news show or series, the movies, or in the newspapers, its influence is considerable. Youngsters are saturated with violence from their earliest years; by the time the average young person is 14, he's already been exposed to as many as 11,000 murders on television! From kindergarten through grade 12, students spend approximately 15,000 hours watching TV. Contrast this to the 11,000 hours spent in classrooms, and the problem gains a new perspective. In some large cities, school personnel have stated that violence in their schools definitely follows a pattern of what the television programs have shown the previous week, with students receiving excellent instruction in creating disturbances and destroying both human beings and property.

Another area of concern is the lack of willingness by our public and community leaders to recognize and admit that there are problems, or to become involved in the solutions. Is it any wonder that school personnel and school boards resent being asked to cope with the problems of the community alone?

Finally, we get to the parents. I haven't left this until last because it is the least important--in fact, it may be the most! Rather, it is here because it plays a part in all the problems already mentioned. To put it quite simply, there are parents who care, and many who don't.

In the first group, many parents who would willingly participate in school problem-solving don't feel comfortable in their children's schools. Instead, they feel unwanted and shut out of the decision-making processes that affect their youngsters' education and safety, and even the day-to-day activities of the school. Whether the result of the school's large, impersonal size, and its seemingly inaccessible teachers and administrators; loss of a sense of community because children no longer attend their neighborhood school but are bussed across town; or working parents who can't meet with teachers during daytime hours--the feeling is one of alienation from the school.

The other side of this coin is lack of parental supervision and support for the school. Parents bear the ultimate responsibility for shaping the behavior of their children, and for extending this interest into the classroom by getting to know their child's teachers, principal, counselors, and school programs.

Complex Solutions

If we're to consider solutions to this growing problem, let's begin with the more immediate approaches which may help to lessen the atmosphere of fear in our schools, and increase the educational opportunities for troubled youngsters.

Some solution must be found for the high school or junior high student who just isn't going to remain in the usual classroom setting without being a constant source of disruption. Depending upon the financial capabilities of school districts, special schools or special classes can be established. Arrangements for "in-school suspension" can be developed, where the student remains in school, but in a separate setting other than the usual classroom. Most importantly, parents and students should be directly involved in seeking such alternatives. With this kind of participation, the most successful programs have been developed. Another approach is for parents and school counselors to work closely with students. In certain schools, parents of children with problems have even been employed as aides to the counselors, with positive results.

Within current laws, provision should be made, if possible, for young people to "stop out"--not "drop out"--of school. Such a decision shouldn't be viewed as defeat or failure, and youngsters should have the opportunity to return to school without penalty. This points up the need for revision of compulsory school attendance laws, as well as child labor laws. Parents need to be well informed about the existence and availability of such programs, and to understand that they are not "dummy" programs, but rather alternatives.

The problem of absenteeism and its relationship to school violence is an area where early parental intervention can make all the difference. In a National PTA study on school absenteeism and truancy, it was determined that caring parents are the key to reversing this pattern, because a child's absenteeism so often reflects his parents' attitudes and work habits. Some PTA units have assumed the responsibility to see that a child is in school when a difficult family situation exists.

Concerning drug and alcohol abuse, parents need to recognize, very early, that such abuse is a fact of life among pre-teens and teenagers. Although we can give our youngsters information about drugs and alcohol, it's more important to help them develop the decision-making skills they'll need to make responsible judgements about drinking or not, using drugs or not, or participating in vandalizing the school or not. For four years the National PTA was involved in a project designed to help parents and students make informed, responsible decisions about the use or nonuse of alcohol. Oregon PTA participated in that project.

At the National PTA's 1975 convention, delegates gave a clear directive to the organization that we must try to make a difference in what children and young people are viewing on television. Thus our much publicized Television Project was born and as a result of that we are doing program monitoring in all of our states, a Critical Viewing Skills curriculum has been developed and we have cut down on the gratuitous violence that is being shown on television.

The role of parents in making both the home and the school positive experiences for their children is of tremendous importance. By being physically present in the school, welcomed by school personnel as aides in the classroom or library, monitors in the halls, or tutors to poor readers, they can make a difference in the occurrence of vandalism and violence.

According to Senator Birch Bayh, chairman of the 1975 Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, "Nothing improves the atmosphere in a school and the overall morale of both teachers and students, more than the realization that the adult community is concerned about, and involved in, the education of its children. Schools are after all an educational community, and it is vital to insure the involvement of all elements of that community in the solution of these problems."

The PTA has long believed in the home as the basic element of society. We still do. Strengthening the family is a process that begins, ideally, in early childhood, when parents and schools start preparing children for informed parenthood. If we wait until high school, many youngsters have already had their first or second child, and will raise these children in single parent homes. Unless we can provide an educational foundation for this responsibility, our schools will receive continuing generations of disturbed children and the problems of violence and vandalism will grow. The PTA has been involved, since 1969, in promoting the inclusion of parenting education in the public school curricula, from kindergarten through grade 12. Parents should also participate in early childhood education programs so that they may help their own children to learn, and to appreciate the learning process.

As parents, we should be willing to assume our share of the responsibility for the problems our schools are experiencing, and should attempt, in every way possible, to assist the school and the community. Many of us can work successfully with troubled youngsters and their families, or help a school counselor in doing so.

While security hardware and school guards will protect property and reduce violence to some extent, only by changing the environment in which our children grow will the basic causes of violence and vandalism be met.

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS
700 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

DISRUPTION IN THE SCHOOLS

(Resolution adopted by the 1969 convention delegates)

- WHEREAS, The incidence of unrest and disruption in schools of our nation is reaching alarming proportions; and
- WHEREAS, The National Congress of Parents and Teachers is concerned with the uninterrupted educational process and the safety of all; therefore be it
- Resolved, That the National Congress of Parents and Teachers encourage local units to work with school boards, teachers, students, and administrators in preparing guidelines for the prevention of student unrest and for prompt and decisive action in the event of student disruption, such guidelines to include provision for notifying parents or legal guardians of students who are involved and safeguarding the rights of all; and be it further
- Resolved, That local PTA's through public forums involving all segments of the community, including parents, teachers, and students, try to bring about an understanding of and solutions to the underlying causes and factors of dissatisfaction in schools; and be it further
- Resolved, That the National Congress of Parents and Teachers prepare guidelines for the participation of local units and councils in the area of disruption in the schools.

END