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Assessing the Level of Effective Communication  
in Schools

by  
Amiot P. Michel

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Masters of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
Rowan University  
May, 1999

Approved by

Date Approved May 1999

## Abstract

Amiot P. Michel

Assessing The Level of  
Communication in Schools.  
1999  
Dr. Ronald L. Capasso  
School Administration

The purpose of this study is to examine the level of communication which exist in the elementary schools in the Millville School District. Millville is currently in the process of developing Lakeside Middle School. Lakeside Middle School will be composed of staff members from the three K-7 elementary schools and the current 5th and 6th grade students in the six elementary schools.

Surveys were developed to assess the effectiveness of the communication systems currently existing in the six schools. Surveys were then distributed to the six elementary school principals, future staff members, and the parents of the 5th and 6th graders in the elementary schools. Upon collection, the data was analyzed and charted to illustrate the level of effectiveness in the schools.

According to the data collected the level of communication in the schools was perceived to be effective. However, suggestions of a homework hotline and a quick-reference parent handbook were made to help maintain and improve communication in the schools.

### Mini-Abstract

Amiot P. Michel

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Communication in Schools.

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The purpose of this study is to examine the level of communication which exists in the elementary schools in the Millville School District. According to the parents, teachers, and principals surveyed, the level of communication was found to be effective. However, recommendations were made to help improve it.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to extend my appreciation to a number of people who have given advice, encouragement, support, time, energy, guidance, and interest toward the successful completion of the Master's Program at Rowan University.

I would first like to thank Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior of my life, my mother Anelle Michel who continues to be my heart, my brothers Landy Duchiene, Richard Duchiene, and Yvan Duchiene for setting the standard, my sisters Mylene Louis and Natalie Louis for the expression of love they continue to show me. I would like to also thank my spiritual mother Dr. Billie Slaughter for keeping me focused and grounded.

Appreciation is also extended to: Dr. Capasso, College Advisor for the internship and Dr. Johnson, Professor, Mentor, and Father figure. Mr. Nedd Johnson, Alternative School Principal for his guidance throughout this process. Mr. Fred Setser, Alternative School Principal for giving me the opportunities to develop my leadership skills. Mr. Roy Harrell, Security at the Alternative School for looking out for me. Mrs. Judy Kessler, Vice Principal Silver Run School for extending herself to me. Members of the Communication Committee, Bernadette Phillips, Joe Monteleone, Danette Cornelius, Nora Bennette, and Dr. Schneider for helping with the study. Colleagues Amy Kimmel, Shawnette Stevens, and Lorrie Adler for their support in keeping me organized. Lorna Bada for always reminding me of my purpose. The children at Silver Run School and Shiloh Baptist Church, Port Norris N.J. for their continued prayers and unconditional love.

Finally, but most importantly I would like to extend a token of love to my beautiful wife Renee' Diane Michel for her prayers and patience and my daughter Kayla Monique Michel for being so beautiful, perfect, and being the joy of my life. Heaven opened up when you were born.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Focus of the Study

Communication impacts every aspect of human life, and it is a central component of the educational process. Many aspects of communication have been studied throughout history, including forms/methods of communication. Researchers have examined how the ability to communicate develops in humans, and have defined the different communication styles used. Despite the different approaches to examining communication and the wide range of results reported, the consensus is that communication is a critical aspect of human life, which can directly affect the success of relationships, businesses and schools.

The primary role of the school is to communicate information or knowledge to students. Yet, school personnel can at times become so focused on the task of communicating specific knowledge to students that they tend to overlook or devalue the importance of communication within the school and with parents and the community. This study will examine the level of effective communication in the three schools which will comprise the student body and teaching staff of Lakeside Middle School.

#### Purpose of the Study

Lakeside Middle School is a new school that is being formed by merging staff members from three separate elementary schools in the Millville School District. Specifically, this study will (1) assess the communication systems currently employed at those three schools; (2) determine the perceived strengths and weaknesses of each respective elementary school's present communication system; (3) enable Lakeside Middle School staff to use a unified



communication system that will enhance the school's effectiveness in collaborative efforts, such as team teaching; and (4) enhance parental involvement in the school.

### Definitions

Resource Center-- an informal setting that provides parents with materials to help children learn more

Parents as Tutors and Mentors-- a program in which parents volunteer to be tutors or mentors to students at risk of failure

Parent Support Group-- a program which allows parents the opportunity to share approaches and perspectives on parenting issues

What's Next-- a program in which parents meet at a school at a scheduled time to learn the different options their children have after high school such as: what college to choose, how to apply for financial aid, the best job market for their child to enter, and other alternatives to college

Open House-- a time in which people from the community can come for a tour of the school

School-Parent Compacts-- voluntary agreements between the home and the school, which define goals, expectations, and shared responsibilities of the school and the parents in the educational experience of the student

Home Visiting Program-- a program which calls for the teacher to visit the home of the students

Parent Teacher Conference-- a time in which teachers and parents have an opportunity to meet and talk about issues relating to the education of the student

### Limitations of the Study

The study will be limited to the three K-7 schools in the Millville School District. Because the data reflect only the schools that were surveyed, the results of this study may not represent the status of communication in the secondary school or other schools in the Millville public schools, or other school districts. However, the study can be used as a model for other school districts to use when they attempt to gauge the level of effective communication that exists in their school district.

In addition, the listing of programs which increases parental involvement can be used as a resource for any school district which is attempting to increase parental involvement in their schools.

### Setting

The City of Millville is located in Cumberland County, New Jersey. It was established in 1801 and was officially incorporated as a city by the New Jersey State Legislature in 1866. The form of government employed until 1913 was the Mayor-Council. As a result of the Walsh Act of 1913, the City changed to a Commission form of government, in which five Commissioners were elected and the one with the highest number of votes served as the City's Mayor. This form of the city government exists in Millville today (Millville City Commission, 1990).

The population demographics of Millville, based on data compiled by the New Jersey State Data Center (1990) indicate that Millville is considered on Urban area (based on population count of 25,992 residents). Data based on residents who are 25 years of age or older indicates the following educational attainments of Millville's residents:

<u>Status</u>	<u>Percent</u>
No high school diploma	30.2
High school diploma	58.2
Bachelor's degree or better	11.6
	<hr/>
	100.0

It appears, then, that Millville is an urban area and the majority of its population (69.8%) have at least a high school diploma.

Economically, as of 1990 (Cumberland County Department of Planning and Development, 1990), Cumberland County ranks last in per capita income among all counties in the State of New Jersey. The average socioeconomic status of Cumberland County ( based on educational level, families living below poverty level, percent unemployed, persons per household) is low-middle class. The average household salaries of Millville by race based on the 1990 census is as follows:

<u>Racial Group</u>	<u>Average Income</u>
White	\$38,414
Black	\$25,432
American Indian Eskimo	\$22,264
Asian and Pacific Islanders	\$21,938
Hispanics	\$22,839
Other Races	\$23,194

Based on the 1990 Census Profile Series, the percentage of children under 18 residing in a two-parent or one-parent home in Millville in comparison to New Jersey as a whole (Fenton, 1995) is as follows:

<u>Household Head</u>	<u>Millville</u>	<u>New Jersey</u>
Married Couple	69.6%	79.6%
Single parent	30.4%	20.4%

It appears from these data that 30% of Millville's children under the age of 18 reside in single-parent homes, as compared to 20% across the state.

The Millville Public School System's socioeconomic status is in the District Factor Group B (i.e.,) ranks in the bottom 10% in community wealth of all New Jersey school districts. Variables used in determining a school district's factoring include: (a) the educational level of persons 25 or older; (b) the status of the occupations; (c) median family income; (d) families living below the poverty level; (e) the percentage of unemployed; (f) the degree of urbanization; and (g) the number of persons per household (New Jersey Department of Education, 1992).

The data provided thus indicate that the students of Millville have a lower average social, economic, and educational status than those recorded for the State as a whole. Addressing these issues will not only require assistance from local, county, and state agencies, but also will place a greater burden on the public school system to deal with the possible negative social, emotional, and educational consequences of the socioeconomic and demographic status of the community. The increase in State aid via the Abbott v. Baker decision has been instrumental in providing much-needed services to Millville students. Currently, there are approximately 5,742 students enrolled in the 11 schools which comprise the Millville School District. These schools include:

Child Family Center	-	(Pre-K)
Bacon School	-	(PreK-5)
Mount Pleasant School	-	(PreK-5)
Wood School	-	(PreK-5)
Holly Heights School	-	(K-7)
Rieck Avenue School	-	(PreK-7)
Silver Run School	-	(PreK-7)
Memorial High School	-	(Grades 8-9)
Millville Senior High School	-	(Grades 10-12)
Alternative School	-	(Grades 9-12)
Millville Academy	-	(Grades 5-8)

The Board of Education is comprised of a nine-member elected team, with three additional members who represent the four sending districts at the secondary level. The sending districts are as follows: City of Woodbine, Commercial Township, Lawrence Township, and Maurice River Township. The inclusion of the board members representing the sending districts is due to a law enacted in 1995 by the State Legislature, which states that sending districts must be represented on the boards of the school district to which the respective district sends their students (Johnson 1996).

During the 1996-97 school year, the Millville School District purchased the Prudential Building. The building is approximately 153,000 square feet and is now being transformed into Lakeside Middle School. Lakeside will eventually house approximately 1,200 students in Grades 6-8. All regular classrooms are being designed to accommodate a maximum of 20 students. The school is scheduled to open in September 1999 and will initially schedule only grades 6-7. Eighth-grade students will attend Lakeside beginning the

following school year. The grade configuration of the other schools in the district therefore will change as grade levels shift to Lakeside Middle School.

### Significance of the Study

Effective internal and external communication are very important factors which affect the success of a school. If the school is to be successful in educating all of its students, everyone within the school must be actively involved in the process. If the vision and goals are not communicated effectively, dissension will build among staff members and eventually filter down to students. Another aspect of communication that is critical to the school's success is involving parents in their child's education by eliciting their active cooperation and participation. Communication is the key to gaining cooperation both from within and outside the school. The significance of this study, therefore, is that it will provide one approach to enhancing the effectiveness of a school by improving its internal communication system and its external communication with parents simultaneously.

### Organization of the Study

This study will provide the future staff members of Lakeside Middle School with the knowledge and tools necessary to establish an environment in which effective communication occurs. As part of this effort, the study will also provide the staff with a list of programs which can be implemented in the school and which would increase parental involvement. The remainder of this paper will include: Chapter 2: Review of the Literature, which will discuss the knowledge necessary to establishing effective communication in a school, based on research, as well as, programs a school can implement to increase parental involvement. Chapter 3: The Design of the Study will present a general description of the research design, description of the development and

design of the research, instruments, a description of the data collection approach, and plan for analyzing the data.

Chapter 4: Presentation of the Research Findings will present the results of the surveys. Chapter 5 Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study. Will discuss the results of the data analysis, implications based on the data, and recommendations for future research in the same area.

## Chapter 2

### Review of the Literature

#### Purpose

Communication is the ability to share information with people and to understand what information is being conveyed to and by others.

Communication has many forms, including nonverbal forms gestures, facial expressions, and body language (e.g.), verbal forms vocalizations (e.g.) pitch tone and speech, and the written form.

One of the major forms of communication used in interpersonal interactions is non-verbal communication and teachers, students, and administrators frequently use nonverbal methods to communicate. For example students often communicate disinterest in school by avoiding eye contact or by sitting back in their chair with their arms folded across their chest or looking around the room during instruction. Staff members may indicate verbally that they have time to talk, but may actually communicate disinterest by grading papers or busying themselves while someone is trying to talk to them. Conversely, eye contact, a smiling face, and a nodding head indicate that the listener is interested in what the speaker is saying, thus encouraging the speaker to continue.

Nonverbal communication includes a broad range of actions, which if used properly, can also help administrators work more effectively with students and teachers. Administrators interact with many different people during the day, including teachers, parents, students, and other administrators; therefore, communication is central to the role of administrator. It is critical that administrators work to establish good rapport and regular communication with their staff members, this will become especially important when difficulties



arise. Without effective communication, conflicts may result between staff and administration, which can be destructive to the operation of a school. Responsiveness and sensitivity on the part of administrators can open the channels of communication between themselves and those with whom they interact both inside and outside the school building.

Administrators and teachers must be able to work collaboratively to meet the needs of students and to create a positive learning environment. As part of the process teachers and administrators should meet regularly and frequently to discuss lesson plans and activities, and to express their respective concerns. By setting aside a time to meet, the administrator and the teacher can establish and maintain open channels of communication.

#### Definition and Elements of Communication

Because there are many elements which impact communication, many people communicate or interpret communication differently. Personal style, cultural background, setting, body language, and many other variables affect how and what we communicate. Because there are many different perceptions of what communication is, and many variables which influence communication, there is a need first to define what communication is.

Todd (1997) defines communication by saying "Communication is the transmission of information, attitudes, values, and noise by people and their 'things' to each other." Because there are many people who are involved in the educational experience of a child, schools must have a system of communication in place which allows all the parties involved to communicate effectively. In order to establish an effective communication system, a school must communicate effectively outwardly (i.e.,) (to the parents, community, and the private sector) and inwardly among staff members.

According to Todd (1997) in order for communication to be effective several principle must to be taken into account.

- "1. Professional and support personnel are employed not only for their professional competence but also for their potential for....
2. Instruction/administrative policies and procedures exist to facilitate an effective communication network between affected individuals in a variety of places and at different times.
3. Parents, students, and taxpayers are considered as equal partners in the decision-making process with appropriate roles and communication responsibilities in this process.
4. The evaluation of teaching and administrative performance includes selected criteria pertinent to the use of adequate communication skills by teachers and administrators.
5. Evaluative procedures and activities are continuously utilized to facilitate the development and maintenance of the institution as a communicating community.
6. There are monthly presentations by faculty members to colleagues of pertinent research affecting various aspects of instructional programs, etc.
7. Effective communication requires binding and uniting elements of agreement.
8. An effective interacting communication networks between human beings whose lives are affected by the school is enhanced when the system of educational ideas provides the centrality of purpose for decision-making communities." (pg. 2).

Before one begins to evaluate a school in light of the principles suggested by Todd, a few facts should be considered.

- “1. Each group of human beings whose lives are affected by the public school has either experienced a real communication problem with ‘he school’ or has had a perceived communication problem. In addition, one or more of these groups may have had communication problems with other groups.
2. The transmission of information, attitudes, values, and noise by people and their “things” is done in a visual or non-visual manner.
3. A communication message from one person to another person usually sets off other messages to other persons.
4. The successful development of any specific community portrait of a public school can not occur without the existence of the public school as a communicating community.
5. Individuals and/or groups of human beings communicate with each other for a variety of reasons.
6. Personal communication problems between individuals and/or groups of human beings can cause other problems for “the school.”
7. Public schools cannot be removed from the political arena because there are various groups of human beings whose lives are affected by public schools.
8. As a result of the United States being an open society, there is increased attention being given by the media to the problems and successes of public schools.
9. As political communities the public school are no longer islands unto themselves because of the continuing pressure of internal and external force. The public schools have become national battlegrounds for resolving pressing societal issues.” (Todd pg. 3).

With this in mind, it will be critical for leaders and their staff to have the communication skills necessary to communicate their positions to parents, students, and society clearly and effectively.

## Tools to Enhance Communication

Karen Irmsher (1998) said that on average, leaders engage in one form or another of communication for about 70 % of their working experience. In order for this time to be used effectively, leaders themselves need to have several characteristics. According to Richard Gemmet (1977) some of these characteristics are: "Good listeners don't interrupt, especially to correct mistakes or make points; don't judge; think before answering; face the speaker; are close enough to hear; watch nonverbal behavior; are aware of biases or values that distort what they hear; look for the feelings and basic assumptions underlying remarks; concentrate on what is being said; avoid rehearsing answers while the other person is talking; and don't insist on having the last word." (pg. 48). Irmsher (1998) believes that one must first seek to understand the other, then to be understood. Irmsher also says that next to physical survival, the greatest need of every human being is "to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, and to be appreciated." (pg. 1 ) In order for a person to become a good listener, the person must be willing to listen and have the skills to help express the fact that he/she is listening. One of the skills that can be learned which is suggested by Susan Glaser and Anthony Biglan (1977) is asking questions to initiate communication, because it tells the other person you are listening and interested. These authors suggest that the questions be open-ended, focused, and not too broad, and the questions should ask for additional details, examples, and impressions. Charles Jung and associates (1973) suggest using feedback as a tool to bring about effective communication. Jung and associates also describe several types of feedback: praise, paraphrasing, perception-checking, and describing; and they suggest that when giving feedback, it is useful to describe observed behaviors, as well as the

reactions they cause. These researchers say that the receiver should be ready to receive feedback; that the comments should describe rather than interpret; and that feedback should focus on recent events or actions that can be changed, but should not be used to force people to change. Perhaps the most important feedback suggested by Jung and associates is for administrators to let staff know how well they are doing in their jobs. Specifically Jung and associates suggest that effective school leaders give plenty of timely positive feedback; they should give negative feedback privately, without anger or personal attack; and they should accept criticism without becoming defensive.

Jung and associates (1973) also describe some of the tools for effective communication and how they should be used. One of the tools is paraphrasing. According to Jung, the purpose of paraphrasing is not to clarify what the other person actually meant, but to show what it meant to you. Paraphrasing may therefore mean saying the original statement in more specific terms, perhaps by using an example to illustrate how the statement is understood. Another tool is perception checking. perception checking is an effort to understand the feeling behind the words. One way of doing perception checking is by describing your impressions of another person's feelings at a given time, but avoiding any expression of approval or disapproval. Another tool that can be used is called describing behavior. describing behavior is what one does when reporting specific, observable behavior without value judgments, and without making accusations or generalizations about motives, attitudes, or personality traits.

All these are tools have been shown to enhance communication between individuals in a school environment. To where does this lead us? What will be the outcome of all this effective communication? Hopefully, for all who have a vested interest in how schools work, the results of effective communication will be reflected in higher test scores, a great educational experience for the students, a rejuvenated staff, and an invigorated leader.

Much of the responsibility of establishing effective communication in a school falls on the shoulders of the administrators in the building, in particular, the principal. The principal sets the tone for the whole school. It is important for the principal to recognize that the school tends to reflect his/her personality and leadership style; and it is therefore imperative that the building principal communicate effectively with staff, students, and community in order to maximize the learning that occurs in the school. Allan Vann (1994) notes that principals earn their staff's respect by clearly stating the vision of their school and by working collaboratively to reach agreed-upon goals and objectives. Vann believes this process should be on-going, beginning before school starts. Vann suggests that a principal should make efforts to remove barriers to effective communication, because barriers can take away team energy and isolate individuals who may be operating on the basis of faulty assumptions. Meetings, combined with private discussions, can remove interpersonal barriers before they become large problems. Vann (1994) also suggests giving praise as a way to create a more constructive atmosphere. For example, an indirect way of giving praise is through sharing information about people at your school who are doing very positive things. Another aspect of setting up an atmosphere for effective communication that a principal can undertake is trying to build teamwork by using humor. The most important job of a principal who is trying to

establish an effective communication atmosphere however, is to be accessible. It is important for a principal to be available and also to welcome personal contact with others. Informal meetings are as important as formal ones. Vann (1994) suggests that a principal ask staff about their families and call them by their first names. Vann believes that an administrator who takes the time to get to know the staff will be able to identify, develop, and make best use of each staff member's capabilities.

### Communication Tools for Administrators

The job of an administrator is very difficult and involves many responsibilities. One of the most important tasks that a principal carries out is initiating and relaying policy or information. Merilee Marsh (1998), a marketing consultant, provides seven tips in accomplishing this task effectively:

- "1. Share your information the first thing in the morning when employees are fresh; before they become involved with other tasks.
  2. Get your information to them quickly. Share promptly what you know, even if the final word hasn't been said on the topic at hand; your employees will then believe that you have their best interest at heart.
  3. Focus whenever possible on what the topic means personally to employees. "What's in it for me?" is the key concern of most people.
  4. Don't overkill a subject. Keep your presentation concise. Break it down into segments you can handle...say 15 to 30 minutes at a time.
  5. Hit the main point first; the detail in support of your key ideas can come out in the discussion to follow.
  6. After your presentation and discussion, you should follow up with any further information or clarification.
  7. Get out from behind your desk and talk to people. And not about "official business" only. There's more to work relationship than just that. Occasionally ask them to talk with you about whatever is on their minds
- (pg. 1)

Ritts reports that one of the most important forms in communication is non-verbal. According to A. Barbour, author of *Louder Than Words: Nonverbal Communication*, the total impact of a message is: "7 percent verbal (words), 38 percent vocal (volume, pitch, rhythm, etc), 55 percent body movements (mostly facial expression)." (Ritts pg.1)

This statement indicates that effective nonverbal communication skills are essential. Communicating effectively is the combined harmony of verbal and nonverbal actions. Nonverbal communication consists of body movement, facial expression, and eye movement. According to Ritts (1998) body movement indicates an attitude, and there are several ways in which it occurs, For example, nodding your head while listening to a person talk to indicate that you understand and are in agreement with the him/her. In contrast, looking away or yawning would indicate that you are bored or would like for the speaker to stop talking. Frowning or raising the eyebrows indicates to the speaker the listener does not or may not understand the message. Posture also plays a role in communicating. For example, a slumped posture may indicate that the person either has low spirits, is fatigued, or perhaps feels inferior. Whereas, an erect posture shows high spirits and confidence. Leaning forward suggests that the person is open and interested. In contrast, leaning away shows disinterest or that the person is defensive. Other examples of body language are crossed arms or legs, which indicate a defensive position; while uncrossed arms and legs indicates a willingness to listen.



## Communication Tools for Teachers

Teachers should be aware of nonverbal behavior in the classroom for several reasons. One reason is that being aware will allow teachers to become better receivers of students' messages. Another reason is that it will allow the teacher to be a better sender of signals that reinforce learning. Some of the areas of nonverbal communication which teachers need to be aware of are: eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, posture and body orientation, and proximity. When positive eye contact is established, it conveys interest, concern, warmth, and, to a degree, credibility in what is being said. Facial expressions are also powerful tools in nonverbal communication and one of the more powerful facial expressions is smiling. If you smile often, it will be perceived as being likable, friendly, warm, and approachable. Smiling is also contagious, and students tend to react positively to it. Gestures are also important in communicating. The lack of gestures can be perceived as boring, stiff, unanimated; while, in contrast, a teacher who is full of movement and gestures, tends to captivate the students, Thus making learning more fun and interesting. Head nods, in particular are very effective in giving positive reinforcement because they show the students that you are listening or communicate to them that they are doing fine with what they are saying.

Posture and body orientation is also critical in communicating effectively. For example, a negative message will be communicated if the teacher is speaking to a student with his/her back turned or while looking at the floor or ceiling. This posture communicates that the teacher is not interested in what is being said.

Finally, culture and personal preferences play a major role in proximity. For example, it is important to look for signals of discomfort caused by invading students' personal space. Usually, in a large classroom, space invasion is not a problem. Moving around the classroom increases the interaction between the teacher and the students, which produces better eye contact and more alertness on the part of the students.

Sarah Cram (1998) says, " The nonverbal language is the universal language of communication. Whatever the country, we all speak the non-verbal communication." (pg. 1).

The U.S. Department of Education (1998) suggests that the way we use our body language, raise our eyebrows, or smile lets a person know what we are really trying to say and emphasize the way we want what we are saying to come across.

#### Involving Parents in Communication

Research has long established the positive effects of parental involvement; and because of this fact, more and more school districts are developing strategies to help communicate more effectively with parents. Making parents partners in the child's educational experience is critical in maximizing the learning potential of each child. The U.S. Department of Education (1996) has a litany of ideas and suggestions to help schools communicate more effectively with parents. A school newsletter, for example, can be issued monthly or bimonthly to keep the parents updated on upcoming events and other happenings in the school. Phone calls to parents to introduce the curriculum and teachers and to tell each parent of his/her child's progress can be made as opportunities arise. Direct telephone calls like this offset the feeling of many parents that schools only contact them when there is bad news.

Giving parents ideas for home learning activities and on how to assist their child with homework is also helpful in sustaining the parent-school relationship. Research indicates that involving parents as educators at home with their children is one of the most effective ways to improve a student's attitude toward school and his/her level of achievement. Because research indicates that homework supervision and home learning activities are closely related to higher achievement for children, many parents want help in that area.

One method which seems to help schools communicate effectively with parents is by establishing a parent resource center; an informal setting that provides parents with materials to help their children learn more. A parent resource center offers space for personal and small-class meetings and helps link parents to the school and community resources. A parent resource center can be created in a spare classroom or in a corner of a school library. In addition, having informal school-family meetings in the Parent Resource Center with simple meals or refreshments with parents, teachers, and principals is another way for schools to increase parental involvement.

Research by the U.S. Department of Education (1996) indicates that parent participation falls off in the upper grades. A secondary school can help reduce this pattern by removing some of the hindrances to communication by:

- “\* Creating smaller units within the school through “clusters,” “houses,” schools-within schools.
- \* Assigning students to the same counselor throughout their high school years.
- \* Creating teams of teachers, who stay with the students for more than one year.” (pg. 12)

Several programs exist which help foster communication with parents of students in the secondary school level. One program is "Parents as Tutors and Mentors," in which parents volunteer to be tutors or mentors to students at risk of failure. The tutoring or mentoring is not restricted to the school setting, but can also be done in the community or at the parents workplace. Another effective program is the "Parent Support Group." This program gives parents the opportunity to share approaches and perspectives on parenting issues. Schools can hold parenting workshops or offer seminars to help develop these groups. "What's Next" is a program in which parents meet at a school at a scheduled time to learn the different options their children have after high school, such as what college to choose, how to apply for financial aid, the best job market for their child to enter, and other alternatives to college.

In communicating to parents to introduce school policies and programs, it is best to send the correct message right from the start that the school welcomes and expects all families to be partners in the education of their children. "Open House" can be one of the vehicles that can be used to send that message. A welcome letter to parents can be distributed which includes a list of basic subjects to be studied and broad plans for the year, a list of materials the child will need for class, a phone number and time when the teacher can be reached, and a sincere invitation to share concerns and provide assistance to parents as they help their child with school work.

In another attempt to communicate more clearly, many schools are now developing "School-Parent Compacts." School-Parent Compacts are voluntary agreements between the home and the school, which define goals, expectations, and shared responsibilities of the school and the parents in the educational experience of the student. In fact, the federal Title I program

requires all participating schools to develop a compact with their Title I parents, which outlines how the parents, school staff, and the children of the parents will work to improve student achievement and build partnerships.

The U. S. Department of Education (1996) also encourages schools to develop a home-visiting program. A home-visiting program calls for the teacher to visit the home of the students, which helps teachers demonstrate their interest in the students and to understand the students better by seeing them in their home environment. While it is suggested that home-visiting is not to replace parent-teacher conferences, it should be done early before any school problems arise so that parents will not be on the defensive when problems do arise.

Regular parent-teacher conferences are a significant building-block for effective home-school communication. Parents provide important information and a perspective that can be extremely valuable to the school. Teachers should help the parents do the best possible job of educating their own child at home and setting up the home environment for this goal to be accomplished. Conferences are a time for listening and sharing and they should be used to reinforce the idea of working as a team. Conferences also allow the teachers to explain the criteria and grades used on report cards. Some schools schedule conferences right after a reporting period, which allows them to distribute the report cards to the parents at that time. Conferences are successful when teachers and the school system create a climate that invites and encourages team-work with parents, and creating this climate involves planning and effort. Some of the strategies the U. S. Department of Education (1996) has suggested for creating this type of climate include:

- “1. Contacting parents well in advance.
2. Sending personal letters or phone calls outlining the agenda.
3. Confirming the conference by letter or phone.
4. Preparing a folder of the students work for the parent to see.
5. Creating a comfortable and private physical environment with enough adult-sized chairs and no desk separating teacher from parent.” (pg. 22)

Many strategies can be implemented to develop a relationship between the school and home. Regardless of the strategies chosen, it is critical that schools begin, if they have not done so already, to make greater efforts to involve parents as much as possible in the educational experience of their children.

## Chapter 3

### Design of the Study

#### Methodology

By using a quantitative approach, the intern attempted to determine the level of effective communication in three schools presently in Millville through the use of surveys. Lakeside Middle School will include many of the staff members from these three schools. The Intern developed three surveys: one for parents, teachers, and principals (See Appendix A). The three surveys contained questions that were designed to assess the perceived level of effective communication which currently exists in the three schools. Each survey also was designed to provide an opportunity for respondents to give comments or suggestions for helping improve communication.

The Intern convened and chaired a Communications Committee made up of representatives from each school who helped develop the questions for the surveys. Once survey questions were developed and accepted by this committee, each member of the Committee was responsible for disseminating and collecting the completed surveys for the school he/she represented. Surveys were disseminated during the Parent-Teacher Conferences: Fall 1998. During these three days, Committee members gave each 5th and 6th grade teacher in his/her school copies of the Parent Survey to distribute to every parent attending the conference.

The following week, the representative from each school gave a copy of the Parent Survey to each child in the 5th and 6th grade whose parent was unable to attend the parent-teacher conference. The representatives identified these students by looking at the attendance sheets from the parent-teacher conference. The students were asked to give the surveys to their parents to complete, and to return them the next day to their teacher. Teachers then put the completed surveys in the representatives' mailboxes.

The representative also gave all 6th and 7th teachers in their respective building (who are possible candidates to be transferred to Lakeside Middle School) a copy of the Teacher Survey to be completed and returned to the representatives' mailbox. The representatives also distributed the Principal's Survey to the principal at their respective school. Once completed, the surveys were returned to the representatives' mailbox. The process of distributing and collecting all the surveys was completed in two weeks.

### Instrument

At the top of each survey instrument there is a brief description of the purpose of the survey and instructions for completing it. All surveys consisted of questions which pertained to the level of effective communication occurring at their school. The questions were developed by all the members of the Communication Committee. The phrasing of the questions, the order of the questions, and the number of questions for each survey were determined by the Committee. Responses were recorded on a four-point Likert Scale using NE, SE, E, or VE ( i.e., Not Effective, Somewhat Effective, Effective, and Very Effective) for one part of each survey. The second part required a written response. In addition, a member of the Committee translated the surveys into Spanish for parents whose primary language is Spanish.



### Population Surveyed

The population used in this study was the present 6th and 7th grade teachers, parents of future 6th and 7th grade students who will attend Lakeside Middle School, and the principals of the six elementary schools.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The intern obtained the data from the Committee representatives at a meeting after all completed surveys were returned. The responses from the three surveys from each school were then tallied. The Intern first assigned a point value from 1 to 4 to each response option in the Likert scale (i.e; 1=NE, 2=SE, 3=E, 4=VE). The intern recorded point values to the responses on all of the completed surveys. The Intern then calculated the average score for each question based on the tallies and also the overall average for each school. The Intern computed the average from the average scores computed from each school.

## Chapter 4

### Research Findings

#### Teacher and Principal Survey

Of the 121 Teacher Surveys distributed at the participating schools, 76% were completed and returned. The Intern compiled and then averaged the teachers responses to each item on the questionnaire.

#### School A

Figure 1 (See Appendix B) presents the average ratings for the teachers and the principal from School A. The data presented in Fig 1 indicate that the average rating of the teachers in School A to question 1 (How do you feel you communicate with parents?) was "Effective" (i.e., 3.0). For question 2 (How effectively do you communicate with students?), the average rating for School A was 3.7, indicating that most teachers at the school perceive that the level of communication is between "Effective" and "Very Effective." The average of teacher ratings at school A to question 3 (How effectively do you communicate with the administrator?) was also 3.7, again indicating that most teachers at the school perceive that the level of communication is between "Effective" and "Very Effective." Question 4 (How effectively does the administrator in you building communicate with you?) had an average rating of 3.2. This average suggests that these teachers perceive the level of communication as a little more than "Effective," but not "Very Effective." Teacher response to Question 5 (How effectively does the school district communicate with the community?) had an average rating of 2.9, indicating that most teachers tend to view the level of communication close to being "Effective." Responses to Question 6 (How effectively do teachers communicate among themselves?) had an average rating of 2.8.

Figure 1 also indicates that the overall average rating of teachers at School A suggests that these teachers perceive their schools' communication system as "Effective."

Figure 1 indicates that the Principal of School A perceives the aspects of communication in question 1 as "Very Effective," as compared to teacher's average rating of "Effective." For question numbers 2 and 3, the Principal's ratings were somewhat higher than those averages of the teachers ratings (i.e., 4.0 vs 3.7, respectively). On question 4, (How effectively does the administrator in your building communicate with you?) both the principal and the teachers ratings indicated "Effective," (i.e., 3.0 and 3.2, respectively), although the teachers' average rating was slightly higher. There is a large difference in perception between the Principal and the teachers in School A to question 5 and 6, however for question 5, the Principal (How effectively does the school district communicate with the community?) indicated "Somewhat Effective," but teachers indicated that it was closer to "Effective" (i.e., 2.0 and 2.9, respectively). For question 6 the Principal and the teachers indicated (i.e., 1.0 and 2.8, respectively). Overall, however, average teacher ratings and those of the Principal of School A were close and both reflected the perception that their school has an effective communication system (i.e., 3.1 and 3.0, respectively).

#### School B

Performing a similar analysis of the ratings obtained from School B's surveys the intern listed results in Figure 2 (See Appendix B). Figure 2 presents a graph of the average of teacher ratings and the principal's ratings. The Principal of School B perceives question 1 (How do you feel you communicate with parents?) as "Somewhat Effective"; while the teachers perceive it as between "Effective" and "Very Effective" (i.e., 2.0 and 3.5 respectively). Data

further reflect that the Principal perceives question 2 (How effectively do you communicate with students?) as “Effective” (i.e., 3.0); while teachers rate it closer to “Very Effective” (i.e., 3.7). Ratings for question 3 (How effectively do you communicate with the administrator?) reflects similar perception; that is both rated the level of communication as “Effective” (i.e., 3.0 and 3.07, respectively). Data ratings for question 4 and question 5 show slightly higher ratings from the Principal (i.e.; each was 3.0 vs 2.57 and 2.54 for teachers, respectively). For Question 6, responses indicated that the Principal of School B perceives the communication among administrators as “Somewhat Effective” (i.e., 2.0), and teachers perceive question 6 (How effectively do teachers communicate among themselves?) approximately between “Somewhat Effective” and “Effective” (i.e., 2.64). Data presented in Figure 2 indicate that overall, both the Principal and teachers at School B feel that their communication system is close to “Effective” and “Not Effective” (i.e., 3.0 and 2.67, respectively).

### School C

Data presented in Figure 3 (See Appendix B) indicate that teachers at School C perceive question 1 (How do you feel you communicate with parents?) as “Effective” (i.e., 3.0) and question 2 (How effectively do you communicate with students?) as slightly more than “Effective” (i.e., 3.29). The average teacher ratings for question 3, 4, and 6 indicate that most teachers perceive the level of communication in those areas as little more than half-way between “Somewhat Effective” and “Effective” (i.e., 2.52, 2.71, and 2.67, respectively); and for question 5 (How effectively does the school district communicate with the community?) the teachers rating was slightly above “Somewhat Effective” (i.e., 2.27).

Data presented in Fig 3 indicate the Principal of School C perceived the schools communication system as “Very Effective,” as illustrated in responses to Questions 1-4 (i.e., 4.0 for each). Teachers at School C, by contrast, perceived Question 1 as “Effective” (i.e., 3.0), question 2 as slightly above “Effective” (i.e., 3.29), question 3 as between “Somewhat Effective” and “Effective” (i.e., 2.71). The principal rated question 5 and 6 halfway between “Somewhat Effective” and “Effective” (i.e., 2.5 for each). Teachers rated question 5 closer to “Somewhat Effective” (i.e., 2.27) and question 6 slightly above the midpoint between “Somewhat Effective” and “Effective” (i.e., 2.67). The data reflects a large difference between the overall Principal’s rating and the overall average teachers rating (i.e., 3.5 and 2.7 respectively). Figure 8 reflects a difference between the two groups to questions 3, 4, and 6. Specifically, principals rated question 3 (How effectively does your staff communicate in your building communicate to you?) as closer to “Very Effective” (i.e., 3.66); while teachers rated it closer to “Effective” (i.e., 3.09). Similarly, principals rated question 4 as above “Effective” (i.e., 3.33); while teachers rated it as below “Effective” (i.e., 2.82). For question 6 (How effectively do administrators communicate among themselves?) and (How effectively do teachers communicate among themselves?) principals rated it as “Somewhat Effective” (i.e., 2.0); while teachers ratings were closer to “Effective” (i.e., 2.7).

## Parent Survey

This intern also compiled and analyzed results of the Parent Survey. Unlike the teachers, prospective 6th-grade students will come from the three K-7 schools (schools A, B, and C), as well as from the three K-5 schools in the district (schools D through F). Thus, the Intern surveyed the parents of prospective sixth-grade students from all six elementary schools, and those of prospective seventh grade students from the three K-7 schools (A-C). Results will be presented first for each individual school.

### School A

Figure 5 (See Appendix C) presents the average response rating for questions 1-4. Parents responded on the same Likert scale used in the Teachers' and Principals' surveys as displayed in Figure 5. The average rating from the parents at School A to all four questions were close to the "Effective" rating (i.e., 2.89, 2.84, 2.68, and 2.65, respectively). The overall average rating for this group was also close to "Effective" (i.e., 2.77). In addition, written data indicated that the most frequent response to question 5 (What ways has the school communicated in the past?) was "by telephone." Written responses to question 6 (Which method has been most effective?) indicated that parents of School A most frequently identified "newsletter"; and for question 7 (What suggestions do you have to improve communication with you?), the most frequently recorded response was "letter."

### School B

Figure 6 (See Appendix C) presents the results of the analysis of the average of the responses given by parents from School B. Figure 6 indicates that this group's average rating for questions 1, 2, and 4 were close to or slightly above "Effective"; whereas, the average response to question 3 (How effectively

does the administrator in the building communicate to you?) was approximately half-way between "Somewhat Effective" and "Effective." The overall average response from this parent group was close to "Effective" (i.e., 2.86). In terms of written input to question 5-7, the most frequent responses from parents at School B were also "phone" and "newsletter" for questions 5 and 6, and "maintain contact" for question 7.

#### School C

Figure 7 (See Appendix C) presents average responses to questions 1-4 from parents at School C. As with School A and B, parent responses from School C reflect average ratings around "Effective" for question 1, 2, and 4, and a rating approximately midway between "Somewhat Effective" and "Effective" for question 3. This group's overall average rating (i.e., 2.97) also reflected a general perception of the school's communication as "Effective." The most frequent written responses from this parent group were "phone and newsletter" for questions 5 and 6, and "daily assignment books and/or progress reports" for question 7.

#### School D

Responses from parents at School D reflect somewhat different perceptions. Figure 8 displays the average responses to questions 1-4 from parents at School D. The data indicate that, on the average, these parents rate question 1 as approximately midway between "Effective" and "Very Effective" (i.e., 3.45); question 2 as "Effective" (i.e., 3.0); question 3 as midway between "Somewhat Effective" and "Effective" (i.e., 2.64); and question 4 as above "Somewhat Effective" but not at the midpoint between "Somewhat Effective" and "Effective" (i.e., 2.36). The overall average rating of this parent group (i.e., 2.86), however, was "Effective" similar to, those of parents from schools A through C.

Written responses similarly reflect “phone” for question 5 and “newsletter” for question 6, but the most frequent response of parents from School D for question 7 was “phone and notes.”

#### School E

Average responses from parents at School E (the second K-5 school) are reflected in Figure 9 (See Appendix C). This parent group’s responses to questions 1-3 and overall reflected perceptions of their school’s communication system as “Effective” (i.e., 3.1, 2.8, 3.2, and 2.8, respectively). Regarding question 4, however, this group rated their school as “Somewhat Effective” (i.e., 2.0). The most frequent responses from parents of students at School E to questions 5 and 6 were “newsletters” and “phone,” respectively; and the most frequent response to question 7 was “phone and letter.”

#### School F

Average responses of parents from School F to questions 1-4 are reflected in Figure 10 (See Appendix C). This parent group gave the highest average responses of the six parent groups surveyed. Average responses to all four questions were near or above “Effective.” Specifically, the average responses to question 1-3, and overall for this group were (i.e., 3.38, 3.23, 3.38, and 3.21, respectively). The average response for question 4, however, was slightly below “Effective” (i.e., 2.85). For question 5-7, this group most frequently identified “phone” for question 5 and 6 and “learn about problems early” for question 7.



### District Wide

This Intern next combined the average data from parents of all six schools to examine the ratings reflecting perceptions of the entire group. Figure 11 (See Appendix C) presents the average of all parent groups to questions 1-4 of the Parent Survey. These data indicate that parents generally view the communication between the school and them as “Somewhat Effective” (i.e., 2.28, 2.29, 1.97, and 2.01, respectively). The overall average score (i.e., 2.14) also reflected the perception that parents generally consider the communication from the school as “Somewhat “Effective.” In terms of written input, the most frequent response of the parent groups to question 5 was “phone;” while the most frequent response to question 6 was “newsletter.” Although data reflected more variation among the schools to question 7, the most frequently given responses were “phone” and “letter.”

### Summary of Findings

The data from all of the surveys therefore indicated that most parents, teachers, and principals perceive the level of communication to be in the “Effective” to “Very Effective” range. Specifically, seventy three percent of the parent responses and seventy five percent of the teacher responses were either “Effective” or “Very Effective.” However, when question 5 asked (How effectively does the school district communicate with the community?), the majority of the responses from the teacher survey fell in the “Somewhat Effective” range; yet, the parents felt that the school their child attends and the school district are doing a very good job in communicating with them. Most of the parents’ responses fell in the “Effective” to “Very Effective” range. One reason for the observed difference in perception between the teachers and parents in this area might be because a significant part of the teaching staff live

outside of the community. The data from the remainder of the parent survey revealed that parents generally view the level of communication in the other areas as favorable; and the majority of the respondents from all groups surveyed found the level of communication, overall, to be either “Effective” or “Very Effective”.

Analysis of the data also reflected an interesting, but predictable, discrepancy between the teachers’ perception of the level of communication from principals and the principals perception of how they communicate with their staff. Specifically, for question 4 (How effectively do you communicate with staff?) the principal’s responses fell between “Effective” and “Very Effective.” On the other hand, teacher’s responses to question 4 in then survey (How effectively does the administrator in your building communicate with you?) fell between “Somewhat Effective” and “Effective.” The biggest discrepancy in question 4 overall occurred in School C (i.e., 4.0 and 2.7 respectively).

Interestingly enough, the same type of discrepancy between the teacher’s and principal’s did not occur when each respondent group was asked to assess the level of communication from teachers. In Question 4 on the Teacher’s Survey (How effectively do you communicate with your administrator?) and Question 4 in the principals’ survey, (How effectively does your staff in your building communicate with you?), both the teachers and the principals perceived the level of communication to be about the same, (i.e., in between “Effective” and “Very Effective”).

Overall, the majority of the respondents from all three groups rated the school’s communication as close to the “Effective.”

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions and Implication

#### Conclusions and Implications

The study found that the three groups who were surveyed viewed communication close to an effective level but with room for improvement and the Principal of Lakeside Middle School thought that the survey results were very favorable, especially the results from the parents. The results implied that teachers have done a satisfactory job in communicating with parents. The various methods that the teachers are currently employing to communicate to parents should therefore continue to be utilized. The discrepancy which occurred between the staff and the principal concerning the level of communication between them can be corrected if both parties begin to develop certain communication skills. These skills should include listening, body language, and timing. If these skills are developed, they will help remove barriers which typically exist in this relationship. Because the principal is the leader in the school, most of the responsibility for effective communication settles on him/her. He/She must therefore be the first to acquire the necessary skills in order for effective communication to occur in the school. In the attempt to help keep discrepancies between themselves and the staff to a minimum, the principals may attempt to survey the staff as often as possible to ascertain the effectiveness of their communication and to determine what must be done to improve it. The principal may also want to talk informally to staff members individually to help foster relationships with them. In turn, staff members may want to take advantage of opportunities offered to them to help build a relationship in which effective communication can occur.

### Leadership Development

Throughout this study, the Intern observed a relationship between the level of communication recorded and staff morale. Specifically, the higher the level of communication, the higher staff morale was. This observed occurrence leads the Intern to conclude that in order for a principal to increase staff morale, he/she must acquire the communication skills necessary to do so.

The impact of this observation to the Intern's professional development was tremendous. The Intern has developed the sense of how important it is to develop and maintain effective communication in a school and especially with parents: More specifically, the parents indicated a greater need for updates regarding their child's progress, and were not necessarily as interested in discipline decisions. They wanted to be notified and kept informed. The parents' concerns dealt mostly in the area of official school information, and parents felt that somehow schools have to do a better job in disseminating information to them in a timely matter. Parents experienced that the school often gave them information after the fact and not early enough.

Overall, the study has provided the Intern with three basic issues concerning communication, which the Intern will need to apply. First, share new information as quickly as possible with staff and parents. Second, give staff members as many opportunities as possible to give feedback and input; and third, take the time to find out about the concerns of staff and parents.

### Organizational Change

In the preliminary stage of the study, the Intern had the opportunity to speak to the Superintendent of the School District; and the Intern suggested establishing a homework hotline for the new Lakeside Middle School. Because this conversation occurred in the early stages of the building of the middle school, the superintendent was able to have the builders put into the building specifications the capacity for the school to have a homework telephone hotline.

The Principal of the new Lakeside Middle School who helped oversee this study was very impressed with the findings. As a result of the study outcomes, in order to keep the level of communication with parents in the effective range, the Communication Committee decided to develop a "quick reference parent handbook." This parent handbook includes a collection of pertinent information: a school calendar, nurse's information and number, tips on how to schedule a parent-teacher conference, with helpful hints, Lakeside Middle School's vision statement, attendance policy, a copy of the curriculum offered, school calendar, and listing of important dates and numbers at Lakeside Middle School. The parent handbook is designed in pamphlet form rather than book form, which serves to minimize any level of intimidation parents may feel, as well as, to enable them to perhaps put it on their refrigerators for easy access.

This study also brought about an awareness on the part of the principals who participated in the study, concerning how communication is connected to the success of their respective school. This study also demonstrated how eager teachers are to feel a part of the educational process beyond just teaching.

### Implication for Further Study

Schools have to continue to find better ways to communicate with parents and everyone involved in the educational process. Administrators and teachers have to continue to make a better effort to work together, and they both must take the initiative to establish a line of communication between themselves. In order for a school to do the best job possible in educating students, teachers and their principal must work together, not against each other.

The next focus for future studies is to identify barriers of communication and the approaches that can be implemented to remove them. Hopefully, through continued research, new and more techniques and methods can be found to remove those barriers and improve communication.

Another area which needs to be researched is communication with parents. With the emergence of charter schools and school choice as an option for parents public school educators have come to the realization that communicating to parents, in an effective manner will be critical in keeping students in their schools. One of the worst things that public schools have done is to allow the opponents of public schools to get out negative messages without responding to them. Negative and inaccurate messages will continue to blow from the opponents of public schools with the hope they can attract enough parents to their own schools.

One way that public schools, can counter that effort is by sharing information with the parents. It is this Intern's belief that many parents who send their children to charter schools or want school choice to be a reality feel that way because they have been misinformed. Public school employees have to do a better job communicating to parents and maintaining contact with them, and research must be conducted to identify or lend to the development of more efficient methods for public schools to use in communicating their value to students, parents, and the public in general.

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Appendix A  
Parent, Principal, and Teacher Surveys

# *Effective Communication Survey*

## *Parents*

NE=Not Effective, SE=Somewhat Effective, E=Effective, VE=Very Effective

To better serve the community, The Lakeside Middle School Committee is asking that you take a minute to fill out this survey.

NE   SE   E   VE

1. How effectively does your child's teacher(s) communicate with you?

—   —   —   —

What's the best strategy they use?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How effectively do you communicate with the teacher(s)?

—   —   —   —

What's the best strategy you use?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How effectively does the administrator in the building communicate with you?

—   —   —   —

What's the best strategy he/she uses?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How effectively do parents communicate among themselves?

—   —   —   —

What's the best strategy you use?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What ways has the school communicated in the past?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Which method has been most effective? Ex. Newsletter, Phone calls, etc....

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What suggestions do you have to improve communication with you?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return by November 2*

# *Effective Communication Survey*

## *Principals*

NE=Not Effective, SE=Somewhat Effective, E=Effective, VE=Very Effective

To better serve our parents, we're asking for as much input from the principals as possible. Please take a minute to fill out this survey.

	NE	SE	E	VE
1. How do you feel you communicate with parents?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				
2. How effectively do you communicate with students?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				
3. How effectively do you communicate with staff?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				
4. How effectively does the staff in your building communicate with you?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy they use?				
5. How effectively does the school district communicate with the community?	—	—	—	—
6. How effectively do administrators communicate among themselves?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				

\*What have you found to be an effective means of communication in your school?

---

# *Effective Communication Survey*

## *Teachers*

NE=Not Effective, SE=Somewhat Effective, E=Effective, VE=Very Effective

In preparation for the Lakeside Middle School, we are asking that you take a minute to fill out this survey.

	NE	SE	E	VE
1. How do you feel you communicate with parents?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				
2. How effectively do you communicate with students?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				
3. How effectively do you communicate with the administrator?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				
4. How effectively does the administrator in your building communicate with you?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy he/she uses?				
5. How effectively does the school district communicate with the community?	—	—	—	—
6. How effectively do teachers communicate among themselves?	—	—	—	—
What's the best strategy you use?				

Appendix B  
Graphs of Principals/Teacher Survey

Figure 1  
Principal/Teacher  
Effective Communication Survey Results: School A

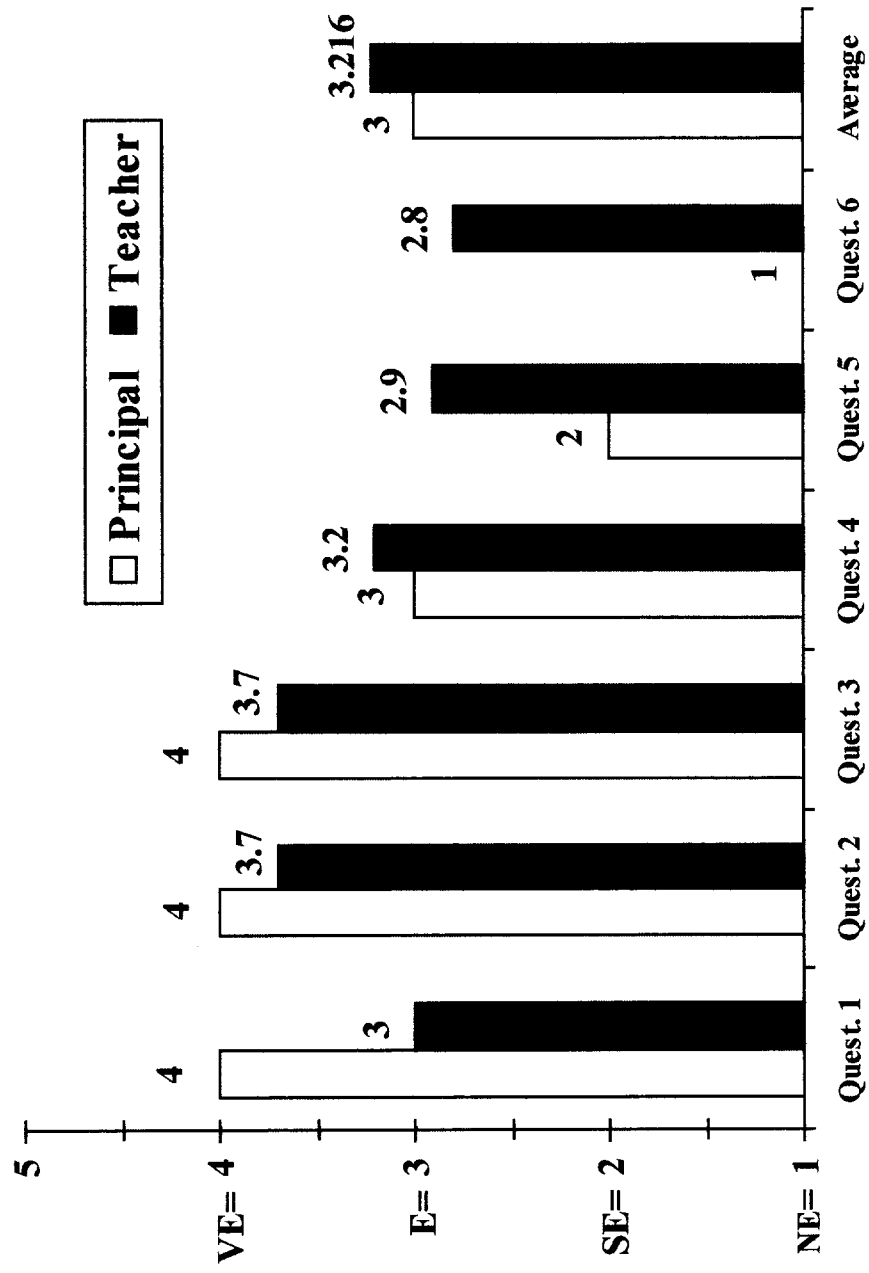


Figure 2  
Principal/Teacher  
Effective Communication Survey Results: School B

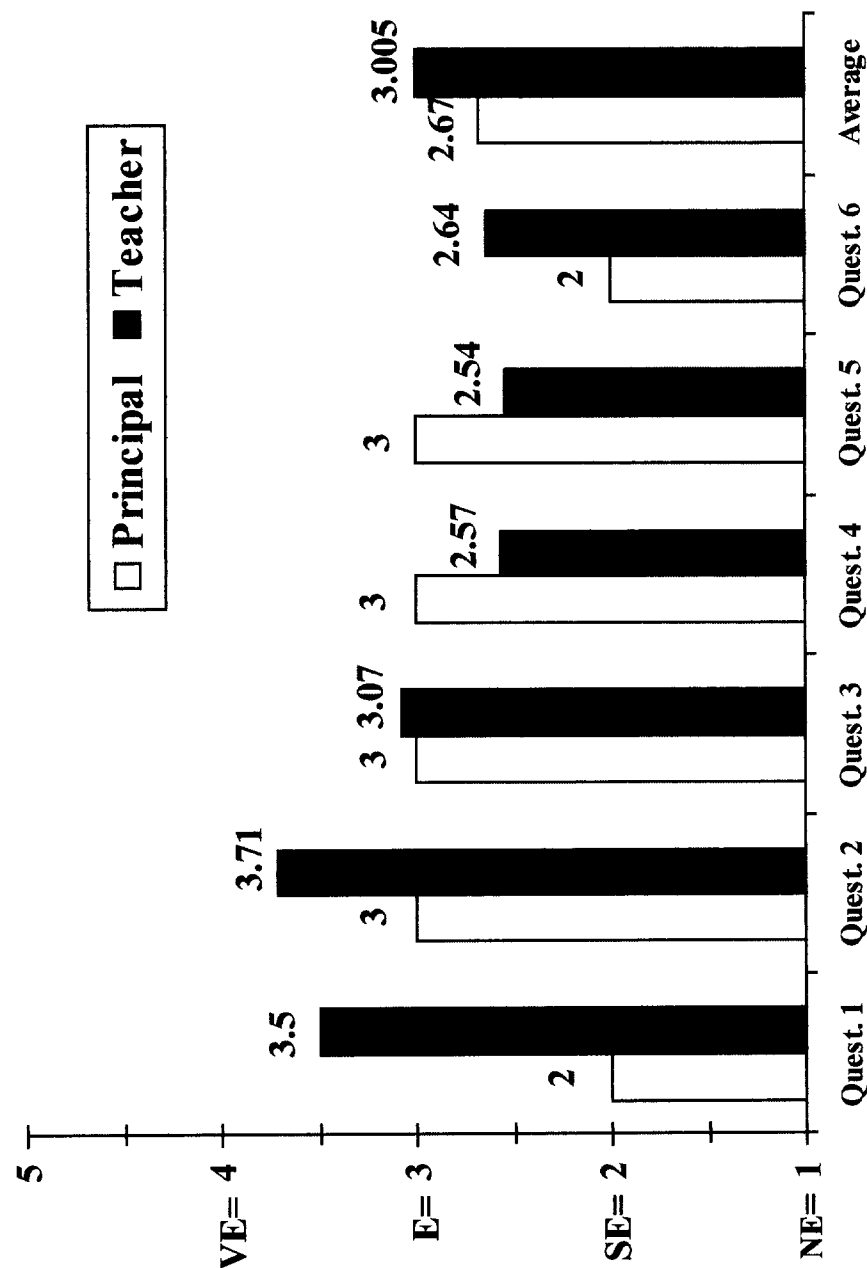




Figure 3  
Principal/Teacher  
Effective Communication Survey Results: School C

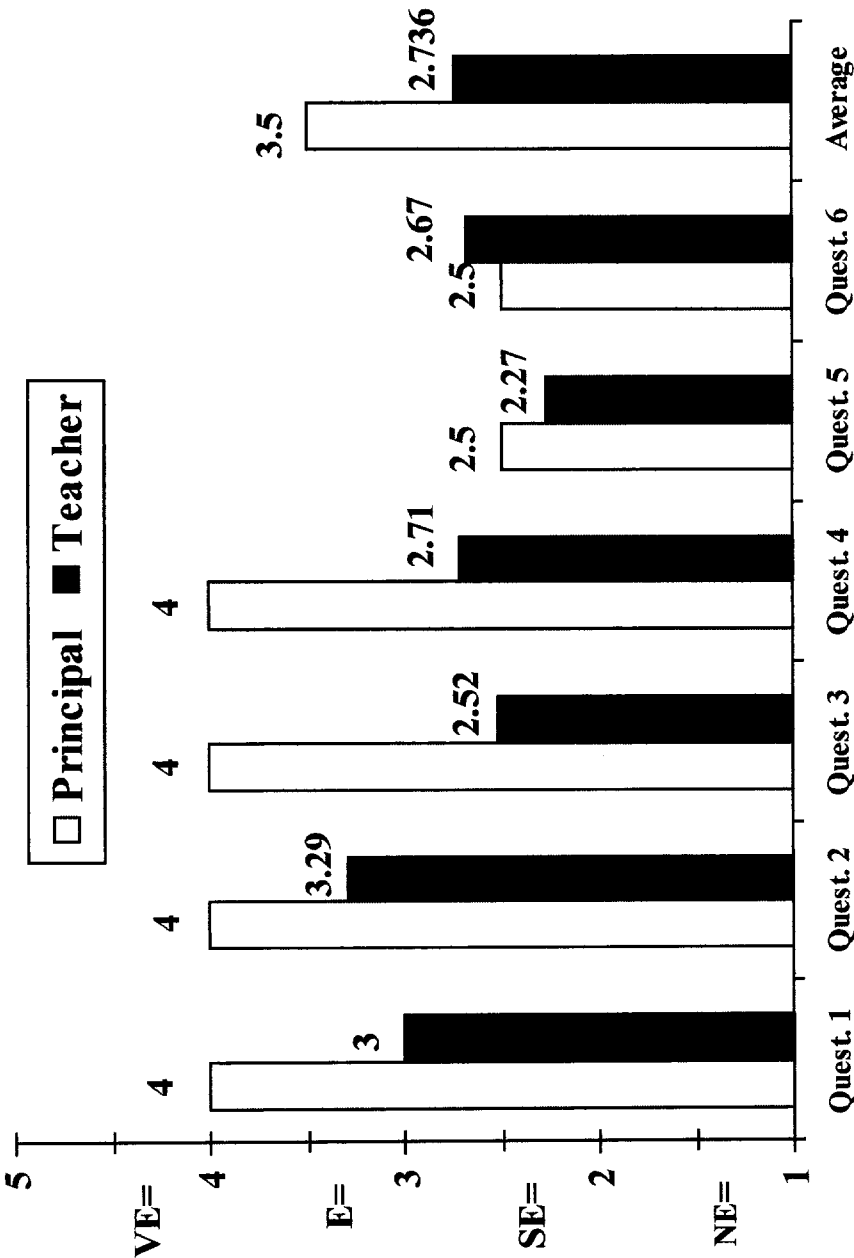
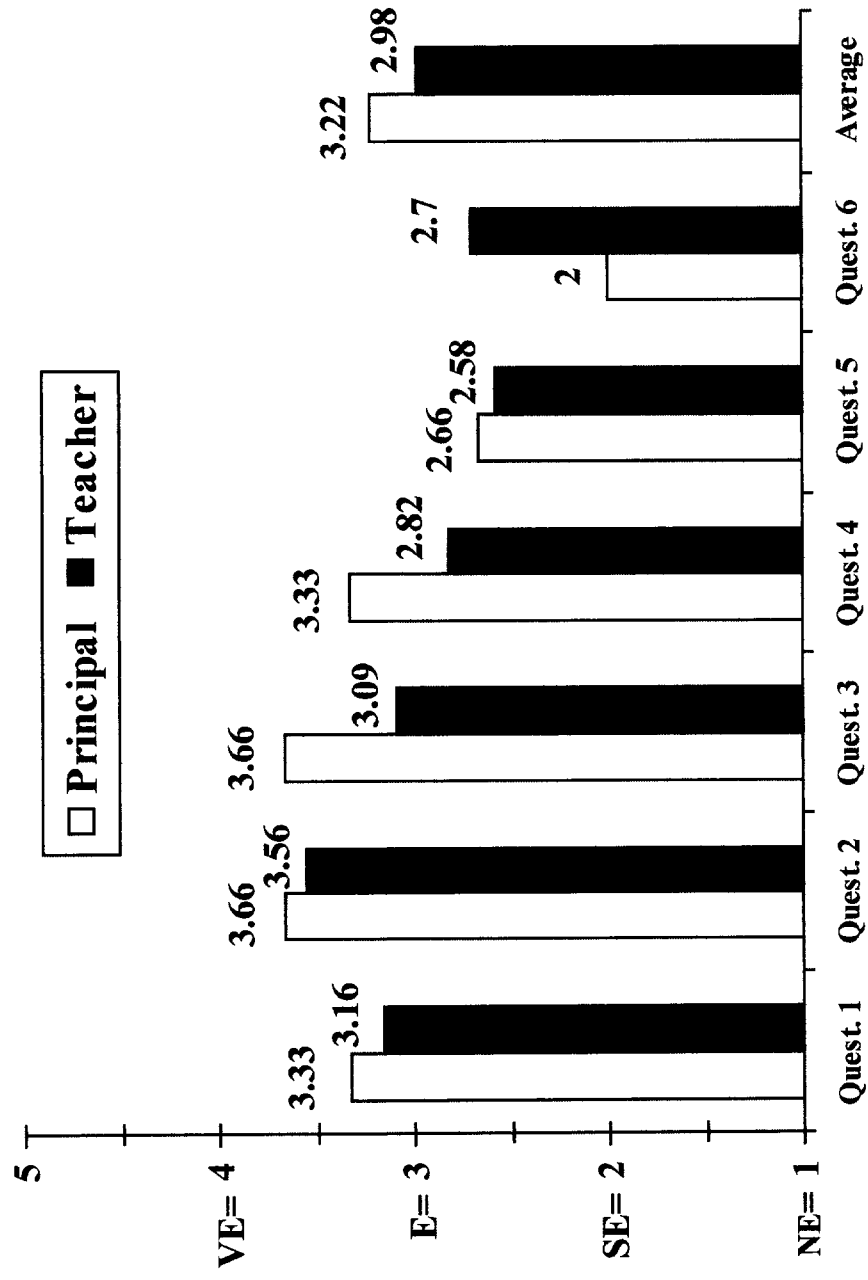


Figure 4  
Principal/Teacher  
Overall Effective Communication Survey Results



Appendix C  
Graphs of Parent Survey

Figure 5  
Parent Survey Results: School A

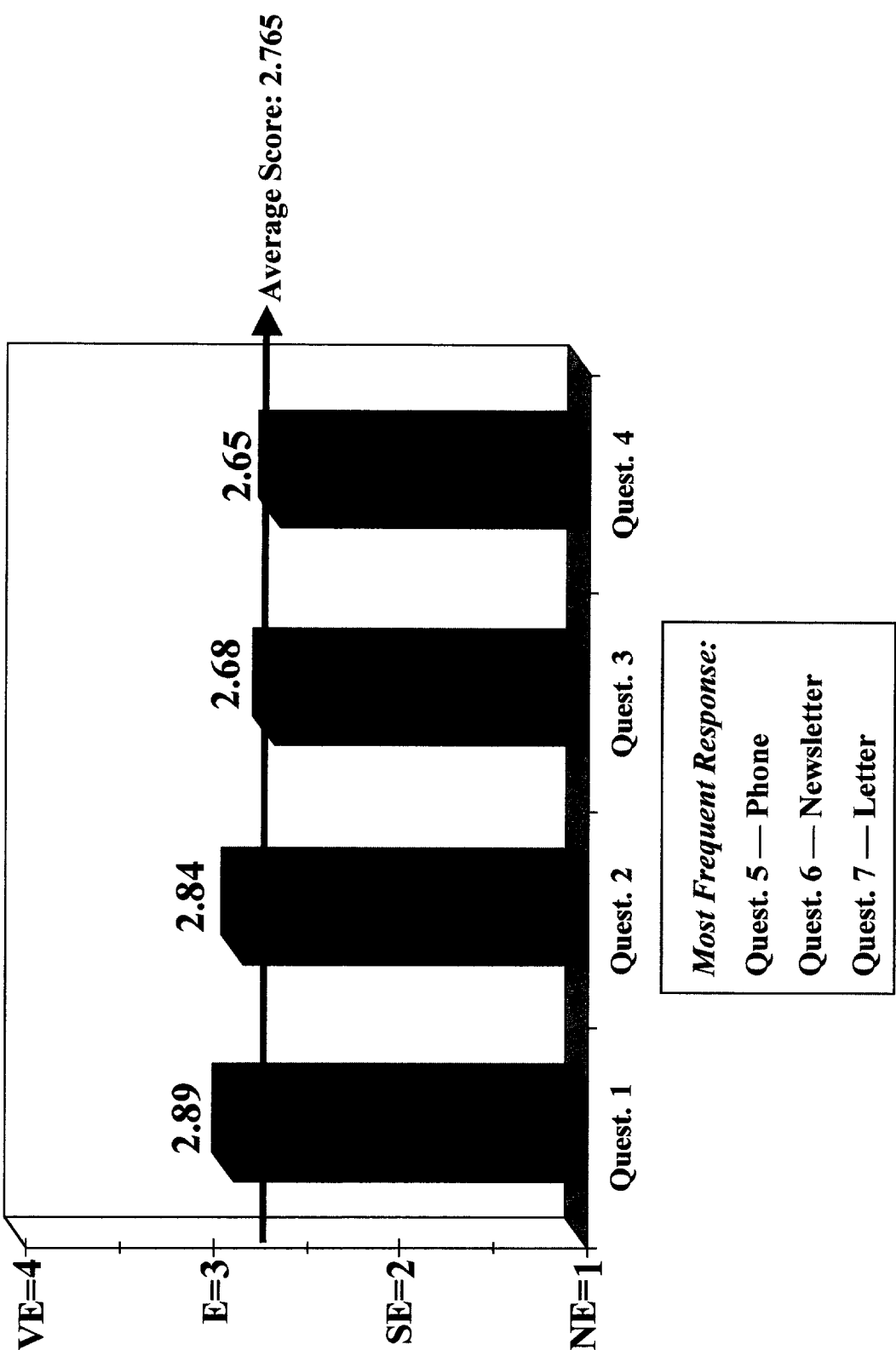
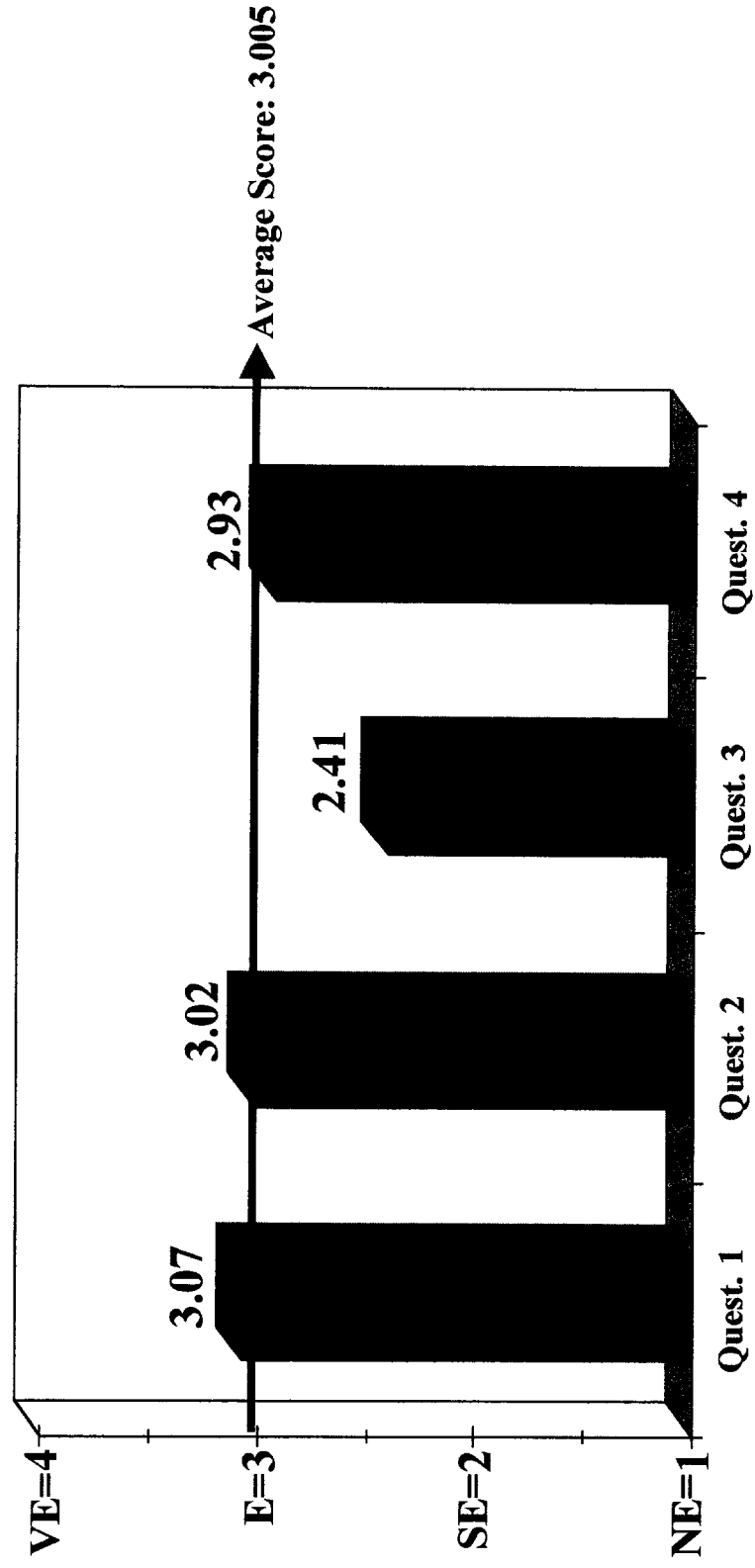
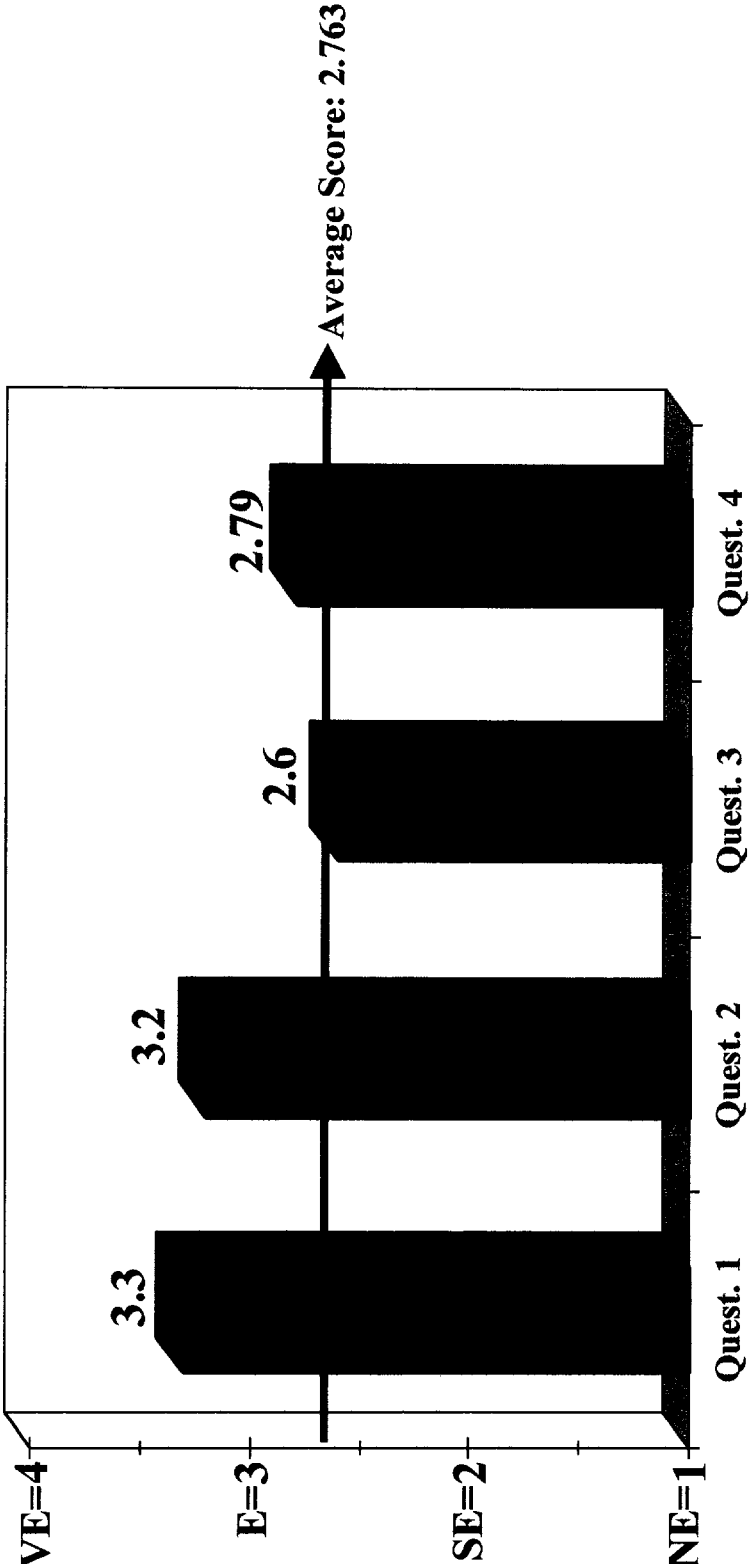


Figure 6  
Parent Survey Results: School B



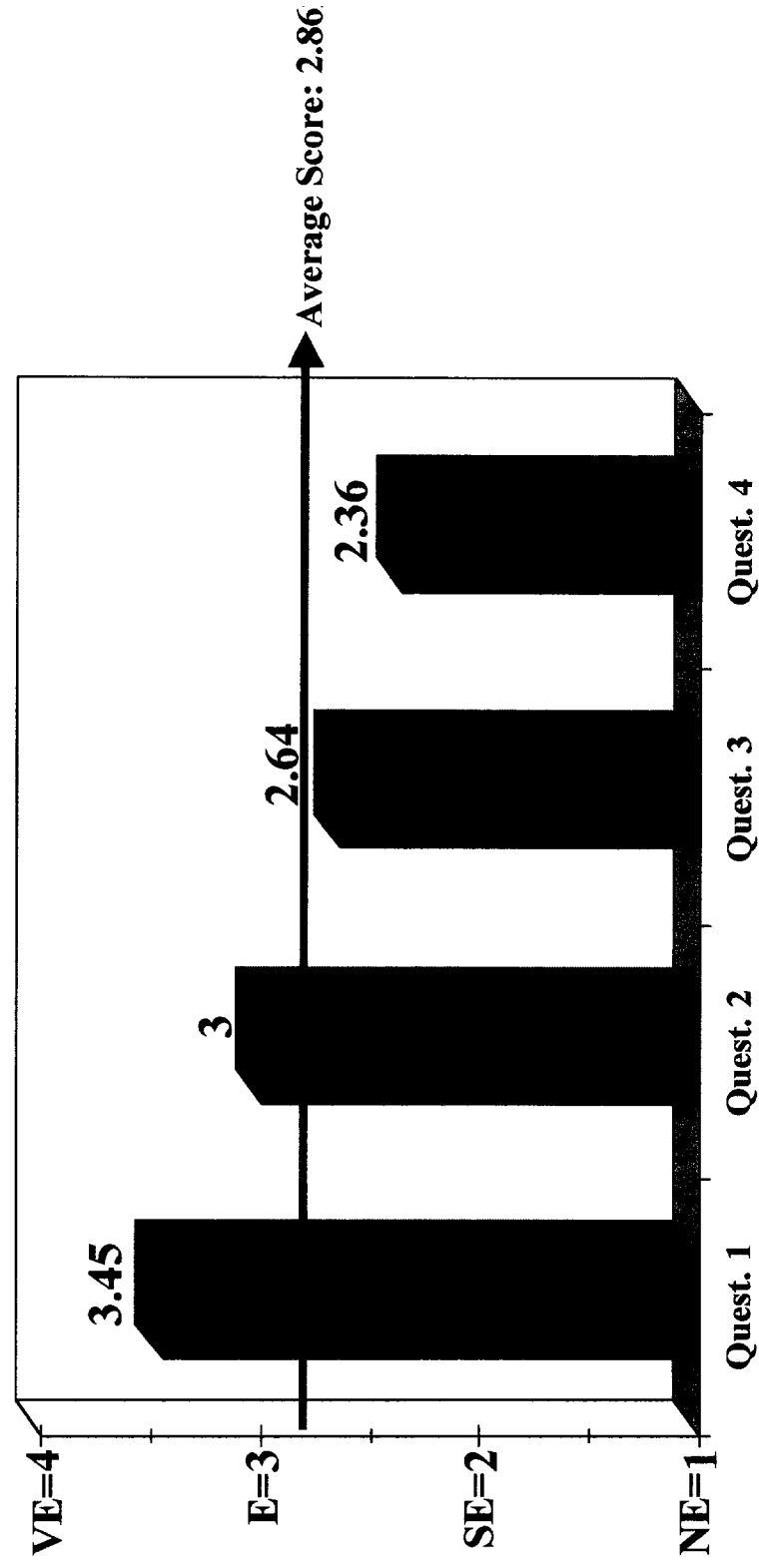
*Most Frequent Response:*  
 Quest. 5 — Phone  
 Quest. 6 — Newsletter  
 Quest. 7 — Maintain Contact

Figure 7  
Parent Survey Results: School C



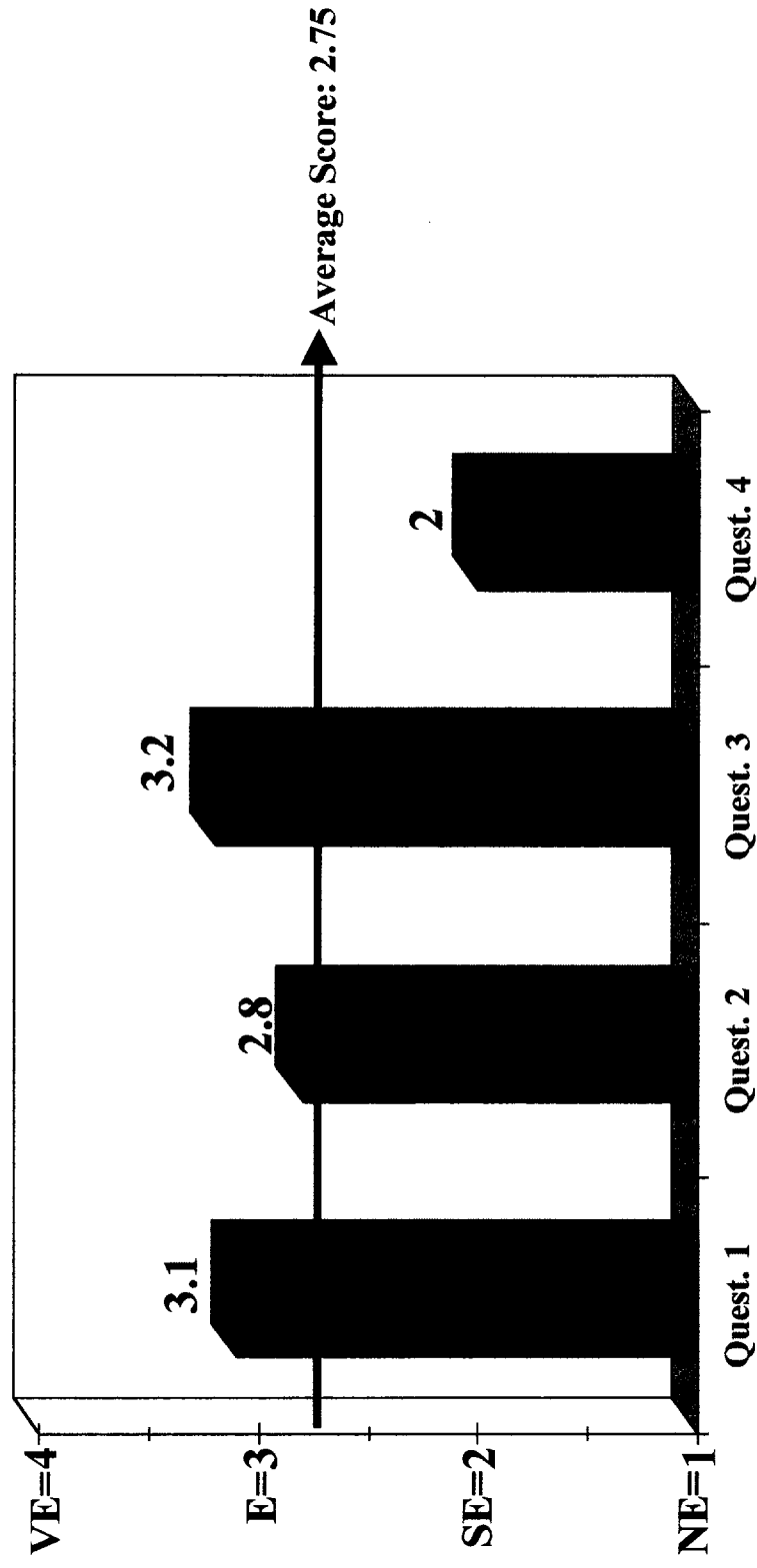
***Most Frequent Response:***  
Quest. 5 — Phone & Newsletter  
Quest. 6 — Phone & Newsletter  
Quest. 7 — Daily Assignment Books and/or Progress Reports

Figure 8  
Parent Survey Results: School D



***Most Frequent Response:***  
 Quest. 5 — Phone  
 Quest. 6 — Newsletter  
 Quest. 7 — Phone & Notes

Figure 9  
Parent Survey Results: School E



*Most Frequent Response:*

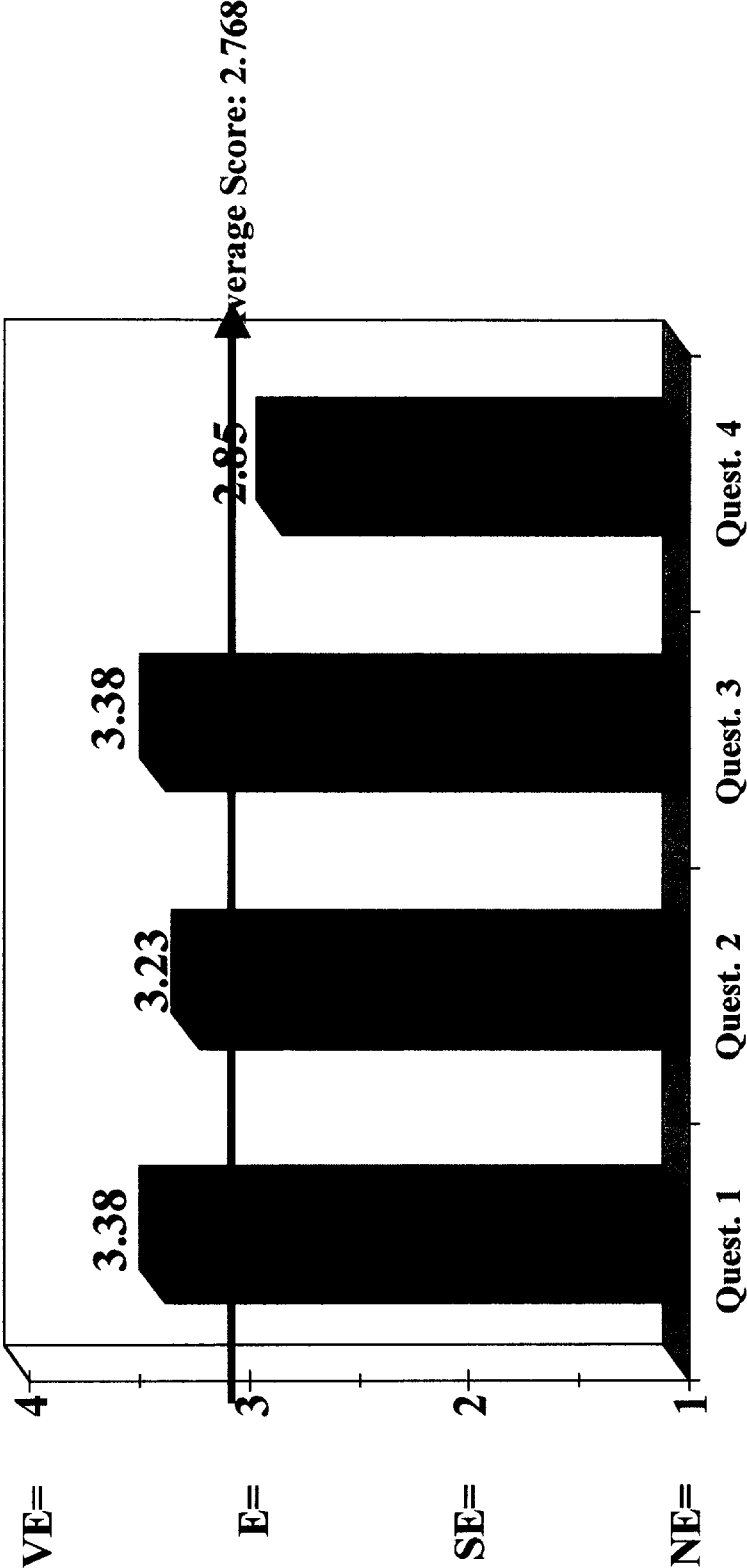
Quest. 5 — Newsletter

Quest. 6 — Phone

Quest. 7 — Phone & Letter

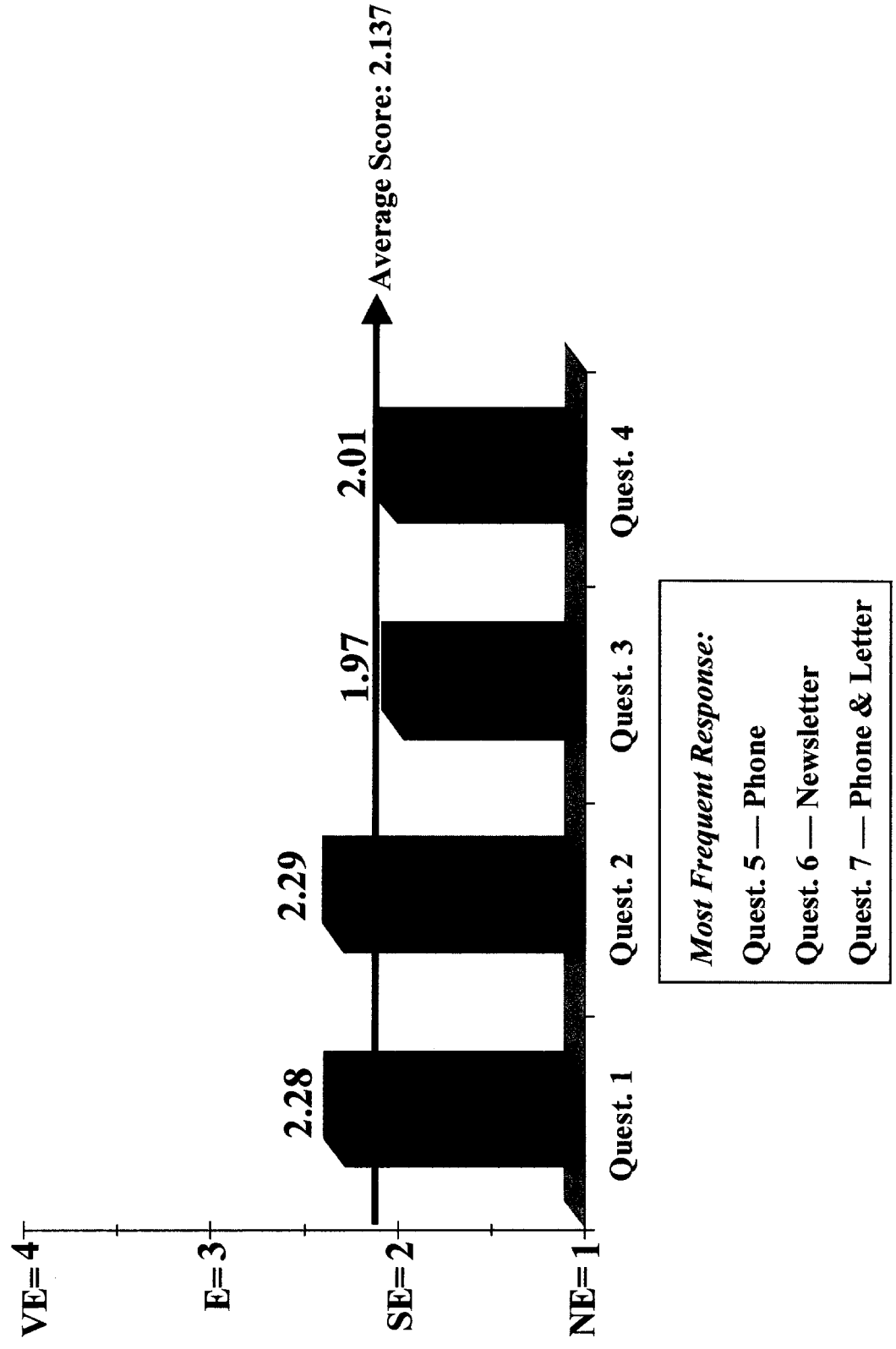


Figure 10  
Parent Survey Results: School F



*Most Frequent Response:*  
Quest. 5 — Phone  
Quest. 6 — Phone  
Quest. 7 — Learn about problems

Figure 11  
Average District-Wide Parent Survey Results



## Biographical Data

Name	Amiot P. Michel
High School	Abraham Clark High School
Undergraduate	Bachelor of Arts Teacher of the Handicapped New Jersey State College Jersey City, NJ
Graduate	Master of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, NJ
Present Occupation	Resource Room Teacher Silver Run School Millville, NJ