

**NOW I BELONG:
AN INVESTIGATION OF FACTORS
AFFECTING BONDING BETWEEN STUDENT AND SCHOOL
AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL**

by

**Sharon Ann Cairns
B.Sc. University of British Columbia 1975**

**THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in the Faculty
of
Education**

**© Sharon A. Cairns 1994
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
March 1994**

**All rights reserved. This work may not be
reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy
or other means, without permission of the author.**

APPROVAL

NAME Sharon Ann Cairns
DEGREE Master of Arts
TITLE Now I Belong: An Investigation of Factors
Affecting Bonding Between the Student and
School at the Secondary Level

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Chair Rina Zazkis

Peter Coleman
Senior Supervisor

~~Mike Manley-Casimir~~
Member

Dr. Milton McClaren
Associate Professor
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University
External Examiner

Date: March 31, 1994

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

**Now I Belong: An Investigation of Factors Affecting Bonding
Between the Student and School at the Secondary Level**

Author:

(Signature)

Sharon Ann Cairns

(Name)

Mar 31, 1994

(Date)

ABSTRACT

Research suggests that students who bond to school are more likely to continue schooling to graduation. This study tested the hypothesis that students who bond to their elementary school carry that propensity to bond to their secondary school. It also attempted to determine which of eight factors affect students' bonding to secondary school.

Using rating of the school as a measure of bonding, students (n=55) in grade seven in four elementary schools in a large British Columbia school district, rated their elementary school on a nine point scale. These students made the transition to a secondary school (grades eight to twelve) and, four months later, rated the secondary school on the same scale. As well a questionnaire was administered on two occasions in grade 8. The items on the questionnaire grouped into eight variables believed to affect a student's bonding to school.

The results suggest that students' rating of secondary school can be predicted from their rating of elementary school. Based on relatively weak scales and low percent of variance, the factors

found to influence the rating of secondary school are:

- a. perception of academic ability,
- b. students' sense of participation and belonging,
- c. pursuit of intellectual growth, and
- d. parent-student communication about school matters.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Ruth McInnes

To my husband, Morley

To my daughter, Kristy

For encouraging and supporting my pursuit of learning

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank my supervisor, Dr. Peter Coleman, who guided me through this thesis. A special thank you to Yvonne Tabin for all her help with the statistical analysis and to Dr. M. Manley-Casimir for his direction. As well, I must thank members of the research group: Joan Collinge, Dan Domes, Judith Raddysh, Colleen Larson, Steve Agabob, Sheilagh Foster and Jane Gorman for the parts they played in bringing this about.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE.....	i
APPROVAL PAGE.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	1
A. Introduction.....	1
B. Statement of the Problem.....	5
C. Method.....	6
D. Definitions.....	9
E. Limitations.....	11
F. Organization of the Thesis.....	11
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	13
Part I Parent Involvement.....	15
A. Types of Parent Involvement.....	15
B. Parent Involvement in Instruction.....	16
C. Consequences of Parent Involvement.....	20
D. Obstacles to Parent Involvement.....	22
Part II Dropouts.....	24
Part III Transition.....	27
Part IV Bonding and Withdrawal.....	32
Part V Conclusion.....	35
METHOD.....	36
Part I Co-Production of Learning Project.....	36
A. Rationale.....	36
B. Design.....	37
C. Data Collection.....	38
D. Problems with Data Collection and Analysis....	42
Part II Transition Substudy.....	43
A. Rationale.....	43
B. Design.....	44
C. Data Collection.....	48
D. Data Analysis - Quantitative.....	55
E. Data Analysis - Subgroups.....	57
F. Problems with Data Collection and Analysis....	57

FINDINGS.....	59
Part I General Quantitative Findings.....	59
A. Variable Analysis.....	60
B. Changing Expectations.....	63
C. Factors Affecting Bonding.....	64
Part II Subgroup Findings.....	70
A. Changing Expectations.....	71
B. Differences - High Raters and Low Raters.....	73
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS.....	77
Part I Transition Period.....	81
Part II Factors Affecting Bonding.....	83
A. Identification.....	83
B. Participation.....	85
C. Relationships.....	86
Part III Subgroups.....	89
A. Academic Attitude - Identification.....	89
B. Climate Variables - Participation.....	91
Part IV Discussion.....	94
Part V Recommendations.....	100
Part VI Conclusion.....	103
APPENDIX A CONSENT FORM.....	106
APPENDIX B SCALED ITEMS - TRANSITION SURVEY.....	107
APPENDIX C SCALED ITEMS - TRANSITION 2 SURVEY.....	110
APPENDIX D TRANSITION 1 SURVEY QUESTIONS.....	113
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	116

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1. Predictor Variables and Number of Items Forming Each Scale.....	46
TABLE 2. Predictor Variables.....	61
TABLE 3. Correlation Matrix - Time 1.....	62
TABLE 4. Correlation Matrix - Time 1 to Time 2.....	63
TABLE 5. Correlation Matrix - Time 2.....	64
TABLE 6. Stepwise Multiple Regression of Predictor Variables on Student's Rating of Secondary School....	66
TABLE 7. Stepwise Multiple Regression of Predictor Variables on Perception of Academic Ability.....	68
TABLE 8. Mean Scale Scores: Whole Group, High Raters and Low Raters.....	70
TABLE 9. Correlations - Time 1 and Time 2.....	87

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.	Summary of Regression Analysis.....	69
FIGURE 2.	Participation-Identification Model.....	79
FIGURE 3.	Relationships Suggested By Regression Analysis....	88
FIGURE 4.	Revised Participation-Identification Model.....	96
FIGURE 5.	Revised Nonparticipation-Alienation Model.....	97

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. Introduction

Current research on school quality correlates parent involvement with student achievement (Walberg, 1984a; Fehrman et al., 1987; Barth, 1979; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1987). These findings have sparked an interest by educational researchers in identifying the various pathways by which parent involvement is linked to student achievement. Aware of the increasing public scrutiny of schools, of the demand for school reform and accountability, coupled with limited student interaction time, educators are looking for ways of 'working smarter'. Those practices that yield the greatest success for students, that keep students involved with learning and participating in school, need to be identified. Fullan (1982, p.196) finds that "direct parent involvement in instructional activities designed to contribute to child development...consistently

influence(s) educational achievement of students." In their study of high school students, Fehrman et al. (1987) found a correlation between student achievement at all ability levels and the activities of parents who monitored their child's daily activities and grades. Concurring with this research is Walberg (1984a, p. 400) who found "the curriculum of the home predicts academic learning twice as well as the socioeconomic status of families." In their four year, longitudinal study, Mortimore et al. (1988, p. 255) found that parent involvement in the classroom, on educational visits and in educational development at home (such as reading and access to books) had a positive effect upon their children's learning.

As well, there has been an increasing focus by educational personnel, researchers and politicians on dropouts (the antithesis of student achievement) and the associated costs to society. Finn (1989) believes dropping out is a long-term developmental process linked to the failure of the student to bond to the school: in effect, the failure of the student to participate in school and to identify with school goals. Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack and Rock's (1986) findings support the hypothesis that the process of dropping out may begin very early in a student's school career and may be directly

influenced by parent involvement in and attitude toward school learning. As well, Mortimore (1990, p. 48) found that difficulties in secondary school were very often presaged by difficulties in elementary school and "were reflected in attendance rates, reading attainments, self-concepts and attitudes to school." These are variables which may be positively, but relatively inexpensively, manipulated by educators for increased student achievement if the family, school and student work together.

The transition period, in particular, may be a problematic time for certain students. The Statistics Canada report on School Leavers (1990, p. 4) states that school leavers found the transition to high school very difficult and identified it as a critical time in their progressive alienation from schooling. The change of the physical environment from a nurturing elementary to a fairly impersonal secondary school, combined with emotional upheavals brought on by puberty, may make it very difficult for some students to cope with school life. Mortimore (1990) found that for the majority of students the transfer to secondary school was a positive experience. He also found, however, that a minority had severe difficulties in transferring.

Eccles and Midgley (1989) summarized the research findings on transition and found there to be many conflicting results, due, in part, to differing contexts. As suggested by Eccles, there needs to be a great deal more research on finding the best fit between a child's development and his/her environment. Finn (1989, p. 118) states that, "few (intervention efforts) are based on a systematic understanding of the developmental processes that lead an individual to withdraw completely from schooling." My belief is that student bonding to the elementary school:

- a. is, in part, a function of parent involvement,
- b. will transfer to the secondary school, and
- c. will prevent various types of withdrawal behaviour, including dropping out.

Hopefully this study will advance knowledge in this area. An increased emphasis on teacher/parent/student collaboration will facilitate an increase in student bonding to school with the result that the transition to secondary school is a positive experience for all students. This in turn may decrease the dropout rate.

This study is a substudy of a larger research project called The Co-Production of Learning Project. Under the direction of Dr. P.

Coleman of Simon Fraser University several doctoral and master students involved with the Co-Production of Learning Project are investigating a wide variety of those influences affecting school quality. The larger project is intended to contribute to knowledge about family influence upon schools and classrooms. Parental involvement may have an effect on student bonding to school and student bonding to school may have a mediating effect on the other developmental and environmental changes experienced by an adolescent child, such that the transition to secondary school is easier for him/her than a child who is less bonded to the elementary school. This substudy is concerned with a comparison of a student's bonding to the elementary school with his/her bonding to the secondary school and how (or if) the factors believed to affect a student's bonding to secondary school change during the transition period.

B. Statement of the Problem

The hypothesis under investigation is that students who bond to the elementary school will carry that propensity to bond to the

secondary school. So the central research question becomes, "Is there a correlation between the degree of bonding of a child to his/her elementary school and to his/her secondary school?" Other questions to be answered are:

1. What factors affect a student's bonding to his/her secondary school?
2. Do the factors believed to affect a student's bonding to secondary school change during the transition period?
3. What differences, if any, are there in the attitudes of those students bonded to the school and those less bonded?
4. What recommendations can be made if bonding to school is found to carry over the transition period to secondary schools?

C. Method

In September 1990, graduate students involved in the Co-Production of Learning Project and employed in two B. C. school districts (Site Alpha and Site Beta) gained permission to do research

within each district in the area of parent involvement. With this permission granted, possible school sites within the districts were discussed and selected based on convenience to the researchers, size of the elementary school, number of elementary schools feeding into a particular secondary school, socioeconomic background of the students and urban/rural mix. Principals were approached and then agreement of sixth and seventh grade teachers was sought.

Explanatory letters and participation agreements were sent to parents of all students in the volunteer teachers' classrooms. The parent provided the consent for the participation of his/her minor child in the sequence of questionnaires and interviews.

Surveys with Likert-scaled questions were developed collaboratively by the research group members and administered by the classroom teacher to the students. A representative sample of the population was interviewed before an informal intervention with parents and teachers took place in January, 1991. A second round of surveys and interviews took place in May, 1991. The surveys for parents and students contained questions derived from personal experience and prior research. The questions clustered into attitude scales. Students were also asked to rate their school on a nine point

scale. This large data pool is available to all project members

In September, 1991, this substudy diverged from the larger project. Grade seven elementary school graduates who had participated in the research project in Site Alpha were followed to their new secondary school. Two questionnaires, transition questionnaire 1 (T. Q. 1) and transition questionnaire 2 (T. Q. 2) were administered, one in September, 1991 and one in December of the same year. The questionnaires were similar in design to those administered the previous school year by the project team (in grade 7). The December questionnaire also included the nine point school rating scale as used in the 1990 elementary surveys. This rating of the school was used as a measure of the student's bonding to school. The questionnaires were designed to explore certain expectations and attitudes that students have upon entering secondary school and changes (if any) in those expectations and attitudes four months later. The questions group into scales and are analyzed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, Correlation Matrices and Regression Analysis. The students' ratings of the elementary and secondary schools plus the two questionnaires administered in secondary school were used to address my research questions.

D. Definitions

The project team began with Epstein's (1988) definitions of types of parent involvement: basic obligations of parents, basic obligations of school, parent involvement at schools as volunteers, parent involvement in learning activities at home and parent involvement in governance and advocacy. For purposes of the larger study we were interested in the effect of parent involvement in learning activities at home on the student's attitude and feelings towards school. Over the course of the data collection we came to view parent involvement as being a partnership between the school and the parents, with equal responsibility and decision making powers (Davies, 1991).

What is bonding? For the purpose of this study bonding to the school is defined as the acceptance of and active participation in the daily classroom and school routines and a concomitant identification with and commitment to school-related goals (Finn, 1989, p. 123). Although we cannot observe bonding directly we can explore indicators of bonding and factors believed to affect bonding, such as the student's sense of belonging to, and participation in, school and

school activities, the student's perception of the teacher's willingness to collaborate, the student's perception of his/her academic ability and the student's pursuit of intellectual growth. The student's rating of the school on a nine point scale is used as the measure of his/her bonding to the school, on the grounds that participation and commitment are essential precursors of a positive feeling about the school.

The transition period being studied here is the move of grade seven students from relatively small elementary schools (grades K to 7) to grade eight in a larger secondary school (ages twelve to fourteen, Dec. 1990 to Dec. 1991). In Collins English Dictionary (1986), transition is defined as the "change or passage from one state or stage to another". In this study, transition is considered to be a duality (as defined by Felner in Eccles & Midgley, 1989): a developmental change and an environmental change - the physical movement of, and emotional impact on, the seventh grade students moving from the elementary school to grade eight in the secondary school.

E. Limitations

The selection process and size of the sample must be kept in mind when reviewing or using results pertaining to this substudy. The parent participants in the study were approached based on their child's presence in a volunteer teacher's classroom. If the parent chose to participate, their child automatically became part of the project. This cannot then be viewed as a random sample of the population. As well this research extended over two school years. It was therefore limited to the number of students forming the original grade seven sample at Site Alpha who then attended the secondary school the following year. Although these factors limit the extent to which these results can be generalized to different populations the conclusions may be useful in supporting the findings of other researchers.

F. Organization of the Thesis

Chapter II contains a review of the literature; it is divided into five sections: parent involvement, dropouts, transition, bonding

and withdrawal, and conclusion. Chapter III details the method of the study. The chapter begins with a description of the larger project, The Co-Production of Learning Project. It continues with a rationale for the transition substudy, describes the research design, follows with a description of the population sample, the instruments used to gather the data and the administration of the instruments. The chapter continues with a description of how the data was analyzed and concludes with a discussion of the problems associated with the data collection and analysis. Chapter IV presents the results of the analysis in two parts, quantitative findings and subgroup findings. Chapter V contains an examination and discussion of the results. In a final summary, implications and recommendations for parents and educators are explored.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In 1972, in response to a public outcry for accountability, the U. S. Department of Education began a national longitudinal study of the effects of schooling by collecting data on senior high graduates. This data was made available to educational researchers and became the precursor of a series of collections which led into the "High School and Beyond" (HSB) studies. The 1980 HSB study sampled 58,000 students, duplicating much of the earlier questions, attitude items and tests, but with at least one major difference. It included not only high school seniors (grade 12) but also sophomores (grade 10), to permit the study of dropouts. This important data set has been used by many educational researchers to examine and identify those variables that are deemed pertinent to student achievement and hence to effective schools (Coleman, 1987; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Fehrman et al., 1987; Walberg & Shanahan, 1983, Wehlage & Rutter, 1986).

Walberg and Shanahan (1983) used the data to determine the

relative importance of different factors that produce more effective schools. They found that the family has the greatest effect on student achievement (higher even than quantity of instruction which also has a strong association with student achievement).

Concurring with such assertions about the influence of the family, Liska and Reed (1985) challenge the underlying assumption of many social control theorists that children's detachment from school is the precursor of behaviour problems that lead to a lessening of parental attachment. Their study of 15 and 17 year old males found that lack of parental attachment to the child is the key variable in a cycle that leads to increased behaviour problems (such as interpersonal violence and vandalism) to school alienation and detachment.

Hill and Stafford found that "even before school age, the inputed value of parental care invested in children differs as much as five times from family to family. Such vast differences go a long way toward accounting for children's varying capacities to profit from schooling and other educative experiences" (cited in Walberg, 1984a, p. 397).

Considerable research in the United States, the United Kingdom

and Canada now links parent involvement with positive student, classroom and school outcomes (Barth, 1979; Dauber & Epstein, 1989; Fehrman et al., 1987; Mortimore et al., 1988; Rosenholtz, 1989; Walberg, 1984b).

Part I - Parent Involvement

A. Types of Parent Involvement

In an attempt to pinpoint which parent-related classroom and school practices have the greatest effect on improving student achievement and/or preventing some students from dropping out, recent research efforts have focused on defining the different forms of parent involvement and examining the effect of each type on student achievement. Epstein (1988) defines five types of parent involvement as:

1. Basic obligations of parents - a home environment that supports schooling
2. Basic obligations of schools - effective forms of

communication with parents

3. Parent involvement at school - parent help and support within the classroom and school
4. Parent involvement in learning activities at home - homework, tutoring, special assignments
5. Parent involvement in governance and advocacy - parent advisory councils.

Fullan (1991) lists four main forms of parent involvement. While concurring with Epstein's third, fourth and fifth types, he proposes home/community-school relations (e. g. communications) as the fourth type of parent involvement. Although researchers have called the forms of parent involvement by different terms, they are generally in agreement about the benefits of each type (Chavkin et al., 1989; Greenwood et al., 1991; Moles, 1982).

B. Parent Involvement in Instruction

Parent involvement activities can be generally divided into two categories based on the beneficiary: a) those activities

primarily aimed at overall school improvement and only indirectly at the parent's own child, e.g. fundraising and school governance, and b) those activities aimed at assisting one's own child, e.g. helping with homework, meeting with teachers.

Over the past decade researchers have found that direct parent involvement in instructional activities in the home and the classroom have the greatest influence on student achievement (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Fullan, 1982). Walberg (1984b) summarizes 29 controlled studies, and finds that differences in achievement between those students in cooperative parent/school programs and those students not in such programs, provide overwhelming support for those programs designed to improve the learning environment of the home. Parent instruction and home-based reinforcement improves the academic performance of children of all ability levels (Barth, 1979). Epstein's (1987) work has shown that parents who help their child with school work at home have increased interaction with the child as a student at home, support and encourage school work more and become participants in their child's education. In turn, these students exhibit more positive attitudes towards school. Bloom (cited in Henderson, 1988, p. 150)

shows that building a strong learning environment at home - including holding high expectations of success and encouraging positive attitudes towards education - powerfully affects student achievement. In the same article, Henderson (1988, p. 150) cites a study by Lazar & Darlington that shows that "young children whose backgrounds would place them 'at-risk' of failing outperform their friends for years if their parents are given training in home teaching."

Comer (1986) ties meaningful parent participation in elementary schools in lower income areas to dramatic positive changes in academic achievement, improved student (and teacher) attendance and reduced behaviour problems. Parents were involved in two ways: assisting in instructional activities in the classroom (paid or volunteer) and/or serving on a management team with school personnel. Parents helped create workshops for peer parents that explain the academic program of the school and how parents can help their children with learning activities outside the school.

In turn Dauber and Epstein (1989) found that the parents of academically weaker middle grade students invested less in helping their child (and the child spent less time on homework) than did the

parents of academically stronger students.

If children perceive the parent has an interest in their in-school activities and progress and is supportive of the school, the children achieve more in school (Walberg, 1984b). In one of the few secondary studies Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) found that parent attendance at school activities and events significantly correlated with school achievement. Fehrman, Keith and Reimer (1987) used student reports (HSB data, 1980) to study the correlation between student grades and the parents' monitoring of their child's daily activities, monitoring of school progress and planning for post high school. Not surprisingly, they discovered that these parental actions had an important direct effect on grades. These findings were confirmed by Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis and Ecob (1988, p. 255) who, in their search for the reasons why some schools were more effective than others, found that parent help in the classroom, educational visits and attendance at school meetings had a positive effect upon their children's learning. Walberg's synthesis of over 2,000 empirical studies of academic learning shows that parents "directly or indirectly influence the eight chief determinants of cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning...", including student

ability, student motivation, an academically stimulating home environment and a peer group with academic interests, goals, and activities (Walberg, 1984a, p. 398).

C. Consequences of Parent Involvement

Besides the positive effects parent involvement in student learning has on student achievement, there are a variety of other documented consequences. Greenwood (1991, p. 280) summarizes many of the positive outcomes:

student sense of well-being, improved student attendance, improved student and parent perceptions of classroom and school climate, positive student attitudes and behavior, student readiness to do homework, increased student time spent with parents, higher education aspirations among students and parents, and parent satisfaction with teachers.

Epstein (1982) shows that in classes of high teacher-perceived parent involvement students feel they are recognized by their teachers for more regular homework habits and for their parents' helpfulness. The students feel their parents have a greater awareness and involvement in their school work at home. Students

get their homework completed more often, have an improved self-concept as a learner and improve their skills while teachers have increasing respect and appreciation of parents' time and ability to follow through and reinforce learning.

However, not only students benefit from parent involvement. Parents develop more positive attitudes towards the teachers and school and generate more positive feelings within the school community towards the school. Comer and Haynes (1991) attribute a jump from about 7% to 83% in parent attendance at school activities to meaningful involvement of parents in their children's schooling. As well, Comer (1986) relates how many parents were "energized by their participation in the school and returned to school to finish their own education thereby becoming more positive role models for their children."

Teachers associated with parent involvement programs devote more time to teaching and are more likely to experiment and develop approaches that are more student-oriented (studies cited in Henderson, 1988, p. 151). Because they look for ways to involve all parents they are less likely to stereotype the less educated, poor and single parents as uncaring (Comer, 1986; Epstein and Dauber, 1991).

"At the school level, a comprehensive program for involving parents helps to create a positive school climate that ultimately affects all teachers' practices to involve parents of their students in the educational program each year" (Epstein & Dauber, 1991, p. 16).

D. Obstacles to Parent Involvement

Moles (1982) states that 90% of teachers from all over the United States and at all grade levels support increased home/school interaction. In their work, Epstein and Dauber (1991) found that almost all teachers express positive attitudes about parent involvement but few teachers or schools have a parent program in place beyond that of ritualistic parent-teacher conferences and parent advisory committees (see also Becker and Epstein, 1982).

Some parents indicate they do not know how to help their children with their homework and few teachers teach parents how to teach their children at home (Moles, 1982). In fact, most teachers probably do not have the preservice training to do so (Comer, 1986; Greenwood et al., 1991). Tangri and Leitch (cited in Moles, 1982)

identified a number of barriers in two inner city junior high schools.

Teachers reported competing home responsibilities, fears for their own safety at evening events, the perception that parents do not transmit educational values, feeling overwhelmed by the problems of their students and families, and low expectations regarding parents' follow-up of efforts. Some parents also reported a number of barriers including family health problems, work schedules, having small children, receiving only "bad news" from school, fears for their safety, late notice of meetings, and not understanding their children's homework (p. 46).

These findings are supported by Comer (1986) who also states that some parents experienced difficulties in school themselves and may be unwilling to become involved. He finds that perceived differences due to race, income and education between home and school may make the parent more reluctant to approach the school. Greenwood and Hickman (1991) believe some parents think that schools should be run by "the experts" while others think they do not have the skills or knowledge to help out in the classroom or on parent advisory bodies. Dauber and Epstein (1989) found a strong correlation between parent level of education and involvement at school and at home. This supports the finding of Stevenson and Baker (1987) that the higher the educational status of the mother, the greater the

degree of parental involvement in school activities: likewise the more involved the parents were in school the higher the achievement of the child (also Ekstrom et al., 1986).

Part II - Dropouts

Ainley, Foreman and Sheret (1991, p. 70) quote a number of studies that link parental encouragement of schooling with student continuance in school. They confirmed the link between parental expectations with student achievement and a satisfying school experience. Similarly, Mortimore (1990, p. 38) cites "mounting evidence that 'parental encouragement' is a significant factor in the experience of pupils who make a successful transition to secondary school". He found that parents of less successful students have less positive attitudes towards their child's schooling than do other parents and that their attitude to secondary school is likely to be strongly influenced by their attitude to elementary school. As well, Fantini (cited in Comer, 1986) ties parents' feelings of exclusion and isolation from the school with sending mixed messages to the child that in turn condones poorer school performance.

Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack and Rock (1986) analyzed the High School and Beyond Data Set (1980 and 1982) for the salient characteristics of the dropout population. They found that dropouts tend to come from homes with a weaker educational support system, are less likely to discuss their experiences with their parents and the parents are less likely to monitor their child's in-school and out-of-school activities. Dropouts get lower grades, do less homework, have lower educational expectations and have different concepts of self esteem, locus of control and life values than do the graduates. They appear to feel alienated from school life and tend to choose friends who are more alienated from school than are the friends of the graduates. They are less likely to feel they have any status in the school except as troublemakers - they are less likely to feel popular with other students, feel other students see them as good students, as athletes or as important (Ekstrom et al., 1986, p. 360).

Many researchers have found that dropouts are more likely than graduates to have skipped class (Barrington et al., 1989; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Mortimore, 1990; Sommer, 1985; Wehlage et al., 1986). Mortimore (1990, p. 31) found that "pupils' attendance was a more significant factor in their progress and adjustment to secondary

school than had been the case at primary school. Furthermore, poor primary attendance was a good predictor of vulnerability to post-transfer difficulties."

Barrington and Hendricks (1989) used a retrospective study in an attempt to identify key indicators in elementary school of future dropouts. With a high degree of accuracy they found dropouts can be identified in elementary school by negative teacher comments (grade three), a pattern of increasing absences (especially from grade five on), and a gradual increase in the number of failing grades (by grade seven). They conclude, "The high accuracy with which the elementary school data identified potential dropouts probably reflects family attitudes toward education. The elementary school student who is not in school is absent with the parent's knowledge and at least tacit consent. The parents who are uninterested in their children's attendance in elementary school, and probably their achievement, likely not only convey their values to the child, but also are willing to agree when the child later decides to leave high school" (p. 317).

Part III - Transition

According to Eccles and Midgley (1989), authors of an extensive literature review pertaining to adolescent development and the transition to high school, adolescence as a stage of life has been largely ignored and understudied until recently. They cite evidence that suggests that children's attitudes toward school and their own academic competence decline with age and this decline is most marked when they enter high school (p. 142; see also Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989, p. 13 and Harter et al., 1992, p. 778). Similarly, there is a decline in general self-esteem (p. 144) and achievement motivation (p. 159) over the transition. Children, confident of their academic abilities and intrinsically motivated, report less anxiety with their new environment than do students less confident and less intrinsically motivated, thus supporting the hypothesis that transition has a detrimental effect primarily on those who perceive themselves to be less academically able (Harter et al., 1992).

As well as changes in adolescents' beliefs and behaviours, there are changes in the academic environment pretransition to

posttransition. Eccles and Midgley (1989, p. 165) outline various studies that suggest that many young adolescents experience a decrease in autonomy and choice, an increase in teacher control and a decrease in the quality of their relationship with their teachers as they move into secondary school (see also Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989, p. 33, 54; Lee et al., 1983; Wehlage et al., 1986). Coleman, Collinge and Seifert (1992) found there is a strong correlation between how sixth and seventh grade students rate the school and their perception of student/teacher collaboration as reflected in such things as opportunities within the class to make suggestions about activities and the teacher's interest in hearing student's opinions. There is also growing evidence that students expect high school to be more difficult than it is and to require higher level skills and understanding than elementary school (Eccles et al., 1989, p. 171).

In their study on improving secondary transfer, Mortimore (1990) and his colleagues found poorer readers have more difficulty adjusting to secondary school than do better readers. These students also exhibit poorer attendance, have less positive self-concepts than do other students and are likely to report having fewer

friends than previously. As well, they do less homework, have a less positive attitude to school, are less likely to prefer different teachers for different subjects and are less likely to be involved in extra-curricular activities. This lack of satisfaction and participation bodes ill for these students. In their review of the literature relating to extracurricular participation and adolescent development, Holland and Andre (1987, p. 447) found:

The available research indicates that participation in extracurricular activities, including both athletic and nonathletic activities is positively correlated with desirable personality/social characteristics. Participation is associated with higher levels of self-esteem....male academic ability and grades, educational aspirations, feelings of control over one's life and lower delinquency rates.

Ishiyama and Chabassol (1985) explored success related fears and found that fear of academic success is higher among early adolescent (grades 7-9) than among mid-adolescent (grades 10-12). They link fear of academic success in early adolescence with studies that indicate that conformity and concerns about peer acceptance peak at ages 11 to 14. Their finding is confirmed by Juhasz (1989) who found friends assume greater importance for

seventh and eighth graders than they do for fifth and sixth graders.

O'Brien and Bierman (1988) conducted a study on peer influence with fifth, eighth and eleventh graders and found:

Preadolescents defined groups on the basis of common activities and social behavior....

Adolescents were more likely to describe peer group influences as global and far-reaching, affecting individual dress codes, illicit acts, attitudes, and values. ...older subjects were more likely to report peer reactions as important to their feelings of social or personal worth (p.1363).

In 1976, Tarr reported on friendships and groups in the high school.

Between 64 and 70 percent of the tenth graders indicated "visiting friends" and only 16 to 20 percent indicated "learning in class" is the most important activity of their school day. Like the students in O'Brien's and Bierman's study, Tarr's students identified groups of friends based on their looks using such descriptors as "greasers, jocks, socialites, brains, burnouts, freaks, straights, rah-rahs, and zoogies (a local label for social isolates)" (p. 2). He found that the two most common sources of new friendships were classes and extracurricular activities although the role of classes as an area of developing friendships is ambiguous as students chose courses largely based on what their friends were taking.

In 1989 the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development published the report of the Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents entitled Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century. According to this report "a volatile mismatch exists between the organization and curriculum of middle grade schools and the intellectual and emotional needs of young adolescents. Caught in a vortex of changing demands, the engagement of many youth in learning diminishes, and their rates of alienation, substance abuse, absenteeism, and dropping out of school begin to rise" (p. 8-9). However, not all youth experience problems with the transfer to a larger secondary school. In fact, Mortimore (1990, p. 48) found that for the majority of students the transition to secondary was not a negative experience and "was marked by a positive upturn in their attitudes towards schooling in general". Some of the moderating influences on the impact of transition may include the stability of one's friendship network, one's pretransition levels of self-esteem and confidence and family relationships and structure (Eccles et al., 1989, p. 156).

Part IV - Bonding and Withdrawal

In their study of at-risk students in fourteen U. S. schools, Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko and Fernandez (1989) identified the importance of social bonds that connect the student to the school. "A student is socially bonded to the extent that he or she is attached to adults and peers, committed to the norms of the school, involved in school activities and has belief in the legitimacy and efficacy of the institution" (p. 117). The researchers identify four common impediments to school membership: adjustment, difficulty, incongruence and isolation. First, the transition from elementary school to junior high places new demands on the student in a larger, more impersonal setting. Some students may have problems adjusting due to new peer groups, different teaching methods as well as more teachers with differing standards and expectations. Second, "Academic success in school work is essential if students are to become socially bonded to school" (p. 124). Difficulty in maintaining interest and effort is one cause of academic failure and ultimate alienation from the school. Three, incongruence is "the personal and social match between the student and institution" (p.

126). How well do the student's values, experiences and projected future match with the middle-class value structure of a school? Wehlage and his colleagues suggest that the closer the match the more likely the student is to be successful in school. And four, isolation from peers and, more especially, isolation from adults is important and related to family stability. In the Royal Commission on Education, Summary Report (Sullivan, 1988, p. 12) "new social forces have transformed the family from a stable social unit to a more fragile institution" reducing stability for students.

Finn (1989) proposes two dropout models describing the withdrawal process that some students go through: The Frustration-Self-Esteem Model and the Participation-Identification Model. The former model posits that lack of successful school outcomes for the student leads to reduced self-esteem which leads to problem behavior causing even less successful school outcomes. The cycle culminates in the student rejecting school or in being rejected by the school. The latter model proposes that a student's active participation in school and classroom activities leads to successful performance outcomes and then identification with the school. Students then participate in multiple, expanding forms of school

activities thus increasing their bonding with school. In contrast, a potential dropout would have decreasing participation, followed by less successful performance outcomes, lack of identification with the school and its values and therefore even less participation.

"Youngsters lacking the necessary encouragement at home may arrive at school predisposed to nonparticipation and nonidentification" (Finn, 1989, p. 130).

Liska and Reed's (1985) research finds there is a causal cyclic path from parent detachment to increasing delinquency (as defined by behaviour problems, interpersonal violence and vandalism) to school alienation to increased parent detachment. This finding supports an even greater need for schools to involve parents in a positive, three-way, longlasting relationship early in their children's school life. Barrington and Hendricks (1989) conclude in their study that "the high accuracy with which the elementary school data identified potential dropouts probably reflects family attitudes toward education" (p. 316) and that "dropout prevention programs should focus on the elementary school and should involve the parents as much as the students" (p. 318).

Part V - Conclusion

Ainley, Foreman and Sheret (1991, p. 72) found that "Only a small proportion of the literature has focused on factors in the early secondary years that might shape students' intentions to continue their schooling." The objective of this study is to examine those factors believed to affect a student's ability to bond to school just after they make the transition to secondary school, adding to this small body of research. Relationships with teachers, peers and family, as well as academic perceptions of the student, will be examined at this critical time.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The transition study, the focus of this research, is a substudy of the Co-Production of Learning Project being conducted over a number of years by doctoral and masters level students from Simon Fraser University. For purposes of clarity, the larger project, the Co-Production of Learning Project, will be discussed first, followed by a description of my substudy on the transition to secondary school, and the factors affecting bonding to the secondary school.

Part I - Co-Production of Learning Project

A. Rationale

The larger project emerged out of ongoing research based on school quality and effectiveness. Over the past decade there has been (and continues to be) an emphasis in educational research on

identifying those variables that lead to school quality. One of the avenues being explored is parent involvement, and the partnership of the triad of student, parent and teacher, in improving the child's chances of having a satisfactory school experience.

The purpose of the larger project is to identify the critical variables affecting collaboration between parents, teachers, and students, to develop a more collaborative relationship between parents, teachers, and students and, finally, to determine if a student's sense of identity with and participation in the school can be heightened through improved interactions between home and school; and whether this has any impact upon the transition to junior secondary school and potentially upon the dropout decision (Collinge and Coleman, 1992, p. 2).

B. Design

This project is a multi-year, multi-site intervention study examining various family influences on school quality. Phase I involved two districts in British Columbia, a number of elementary schools and a number of grade six and seven classrooms. Team members chose to use surveys and focussed interviews to investigate collaborative links between parents, students and

teachers. Within classrooms, parents and their children were asked to participate. This allowed the research team to form triads of parent, student and teacher. Data was gathered from each triad member on six to nine variables. This created a pool of data that all members of the project team could access to investigate his/her particular research question.

C. Data Collection

1. Sample

Students at the grade six and seven levels were chosen, in part because little research has been done on this age group in terms of parent involvement and, in part, because they form one end of the transition spectrum. Graduate students then approached the districts where they had school contacts and permission was gained to conduct research in the district (designated Site Alpha and Site Beta). At Site Alpha, the site of the transition study, a secondary school was selected based on its large number of feeder schools, the range of socioeconomic backgrounds of the students, the large area

from which it drew and its accessibility to the team members. The principal's consent was then gained to conduct the transition study the year following Phase I. From there the principal of each feeder school was contacted by a team member and permission requested to conduct the study with as many grade six and seven classroom teachers as were willing to participate. In some cases the principal enlisted the help of the teachers and in others, the principal had the team members speak to the teachers, by phone or in person, independently of the principal. Once a teacher had agreed to participate an informational letter and consent form (Appendix A) was sent home via each child in the class. The parent then signed for themselves and their child to participate; either fully (interview, questionnaire and workshop) or partially (questionnaire and interview). It is important to note that care was taken to ensure the sample was representative of schools in B. C. Urban and rural schools took part, as well as participants from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds.

In the school year 1990/1991, a total of twelve classrooms from two school districts completed Phase I of this research: seven classrooms in five schools from Site Alpha and five classrooms in

two schools from Site Beta. This brought the total number of volunteer participants to: twelve teachers, 187 parents and a total of 187 grade six and seven students. This sample represents a broad range of socioeconomic groupings. All team members in the original project were involved in some way with collecting data from these school sites during Phase I while the collection of the transition data remained the responsibility of the author. For a description of the schools involved in the larger project see Collinge and Coleman (1992).

2. Instrumentation

Likert-type survey instruments and focussed interviews were chosen as the data collection devices for the Co-Production of Learning Project. Three survey instruments were developed; one for parents, one for students and one for teachers.

The student questionnaire consisted of 51 items that grouped into the seven variables under investigation which were thought to be critical to developing a collaborative partnership between parent, student and teacher. Students chose responses on a five point scale

from agree strongly (1), agree (2), not sure (3), disagree (4) and disagree strongly (5). All surveys contained an additional item asking the participant to rate the school on a nine point scale (1 being very poor and 9 being excellent).

Interviews were conducted with a randomly selected sample of the student and parent populations, stratified by classroom, and all teachers.

Anonymity was ensured for all participants by having surveys returned in sealed envelopes and by developing and using a number coding system on all surveys and transcribed interviews. Coleman, Collinge and Seifert (1992) describe the survey instruments used in the larger study.

3. Administration

The surveys were administered twice during Phase I of the study: once in the fall of 1990 (Time 1) and again in the spring of 1991. Student surveys were administered by the classroom teacher. Parent surveys were distributed to the students who delivered them to their parents and, when completed, returned them to the school.

Parents and students were also interviewed twice at approximately the same time as the surveys were administered.

D. Problems with Data Collection and Analysis

There were some problems experienced with the data collection and analysis. At least one principal in the Co-Production of Learning Project applied some pressure for the teachers in his school to participate. This became obvious when appointments with his teachers were unmet and survey deadlines passed. The effect of the Principal's enthusiasm for the Project may have had an effect on teacher participation. Another problem occurred when parents volunteered for differing levels of involvement in the Co-Production of Learning Project and then did not carry through.

Part II - Transition Substudy

A. Rationale

A review of the literature indicates that: a) parent involvement in the upper elementary and junior secondary years is little studied; b) bonding to the school as indicated by participation and identification with the school's values and goals likely has its beginnings in elementary school and may be a determining factor in whether a child continues his/her schooling to graduation; c) transition to secondary school is a critical time in the schooling of some children.

The primary purpose of this transition substudy of the Co-Production of Learning Project is to investigate whether students who bond to their elementary school carry a similar propensity to bond to their secondary school. A secondary purpose is to examine eight factors that are believed to affect a student's bonding to his/her secondary school and to investigate whether these change in the first four months of secondary school. The final purpose is to investigate whether there are any notable differences between the

attitudes and behaviours of those students who are more or less bonded to the secondary school. Mortimore (1990, p. 12) found "there is evidence of a 'honeymoon period', immediately after transfer, during which pupils' attitudes to school are generally very positive. This honeymoon period may actually mask some of the coping problems that children experience when making the transition from primary school." It is expected that there will be identifiable differences in some of the attitudes and behaviours between those students who rate their secondary school high and those who rate the school low.

B. Design

This is a quantitative, correlational study focussing on the attitudinal outcomes of the schooling process and the forces, internal and external to the school, which are felt to contribute to bonding to the secondary school. No adequate Canadian measures were found, therefore an instrument was developed based on a review of pertinent literature, the questionnaires used in Phase I of the larger project and the personal and professional experiences of

the author. Finn's (1989) model of Identification-Participation is used as the conceptual basis of this study. Finn postulates that bonding is a developmental process whereby student participation in school activities, social, academic and extra-curricular promotes a successful school experience which, in turn, increases the student's identification with the goals of schooling. Eight factors (labelled predictor variables, see Table 1) believed to influence those attitudinal outcomes, and thus student bonding, were determined and a number of questions were developed for each variable to assess the degree to which they applied to each participant. Three of the variables were chosen to evaluate the academic attitudes of the students. Perception of academic ability (examples, 'I can achieve good marks', 'I have frequently had difficulty...'), pursuit of intellectual growth (example, 'doing well is important to me') and changing personal responsibility (example, 'seeking help outside of class time', 'staying home when not really ill') formed three scales to evaluate the identification of the student with school-related goals. Another five variables were chosen to examine participation in school activities and events, feelings of belonging and relationships between the student and his/her parents, teachers and

friends.

Table 1: Predictor Variables and Number of Items Forming Each Scale

<u>Predictor Variables</u>		<u>ITEMS</u>
<u>Academic Attitude Variables</u>		
Scale 1	Changing Personal Responsibility	10
Scale 2	Pursuit of Intellectual Growth	7
Scale 3	Perception of Academic Ability	7
<u>Climate Variables</u>		
Scale 4	Sense of Participation and Belonging	14
Scale 5	Peer Group Expectations	9
Scale 6	Student-Teacher Relationship	8
Scale 7	Parent-Student Comm. School	7
Scale 8	Parent Assistance and Support	6

*See Appendix B and C for the items used in the analysis.

Students were asked to rate the school on a nine point scale "as a place for you to learn" (see Appendix C). The rating the student gave the secondary school is the dependent variable in the study and is used as a measure of the student's bonding to the school. "It seems reasonable to argue that how students rate the climate and the quality of the school will, in large part, determine the degree to which they will accept the school's values and participate in its activities, academic and otherwise. Student ratings of school

constitute a defensible measure of school bonding that might serve as an early warning system for identifying at-risk students" (Coleman, Collinge and Siefert, 1992, p. 3). The data will be subjected to analysis using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha to check the internal validity of each scale. The data will be further analyzed using correlational techniques and stepwise multiple regression analysis.

Finally, the participants will be divided into three subgroups based on their rating of the secondary school. Those who rate the school high will form one subgroup of the original population and those who rate the school low will form another subgroup. (The middle group will not be used for further analysis.) Mean scores for the variables as well as individual items will be compared for notable differences between the two remaining rater subgroups.

Volunteers are used exclusively throughout this study. The students taking part in this transition substudy were volunteered the previous year while in grade 7 by their parents. Caution must be used when interpreting the results obtained from a survey conducted with volunteer participants (Borg and Gall, 1989, p. 227-231).

However, care was taken to ensure the sample is representative of

the general population. Borg and Gall (1989) is used as the statistical and research design reference text throughout this study.

C. Data Collection

1. Sample

This substudy focussed on the fifty-nine participants in the Co-Production of Learning Project who entered grade eight at the target secondary school in September 1991. These students, coming from four different classrooms in four different elementary schools in Site Alpha, had participated in Phase I of the project during their grade seven year. Their parents signed permission forms for their child's participation while in grade seven (see Appendix A).

To gain some understanding of the schools and the students who form the survey sample, Site Alpha and those school sites relevant to the transition study are briefly described. Site Alpha is a large, interior district with numerous elementary schools (grades K-7, ranging from 20 to 450 students) planned on the neighbourhood-school model. There are five large secondary schools (grades 8 -12,

from 850 to 1600 students) and three junior secondary schools (grades 8 -10, from 350 to 500 students) situated within thirty minutes of the Central Administration Offices. As well, there are three outlying, smaller communities with their own secondary and elementary schools. The population within the district is a combination of urban (commercial, service and resource based employment) and rural (farming).

The participant secondary school has approximately 1100 students in grades 8 through 12 with a total of eleven feeder schools. About half the student population is bussed to the school, some from great distance. The parents and students are very supportive of the school and there is a relatively low turnover of teachers. The school is situated about twenty minutes from the main city centre and is geographically isolated by the convergence of two rivers. The average income of the private household in this area is just above the provincial average but the socioeconomic status of this population ranges from the wealthiest to the poorest. Daily attendance at the school remains fairly constant, close to 95%, and withdrawal rates have been decreasing over the past four years in grades 8 - 10 while maintaining in grades 11 and 12. The school is

noted for its athletic teams and has little difficulty getting teacher or community coaches and sponsors. Upon entering secondary school students are assigned alphabetically by surname to one of eight grade level homerooms. The homerooms meet only briefly at the beginning of the year to accomplish administrative duties such as collecting fees and issuing timetables. After the first week there is no homeroom and students meet in their eight subject classes. There is no ability grouping at this grade level in this school and students are assigned on a random basis to subject specific classes. Class composition may be influenced, however, by the student's choice of an elective, such as band, which tends to group these students into specific sections of the core courses. Honours and minimum essentials courses are offered from grade nine to graduation.

The four elementary feeder schools involved in the transition study will also be described in a general way. School A contributed fourteen grade seven students to the study. The school has a French Immersion track as well as an English speaking component. The French programme serves students from outside the attendance area and the English track serves the students from the neighbourhood.

The students come from a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds (low to medium). While the area in which the school is located is mostly residential it includes a highway commercial area relatively close to the school. Because of the bussing of the French students and the merging of the boundaries of this school with those of School B and the secondary school, there is not the feeling of community that is present in some of the other schools in the study.

School B contributed seventeen grade seven students to the study. The area around the school is solidly middle class residential, with some of the most exclusive housing in the city. Educators form a high proportion of the population. The 350 students walk to school and the parent group is knowledgeable and demanding. The staff has been fairly stable over the past few years and the school has a good reputation with its community.

School C, a small, rural school, contributed nine grade seven students to the study. This school is the focus of a very tightly knit community that is isolated both from the main city centre and the secondary school. Many of the community members operate hobby farms and/or commute to jobs in the city (approximately thirty kilometres away). Most students are bussed to the elementary

school and all students in grades 8 - 12 from this area are bussed to the secondary school.

School D contributed fifteen students to my study. The school is bounded by farms, a residential area and the main highway with about half the students being bussed to the school. Over the years this school has become known for its strong parent advisory group. The students come from low to middle socioeconomic backgrounds.

All four elementary schools and the secondary school in this study are located north of the main population centre and are somewhat distinct from the main community due to isolation by two rivers. All of the schools, except for School C, share attendance area boundaries with each other and/or the secondary school.

In the final analysis the responses of fifty-five participants were used. By December of 1991 one participant had moved out of the district, one student filled in "not sure" for all the choices and two chose not to continue to participate.

2. Instrumentation

Likert-scaled questionnaires were also developed for

surveying the students in secondary school. The questionnaires had 68 questions with five response choices for each question: agree strongly (1), agree (2), not sure (3), disagree (4) and disagree strongly (5). Factors that were felt to influence transition and student bonding to the school were discussed by four of the original team members. The author chose eight variables (or scales) to be investigated and devised questions to gain data in these categories. The variables chosen and the items created drew from Phase I surveys, an interpretation of the literature, and the personal and professional experiences of the author with input from three project team members. The first transition survey (see Appendix D) was administered the first week of secondary school and the internal validity of the items was checked using Cronbach's Alpha. From T.Q. 1 to T. Q. 2, the verb tense of each of the questions was changed from a future orientation to a present orientation. For example, question #3 (T.Q.1) changed from: "I expect my grade 8 teachers will give us opportunities to make suggestions for activities in the class." to question #3 (T.Q.2): "My grade 8 teacher gives us opportunities to make suggestions for activities in the class." An additional item asking the students to rate the secondary school on a

9-point scale was also added to transition questionnaire 2.

3. Administration

The first transition questionnaire was administered during the first week of school in September 1991 by homeroom teachers to all students who had participated in the Co-Production of Learning Project the previous school year. The questionnaires were distributed, completed, collected and sealed in individual envelopes and coded using the same numbering system as in Phase I of the Co-Production of Learning Project. The second transition survey was administered on the same basis as the first transition questionnaire except by classroom math teachers to the participant students in December 1991. No students were absent for the first round of the transition data collection. Those students who were absent for the second administration of the survey were called together one lunch hour to complete the surveys and all but four surveys were completed, yielding a total of 55 participants who provided complete data.

D. Data Analysis - Quantitative

1. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

Analyses were conducted using SPSS on a mainframe computer. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to verify the internal consistency of the scales on the first transition survey. With marginal improvements the items were judged adequate by accepted standards for further analysis. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was also used to verify the internal consistency of the scales in the second transition survey. On this analysis however, the scale 'student's perception of the parent's ability to provide assistance' did not meet accepted standards and therefore was not subjected to further analysis. The remaining seven scales were judged adequate for further analysis (see Table 2).

2. Correlation Matrix

Mean scale scores were calculated for each participant in both transition surveys. Three correlation matrices were prepared. The

first matrix examined associations between the mean scale scores from transition survey 1 (September, 1991). A second correlation matrix examined associations between mean scale scores as well as the rating of the school obtained from transition survey 2 (December, 1991). A third matrix compared the mean scale scores from transition 1 to those obtained four months later on transition 2. This matrix included a correlation between the students' rating of elementary school (grade 7 - December, 1990) and their rating of secondary school (grade 8 - December, 1991).

3. Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression is a multivariate technique for determining the correlation between a criterion variable and a combination of two or more predictor variables (Borg and Gall, 1989, p. 601). It is used to examine the relationship between the bonding variable, rating of the secondary school, and seven predictor variables.

E. Data Analysis - Subgroups

In order to explore differences between those bonded to the school and those less bonded to the school, the students, based on their rating of the secondary school, are divided into three subgroups: high raters, middle raters and low raters. Differences between, and changes of, the mean scale scores for each predictor variable are examined for the two groups. As well, the mean score for each item was charted with differences between, and changes in, the mean item scores noted between the two groups at Time 1 (T.Q. 1) and Time 2 (T.Q. 2).

F. Problems with the Data Collection and Analysis

To improve the generalizability of the findings a parallel transition survey was to be administered at Site Beta during the same time period and the results pooled for use by both researchers. However, the graduate student coordinating the administering and collection of the survey at Site Beta changed the focus of her research over the summer.

As well, the students were originally volunteered by their parents in elementary school at a time when most parents and the teacher were also part of the project. Even at this point, it became obvious that a very small number of students did not want to participate. However, the inclination toward nonparticipation may well have been greater in secondary school when the students involved in the project were a minority and their parents were no longer involved.

In terms of the analysis, one of the scales, parent assistance and support, did not meet accepted standards using Cronbach's Alpha.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Findings of this study will be reported in two sections:

General Quantitative Findings and Subgroup Findings. These sections will be further subdivided into categories that report the findings associated with each of the thesis questions.

Part I - General Quantitative Findings

The responses to two administrations of Likert-scaled questionnaires clustered into testable variables (also called scales) and the variables were analyzed for internal validity using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Once the validity had been established, mean scores were calculated for each variable and three correlation matrices were formed: predictor variables (Time 1) against each other, dependent variable and predictor variables (Time 2) against each other, and rating of elementary school with predictor variables (Time 1) against rating of secondary school with

predictor variables (Time 2). To investigate the relationships between various predictor variables and the dependent variable, further analysis was conducted using stepwise multiple regression.

A. Variable Analysis

Table 2 presents the variables (scales) used in the study, one example of the type of item forming the scale, the number of items used in the analyses of the scale, and Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for each scale used in the study. The scales are marginally acceptable. One scale, parent ability to offer academic assistance and support was deleted entirely from further analysis as it proved invalid. In hindsight, the items forming the scale measure different student attitudes and perceptions and are therefore ill-defined and open to differing interpretations by the student. As well, the scales 'peer group expectations' and 'parent-student communication about school matters' are not as strong as one would wish. Possible reasons for this will be suggested in Chapter 5.

Table 2: Predictor Variables

<u>Predictor Variable</u>	<u>Example of an Item</u>	<u>Number of Items</u>	<u>Time1 Alpha</u>	<u>Time2 Alpha</u>
Scale 1: Changing Personal Responsibility (PR)	It doesn't bother me if I am a day or two late handing in an assignment	7	0.68	0.63
Scale 2: Pursuit of Intellectual Growth (PIG)	Doing well in school is important to me	5	0.66	0.61
Scale 3: Perception of Academic Ability (PAA)	I can achieve good marks if I do my homework	7	0.67	0.74
Scale 4: Sense of Participation and Belonging (SPB)	I feel like I "fit in" at KRSS	9	0.70	0.68
Scale 5: Peer Group Expectations (PGE)	My friends stay home from school when they are not really sick	6	0.69	0.42
Scale 6: Student-Teacher Relationship (STR)	I expect my grade 8 teachers will give us opportunities to make suggestions for activities in class	8	0.76	0.62
Scale 7: Parent-Student Communication about School (PSC)	I will let my parent(s) know what homework I have	7	0.53	0.57
Elementary Rating		1		

Table 3 presents the correlations of the scales at Time 1, entrance to secondary school. This shows strong correlations ($p < .05$) between all of the variables except parent-student communications about school and peer group expectations, the two

weakest scales in terms of reliability. Note especially the strong correlations ($p < .001$) between perception of academic ability and all the other predictor variables; in particular, pursuit of intellectual growth ($r = 0.70$), sense of participation and belonging ($r = 0.66$) and changing personal responsibility ($r = 0.62$).

Table 3: Correlation Matrix, Time 1

	Academic Attitude				Climate		
	PR1	PIG1	PAA1	SPB1	PGE1	STR1	PSC1
PR1	1.00						
PIG1	0.74***	1.00					
PAA1	0.62***	0.70***	1.00				
SPB1	0.47***	0.57***	0.66***	1.00			
PGE1	0.32**	0.38**	0.45***	0.54***	1.00		
STR1	0.53***	0.55***	0.55***	0.30*	0.30*	1.00	
PSC1	0.53***	0.47***	0.51***	0.34**	0.11	0.51***	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

In general, there appears to be strong associations between the academic attitude variables and the remainder of the predictor variables. Two climate correlations also prove significant ($p < .001$): peer group expectations against sense of participation and belonging ($r = .54$) and parent-student communication about school matters against student-teacher relationship ($r = .51$).

B. Changing Expectations

Table 4 presents the correlations between the rating of elementary school (R.E.) and the scales (Time 1, vertical) against the rating of secondary school (R.S.) and the scales (Time 2, horizontal).

Table 4: Correlation Matrix, Time 1 to Time 2

	R.S.	Academic Attitude				Climate		
		PR2	PIG2	PAA2	SPB2	PGE2	STR2	PSC2
R.E.	0.47***	-0.16	-0.16	-0.16	-0.18	-0.10	-0.36**	-0.27*
PR1	-0.23*	0.43***	0.39**	0.53***	0.34**	0.49***	0.22	0.26*
PIG1	-0.10	0.39**	0.46***	0.50***	0.43***	0.18	0.22	0.22
PAA1	-0.04	0.17	0.23*	0.41***	0.31*	0.09	0.02	0.23*
SPB1	-0.07	0.30*	0.33**	0.38**	0.45***	0.26*	0.17	0.18
PGE1	0.06	0.27*	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.51***	0.17	0.00
STR1	-0.06	0.22	0.16	0.25*	0.22	0.04	0.13	0.18
PSC1	-0.12	0.16	0.18	0.33**	0.16	-0.02	0.17	0.42***

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

There is a strong correlation between the rating given by the student to elementary school and that given secondary school ($r=.47$, $p<.001$).

As well, there are strong correlations ($p<.001$) between the scale rating at Time 1 and the same scale at Time 2; for example, pursuit of intellectual growth 1 and pursuit of intellectual growth 2 ($r=.46$, $p<.001$). This suggests that the scales are stable over time and hence are valid and reliable measures. In particular, note the

associations between the academic attitude variables Time 1 to Time 2. This suggests that the attitudes students bring to secondary school predict those later in the year.

The notable lack of correlation between student-teacher relationship, Time 1 and Time 2, requires further investigation.

C. Factors Affecting Bonding

Table 5 presents the correlation of the dependent variable, rating of secondary school, and the predictor variables, as well as the associations of the predictor variables at Time 2.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix, Time 2

	Academic Attitude				Climate			
	RS	PR2	PIG2	PAA2	SPB2	PGE2	STR2	PSC2
RS	1.00							
PR2	-0.14	1.00						
PIG2	-0.30*	0.61***	1.00					
PAA2	-0.36**	0.51***	0.69***	1.00				
SPB2	-0.30*	0.39**	0.45***	0.66***	1.00			
PGE2	-0.20	0.49***	0.23*	0.39**	0.40**	1.00		
STR2	-0.34**	0.27*	0.28*	0.37**	0.28*	0.34**	1.00	
PSC2	-0.32**	0.40**	0.44***	0.48***	0.35**	0.27*	0.38**	1.00

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

The rating of the secondary school is significantly correlated with

five of the predictor variables, most notably perception of academic ability ($r=-.36$, $p<.01$), student-teacher relationship ($r=-.34$, $p<.01$) and parent-student communication about school ($r=-.32$, $p<.01$).

(Note the correlation values are negative here because on the questionnaire the dependent variable, rating of school, has 1 = poor to 9 = excellent while the questionnaire items are worded 1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree).

Associations between the predictor variables are all significant ($p<.05$). Note particularly the significant correlations between the student's perception of academic ability and four other predictor variables: a student's sense of participation and belonging ($r=.66$, $p<.001$), pursuit of intellectual growth ($r=.69$, $p<.001$), changing personal responsibility ($r=.51$, $p<.001$) and parent-student communications about school ($r=.48$, $p<.001$).

Referring to Table 3 and Table 5, note the strong, stable correlations (all $p<.001$) over time between two academic attitude measures, pursuit of intellectual growth and perception of academic ability, with two climate measures, sense of participation and belonging and parent-student communication about school matters.

Stepwise multiple regressions using SPSS Release 4.0 were

conducted to examine the relationships between the dependent variable, rating of the secondary school, and the predictor variables. "Multiple linear regression is a statistical technique for exploring the strength of relationships between several independent variables (singly or in combination) and one dependent variable" (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 346). The best predictor variable associated with the rating of secondary school is rating of elementary school ($r=.47$, $p<.001$) and, is therefore, entered first into the multiple regression. This analysis (see Table 6) found that the students' rating of the elementary school accounts for 22% of the variance ($p<.05$) in their

Table 6: Stepwise Multiple Regression of Predictor Variables on Student's Rating of Secondary School

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Beta</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient(r)</u>	<u>Multiple Correlation (R)</u>	<u>R²</u>	<u>R² Increment</u>
Dependent: Rating of secondary school					
Predictors:					
1. Rating of elementary school	.47	.47	.47	.22	
2. Perception of academic ability	.29	-.36	.55	.30	.08

rating of the secondary school with perception of academic ability accounting for a further 8% ($p<.05$). None of the remaining predictor

variables added significantly to the amount of variance in the rating of secondary school.

Finally, stepwise multiple regressions were conducted to examine the components contributing to students' perception of academic ability, the only attitude variable which predicted the students' rating of the secondary school. This analysis (see Table 7) suggests that:

- a. perception of academic ability is a function of:
 - i. pursuit of intellectual growth (47% of variance, $p < .05$), and,
 - ii. parent-student communication about school (an additional 4% of variance, $p < .05$).

- b. perception of academic ability is a function of:
 - i. sense of participation and belonging (43% of variance, $p < .05$), and,
 - ii. parent-student communication about school (an additional 7% of variance, $p < .05$).

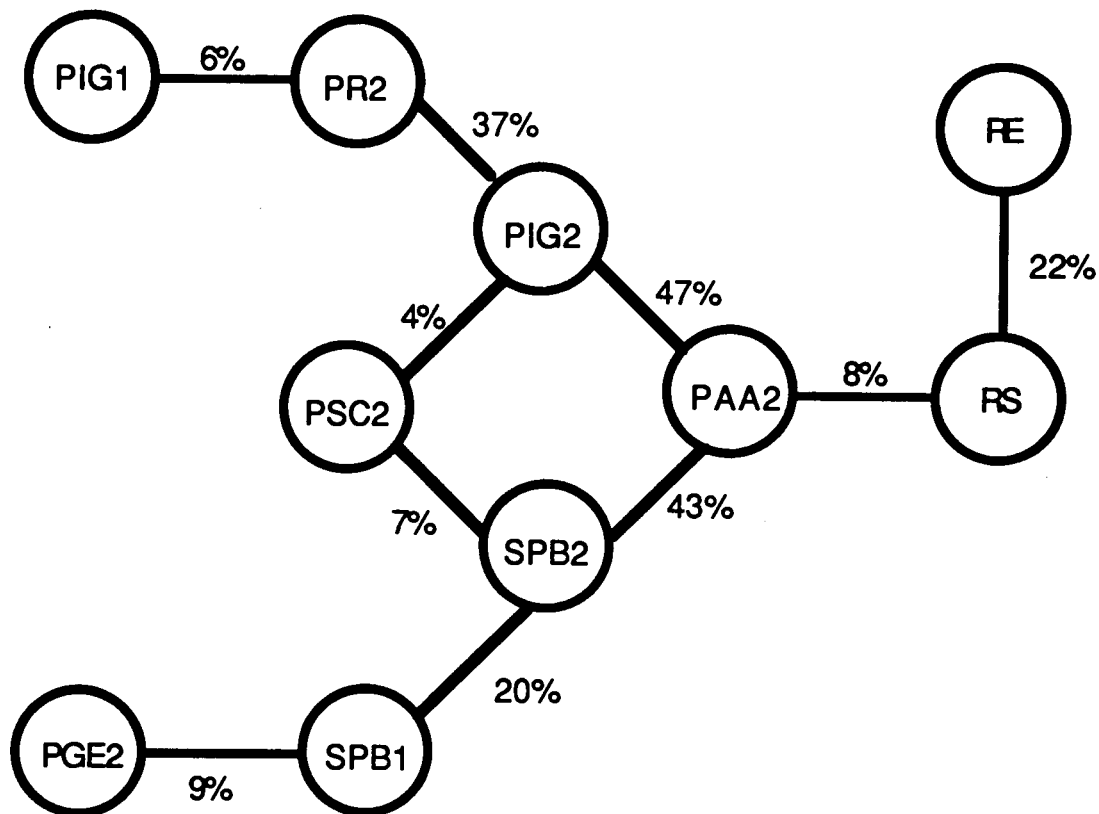
- c. students' sense of participation and belonging is a function of:
 - i. their sense of participation and belonging at the very beginning of secondary school (20% of variance, $p < .05$), and,
 - ii. their peer group expectations (an additional 9% variance, $p < .05$).

- d. pursuit of intellectual growth is a function of:
 - i. changing personal responsibility (37% of variance, $p < .05$), and,
 - ii. pursuit of intellectual growth at the beginning of the school year (an additional 6% variance, $p < .05$).

Table 7: Stepwise Multiple Regression of Predictor Variables on Perception of Academic Ability

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Beta</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient (r)</u>	<u>Multiple Correlation (R)</u>	<u>R²</u>	<u>R² Increment</u>
1. Dependent: Perception of academic ability²					
Predictors:					
a. Pursuit of intellectual growth ²	.69	.69	.69	.47	
b. Parent-student communication about school ²	.22	.48	.71	.51	.04
2. Dependent: Perception of academic ability²					
Predictors:					
a. Sense of participation and belonging ²	.66	.66	.66	.43	
b. Parent-student communication about school ²	.28	.48	.71	.50	.07
3. Dependent: Sense of participation and belonging²					
Predictors:					
a. Sense of participation and belonging ¹	.45	.45	.45	.20	
b. Peer group expectations ²	.31	.40	.54	.29	.09
4. Dependent: Pursuit of intellectual growth²					
Predictors:					
a. Changing personal responsibility ²	.61	.61	.61	.37	
b. Pursuit of intellectual growth ¹	.27	.46	.66	.43	.06

For clarity, the results of the regression analysis are summarized in Figure 1.



Legend

- PAA Perception of Academic Ability
- PGE Peer Group Expectations
- PIG Pursuit of Intellectual Growth
- PR Changing Personal Responsibility
- PSC Parent Student Communication about School Matters
- FE Rating of Elementary School
- RS Rating of Secondary School
- SPB Sense of Participation and Belonging

Figure 1: Summary of Regression Analysis

Part II - Subgroup Findings

Three subgroups of students were formed from the sample and two of them were examined more closely for attitudes that might point to differences between those students who rate the school high and those who rate the school low. The five students who rated the secondary school as 9 on the 9-point scale formed the first group, called the high raters. The six students who rated the secondary school 5 or less formed the second group, called the low raters.

Table 8 presents the mean scale scores for the sample (N=55) and the two subgroups, high raters (N=5) and low raters (N=6).

Table 8: Mean Scale Scores: Whole Group, High Raters, Low Raters

Attitude Scales	TIME 1			TIME 2		
	W.G.	HIGH	LOW	W.G.	HIGH	LOW
Scale1 RP	1.938	1.629	2.071	2.140	2.686	2.343
Scale2 PIG	1.782	1.640	1.833	2.098	2.400	2.223
Scale3 PAA	2.026	1.743	2.167	2.078	2.029	2.357
Climate Scales						
Scale4 SPB	2.204	2.060	2.133	2.378	2.300	2.567
Scale5 PGE	2.077	2.067	2.111	2.315	2.367	2.445
Scale6 STR	2.498	2.450	2.479	2.744	2.625	2.938
Scale7 PTC	2.147	1.914	2.229	2.405	2.286	2.857

***p < .001

A. Changing Expectations

In general, the mean scale scores for the whole group and both high raters and low raters indicate less agreement with the item statements forming the scales in December than when first surveyed in September. Some of the changes are noteworthy mainly because they occur in different scales for the two subgroups.

1. The High Raters Subgroup

In particular the high raters subgroup show notable change in mean scale scores on two academic attitude variables: changing personal responsibility and pursuit of intellectual growth. All but one of the items forming the scale changing personal responsibility produce less agreement on the second administration than on the first. Item 51, for example "My parent(s) expect me to be more responsible for my own work" has a mean value of 1.4 at Time 1 indicating fairly strong agreement with the statement. However, at Time 2 the mean value of the item for this group is 2.8 moving into a

much more uncertain position. As well, all of the five items forming the scale pursuit of intellectual growth indicate a shift to less agreement at Time 2 for the high raters. For example, item 40 "I like studying many different subjects...." has a mean value of 1.4 in September and 2.4 in December. Two of the students chose the same response both times, with 3 students moving in a less positive direction.

2. The Low Raters Subgroup

In contrast, the low raters group show notable change from Time 1 to Time 2 in mean scale scores on three of the climate variables: sense of participation and belonging, student-teacher relationship and parent-student communication about school matters. For this subgroup all but one of the items forming the scale sense of participation and belonging show less agreement at Time 2 than Time 1. Those items, such as participation, volunteering and "fitting in" show much less agreement. At the beginning of grade 8 the low raters group indicate a willingness to volunteer around the school. By December, they are much less likely

to volunteer. Within the scale student-teacher relationship all but two of the items show less agreement later in the year. For instance, the low raters are less able than they had expected, to develop a relationship with the teacher. The third climate scale showing notable change for the low raters is parent-student communication about school matters. All of the items forming this scale show less agreement in December than the students expected in September. In particular, in September, the low raters believe they will tell their parents about the school, their homework and their feelings towards the school. They are much more uncertain about this in December. Likewise, it is less likely than they expected that this subgroup of students tell their parents of special events and activities at the school. As well, in their view, their parents are less likely to attend parent-teacher interviews than expected in September.

B. Differences Between High Raters and Low Raters

In general, the mean item scores for the high raters subgroup indicate more positive school feelings, friendship nets and parent-

student-teacher interactions than do the mean item scores for either the whole sample or the low raters subgroup.

In particular, notable differences in mean item scores for high raters and low raters occur within the following academic attitude scales: changing personal responsibility and perception of academic ability. The high raters feel confident they can ask the teacher for help outside the classroom while the low raters are uncertain not only about how they feel about asking for extra help but also in their perception of how the teacher might feel. The high raters indicate in December they are more likely to feign sickness and stay home than the low raters do. They worry about being late to school less than do the low raters group and, while indicating in September that their parents expect them to be more responsible for their own work, they become increasingly uncertain about this in December. In their perception of academic ability, the high raters feel that the work they are doing in school makes them smarter while the low raters are uncertain.

Notable differences are also found in some mean item scores between high raters and low raters in all four climate variables. The high raters tend to be comfortable dealing with several teachers

when they enter secondary school and four months later. While the whole group increases in comfort level over the four months, the low rater group feels a decrease in their comfort level about having several grade 8 teachers. Although one student in the high rater group feels very strongly that he/she can not talk to any of the grade 8 teachers about personal problems and feels the teachers do not care about his/her feelings, in general, the remainder of the high raters group feel positive about the grade 8 teachers both in September and four months later. However, the low rater group is uncertain about the teachers upon entering grade 8 and even more negative four months later.

In terms of participation and belonging, the high raters indicate that they "fit in" to the school and that they enjoy grade 8 when they arrive in September and about the same four months later. The low raters are less likely to feel they "fit in" and are less likely to enjoy grade 8 as time passes.

Differences between the two groups are also noted in terms of communication with parents. While high raters consistently feel it is important to talk to their parents about school events and activities, the low raters move into a less likely mode over time.

As well, high raters communicate with their parents about their feelings about the school and if they are having problems in the classroom. On the other hand, the low raters become more uncertain about communication with their parents and more uncertain about their parents' views of the school as time goes on.

Finally, in terms of their friendships, the high raters indicate their friends are likely to try out for school teams while the low raters are uncertain if their friends are trying out or not. Friends become more important to the high raters by December. In September, the high raters are uncertain or strongly disagree with the statement "my friends are more important than my learning". By December only one high rater disagrees with that statement, most are now uncertain and one strongly agrees with the statement. In contrast the low raters group shows little movement over time from their initial position of disagree.

CHAPTER 5

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS

Schools in British Columbia in the 1990's face unprecedented educational, social, economic, political and legal challenges (real or perceived). The Educational Change (formerly Year 2000) initiatives, drafted by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia as a result of the Sullivan Commission (1988), have had great impact, and continue to impact the classroom, schools and teachers with changing philosophies, teaching strategies, evaluation techniques and reporting to parents. Parents have been given the right to greater access to, and say in, their child's schooling. The School Act of British Columbia has mandated the inclusion of all students into their neighbourhood schools, regardless of the severity of any disability: learning, physical or behavioural. Teachers, administrators and, in some cases, parents are attempting to develop educational programs to fit the individual needs of dual diagnosis children, runaways, children of split families, children living on their own, emotionally and physically abused children,

attention deficit disorder children and fetal alcohol syndrome children, to name a few. Sullivan (1988) summarized the situation facing schools in the Royal Commission on Education, "...agencies (of government), all of which operate within their own resource limitations, have defined their own responsibilities in ways that require the school to assume a greater social service role."

In order to have a chance of creating more effective schools, during times of decreasing funding and increasing expectations, we need to identify those manipulable classroom and school practices that yield the greatest success for students and implement processes to share the information about the more successful practices with parents, students and teachers. "As efforts continue concerning means of improving high school student academic achievement, parents and students need to give attention to those variables that research indicates promote academic learning. It is also important that attention be given to those variables that parents, schools, and students can manipulate, versus those that cannot be controlled easily (e.g., ability, gender, family background) (Fehrman et al., 1987, p. 336).

This substudy on the transition period and factors believed to

affect bonding to the school grew out of a larger project on parent involvement, school effectiveness and quality schools being conducted by doctoral and masters level students at Simon Fraser University. Finn's (1989) Model of Participation-Identification (Figure 2) formed the conceptual basis of this substudy. Finn proposes that a student's active participation in school and classroom activities leads to successful performance outcomes and then identification with the school.

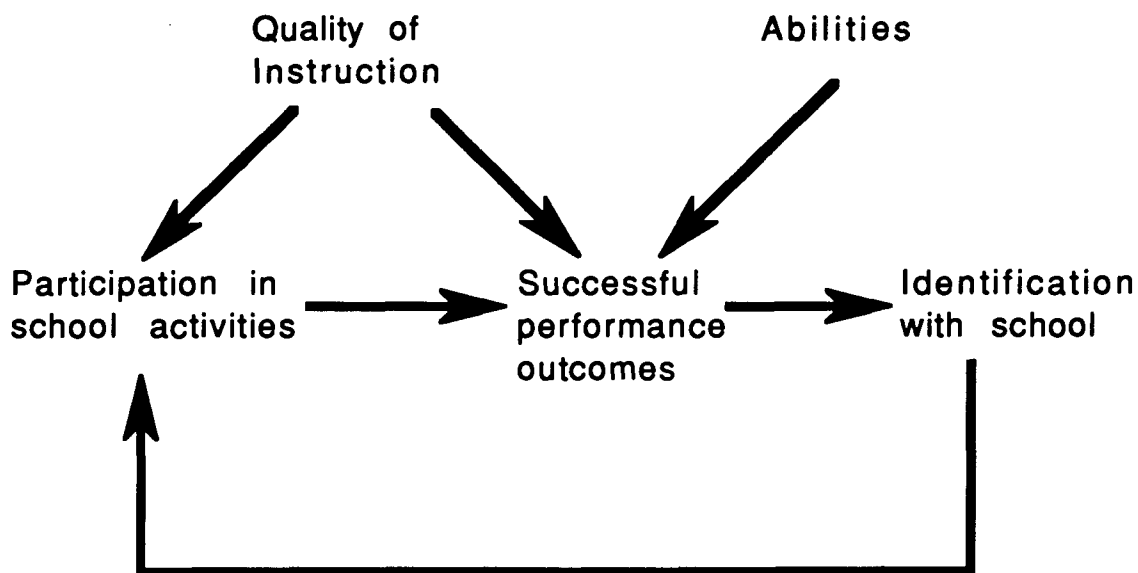


Figure 2: Participation-Identification Model

Students then participate in multiple, expanding forms of school activities, thus increasing their bonding to the school. In contrast, a

potential dropout would have decreasing participation, followed by less successful performance outcomes, lack of identification with the school and its values and, therefore, even less participation. Finn postulates that bonding to the school is important in preventing alienation from and, ultimately, dropping out of school. He views withdrawal from school as a long term, developmental process whereby a student either fails to establish bonds to the school initially or, due to lack of participation and identification with the school, gradually withdraws from school.

In order to explore bonding at the transition period, eight variables or factors, believed pertinent to a successful school experience, were chosen from a review of the literature, from previous questionnaires and from personal experience. Questions were then developed to assess each variable.

The methodology I have followed, a correlational study of factors believed to affect bonding to the school, uses questionnaire data collected during the first week of grade 8 and again four months later. The questions are grouped into scales and analyzed using Cronbach's Coefficient Analysis, Correlation Matrices and Regression Analysis. As well, students rate their elementary school

in the fall of their grade 7 year (final year at the elementary level) and rate the secondary school in December of their grade 8 year. This data is used as the measure of bonding. The reader must use caution when generalizing these findings to other populations, as the questionnaire data is not supported by independent data. However, this does not diminish the importance of this study, as previous research on the relationship between bonding and the transition period is limited (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989, p. 12 -13). This substudy supports previous research, offers important results and suggests some promising directions for further explorations.

Part I - Transition Period

The primary purpose of this substudy is to determine if students carry the propensity to bond to the elementary school over to the secondary school. According to the Carnegie Council (1989, p. 12) "This is a time not only of inordinate vulnerability, but also of great responsiveness to environmental challenge." The strong correlation between the students' rating of elementary school with

their rating of secondary school ($r=0.47$, $p<0.001$) suggests that they do indeed carry the propensity to bond (or not) over the transition to secondary school from elementary school. This conclusion is also supported by the finding that the students' rating of elementary school predicts 22% of the variance in the rating of the secondary school. Of more importance is the support this finding gives to Finn's theory that bonding to, or alienation from, school is a developmental process starting in (or before) elementary school.

Another purpose of this study is to determine which, if any, of the factors believed to affect students' bonding to school change during the first four months of secondary school. A number of inferences may be drawn from the findings of this study. The strong correlations (all significant at $p<0.001$ except for student-teacher relationship) between the same variables Time 1 (September) and Time 2 (December) indicate that students' responses to the items forming the scales were stable over time (see Table 4, diagonal). In general, what students expected of secondary school in September is what they found in December; for example, the correlation of the variable, pursuit of intellectual growth, Time 1 to Time 2 is 0.46, $p<0.001$. This suggests that students who value school in September

(doing well, feeling confident, working hard) value it in December. As well, students who feel they fit in and will participate and volunteer in September feel likewise in December. If we assume that the students are basing their responses at the beginning of Grade 8 on their attitudes and experiences from elementary school, then it suggests that the attitudes for many students developed in elementary school are stable over the transition period.

Part II - Factors Affecting Bonding

A. Identification

According to Finn (1989), bonding has two components, identification and participation. In Finn's words, "...students who identify with school have an internalized conception of belongingness - that they are discernibly part of the school environment and that school constitutes an important part of their own experience.....these individuals value success in school-relevant goals" (p. 123). The variables chosen to explore the relationship between a student's academic goals and bonding to school are

changing personal responsibility, pursuit of intellectual growth and perception of academic ability. This study found that the students' perception of their academic ability has the strongest correlation ($r=-0.36$, $p<0.01$) to the bonding measure, rating of secondary school. This supports the findings of other researchers, such as Wehlage, Rutter, Smith and Lesko (1989), who state that "academic success in school work is essential if students are to become socially bonded to school" (p. 124). It seems logical that students who find relevance in school, feel confident of their ability, are persistent and find personal satisfaction in problem solving would rate the school high. Conversely, students who find school and its goals irrelevant and who are frustrated by the work tend to rate the school lower.

The associations between the group of academic attitude variables Time 1 to Time 2 (see Table 4) indicates that the students' attitudes towards academics (e.g. working hard, doing well in school, seeking help from the teacher) remain stable at least for this period of time. As well, the finding that the academic attitude variable, pursuit of intellectual growth, accounts for 47% ($p<0.05$) of the variance in perception of academic ability suggests that the

attitude a student displays in grade 8 towards school-relevant goals may be predicted from knowing the attitude of a student toward academic endeavors in grade 7 .

B. Participation

A second component of Finn's (1989, p. 128-129) model is participation in school. He theorizes that the active participation of a student in school is essential in a developmental cycle that leads to successful outcomes for the student which, in turn, causes the student to identify with school-relevant goals and back to increased participation. Finn defines level one participation simply as a student recognizing the need to attend, be prepared and respond to directions or questions from the teacher. With level two participation, the students initiate questions, respond enthusiastically and do a little more than is required around the school. Level three students participate in social, extracurricular and athletic aspects of school life. Level four students participate in academic goal-setting and decision-making. In this study, belonging in school is explored by examining climate variables of the

students' sense of participation and belonging, peer group relationships, student-teacher relationships, and parent-student communication about school matters. The findings of this substudy indicate that the students' sense of belonging, as demonstrated by participating in school activities and feeling like they "fit in", strongly correlates with most of the academic attitude variables. In effect, students who rated academic attitudes high, also felt as if they belonged. Conversely, students who rated academic attitudes low, felt less as if they belonged.

C. Relationships

The relationships with peers and teachers are examined. There is less association found between these variables and the academic attitude variables. This may suggest that habits and attitudes dealing with academic confidence, doing well and working hard, are established at this point for most students. However, based on previous research and personal knowledge it is reasonable to suggest that the transfer to secondary school may have destabilized friendship nets and student-teacher interactions.

Regression analysis suggests that parent-student communications about school matters independently influences both an academic attitude variable (a student's pursuit of intellectual growth) and a climate variable (sense of participation and belonging). These, in turn, influence perception of academic ability, the one factor found to affect rating of school, the bonding measure.

The connection between sense of participation and belonging (SPB), pursuit of intellectual growth (PIG), perception of academic ability (PAA) and parent-student communications (PSC) about school matters is supported by the stability of the associations between these variables over time (see Table 9).

Table 9: Correlations, Time 1 and Time 2

Variables	r - Time 1	r - Time 2
PIG vs PAA	0.70***	0.69***
PIG vs SPB	0.57***	0.45***
PIG vs PSC	0.47***	0.44***
PAA vs SPB	0.66***	0.66***
PAA vs PSC	0.51***	0.48***
SPB vs PSC	0.34**	0.35**

p < 0.01. *p < 0.001.

Figure 3 summarizes the tentative relationships discovered between

the variables. These findings, although not reporting a causal relationship, support Finn's Identification and Participation Model and suggest that it may be possible to manipulate bonding by increasing parent-student communication about school matters.

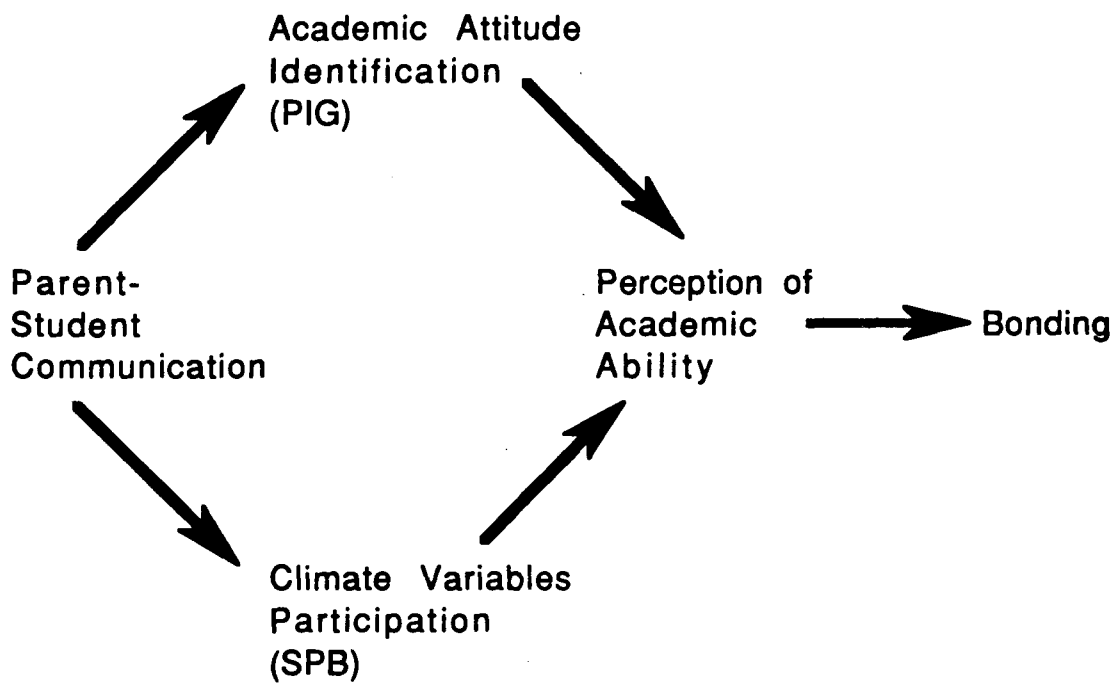


Figure 3: Relationships Suggested By Regression Analysis

Part III - Subgroups

Differences in attitudes and behaviours between the high raters and the low raters are discovered when individual items are examined more closely for changes over the first four months of secondary school. Caution must be used when assigning importance to these findings, as the number in the sample is very small. However, this examination does suggest some areas in need of further study.

A. Academic Attitude - Identification

1. Changes Within the Subgroups

The responses of the high raters remain reasonably consistent in all areas except for pursuit of intellectual growth and changing personal responsibility - both academic attitude variables. Items like "getting help from teachers when needed" and "being worried about being late with assignments" indicate a lessening of concern than was exhibited in September. In contrast, the low raters'

expectations and realizations of grade 8 remain stable in the academic attitude areas.

2. Differences Between The Subgroups

In terms of finding relevance in school work, the high raters feel that the work they are doing in school makes them smarter, while the low raters are uncertain. Some of the differences found between the high and low raters groups are unexpected. For instance, in terms of changing responsibility the high raters indicate in December they are more likely to feign sickness and stay home than the low raters do. They worry about being late to school less than do the low raters group and, while indicating in September that their parents expect them to be more responsible for their own work, they become increasingly uncertain about this in December. One can only speculate as to the reasons for these findings. Perhaps the high raters are responding to the increased freedom experienced in a secondary school and a more impersonal atmosphere. Further investigation is needed to assign significance to these particular findings.

B. Climate Variables - Participation

1. Changes Within The Subgroups

An examination of the responses of the high raters reveals very little change in the climate variables between what they expect of secondary school and what they perceive four months later. For this group, the ability to adapt to a new environment and cope socially seems to be established. However, a closer look at the responses of the low raters indicates notable changes between what they expected in September and what they found in December. For example, in December, the low raters reveal they were less able to:

- a. "fit in"
- b. volunteer
- c. participate in school activities or events
- d. be able to establish a relationship with the teacher
- e. communicate school events, homework concerns, or feelings about school to their parents than they had expected to.

And, in their view, their parents are less likely to attend parent-teacher conferences than they predicted in September. This is

particularly interesting, as the parent-teacher interviews would have occurred just prior to the administration of the second survey.

2. Differences Between The Subgroups

Very interesting differences are found between the high raters and low raters in the area of student-teacher relationship. For example, the high raters feel:

- a. confident they can ask the teacher for help outside the classroom
- b. comfortable dealing with several teachers
- c. that the teachers care about them
- d. that they "fit in"
- e. that they enjoy grade 8
- f. that it is important to talk to their parents about school events and activities.

Conversely, the low raters feel:

- a. uncertain about how they feel about asking for extra help
- b. uncertain how the teacher might feel if they did ask for help

- c. less comfortable having several teachers
- d. uncertain if the teachers care about them
- e. less likely to "fit in"
- f. less likely to enjoy grade 8
- g. less likely to communicate with parents about school events, activities, their feelings about school or problems in school.

Finally, in terms of their friendships, the high raters indicate their friends are likely to try out for school teams, while the low raters are uncertain if their friends are trying out or not. In September, the high raters are uncertain or strongly disagree with the statement "my friends are more important than my learning". By December, only one high rater disagrees with that statement. Most are now uncertain and one strongly agrees with the statement. This supports the findings of Ishiyama and Chabassol (1985), who indicate adolescents at this age are more concerned about friends than academic success. In contrast, the low raters group shows little movement over the four months from the position of disagreeing with the statement "my friends are more important than my learning."

In general, the high raters group's attitudes and behaviours remain stable while the low raters are less comfortable with relationships and less likely to be involved in the school. The expectation that they would have a new start is unrealized and may point to another area where the school can work to establish programs of parent-teacher-student communication and interaction.

Part IV - Discussion

The findings of this study are significant in that they support previous research (Barrington et al., 1989; Ekstrom et al., 1986; Harter, 1992; Mortimore, 1990), suggest the importance of the transition period to those less bonded and suggest areas that require further investigation. The findings can be summarized thus:

- a. the propensity to bond is established in elementary school and carried to secondary school
- b. success in school-relevant goals correlates to the rating of secondary school, the measure of bonding
- c. academic attitude variables are associated and stable over this period

- d. participation in school influences perception of academic ability and hence bonding
- e. parent-student communication contributes independently to both academic attitude and participation
- f. the high raters group perceives a positive and stable relationship with parents and teachers
- g. the low raters group anticipates positive relationships with teachers and continuing communication with parents, neither of which is realized to the extent they expect.

Combining previous research (Ainley et al., 1991; Comer, 1986; Mortimore, 1990) with the findings of this study, I would like to suggest a revised model of bonding to school that includes parents and, to a lesser extent, teachers. In this model, a parent may positively or negatively affect the participation and identification their child develops towards the school. The parent, who by behaviour and words (Ekstrom et al., 1986) supports learning, inculcates a valuing of school prior to the child entering school. These youngsters may be more cooperative and interested in doing a good job and, therefore, more successful. In turn, this initial success promotes greater participation and identification on the

part of the student and continued involvement by the parent (see Figure 4).

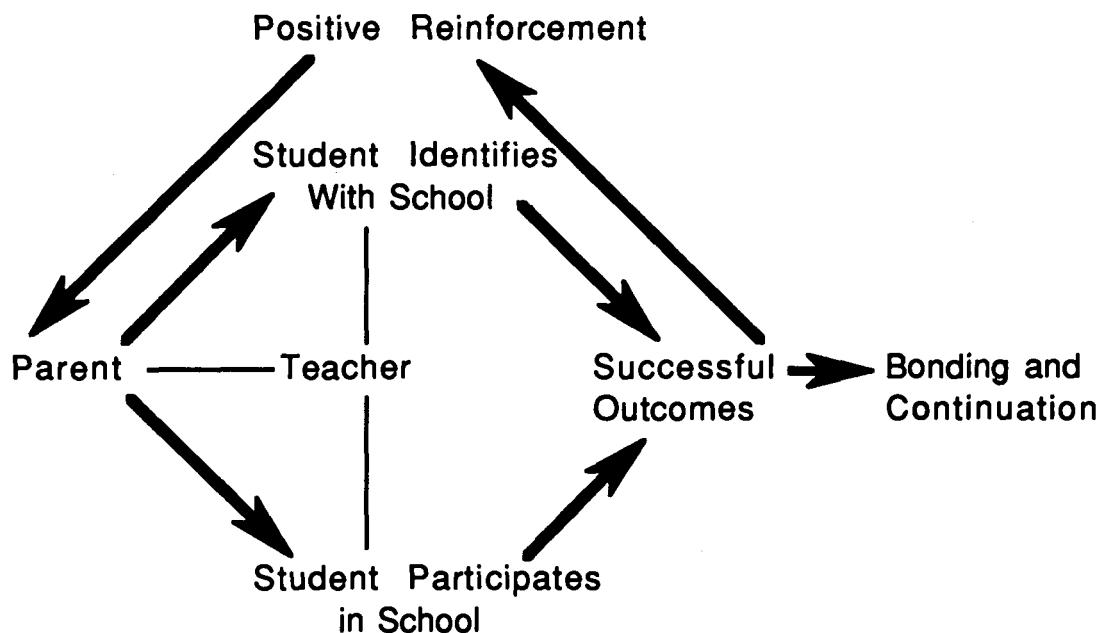


Figure 4: Revised Participation-Identification Model

Continuing encouragement from the parent reinforces the identification and participation of the student in school-related goals and activities. Parents of successful students encourage and support those activities, academic and otherwise, that increase the identification and participation of their child in school. As well, they continue to support and participate in school events, such as

parent-teacher conferences. The success of their child increases, or at least maintains, the positive parent input.

However, the opposite may also be true. "Youngsters lacking the necessary encouragement at home may arrive at school predisposed to nonparticipation and nonidentification..." (Finn, 1989, p. 130). They may not become involved even at a minimal level and, therefore, never identify with the values of schooling or, due to lack

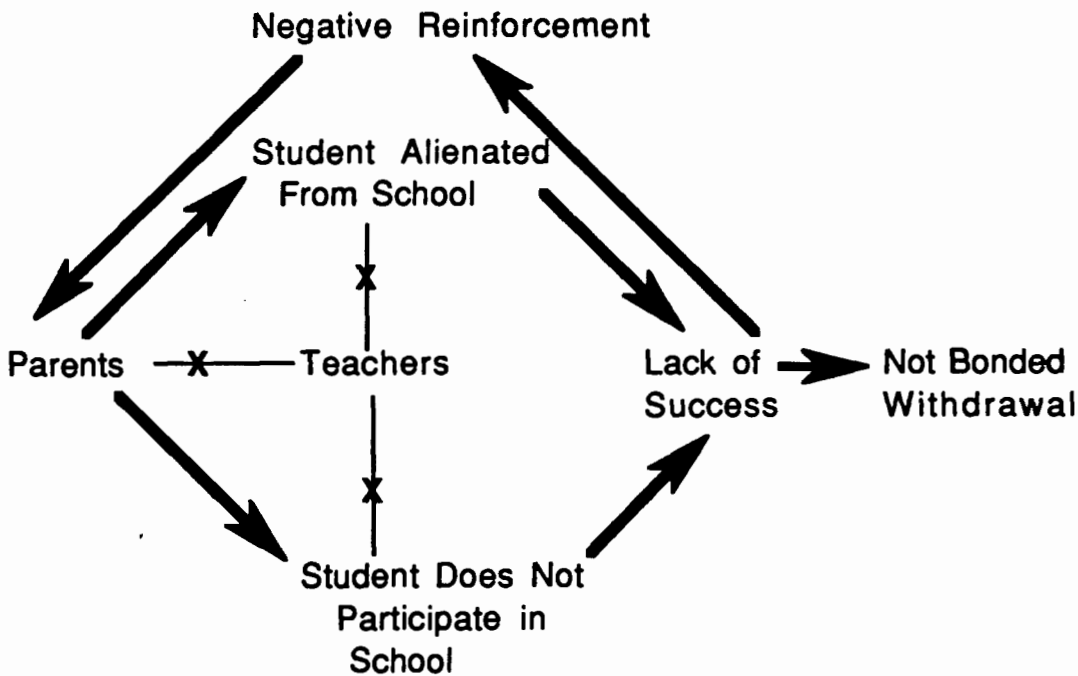


Figure 5: Revised Nonparticipation-Alienation Model

of initial success, they may withdraw as they continue through the

grades (see Figure 5). This withdrawal may, in turn, promote a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness in the parent that is transferred to the child. Parents of less successful students may support the school initially but lack of success by their child may initiate a cycle where blaming the school excuses the child. The student does even more poorly, participates less, values school less, feels more alienated, and the parent contributes to the negative cycle, deepening its effects on the student.

Liska and Reed (1985) found that lack of parental attachment to the child is the key variable in a cycle that leads to increased behaviour problems, to school alienation and to detachment. The parents themselves may withdraw from communicating with the school or teacher, except when the school forces the communication. It may be that the parents are in the same cycle as is suggested for the students.

Raddysh (1992) found that each of the dropouts studied in her retrospective study could recall an incident where the parent became involved in a confrontation with the school. As stated, this is not to suggest the school must be supported on every occasion, but it must be clear to the student that the parent and teacher are

working together for the benefit of the student and not as opponents.

It is not surprising that Walberg and Shanahan (1983) found that the family is the greatest influence on student achievement. This transition study suggests that parent-student communication influences both academic and climate factors pertinent to students' perception of their academic ability. The students who rated the school high maintain communication about school with their parents. The low raters indicate a decreasing amount of communication with their parents within the first four months of secondary school. Finn (1989, p. 130) reports on research that has shown that "participation and identification occur more readily among children from communicative families who place an explicit emphasis on school-related goals...."

Transition may be a particularly important time for the low raters as they indicate a desire for a new beginning, and they have strong expectations of better relationships. This may be a "window of opportunity" when a change in their perception of academic ability, a more positive student-teacher relationship and increasing communication with parents about school may bring about a change

in their feelings of identification with the school.

Part V - Recommendations

The findings that the propensity to bond to the elementary school is carried over to the secondary school, that students carry established academic attitudes and that low raters differ from high raters in terms of participation, belonging and relationships are important. Transition programs that ease a student into secondary school should be continued. For the most part, students appear to look forward to secondary school, anticipate a new beginning and enjoy and feel comfortable in their relationships with their teachers, parents and friends. Perhaps transition should be viewed as a time to focus extra attention on those who rate the elementary school lower.

There is a dramatic decline of parent involvement practices by teachers and participation by parents in learning activities from grade one to five (Becker and Epstein, 1982; Epstein, 1987). Lucas and Lusthaus (cited in Epstein, 1987) found this trend worsens in the secondary grades. Since, as this study found, parents influence both

the academic attitudes and sense of participation and belonging the child feels, the importance of involving the parents of low raters must be emphasized. As well, it is imperative that parents are involved early in meaningful activities that reinforce the value of learning for the child, as this seems well established by the time a child enters secondary school. Programs to involve parents in communication with the teacher and child need to be developed and implemented at this time of decreasing communication with some parents. Epstein (cited in Brandt, 1989) estimates that only about 2 - 5% of parents have problems that interfere with their involvement in their child's school, and about 20% of all parents are already successfully involved. She indicates from her research in urban, rural and suburban schools, "that most parents at all grade levels want and need information and guidance from their children's schools and teachers" (Epstein, in Brandt, 1989, p. 27).

Teachers must continue to focus at every level on finding and utilizing the talents and abilities of individual students, as success at school is found to be the only attitude variable directly linked to bonding to the school by this study. In particular, teachers at the secondary school, already dealing with large numbers of students,

need to establish ways to get to know individual students and parents better, as this is very important to those less bonded to the school. The advisory programs in existence in some secondary schools (and proposed for all British Columbia schools in the new draft Intermediate Document) may fill a need for increased interaction between teachers, students and parents, allowing for the establishment of a common base of understanding and support between the school and home.

The significance of friends in the bonding experience is, unfortunately, not clarified by this study. Eckert (cited in Steinberg, 1993, p. 2) found that "Students named their entrance to junior high as the critical transition point when asked to trace their friendships from childhood to the present." Perhaps those students who are successful in school come to associate with "like" friends and those less successful in school find friends who have similar attitudes and behaviours. The stability or instability of friendship nets over the time of transition is a key area that requires further exploration.

Part VI - Conclusion

Over the past one hundred years, as the school system became larger, serving ever more students and thus increasing in complexity, parents have had less and less direct say in the local schools. James S. Coleman (1987) describes changes that have occurred in the relation between family and society with particular reference to schooling. According to Coleman, the shift from family centered work, such as farming, to work outside the neighbourhood in factories has reduced the incentives on the part of parents to take responsibility for their children. In society, there is a change in the locus of dependency from the family to outside institutions (p. 34). Coleman postulates that schools are fulfilling their obligation for academic teaching but the parents' obligation to develop attitudes, effort and a conception of self in some children is being neglected.

Comer (1986) argues that changes in the family-school relationship have occurred as a result of technological and scientific changes. These changes have decreased the level of trust and agreement between the home and the school, and "school people have lost much of the power they once had to significantly influence

the social and psychological development of students as they address their intellectual development" (p. 443). According to Arons (1983, p. 28), "The growth of professional control of school administration, the eclipse of meaningful relationships between parents and teachers have left families with the feeling that they have lost custody of the child who goes to school. Parents ...are increasingly met with a wall of professional hostility and bureaucratic lethargy." This wall needs to be dismantled.

The importance of the teacher-student relationship to the student and the role the parents play in the successful education of the student is becoming increasingly apparent. The belief that the teacher is the expert and the parents can contribute little to the formal education of their children needs to be revised.

Administrators and teachers must recognize the importance of developing shared educational values with the parents and students and must make a commitment to fostering processes that will enhance the role of parents in their child's education.

Change is occurring in schools in British Columbia starting with the mandated formation of parent advisory councils in 1989. Most recently, the latest draft of the B. C. Graduation Program

states, "The education of students is a shared responsibility." and "The Graduation Program promotes partnerships between schools and parents..."(p. 26).

That the time when students make the transition to secondary school is a time of opportunity to intervene in the established attitudes and behaviours of those less bonded to school is also becoming clearer. How this intervention and development of partnerships is to be accomplished by secondary schools is less clear. It is easier to suggest that something must change than it is to change it (especially when dealing with organizations as complex as schools). Fullan (1991, p. 43) states "The real crunch comes in the relationships between these new programs or policies and the thousands of subjective realities embedded in people's individual and organizational contexts and their personal histories. How these subjective realities are addressed or ignored is crucial for whether potential changes become meaningful at the level of individual use and effectiveness."

APPENDIX A

CO-PRODUCTION OF LEARNING PROJECT

September, 1990

LETTER OF CONSENT (PARENTS - GRADE 6/7)

I AGREE TO FULL PARTICIPATION FOR MY CHILD AND MYSELF _____

I AGREE TO LIMITED PARTICIPATION FOR MY CHILD AND MYSELF _____

I CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT _____

I NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BEFORE MAKING A DECISION _____

School Name: _____

Name (Child): _____

Name (Parent): _____

Signature: _____

Telephone Number: _____

APPENDIX B

Scaled Items - Transition 1 Student Survey

Student-Teacher Relationship

Cronbach's Alpha .7638

1. I look forward to having several teachers in grade 8.
2. I expect my grade 8 teachers will be similar to my grade 7 teacher.
3. I expect my grade 8 teachers will give us opportunities to make suggestions for activities in the class.
4. My grade 8 teachers will spend time talking to me individually about my school work when necessary.
5. I expect I could talk to one of my grade 8 teachers if I have personal problems.
6. I expect that my grade 8 teachers will care about how I feel.
7. I expect my grade 8 teachers will listen to me and value my opinion.
8. I care about how my teachers in grade 8 feel about me.

Peer Group Expectations

Cronbach's Alpha .6912

14. My friends are not looking forward to attending this school.*
15. It is important to my friends at school that they have their assignments done on time.
16. My friends stay home from school when they are not really sick.*
17. It is important to my friends to do the best they can in school.
18. Some of my friends are planning on trying out for a school team(s).
24. If my friend(s) skipped class, I would too.*

Sense of Participation and Belonging

Cronbach's Alpha .6963

52. I expect to participate in lots of school activities, such as student's council.
53. I plan on trying out for a school team.
55. I will not participate in special events, such as crazy hat day, at this school.*

- 56. I will volunteer to help do extra work around this school.
- 57. I am not interested in joining any clubs at this school.*
- 58. I feel like I "fit in" at this school.
- 60. I feel I can contribute in some way to making this school a good place to be.
- 62. I am looking forward to grade 8.
- 65. I feel comfortable attending a larger school.

Perception of Academic Ability

Cronbach's Alpha .6724

- 25. I can achieve good marks if I do my homework.
- 33. The courses I take at this school will prepare me well for the future.
- 35. I have frequently had difficulty in school therefore I don't do my best.*
- 36. I feel good when I've solved a difficult puzzle.
- 37. I like to stick with a problem until I've solved it.
- 38. I feel confident that I can do well in most of my subjects.
- 39. I feel the work we will do in class will make me smarter.

Parent-Student Communication About School

Cronbach's Alpha .5282

- 11. My parent(s) will attend parent-teacher nights
- 28. I will let my parent(s) know what homework I have.
- 29. It is important to me to tell my parent(s) about school events and activities.
- 30. It is difficult to talk to my parents about my feelings about this school.*
- 31. My parents expect me to tell them when I am having problems in the classroom.
- 67. My parent(s) are concerned for my safety at this school.
- 68. My parent(s) feel the teachers at this school are caring individuals.

Pursuit of Intellectual Growth

Cronbach's Alpha .6596

- 34. Doing well in school is important to me.
- 40. I am looking forward to studying many different subjects at this school.
- 41. My friends are more important than my learning.*
- 42. Being on the Honour Roll is important to me.
- 43. How well I do at this school depends on how hard I work.

Changing Personal Responsibility

Cronbach's Alpha .6814

44. I would feel O. K. about getting extra help from my grade 8 teachers at lunch hour.
47. It is my teacher(s) and parent(s) responsibility to make me do my homework.*
48. I won't stay home from school unless I'm really sick.
49. I don't worry about being late for school.*
50. It doesn't bother me if I am a day or two late handing in an assignment.*
51. My parent(s) expect me to be more responsible for my own work at this school.
54. I expect it would bother my teachers in grade 8 if I requested help outside of classtime.*

- Inverted Items

APPENDIX C

Scaled Items - Transition 2 Student Survey

Student-Teacher Relationship

Cronbach's Alpha .6210

1. I am comfortable having several teachers in grade 8.
2. My grade 8 teachers are similar to my grade 7 teacher.
3. My grade 8 teachers give us opportunities to make suggestions for activities in the class.
4. My grade 8 teachers spend time talking to me individually about my school work.
5. I feel I could talk to one of my grade 8 teachers if I had personal problems.
6. My grade 8 teachers care about how I feel.
7. My grade 8 teachers listen to me and value my opinion.
8. I care about how my teachers in grade 8 feel about me.

Peer Group Expectations

Cronbach's Alpha .4244

14. My friends don't like attending this school.*
15. It is important to my friends at school that they have their assignments done on time.
16. My friends stay home from school when they are not really sick.*
17. It is important to my friends to do the best they can in school.
18. Some of my friends plan on trying out for a school team(s).
24. If my friend(s) skipped class, I would too.*

Sense of Participation and Belonging

Cronbach's Alpha .6846

52. I am now, or expect to, participate in lots of school activities, such as student's council.
53. I plan on trying out for a school team.
55. I will not participate in special events, such as crazy hat day, at this school.*
56. I have volunteered to help do extra work around this school.
57. I am not interested in joining any clubs at this school.*
58. I feel like I "fit in" at this school.

60. I feel I can contribute in some way to making this school a good place to be.

62. I enjoy grade 8.

65. I feel comfortable attending a larger school.

Perception of Academic Ability

Cronbach's Alpha .7410

25. I can achieve good marks if I do my homework.

33. The courses I take at this school will prepare me well for the future.

35. I have frequently had difficulty in school therefore I don't do my best.*

36. I feel good when I've solved a difficult puzzle.

37. I like to stick with a problem until I've solved it.

38. I am doing well in most of my subjects.

39. I feel the work we do in class is making me smarter.

Parent-Student Communication About School

Cronbach's Alpha .5654

11. My parent(s) attend parent-teacher nights.

28. I let my parent(s) know what homework I have.

29. It is important to me to tell my parent(s) about school events and activities.

30. It is difficult to talk to my parents about my feelings about this school.*

31. My parent(s) expect me to tell them when I am having problems in the classroom.

67. My parent(s) are concerned for my safety at this school.

68. My parent(s) feel the teachers at this school are caring individuals.

Pursuit of Intellectual Growth

Cronbach's Alpha .6115

34. Doing well in school is important to me.

40. I like studying many different subjects at this school.

41. My friends are more important than my learning.*

42. Being on the Honour Roll is important to me.

43. How well I do at this school depends on how hard I work.

Changing Personal Responsibility

Cronbach's Alpha .6287

44. I feel O. K. about getting extra help from my grade 8 teachers at lunch time if necessary.

47. It is my teacher(s) and parent(s) responsibility to make me do my homework.*
48. I don't stay home from school unless I'm really sick.
49. I don't worry about being late for school.*
50. It doesn't bother me if I am a day or two late handing in an assignment.*
51. My parent(s) expect me to be more responsible for my own work at this school.
54. I expect it would bother my teachers in grade 8 if I requested help outside of class time.*

69. If you were giving this school an overall rating as a place for you to learn, on a scale of 1 to 9 (1=very poor, 9=excellent) what rating would you assign?

* Inverted Items

APPENDIX D

FACULTY OF EDUCATION, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

CO-PRODUCTION OF LEARNING: STUDENT SURVEY

1. I look forward to having several teachers in grade 8.
2. I expect my grade 8 teachers will be similar to my grade 7 teacher.
3. I expect my grade 8 teachers will give us opportunities to make suggestions for activities in the class.
4. My grade 8 teachers will spend time talking to me individually about my schoolwork when necessary.
5. I expect I could talk to one of my grade 8 teachers if I have personal problems.
6. I expect that my grade 8 teachers will care about how I feel.
7. I expect my grade 8 teachers will listen to me and value my opinion.
8. I care about how my teachers in grade 8 feel about me.
9. I think my parent(s) feel comfortable about me attending KRSS.
10. My parent(s) will be able to help me find the resources needed to do my homework in grade 8.
11. My parent(s) will attend parent-teacher nights.
12. If I have trouble with my school work in grade 8 my parent(s) will be unable to help me.
13. It won't bother me if my parents don't attend school events.
14. My friends are not looking forward to attending KRSS.
15. It is important to my friends at school that they have their assignments done on time.
16. My friends stay home from school when they are not really sick.
17. It is important to my friends to do the best they can in school.
18. Some of my friends are planning on trying out for a school team(s).
19. Some of my friends are planning to get involved in student activities, like student's council.
20. I have known my current friends for years and years.
21. Lots of my friends are attending KRSS.
22. I have friends at KRSS who care about how I feel.
23. My friends are more important to me than anything else.
24. If my friend(s) skipped class, I would too.

25. I can achieve good marks if I do my homework.
26. I value my parent's opinion about my friends.
27. My parent(s) don't like my friends.
28. I will let my parent(s) know what homework I have.
29. It is important to me to tell my parent(s) about school events and activities.
30. It is difficult to talk to my parents about my feelings about KRSS.
31. My parents expect me to tell them when I am having problems in the classroom.
32. I expect to do more homework in secondary school.
33. The courses I take at KRSS will prepare me well for the future.
34. Doing well in school is important to me.
35. I have frequently had difficulty in school therefore I don't do my best.
36. I feel good when I've solved a difficult puzzle.
37. I like to stick with a problem until I've solved it.
38. I feel confident that I can do well in most of my subjects.
39. I feel the work we will do in class will make me smarter.
40. I am looking forward to studying many different subjects at KRSS.
41. My friends are more important than my learning.
42. Being on the Honour Roll is important to me.
43. How well I do at KRSS depends on how hard I work.
44. I would feel O.K. about getting extra help from my grade 8 teachers at lunch time.
45. If I have problems with a teacher at KRSS I expect my parent(s) to call the school.
46. I expect my grade 8 teacher to contact my parent(s) if I have difficulty in his/her class.
47. It is my teacher(s) and parent(s) responsibility to make me do my homework.
48. I won't stay home from school unless I'm really sick.
49. I don't worry about being late for school.
50. It doesn't bother me if I am a day or two late handing in an assignment.
51. My parent(s) expect me to be more responsible for my own work at KRSS.
52. I expect to participate in lots of school activities, such as student's council.

53. I plan on trying out for a school team.
54. I expect it would bother my teachers in grade 8 if I requested help outside of class time.
55. I will not participate in special events, such as crazy hat day, at KRSS.
56. I will volunteer to help do extra work around KRSS.
57. I am not interested in joining any clubs at KRSS.
58. I feel like I "fit in" at KRSS.
59. I need to make new friends this year.
60. I feel I can contribute in some way to making KRSS a good place to be.
61. I am concerned about what to wear to KRSS.
62. I am looking forward to grade 8.
63. I am concerned about how the older students will treat me at KRSS.
64. I am concerned about finding my way to my classes at KRSS.
65. I feel comfortable attending a larger school.
66. KRSS will give me a new start.
67. My parent(s) are concerned for my safety at KRSS.
68. My parent(s) feel the teachers at KRSS are caring individuals.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ainley, J., Foreman, J., & Sheret, M. (1991). High school factors that influence students to remain in school. Journal of Educational Research, 85(2), 69-80.
- Arons, S. (1983). Compelling belief: The culture of American schooling. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Barrington, B., & Hendricks, B. (1989). Differentiating characteristics of high school graduates, dropouts, and nongraduates. Journal of Education Research, 82(6), 310-319.
- Barth, R. (1979). Home-based reinforcement of school behavior: A review and analysis. Review of Educational Research, 49(3), 436-458.
- Becker, H. H., & Epstein, J. L. (1982). Parent involvement: A survey of teacher practices. Elementary School Journal, 83(2), 85-102.
- Borg, W. R. & Gall, M. D. (1989). Educational Research: An Introduction. New York: Longman.
- Brandt, R. (1989). On parent and schools: A conversation with Joyce Epstein. Educational Leadership, 24-27.
- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989). Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century. Carnegie Corporation of New York, June, 1989.
- Chavkin, N. F. (undated). Parent and community involvement: Practitioner's guide series number four. Texas Education Agency: Texas Dropout Information Clearinghouse.
- Chavkin, N. F., & Williams, D., Jr. (1989). Community size and parent involvement in education. The Clearing House, 63, 159-162.

- Coleman, J. S. (1987). Families and schools. Educational Researcher, 16(6), 32-36.
- Coleman, J. S., Hoffer, T., & Kilgore, S. (1982). High School Achievement. New York: Basic Books.
- Coleman, P., Collinge, J. & Seifert, T. (1992). Seeking the Levers of Change: Participant Attitudes and School Improvement. A Paper Presented at the Fifth Annual International Congress on School Effectiveness and Improvement, Victoria, B. C.
- Collinge, J. & Coleman, P. (1992). Home-School Collaboration: Teacher Practices and Parent Attitudes. Unpublished Report, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B. C.
- Comer, J. P. (1986). Parent Participation in the Schools. Phi Delta Kappan. Feb. 1986, p. 442-446.
- Comer, J. P. & Haynes, N. M. (1991). Parent involvement in schools: An ecological approach. The Elementary School Journal, 91(3), 271-277.
- Dauber, S. L. & Epstein, J. L. (1989, March). Parent attitudes and practices of parent involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools, (Report No. 33). Baltimore, Md: Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools.
- Davies, B. (1991). Schools reaching out: Family, school, and community partnerships for student success. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(5), 376-382.
- Dornbusch, S. M. & Ritter, P. L. (1988). Parents of high school students: A neglected resource. Educational Horizons, 66, 75-77.
- Eccles, J. S. & Midgley, C. (1989). Stage-environment fit: Developmentally appropriate classrooms for young adolescents, in Research on Motivation in Education, 3, Goals and Cognitions, Academic Press, Inc.

- Ekstrom, R., Goertz, M., Pollack, J., & Rock, D. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a National Study. Teachers College Record, 87(3), 356-373.
- Epstein, J. L. (1982, March). Student reaction to teachers' practices of parent involvement. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.
- Epstein, J. L. (1987). Parent involvement: What research says to administrators. Education and Urban Society, 19(2), 119-135.
- Epstein, J. L. (1988). How do we improve programs for parent involvement? Educational Horizons, 66(2), 58-59.
- Epstein, J. L. & Dauber, S. L. (1991, January). School programs and teacher practices of parent involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. The Elementary School Journal, 91(3), 289.
- Fehrman, P., Keith, T. & Reimer, T. (1987). Home influence on school learning: Direct and indirect effects of parental involvement on high school grades. Journal of Educational Research, 80(6), 330-337.
- Finn, J. (1989). Withdrawing from school. Review of Educational Research, 59(2), 117-142.
- Fullan, M. (1982). The meaning of educational change. Toronto, Ontario: OISE Press.
- Fullan, M. (1991). The new meaning of educational change. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Glass, G. V. & Hopkins, K. D. (1984). Statistical methods in education and psychology. Toronto, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc.
- Greenwood, G. & Hickman, C. (1991). Research and practice in parent involvement: Implications for teacher education. The Elementary School Journal, 91(3), 279-288.

- Harter, S., Whitesell, N. R., & Kowalski, P. (1992). Individual differences in the effects of educational transitions on young adolescent's perceptions of competence and motivational orientation. American Educational Research Journal, 29(4), 777-807.
- Henderson, A. (1988, October). Parents are a school's best friends. Phi Delta Kappan, 148-153.
- Henderson, A. T., Marburger, C. L., & Ooms, T. (1986). Beyond the bake sale: An educator's guide to working with parents. Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education.
- Holland, A. & Andre, T. (1987). Participation in extracurricular activities in secondary school. Review of Educational Research, 57(4), 437-466.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Bassler, O. C. & Brissie, J. S. (1987). Parent involvement: contributions of teacher efficacy, school socioeconomic status, and other school characteristics. American Educational Research Journal, 24(3), 417-435.
- Ishiyama, F. I. & Chabassol, D. J. (1985). Adolescents' fear of social consequences of academic success as a function of age and sex. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14(1), 37-46.
- Juhasz, A. M. (1989). Significant others and self-esteem: Methods for determining who and why. Adolescence, 24(95), 581-594.
- Lee, P., Statuto, C., & Kedar-Voivodas, G. (1983). Elementary school children's perceptions of their actual and ideal school experience: A developmental study. Journal of Educational Psychology, 75(6), 838-847.
- Liska, A. E. & Reed, M. D. (1985). Ties to conventional institutions and delinquency: Estimating reciprocal effects. American Sociological Review, 50(4), 547-560.
- Merriam, S. B. (1988). Case study research in education: A qualitative approach. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

- Moles, O. C. (1982). Synthesis of recent research on parent participation in children's education. Education Leadership, 40(5), 44-47.
- Mortimore, P., Sammons, P., Stoll, L., Lewis, D., & Ecob, R. (1988). School matters: The junior years. Wells, Somerset, England: Open Books.
- Mortimore, P. (Dir.) (1990). The secondary transfer project - the final report. ILEA Research and Statistics, draft paper, London.
- Oakes, J. & Lipton, M. (1990). Making the best of schools: A handbook for parents, teachers, and policymakers. New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press.
- O'Brien, S. & Bierman, K. (1988). Conceptions and perceived influence of peer groups: Interviews with preadolescents and adolescents. Child Development, 59(5), 1360-1365.
- Raddysh, J. L. (1992). Fading out: Comparing high school graduates with high school dropouts. Thesis, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.
- Rosenholtz, S. (1989). Teachers' workplace: The social organization of schools. New York: Longman.
- Sommer, B. (1985). What's different about truants? A comparison study of eighth-graders. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 14(5) 411-422.
- Smith, M. L. & Glass, G. V. (1987). Research and evaluation in education and the social sciences. Toronto, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc.
- Statistics Canada (December, 1990). Qualitative Research on School Leavers. Summary Final Report: Ottawa.
- Statistics Canada (December, 1991). School Leavers Survey. Educations Culture & Tourism Division: Ottawa.

- Steinberg, A. (1993). Hallways, lunchrooms, and football games: How schools help create jocks and burnouts. The Harvard Education Letter, 9(3), 1-4.
- Stevenson, D. L. & Baker, D. P. (1987). The family-school relation and the child's school performance. Child Development, 58, 1348-1357.
- Sullivan, Barry M. (Comm.) A legacy for learners: Summary of findings. The report of the British Columbia Royal Commission on Education. (1988). Victoria: Queen's Printer.
- Tarr, J. S. (1976-77). Students in groups: The impact of friendships and values on the high school. Administrator's Notebook. Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago.
- Walberg, H. J. (1984a). Families as partners in educational productivity. Phi Delta Kappan, 65(6), 397-400.
- Walberg, H. J. (1984b). Improving the productivity of America's schools. Educational Leadership, 41(8), 19-27.
- Walberg, H. J. & Shanahan, T. (1983). High school effects on individual students. Educational Researcher, 12(7), 4-9.
- Wehlage, G. G. & Rutter, R. A. (1986). Dropping out: How much do schools contribute to the problem? Teachers College Record, 87(3), 374-392.
- Wehlage, G. G., Rutter, R. A., Smith, G. A., Lesko, N. & Fernandez, R. R. (1989). Reducing the risk: Schools as communities of support. New York: The Falmer Press.