

REPORT ON HARASSMENT
and
MULTICULTURAL NONSEXIST EDUCATION
for
IOWA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

March, 1996

**Bureau of School Administration
and Accreditation
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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The Issue

Based on the work of Department of Education staff, on contacts with parents and students, and on reports in staff development sessions across the state, harassment appears to be a significant problem in Iowa schools. Ranging from jokes to rumors to actual assault, harassment can poison an educational environment and reach eventually beyond school walls to contaminate the mental and physical health and even life choices of persons who have been subjected to such treatment. The words used in sexual harassment are coarse and crude. Sexually harassing behaviors are disgusting and often violent. Yet, students, K-12, in Iowa hear those words and endure those sorts of behaviors daily.

Harassment appears to be as widespread in Iowa's schools as it does across the rest of the country. Nationally, surveys reveal from 85% to 92% of girls reporting experiences of sexual harassment, and from 57% to 76% of boys. In Iowa, 83% of high school girls and 62% of high school boys report at least one episode of sexual harassment. Nineteen (19) percent of Iowa's young women and eight (8) percent of young men report exposure to on-going harassment.

A review of major studies of harassment reveals that promulgation and enforcement of a comprehensive harassment policy and complaint procedure, followed by intensive education of staff, students, and community is crucial to stopping behaviors that can disgrace our schools. Consequently, the Sexual Harassment survey was implemented in order to determine what Iowa districts are doing in terms of sexual harassment prevention.

It is worth noting here that very recently the Department of Education equity staff received a telephone call from a high school administrator. The administrator revealed that after intensive staff development and the implementation of harassment prevention curriculum for students, their school had become a "zero tolerance zone" for harassing behaviors. "It has worked!" the administrator exclaimed. "We're even getting calls from parents who are observing a resurgence of respect at home!"

Harassment *can* be prevented in the schools of Iowa. Schools *can* add **Respect** to the other three R's.

The Historical Perspective and Current Status

Although many people consider prohibition of sexual harassment and litigation of sexual harassment complaints to be a contemporary problem, there have actually been injunctions against such behavior for the past 125 years. After the Civil War, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1871 in order to enforce the guarantees of life, liberty, and property (Yaffe, 1995).

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, usage, of any state or territory, subjects or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or any person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress (Civil Rights Act of 1871, 42 U.S.C. section 1983).

However, the laws which are more commonly mentioned in reference to sexual harassment are Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (which relates only to employment but has primarily provided the definition that is used for sexual harassment in education) and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits sex discrimination in education programs and activities which receive federal funds). Both these laws provide for compensatory and punitive damages.

Many states have adopted laws which prohibit sexual harassment in employment, and some states also govern sexual harassment in education. Minnesota prohibits harassment in its schools and requires that all schools have a sexual harassment policy. California, Illinois, Wisconsin prohibit sexual harassment "in education and/or higher education" (Lewis, 1992; Yaffe, 1995.)

The Iowa legislature, in 1992, prohibited sexual harassment of persons attending state educational institutions as well as state employees. Also, the Uniform School Requirement - Iowa Code, Chapter 280.3 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, marital status, or national origin in the public schools of Iowa. It covers all components of the

educational program. Chapter 601.9 - Civil Rights Commission - Iowa Code prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, creed, color, religion, disability, and parental/family, or marital status in educational programs in the state of Iowa. It includes admission and recruiting, intramural and interscholastic athletics, employment and all educational programs.

The following is the commonly accepted definition of sexual harassment in a school setting. It is adapted from the Equal Employment Opportunity Act (Title VII).

Sexual harassment includes “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature” when:

Submission to the conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining education:

Submission or rejection of the conduct or communication is used as a factor in decisions affecting that person’s education;

The conduct or communication has either the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a person’s education;
or

The conduct or communication creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

The two types of sexual harassment generally recognized, *quid pro quo* and *hostile environment*, appear in this definition:

Quid pro quo presents a situation in which a person might be “required to participate in unwelcome sexual conduct in order to receive certain benefits” such as participating in a sexual act in order to retain a job, or a person might be denied a job for refusing to participate in unwelcome sexual activity. One occurrence of this nature probably makes the harasser liable. Whether this

standard (developed for Title VII) is applicable to students is unanswered at the present time (Penfield, 1993) although there have been several cases where student situations are comparable. *Franklin v. Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Schools* is one case in point.

Hostile environment is conduct of a sexual nature "that makes the recipient feel uncomfortable." The conduct can be in the form of jokes, graffiti, comments, touching, etc. One occurrence of this nature does not necessarily make the harasser liable. Courts have generally said that the behavior must be pervasive. (Penfield, 1993; Lewis, 1992).

There are gray areas surrounding these definitions. "Unwelcome" and "eye of the beholder" appear to be crucial to determining what actually constitutes sexual harassment. Most experts agree that it is the victim of harassment who determines whether harassment has occurred. In court cases the "reasonable person" phrase is invoked to answer the question: "Would a reasonable person consider this action to be sexual harassment?"

Although many people consider sexual harassment to be no more offensive than being forced to listen to an occasional unwelcomed joke, it should be noted that harassment sometimes occurs as assault and battery, libel or slander, defamation of character, pornography, child abuse, or rape. Being told "Ignore it and it'll stop" is an insufficient remedy for harassment since "minor" forms of harassment frequently escalate into some of the major forms listed above. (It is worth noting here that the consensus appears to be that sexual harassment is not about sex, per se. It is about power, and sex is the way the harasser has chosen to show that power.)

Although research into harassment issues has been extant for years (the University of Michigan School of Education was active in this area in the early 1980's), it was the *Seventeen* magazine survey conducted by the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women in conjunction with the Legal Defense and Education fund at the National Organization for Women (1992) which first produced nationwide concern over the problem. This research was closely followed by the AAUW survey, *Hostile Hallways* (1993) and an abundance of smaller state surveys (see "An Abuse of Trust," 1994).

These studies showed not only the forms of harassment that occur in schools but also the extent of those behaviors. A particularly startling revelation was the fact that some appalling behaviors have become commonplace and occur in public. Nan Stein says, "What happens in public, if not interrupted, becomes normalized and acceptable over time" (1994). By ignoring racist, homophobic, and sexist incidents, schools are giving "tacit approval" to such behaviors (*How Schools Shortchange Girls*, 1992).

Although surveys specific to far-reaching male injury from harassment are not available at this time,

One fact is clear - female students show residual signs of wear and tear as a result of their male counterparts' harassment throughout the years. The vast disparity between men and women in the workforce makes it obvious that the underpinnings of sexual harassment begins well before entry into the workforce (Lewis, 1992, *How Schools Shortchange Girls*, 1992).

A continuing and rigorously debated topic among elementary educators is whether the term "sexual harassment" can be applied to the acts of very young students. Nan Stein endorses using the term "bullying" rather than "demonizing" very young children with the appellation "harasser" (Stein, 1994). However, Sue Sattel, a gender equity specialist with the Department of Education in Minnesota, has been a leader in working with very young students who are involved in harassing situations. She says, "Title IX protects kids from kindergarten through college. I'm not sure you can exempt anyone" (Yaffe, 1995).

The Office for Civil Rights evidently agrees with Sattel. In the Cheltzie Hentz complaint in Minnesota (Cheltzie was 6 years old and her harassers were as young as 6 and as old as 13), the OCR ruled that even the youngest students were aware that the "language and conduct being used were expressions of hostility" based on gender.

Whatever names are given to the deeds, it is apparent that students of all ages must be offered clear and readily available sources of assistance when they are confronted by harassment. This is not to say that equal assistance

should not be given to the harasser. In many cases, the harasser is not even aware that the behavior being exhibited is illegal. Therefore, it appears clear that education is the answer to this dilemma and, consequently, schools must assume the major burden for the education.

Schools are equal to the task, of course. However, in order to aid the already overburdened staff, provision should be made for specialized training for staff and students, curricula for all levels, and administrators dedicated to zero tolerance of harassment.

About 2,500 years ago, Hippocrates, the "teaching" Father of Medicine, issued advice to his students that today's educators would do well to heed. He said, "First, do no harm." That statement introduces another component to the harassment problem that is not so frequently addressed as is student to student harassment. That component is the sexual abuse of students by teachers, and it is a problem that is far more common than many would like to believe. New York Special Commissioner Frank F. Stancik says, "This is very painful for institutions to face. Once we started taking it seriously, we began finding cases that were there for a long time" (Graves, 1994).

In Wisconsin, complaints to the Department of Public Instruction have climbed from "5 or 6 a year to 50 or 60, and most are for sexual misconduct." In 1992, Oregon suspended 8 licenses and revoked six; in 1993, three licenses were suspended and 19 revoked. Forty-three educators were disciplined in 1993 for misconduct, "most for sexual improprieties with minors." The Florida Educational Practices Commission reports an average of...about 50 sexual misconduct complaints per year although the proportion of sexual misconduct complaints is declining (Graves, 1994).

According to the Board of Educational Examiners, in Iowa, from January 1, 1993 through December 31, 1995, approximately 20 cases were filed which were identified as sexual abuse. From these filings, eight were resolved through revocation, three resulted in other disciplinary action, and nine were dismissed or are currently under investigation. It must be understood that because an allegation of sexual abuse is filed with the Board, it does not mean in reality there was sexual abuse. Based on the investigator's report, the Board has dismissed cases where there was no evidence of probable cause on an on-site investigation.

Carol Shakeshaft's study, *In Loco Parentis: Sexual Abuse of Children in Schools*, (1994) discusses how widespread this problem is. Estimates vary widely - from .04% to 5% of teachers who have sexually abused children. However, the AAUW study revealed that only 7% of children harassed by a teacher report the incident to school personnel. Dr. Shakeshaft's document charges that "Studies consistently find that childhood sexual abuse is underreported, with most professionals estimating that only 2 to 6% of sexual abuse of children is reported to an official source. The numbers are consistent with the AAUW report...We don't know what is happening in the other 98 to 93% of the cases."

Sexual overtures directed by a teacher to a student clearly involve an abuse of power. Attorney Mary Jo McGrath (1994) quotes Psychiatrist and sexual abuse expert Roland C. Summit from an article in *Child Abuse and Neglect*:

[Assuming] that an adolescent can be ...even deliberately provocative, it should be clear that no child has equal power to say 'no' to a parental figure or to anticipate the consequences of sexual involvement with a caretaker. Ordinary ethics demand that the adult in such a mismatch bear sole responsibility for any clandestine sexual activity with a minor.

Because of the power differences that exist between student and teacher, many authorities wonder "whether a student can ever authentically consent to sexual activity with an educator." In *Doe v. Taylor Independent School District*, Court of Appeals Judge Patrick E. Higgenbotham said, "Make no mistake about it. This is not a case about a high school coach who happened to have an affair with a student. It is about abuse of power" (McGrath, 1994)

Frequently, harassment from teacher to student takes the form of crude remarks, sexual name-calling, jokes or even touching which does not constitute criminal activity, but, nevertheless, requires discipline. Educators may be aware of these sorts of behaviors but are reluctant to report them. In some cases, they refuse to acknowledge unprofessional behaviors as such and defend colleagues as "meaning no harm" or "just kidding around." In other situations, teachers choose to believe that an accusing student is falsifying a

charge rather than face the truth about a colleague. Bill Graves (1994) reports cases of staff blaming the victims after investigations, and “Instead of protecting the students who reported...allowed them to be hounded out of the school.”

Dominick Dunne, a writer and reporter who has covered some of the most famous jury trials in the second half of the twentieth century, has stated, “Ethics and morality seem to have gone out of our lives. They seem to have become jokey things. They are not jokey things” (1995). It seems clear that the language and behaviors noted in many school districts across Iowa reflect the viewpoint of Mr. Dunne.

The language and behavior of students “can and should be modified to reflect the essential ingredients of respect, honor, and esteem of others,” says James Van Patten who has studied sexual harassment remedies across the United States. “Although the legal system provides necessary guidelines and grievance procedures, the problem of sexual harassment is best dealt with through education.”

While it is true that schools will bear a large part of this re-education process, other institutions, public and private, should be called upon to participate.

...churches, civic groups, parental organizations, and multi-media corporations...Television, broadcasts, newspapers, governmental officials at all levels have an obligation to become engaged in the fight to preserve human dignity and worth through elevating our language and behavioral conduct. We need to develop a community of shared values to rediscover civility and human dignity in our language and behavior” (Van Patten, 1994).

The Harassment Survey

The survey document was mailed to 389 school districts in Iowa in August of 1995 with a return date of September 15, 1995. Three hundred forty-four districts responded by the specified date and are counted in this document. The tables and graphs contain information related to whether the district has a harassment policy, what areas are covered, date of policy adoption, and whether staff and students have received education related to harassment. Information is also provided as to the source of harassment prevention education. A copy of the Harassment Survey precedes the Tables. Unless otherwise indicated, the source of data is from the Iowa Department of Education, Sexual Harassment Survey.

District name _____
 District ID _____

Due Date 9/15/95

Iowa Department of Education
 Educational Equity
 Policy Survey on Harassment

1. Does your district have a policy(ies) on harassment?

____ Yes No ____

2. Does the policy(ies) address sexual harassment?

____ Yes No ____

3. When did the board adopt the harassment policy?

____ Month ____ Year

4. Does the harassment policy(ies) cover: (check all that apply)

____ a. employee to employee ____ c. student to employee

____ b. employee to student ____ d. student to student

____ e. other (list) _____

5. The policy covers harassment on the basis of (check all that apply)

____ a. race ____ g. marital status

____ b. color ____ h. disability

____ c. creed ____ i. age

____ d. religion ____ j. gender

____ e. national origin ____ k. all of the above

____ l. other (list) _____

6. Has your district staff been provided inservice on harassment?

____ Yes ____ No (if 'no' skip to question #8)

7. Who provided inservice to your district?

____ a. Department of Education

____ b. Area Education Agency

____ c. Your district

____ d. Other (name) _____

8. Has harassment inservice been provided for students in your district?

____ Yes ____ No (if 'no' skip to question #9)

Circle the grade levels which received inservice.

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

9. If your district provided instruction on harassment, what was the source of instructional materials?

____ a. Department of Education

____ b. Area Education Agency

____ c. Your district

____ d. Other (list) _____

Please return to:
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Question 1

Does your district have a policy on harassment? Of the 344 districts which returned the survey on time, 337 (98%) indicated they had a policy on harassment. Seven districts (2%) indicated they did not have a policy.

Policy?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	337	98.0
No	7	2.0

*of the 344 districts which returned the survey on time.

Question 1A

This table shows the number and percentage of districts by size which have a policy on harassment. Although the differences are small, it is the smallest which lack a policy.

District size: Less than 400 students

Policy?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	67	96.4
No	4	5.6

District size: From 400 to 2499

Policy?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	240	98.8
No	3	1.2

District size: 2500 or more

Policy?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	30	100.0
No	0	0.0

*of the 344 districts which returned the survey on time.

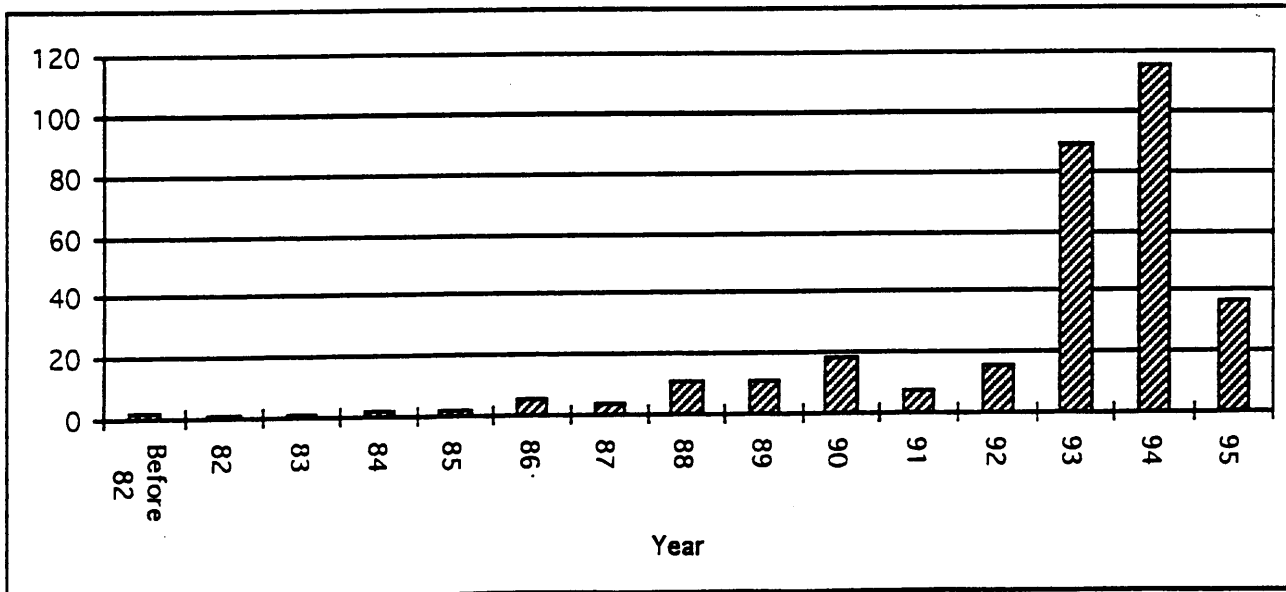
Question 2

Does the policy address sexual harassment? Out of 341 districts which responded to this question, 340 (98.8%) districts indicated that their harassment policy addressed sexual harassment. One district (0.3%) indicated that their harassment policy did not address sexual harassment. Three districts (0.9%) which returned the survey did not respond.

?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	340	98.8
No	1	0.3
NR	3	0.9

Question 3

When was the policy adopted? This figure indicates the impact that an intensive education effort coupled with national and state media attention can have on district policy making. Prior to 1982, there were 2 districts indicating they had adopted a harassment policy. Between 1982 and 1990, thirty-nine (39) districts adopted a harassment policy. In 1991 and 1992, twenty-four (24) districts adopted policies on harassment. The intensive education effort begun in 1992 appears to have produced results. From 1992 to September of 1995, two hundred fifty-seven (257) districts adopted policies on harassment.



* of the 344 districts who returned the survey on time

Question 4

Does the harassment policy cover...? This figure indicates the individuals covered by the harassment policy. No single policy area was addressed in all districts.

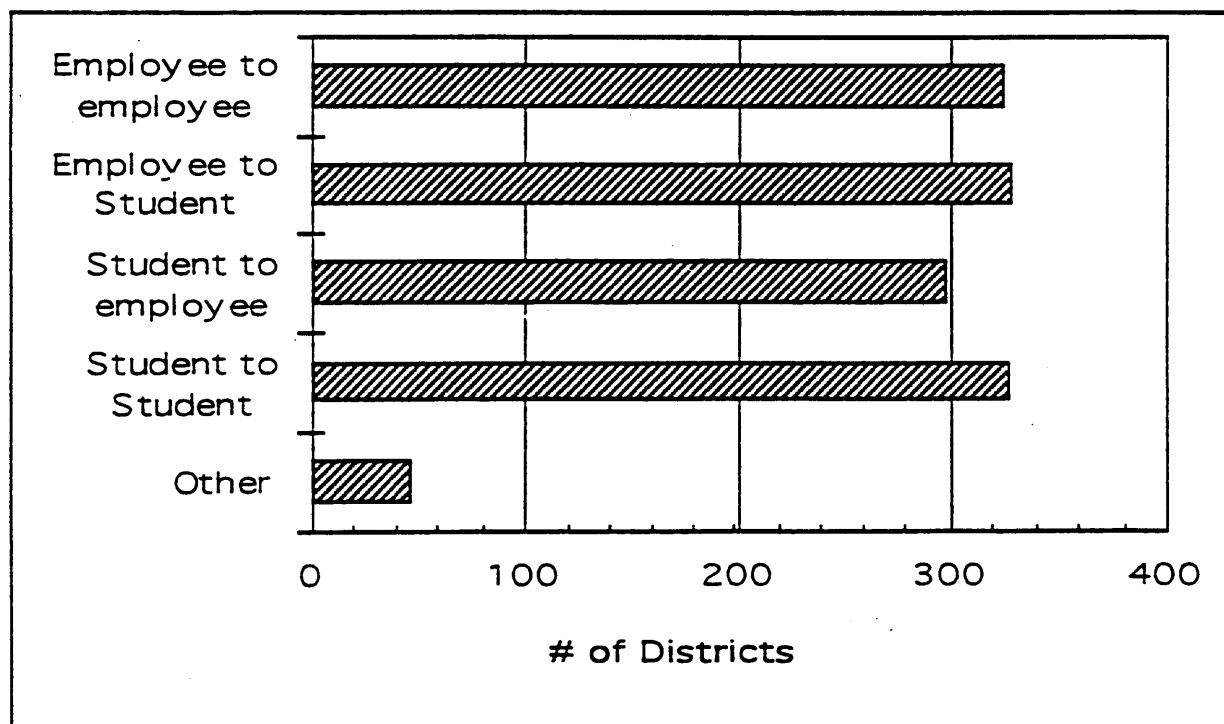
Out of 344 districts, harassment from employee to employee was addressed by 325 (94%) of those districts. Nineteen districts indicated they do not address this form of harassment.

Out of 344 districts responding, 330 districts or 96% indicated their policy addressed employee to student harassment.

Two hundred ninety-eight district policies (89%) addressed student to employee harassment.

Student to student harassment was addressed in 327 districts (95%).

The area described as "Other" included such listings as "vendors, parents, community members" or indicated that no harassment by anyone toward anyone would be tolerated within the district.



Question 5

The policy covers harassment on the basis of...Out of 344 districts responding, 331 or 96% indicated their policy included protection on the basis of race.

Harassment on the basis of color was included in 296 or 86% of districts.

Two hundred ninety-three districts or 85% protect persons on the basis of creed.

Harassment on the basis of religion was included in 329 or 96% of districts.

Harassment on the basis of national origin was included in 328 or 95% of districts.

Only 78% or 268 districts include marital status as a protected class.

Disability is included in 326 or 95% of districts.

Three hundred ten districts or 90% of districts included age in their policy.

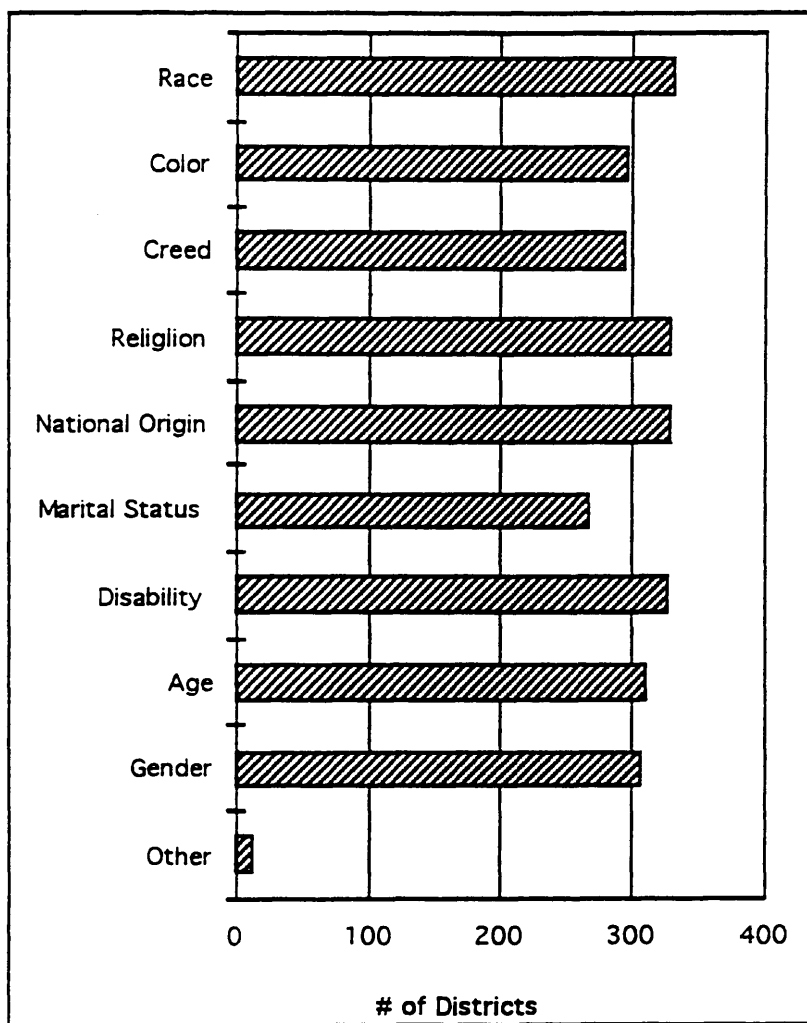
Gender was included in the policies of 307 districts or 89%.

The category described as other included three other bases. Sexual orientation was included by nine (9) or 3% of districts. Parental status was included in the policies of two (2) or 6% of districts, and nine (9) districts (3%) included "any form of harassment."

It is worth noting that some districts have a sexual harassment policy and no other harassment policy.

The figure illustrating Question 5 is found on the next page.

The Figure for Question 5



Question 6

Has your district staff been provided inservice on harassment?

Three hundred two (302) or 88% of districts indicated that their staff had received some form of inservice in regard to harassment. Thirty-eight or 11% indicated that staff had received no education in regard to harassment, and four (4) districts or 1% did not respond.

Although 98% of the districts have reported that they have a policy on harassment, only 88% of those reporting districts have received any staff development on dealing with the harassment issue. At least 38 districts have teachers as well as other staff who may be ill-equipped to recognize harassment when it occurs or to assist students (or other staff members) who are harassed.

Inservice?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	302	87.8
No	38	11.0
NR	4	1.2

Discussion of Question 7

Who provided inservice to your district? It is difficult to assess inservices because of the collaborative efforts between the Department of Education, the Area Education Agencies, and individual districts. In 1995, Department of Education staff had provided staff development for over 75% of Iowa districts. This was accomplished by Training of Trainer sessions being offered in 13 of the 15 AEA's (sometimes multiple sessions in an AEA), through staff development offered in individual districts, and in consortiums of districts. In a few instances, harassment prevention training was done for students. The staff development sessions are continuing.

Most AEA's were very cooperative with the effort of the Department of Education's goal to provide harassment prevention education for all districts in Iowa and to make available for each district, free material for both staff and students. AEA's printed materials for workshops, collaborated in many instances with workshop presentations, and, currently, distribute the *Stop It!* video to schools in Iowa.

Some schools indicated that harassment information was provided to their schools by local police departments and the county Sheriff's office, American Association of University Women speakers, their school's attorney, speakers from Grinnell College and DMAAC, private counseling agencies, speakers from School Administrators of Iowa, the Iowa Association of School Boards, and the Methodist Employee's Assistance Program

Question 8

Has harassment prevention education been provided for students in your district? Out of 344 districts, 275 (82.6%) indicated that harassment prevention education had been provided for students. Fifty-eight districts (17.4%) said they had provided no harassment prevention training for students.

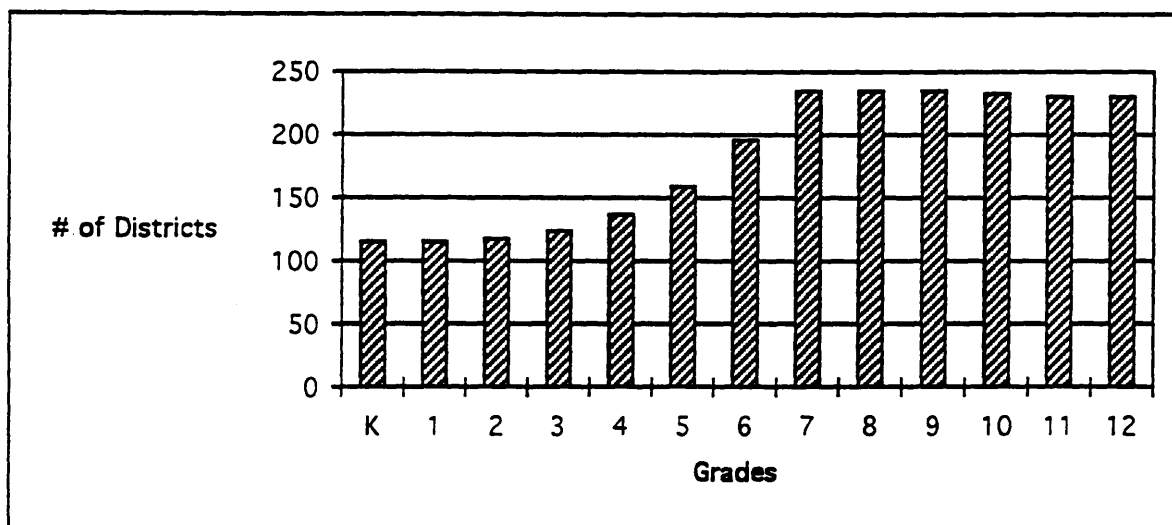
Recognition of what constitutes harassment and information on how to combat harassing behaviors is of major importance in dealing with this issue. Since the Supreme Court ruled in 1992 that students can sue and collect damages, schools have had a responsibility “to ensure that each student can attend school in a safe environment” (Mentell, 1993). Developing and adopting a harassment policy is a necessary beginning for every school, but of equal importance is helping students understand that harassment is neither a joke nor an embarrassment to be hidden. Harassment is a serious violation of the law, and it is incumbent upon each district to ensure that students understand this issue. Department of Education staff has developed model policies and curricula for this purpose.

Provided?	Frequency*	Percent*
Yes	275	82.6
No	58	17.4

Question 8A

What grade levels have received harassment training? District responses make it clear that the focus for harassment training for students has been in the 7th grade with 234 districts responding, the 8th grade with 235 districts responding and the 9th grade with 234 districts responding. Grades 10, 11, and 12 show only a slight variation with grade 10 receiving 232 responses, grade 11 showing 231 responses, and grade 12 showing 230 responses.

Elementary grades have not fared so well, but this is not necessarily the fault of the districts. For a long while, there was no free and state-provided elementary curriculum available, so schools either had to purchase curricula or design their own. However, the Department of Education elementary curriculum is under final revision and should be ready for distribution soon.



Discussion of Question 9

If your district provided instruction on harassment, what was the source of the instructional materials? The great majority of schools appear to be using “No Big Deal,” the middle school/high school curriculum and the accompanying video *Stop It! Students Speak Out About Sexual Harassment*. Many AEA’s printed the manuals for Department of Education workshops. Also, the AEA’s distribute the video. Some districts have adapted the manual to suit their particular needs, and it is published by their school under another title. The following list indicates additional resources that schools are using either alone or in conjunction with other materials.

Crossing the Line, Kitchener, Reese, Sepler and Associates, 1992

Sexual Harassment: What Is It and Why Should I Care, Quality Work Environment, 1992

Sexual Harassment: A Guide to Prevention, Intervention, and Investigation, Aspen Publications, 1995

Kid Ability IV

It’s Not Fun; It’s Illegal, Minnesota Department of Education

Don’t Do It; Don’t Allow It (tape)

“Safe Schools Culture” (formerly “Vulture Culture,” Dennis Brown

Locally developed materials

Survey of State Departments of Education

Alabama

The state of Alabama educates state employees about sexual harassment. The state has a technical assistance program available to all school districts re. race and gender equity.

Alaska

Does not provide school districts with guidelines for harassment.

Arizona

Does not provide school districts with guidelines for harassment.

Arkansas

Harassment policy for personnel provided. Does not provide school districts with guidelines for harassment.

California

Legislative Bill 2900 requires every educational institution in the state to have a written policy on sexual harassment. Districts may obtain sample policy from California School Board Association. Students from 4th grade up are covered.

Connecticut

The state provides Equity/Title IX laws and regulations, sample sexual harassment policies, and grievance procedures to school districts.

A commission is empowered to require employers to take proactive steps with regard to sexual harassment in the workplace. Prohibits sexual harassment on campus and in higher education.

Florida

The Florida State Department of Education provides materials and guidelines for the districts.

Georgia

The state provides self-evaluation checklists, federal register regulations, gender equity brochures, and a model sexual harassment policy.

Hawaii

The state provides a brochure on EEO, a civil rights complaint procedure, a sexual harassment brochure and poster, as well as Train-the-Trainer sessions for teachers, counselors, and school administrators.

Illinois

The state provides training for agency staff, but does not furnish specific guidelines to local school districts on sexual harassment. Prohibits sexual harassment in education and higher education.

Indiana

Sample school policies and grievance guidelines are provided to districts.

Kansas

The state has not developed sample guidelines. Local districts are responsible for developing their own.

Kentucky

There is no information available.

Louisiana

Inservices are provided to local districts through Title IX coordinator.

Maine

The state provides sample policies, a grievance procedure outline, and training to local districts. Guidelines and a pamphlet are distributed to all students.

Maryland

Information about sexual harassment is provided to all districts which, in turn, develop their own policies and procedures. Guidelines and a pamphlet are distributed to all students.

Michigan

Training sessions and guidelines are provided upon request from local districts. The Michigan Department of Education has also developed other sexual harassment publications which are available to local districts.

Minnesota

In 1989, the state passed a law requiring all districts to implement a student sexual harassment policy K-12. Extensive training is required of district personnel. Excellent curriculum materials are provided. Also, the state school board association provides a sample school board policy. A harassment prevention workshop handout is provided along with information about sexual harassment in schools.

Mississippi

Mississippi provides no guidelines to districts.

Missouri

No strict guidelines are provided by the state. However, a packet is provided to districts which contains information about policies, definitions, educator and student guides, prevention workshops, and literature on the subject of harassment.

Nebraska

The State Department of Education provides extensive information to local districts, including presentations, sample policies, model curriculum, and training of staff and students. The state regulations do not mention sexual harassment specifically, but do allow for compensatory damages under the Equal Opportunity in Education law. The EOE is a procedural law (which informs litigants of how to file) which prohibits sexual discrimination in pre-school through institutions of higher learning, plus the Department of Education.

Nevada

The state has no official guidelines currently.

New Hampshire

No sexual harassment guidelines are issued to school districts. Teachers as employees are covered under the state's anti-discrimination law. The EEO office offers workshops for teachers, superintendents, and building administrators on sexual harassment policies and procedures are covered under the anti-discrimination law.

New York

The State Education Department provides inservice training on request of local districts. Material typically includes definitions, lists of behaviors that may be discriminatory, suggestions for prevention, and advice for victims.

North Dakota

A packet of information is provided upon request of local districts. The information includes definitions, examples, sample policies for students and employees, reporting procedures, and information on how to protect against false accusations.

Ohio

Ohio has a policy to prohibit harassment among its employees.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma does not provide information to districts.

Pennsylvania

An executive order prohibiting harassment in Pennsylvania was issued by the governor. There are harassment policies for employees of the State Department of Education. A guide book for policy development for school districts is issued by the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals.

Rhode Island

No specific guidelines are issued to districts, but conferences are sponsored to help school district staff develop awareness and appropriate strategies.

South Carolina

There are no state requirements, but a model harassment program suitable for both employees and students is available to districts.

Tennessee

No guidelines or laws are provided to schools. Department of Personnel guidelines were developed in 1989.

Utah

All districts have developed harassment policies. The State Department of Education trains all supervisors. There is also a training manual for use in schools.

Washington

Legislative House Bill 2153 relates to school district sexual harassment policy. Copies of the bill are provided to districts along with a manuscript which provides information and guidelines on harassment.

Washington, D.C.

The Superintendent of Public Schools provides guidelines and a district policy prohibiting sexual harassment. Information sheets are provided.

West Virginia

The West Virginia Board of Education has a comprehensive developmental guidance policy for local districts. The policy identifies prohibited discriminatory behaviors. There are also broad-based materials covering parental education, student rights and responsibilities, teacher codes of conduct which are available to schools.

Wisconsin

A state statute prohibits discrimination including harassment in education and higher education. A brochure describes state law and how to file complaints. Extensive materials for schools is available from the Department of Public Instruction.

Wyoming

There are no state guidelines to districts available from the Department of Education, but the Department does disseminate a student's guide to sexual harassment.

This material was partially provided by Van Patten (1994) and Lewis and others (1992). It is possible that states have passed additional legislation since the 1994 Van Patten report.

Iowa

Iowa has no state law requiring all districts to implement a student harassment policy, but the Department of Education has taken numerous steps to encourage districts to do so. The following is a list of services and materials provided by the Department of Education:

The Iowa Department of Education provides guidelines and a model comprehensive harassment policy to public and private schools upon request. Model forms for grievance procedures, forms for reporting incidents, specific suggestions for investigation, teacher/administrator conduct guidelines, and other materials individualized for the particular needs of a district are also available.

A student brochure, "Sexual Harassment: What Every Student Should Know," is widely distributed in districts. This brochure is designed for upper elementary, middle school and high school levels. Space is provided so that local agencies can include names, addresses, and telephone number of district contact persons.

Department staff developed a harassment curriculum, *No Big Deal*, for middle schools and high schools. In addition to the comprehensive text, the book contains discussion questions, case studies, twelve transparency masters, a summary of harassment laws, a list of projects, a survey, and print-ready masters of the model policy and the brochure. The manual is distributed free of charge.

For use in conjunction with the manual is the Emmy-winning video, *Stop It! Students Speak Out About Sexual Harassment*. Free to schools in Iowa, there is a small charge for out-of-state schools and other organizations.

In response to a national need for harassment information for school transportation personnel, Department staff developed the training manual *The Hostile Schoolbus*. Selzer/Boddy, Inc. has since packaged the manual along with a video. There is a charge for the package.

Training materials targeted at K-5 students are in the process of revision.

Sexual harassment inservices and Train-the-Trainer sessions are presented by equity staff at AEA's, in single districts, and in consortiums of school districts. These sessions include presentations targeted at administration, all staff, school boards, parents and other community members, and students. Presentations are done on-site and by use of the ICN.

Presentations about harassment have also been made at colleges and universities; national, state, and regional conferences; and civic and professional organizations.

Department of Education staff provides additional technical assistance by disseminating procedural information for filing grievances, listing available options, and in assisting parties to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion to complaints. This assistance is given both indirectly and on-site.

The following table is from the work of Charol Shakeshaft and Audrey Cohan. It appears in *In Loco Parentis: Sexual Abuse of Students in Schools: What Administrators Should Know, 1994*.

The Educational Level by Sex of Students Abused

	Percent elementary	Percent middle/Jr. high	Percent high school
Females	37.0	21.0	42.0
Males	52.6	21.1	23.3

“Respect” appears to be the component missing from a school environment in which harassment flourishes. A strong Multicultural Nonsexist approach to education will provide the foundation for that necessary respect.

The Issue

“Why does our school have to bother with all this MCNS stuff? We don’t have any diversity here. We’re all the same!” (Iowa superintendent, 1995)

This superintendent’s question would likely provoke discussion in many homogeneous districts, in Iowa and across the United States. However, even the most recalcitrant administrator is given pause when confronted with what James Banks called “a demographic imperative” (Banks, 1991): it is reported that approximately half of school children in the United States will be children of color by shortly after the year 2000 (Gormley and others, 1994, Garcia and Pugh, 1992). Iowa’s schools will inevitably be affected by such change, and the multicultural nonsexist approach to education will help schools meet the challenges that those changes will bring.

As Iowa’s population rate slowly increases, (*Des Moines Register*, 1/27/96), the state’s citizenry grows more diverse (Iowa Department of Economic Development, 1994). Consequently, the educational system cannot ignore the fact that “failing to teach children to respect people who are different from them does not augur well for the future” (Gough, 1993).

However, ethnicity is not the exclusive reason for espousing a multicultural nonsexist-based education system. Gasbarro and Matthews cite Hodgkinson from 1985:

What is coming toward the educational system is a group of children who will be poorer, more ethnically and linguistically diverse, and who will have more handicaps that will affect their learning...Also, minorities will cover a broader socio-economic range than ever before, making simplistic treatment of their needs even less useful (1994).

It appears clear that neither Iowa nor any other state will remain homogeneous far into the twenty-first century.

Because the demographics of the world are changing, children can no longer live in a cloistered environment.

All students, whether in urban, suburban, rural, or the new...exurban (meaning beyond the suburbs, but not rural) communities, need to be aware of different cultures and their impacts on the interpersonal, commercial, and educational facets of their lives (Lloyd, 1994).

Given the varying faces of Iowa communities and the broadening relationship of Iowa to world communities, it would appear clear that our students need to acquire information and skills that are necessary to functioning in a world that is characterized by transformation.

Consequently, if schools ignore the diversity among students, student learning can be inhibited. (Gough, 1993; Gay, 1993; Boutte and McCoy, 1993).

Bachman (1994) reminds us that "as diversity increases, so have the number of racially and ethnically motivated crimes." One has only to read the *Des Moines Register* to realize that cross-cultural animosity is increasing. Within the past year many violent incidents with religious, racial, and gender overtones have occurred in Iowa. A Des Moines Synagogue was defaced; a black youth was beaten by white skinheads, and incidents of sexual harassment continue to plague students of younger and younger ages.

Although the information submitted by Iowa districts to the Educational Equity Report from 1995 (as well as other years) indicates a paucity of race and gender related incidents of harassment, field interviews with students as well as telephone calls from students and parents who seek assistance in these matters reveal a different story.

For example: during a student interview (1996) a group of white students vehemently denied there being any racial animosity within their district. "We get along great!" they said. "No one here would mistreat another student!"

Their denials would have been accepted as correct, had the expression on the faces of a Native American student, an African American student, and an Asian American student not been so incredulous. Each of these students had stories to tell of ethnic slurs, racial remarks, and rampant paternalism exhibited by both students and staff. The African American student even

spoke of “counseling” sessions that he held with African American elementary students in order to help them learn to deal with racial slurs that “increase as they get older.”

Especially interesting was a session held with elementary school teachers representative of the district. One African American teacher smiled wryly as her white colleagues proclaimed that no racial incidents ever occurred. “Only every day!” she announced.

Interviews in other districts reveal educators and students who say, “We do not have minority students here” when minority students are *at that moment* in plain view of the speaker. Other persons insist that they “treat everybody the same.” Although both these groups are surely well-intentioned, the common denominator here is that very likely all the students are treated as European American with no allowances made for racial or cultural differences of other sorts.

It is imperative that children of color see themselves in books and in the curriculum. Presently, many children of color are exposed to a sense of invisibility in the classroom. They need to know that role models exist and that they (children) can be a (sic) presidents, or politicians, teachers, writers, inventors, or anything that they aspire to be (Boutte and McCoy, 1994).

Textbooks, curricula, the pictures on the classroom bulletin all contribute subtly to the images of themselves that students form. However, it seems clear that no teaching method or material has the impact that a role model has. Barbara Jordan testified to this when she related that until she *saw and heard* a black, female lawyer speak at a long ago Houston Public Schools career day, she “never knew” she could do that; she “never aspired.”

Like ripples in a pond spreading from a dropped pebble, the influences of role models expand. In the *Des Moines Register*, Shirley Ragsdale, a journalist from Indiana, tells of simply seeing Jordan on a television screen and realizing that “women could be strong and speak powerfully. I never doubted I could not do it, too” (January 20, 1996).

If it is agreed that effective education must be “personally meaningful, socially relevant, culturally accurate, and pedagogically sound” (Gay, 1994), then it appears imperative that teacher training institutions provide for a strong multicultural component in teacher education and that teachers currently in the classroom be provided staff development to assist them in providing *all* their students with the sense of empowerment that results when students can “walk out of the classroom feeling that they are a part of the information”(Walcott and Dei in Cheng and Soudack, 1994). This expectation can more accurately be realized when teachers are themselves taught from an inclusive rather than exclusive perspective and are helped to discover their own “well-intended” behaviors that help to institutionalize personal biases.

Hodgkinson, as far back as 1985, reminded educators that the future (now!) will have more “poor” children than ever before. If Boutte and McCoy (1994) are correct in that “lower expectations (are) generally held for children from low SES (socioeconomic status),” and that students with low SES are channeled into different vocational areas than are the more affluent students, then it is possible that we are truncating the expectations of ever growing numbers of students.

In order to perform well in school, students must feel that their school environment is “safe, secured, accepting, caring, nurturing, and encouraging” (Lloyd, 1994). The success or failure of students’ school experience will inevitably affect their adult lives. Almost no one disagrees with this; however, according to many studies, at least fifty percent of our student population is discriminated against on a regular basis. Women and girls, and particularly

Minority and disadvantaged girls are commonly the recipients of the worst forms of discrimination at school. They are discriminated against because of their minority or disadvantaged status; they are discriminated against within their own racial, ethnic and socio-economic groups, and they are discriminated against by predominately male policy formulation (Cardenas, 1994).

While many people express shock at incidents of racial or religious discrimination, gender discrimination has become so widely ingrained in our society that frequently both schools and communities are not only insensitive

to it, but long for “a return to the days when women acted like women’ and did not disrupt traditional educational practices” (Cardenas, 1994).

The idea that teachers must accommodate the different learning styles of various cultural or ethnic groups has become a generally accepted principal of education. However, there is still widespread animosity (sometimes masked as indifference), to the idea that males and females learn differently as well, and that in order to provide equitable educational opportunities for both genders, we must provide for that difference.

Carol Gilligan’s research in developmental psychology at Harvard University presents the view that

we continue to study adolescent boys and make generalizations about human development, but when girls are studied, researchers get a very different view.... ideas are expounded by men and about men, yet claim to represent the entire human condition (First and Curcio, 1994).

As far back as 1989, Csikszentmihalyi propounded the ideas that

girls’ concerns for human relatedness (connection) and personal responsibility (care) do not produce a less valid way to reason, but an equally intelligent and viable perspective that complements what are seen as more masculine concerns, those for rights and justice (Csikszentmihalyi, 1989).

The song from *My Fair Lady* (words mostly by George Bernard Shaw, that *fin de siecle* male advocate of education for women) asks satirically, “Why can’t a woman be more like a man?” Its counterpoint is heard from classrooms across the country every time girls are urged to think like men in some higher level science, mathematics, or history classes - and especially in vocational classes.

In *Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America*, William Johnson, vice president, telecommunications and networks, Digital Equipment Corporation, is quoted as saying

Business is already having trouble finding qualified people to fill our jobs, especially in fields like computers and biotechnology. By early in the next century, we're going to need over 700,000 new scientists and engineers. That's ten times the number of Hispanics, twelve times the number of African Americans, and three times the number of women scientists we are currently producing (AAUW, 1992).

Predictions for the workforce in the year 2000 include the following:

- (1) two out of three new participants in the workforce will be women;
- (2) eighty percent (80%) of all women will be in the workforce;
- (3) sixty-two percent of African American women, 61.5% of all white women, and 57% of all Hispanic women are projected to be in the workforce;
- (4) 10% of women entrants into the labor force will be Asian, American Indian, and Alaskan native women (American University, "The Report Card #7).

The predictions listed above, when coupled with the increasing number of households headed by women present new challenges. "Between 1980 and 1990...the poverty rate among single-parent families headed by a woman increased from 35% to 45%, despite the fact that the women in those families were more likely to be working." The need to make sure that women are educated for full participation in the workforce appears clear. We also should consider the accompanying issues of "family leave, universal child care, and schools as community resource centers" (Iowa Kids Count, 1994).

Given the changes mentioned above, it would appear that districts need to examine the disparity that exists between numbers of female and male students in such vocational classes as Family and Consumer Science and Industrial Technology. Numbers of male students taking classes related to child care range between 16.97% and 26.62% of class enrollment while numbers of female students enrolled in, for example, electronics classes range from 2.60% to 4.89%.

If Iowa wishes to prepare both genders to make a strong contribution to the years past the turn of this century, then perhaps we should consider giving more recognition to the roles that fathers will play in child-rearing - and also more attention to the fact that women should be encouraged to

consider well-paying occupations which may not fall into the traditional range, but which may enable them to keep their children and themselves off welfare.

The questions facing schools in the twenty-first century appear to be more difficult than those faced at the beginning of any other century. Schools are asked to *do* more for students and *be* more to students than ever before. The students, themselves, present challenges that teachers have not had to face until the second half of the current century.

Homelessness is on the rise in Iowa as it is across the nation. Dr. Raymond Morley's report on homelessness in Iowa revealed that not only is the proportion of the homeless at its greatest level since the Great Depression, but in Iowa, students K-12 that are homeless or near-homeless are at an all-time record level of 22,990. The report urges Iowa to consider

the experiences of children living in crowded shelters or apartments, and doubling up with more people than available space can reasonably accommodate. When a child is in a constant state of flux because of inadequate living conditions or is concerned about whether or not adequate shelter and food will be available on a regular basis, other concerns can pale in comparison. (This child) may have a more difficult time doing homework, or even attending school, because daily life is a struggle...The life chances of those living in extreme poverty become increasingly narrowed because survival is problematic (*Homeless Children and Families in Iowa*, 1994).

A corollary to the poverty level of families is that "adolescents from low-income families, who are already more likely to be educationally disadvantaged, are more likely to become pregnant than their peers from middle- and upper- income families" (National Women's Law Center, 1994). Nor is the problem of pregnant and parenting adolescents confined to large urban centers. In Iowa, in 1993, one in twelve (12) infants was born to an unmarried teen.

This percentage has increased more than 77 percent since 1980 and, at this rate, will surpass the national average by

the year 2000. More than one-fourth (1/4) of the counties in the state already have teen unmarried birth percentages above the national average (Iowa Kids Count, 1994).

Information from the National Women's Law Center indicates that "pregnancy is the most commonly cited reason for young women dropping out of school," and, although teen pregnancy should not be considered just an issue involving the expecting *mother*, teacher prejudice against pregnant and parenting young women often causes them to drop out of school (1995). It is worth mentioning here that although the national drop out rate for men (13.5%) is slightly higher than that of women (12%), fewer women who drop out ever return to school (Report Card #7, 1990).

The faces of Iowa are changing, and with those changes have come great challenges. Ted Stilwill, Director of the Department of Education, recognizes these challenges: "This is an exciting time. It is exciting because I cannot remember a time when the challenges and opportunities facing education, both nationally and here in Iowa, have been greater. Our commitment to multicultural nonsexist education not only offers schools the opportunity to meet the learning needs of students from a diverse cultural population, but also offers the opportunity to build the mutual respect for each other that a vigorous democracy requires."

Iowans understand that in order to continue leading education reform now and throughout the next century, we must REVIEW the way we have educated our students in the past, and RETAIN what is good. But we must also RECOGNIZE the new set of problems presented to us by a changing world, and RALLY to meet those challenges. The issues of increasing diversity, increasingly poorer students, drop out rates, homelessness, gender discrimination, teen pregnancy, single parent families, harassment and violence are daunting. To meet these challenges, Iowa educators need to enlarge upon the ideas of people like Jesse M. Parker, and W.H. McFarland, and Robert D. Benton. In truth, we must "prepare all children...for living and working in integrated environments" and insure that our instructional materials, curriculum content, and teaching patterns in no way condition girls or boys for stereotyped roles or careers on the basis of sex or race" (MCNS Guidelines for Iowa Schools, 1975).

Historical Perspective and Current Status

“You state people keep on coming up with new stuff for us teachers to do...like this MCNS education...” (An Iowa educator, 1995).

New stuff?

Multicultural education in Iowa is not new. To the contrary, the multicultural approach to education is at least fifty years old, and its younger cohort, the equally important *nonsexism*, is more than twenty years old.

In the November 1, 1945 issue of *The Educational Bulletin*, a publication of the Iowa Department of Public Instruction, Jesse M. Parker then Superintendent of Public Instruction, wrote of “postwar matters” which demanded the attention of Iowans “now that we are permitted to turn from the tensions under which we have been working in our all-out struggle to win the war.” She notes that the world in 1945 was changing and that to “educate soundly for the future, education must keep in mind social as well as technological change, and must itself be constantly moving or changing...changes in our curriculum are bound to come” (p.3).

W. H. McFarland, in the February, 1946 issue of the same publication, argues for curriculum changes which would include the teaching of world geography and world history. He urges Iowans to consider that much suffering in the world comes from a “lack of human understanding and human sympathy” (p. 4).

Sprinkled throughout this publication from the immediate postwar years are articles urging “education for human understanding” in light of the consensus that “society is constantly changing,” as well as repetitive calls for schools to teach “respect for other cultures.” *Humane education* was the temporary name assigned to this new approach.

Multicultural nonsexist education is **not** new in Iowa. It appears clear that at least 50 years ago, many Iowa educators were not only cognizant of the need for cultural sensitivity, they were also offering concrete suggestions showing how learning respect for diversity might be accomplished in local Iowa districts, suggestions which sound remarkably contemporary:

- “1. Control your voice and gestures when speaking of people of other races or creeds so as not to make them disparaging. Children learn attitudes from seven months on. (See Boutte and McCoy, 1994.)
2. Through words and music, teach children to identify themselves with children all over the world. (See *Tapestry*, 1992.)
3. Take every chance to show you do not believe in segregation. For example, if opportunity offers, sit next to someone of another race in a bus. Things as simple as that have their long range effect. (See the life of Martin Luther King.)
4. Don't call people of other races and nationalities by their current derogatory diminutives. (See Pang, 1994.)
5. Have children face their prejudices at an early age. (See Cheng and Soudak, 1994.)
6. Association is important, especially with children. They must know people of other races, not just know about them. (See Spears, 1994; Pang, 1994.)
7. Studying more about other peoples' customs, their history and anthropology helps to complete understanding.” (See Bachman, 1994, Pang, 1994.)

(*Educational Bulletin*, 2/47, p.4, reprinted from *Woman's Day*, 1944).

The student composition of Iowa classrooms changed between the years of 1945 and 1975. Student diversity in schools was no longer a prospect, but became a reality.

Partly because of the changing faces in Iowa schools and partially because of federal legislation, the State Board of Public Instruction and state legislators launched an effort to prepare district personnel to meet the needs of all their students. Non-discrimination statements were developed and adopted, and state mandates regulating curriculum, teaching practices, and the like were implemented. The ultimate objective was to produce a future generation of Iowans who respect and appreciate diversity rather than fear it,

and who will be less apt to stereotype, exhibit prejudicial attitudes or discriminate against each other .

In the *Multicultural Nonsexist Guidelines for Iowa Schools* approved July 18, 1975, part of the rationale indicates that "Issues in human relations and issues concerning social value judgments have become inescapable in the present day classroom. For thousands of Iowa teachers already teaching in multicultural classrooms, dealing with intergroup relations is no longer a matter of teaching preference. Instead, the achievement of better human relations through education is a necessity which is vital to our national welfare and to the complete development of human beings" (p.4).

The Bill passed by the legislature required the Department of Education to develop rules for systematically implementing the multicultural nonsexist requirement in local school districts. These rules were designed so that (a) curriculum changes could be implemented gradually over a period of years; (b) the cost to local districts would be minimal; and (c) the program could be smoothly integrated into the ongoing process for curriculum and review.

The rules allowed each school district to determine its own plan of action for designing a multicultural, nonsexist program. The only parameters set were that the plans include these four components:

- (1) Goals and objectives with timelines for each curriculum/ program area
- (2) A description of how districts would provide inservice for employees
- (3) Evidence of input into the plan's development and implementation by men and women, diverse cultural and racial groups, and persons who are disabled.

The plans were to be written and placed on file so that they were available to the public by July, 1980. They were to be implemented across the curriculum by July, 1985. The 1988 Iowa Legislature made two major revisions to the legislation: to require evaluation and updating of the MCNS plans every five years and to add a fifth required component of the plan involving "specific provisions for the infusion of multicultural nonsexist concepts into each component of written curriculum required by Iowa law." The latter was done to insure that objectives found in multicultural nonsexist

plans were also found in the philosophy, goals, and objectives, student outcome statements and other components required for each program area.

It is important to remember that the MCNS education plan is only one facet of the Educational Equity thrust in Iowa's schools. It is meant to complement other components in a broad based program which include the following:

- (1) A requirement that all school boards take affirmative steps to integrate students in attendance centers and courses based on sex, race, national origin, and disability.
- (2) A requirement that human relations training be included in pre-service teacher education programs as well as for the re-certification of educators already in the field. The training is designed to sensitize educators to gender, race, national origin, and disability equity issues.
- (3) A requirement that supplementary language programs be provided for Limited English Proficiency students. This is coupled with increased foreign language requirements in the state which recognize the value of bilingualism to Iowa students.
- (4) The establishing of an educational equity monitoring system in which the State Department of Education implements desk audits and on-site reviews to determine the degree to which school districts, area education agencies, and merged area schools are implementing and complying with federal and state educational equity (civil rights) requirements including MCNS education.
- (5) A requirement that affirmative action plans in employment in school districts, area education agencies, and merged area schools be developed which would recognize the positive educational impact of diverse role models in all levels of employment.

Department of Education staff marshaled resource people and materials and commenced an intensive statewide program to instruct LEA and AEA staff in the nuances of establishing a multicultural nonsexist approach to the programs of all schools. In the years from 1980-1988, state conferences were held in most major subject/program areas, and workshops were sponsored in each of the 15 AEA's. A series of pamphlets in each area were developed. In 1989,

computer and foreign language pamphlets were developed, and in 1990, fifteen AEA workshop were held to assist districts in updating or developing Multicultural Nonsexist Plans. Grant programs to schools and individual teachers not only helped schools meet the need for some new instructional materials, but acted in a sense as an inducement for district staff to generate innovative activities for their classrooms.

Currently, Multicultural Nonsexist Education progress is monitored through the Educational Equity Review System. The AEA's provide assistance to school districts in terms of infusing MCNS concepts into curricula, and the Department of Education lends technical assistance in terms of continuing and specialized workshops.

There is no current arrangement for comprehensive assessment of whether all Iowa districts have followed MCNS mandates and have in place the necessary components required by state and federal regulations. For example, although school districts routinely indicate on BEDS documents that they uniformly have an MCNS plan in place, the information gleaned from Educational Equity Reviews sometimes reveals the opposite.

The following material is the most current and the most accurate information available at the present time for assessing the status of some MCNS information:

MCNS Information Gathered From Educational Equity Reviews 1991-1995

This information was gathered during Educational Equity On-site Reviews during the last four (4) years. Information gathered before that time was reported in a narrative manner, rather than as numerical data, and was, therefore, difficult to report in a form such as this. Given the informal process for the collection of this data, there is a potential for error beyond that found in the Department's systemic data system.

It is important to remember that most of the school districts reviewed are selected using a desk audit procedure which is designed to identify school districts that have more statistical indicators of potential equity-related issues. It does not constitute a random sample of Iowa educational agencies.

A. Educational Equity Coordinator

One of the first steps in providing multicultural nonsexist approaches to the teaching/learning process is to assign responsibility for coordinating the agency's equity

related activities. Both federal and state laws require that districts designate such a coordinator.

	Compliance	Compliance with Concerns	Noncompliance
1994-1995	7	12	4
1993-1994	16	8	3
1992-1993	11	7	13
1991-1992	4	x	15

In 1995, there is a compliance rate of 79%.

B. Multicultural Nonsexist Education Plan

These plans are required under Iowa School Standards, and they are intended to provide the blueprint for building awareness of and respect for diversity throughout the agency's programs. These plans are to include goals and objectives for all program areas, descriptions of staff development efforts, strategies for involving diverse groups in the development and implementation of the plan, the district's plan for infusing the objectives into written curricula, and a strategy for evaluating the implementation of the plan. They are to be updated every five (5) years.

	Compliance	Compliance with Concerns	Noncompliance
1994-1995	1	10	13
1993-1994	2	9	16
1992-1993	6	7	16
1991-1991	6	27	x

The compliance rate for 1995 is 46%.

C. Infusion of MCNS Concepts Into Written Curriculum

A major thrust of the MCNS education plan is to provide a link to the curriculum development process through the description of the infusion process and the development of objectives for each program area. Written curriculum guides in the agencies are reviewed to see whether they reflect the objectives indicated in the MCNS plan. Guides from the four most recently revised curricula were reviewed on each visit prior to 1995. In 1995, teams reviewed one nonvocational guide and one vocational guide.

	Compliance	Compliance with Concerns	Noncompliance
1994-1995	7	9	8
1993-1994	3	16	8
1992-1993	9	7	13
1991-1992	11	x	13

The 1995 compliance rate is 67%.

D. Language Services to Limited English Proficiency Students

Both federal and state legislation requires school districts to provide language assistance to students whose primary language is one other than English. All districts are to identify the home (primary) language of students when they first enter the school district. If the student's home language is one other than English, the district is required to measure the student's oral and written language proficiency to ensure that the student has the English skills necessary to successfully function in the classroom. If the language assessment tests administered determine that the student needs language assistance, the district is required to provide needed English language assistance and support services.

	Compliance	Compliance with Concerns	Noncompliance
1994-1995	5	8	11
1993-1994	7	5	15
1992-1993	2	4	23
1991-1992	1	x	27

The 1995 compliance rate is 54%.

E. Harassment of Staff and Students

Sexual harassment of staff or students and harassment based on their race, national origin, disability, gender, or religion has been ruled a form of discrimination by the Supreme Court. This includes harassment by administrators, fellow employees, or students. Over the past three years Department equity staff have received more requests for assistance, information, and training and have provided more assistance and training on this topic than any other.

	Compliance	Compliance with Concerns	Noncompliance
1994-1995	11	13	0
1993-1994	8	11	8
1992-1993	0	20	9
1992-1991	2	x	18

There was 100% compliance from school districts visited during the 1995 equity review. See the Harassment Report for specific information.

Statistical Information from Education Preparation Programs

Current Number of Teacher Education Faculty: 851

Full time faculty	Female 240	Male 270
Part time faculty	Female 205	Male 136

Current Number of Minority Teacher Education Faculty: 38

Full time faculty	Female: 15	Male 11
Part time faculty	Female: 6	Male 6

Source: Dr. Susan Hetzler, *Statistical Description of the Institution, 1994-95 Academic Year*.

**“...diversifying the college level teacher education workforce represents...a hurdle”
(Bachman, 1994).**

Current Number of Teacher Education Students

White: Origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East	9167
Black: Origins in any of the black racial groups	200
Asian/Pacific Islander: Origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands	63
American Indian/Alaskan Native: Origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition	29
Hispanic: Persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South America, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.	90
Not specified	4349

Total number of students: 13,898

Source: Dr. Susan Hetzler, *Statistical Description of the Institution, 1994-1995 Academic Year*.

It appears that out of almost 14,000 students in Iowa who are preparing to become teachers, 9,167 are white (with 4,349 not responding). "...the composition of today's pool of prospective teachers remains largely white and middle class while the students they serve are becoming more diverse"(Gormley and others, 1994).

The purpose of scrutinizing educational data is to use them as a basis for designing plans for improvement. In the next segment, some options are offered.

Options for Action

The belief that “Educational excellence is not possible without educational equity” must be the guiding principal of any actions taken to provide leadership at the state level. That tenet, combined with the new Iowa education focus, should serve to collect current duplicated efforts toward school reform and shape them into a worthy educational model. Consequently, the options listed below are offered for consideration within the framework of the developing School Improvement Plan.

1. It is essential that all school districts be urged to adopt comprehensive harassment policies for the protection of students and staff. Equally important is community involvement in the development, understanding, and distribution of these policies and complaint procedures. The Department of Education should provide support for districts, who with the assistance of local committees, develop harassment policies and procedures. Since education is the *sine qua non* of harassment prevention, schools should be urged to provide comprehensive and continuing harassment prevention education for K-12 students and staff.

In tandem with harassment information, strong Multicultural Nonsexist education should be specified in School Improvement Plans for all districts. This training would find most success if it included *all* staff, both full- and part-time (administrators, certified, non-certified), community members, parents, incoming students, and the like. Specifying an annual review of the Multicultural Nonsexist Plan with particular emphasis on curriculum inclusion should be recommended by the School Improvement Teams to district committees.

2. The state could establish grants which might encourage districts to implement and improve necessary harassment, gender equity, or multicultural nonsexist education mandates, carry out extensive public information campaigns, provide for community-wide events in order to change attitudes that foster gender inequity and harassment. Local district advisory committees could use grants to establish support programs for agencies and organizations which are designed to prevent harassment and violence.

3. Program approval standards for educator preparation programs should address harassment prevention, gender equity and multicultural nonsexist issues.

4. Harassment prevention and multicultural nonsexist education updates should be provided to all Department of Education staff with particular emphasis for School Improvement Teams who will assist districts to meet emerging goals.

Including the options listed above as part of Iowa's school improvement efforts will help to insure that Iowa's schools provide an environment in which positive racial, ethnic, and gender attitudes will flourish. When all students feel valued and challenged, then high academic expectations for all students can become a reality.

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