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Elementary teacher planning time and its use in Nebraska elementary schools

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ELEMENTARY TEACHER PLANNING TIME AND ITS USE IN NEBRASKA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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The purpose for conducting the study was to identify the amount of planning time offered to elementary teachers and to compare that time to the planning time offered secondary teachers. The study was also conducted to identify how elementary teachers used planning time and how their planning time was monitored by administrators. In addition, the study was conducted to determine whether teachers and principals desired more planning time and how additional planning time would be used.

The study included information provided by superintendents, elementary principals, and teachers from Nebraska Class III districts. Questionnaires were mailed to 223 superintendents. Questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 150 principals and 391 teachers whose superintendents reported the use of planning time.

Frequency analysis and cross-tabulations were used to analyze the responses from the questionnaires. Data from each of the groups were compared using t-tests and the Mann-Whitney U test.

A number of conclusions were inferred from the planning time study:

1. While studies have addressed how teachers plan, little has been done to study the use and effectiveness of planning time.

2. The intensification of the role of the teacher has increased the need for planning.

3. Superintendents, principals, and teachers did not always agree on what was and was not planning time.

4. Less time was given to elementary teachers for planning time than to secondary teachers.

5. Teachers reported using planning time to complete professional tasks. Principals supported the teachers' reported use of planning time. Teachers who reported fewer weekly minutes of planning time also reported less long-term planning.

6. Principals spent little time monitoring and assessing teacher planning time. Superintendents and teachers reported less monitoring or assessing by principals than did principals.

7. Elementary principals and teachers desired more planning time.

8. Principals and teachers would use additional planning time for long-term planning and collaboration with other staff.

9. Along with daily planning time, principals and teachers reported a preference for block planning time which would allow staff members to plan together.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Context

In formal and informal discussions with Nebraska educators, a reoccurring theme has been the continued growth of responsibility in the planning of curriculum and instructional experiences for elementary students. Discussions have also included the problems involved in allocating time for teacher planning. The problem of allocating teacher planning time has been discussed by educators in both large and small districts in Nebraska.

The growth of teacher responsibility was supported by Hargreaves (1992) who noted the increase in the needs of special education students, multiple teaching innovations, diverse assessment strategies, and the pressures of reform as additional responsibilities for teachers. These increases have intensified the role of the teacher and has made preparation time for teachers a critical issue.

As an administrator, efforts have been made to discuss, with other administrators, issues related to planning time for elementary teachers who, for the most part, provide instruction in self-contained classroom settings. The goal of this researcher has been to identify approaches to scheduling, using, and monitoring planning time for teachers.

Little information about planning time for elementary teachers was available in the literature. A computer search provided one study specific to

elementary teacher preparation time. With "planning time" and "preparation time" used as a descriptors, most authors dealt with how teachers planned, not with when teachers planned.

Nationally known researchers have indicated that elementary teachers have been given little time for on-the-job preparation, as compared to middle level and high school level teachers (National Education Association, 1992). The disparity between elementary teacher planning time and secondary teacher planning time can be attributed to a number of factors, including staffing patterns and the nature of the traditional structures of elementary and secondary schools (Falzon, 1983).

Legislators have failed to pass legislation to support planning time for elementary teachers. A regional example is the state of Minnesota where, as late as 1987, secondary planning was mandated, while no such provision was made for elementary teachers (Holstein, 1987). In 1988, legislators in Nebraska failed to approve LB 979, which would have provided daily planning time for elementary teachers.

Added to the increase of responsibilities for instructional planning for elementary teachers and the disparity of elementary planning time to secondary planning time is the internal and external pressure on school districts and teachers to provide evidence indicating change and restructuring. Elementary teachers have been given more opportunities for input into the educational process by school management concepts, such as "site-based management," but such concepts have also placed additional burdens on teachers' use of planning time.

In terms of the curriculum, a renewed movement for holistic instruction and the integration of curricular areas in planning have increased the demand on elementary teachers to plan instructional experiences for students. The integration of different curricular strands not only requires understanding and planning for content and process objectives in particular areas (i.e., math), but also necessitates planning to unitize content and process objectives (Jacobs, 1989). The use of team planning and teaching among teachers has also been emphasized by curriculum and instructional planning. Team teaching and planning have been expanded by the practices of collaborative teaching. which incorporates the inclusion of special education teachers in regular classrooms as partners in instruction.

Based on the literature, a number of conclusions have been reached: (1) most elementary teachers are provided limited planning time; (2) when compared to secondary teachers, elementary teachers are provided less planning time; (3) elementary teachers use planning time for a variety of tasks; (4) guidelines for planning time are informal and not defined formally for most elementary teachers; and (5) little monitoring and assessment of planning time are provided.

The lack of research or evaluative data concerning planning time, coupled with the disparity in planning time among secondary and elementary teachers, leads to important questions. To what extent is planning time provided for elementary teachers, specifically teachers in Nebraska? Is elementary teacher planning time in Nebraska equal to, less than, or the same as Nebraska secondary teachers? To what extent, if any, is the use of planning time during the instructional day monitored by administrators?

Have administrators correlated planning time with teacher or student outcomes? How has the amount of elementary teacher planning time influenced the way teachers use that planning time? Answers to these questions may help superintendents and principals develop realistic approaches, which can motivate teachers to provide time and energy to additional responsibilities for change and restructuring within Nebraska districts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose for conducting the study was to identify the amount of planning time available to elementary teachers and to compare that time to the planning time offered secondary teachers. The study was also conducted to identify elementary teachers' use of planning time and how their planning time was monitored by administrators. In addition, the study was conducted to find out whether teachers and principals wanted more planning time and how additional planning time would be used.

Research Questions

1. How many elementary teachers in Class III school districts in Nebraska are provided with planning time during the student day, and how much planning time is provided elementary teachers in Class III school districts?

2. How are personnel provided in Nebraska Class III school districts to allow for elementary teacher planning time?

3. In Class III school districts, is the amount elementary planning time less than, equal to, or more than the planning time of secondary teachers as reported by superintendents?

4. How do elementary teachers in Class III school districts use the planning time provided by the district?

5. How do principals monitor the planning time behaviors of elementary teachers as reported by superintendents, principals, and teachers?

6. Do Class III elementary principals assess the effects of elementary planning time on instruction?

7. How does the amount of planning time provided, the type of teaching assignment, and the years of experience of elementary teachers affect their use of planning time in Class III districts in Nebraska?

8. Is additional elementary teacher planning time desired by principals and teachers in Class III districts in Nebraska?

9. If additional elementary planning time were provided, how would teachers use the time?

10. How would principals and teachers prefer to have elementary planning time blocked?

Definition of Terms

Class III elementary school. As defined by Nebraska Statutes, this elementary school is part of a K-12 school district with a total population of more than 1,000 people but less than 100,000 people.

Planning time. For the purposes of this study, planning time is defined as that time given to teachers during the student day which releases them from direct supervision of their students.

Student day. For the purposes of this study, student day is defined as those daily clock hours when students are in session.

Limitations and Delimitations

1. Generalizations derived from this study will only be applicable to Class III districts in Nebraska.

2. Superintendents with more than one elementary attendance center may generalize planning policy and not be able to reflect differences in all attendance centers.

3. Conclusions derived from this study will be based on data reported on surveys provided by participating superintendents and teachers of Class III districts in Nebraska.

4. The study was limited to Nebraska Class III districts and information provided by superintendents, elementary principals, and elementary teachers.

Significance of the Study

With the ever changing responsibilities placed on teachers for decision making and curriculum planning, planning time should be provided for teachers. The findings from this study can help school officials understand the current conditions with respect to planning time for elementary teachers.

Further, the results from this study will provide an information base to assist educational leaders in structuring their schools in such a way that elementary teachers will have appropriate planning time. In addition, this study may help Nebraska administrators identify the efforts other administrators are taking to monitor and assess the use of planning time.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Perspective

To understand the need for teacher planning time, one should understand the relationship between the planning of teachers and how this planning relates to the behaviors of teachers in the classroom. In an effort to show this relationship, Clark and Peterson (1986) developed a model to serve as an organizer for their review of the literature on teachers' thought processes and observable actions in classrooms.

The model includes two domains. The first domain, entitled Teachers' Thought Processes, includes teachers' theories and beliefs, teachers' interactive thoughts and decisions, and teacher planning (both preactive and postactive). The second domain, entitled Teachers' Actions and Their Observable Effects, includes teacher classroom behavior, student classroom behavior, and student achievement. Clark and Peterson (1986) stated that, while research has been conducted on the second domain, the first domain has been studied only recently. For the purposes of this study, a closer look at the first domain provides a theoretical perspective.

Clark and Peterson (1986) saw teacher thought processes as preactive, interactive, and postactive. In the preactive stage, the teacher considers what content will be taught and how the content will be taught. The interactive stage includes those thought processes used in the delivery and interaction with students in a lesson. The postactive stage is the time the teacher spends

to reflect and assess the lesson. The preactive and postactive stages of the thought process are subsumed under the label of "teacher planning." The authors explained that through research, a difference in the thought processes of teachers in the planning phase and the interactive phase of a lesson has been shown. Clark and Peterson (1986) suggested that planning is challenging to study because it is seen as a psychological process and a practical activity.

Eight types of teacher planning were identified by Clark and Yinger (1979): weekly, daily, long-range, short-range, yearly, term planning, unit planning, and lesson planning. Unit planning was cited as most important to teachers and lesson planning as least important.

The principal product of teacher planning has been defined as a set of routines. Yinger (1979) categorized the routines as: activity routines, instructional routines, management routines, and executive planning routines. He explained that routines "played such a major role in the teacher's planning behavior that planning could be characterized as decision making about the selection, organization, and sequencing of routines" (p. 165).

A study was conducted of 12 teachers who were given a new instructional unit to teach (Peterson, Marx, & Clark, 1978). The researchers coded the verbal statements during the teachers' planning periods and found that most of the teachers' time was spent on content, followed by strategies and activities. There were a number of positive relationships between teacher planning and classroom behavior. The beginning planning was

content-oriented, and the continued planning focused more on instructional processes and activities.

A number of conclusions can be made: (1) teacher planning is an important part of the teaching process; (2) teachers use planning to prepare for and reflect on instructional episodes; (3) teachers use planning to establish routines, organize and adapt curriculum, and develop instructional processes and activities; (4) teacher planning has positive relationships with how instruction is delivered; and (5) teacher planning processes are addressed in the literature, but little research can be found to determine when this planning takes place.

To broaden the perspective on elementary planning time, the work of Hargreaves (1992) must be included. To understand the work of teachers, two definitions have been given: professionalization and intensification. Intensification includes the expectation of teachers to respond to greater pressures and to comply with multiplying innovations, and professionalism is defined as a strategy for getting teachers to collaborate willingly in their own exploitation. In order to promote a greater professionalism (empowerment) for teachers, their roles are continually extended. These extended roles include experience in whole school curriculum development, involvement in collaborative support and professional growth, teacher leadership, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Hargreaves (1992) drew on the general theories of labor to make the following claims about intensification and its effects on teachers:

> Intensification leads to reduced time for relaxation during the working day, including "no time at all" for lunch.

> Intensification leads to lack of time to retool one's skills and keep up with one's field.
>
> Intensification creates chronic and persistent overload (as compared with the temporary overload that is sometimes experienced in meeting deadlines), which reduces areas of personal discretion, inhibits involvement in and control over longer-term planning, and fosters dependency on externally produced materials and expertise.
>
> Intensification leads to reductions in the quality of service, as corners are cut to save time.
>
> Intensification leads to enforced diversification of expertise and responsibility to cover personnel shortages, which can in turn create excessive dependency on outside expertise and further reductions in the quality of service.
>
> Intensification creates and reinforces scarcities of preparation time.
>
> Intensification is voluntarily supported by many teachers and misrecognized as professionalism. (pp. 88-90)

Most Ontario school districts now have a guaranteed minimum of 120 minutes or more of planning time per week (Hargreaves, 1992). Such guaranteed time for elementary teachers is unusual in Western schooling systems, although guaranteed time has been advocated as a condition for increased collegiality among teachers, commitment to change, and restricting intensification in teachers' work. Hargreaves conducted a study, which included 12 principals and 28 elementary teachers from the Metropolitan Toronto school district, to compare their responses with the

intensification claims. Teachers identified a number of concerns which supported the intensification thesis. Special-education legislation and mainstreaming of special-education students into regular classrooms increased classroom discipline problems and demands on teachers to provide more diversified programs. Teachers also identified scarce and declining in-class specialist support to help them cope with special-needs students.

In addition, accountability to parents and administrators increased the sense of pressure for teachers. This accountability included more paperwork and attention to the assessment of what was being done, what had been done, and what was intended to be done. Hargreaves (1992) also found that the intensification of planning and teaching was not only due to the teachers' compliance with external demands. Intensification also came from the teachers' dedication to do a good job and providing effective care for students.

A measure of compensation and easement also became apparent with planning time. One benefit reported by teachers included the reduction of stress. A second benefit reported by teachers was the restoration of "lives outside teaching." Together, these two benefits helped improve the teachers' temperaments in the classroom and the interaction they had with their classes. Teachers reported that a third benefit was the feeling they were better organized, better prepared, and were able to provide better quality instruction. They also became more efficient and were able to take on a wider range of activities. Hargreaves (1992) concluded that planning time

relieved stress, reduced chronic work overload, and led to more opportunities for teachers to plan more creative work.

While the benefits of planning time for the reduction of intensification were identified, some problems also became apparent (Hargreaves, 1992). Because teachers tended to focus on the immediate needs of their own classrooms, the introduction of planning time did not, in itself, promote a sense of community or collegiality among teachers. Unless there was a commitment to collaborative working relationships at the school or district level administration, teachers continued their "classroom-centeredness," which was ingrained in the prevailing patterns of teachers' work. For a minority of teachers in the study, preparation time was appreciated, but for the majority of teachers, additional planning time was undesirable because they felt the additional time would adversely affect the continuity of relationships and the care they needed with their students. This finding was not surprising since the importance of care and relationships with students were among key reasons why elementary teachers reported they entered teaching.

Scheduling and Time Issues

Elementary planning time for teachers includes issues related to scheduling and time. Nearly all elementary schools are organized in self-contained classrooms, while most middle schools and virtually all high schools use departmentalized staffing patterns (MacIver, 1992). For elementary teachers and their students, self-contained classrooms have many advantages. Some of the advantages include: (1) elementary teachers have

an opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their students holistically, because they observe students in most curricular areas; (2) teachers in self-contained classrooms are with students most of the day and have an opportunity to build close relationships; and (3) teachers are able to monitor students throughout the day and provide additional help and instruction for students having difficulty.

In self-contained classrooms, most elementary teachers are left with the responsibility of continual supervision. As the elementary school curriculum has expanded and become more discipline-specific, additional teachers have been included in elementary schools. The additional teachers have been used to provide specific instruction in physical education, health, art, music, and library science. MacIver (1992) provided scheduling ideas which aided teacher planning. The ideas presented, however, would rely on additional staff. This additional staff could be teachers, teacher assistants, and/or parent volunteers.

While parent volunteers are used to increase planning time for elementary teachers, they create issues which must be addressed. Using parent volunteers for student supervision raises liability issues. In addition, the lack of specific training for parent volunteers would limit their use in the instruction and assessment of students.

The funding of elementary schools also provides problems. One approach would be to provide more funding to hire teachers in specific instructional areas, such as physical education, health, art, music, library science, gifted education. Without additional funding, the hiring of specific instructional area teachers could force a reallocation of existing funds and

potentially reduce the number of "regular" classroom teachers. This approach could negatively affect the class size of self-contained classroom teachers.

McPartland and Fessler (1992) addressed issues related to staffing. They noted the use of instructional aides to assist teachers in the classroom and to provide relief for teachers by supervising routines such as recess and lunch duty. They did, however, cite a scientific study by Folger and Breda of Project STAR, which was mandated by the Tennessee legislature in the mid-1980s. In the Project STAR study, kindergarten students who were placed in small classrooms, larger classrooms with an instructional aide, and larger classrooms with no instructional aide were compared. After comparing the students from 79 schools the authors found no significant student learning effects. One conclusion that could be drawn is that school district personnel would want to be cautious in the number of instructional aides used to address staffing needs.

According to McPartland and Fessler (1992), the external conditions involving financial and technological resources can constrain teaching practices, including teacher teaming and planning. Without access to additional financial resources or the acquisition of technological resources, creativity and flexibility used to increase planning are constrained. The authors stated, "Revised labor-management agreements that permit greater variation in the combination of number of preparations, number of students, and number of contact periods for individual teachers could open up possibilities for teacher teams. . . to meet different educational goals" (p. 1258). Traditional approaches to contractual agreements between teacher organizations and

school districts can impede the flexibility of individual schools to create staffing patterns which meet the needs of students and teachers.

Legal Issues

Since 1956, the National Education Association has conducted nation-wide research on teachers. The research is reported every five years, and the results are published under the title Status of the American Public School Teacher. According to the research conducted and reported in 1990-1991, elementary teachers continue to fall short of the time given for preparation on the job as compared to middle level and high school level teachers. In the 1990-1991 results, elementary teachers reported receiving 8.3 minutes for every hour of instruction; middle level and high school teachers reported 13 minutes per hour of instruction. In addition, 9.7 percent of the elementary teachers had no planning time compared to 5.2 and 6.2 percent of the middle and high school teachers, respectively (National Education Association, 1992). In the same study, an historical disparity between elementary and secondary teachers in planning time was noted; although planning time has been researched since 1956 for secondary teachers, information on planning time for elementary teachers was not collected by the National Education Association until 1981.

A regional example of the disparity between elementary and secondary teachers in planning time is in the state of Minnesota. As late as 1987, there was no change in a 1959 state law in which local school districts were required to provide 50 minutes of planning time each day for secondary teachers while no mandate was provided for elementary teachers

(Holstein, 1987). Holstein demonstrated her concern for equity in planning time for elementary teachers by listing the 16 curriculum areas in which elementary teachers must provide instruction by state law.

In 1988, Nebraska Legislators did not pass LB 979, which would have provided all elementary teachers in the state with 45 minutes of preparation time daily within the student day. In testimony before the Education Committee of the State Legislature, Wylie (1988), an elementary teacher and Lincoln Education Association representative from Lincoln, Nebraska, presented information listing seven categories for which planning time was needed. Discussing the need for planning time, Wylie provided no information regarding how planning time, already available, was used, monitored or evaluated.

Falzon (1983), a National Education Association researcher, reported in the 1985-1986 Status of the American Public School Teacher that nationwide, teacher planning time (over and above required work time) averaged from a low of 7.4 hours per week to a high of 8.0 hours per week for teachers in larger systems. Falzon labeled this additional time as prep time and considered it a "hidden subsidy (p. 23)." By giving more time to the job than what is being paid for, teachers are, in fact, subsidizing education and their own jobs. Statistics were cited which showed elementary teachers received 4.5 minutes of planning per instructional hour, and high school teachers received 12.0 minutes. Falzon recognized the lack of planning time for all teachers, but further noted the historic disparity between elementary and secondary teachers. He concluded that planning time has increased for elementary teachers, but still averages less than

secondary teachers. This difference becomes an equity issue which must be faced by districts across the country, although this movement toward equity will require additional financial resources.

Even without a mandate from the Legislature, school district personnel within Nebraska have made efforts to increase planning time. Information regarding planning time for most larger districts in the state has been collected by the Nebraska State Education Association (1990-91). While the NSEA has spent time collecting data on the amount and types of planning time offered by individual districts, no data exist about the actual use of planning time by teachers, the extent to which planning time use is monitored, or how planning time is being evaluated across the state.

Educational Change

Changes in schools and how instruction is provided for students impact the nature of teaching. These changes increase the need for teachers to spend more time planning for students. Major movements which have a direct effect on how and what teachers do are addressed in this section. As a practicing administrator, this writer would support the variety of strategies and innovations for school improvement. The references in this section are cited to reinforce what Hargreaves (1992) called the intensification of the work of teachers.

Worthen (1993a) stated that the movement from standardized testing to more direct assessment of student performance is a movement that has "caught the attention" of educators. He defined this movement as alternative assessment, which is a generic term for other descriptors, including direct

assessment, authentic assessment and performance assessment. Throughout his discussion, he highlighted the concerns of many educators related to the negative effects of standardized and "high stakes" assessment measures. In the balance of his article, he identified what he believes are the critical issues facing alternative assessment. The support and involvement of professional educators were included in the twelve critical issues.

In another article, Worthen (1993b) identified ten conditions necessary to determine a school's readiness to move to alternative assessment. One condition discussed was the "staff openness to innovations." He suggested that if a school's teachers and administrators are innovative, they will find alternatives less a struggle. If not, school officials should consider staff development, teacher mentoring, or other means to help the transition.

The use of the Vermont Portfolio Project was discussed by Abruscato (1993), who explained that teachers need less information about percentile rankings and more information about students' performance. A review of the project was provided, which was piloted in writing and mathematics with fourth- and eighth-grade students. Teachers were involved in compiling the portfolios. Specially trained teachers were used to judge the quality of individual student portfolios.

Seven common forms of performance assessment described by Feuer and Fulton (1993) included the use of student essays, writing, oral discourse, exhibitions, experiments, and portfolios. A description was given of how the forms provide assessment in many curricular areas. Additional articles which address the issues related to assessment can be found in major

educational publications. These publications include the April 1989 and May 1992 issues of Educational Leadership and the May 1989 and May 1991 issues of Kappan. A number of teacher tasks including the collection and selection of assessment artifacts and the evaluation of the artifacts will continue to add to the responsibilities of teachers.

The concept of integrating curriculum through the use of interdisciplinary designs was supported by Jacobs (1989). This concept is grounded in the premise that individual disciplines are interconnected in learning. The integration of disciplines for interdisciplinary designs can be accomplished with different approaches. Three main approaches for designing interdisciplinary units include thematic, skill/content, and thinking process.

An example of thematic design would be illustrated by primary grade level themes such as "Bears." This approach would involve planning instruction in discipline areas using "bears" as the central theme and content for learning. Another thematic approach at the primary grade level could include the use of a literature story whose content would be used to drive individual lessons in subject disciplines. An intermediate example of thematic planning might include "dinosaurs" or "transportation." An example of a skill/content interdisciplinary unit would be writing. Rather than teaching skills in writing as an isolated discipline, other subject disciplines and their content would be used to provide instruction in writing skills. An example of an interdisciplinary unit is the use of thinking skills or processes as organizing themes. Using this approach, the organizing theme could be "cause-effect relationships." The unit incorporates the use of

concepts from specific disciplines and content which illustrate cause-effect relationships.

Jacobs (1991) provided a specific action plan teachers can use to develop interdisciplinary units. Specific tasks were cited within the plan for teachers which required planning, research, and teaming. Important reasons for integration of the curriculum included: (1) knowledge in all areas of study continues to grow at exponential proportions and integration can provide a combined structure for dealing with this knowledge; (2) the use of integration could also reduce the fragmentation created by the scheduling of blocks of time for each discipline.; and (3) the use of organizational themes to teach content can provide relevance to students. While the results of interdisciplinary curriculum work could reduce intensification for teachers, the time trade-off does not. The use of interdisciplinary models requires large amounts of planning time on the part of teachers.

Other influences affect the intensification of the role of the teacher. Many movements using different names and focusing on different aspects of schooling invite the participation of teachers. This participation can include direct involvement, planning, and new learning for teachers.

The subtitle of the May 1991 issue of Educational Leadership was "Restructuring Schools: What's Really Happening?" A variety of articles were contained in this issue, in which the efforts of teachers across the country to move toward "outcomes-based education" were discussed. By definition, outcomes-based education is the movement to restructure curriculum and instruction. Through this restructuring, the outcomes for the learner--both content and process--are identified; the indicators of

performance which assess whether or not the outcomes are present are defined; and the focus of instruction. through the expectation that all students must meet a standard of performance or mastery, is shifted. While the overall goals sound familiar to many educators, they move from the traditional instructional input and grading of success, to instructional input and alternative instructional input for students who have not met the standard of performance. This not only implies the need for time for instructional input and planning on the part of teachers, but suggests the need for time for retraining teachers who have had little or no experience with an outcomes-based approach.

Another movement, which he calls school-based management or site-based management, was discussed by Guthrie (1986). The concept that each school should have the decision-making power to control what happens is supported by this movement. The concept includes the involvement of the building administrator, professional staff, parents, and other stakeholders. Throughout the article, the need for teacher involvement and accountability for everything from curriculum and instruction to budget expenditure is discussed. This researcher has been associated with three small Nebraska districts in which there was only one elementary school. With the limitation of salary decisions, teachers and building administrators were practicing school-based management due to the unassisted responsibility of curriculum development, assessment, and the prioritization and budgeting of needed supplies, materials, and equipment. This involvement and accountability required more time than was provided during the normal workday.

Conclusions

From the literature review and personal observation of this writer, a number of conclusions can be made.

1. The thought processes of teachers can be categorized as preactive, interactive, and postactive. While interactive processes take place during instruction, preactive and postactive processes take place outside the instructional episode and are necessary for teachers in planning and reflecting.

2. The intensification of the teacher's role has been created both by external and internal pressures. Planning time has a positive effect on the restriction of this intensification and gives teachers opportunities to plan for and complete tasks more successfully than they did before being given planning time.

3. Due to the nature and structure of elementary schools compared to secondary schools, elementary teachers continue to receive less planning time than their secondary colleagues. Without additional funding and staffing, these traditional structures limit planning time for elementary teachers.

4. Legislation in the state of Nebraska has not supported additional funding or provided mandates for increasing or ensuring elementary teacher planning time.

5. Continual changes in education intensify the role of the teacher. While these changes are often supported or initiated by teachers, they create constant demands for teacher planning and involvement.

6. Little has been done to study critical issues related to planning time. More information is needed regarding the status of elementary teacher planning time and how elementary planning time is used by teachers. Information is also needed to identify how elementary planning time is directed by administrators and whether or not administrators monitor and/or assess elementary planning time.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF STUDY

Introduction

The purpose for conducting the study was to identify the amount of planning time available to elementary teachers and to compare that time to the planning time offered secondary teachers. The study was also conducted to identify elementary teachers' use of planning time and how their planning time was monitored by administrators. In addition, the study was conducted to find out whether teachers and principals wanted more planning time and how additional planning time would be used.

The research questions which directed the collection of data are provided in this chapter. Following the research questions, the population and sample for the study are identified. The descriptive study is described in the design section, and the creation of the survey instruments is discussed in the instrumentation section. A comparison is made of the survey questions on the superintendents', principals', and teachers' questionnaires in the data analysis section.

Research Questions

1. How many Class III school districts in Nebraska provide elementary teachers with planning time during the student day and how much planning time is provided by districts with elementary planning time?

2. How do Class III school districts in Nebraska provide personnel to allow elementary teacher planning time?

3. In Class III school districts, is the amount of elementary planning time less than, equal to, or more than the planning time of secondary teachers as reported by superintendents?

4. How do elementary teachers in Class III school districts use the planning time provided by the district?

5. How do principals monitor the planning time behaviors of elementary teachers as reported by superintendents, principals, and teachers?

6. Do Class III elementary principals assess the effects of elementary planning time on instruction?

7. How does the amount of planning time provided, the type of teaching assignment, and the years of experience of elementary teachers affect their use of planning time in Class III districts in Nebraska?

8. Is additional elementary teacher planning time desired by principals and teachers in Class III districts in Nebraska?

9. If additional elementary planning time were provided, how would teachers use the time?

10. How would principals and teachers prefer to have elementary planning time blocked?

Population and Sample

The population for this study included educators from Class III school districts in Nebraska, which included all districts which were K-12 and contained a total resident population of more than 1,000, but not more than

100,000 people. There were 224 Class III School districts in Nebraska. Class III school districts were selected for the study because they represented the majority of Nebraska elementary schools and a wide range of smaller to larger districts in the state.

In the first phase of the study, superintendents of all Class III schools (N = 224) were surveyed. In the second phase of the study, a sample of 150 elementary principals and 391 elementary teachers from Class III elementary schools who reported planning time were surveyed.

Design

This descriptive study was designed to identify districts where planning time for teachers was provided and to determine how elementary teachers used their planning time and whether or not elementary teacher planning time was monitored by administrators. Survey methodology was utilized in the study. Three surveys were developed. In one survey, superintendents reported descriptive data about elementary planning time in their districts. Along with descriptive data about elementary teachers, information was solicited in the superintendent survey about how elementary planning time was provided, to what degree elementary planning time was monitored and assessed, and how elementary planning time compared with secondary planning time in the districts.

In the second survey, elementary teachers, in districts with elementary planning time, reported descriptive data about elementary planning time in their districts. Along with descriptive data, information was solicited about how their planning time compared with secondary teachers in their district,

how they used their planning time, how their planning time was monitored, and to what degree their planning time was assessed. In addition, teachers were asked if they needed more planning time, how they would use the planning time, and how they would prefer the planning time to be blocked.

In the third survey, elementary principals, in districts with elementary planning time, reported descriptive data about elementary planning time in their districts. Along with descriptive data, information was solicited about how planning time in their building compared with secondary teachers in their district, how teachers in their building used planning time, and how they monitored and assessed teacher use of planning time. In addition, principals were asked if they needed more planning time, how they would want teachers to use the planning time, and how they would prefer the planning time to be blocked.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

Three researcher-designed questionnaires were developed to collect data related to the ten research questions. The surveys were developed with assistance from doctoral seminar students under the direction of Dr. Alvah Kilgore. The surveys were further refined with assistance from personnel at the Nebraska Evaluation and Research Center (NEAR). Final refinement of the questionnaires was made with input from committee members: Dr. Fred Wendel, Dr. Stan Vasa, and Dr. Alvah Kilgore. The teacher survey was field tested with the help of one elementary teaching staff. The principal survey was reviewed by two practicing elementary principals.

The superintendent survey was mailed to 223 Class III superintendents (who represented the 224 Class III districts in Nebraska). A second superintendent survey was mailed to non-responding superintendents.

A computerized list of Class III elementary principals, available from the Nebraska Department of Education, was utilized. From the list of principals, all principals of middle schools (which were included in the Nebraska Department of Education's list of elementary principals) were eliminated. Principals from districts whose superintendents did not respond or requested their districts not be involved in the planning time survey were eliminated. Principals in districts whose superintendent reported no elementary planning time were also eliminated. A principal survey was mailed to 150 elementary principals in Class III districts in which there was elementary planning time. The principal survey was followed with a reminder postcard requesting the return of the survey.

A computerized random sample list of 550 Class III elementary teachers, available from the Nebraska Department of Education, was used for the study. From the list of teachers, all teachers in middle schools (which were included in the Nebraska Department of Education's list of elementary teachers) were eliminated. Teachers from districts whose superintendents did not respond or requested their districts not be involved in the planning time survey were eliminated. Teachers in districts whose superintendent reported no elementary planning time were also eliminated. A teacher survey was mailed to 391 elementary teachers in Class III districts that had elementary planning time. The teacher survey was

followed with a reminder postcard requesting the return of the survey. (Data on the number and percentage of returns are found in Table 1, Chapter IV.)

Data Analysis

Data collected on the superintendent, principal, and teacher surveys were used to analyze the research questions in the study. In addition to questions about planning time, the superintendents, principals, and teachers were asked to give the athletic classification of their districts as determined by the Nebraska State Athletic Association. The athletic classification divided the Class III schools into four groups: A, B, C, and D. Larger schools in Nebraska were classified as "A" schools, the next largest schools were classified as "B," followed by "C" schools; the smallest districts were classified as "D" schools. The use of athletic classification provided a stratification of the responses by superintendents, principals. and teachers. The athletic classification was cross-tabulated with questions on the surveys to demonstrate consistency or discrepancies in elementary teacher planning time practices between large, medium, and small Class III school districts across Nebraska.

Research Questions

To answer research question 1 ("How many Class III school districts in Nebraska provide elementary teachers with planning time during the student day and how much planning time is provided by districts with elementary planning time?"), a frequency analysis was used with questions 5 and 7 of the superintendents' survey. For question 5, "Do elementary

teachers in your district receive planning time during the student day?" superintendents were give the option to respond "yes" or "no." For question 7, "Elementary teachers in the district receive how many minutes of planning time during the student day each week?" superintendents were given the option to respond "more than 200 minutes," "between 100 & 200 minutes," or "less than 100 minutes." In addition to frequencies of responses, a cross-tabulation was used to compare the responses to the survey questions and the athletic class of the respondents in an effort to identify any differences between sizes of school districts and the amount of planning time provided to elementary teachers. An example is provided below:

Elementary Planning Time Provided	A	B	C	D	Weekly Planning Minutes	A	B	C	D
Yes					200+				
No					100-200				
					Less than 100				

To answer research question 2 ("How do Class III school districts in Nebraska provide personnel to allow elementary teacher planning time?"), a frequency analysis was used for responses to the principal survey question 8 and teacher survey question 8, "In order to provide planning time for elementary teachers, the following people were used:" For question 8 on both the principal and teacher survey, respondents were given the option of marking "paraeducators," "curriculum specialists," "both paraeducators and curriculum specialists," or "other." In addition to frequencies of responses, a cross-tabulation was used to compare the responses to the survey questions

and the athletic class of the respondents in an effort to identify any differences between sizes of school districts and the personnel provided. An example is provided:

	Personnel Used for Planning Time (Principal Response)				Personnel Used for Planning Time (Teacher Response)			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
Para's								
Curr. Specialist								
Both								
Other								

To answer research question 3 ("In Class III school districts, is the amount of elementary planning time less than, equal to, or more than the planning time of secondary teachers as reported by superintendents?") superintendents were asked, "Compared with secondary teachers, elementary teachers' planning time is less, the same, or more?" (question 8). Superintendents were asked to respond to "less than," "the same," or "more than." A frequency analysis of the superintendent survey question 8 was completed and cross-tabulated by athletic classification. A sample is provided below:

Elementary Planning Time
Compared with Secondary
Planning Time

	A	B	C	D
Less				
Same				
More				

To answer research question 4 ("How do elementary teachers in Class III school districts use the planning time provided by the district?"), teachers were asked, "Considering all of your planning time during the student day, please review the following 15 tasks and rank order the top five tasks you most frequently engage in with 1 = the most frequency, 2 = the next highest frequency, . . ." (question #11). Teachers were provided with the following 15 tasks from which to select:

- Complete daily lesson plans
- Continue work on unit plans
- Mentally reflect on past or future instruction
- Prepare student materials
- Student assessment activities (correct papers, etc.)
- Plan with other teachers (i.e. PE, Music, SpEd)
- Conference with other teachers (i.e. peer coaching, collaborative teaching)
- Participate on SAT team
- Make phone contacts/conference with parents
- Work with students (i.e., one-on-one instruction, work completion)
- Disciplining students
- Complete administrative tasks for the principal
- Complete tasks for extra duty assignments
- Take a break for personal needs (i.e., beverage, restroom)
- Complete tasks not related to school

Principals (principal question 11) were also asked to rank the top five tasks in which teachers were most frequently engaged during planning time, using the same 15 items. A frequency analysis of the teacher survey question 11 and principal survey question 11 was used for each of the task items. The data from each of the groups were compared using the Mann-Whitney U analysis.

To answer research question 5 ("How do principals monitor the planning time behaviors of elementary teachers?") a "monitoring" question was asked on the superintendent, principal, and teacher surveys. Superintendents were asked, "Does your district use any specific approaches for monitoring teacher planning time?" (question 11). Under the question, superintendents were provided five items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- Principals provide informal guidelines for teacher use of planning time
- Principals provide written guidelines for teacher use of planning time
- Principals monitor teacher use of planning time
- Principals assign tasks to be completed during planning time
- Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes

A frequency analysis of the superintendent survey question 11 was completed for each of the items.

Principals were asked, "To what extent do you monitor teacher use of planning time?" (question 9). Under the question, principals were provided six items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- I observe use of planning time
- I provide general guidelines for use
- I review teacher lesson plans
- I provide specific guidelines for planning time use
- I provide specific feedback about teacher use of planning time
- I tie teacher use of planning time to teacher evaluation

A frequency analysis of the principal survey question 9 was completed for each of the items.

Teachers were asked, "To what extent does your principal monitor your use of planning time?" (question 9). Under the question, teachers were provided six items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- Observes my use of planning time
- Provides general guidelines for use
- Reviews my lesson planning
- Provides specific guidelines for planning time use
- Provides specific feedback about my use of planning time
- Ties my use of planning time to my evaluation

A frequency analysis of the teacher survey question 9 was completed for each of the items. A t-test was used to compare the responses of the principals with the responses of the teachers.

To answer research question 6 ("Have Class III school districts assessed the effects of elementary planning time on instruction?") an "assessing" question was asked on the superintendent, principal, and teacher surveys. Superintendents were asked, "Has your district attempted any

specific or formal approaches for assessing the effects of elementary teacher planning time on instruction?"(question 12). Under the question, superintendents were provided three items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes
- Planning time is linked in some way to student outcomes
- Teachers' use of planning time is evaluated against student and teacher outcomes.

A frequency analysis of the superintendent survey question 12 was completed for each item.

Principals were asked, "Is the use of planning time linked to or measured by outcomes?" (question 10). Under the question, principals were provided four items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- Teacher use of planning time is evaluated by what a teacher does during planning time
- Teacher use of planning time is evaluated based on teaching behaviors called for in his/her lesson plans
- Use of planning time is linked, but not measured by student outcomes
- Use of planning time is evaluated based on student outcomes

A frequency analysis of the principal survey question 10 was completed for each item.

Teachers were asked, "To what extent is your planning time measured by or linked to outcomes by your principal" (question 10). Under the

question, teachers were provided four items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- My use of planning time is evaluated by my behavior during planning times
- My use of planning time is evaluated based on the teaching behaviors stated in my plans.
- My use of planning time is linked, but not measured by student outcomes
- My use of planning time is evaluated based on my students' outcomes

A frequency analysis of the teacher survey question 10 was completed for each item. A t-test was used to compare the responses of the principals with the responses of the teachers.

To answer research question 7 ("How does the amount of planning time provided, the type of teaching assignment, and the years of experience of elementary teachers affect their use of planning time in Class III districts in Nebraska?") a frequency analysis and cross-tabulation were used between each of three questions from the teacher survey and the 15 tasks teachers used on the survey to rank their use of planning time (question 11). The first question was cross-tabulated with each planning time task related to the amount of planning time given to respondent teachers (question 2). The second question was cross-tabulated with each planning time task related to the years of experience of the respondent teachers (question 13). The third question was cross-tabulated with each planning time task related to the teaching assignment of the respondent teachers (question 14).

To answer research question 8 (Is additional elementary teacher planning time desired by principals and teachers in Class III districts in Nebraska?"), principals and teachers were asked, "Would you prefer more planning time during the day if it were available to you?" (Question 4 on the principal and teacher surveys). A frequency analysis was completed for both the respondent principals and teachers.

To answer research question 9 ("If additional elementary planning time was provided how would teachers use the time?"), teachers were asked, "If you were provided more planning time, how would you use the time?" (question 5 on the teacher survey). Written responses were categorized, and a frequency analysis was completed.

To answer research question 10 ("How would principals and teachers prefer to have elementary planning time blocked?"), principals and teachers were asked, "How would you prefer to have your planning time block?" (question 6 on both the principal and teacher survey). Written responses were categorized, and a frequency analysis was completed.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose for conducting the study was to identify the amount of planning time available for elementary teachers and to compare the time offered elementary teachers with the planning time offered secondary teachers. The study was also conducted to identify how elementary teachers used planning time and how their planning time was monitored by administrators. In addition, the study was conducted to find out whether teachers and principals wanted more planning time and how additional planning time would be used.

In this chapter, the research questions are listed and respondent information is provided. Following the respondent information, the results of each research question is provided.

Ten research questions provided the basis for the study:

1. How many Class III school districts in Nebraska provide elementary teachers with planning time during the student day and how much planning time is provided by districts with elementary planning time?

2. How do Class III school districts in Nebraska provide personnel to allow elementary teacher planning time?

3. In Class III school districts, is the amount of elementary planning time less than, equal to, or more than the planning time of secondary teachers as reported by superintendents?

4. How do elementary teachers in Class III school districts use the planning time provided by the district?

5. How do principals monitor the planning time behaviors of elementary teachers as reported by superintendents, principals, and teachers?

6. Do Class III elementary principals assess the effects of elementary planning time on instruction?

7. How does the amount of planning time provided, the type of teaching assignment, and the years of experience of elementary teachers affect their use of planning time in Class III districts in Nebraska?

8. Is additional elementary teacher planning time desired by principals and teachers in Class III districts in Nebraska?

9. If additional elementary planning time were provided, how would teachers use the time?

10. How would principals and teachers prefer to have elementary planning time blocked?

Respondent Information

A total of 223 superintendents representing the 224 Class III districts in Nebraska were identified. The 223 superintendents were sent a questionnaire. A second mailing of questionnaires was sent to superintendents who did not respond to the first round of questionnaires. One hundred fifty principals and 391 teachers were selected to be surveyed. Each principal and each teacher were sent a questionnaire and a follow-up postcard reminder. The number of respondents is provided by total and by athletic classification in Table 1.

Table 1

Questionnaire Respondents

Position	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Missing Response	Total	Total Possible	% of Return
Superintendents	16	42	97	55	2	212	223	95.0
Principals	26	20	35	25	6	112	150	75.0
Teachers	102	63	75	18	15	273	391	70.0

Research Question Results

Research question 1. How many Class III school districts in Nebraska provide elementary teachers with planning time during the student day and how much planning time is provided by districts with elementary planning time?

Superintendents were asked, "Do elementary teachers in your district receive planning time during the student day?" (question 5). Superintendents were given the option to respond "yes" or "no." Elementary planning time was provided in approximately 90 percent of the Class III districts. According to the chi-square analysis, there was no significant difference at the .05 level between larger and smaller school districts when the athletic classes were cross-tabulated (X^2 (df =3) = 1.44, p > .05). The responses of the superintendents and the cross-tabulation of responses by athletic class are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Elementary Planning Time Reported by Superintendents

Response	Class A N	Class A %	Class B N	Class B %	Class C N	Class C %	Class D N	Class D %	Total N	Total %
Yes	13	93.0	37	88.0	87	90.0	51	94.0	190	91.0
No	1	7.0	5	12.0	10	10.0	3	6.0	19	9.0

X^2 (df = 3) = 1.44, p > .05

Superintendents were also asked, "Elementary teachers in the district receive how many minutes of planning time during the student day each week?" (question 7). Superintendents were given the option to respond "more than 200 minutes," "between 100 & 200 minutes," or ""less than 100 minutes." Larger-sized school districts (Class A) had a smaller number of districts in which more than 200 minutes of elementary planning time per week was provided, but smaller-sized districts had a higher percentage of schools in which less than 100 minutes of elementary planning time per week were provided. Forty-nine percent of the superintendents reported more than 200 minutes was provided for elementary planning time, which would average more than 40 minutes per day. The responses of the superintendents and the cross-tabulation of responses by athletic class are shown in Table 3. There was a significant difference between the responses of the superintendents. Superintendents in Class C schools

reported significantly more planning time was allowed for elementary teachers than reported by superintendents in Class A schools (X^2 (df = 2) = 7.45, $p < .02$). Due to the small number of responses in two of the six cells, the significance is questionable. As a result, a conclusion can be made that there generally was no significant differences in the amount of planning time provided teachers based on athletic class size of the district.

Table 3

Weekly Minutes of Elementary Planning Time as Reported by Superintendents

Response	Class A N	Class A %	Class B N	Class B %	Class C N	Class C %	Class D N	Class D %	Total N	Total %
200 minutes or more	4	29.0	16	43.0	51	61.0	21	40.0	92	49.0
100-200 minutes	9	64.0	14	38.0	23	27.0	19	37.0	65	35.0
Less than 100 minutes	1	7.0	7	19.0	10	12.0	12	23.0	30	16.0
Total	14	100.0	37	100.0	84	100.0	52	100.0	187	100.0

X^2 (df = 6) = 12.92, $p < .05$

Research question 2. How do Class III school districts in Nebraska provide personnel to allow elementary teacher planning time?

A frequency analysis was used for responses to question 8 in the principal survey and the teacher survey, "In order to provide planning time for elementary teachers, the following people were used:" For question 8 on both the principal and teacher surveys, respondents were given the option of marking "paraeducators," "curriculum specialists," "both paraeducators and curriculum specialists," or "other." In addition to frequencies of responses, a cross-tabulation was used to compare the responses and the athletic class of the respondents to identify any differences between sizes of schools and the personnel provided.

Both principals and teachers reported that six percent or less of the planning time was provided by paraeducators. At least 66 percent of the planning time was provided by curriculum specialists. Principals reported that 93 percent of the elementary planning time was provided by a combination of paraeducators and curriculum specialists. Teachers reported 19 percent of the planning time was provided by personnel other than paraeducators and curriculum specialists; the percentage was higher for teachers in Class A and Class D schools. The responses of principals are shown in Table 4, and the responses of teachers are presented in Table 5. The analysis of teacher and principal responses by size of district showed no significant differences (X^2 (df = 9) = 12.84, $p > .05$ and X^2 (df = 9) = 12.28, $p > .05$, respectively). A review of the questionnaires suggested some confusion on the part of respondents related to the marking of the "both" and "other" categories.

Table 4

Personnel Used for Elementary Planning Time as Reported by Principals

Response	Class A N	Class A %	Class B N	Class B %	Class C N	Class C %	Class D N	Class D %	Total N	Total %
Para-educators	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	9.0	3	3.0
Curriculum specialists	19	76.0	10	53.0	24	69.0	14	61.0	67	66.0
Both curriculum specialists and para-educators	5	20.0	9	47.0	8	23.0	6	26.0	28	27.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	8.0	1	4.0	4	4.0
Total	25	100.0	19	100.0	35	100.0	23	100.0	102	100.0

X^2 (df = 9) = 12.28, p > .05

Table 5

Personnel Used for Elementary Planning Time as Reported by Teachers

Response	Class A N	Class A %	Class B N	Class B %	Class C N	Class C %	Class D N	Class D %	Total N	Total %
Para-educators	3	3.0	2	4.0	8	12.0	1	6.0	14	6.0
Curriculum specialists	61	69.0	38	70.0	49	73.0	9	53.0	157	69.0
Both curriculum specialists and para-educators	6	7.0	4	7.0	1	2.0	2	12.0	13	6.0
Other	19	21.0	10	19.0	9	13.0	5	29.0	43	19.0
Total	89	100.0	54	100.0	67	100.0	17	100.0	227	100.0

X^2 (df = 9), 12.84, $p > .05$

There were no significant differences in the responses between teachers and principals who identified the use of paraeducators and curriculum specialists for the provision of planning time. A chi-square cross tabulation, comparing the responses of the principals and teachers, is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

A Comparison of Principal and Teacher Responses Regarding Personnel Used for Elementary Planning Time

Position	Para-educators		Curriculum Specialists		Paraeducators & Specialists		Other		No Response		Row Totals	
	No.	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Principals	3	3.0	70	63.0	29	26.0	4	4.0	5	4.0	111	100.0
Teachers	14	5.0	171	63.0	14	5.0	47	17.0	27	10.0	273	100.0
Totals	17	4.0	241	63.0	43	11.0	51	13.0	32	8.0	384	100.0

X^2 (df = 4) = 5.87, p > .05

Research question 3. In Class III school districts, is the amount of elementary planning time less than, equal to, or more than the planning time of secondary teachers as reported by superintendents?

Superintendents were asked, "Compared with secondary teachers, elementary teachers' planning time is less, the same, or more?"(question 8). Superintendents were asked to respond to "less than," "the same," or "more

than." A frequency analysis of question 8 was completed and cross-tabulated by athletic classification. Fifty percent of the superintendents (in districts where elementary planning time was provided) reported that elementary teachers in their districts received less planning time than secondary teachers. Seventy-one percent of the superintendents from Class A schools and 68.5 percent of the superintendents from Class B schools reported that the elementary teachers in their districts received less planning time than secondary teachers. There was no significant difference in the responses of the superintendents from the different athletic classes (X^2 (df = 6) = 11.37, $p > .06$) The superintendent responses and cross-tabulation by athletic class are shown in Table 7.

An analysis of responses provided by principals and teachers showed differences when compared to superintendents. Principals indicated a higher percentage of elementary teachers who had less planning time than secondary teachers (62.0%). Sixty-eight percent of the elementary teachers reported they received less planning time than secondary teachers in their districts. The responses and percentages of superintendents, principals, and teachers are shown in Table 8.

Table 7

Elementary Planning Time Compared with Secondary Planning Time as Reported by the Superintendents

Response	Class A		Class B		Class C		Class D		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than secondary	10	71.0	24	68.5	38	45.0	20	40.0	92	50.0
Same as secondary	2	14.5	8	23.0	33	39.0	23	46.0	66	36.0
More than secondary	2	14.5	3	8.5	14	16.0	7	14.0	26	14.0
Total	14	100.0	35	100.0	85	100.0	50	100.0	184	100.0

X^2 (df = 6), = 11.37, p > .05

Table 8

A Comparison of Elementary and Secondary Planning Time by Superintendents, Principals, and Teachers

Response	Superintendents No.	%	Principals No.	%	Teachers No.	%
Less than secondary	92	50.0	67	62.0	177	68.0
Same as secondary	66	36.0	24	22.0	30	11.0
More than secondary	26	14.0	14	13.0	8	3.0
Do not know	-	0.0	3	3.0	46	18.0
Total	184	100.0	108	100.0	261	100.0

Research question 4. How do elementary teachers in Class III school districts use the planning time provided by the district?

Teachers were asked, "Considering all of your planning time during the student day, please review the following 15 tasks and rank order the top five tasks in which you most frequently engage, with 1 = the most frequency, 2 = the next highest frequency, etc.:"(question 11). Teachers were asked to select from the following 15 tasks:

- Complete daily lesson plans
- Continue work on unit plans
- Mentally reflect on past or future instruction
- Prepare student materials
- Student assessment activities (correct papers, etc.)
- Plan with other teachers (i.e., PE, Music, Sped)
- Conference with other teachers (i.e. peer coaching, collaborative teaching
- Participate on SAT team
- Make phone contacts/conference with parents
- Work with students (i.e., one-on-one instruction, work completion)
- Disciplining students
- Complete administrative tasks for the principal
- Complete tasks for extra duty assignments
- Take a break for personal needs (i.e., beverage, restroom)
- Complete tasks not related to school

Principals (question 11) were also asked to rank the top five tasks they observed teachers engaged in during planning time, using the same 15 items.

A frequency analysis of the teacher question 11 and principal question 11 was completed for each of the task items. To analyze the relationship of the tasks to one another as reported by teachers and principals and to compare the responses of the two groups toward each of the planning time tasks, the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted.

Teachers and principals reported that teachers were most frequently engaged in the same five tasks. The five top ranked tasks were:

- Preparation of student materials
- Completion of lesson plans
- Student assessment activities (correcting papers, tests, etc.)
- Continued work on unit planning
- Personal needs (e.g., using the restroom, coffee, etc.)

Teachers and principals reported the same frequency ranks for the remainder of the ten tasks. While two task responses (complete lesson plans and personal needs) showed a statistical difference between teachers and principals, the total responses would not suggest any practical significance in the difference between the principal and teacher responses for the two tasks. The responses and their ranks are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Difference in Elementary Teacher Use of Planning Time as Reported by Teachers and Principals

Task	Teacher Task Rank	Teacher Mean Rank	Principal Task Rank	Principal Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U
Prepare student materials	1	159	1	164	9951
Student assessment activities (correct papers, tests, etc.)	3	118	2	134	5864
Complete lesson plans	2	124	3	101	4084*
Personal needs (i.e., restroom, coffee, etc.)	5	99	5	82	3102*
Continue work on unit plans	4	100	4	84	2898
Make phone contacts or conference with parents	6	58	6	65	1260
Conference with other teachers (i.e., peer coaching, team teaching)	7	50	7	53	1064
Work with students (one-on-one instruction, etc.)	8	44	8	50	743
Mentally reflect on past or future instruction	9	41	9	45	548
Plan with other teachers (i.e., PE, music, Sped)	10	26	10	32	307
Complete administrative tasks for principal	11	23	11	25	120
Complete tasks for extra duty assignments	12	21	12	22	70

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 9 (continued)

	Teacher Task Rank	Teacher Mean Rank	Principal Task Rank	Principal Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U
Disciplining students	13	15	13	17	22
Complete tasks not related to school	14	8	14-15	6	15
Participate on SAT team	15	6	14-15	6	10

Research question 5. How do principals monitor the planning time behaviors of elementary teachers as reported by superintendents, principals, and teachers?

To answer research question 5 ("How do principals monitor the planning time behaviors of elementary teachers?") a "monitoring" question was asked on the superintendent, principal, and teacher surveys. Superintendents were asked, "Does your district use any specific approaches for monitoring teacher planning time?" (question 11). Under the question, superintendents were provided five items to rate, "never, almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always, always." The items are listed below:

- Principals provide informal guidelines for teacher use of planning time
- Principals provide written guidelines for teacher use of planning time
- Principals monitor teacher use of planning time
- Principals assign tasks to be completed during planning time
- Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes

A frequency analysis of question 11 on the superintendent survey was completed for each of the items. According to the standard deviations of the responses, that superintendents believed that principals rarely engaged in monitoring tasks of the elementary teachers. The responses of superintendents are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Monitoring of Elementary Planning Time as Reported by the Superintendents

Task	Mean	Standard Deviation
Principals provide informal guidelines for teacher use of planning time	2.79	1.71
Principals provide written guidelines for teacher use of planning time	1.93	1.24
Principals monitor teacher use of planning time	2.90	1.50
Principals assign tasks to be complete during teacher planning time	2.38	1.28
Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes	2.46	1.56

Principals were asked, "To what extent do you monitor teacher use of planning time?" (question 9). Under the question, principals were provided six items to rate, "never," "almost never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," "almost always," "always." The items are listed below:

- I observe use of planning time
- I provide general guidelines for use
- I review teacher lesson plans

- I provide specific guidelines for planning time use
- I provide specific feedback about teacher use of planning time
- I tie teacher use of planning time to teacher evaluation

A frequency analysis of the principal survey question 9 was completed for each of the items.

Teachers were asked, "To what extent does your principal monitor your use of planning time?" (question 9). Under the question, teachers were provided six items to rate, "never," "almost never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," "almost always," "always." The items are listed below:

- Observes my use of planning time
- Provides general guidelines for use
- Reviews my lesson planning
- Provides specific guidelines for planning time use
- Provides specific feedback about my use of planning time
- Ties my use of planning time to my evaluation

A frequency analysis of the teacher survey question 9 was completed for each of the items. A t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of teacher responses to the mean scores of the principal responses on each of the six monitoring tasks.

Principals reported monitoring the lesson plans of teachers and teacher use of planning time more often than the other monitoring tasks listed on the survey. Principals were rarely engaged in other monitoring tasks. Teachers consistently rated principals lower in monitoring tasks than principals rated themselves; this difference was significantly different. To maintain a family-wise alpha of .05, a Bonferroni adjustment was used (.05 divided by

the number of comparisons), which resulted in p = .008. The significant difference in the means of the teacher and principal responses demonstrated both a statistical and practical difference in how principals perceived their task engagement and how teachers perceived the principals' task engagement. Teacher and principal means, the difference in the means, and the t-value are shown in Table 11.

Research question 6. Do Class III elementary principals assess the effects of elementary planning time on instruction?

To answer research question 6 ("Have Class III school districts assessed the effects of elementary planning time on instruction?") an "assessing" question was asked on the superintendent, principal, and teacher surveys. Superintendents were asked, "Has your district attempted any specific or formal approaches for assessing the effects of elementary teacher planning time on instruction?" (question 12). Under the question, superintendents were provided three items to rate, "never," "almost never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," "almost always," "always." The items are listed below:

Table 11

Difference in Monitoring of Elementary Planning Time as Reported by Principals and Teachers

Task	Teacher Mean	Teacher St. Dev.	Principal Mean	Principal St. Dev.	Mean Difference	t Value
Principal observes the use of planning time	2.11	1.37	3.52	1.25	1.41	9.29*
Principal provides general guidelines for planning time use	1.74	1.18	3.06	1.52	1.32	8.93*
Principal reviews lesson planning	3.35	2.09	4.76	1.62	1.41	6.32*
Principal provides specific guidelines for teacher use of planning time	1.65	1.08	2.42	1.20	0.77	6.06*
Principal provides specific feedback about teacher use of planning time	1.59	1.06	2.78	1.30	1.19	9.21*
Principal ties teacher use of planning time to teacher evaluation	1.83	1.48	2.56	1.46	0.73	4.38*

*$p < .008$

- Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes
- Planning time is linked in some way to student outcomes
- Teachers' use of planning time is evaluated against student and teacher outcomes.

A frequency analysis was completed for each item. Superintendents reported that elementary planning time was almost never assessed by the three assessment tasks listed in question 12. The superintendent responses are shown in Table 12.

Principals were asked, "Is the use of planning time linked to or measured by outcomes?" (question 10). Under the question, principals were provided four items to rate, "never," "almost never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," "almost always," "always." The items are listed below:

- Teacher use of planning time is evaluated by what a teacher does during planning time
- Teacher use of planning time is evaluated based on teaching behaviors called for in his/her lesson plans
- Use of planning time is linked, but not measured by student outcomes
- Use of planning time is evaluated based on student outcomes.

Table 12

Assessment of Elementary Planning Time as Reported by the Superintendents

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes	2.19	1.52
Planning time is linked in some way to student outcomes	2.19	1.50
Teachers' use of planning time is evaluated against student and teacher outcomes	1.82	1.23

Teachers were asked, "To what extent is your planning time measured by or linked to outcomes by your principal?" (question 10). Under the question, teachers were provided four items to rate, "never," "almost never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," "almost always," "always." The items are listed below:

- My use of planning time is evaluated by my behavior during planning times
- My use of planning time is evaluated based on the teaching behaviors stated in my plans
- My use of planning time is linked, but not measured by student outcomes

- My use of planning time is evaluated based on my students' outcomes

A frequency analysis of question 10 on the principal and teacher surveys was completed for each item. A t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of the teachers' responses to the mean scores of the principals' responses on each of the four principal assessment tasks.

Principals reported they were rarely engaged in assessment tasks. Teachers consistently rated principals lower in assessment tasks than principals rated themselves. According to the t-test results, the teachers' lower ratings of the principals were significantly different. To maintain a family-wise alpha of .05, a Bonferroni adjustment was used (.05 divided by the number of comparison, which resulted in $p = .013$. The significance in the difference of the means between teacher and principal responses demonstrated both a statistical and practical difference in how principals perceived their task engagement and how teachers perceived the principals' task engagement. The teacher and principal means and standard deviations, the difference in means, and the t-value are shown in Table 13.

Research question 7. How does the amount of planning time provided, the type of teaching assignment, and the years of experience of elementary teachers affect their use of planning time in Class III districts in Nebraska?

To answer research question 7, a frequency analysis and cross-tabulation was used between each of three questions from the teacher survey and the 15 tasks teachers used on the survey to rank their use of planning time (question 11). The first question was cross-tabulated with each

Table 13

Difference in Principal and Teacher Responses to the Assessment of Elementary Planning Time

Task	Teacher Mean	Teacher St. Dev.	Principal Mean	Principal St. Dev.	Mean Difference	t Value
Teacher use of planning time is evaluated by what a teacher does during planning times	1.75	1.26	2.63	1.45	0.99	5.80*
Teacher use of planning time is evaluated based on teaching behaviors called for in his or her lesson plans	2.07	1.61	2.81	1.54	0.74	4.02*
Use of planning time is linked, but not measured, by student outcomes	2.32	1.75	2.75	1.50	0.43	2.21
Use of planning time is evaluated based on student outcomes	2.07	1.65	2.27	1.36	0.20	1.11

*$p < .013$

planning time task related to the amount of planning time given to respondent teachers (question 2); the second question was cross-tabulated with each planning task related to the years of experience of the respondent teachers (question 13); and the third question was cross-tabulated with each planning task related to the teaching assignment of the respondent teachers (question 14).

Regardless of the amount of planning time provided, teachers indicated that completing lesson plans, preparing student materials, and assessing student work were the three most frequent tasks completed during

planning time. Teachers with 100 minutes or more also indicated that taking care of personal needs and working on unit plans were two of the top five planning time tasks. This was consistent with the overall rating of planning time tasks indicated by teachers (see Table 9). Teachers with less than 100 minutes a week rated mental reflection on past or future instruction and working with students as two of the top five planning time tasks and placed them higher than unit planning and personal needs. The use of elementary teacher planning time compared with the amount of planning time is shown in Table 14

Teacher responses to the top five planning time tasks were analyzed to determine whether or not the top five planning time tasks were different for teachers with 1-5 years experience, 6-10 years experience, 11-15 years experience, and more than 16 years experience. Regardless of the number of years experience, teachers ranked the same five tasks highest. The five tasks were consistent with the overall rating of planning time tasks indicated by teachers (see Table 9). The use of elementary teacher planning time compared with years of teaching experience is presented in Table 15.

When comparing the top five planning tasks with the type of teaching assignment, some differences were identified. Teachers with regular classroom assignments ranked the five top tasks consistent with the overall rating of planning time tasks indicated by teachers as one large group (see Table 9).

Curriculum specialists who taught music, physical education, art, library/media, etc., did not include student assessment tasks as being one of the top five most frequent planning time tasks. Curriculum specialists did

Table 14

Elementary Teacher Use of Planning Time Compared with Amount of Planning Time

Task	More than 200 Minutes		100-200 Minutes		100 Minutes or Less	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Complete lesson plans	57	77.0	105	66.0	15	48.0
Prepare student materials	70	95.0	132	84.0	24	77.0
Student assessment activities (correct papers, tests, etc.)	49	66.0	96	61.0	13	42.0
Personal needs (i.e., restroom, coffee, etc.)	36	49.0	79	50.0	8	26.0
Continue work on unit plans	42	57.0	90	57.0	9	29.0
Conference with other teachers (i.e., peer coaching, team teaching)	16	22.0	40	25.0	8	26.0
Work with students (one-on-one instruction, etc.)	22	30.0	31	20.0	10	32.0
Make phone contacts or conference with parents	22	30.0	52	33.0	8	26.0
Plan with other teachers (i.e., PE, music, Sped)	14	19.0	14	9.0	3	10.0
Mentally reflect on past or future instruction	18	24.0	34	22.0	11	35.0

Table 14 (continued

Task	More than 200 Minutes N	%	100-200 Minutes N	%	100 Minutes or Less N	%
Complete tasks not related to school	2	3.0	4	3.0	0	0.0
Complete administrative tasks for principal	8	11.0	25	16.0	3	10.0
Complete tasks for extra-duty assignments	10	14.0	20	13.0	6	19.0
Participate on SAT team	5	7.0	3	2.0	0	0.0
Disciplining students	7	9.0	16	10.0	3	10.0

Table 15

Elementary Teacher Use of Planning Time Compared with Years of Teaching Experience

Task	1-5 Years N	%	6-10 Years N	%	11-15 Years N	%	16 or More N	%
Complete lesson plans	23	74.0	38	70.0	38	66.0	82	72.0
Prepare student materials	27	87.0	50	93.0	51	89.0	103	90.0
Student assessment activities (correct papers, tests, etc.)	13	42.0	36	67.0	38	66.0	76	67.0
Personal needs (i.e., restroom, coffee)	16	52.0	23	43.0	27	47.0	58	51.0
Continue work on unit plans	13	42.0	38	70.0	30	52.0	62	54.0
Conference with other teachers (i.e., peer coaching, team teaching	11	35.0	14	26.0	16	28.0	26	23.0
Work with students (one-on-one instruction, etc.)	8	26.0	13	24.0	12	21.0	32	28.0
Make phone contacts or conference with parents	12	39.0	16	30.0	23	40.0	34	30.0

Table 15 (continued)

Task	1-5 Years N	%	6-10 Years N	%	11-15 Years N	%	16 or More N	%
Plan with other teachers (i.e., PE music, Sped)	3	10.0	7	13.0	9	16.0	12	11.0
Mentally reflect on past or future instruction	8	26.0	11	20.0	9	16.0	36	32.0
Complete tasks not related to school	1	3.0	0	0.0	2	3.0	3	3.0
Complete administrative tasks for principal	3	10.0	9	17.0	10	17.0	16	14.0
Complete tasks for extra-duty assignments	4	13.0	8	15.0	12	21.0	13	11.0
Participate on SAT team	3	10.0	1	2.0	3	5.0	1	1.0
Disciplining students	3	10.0	7	13.0	7	12.0	10	9.0

indicate that the mental reflection on past or future instruction was one of the top five most frequent planning time tasks.

Special educators, including special education and Chapter I teachers, also indicated some differences in their top five planning time tasks. Special educators did not rank student assessment activities or personal needs in the top five planning time tasks. Special educators did indicate that making phone contacts or conferencing with parents and conferencing with other teachers were in their top five planning tasks. The use of elementary teacher planning time compared with teaching assignment is shown in Table 16. Due to the number of possible responses of the teachers and the comparison of groups based on amount of planning time, years experience, and teaching assignment, the expected frequencies for each of the chi-square cells, and the actual responses, the test for significance was not considered reliable. As a result, the responses shown in Tables 14, 15, and 16 are descriptive only and based on percentages.

Research question 8. Is additional elementary teacher planning time desired by principals and teachers in Class III districts in Nebraska?

To answer research question 8, principals and teachers were asked, "Would you prefer more planning time during the day if it were available to you?" (question 4 on the principal and teacher surveys). A frequency analysis was completed for both the responding principals and teachers.

Principals indicated less of a desire for more planning time than did teachers. Sixty-six percent of principals indicated a desire for more teacher planning time while 34.0 percent did not. Eighty-six percent of teachers preferred more teacher planning time while 14.0 percent did not. Principal

Table 16

Elementary Teacher Use of Planning Time Compared with Teaching Assignment

Task	Classroom Teacher N	Classroom Teacher %	Curriculum Specialist N	Curriculum Specialist %	Special Educator N	Special Educator %
Complete lesson plans	126	71.0	37	80.0	17	57.0
Prepare student materials	163	92.0	41	89.0	25	83.0
Student assessment activities (correct papers, tests, etc.)	135	76.0	15	33.0	11	37.0
Personal needs (i.e., restroom, coffee, etc.)	88	50.0	22	48.0	12	40.0
Continue work on unit plans	99	56.0	27	59.0	15	50.0
Conference with other teachers (i.e., peer coaching, team teaching)	47	27.0	5	11.0	15	50.0
Work with students (one-on-one instruction, etc.)	42	34.0	13	28.0	10	33.0
Make phone contact or conference with parents	61	34.0	7	15.0	17	57.0
Plan with other teachers (i.e., PE, Music, Sped)	19	11.0	8	17.0	4	13.0
Mentally reflect on past or future instruction	32	18.0	24	52.0	8	27.0

Table 16 (continued)

Task	Classroom Teacher N	Classroom Teacher %	Curriculum Specialist N	Curriculum Specialist %	Special Educator N	Special Educator %
Complete tasks not related to school	2	1.0	4	9.0	0	0.0
Complete administrative tasks for principal	27	215.0	6	13.0	4	13.0
Complete tasks for extra-duty assignments	21	12.0	12	26.0	4	13.0
Participate on SAT team	5	3.0	3	7.0	0	0.0
Disciplining students	19	11.0	7	15.0	1	3.0

and teacher responses to the desirability of additional planning time are shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Principals' and Teachers' Responses Concerning the Desirability of Additional Planning Time

Respondent	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Principals	72	66.0	37	34.0
Teachers	225	86.0	38	14.0

An additional comparison was made between principal and teacher desire for more planning time and the amount of time already provided. Principals and teachers in districts where more than 200 minutes of planning time was already provided indicated less of a desire for additional planning time. Fifty-two percent of the principals and 69.0 of the teachers preferred additional planning time, while 48.0 percent of the principals and 31.0 percent of the teachers did not. In districts where teachers received 100-200 minutes of planning time, 75.0 percent of the principals and 92.0 percent of the teachers indicated a desire for additional planning time. In districts where teachers received less than 100 minutes of planning time 86.0 percent of the principals and 94.0 percent of the teachers indicated a desire for additional planning time. Principal and teacher responses related to

additional planning time as compared to the time already provided are shown in Table 18.

Table 18

Desirability of Additional Planning Time as Reported by Principals and Teachers by the Categories of More than 200 Minutes, 100-200 Minutes, and Less Than 100 Minutes Planning Time

	More Than 200 Minutes Planning Time				100-200 Minutes Planning Time				100 Minutes Planning Time			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Principals	24	52.0	22	48.0	42	75.0	14	25.0	6	86.0	1	14.0
Teachers	51	69.0	23	31.0	145	92.0	13	8.0	29	94.0	2	6.0

Research question 9. If additional elementary planning time was provided, how would teachers use the time?

To answer research question 9, teachers were asked, "If you were provided more planning time, how would you use the time?" (question 5). Written responses were categorized and a frequency analysis was completed; the written responses were grouped into the following 10 categories:

- General and daily lesson planning, short-term planning
- Unit planning, long-term planning, project planning
- Assessment of students, correcting papers, assessing instruction
- Collecting, organizing, developing resources and materials

- Communication, collaboration, team planning with other teachers including specialists, same grade, cross grade, and special staff (Sped, Chapter I, etc.)
- Professional reading and self-development
- Parent/family contact/correspondence
- Assistance and work with students
- Paperwork, bulletin boards, classroom management, student files
- Planning or developing skills related to technology

Principals and teachers indicated similar uses for additional planning time. Principals and teachers agreed on the top three task categories. For teachers, general planning (39.0%), unit planning (36.0%), and staff communication (33.0%) were indicated as the top three uses for additional planning time. For principals, staff communication (64.0%) was followed by equal responses for general planning (30.0%) and unit planning (30.0%). The responses of principals and teachers related to use of additional planning time are shown in Table 19.

Research question 10. How would principals and teachers prefer to have elementary planning time blocked?

To answer research question 10, principals and teachers were asked, "How would you prefer to have your planning time blocked?" (question 6 on the principal and teacher surveys). Written responses were categorized and a frequency analysis was completed; the written responses were grouped into the following nine categories:

Table 19

Teacher and Principal Responses Concerning Teacher Use of Additional Planning Time

Task Category	Teachers N	Teachers %	Principals N	Principals %
General and daily lesson planning, short-term planning	93	39.0	26	30.0
Unit planning, long-term planning, project planning	86	36.0	26	30.0
Assessment of students, correcting papers, assessing instruction	64	27.0	7	8.0
Collecting, organizing, developing resources and materials	51	22.0	3	3.0
Communication, collaboration, team planning with other teachers	79	33.0	55	64.0
Professional reading and self-development	17	7.0	4	5.0
Parent/family contact/correspondence	17	7.0	3	3.0
Assistance and work with students	12	5.0	1	1.0
Paperwork, bulletin board, other classroom management	43	18.0	2	2.0
Planning or developing skills related to technology	8	3.0	1	1.0

- Daily planning time
- Daily planning provided in larger blocks of time
- Daily planning time plus one larger weekly block
- Daily planning time plus one larger monthly block
- Daily planning time plus one or more days additional each school year
- Larger weekly blocks of planning time
- Monthly blocks of time (1/2 or 1 full day)
- Two or more days per school year for planning
- Other

Sixty-nine percent of teachers and 71.0 percent of the principals indicated a preference for daily planning or daily planning in larger blocks. Eighteen percent of teachers and 15.0 percent of principals indicated a preference for daily planning plus some type of larger block planning, such as weekly, monthly, or half or full day planning blocks. In addition to listing the type of planning blocks that were preferable, both principals and teachers indicated a need for larger blocks of planning time for the purpose of having staff communicate, plan, and collaborate together. Teacher and principal responses concerning preferences for blocking planning time are shown in Table 20.

Table 20

Teacher and Principal Preferences for Blocking Planning Time

Type of Planning Time Block	Teachers N	Teachers %	Principals N	Principals %
Daily	132	51.0	41	40.0
Daily in larger blocks	48	18.0	32	31.0
Daily plus one larger weekly block	16	6.0	2	2.0
Daily plus one larger monthly block	16	6.0	9	9.0
Daily plus one or more days additional each school year	3	1.0	1	1.0
Larger weekly blocks	26	10.0	1	10.0
Monthly blocks (1/2 or 1 full day)	12	5.0	3	3.0
Two or more days per school year	0	0.0	1	1.0
Other	7	3.0	4	4.0

Additional Questionnaire Comments

In addition to the questions on the surveys, teachers and principals were provided the opportunity to make any comments they thought would be important to the planning time study. Sixty-nine comments were written by teachers. Listed below is a summary of comments provided:

1. Thirteen teachers reported concerns that elementary planning time in their districts was less than secondary planning time. Teachers reported they had more preparations and less time.

2. Eleven teachers reported curriculum planning was becoming more complex and they had more resposibility within the curriculum planning process. Planning time was not enough or had not increased at the same rate as an increase in their tasks or responsibilities.

3. Nine teachers reported that the planning time they had was provided in blocks that were too short to conduct any meaningful planning.

4. Six teachers reported positive feelings about the block time given to them and the opportunity to plan with other teachers.

5. Five teachers reported they had to spend most of their planning time in the evenings or on weekends to meet the needs of their position.

6. Five teachers reported concerns that elementary planning time was not a high priority for the administration or boards of education.

7. Five teachers reported being special education teachers with little or no planning time, due to case load.

8. Four teachers reported too much dependency on secondary specialists for their planning time. If secondary schedules were altered or teachers were ill, planning time was interrupted.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions have been inferred from the planning time study.

1. Almost all Class III districts provided some elementary planning time. Understanding what was and what was not planning time sometimes differed between superintendents, principals, and teachers.

2. Curriculum specialists (music, physical education, library/media, technology teachers) were used to provide elementary planning time for classroom teachers in most districts.

3. Less time was given to elementary teachers for planning time than to secondary teachers.

4. Teachers used planning time to complete professional tasks related to their positions. The top five tasks reported by teachers and principals included: (1) lesson plan completion, (2) preparation of student materials, (3) student assessment activities, (4) continued work on unit plans, and (5) attention to personal needs. Teachers who reported fewer weekly minutes of planning time also reported less work in the area of long-term planning.

5. Principals spent little time monitoring and assessing teacher planning time. Superintendents and teachers reported less monitoring or assessing of elementary planning time than did principals.

6. Elementary principals and teachers reported they desired more planning time, especially in districts where 200 or fewer minutes of planning time were provided weekly.

7. If provided with additional planning time, principals and teachers reported a preference to increase long-term and collaborative planning with other staff members.

8. While daily planning time was preferred, principals and teachers reported they desired some block planning time which would allow staff members to plan together.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose for conducting the study was to identify the amount of planning time offered to elementary teachers and to compare that amount of time with the planning time offered secondary teachers. The study was also conducted to identify how elementary teachers used planning time and how their planning time was monitored by administrators. In addition, the study was conducted to determine whether teachers and principals desired more planning time and how additional planning time would be used.

Chapter V consists of three sections. In the first section, comparisons are made between the review of literature and the results of the study, along with general conclusions. Generalizations and applications of the literature review and results of the planning time study are provided in the second section. Recommendations for the profession and for further study are provided in the third section.

Summary of the Study

A literature review was conducted to establish a theoretical perspective, examine issues related to teacher planning time, and identify previous studies related to teacher planning time. The review led to the conclusion that teacher planning was an important part of the teaching

process. Teachers used planning to prepare for and reflect on instructional episodes and to establish routines, organize and adapt curriculum, and develop instructional processes and activities. Teacher planning had a positive relationship with how instruction was delivered. Although teacher planning processes were addressed in the literature, little was found concerning when this planning took place and how it was provided (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Peterson, Marx, & Clark, 1978; Yinger, 1979).

Because the literature contained many studies in which the importance of teacher planning to the instructional process was identified, and little was reported on the provision and effectiveness of planning time for teachers, a number of important questions can be asked. Would it be appropriate to assume that because little effort has been given to the study of elementary planning time, planning time is not important or a high priority? Is it assumed by educators and researchers that all teachers receive planning time or that planning time is not necessary? Should it be assumed that because of the bureaucratic structure of schools, those who have the power to control the provision for planning time, i.e. administrators, have the least amount of need for planning time? Should the increase in elementary planning time come from outside pressures such as legislative mandates, or should an increase in elementary planning time come from within education through a recognition of need? If teacher involvement in educational reform is important, are teachers provided with the additional time necessary to be involved? If the planning time of teachers was monitored and assessed to a greater degree, would planning time gain focus and higher priority in the restructuring of schools?

Would it be appropriate to assume that because little effort has been given to the study of elementary planning time, planning time is not important or a high priority? Is it assumed by educators and researchers that all teachers receive planning time or that planning time is not necessary? The lack of studies regarding elementary teacher planning time would lead to the conclusion that elementary planning time was not a high priority issue. Responses from superintendents, principals, and teachers, however, would indicate that planning time was a high priority issue. Principals and teachers not only indicated a need for more planning time, but were able to specify uses and structures for additional planning time. One assumption would be that planning time was, in fact, important; however, superintendents reported that in some districts in Nebraska no planning time was provided for elementary teachers. The lack of planning time in some Nebraska districts was not in agreement with studies in which researchers found a need existed for teachers to have planning time.

Should it be assumed that, because of the bureaucratic structure of schools, those who have the power to control the provision for planning time, i.e. administrators, have the least amount of need for planning time? Teacher comments about planning time were generally more negative than positive. Administrators, by the nature of their positions, had the most control over the provision of elementary planning time and the least need for released time from direct supervision of students. Teachers found themselves in an adversarial position, placing them in a "we-they" role between administrators and other teachers in middle and secondary school settings. Teachers reported that the lack of planning time and the

approaches for scheduling planning time (wherever it could be fit into the schedule) gave them the impression that administrators did not see planning time as important; teachers had little or no support from administrators when requesting additional planning time from central administrators and/or school boards.

In one Class B district, plans were underway to schedule the middle school to an eight-period day. Teachers at the middle school would receive 88 minutes each day for planning--one period for individual planning and one period for team planning. In this same district, elementary teachers would receive 30 minutes a day for planning. When approaching the school board and district administrators with a proposal for additional elementary planning time, one elementary teacher reported the superintendent stated the district had provided the elementary teachers with more planning time over recent years and he had not seen any improvement in the test scores of elementary students. The comment left teachers with a negative feeling about the lack of support from the administration. The same teacher also expressed concern about voicing any negative opinions about planning time given to the middle school teachers, because she knew the middle school teachers could use the planning time. She felt that the administration had placed them in a "divisive" position with middle school teachers. Possibly, elementary teachers could place the middle school planning time in jeopardy by using it as an example of disparity in the district.

The above example of a Class B district outlines the negative aspects of planning time for elementary teachers. Some teachers reported

administrators were not working with elementary teachers collaboratively to increase planning time. Did the lack of equity in elementary planning time and secondary planning time indicate that elementary teachers did less so they needed less planning time? Was there a significant difference between the role of secondary and elementary teachers which warranted a difference in the amount of planning time? While one could conclude the answer to these questions is "no," elementary teachers were left with negative feelings as a result of inequity in planning time and a perception that they had no administrative support.

Legal and economic issues related to planning time could also be addressed under the "we-they" concept. In the traditional structure of secondary schools, scheduling of planning time is allowed for secondary teachers through a departmental approach. This approach schedules students in different courses and allows principals to schedule secondary planning time with little additional personnel and funding. Because of traditional structures, elementary teachers are responsible for all subject areas and the supervision of students throughout the day. As a result, the scheduling of planning time for elementary teachers requires the addition of curriculum specialists and/or other additional personnel to supervise students. This structure creates economic issues for districts in which elementary planning time is provided. Legal approaches for teacher contract negotiation have produced wage and benefit scales which provide equity for elementary and secondary teachers. Attempts have been made by teachers to include planning time in the negotiation of contracts. If planning time is labeled as an item under "working conditions," should

elementary teachers from a particular district receive the same planning time as secondary teachers? National statistics and the results of the planning time study would indicate that elementary teachers still do not receive the same amount of planning time. Falzon (1983) pointed out that if planning time improved instruction would it not become a "hidden compensation?" He theorized that the more planning time a teacher had, the better the instructional delivery, the better the evaluation, and the greater the job security for the teacher. Using his theory and the example of the Class B school district, could it be concluded that during the evaluation process, administrators from the Class B school district should expect more effective instructional delivery from a middle school teacher, with 88 minutes of daily planning time, than from an elementary teacher with only 30 minutes of daily planning time?

While the equity of planning time was a conclusion of the planning time study, it would not be considered a major conclusion. The purpose for the inclusion of equity issues was made to demonstrate that if elementary planning time was not addressed as a positive and high priority for providing educational change, planning time could become a negative issue which would impede teacher moral and efforts toward positive involvement in the change process.

Should the increase in elementary planning time come from outside pressures, such as legislative mandates, or should an increase in elementary planning time come from within through a recognition of need? Nebraska teachers have not been able to create funding or avenues for additional elementary planning time at a state level through the legislature. The

failure of the elementary planning time bill, introduced in the 1988 Nebraska Legislature, would suggest that legislators were not ready or willing to provide additional funding necessary at the state level and/or to mandate elementary planning time to individual districts across the state. While the testimony of teachers at legislative hearings was focused on the instructional improvements provided by planning time, the approach to legislate elementary planning could be concluded as an attempt to legalistically move elementary planning time toward equity with secondary planning time. The pressure for more elementary planning time must come from within local districts based on need. Unlike a legalistic approach, which has some merit, the approach must be a connection between desired outcomes for students and the planning necessary to reach those outcomes. When administrators, teachers, school boards, and communities develop a shared focus through a shared concept of what students need, positive collaboration begins to develop. If a collaborative attitude is developed in a district, all audiences can address the needs of the other. As a result, planning time potentially could be seen as a need to reach the ultimate outcomes for students.

If teacher involvement in educational reform is important, are teachers provided with the additional time necessary to become involved? This question strikes the core of planning time issues and creates a sense of irony. How can teachers provide input for educational change and decision making outside their traditional roles, while still dealing with the increase in instructional innovations without additional planning time? Hargreaves (1992) used the terms professionalism and intensification in his study.

Professionalism included an increase in the teacher's role for decision making, site-based management, teacher leadership, total school curriculum development, and collaborative support, along with continuous improvement. In addition to the expanded professionalism, teachers were faced with multiplying instructional innovations, increased accountability, and diversity of student populations contributed by the increased inclusion of special education students in classrooms. Collectively, the increased role of teachers was termed intensification.

The intensification of the role of the teacher has a number of negative effects on teachers as well as the students and districts they serve. Intensification reduces the time teachers have to improve their skills and keep up with innovations in education. Intensification creates persistent overloads on teachers which inhibits involvement in and control over long-term planning and fosters dependency on externally produced materials, e.g., teacher guides. Teachers reported, in negative terms, the increased amounts of time needed to plan at home and on weekends. One teacher reported, in positive terms, the reduction in intensification and the feelings of being better prepared for students due to the increase of planning time in her district. Hargreaves (1992) reported that teachers in his study with new provisions of planning time also felt the reduction of intensification and, as a result, temperaments in the classroom and interaction with their classes were improved.

Along with survey items addressing the research questions for the study, superintendents were asked to identify strategies for restructuring their districts and the amount of involvement requested of teachers in the

strategies. More than half of the superintendents reported being involved in restructuring strategies, such as McREL A+, High Performance Learning, Outcomes Based Education, and/or Strategic Planning. More than half of the superintendents also reported that teacher involvement ranged from assignment on district committees to involvement in restructuring activities. Superintendents demonstrated a desire for change and the inclusion of teachers in the change process.

The conclusion can be made that Nebraska teachers experienced the intensification of their roles as educators and, based on Hargreaves' (1992) conclusions, would experience a reduction in the intensification through the increase in planning time.

If the planning time of teachers was monitored and assessed to a greater degree, would planning time gain focus and higher priority in the restructuring of schools? This question also strikes the core of issues related to elementary planning time. Administrators did little to monitor and assess the effects of planning time. Without some structure for monitoring or assessing planning time, judgments about planning time cannot be made. As a result, while planning time may be theoretically viewed as important, ultimately the only criterion used for the provision of various amounts of elementary planning time is the availability of funds for additional personnel.

Best practice would support the idea that any educational change must include an assessment component which allows for an evaluation of effectiveness. In order to give elementary planning time a higher priority in the restructuring of schools, formal approaches for monitoring and

assessing planning time must be a component of any plan for change. The formal approaches would also place the focus on what could be done with additional planning time and not merely on the amount or amount of increase in planning time.

Discussion

The generalization and application of the literature and findings of the elementary planning time study are important to the use, structuring, monitoring, and assessing of planning time. In this section generalizations and applications are discussed.

The restructuring of schools must include a restructuring of planning time and recognize the priority role planning time plays in promoting the restructuring of schools. The first step toward the restructuring of planning time is a clear definition of what planning time is and what purpose it serves. Administrators and teachers must jointly define planning time and how it should be used. Without definition, terms such as planning time and inservice time lack purpose and direction. To define planning time administrators and teachers must collaboratively identify and prioritize all of the planning tasks necessary to improve and restructure instruction, using student outcomes as indicators of improvement.

In the development of the elementary planning time study, one focus included the equity between planning time for elementary teachers as compared with planning time for secondary teachers. While more than half the elementary teachers in Nebraska schools had less planning time than secondary teachers at the time of this study, the focus on planning time

equity was not as important as first predicted. Because of the concept that planning time should be equitable for all teachers, an inappropriate assumption could be made that all teachers need the same amount of planning time although their teaching assignments and responsibilities are different.

Many superintendents and some principals considered before and after school time and duty-free recess time as planning time for teachers. Many teachers reported that those times were often used to attend meetings or work with students. While attending meetings and working with students are important, the tasks were not "labeled" as planning time by teachers. The consideration of planning time equity in terms of blocks of time and the monetary and personnel resources, which make elementary planning time available, limit the paradigm of restructuring. Planning time must be defined, not as a block of time, but as different blocks of time which meet different needs and tasks identified and prioritized by administrators and teachers as important. The identification and prioritization of planning tasks shift the focus from acquiring more time to finding time for the tasks necessary for instructional improvement.

In a school with a restructured paradigm of planning time, planning tasks would prioritize the acquisition and scheduling of planning time. Planning time would include short planning blocks that would allow teachers to develop short-term planning (lesson plans) related directly to the goals, objectives, and outcomes developed in long-range planning (formal curriculum and units). Short planning blocks would also allow teachers to organize and structure instructional materials to aid in

instructional delivery. Short planning blocks would be available to teachers daily. Short planning blocks would also be used by teachers to engage in other tasks, such as working with students one-on-one, making contacts with parents, etc.

Larger blocks of planning time would be necessary to conduct a number of planning tasks. The planning tasks in the study were identified as most important based on teacher task engagement. The key to the larger blocks of planning time is not the amount of time. The key to larger planning blocks in a restructured school is the opportunity for administrators and teachers to have the same block of time for planning. Team planning and collaboration between all staff members are essential to the planning process. For the purpose of the generalization, team planning block is used as a "label" for larger blocks of planning time.

Team planning blocks of time are needed for long-range planning, unit planning, curriculum revision, and curriculum articulation. The team planning block time could be used as a collaborative effort to give teachers and principals direct input related to the improvements that could and should be made to improve instruction. Through the use of team planning blocks, teachers and principals could review curriculum and have an opportunity to discuss articulation between instructional outcomes at different grade levels to provide for an active scope and sequence. In addition, units developed by teachers could be strengthened by the input of teacher teams and could be bridged across grade levels. The concept of curriculum and unit integration could be developed in more depth when curriculum specialists are included in the development process, rather than

excluded through their traditional roles of providing the planning time for classroom teachers. The curriculum integration concept would also include special educators from special education and Chapter I programs. The team planning time block is critical in schools where a curriculum development shift includes a focus on student outcomes. Teachers and principals must be directly involved in the process of defining and developing learner outcomes, developing instructional activities that promote the learning outcomes, and using alternative assessment approaches for measuring success. The development of a process for reteaching loops which ensure learning outcomes for all students is also critical.

Principals and teachers in restructured schools could develop strategies for monitoring and assessing planning time tasks. Together, principals and teachers could use the prioritized list of tasks to develop specific guidelines for the use of planning time blocks. The shared commitment and focus could allow teachers to self-monitor planning activities and principals to assist in facilitating resources necessary for teachers to complete tasks. Principals and teachers could develop and incorporate approaches for assessing planning time tasks. The assessment of specific planning time tasks would need to be linked to student success in meeting outcomes. By linking the planning time tasks with student outcomes, teachers and principals could validate their prioritization of planning tasks or collect data which would warrant a changing of priorities. The linking of planning time tasks to student outcomes could also provide data to support any need for additional planning time and an

avenue for communicating with other audiences (school boards, parents, patrons) what teachers are doing.

Team planning blocks could provide time for teachers and principals to develop and refine alternative assessment for students. The inclusion of alternative student assessment would require team planning due to the nature of different assessment approaches. To require teachers to do more than "take percentages" or "average grades," more time is necessary. The restructuring of assessment would also require additional articulation to provide a logical assessment progression from grade level to grade level and between classroom teachers and other teaching support staff.

If schools are to be restructured, teachers and principals must have an equal opportunity to have input into restructuring decisions. The input for restructuring decisions is often labeled "site-based management." Team planning time could provide a structured time for the development of restructuring decisions, including those decisions discussed earlier in the section. Team planning time could also allow teachers and principals to identify the skills necessary for restructuring. In the planning time study, 67 percent of the responding teachers reported teaching for 11 or more years. As a result, some teachers may not have formal training in outcomes-based curriculum development or in alternative assessment; teachers could use team planning time to acquire the skills necessary to complete those planning tasks.

After defining the purpose of planning time, identifying and prioritizing planning time tasks, and developing approaches for monitoring and assessing planning time through a link to student outcomes, teachers

and principals would be able to begin developing amounts and types of planning time blocks necessary to achieve the tasks. School personnel committed to restructuring would include principals and teachers who would look beyond the traditional paradigm of scheduling to include daily planning time, team planning blocks, and other structures which, no doubt, would have an impact on the structure of the school calendar from early dismissals and late starts for students, to planning days for staff, to changes in contracts between teachers and districts.

If administrators and teachers shared a definition and purpose for planning time, used planning time to reduce the intensification of the teacher's role, developed approaches which linked planning time activities to successful student outcomes, demonstrated that different types of planning time were necessary to carry out the collaborative mission of the school, and demonstrated a shared desire for accountability to their students and parents, planning time would take on a high priority in the restructuring of schools.

Recommendations

Recommendations are made based on the results and experiences associated with the study. The recommendations are reported either as recommendations for the profession or recommendations for further study.

1. Administrators and teachers must communicate with one another to create a common definition of planning time.

2. Administrators and teachers must work collaboratively to identify how planning time should be used and what planning tasks have priority.

3. If principals and teachers are to demonstrate the importance of elementary planning time and additional elementary planning time, they must identify approaches for assessing the effectiveness of planning time. Linking planning time activities to an increase in desirable student outcomes can provide the basis for additional planning time.

4. Elementary planning time provides teachers an opportunity to complete a variety of tasks. Different types of planning tasks require different amounts of time. In addition, some planning tasks are individual in nature, while others require collaboration and integration. As a result, planning time must be seen and allocated by the priority and types of tasks which are identified as desirable. For example, shorter blocks of planning time may be necessary to complete tasks related to materials organization or acquisition, while long-term planning or unit writing would require larger blocks of time.

5. The scheduling of planning time must go beyond the traditional concept of "40 minutes a day." Planning time scheduling must include shorter daily blocks of time and larger blocks for team or staff planning. Planning time must be another influence on the construction of yearly school calendars. To achieve the type of long-term collaborative planning which both principals and teachers reported as desirable, elementary teachers must be provided released time from students. To include all staff members, district personnel will need to consider an increase in "late starts" and "early dismissals" for students, along with "inservice" or

"planning days" for staff members.

6. Further study of the relationship between principal supervision of elementary planning time and the use of planning time by teachers is necessary. Are there specific principal supervision behaviors which can improve the use of planning time? Are the specific supervision behaviors among the general characteristics of instructional leadership?

7. Further study of the relationship between how teachers use planning time and the effects on student outcomes is necessary. Can teacher planning behaviors be linked to higher student outcomes? Do certain teacher planning tasks have a greater effect on student outcomes than others?

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APPENDIX A

Cover Letter and Superintendent Questionnaire

March 1, 1993

Dear Superintendent,

I am elementary building principal at Valley, Nebraska, and doctoral candidate under the supervision of Dr. Alvah Kilgore at the University of Nebraska. As a practicing administrator, elementary teacher planning time is an interest for me and is the focus of my doctoral study. The enclosed survey is a part of my dissertation study. For the purpose of my study, planning time is defined as release time from student supervision during the student day (when students are present and in session).

The study is a two phase process. In the first phase I hope to determine the status of elementary teacher planning time through a survey of superintendents in Nebraska Class III districts.

In the second phase of the process a sample of districts that provide elementary teacher plan time will be selected. Teachers from the sample districts will be surveyed to collect information about how planning time is used and monitored.

The superintendent survey was designed to get maximum information while keeping your time commitment at a minimum. Your help will allow me to collect the most accurate information possible which I can, in turn, give you in summary form. Please take a moment to complete the survey or designate someone in your office who would have knowledge about your district's elementary planning time.

I thank you in advance for taking a moment to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

George Conrad
Valley Elementary
401 South Pine
Valley, Nebraska 68064
(402) 359-2151

SUPERINTENDENT
PLANNING TIME
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Approximately how many elementary students does your district serve?
_____

2. How many elementary teachers do you have in the district? _____

3. How many elementary attendance centers are in your district? _____

4. What athletic classification is your district (Class A, B, C, or D)? _____

5. Do elementary teachers in your district receive planning time during the student day?

_____ yes _____ no

If your response to #5 is NO please check any of the following statements which apply, respond to #14 & 15, and return in the enclosed envelope:

_____ Limited staff (i.e. PE, Music, Art, or paraeducators) are available to supervise students and free teachers.
_____ Limited financial resources are available to allow budgeting for elementary planning time.
_____ The School Board has not supported efforts to provide elementary planning time.

If your response to #5 is YES please respond to the following questions:

6. Elementary teachers in the district receive planning time (check one):

_____ daily _____ 3-4 days a week _____ 1-2 days a week
_____other (please explain):
_____

7. Elementary teachers in the district receive how many minutes of planning time during the student day each week?

_____ more than 200 min. _____ between 100 & 200 min. _____ less than 100 min.

8. Compared with secondary teachers, elementary teachers' planning time (during the student day):

_____ is less _____ is the same _____ is more

9. Planning time for elementary teachers is provided by the district (please check one):

_____ as directed by School Board Policy

_____ as directed by the negotiated teacher contract
_____ as directed by both School Board Policy & Teacher Contract
_____ not by policy or contract, but by practice when available

10. In order to provide planning time for elementary teachers, the following people are used:

_____ Paraeducators
_____ Curriculum Specialists (i.e. art, PE, music)
_____ both paraeducators & curriculum specialists
_____ other:
_____

11. Does your district use any specific approaches for monitoring teacher planning time?

	never	almost never	rarely	sometimes	often	almost always	always
Principals provide informal guidelines for teacher use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Principals provide written guidelines for teacher use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Principals monitor teacher use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Principals assign tasks to be completed during teacher planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. Has your district attempted any specific or formal approaches for assessing the effects of elementary teacher planning time on instruction?

	never	almost never	rarely	sometimes	often	almost always	always
Planning time is linked in some way to teacher outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Planning time is linked in some way to student outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers use of planning time is evaluated against student and teacher outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. Based on responses from Class III school districts in Nebraska, a sample will be identified to be surveyed about uses of elementary teacher planning time. Would you agree to allow a random sample of your teachers and/or principals to be surveyed and/or interviewed?

_____ yes _____ no

14. Are you involved in any of the following approaches for school restructuring?

_____ McREL A+
_____ High Performanced Learning
_____ Outcomes Based Education
_____ Outcomes Based Accreditation
_____ Collaborative Teaching
_____ Strategic Planning
_____ Other _____

15. If you have marked an approach in #14 please mark the following statements:

Teachers have not been informed.	Teachers have been informed but are not active.	Teachers have been informed & assigned to committees.	Teachers have been assigned committees & are organizing.	Teachers are directly involved in activities & individual tasks.	Teachers are using restructuring for personal unit lesson planning.
1	2	3	4	5	6

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this survey. I've attempted to keep it brief. I would be happy to provide compiled data for your use.

_____ yes, send me results _____ no, results not necessary

Signature _____

District _____ School Code # _____

Other additional comments which you believe will give me a "picture" of elementary teacher planning time in your district:

PLEASE RETURN IN ENVELOPE BY MARCH 12TH, 1993

APPENDIX B

Cover Letter and Elementary Principal Questionnaire

April 2, 1993

Dear Colleague,

As an elementary building principal at Valley, Nebraska, and doctoral candidate at the University of Nebraska, elementary teacher planning time is an important interest of mine. The enclosed survey is a part of my dissertation study.

The study is a two phase process. In the first phase I hope to determine the status of elementary teacher planning time through a survey of Nebraska Class III districts. The status will be determined based on information collected from superintendents.

In the second phase of the process a sample of districts that provide elementary teacher plan time will be selected. Your name was selected based on a random approach for selecting teachers from districts that provide planning time.

The principal survey was designed to get maximum information while keeping your time commitment at a minimum. Your help will allow me to collect the most accurate information possible which I can in turn give your district in summary form. I thank you in advance for taking a moment to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

George Conrad
Valley Elementary
401 South Pine
Valley, Nebraska 68064
(402) 359-2151

School Code # _____

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL PLANNING TIME QUESTIONNAIRE

For purposes of this questionnaire, "planning time" is defined as a block of time you schedule for teachers during the student day. "Student Day" is defined as those hours that students are in session, not before or after school.

1. You provide planning time for teachers(check one):

   _____ daily _____ 3-4 days a week _____ 1-2 days a week
   _____other (please specify):
   _____

2. You provide how many minutes of planning time each week?

   _____ more than 200 min. _____ between 100 & 199 min. _____ less than 99 min.

3. Do you provide any planning time structured differently than listed in question #1? If yes, please describe.

4. Would you prefer to give teachers more planning time during the day if it were available to you?

   _____ yes _____ no

5. If you provided more planning time to teachers, how would you prefer they use the time?

6. How would you prefer to have teacher planning time blocked (i.e. daily, larger blocks weekly, monthly)?

7. Compared with secondary teachers in my district, elementary planning time (during the student day) is:

_____ is less _____ is the same _____ is more _____ I don't know

8. In order to provide planning time for teachers, the following people are used:

_____ Paraeducators
_____ Curriculum Specialists (i.e. art, PE, music)
_____ both paraeducators & curriculum specialists
_____ other:
_____

9. To what extent do you monitor teacher use of planning time?

	never	almost never	rarely	sometimes	often	almost always	always
I observe use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I provide general guidelines for use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I review teacher lesson plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I provide specific guidelines for planning time use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I provide specific feedback about teacher use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I tie teacher use of planning time to teacher evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. Is the use of planning time linked to or measured by outcomes?

	never	almost never	rarely	sometimes	often	almost always	always
Teacher use of planning time is evaluated by what a teacher does during plannning times	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teacher use of planning time is evaluated based on teaching behaviors called for in his/her lesson plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Use of planning time is linked, but not measured by student outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Use of planning time is evaluated based on student outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Considering all of the planning time provided during the student day, please review the following 15 tasks and rank order the top 5 tasks teachers most frequently engage in with 1=the most frequency, 2=the next highest frequency, etc.:

_____ Complete daily lesson plans
_____ Continue work on unit plans
_____ Mentally reflect on past or future instruction
_____ Prepare student materials
_____ Student assessment activities (correct papers, etc.)
_____ Plan with other teachers (i.e. PE, Music, Sped)
_____ Conference with other teachers (i.e. peer coaching, collaborative teaching)
_____ Participate on SAT team
_____ Make phone contacts/conference with parents
_____ Work with students (i.e. one-on-one instruction, work completion)
_____ Disciplining students
_____ Complete administrative tasks for the principal
_____ Complete tasks for extra duty assignments
_____ Take a break for personal needs (i.e. beverage, restroom)
_____ Complete tasks not related to school

12. What athletic classification is your district (Class A, B, C, or D)? _____

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this survey. I've attempted to keep it brief. The information you provide will help me provide accurate summaries to schools across the state.

Other additional comments which you believe will give me a "picture" of elementary teacher planning time in your district:

PLEASE RETURN IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE BY APRIL 16TH, 1993

APPENDIX C

Cover Letter and Elementary Teacher Questionnaire

April 2, 1993

Dear Colleague,

As an elementary building principal at Valley, Nebraska, and doctoral candidate at the University of Nebraska, elementary teacher planning time is an important interest of mine. The enclosed survey is a part of my dissertation study.

The study is a two phase process. In the first phase I hope to determine the status of elementary teacher planning time through a survey of Nebraska Class III districts. The status will be determined based on information collected from superintendents.

In the second phase of the process a sample of districts that provide elementary teacher plan time will be selected. Your name was selected based on a random approach for selecting teachers from districts that provide planning time.

The over all purpose of the study is based on my view that teacher planning time is important for elementary teachers and that planning time for elementary teachers should be equal to that of secondary teachers. As a result, I need information about how planning time is provided and used by elementary teachers.

The teacher survey was designed to get maximum information while keeping your time commitment at a minimum. Your help will allow me to collect the most accurate information possible which I can in turn give your district in summary form. I thank you in advance for taking a moment to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

George Conrad
Valley Elementary
401 South Pine
Valley, Nebraska 68064
(402) 359-2151

School Code # _____

ELEMENTARY TEACHER PLANNING TIME QUESTIONNAIRE

For purposes of this questionnaire, "planning time" is defined as a block of time you are given without having to supervise students during the student day. "Student Day" is defined as those hours that students are in session, not before or after school.

1. You receive planning time (check one):

   _____ daily _____ 3-4 days a week _____ 1-2 days a week
   _____other (please specify):
   _____

2. You receive how many minutes of planning time each week?

   _____ more than 200 min. _____ between 100 & 199 min. _____ less than 99 min.

3. Are you provided any planning time structured differently than listed in question #1?

4. Would you prefer more planning time during the day if it were available to you?

   _____ yes _____ no

5. If you were provided more planning time, how would you use the time?

6. How would you prefer to have your planning time block (i.e. daily, larger blocks weekly, monthly)?

7. Compared with secondary teachers in my district, my planning time (during the student day) is:

_____ is less _____ is the same _____ is more _____ I don't know

8. In order to provide planning time for you, the following people are used:

_____ Paraeducators
_____ Curriculum Specialists (i.e. art, PE, music)
_____ both paraeducators & curriculum specialists
_____ other:
_____

9. To what extent does your principal monitor your use of planning time?

	never	almost never	rarely	sometimes	often	almost always	always
Observes my use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Provides general guidelines for use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reviews my lesson planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Provides specific guidelines for planning time use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Provides specific feedback about my use of planning time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ties my use of planning time to my evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. To what extent is your planning time measured by or linked to outcomes, by your principal?

	never	almost never	rarely	sometimes	often	almost always	always
My use of planning time is evaluated by my behavior during planning times	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My use of planning time is evaluated based on the teaching behaviors stated in my plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My use of planning time is linked, but not measured by student outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My use of planning time is evaluated based on my students' outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Considering all of your planning time during the student day, please review the following 15 tasks and rank order the top 5 tasks you most frequently engage in with 1=the most frequency, 2=the next highest frequency, etc.:

_____ Complete daily lesson plans
_____ Continue work on unit plans
_____ Mentally reflect on past or future instruction
_____ Prepare student materials
_____ Student assessment activities (correct papers, etc.)
_____ Plan with other teachers (i.e. PE, Music, Sped)
____ Conference with other teachers (i.e. peer coaching, collaborative teaching)
_____ Participate on SAT team
_____ Make phone contacts/conference with parents
_____ Work with students (i.e. one-on-one instruction, work completion)
_____ Disciplining students
_____ Complete administrative tasks for the principal
_____ Complete tasks for extra duty assignments
_____ Take a break for personal needs (i.e. beverage, restroom)
_____ Complete tasks not related to school

12. What athletic classification is your district (Class A, B, C, or D)? _____

13. How many years of teaching experience do you have counting this year?

_____ 1-5 years _____ 6-10 years _____ 11-15 years _____ 16 or more

14. What is your present teaching assignment?

_____ classroom teacher _____ curriculum specialist (PE, music, art, etc.) _____ special educator (sped, chapter, SLP)

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this survey. I've attempted to keep it brief. The information you provide will help me provide accurate summaries to schools across the state.

Other additional comments which you believe will give me a "picture" of elementary teacher planning time in your district:

PLEASE RETURN IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE BY APRIL 16, 1993

APPENDIX D

Institutional Review Board Permission Form

University of Nebraska
Institutional Review Board
For the Protection of
Human Subjects

University of Nebraska Medical Center
Eppley Science Hall 3018
600 South 42nd Street
Omaha, NE 68198-6810
402/559-6463
Fax 402/559-7845

February 15, 1993

George Conrad, Jr.
324 So. Mayne
Valley, NE 68064
UNL

IRB # 204-93-EX

TITLE OF PROTOCOL: Elementary Teacher Planning Time and Its Use in Nebraska Elementary Schools

Dear Mr. Conrad:

The IRB has reviewed your Exemption Information Form for the above-titled research project. According to the information provided this project is exempt under 45 CFR 46:101B. You are therefore authorized to begin the research.

It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines. It is also understood that the IRB will be immediately notified of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project.

Sincerely,

Ernest D. Prentice, Ph.D.
Vice Chairman, IRB

EDP/abk