Spring 2005

Exploring table talk: Does dialogue or debate correspond to success and satisfaction in teacher collective bargaining?

Michael R. Jette

*University of New Hampshire, Durham*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation](https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation)

**Recommended Citation**


[https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation/268](https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation/268)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact nicole.hentz@unh.edu.
NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI®

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
EXPLORING TABLE TALK: 
DOES DIALOGUE OR DEBATE CORRESPOND TO 
SUCCESS AND SATISFACTION 
IN TEACHER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING?

BY

MICHAEL R. JETTE
B.S., State University of New York at Plattsburgh, 1989
M.S. Ed., State University of New York at Plattsburgh, 1991

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire 
in Partial Fulfillment of 
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy 
in 
Education 

May, 2005
This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Dissertation Director, Dr. Todd A. DeMitchell
Professor of Education

Dr. Casey Cobb
Assistant Professor of Education
University of Connecticut

Dr. Mark V. Joyce, Executive Director
New Hampshire School Administrators Association

Dr. Barbara H. Krysiak
Associate Professor of Education

Dr. Brian Wazlaw, Executive Board Member
National Education Association - New Hampshire

April 19, 2005
Date
DEDICATION

To Nancy, whose love, support, and understanding made this possible. Thank you for all of the quiet weekends, so that I could “dissertate” in peace.

And

To my parents, Richard and Charlotte, for instilling in me a love for learning.

And

To Uncle Dick Goodman, for always believing in me, serving as a great role model, and gently pushing me to achieve.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Throughout my program of studies and the writing of this doctoral dissertation, there have been many people who have provided me with guidance, support and encouragement. I owe them my sincere appreciation.

First and foremost, I wish to thank my dissertation director, Todd DeMitchell. From that first course in school law to the final words of this study, Todd has served as a teacher, advisor and mentor. He has greatly influenced my education and career, and I value the support that he continues to provide.

I would also like to thank the members of my dissertation committee: Casey Cobb, Mark Joyce, Barbara Krysiak and Brian Wazlaw. I truly appreciate all of the time, energy, and expertise that each person brought to this study. My work was improved because of your combined efforts.

I wish to extend sincere appreciation to the National Education Association - New Hampshire affiliate and to the New Hampshire School Boards Association and the New Hampshire School Administrators Association for their open support of this research project.

Thank you to the Merrimack Valley School District, especially Pam and Mike, for the constant push to get this done. I appreciate all of the support from my colleagues and the entire school community.

My hat is off to the participants from labor and management who responded to my survey and who do the difficult work of contract negotiations.

Finally, making sense of a poem or song is based largely on personal experience. Whenever it played in the background over the years of writing, my sense-making of The Trees enlarged because of this research.
The Trees by Neil Peart

There is unrest in the Forest
There is trouble with the trees
For the Maples want more sunlight
and the Oaks ignore their pleas

The trouble with the Maples
(And they're quite convinced they're right)
they say the Oaks are just too lofty
And they grab up all the light
But the Oaks can't help their feelings
If they like the way they're made
and they wonder why the Maples
Can't be happy in their shade?

There is trouble in the forest
And the creatures all have fled
As the Maples scream 'Oppression!'
And the Oaks, just shake their heads

So the Maples formed a Union
and demanded equal rights
'The Oaks are just too greedy
We will make them give us light'
Now there's no more Oak oppression
For they passed a noble law
And the trees are all kept equal
By hatchet,
Axe,
And saw ...
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication...................................................................................................... iv  
Acknowledgment........................................................................................... v  
The Trees...................................................................................................... vi  
List of Tables and Graphs.............................................................................. viii  
Abstract.......................................................................................................... ix  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE** | 10 |
| Introduction | 10 |
| History of Collective Bargaining in Education | 10 |
| Unionism | 16 |
| Principled Negotiations | 26 |
| Communication and Conversation | 32 |
| Summary and Need For This Research | 37 |

| **III. METHODOLOGY** | 40 |
| Research Design | 40 |
| Population and Sample | 41 |
| Study Limitations | 42 |
| Development of the Survey Instrument | 43 |
| Data Collection Procedures | 45 |
| Data Analysis | 49 |
| Reliability | 52 |
| Validity | 54 |
| Summary | 56 |

| **IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA** | 57 |
| The Talkers and the Talk | 59 |

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Response rates by school district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reliability analysis, survey part II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Demographics of the talkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>'Table talkers', reported by role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Management talkers, reported by role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Labor talkers, reported by role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>'Table talk' related to bargaining outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rating the success of the bargaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Comparison of 'table talk' and wise agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Analysis of Part II of the survey on dialogue/debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Part II rank order of mean scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Analysis of top and bottom four statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Correlation between success/wise and dialogue/debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Independent samples t-test on 19 statements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIST OF GRAPHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAPH</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mean Scores on Part II of the Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

EXPLORING TABLE TALK: DOES DIALOGUE OR DEBATE CORRESPOND TO SUCCESS AND SATISFACTION IN TEACHER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING?

by

Michael R. Jette

University of New Hampshire, May, 2005

The purposes of this study were: (1) to see if there is a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the teacher contract collective bargaining table, and (2) to determine if individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the teacher contract collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate.

The survey instrument designed for this study consisted of two parts. Part I collected background information about the negotiators, the outcome of their bargaining, and their perceptions of success. Part II of the survey contained 19 diametrically opposed statements related to either dialogue or debate, and respondents used a Likert-type scale to describe the nature of their ‘table talk’ (defined as the conversations that took place when management and labor sat together around the teacher contract bargaining table). The population consisted of 39 New Hampshire school districts that bargained new teacher contracts in the 2001-02 school year. A total of 190
surveys were returned for a response rate of 58.5%.

This research found that representatives from labor generally had a higher score on the dialogue-debate questions than did the representatives from management. Thus, labor was more likely to view the table talk toward the neutral or debate end of the scale while management tended to view the identical conversations more toward the dialogue end of the continuum. However, the two parties had a fairly consistent rank order of the 19 statements and there were three easily identifiable groupings. This supports that Berman's conceptual framework of dialogue and debate seems to work nicely within the confines of teacher collective bargaining since the diametrically opposed statements were seen in a similar manner by respondents from both management and labor. These data show that representatives from labor and management have a degree of consistency in the way they view and report the talk that occurs at the negotiation table.

The individuals reported a fairly high level of satisfaction with their bargaining, and it is worth noting that few of the respondents reported a lack of success. The research found that a lack of success was less dependent on the product of the bargaining but more dependent on the manner in which the parties conducted their ‘table talk’. When the dialogue/debate score was correlated to questions about the success of the bargaining and whether a wise agreement was reached, the correlations were found to be weak to moderate. This establishes that those who engage in dialogue have a slightly greater personal satisfaction with their bargaining than those who approach the table and engage in debate.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Collective bargaining is a formal process that determines the wages, benefits, terms and conditions under which many educators practice their craft. Numerous states have laws which require teacher collective bargaining, and millions of teachers who belong to either the National Education Association (NEA) or the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) have their profession shaped by the collective bargaining process. While public sector collective bargaining roots are planted in private sector industrial unionism, teacher unions have recently begun to move away from the traditional framework of industrial unionism toward a new unionism that embraces a concern for the profession of teaching (Chase, 1999 & Chase, 1997). One place where such a concern should be demonstrated through action is at the contract negotiation table. Yet, there is little evidence available to support the proposition that discussions at the table are focused on improving the educational environment. Indeed, there is little evidence to suggest that the conversations at the table are designed to enhance the relationship between the teachers and the school district management. An enhanced relationship would be a logical precursor to moving beyond traditional ‘bread and butter’ issues (wages, benefits and working conditions) to embrace issues associated with teacher quality, student achievement and school district accountability.
Much has been written about strategies to use when negotiating a teacher contract (Sharp, 1993; Keiner, 1995; Webster, 1988; Bolton, 2001). Terms such as 'win-win' or 'interest-based' can be found in the literature concerning teacher contract negotiations, and many teachers advocate such an approach perhaps without understanding how to accomplish it during the collective bargaining process. However, in Getting to Yes (1991) Fisher and Ury advocate four basic points to “principled negotiations: Separate the people from the problem; focus on interests not positions; generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do; and insist that the result be based on some objective standard” (p. 10). Principled negotiation places attention on the type and quality of discussions that occur at the bargaining table and suggests that the outcome of the bargaining is related to the ‘table talk’. Does it follows from Fisher and Ury’s work that when the parties at the bargaining table focus on having a dialogue about the issues, and not on debating positions, a greater likelihood to achieve a collective bargaining agreement will exist? Further, would such an approach lead individuals to have a greater satisfaction with the process of collective bargaining?

**Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of the conversations that took place between labor (teachers and other state certified professional staff members) and management (school boards and school administrators) when the parties were negotiating a new teacher contract. Specifically, the study utilized Berman’s *Comparison of Dialogue and Debate* (1998), to assign both the labor team and the management team a score that...
indicated whether the team perceived the conversations that took place between the parties (defined as 'table talk') to be more similar to a dialogue or to a debate. In addition to describing the nature of the table talk, the study collected data on each individual's personal satisfaction and perception of success with collective bargaining in their school district. Through the use of statistical analysis, this study determined whether there was a relationship between the nature of the table talk (dialogue or debate) and the bargainer's perception of success and satisfaction.

Currently, there are no empirical studies that examine the conversations that take place when teachers and school district officials sit down around a table to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement. Therefore no studies have purported to find a relationship between 'table talk' and success in reaching an agreement or personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process. This exploratory study has begun to address this lack of information about teacher collective bargaining. This study will also contribute to our knowledge of what happens when the participants in negotiating a new teacher contract talk about their interests and make proposals to settle contractual issues.

**Research Questions**

This research was designed to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table?
2. Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in
dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate?

**Significance of the Study**

Across the country, there are thousands of teachers and school district representatives who are engaged in collective bargaining. The outcome of their contract talks will not only effect the livelihood of the millions of teachers who work in their schools, but also the ability of the schools to conduct their business or reform their operation. Clearly, collective bargaining is important to the landscape of education in the United States. Despite this importance, there is very little that is known about what happens at the contract negotiation table. Searches of the literature do not reveal any empirical studies about what happens when teachers and school board members or administrators sit down to negotiate a new teacher contract. Conversations between the parties are central to the collective bargaining process. Yet, there is scant evidence about the nature of these conversations.

The literature related to collective bargaining is largely based in theory. As cited earlier, it tends to suggest strategies to get the job done. Often, the research in the area of contract negotiations focuses on the attitudes of the parties and the relationship they have during the collective bargaining process (Bolton, 2001; Keiner, 1995; Lunenburg, 2000; Ury, 1993; Fisher 1988 & 1991). The relationship during the process is important because it carries over into the settlement and the time period when labor and management are not negotiating a contract but are working under an agreement achieved through
collective bargaining. It would not be a positive result if the parties managed to settle a contract, but were so bitter over the attitudes from the table that the working relationship was strained for years to come. Not only would this have a negative impact on future attempts to reach a successor agreement, it would make for a very unpleasant working environment and could be a wedge in the quest to move educational quality higher on the list of teacher union objectives. The notion of approaching the negotiation table with a lens for dialogue, and not for debate, is one way to look at the attitudes and relationship that exist between the parties. This approach strikes at the heart of the matter and creates a framework that will allow us to advance our understanding of collective bargaining and could move us toward a better way to approach a negotiation session.

Finally, this research would help those who are responsible for training teachers and school boards to negotiate. It would pave the way to future research in collective bargaining and help us to better understand a field that has tremendous impact on the delivery of public school educational services in our country. It could change the face of bargaining teacher contracts from an adversarial approach to a facilitative approach. In the past, when the adversarial approach has failed to reach a settlement, the parties have declared an impasse and moved to a mediation process. On some level, the work of the mediator focuses on the dialogue at the table. The goal is to find common ground and broker a deal that is acceptable in the grand scheme even if minor points are conceded in the process. If the overall settlement is seen as a win, then the small concessions do not seem like 'losses'. This research could influence the way we approach professional unionism by
documenting a need to emphasize dialogue throughout bargaining, and not waiting until an impasse has been reached.

Methodology

Data was collected through a survey research method. This study was limited to school districts in the State of New Hampshire in which the teachers have selected the National Education Association (NEA-NH) as their exclusive bargaining representative. The population of the study was further refined to include only those schools that bargained a new teacher contract in the 2001-2002 school year, and a provision was made to randomly select only one school district for participation in the study whenever a multi district School Administrative Unit (SAU) had more than one school district engaged in teacher bargaining during this time frame.

The research survey or questionnaire consisted of two parts: part one was designed to collect some background information on the people who negotiated, on the general outcome of the bargaining and on the individual's perception of the success of the bargaining; part two presented nineteen diametrically opposed statements that describe dialogue or debate, and asked that each respondent select the statement that more closely resembled the conversations that took place when the parties sat together at the bargaining table.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter consists of background information on collective bargaining, the purpose of the research,
the research questions, the significance of the study, the methodology, and a
definition of terms. Chapter two is a review of the literature related to the history
of teacher collective bargaining and a discussion of research relating to the
purpose of this study. Chapter three describes the methodology used to gather
and analyze data. Chapter four presents the data and results related to each of
the research questions. Chapter five summarizes the findings of this study and
makes recommendations for future research. References and appendices
conclude the study.

Definition of Terms

With some of the terms outlined below, the pertinent New Hampshire
law (RSA 273-A) has been used to help define the term within the context of this
research. A few of the terms were developed by the researcher and are
presented here to ensure clarity for users of this research.

Collective Bargaining Agreement: A written legal document that
stipulates the terms and conditions of public employment. In New Hampshire,
such an agreement must “be reduced to writing and shall contain workable
grievance procedures” (RSA 273-A: 4). Specifically, wages and benefits are
determined by a collective bargaining agreement.

Exclusive Representative: A public employee organization selected by
the members of labor and certified by the New Hampshire Public Employee
Labor Relations Board to conduct contract negotiations. In this study, only
schools that had selected the New Hampshire affiliate of the National
Education Association (NEA-NH) as their exclusive bargaining representative
were invited to participate.

**Impasse:** The situation that occurs when the two parties (labor and management) have bargained in ‘good faith’, yet failed to reach an agreement. The negotiations are at a stalemate.

**Labor:** The members of the public employee bargaining unit. Eligibility for membership is defined in each collective bargaining agreement, but generally includes positions requiring state certification. In the scope of this study, Labor refers to the individuals who were selected to be on the employee contract negotiation team.

**Legislative Body:** In New Hampshire, this is the governmental body empowered to raise and appropriate tax dollars and other revenue. In most cases, the legislative body is the local school district meeting, while in a few cases the power resides with a city council or in one case with an independent school board.

**Management:** The members of the board of the public employer. In most cases, this refers to the local board of education and the administrators they have hired to conduct the business of the board. In the scope of this study, management refers to the individuals who served on the employer contract negotiation team.

**Proposal:** An offer from either Labor or Management to resolve a conflict and reach a successor collective bargaining agreement. Proposals may be matched with counterproposals until an agreement is reached. It is possible that a proposal may be dropped altogether by the initiating team.

**Table Talk:** The conversations that occurred when representatives from
both the teachers (labor) and the school district (management) were sitting together at the negotiation table. Respondents were directed to not focus on a particular conversation when describing their ‘table talk’. Instead, respondents were directed to focus on the overall tone of the numerous conversations that occurred throughout the collective bargaining process.

Unionism is an idea that provides the central identity which guides action and stimulates response (Kerchner and Mitchell, 1988, p.3).

Unionization is the reality produced by labor and management, the product of conflict and accommodation as competing ideas of a union are brought together on a crowded organizational stage (Kerchner and Mitchell, 1988, p.3).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will review the pertinent literature related to teacher contract negotiations. Specific information related to the history of collective bargaining in public education will be examined. Additionally, unionism in general will be explored with an emphasis on the shift from industrial style unionism to professional unionism. To further contribute to the need for this research, the principles outlined in *Getting to Yes* (1991) and later realized in 'Win-Win' or interest based bargaining will be examined. Finally, a section on communication and conversation is included because this information is essential to this research project.

History of Collective Bargaining in Education

No historical perspective would be complete without reference to specific events and dates. Collective bargaining first appeared in the private sector of labor relations, and only evolved in public institutions after it had been well established (Sharp, 1993, p.3). Sharp (1993) points to the following series of acts and laws as significantly shaping labor relations in the United States:

1. The Railway Labor Act (1926) required railroad management to bargain collectively with the employee unions.
2. The Wagner Labor Act (1935) established the right of private employees to bargain and established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

3. The Taft-Hartley Act (1947) gave employees the right to refrain from joining a union and established restrictions for both employers and employees.

4. The Landrum-Griffin Act (1959) amended the Taft-Hartley Act to expand the jurisdiction of the NLRB.

5. Executive Order 10988 (1962) issued by President Kennedy to allow federal employees the right to organize and negotiate while specifically stipulating that they could not strike.

The Executive Order cited above included any teachers who worked for a federal agency. This was one of the compelling reasons why the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) were able to successfully lobby within the state legislatures for the right to organize and bargain.

In *The Changing Idea of a Teacher's Union*, Kerchner and Mitchell (1988) also place an emphasis on dates and events in their analysis of teacher union development. They cite the New York City teacher's strike of April 11, 1962 as a (if not the) defining event in teacher unionism. With "more than half of the city's teachers" on strike for about a day, "a permanent change in the relationship between teachers and their school district employers" was realized (p. 1, 2). This change effected not just teachers in New York City, but impacted all public school teachers across the nation by demonstrating a willingness to use the hardball tactics of traditional industrial labor union
activists. In the view of Kerchner and Mitchell, teacher unions have brought about changes in public education that are "as swift as, and more complete than, the massive industrial changes brought about by the National Labor Relations Act and the spread of industrial unionism in the 1930's" (Ibid.). They even elevate teacher unionism to rank "alongside school desegregation and categorical funding as one of the three major structural changes in public education" (Ibid.).

In exploring teacher union evolution, Kerchner and Mitchell (1988) describe three distinct "generations" of labor relations:

1. The Meet and Confer generation,
2. The Good Faith Bargaining generation, and
3. The Negotiated Policy generation.

These three defined generations provide a useful framework for understanding the progression of a teacher's union from first securing the basic right of teachers to organize (Meet and Confer) to later representing teachers over legitimate educational issues (Negotiated Policy). The generation that a local school district is functioning within should be reflected in the negotiating that takes place during the collective bargaining process. The type of issues brought to the bargaining table and the discussions that ensue over those issues ought to progress in sophistication as labor and management evolve their relationship through the generations described by Kerchner and Mitchell.

The Meet and Confer generation is characterized by the "premise that all educators share a common interest in educating children" and "teacher organizations are seen as legitimate only as long as they recognize the ultimate authority of the administration and school board and do not challenge
it publicly" (Ibid. p. 6). Basically, the first generation is the time in which teachers assert that they have the right to organize as a group and to meet with management over matters of concern. In discussing this first generation, it is helpful to review who served as the first teachers in our nation. Originally, teaching children was conducted by family members in the home. In the early years of our nation, leaders realized that schooling had political, social and economic purposes and a shift occurred in which children began to be educated outside of the home by a schoolmaster or teacher. According to Streshly and DeMitchell (1994), the early teachers and schoolmasters "were a hodge podge assortment of individuals" who practiced their craft under pervasive control of the community (p. 3).

In order to advance the profession of teaching, teachers began to associate with one another and to define some common interests. It is clear that there were already numerous local and state associations in the middle of the nineteenth century, since the letter that invited teachers to the 1857 founding meeting of the NEA stated "Believing that what state associations have accomplished for the states may be done for the whole country by a National Association, we, the undersigned, invite our fellow-teachers throughout the United States to assemble in Philadelphia..." (Spring, 1998, p. 57). Thus a national organization was formed, and the rights and responsibilities of the modern teacher began to take shape. Streshley and DeMitchell (1994) point out that the NEA started as an organization that was dominated by school administrators and higher education professors until the 1960s. Therefore, bargaining that took place in the first century of the NEA was clearly first generation in nature, as teachers sought to define their interests
and assert themselves without alienating school authorities.

The second generation of bargaining, as defined by Kerchner and Mitchell (1988), is known as the Good Faith Bargaining generation. This generation is characterized by teachers legitimately representing "their own welfare interests . . . to bargain with management over economic and procedural due process questions" (p. 7). In the second generation, teacher contracts are bargained collectively and the parties establish rights and responsibilities of educational employees and employers. This generation of labor relations evolved during the 1960s in response to events like the New York City teacher's strike. The second generation was ushered in as states passed laws that legally defined public employee-employer relationships. In the State of New Hampshire, RSA 273-A et seq. (Public Employee Labor Relations Act) was implemented in 1975; this law established the notion of good faith bargaining and is the same law under which this research will be conducted (excepting a few legislative changes since 1975). Therefore, most schools in New Hampshire would be expected to be functioning under the second generation of bargaining.

In the Negotiated Policy or third generation, labor relations are seen by Kerchner and Mitchell (1988) as an "explicit attempt to shape school district policy through the contract and the union rather than attempting to 'manage around the contract' or through informal accommodation with the union" (p. 8). In the third generation, teachers essentially gain recognition from all parties that they have a legitimate voice in deciding how their school will function. Kerchner and Mitchell (1988) describe the type of unionism that occurs in the third generation as "Professional Unionism" and contrast it against the
industrial unionism from which teacher unions evolved. Collective bargaining in the third generation would extend the discussions to encompass issues such as curriculum, student achievement and teaching methodology. These issues would be defined in a “new form of agreement” called “an Educational Policy Trust Agreement” (p.19).

In defining their three generations of labor relations, Kerchner and Mitchell are very clear about two key concepts. First, they assert that conflict is an essential part of each generation and that “between each of the generations there has been a highly visible period of intergenerational conflict lasting from several weeks to several years and characterized by intense social, ideological and political conflict” (p. 4). The role of conflict in labor relations is very important to this study since one place conflict would be expected to appear is at the collective bargaining table. Furthermore, in order for schools to move from second generation labor relations (good faith bargaining) to third generation (professional unionism) the level of conversation at the bargaining table will need to become very sophisticated. Therefore, exploring the nature of the discussions that take place between labor and management will provide us with information on how this conflict appears during bargaining and what types of training will be needed to facilitate the more sophisticated conversations. The second clear concept is that “changes in labor generations are driven by changes in belief” (p. 9). A new belief could be developed at the local level that would transform the manner in which a particular school district works with its teachers. It is also possible that a new belief would be envisioned by union or school leadership on a larger scale and would be integrated into organizational thinking on a broader level. One example of this
is the concept of 'new unionism' that was articulated in 1997 by Bob Chase, the past President of the NEA.

**Unionism**

Bob Chase announced his plans for "a new approach to teacher unionism" in a speech before the National Press Club in February 1997. There are essentially two main goals of the 'new unionism' initiative: high-quality teachers and high-quality schools. The thrust is to move the NEA beyond advocating solely for 'bread-and-butter' issues (wages, benefits and working conditions) to also embrace the issue of educational quality (movement toward the third or Negotiated Policy generation). Chase has advocated the following specific practices in order to realize a reinvented NEA (Chase, 1999):

1. strict entry-level standards for teachers,
2. teacher mentoring,
3. peer assistance and peer review,
4. professional development,
5. National Board Certification,
6. a larger role for teachers in organizing a school for excellence, and
7. collaborative, rather then confrontational, bargaining.

While these practices currently enjoy pockets of support, there are also those within the organization and on the outside of the organization who are critical of these ideas. Either way, Chase articulated a blueprint for a reinvented union, and the foundation for that vision is being poured in local NEA affiliates across the country. The completed structure of New Unionism is still many years
The aspect of New Unionism that is pertinent to this study is Chase’s call for collaborative, rather than confrontational, bargaining. In an article in NEA Today, he points out to members that “cooperation does not mean capitulation. An olive branch is not a white flag” (1997, p.2). This could be taken as a somewhat dubious statement. New unionists would be willing to be collaborative, but also reserve the right to resist efforts that are not in their interest. Exactly how genuine disagreements will be settled remains to be seen. Current legal mechanisms to solve disputes (such as grievances and arbitration) do not seem to fit well with a spirit of collaboration. Chase further noted in his 1997 article that “ Strikes within public education hit a 20 year low last school year. . . (p.2).” However, the year 1996 also coincided with one of the most prosperous economies in recent memory. It is possible that economic conditions had a greater effect on the reduction of the number of strikes in public education than any spirit of collaboration. The proof of this may come to bear as we monitor collaboration during an economic downturn. But perhaps Chase is ready for that to occur. He also asserts in his article that “where management insists on treating school employees like overgrown children, we will resist. And we have not forgotten how to resist” (Ibid.). Is this foreshadowing the spin that New Unionism will take when genuine concerns about finances stall contract negotiations?

Kerchner and Mitchell (1988) include a brief discussion of “unionism as a normative idea and unionization as the social reality that results from trying to implement the idea” (p. 3). Their definitions of these terms appeared in chapter 1 of this report, but also follow for clarity:
Unionism is an idea that provides the central identity which guides action and stimulates response. Unionization is the reality produced by labor and management, the product of conflict and accommodation, as competing ideas of a union are brought together on a crowded organizational stage. Applying these definitions to Chase's concept of 'New Unionism', one can see that he is expressing an idea to guide action within the NEA. However, the practical reality of ‘New Unionization’ is still being shaped and one of the places it could be found is at the bargaining table. Once again, conflict is a central expectation in unionization. Therefore, collecting information about the nature of the discussions that take place between labor and management during teacher collective bargaining will help us to better understand how the normative idea of new unionism is becoming the practiced reality of new unionization.

In *A Union of Professionals* (1993), Kerchner and Caufman adopt an intriguing description of the relationship between the school district and the union. They explain how industrial era schooling has been working in partnership with industrial era unions. As the notion of education has changed and faced reform, the unions have found that they too must adapt to the new expectations and educational climate. The authors summarize labor-management relationships as follows: “At their worst, unions and school districts are two prisoners manacled together and slugging it out with their free hands. At their most productive, they are self interested partners in a joint civic venture” (p. 2). This imagery of labor relations could apply as easily to auto workers (or any other industry) as it could to what Kerchner, Koppich and
Weeres call “Mind Workers” (1997). This reinforces the industrial origin of teacher unions, and makes the point that as educational reforms take shape, there is a need to better understand educational labor relations and forge new approaches to teacher unionism.

Kerchner and Caufman (1993) view professional unionism as having three distinct characteristics that differentiate it from industrial unionism (p.9):

1. Labor and management (teaching and administration) are not inherently separate,
2. Adversarial relationships are not necessary, and
3. Ideas about teacher protection need to be rethought to embrace the integrity of the profession while protecting individuals.

This viewpoint of professional unionism is supportive of Chase’s notion that collective bargaining should be collaborative and not confrontational and that issues related to educational quality need to become part of the association’s agenda. Professional unionism calls for management and labor to work together as education is defined as a “collective and shared enterprise” (Ibid.). Specific examples of this sharing may be realized through the following practices (p. 11-15):

1. Joint committees - bring labor and management together to determine what needs to be done and how to do it.
2. Decentralization to school site - decisions about budgets, schedules and curricula become discussion between management and labor.
3. Central office changes - needed to allow decentralization to successfully occur.
4. Training and development - will allow labor and management to
solve problems collaboratively.

5. Teacher and principal leadership - crafting new leadership positions with schools and districts.

As these examples point out, working together presents a challenge to time honored notions of centralized control (within either the union or the administration) and defined lines of authority.

When it comes to bargaining, Kerchner and Caufman (1993) contrast industrial unionism to professional unionism with the following practices (p. 16 - 19):

1. Bargaining techniques and practices - the focus moves from shifting periods of conflict and cooperation to one of continuous problem solving.

2. Broader scope and different agreements - issues of educational quality are brought to the bargaining table, and new agreements typically outline a process to work on the problem rather than a finalized practice.

3. Agreements outside the contract - usually reserved for issues that have no easy answer and must be resolved through purposeful deliberation.

4. Contract waivers - allow individual schools to seek local arrangements outside of district contracts.

In order to achieve the practices detailed above, professional unionism will require a shift in the nature of collective bargaining. The industrial unionism idea that management and labor are timeless opponents will no longer work. "Moving from a unionism built around diffidence and antagonism to one built
around cooperation requires mutual respect; the vehicle for antagonism must be converted into a vehicle for getting things done” (p. 16). This new relationship, centered around mutual respect, should be able to be noticed in the conversations that take place at the bargaining table. By seeking information about the the nature of the table talk, this research will help to pinpoint progress on the continuum from industrial to professional unionism while also providing insight into the training that is needed to realize new unionism practices.

Johnson and Kardos (2000) describe three tenets of industrial unionism as they examine specific contract provisions that have shifted some school districts toward professional unionism. Borrowing from Kerchner and Caufman (1993), they looked for practices that challenged the notions of “adversarial labor-management relations, standardized practice, and generic roles for employees” (p.27). They found joint labor-management committees in Cincinnati that promoted cooperation even when a new contract was not being sought. In Toledo, Cincinnati and Rochester, they found peer review and career ladders had changed the role of some teachers beyond the generic position of teacher. In three anonymous districts, they found “reform contracts” that “recognize the shared interests of labor and management; affirm the importance of flexible, nonstandardized practice; and define differentiated, professional roles for teachers” (p.32). They also found districts in which the contract remained “industrial in tone, form and content” (p.35) or “modified industrial” with “new elements of reform that seem to have been appended to the old agreements without changing their overall purpose or character” (p.37). These practices demonstrate some of the specific things that can be done as
districts move from industrial style bargaining to professional unionism.

Empirical studies which establish a link between the conversations that take place among the parties when they sit together at the bargaining table (‘table talk’) and the reaching of a collective bargaining agreement are nonexistent. There are also no empirical studies which establish a relationship between personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process and the manner in which the parties talked with each other in trying to resolve their differences. However, there are some studies that have examined and drawn conclusions about collective bargaining which are pertinent to this exploratory research. In a 1984 study of six school districts representing a variety of demographics, Susan Moore Johnson found that “the organizational effects of collective bargaining appear to be both moderate and manageable” (p.164). In describing the labor relationships, she found that four of the six school districts had “intentionally cooperative” relations between labor and management, while the relationship was described as “notably more adversarial” in the other two districts (p.28). She found that the relationships between labor and management were often based on the personalities in each district.

Interestingly, Johnson also found that while “the position of building representative is often said to be an adversarial one . . . the building representatives considered in this study were rarely characterized that way” (p.40). The words used by teachers and principals to describe the building representatives were “cooperative and constructive” and most viewed “commitment to the union” as “compatible with school interests” (Ibid.). In the case of a few building representatives, the descriptive words were
"antagonistic, adversarial and disruptive" (Ibid.). Support for each of these aggressive representatives was reported by teachers to be moderate at best. Teachers preferred that, whenever possible, their representatives maintain collegial relationships with the principals" (Ibid.). While not directly commenting on the nature of contract negotiations, the representative/principal relationship does shed some light on the manner in which teachers expect their union to approach problems. This could carry over to the contract negotiation table as an expectation that the teachers hold for their contract negotiators. Finally, Johnson concludes that "it is individuals who strike bargains, make concessions, interpret language, advise strategies, and act on the basis of what they think others will do. Typically, personalities predominate over roles, rules and rituals. Collective bargaining is a people-centered process, just as schools are people-centered places" (p.167-168).

An additional area of research which further scratches at the surface of these lines of inquiry can be found in the area of school reform as it relates to collective bargaining. DeMitchell and Carroll (1999) specifically studied the topics of educational reform and collective bargaining as "two potent intersecting forces shaping the landscape of education" (p.675). They indicate that at the time of their research, there were only four reported studies which looked at the issue of reform and bargaining. One of the studies they cited found that teachers expected bread and butter issues to be at the center of bargaining, with other issues such as reform coming secondary (McDonnell and Pascall, 1988). Further, a study by Bascia (1994) supported the idea that before bargaining can be expanded to include reform initiatives, "historical needs for protection and representation” must be addressed (p.98).
DeMitchell and Carroll (Ibid.) state that the respondents to their study “perceived that the bargaining table provided a forum for serious discussion” about reform (p.686). One of their respondents said that it was bargaining that “caused both sides to truly and deeply discuss philosophy” (p.687). Even the negative responses in their study seemed to have a link to the manner in which the bargaining was conducted. The authors found that “often the negative comments were not targeted to the specific bargaining proposal being rated but were instead aimed at the bargaining process or the action of unions” (p. 687). One respondent in their study even “characterized the confrontational approach to bargaining as not being conducive to reform” (p.687). Their study found that collective bargaining facilitated discussions about reform and that the bargaining process may have actually increased collegiality between labor and management. If the bargaining related to traditional material benefits of teacher employment remains in an adversarial or industrial model, then what is the likelihood that issues related to reform will ever be successful? Therefore, it would appear that before bargaining reform, labor and management must build a relationship that is centered on trust, and the talk that occurs at the bargaining table may play an important role in building that trust.

In a 1996 study, DeMitchell and Barton examined the views of teachers, principals and union representatives on reform and bargaining. One interesting line of inquiry in their research centered around the “Character of Bargaining” (p. 371). Specifically, they looked at problem solving, friendliness and whether the contract was an obstacle to reform efforts. They found that all parties held a neutral view of the bargaining process. However, when the
bargaining was viewed as problem solving (and not problem-producing), then
the contract was also viewed as no obstacle to reform (as opposed to a
considerable obstacle to reform). Likewise, they found that when the
bargaining process was reported to be friendly, it was also seen as no
obstacle to reform. This study looks at the character of bargaining and finds a
positive correlation between friendliness among the parties and viewing the
contract as no obstacle to reform, and the ability to successfully bargain reform
initiatives. This seems to uphold the tenet that professional unionism (as
opposed to the older industrial model) employs different bargaining techniques
and practices. As mentioned previously, Kerchner and Koppich claim the focus
moves from shifting periods of conflict and cooperation to one of continuous

Before concluding this section on unionism, it is important to also point
out that there are those who are critical of the role teacher unions play in public
education. Myron Lieberman has historically been one of the most vocal critics
of the NEA and the AFT. In his book *The Teacher Unions: How the NEA and
AFT Sabotage Reform and Hold Students, Parents, Teachers, and Taxpayers
Hostage to Bureaucracy* (1997), he asserts that "collective bargaining... is the
key to NEA / AFT political power" (p. 47). In chapter four on bargaining, he
paints a decidedly dark portrait of control by "union business agents" (his term
for the NEA Uniserve Directors). These individuals are more interested in
"raising the level of teacher militancy" (p. 51) in order to force management into
concession. His articulated view of bargaining is clearly from the adversarial
approach. His main criticism of bargaining is that "collective bargaining in
public education constitutes the negotiation of public policies with a special
interest group, in a process from which others are excluded” (p. 64). At least in New Hampshire, the legislative body must appropriate the funding of a negotiated agreement: a fact that allows inclusion of the public in certain aspects of teacher public policy.

Another outspoken critic of the teacher unions is Peter Brimelow. In his recently published book *The Worm in the Apple: How the Teacher Unions are Destroying American Education* (2003) he renames collective bargaining “monopoly bargaining” (p. 77). He selects this term since only one union, possibly representing less than one half of the teachers in a district, is allowed to deal with management at the bargaining table. He views the “modern Teacher Trust” as “the creature of legal privilege” that draws its power from the “collective bargaining legal regime as it exists in each state” (p.211). His solution to things is to adopt a European model that allows multiple unions access to management, and has them negotiate only for those teachers who want to join their ranks. Brimelow acknowledges that before this can happen, a change in the way teacher contracts are bargained must be realized. Perhaps an examination of the manner in which bargaining is conducted, and an emphasis on professional instead of industrial model tactics, could bring about the same change.

**Principled Negotiations**

If the conversations that take place between labor and management during collective bargaining are worthy of exploration, then a deeper understanding of negotiation in general must be attempted. The main theoretical book to detail the reasons for looking at the teacher collective

26
bargaining process is *Getting to Yes* (1991) by Roger Fisher and William Ury. Their notion of 'principled negotiations' was developed through the Harvard Negotiation Project. The four basic points of principled negotiations (p.10) are:

1. People: separate the people from the problem,
2. Interests: focus on interests, not positions,
3. Options: Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do, and
4. Criteria: Insist that the result be based on some objective standard.

The authors claim that the method of principled negotiation can be applied to any negotiation from "diplomats in arms control talks" to "couples deciding everything from where to go for vacation to how to divide their property if they get divorced" (p.xix). The authors advocate principled negotiations regardless of the number of issues to be settled or the number of parties engaged in negotiating. They specifically state that it applies when "there is a prescribed ritual, as in collective bargaining" or when there is a difference in bargaining experience or style (p. xix). In summary, principled negotiations is a strategy that suits a variety of purposes and conditions.

The sequel to *Getting to Yes* is a book called *Getting Together* (Fisher and Brown, 1988). This book takes the basic ideas about negotiation (stated above) and focuses on the relationship of shared and conflicting interests. It is notable for this study that Fisher branches out from the first book by choosing to explore in greater detail the relationship that exists between the parties. The overall theme of the book is the importance of pursuing a "working relationship", one that can deal with the inherent differences of a relationship.
Various strategies for dealing successfully with the differences in a relationship are applied. The major themes of *Getting Together* are summarized below:

1. Balance reason and emotion: Both appear at the table, but emotion is easily misinterpreted and can derail the process.
2. Understanding: See how they see things.
3. Good communication: Consult before deciding, listen actively and plan the communication process.
4. Reliability: Both parties work on being trustworthy.
5. Persuasion, not coercion: Accomplished by focusing on interests and options.

Applied to the collective bargaining landscape (where a community of both interest and conflict coincide), the strategies in *Getting Together* seem to be aligned with the goals of a professional union as defined previously by Kerchner and Caufman.

Fisher also weighed in with his own sequel to *Getting to Yes* called *Getting Past No: Negotiating Your Way from Confrontation to Cooperation* (1993). The questions he sets out to answer have been asked by numerous readers of the first book: “Sure, I'd like to get to yes, but what if the other side's answer is no? What if they don't want to cooperate?” (p. x). His answer to these questions is a five step strategy that he calls “breakthrough negotiation” (p. 9). The steps of “breakthrough negotiation” are summarized below:

1. Go to the Balcony: If the negotiations are conducted on a stage, then the balcony is a metaphor for providing an overview of the big picture.
2. Step to their side: Accomplished by listening, acknowledging and finding agreement where it exists.

3. Reframe: When confronted with positional bargaining, try to reframe the situation into a problem-solving activity.

4. Build them a golden bridge: Instead of applying pressure to reach an agreement, look to draw the other side into a joint solution.

5. Use power to educate: A constructive, not destructive, way to look at power.

Again, these strategies are in alignment with the framework of a professional union as defined earlier in this chapter. If labor and management treat each other with respect and pay attention to the process of collective bargaining, then Fisher's stated goal ("...not to win over them, but to win them over (p. 160)) will be more easily obtained.

Resonant with the methods of principled negotiations are the notions of dialogue and debate. Sheldon Berman authored a comparison sheet of these two diametrically opposed communication techniques (1998, Appendix A). The comparison consists of 15 diametrically opposed statements that differentiate dialogue from debate. The statements on the comparison sheet appear to be an effective way to frame the issue. The comparison of dialogue and debate has been used to point out the need for dialogue while people are participating in 'study circles'. Study circles are "small group, democratic, highly participatory discussions" that "provide settings for deliberation, for working through social and political issues, for coming up with action strategies, for connecting to policy making, and for building community" (Study Circles Resource Center, p. 1).
Study circles, while not developed for the purpose of contract negotiations, do share some parallels with the common approach to collective bargaining. First, each party (labor and management) selects a 'small group' to represent the interests of their large group membership at the negotiation table. Next, the bargaining table becomes a 'setting for deliberation', and the interests explored with the teacher's contract would be 'social and political issues' of the local school district. Any necessary 'action strategies' that emerge from negotiations would be in line with local 'policy' or would set a new direction for local 'policy'. Finally, the process may help to build a stronger relationship between labor and management and with the school community at large. Thus, collective bargaining can be one way to 'build community'.

While there are some parallels that can be drawn between 'study circles' and teacher contract negotiations, there are also some distinct differences. The idea that negotiations are 'democratic' is not at all clear or definite. If one defines democracy as people sharing power, then it is clear that the people who represent the parties at the bargaining table do not have an equal power base. In New Hampshire, the parties must always be aware that the collective bargaining agreement they reach must later be approved by a 'legislative body'. This body is commonly comprised of the local taxpayers who assemble each March in a school district meeting to vote on expenditures and approve sources of revenue. Exceptions to this format can be found with school districts that must have a city council approve the teacher's contract as the legislative body, or those districts that have adopted the provisions of RSA 40:14 et seq. and therefore operate under an optional form of town meeting that provides for "Official Ballot Referenda". There is also an example whereby the legislative
body is the full school board which has the authority to act independently. So while democracy is embedded in school governance, democratic principles may not be evident at the negotiations table.

It is also not clear if teacher contract negotiations are 'highly participatory discussions'. Experience shows that in some cases, all of the people at the table may participate in the bargaining, although it is highly unlikely that all participants are engaged on each topic being explored. It is more likely that each participant may have expertise on a particular interest or problem and will contribute to the discussion when that topic is pertinent to the discussion. In other cases, hired spokespersons will do the majority of the talking. In this scenario, it is common for each team (or side) to take time away from the bargaining table (this is called a caucus) to openly discuss the issues at hand. These discussions may be highly participatory within the group, but they really represent the interests of that group and often speculate about the interests of the other party. This is not what the Study Circles Resource Center had in mind when they defined study circles as being 'highly participatory discussions'. They were directly indicating that the discussions should involve all interests and all participants. Experience shows that bargaining culture seems to work differently from this aspect of a study circle.

The final point to make about the comparison between study circles and contract negotiations is that while the process of bargaining can build a stronger school community, it is also possible that the school community can be greatly fractured by that process. In some cases, the parties at the table could reach what they perceive as a solid agreement, only to have it enrage the legislative body which represents the broader school community. It is also
possible that the interests or views shared at the bargaining table are widely disparate, and the process of discussion serves to widen the gap and establish firm positions. Another possibility is that in the spirit of compromise, the parties reach a reluctant decision and grudgingly live with it for the duration of the agreement. In each of these cases, an agreement was reached but the school community is hardly better for it. Thus, the tenet from the Study Circles Resource Center that study circles are ‘for building community’ has not been achieved.

In summary, it is important to recall that Kerchner and Caufman (1993) point out that the details of professional unionism, and especially collective bargaining by a reinvented union, are still being determined. In their case study of nine school districts, they found “what is perhaps most radical in these schools is the developing sense of freedom to try, risk and fail” (p.8, emphasis in original). While this claim seemingly applies to many school reform initiatives, it represents a willingness to try new solutions to familiar problems. This spirit of trying new approaches should be expected to appear at the bargaining table as that is one place that teachers and administrators meet to formally discuss their community of interests and their community of conflict.

Communication and Conversation

This research revolves around the conversations that occur when representatives from labor and management negotiate a teacher collective bargaining agreement. Specific questions about the nature of these conversations were asked of the participants who sat around the negotiation table. This research was not interested in the preparation of either side to
negotiate. It was not interested in the types of issues brought to the table, nor the resolution of those issues. This research was solely interested in the 'table talk' or conversations that occurred when the parties sat together and talked about the issues specific to their local school district. It was not interested in the dynamics of each team or the conversations that each team held when alone in a room (commonly known as a caucus). Instead, it was interested in how issues were discussed when the parties shared time together at the negotiation table. These joint conversations were named 'table talk' and participants in the study were asked to focus solely on such conversations. To help frame the issue of communication, a little background knowledge is necessary.

Textbooks for introductory school administration courses often have a section on 'communication' (Hoy and Miskel, 1991; Hanson, 1996; Gorton and Snowden, 1993). While the inclusion of this topic in these various textbooks would suggest that communication has a high level of importance to the school administrator, it also notes that the topic is filled with various nuances that make it difficult to fully characterize. Hoy and Miskel (1991) indicate that "attempts to define communication in terms that are universally applicable have been frustrated by the multifaceted nature of the process, which is characterized by subtlety, variety, and ubiquity" (p.344). They ultimately adopt the definition of communication developed by Lewis (1975, p.5) as the most useful. He said "communication means sharing messages, ideas, or attitudes that produce a degree of understanding between a sender and receiver" (p.345). In taking another look at communication, Hanson (1996) discusses the evolution of knowledge about communication beginning with Classical
Theory, progressing to the Human Relations Theory and finally ending with the Open System Theory (pp. 223-224).

In examining these three theories, Hanson (1996) introduces the “S-M-C-R Communication Model” (p. 223) as the best synthesis of these three theories. The acronym represents the following essential parts of communication:

S - Source of the message and determiner of format (oral, written, etc.),
M - Message which represents the ideas being transmitted,
C - Channel by which the message travels from sender to recipient, and
R - Receiver who must decode the message.

In order to fully understand how people communicate, Hanson indicates that this model allows communication to be understood as:

"1. The process of sending and receiving messages;
2. the formal and informal impediments and facilitators of the process; and
3. the multivariate social, political, cultural, and economic environments that surround and permeate every aspect of the communication process" (p.224).

To better understand communication as it relates to this research, consider the application of this model to the negotiation process.

During contract negotiations, labor and management typically have issues they wish to communicate to the opposing side. They begin by refining the message to ensure clarity about the issue, and also must determine the format of the message (often a formal, written proposal is prepared by the sender, with verbal communication used to ensure that the receiver
understands what is being sought). Throughout the collective bargaining process, a great deal of back and forth conversation occurs. Sometimes, this communication is between two spokespersons while at other times all parties at the table may participate. There is a chance that the people may serve as either facilitators of the communication (through clarifying, finding common ground and active listening) or as impediments to the communication (through finding flaws, defending assumptions or deprecation of others). Such actions need not be limited to only verbal communications since body language, timeliness and thoroughness of preparation can be interpreted as either a facilitator or impediment of communication. If the sender (or receiver) has a bias about a particular issue, then the manner in which the message is encoded (or decoded) can serve as either a facilitator or impediment of communication. Finally, each school district has a unique history of labor relations and set of personalities engaged in the process. This will ensure that the "social, political, cultural, and economic environments" (Ibid.) have an impact on the communication that occurs at the collective bargaining table.

In *Breaking the Impasse, Consensual Approaches to Resolving Public Disputes*, Susskind and Cruikshank call for the use of "negotiated approaches to consensus building" which involves "informal, face to face interactions" and a "voluntary effort to seek 'all-gain' rather then 'win-lose' solutions or watered-down political compromise" (1987, p.11). They view the consensus-building process as having three distinct phases: Prenegotiation, negotiation and implementation or post negotiation (p.95). Each one of these phases involves communication between the various constituencies. Therefore, applying the S-M-G-R model of communication, it is easy to see that consensus building is
filled with opportunities to facilitate communication and avoid misunderstandings. However, if there are people who oppose the issue or are not committed to the consensus-building approach, it is possible that they will act to impede communication. While this is not to suggest that consensus building is the best approach to settling a contract dispute, it should be seen as one way to break an impasse or shake up the conditions when the social, political, cultural, and economic environments make an agreement unlikely.

The language used by the Study Circles Resource Center is focused on "dialogue and debate". These terms do not always appear in other pieces of literature on collective bargaining or unions. In *The Adaptive School: Developing and Facilitating Collaborative Groups* (2000), Garmston and Wellman use the terms "dialogue and discussion" (p.52) instead of 'dialogue and debate'. They define 'dialogue' as a way of talking "that leads to collective meaning making and shared understanding" (p.53). This is very much aligned with the description of dialogue used by the Study Circles Resource Center and detailed in the document "A Comparison of Dialogue and Debate" (Appendix A). 'Discussion' is defined by Garmston and Wellman as a way of talking that "leads to decisions that stay made" (p.53). They see debate as 'unskilled discussion' but use many of the same ways to describe 'discussion' as the Study Circles Resource Center describes the term 'debate'. They claim that ineffective discussion is simply a "hurling of ideas at one another" (p.57). Since they also assert that "misunderstanding lies beneath most intra- and intergroup conflict" (p.56), it would seem that communication designed to invoke a dialogue would be best suited to reaching an agreement at the negotiation table.
Summary and Need For This Research

Much has been written about strategies to use when negotiating a teacher contract (Sharp, 1993; Keiner, 1995; Webster, 1988; Bolton, 2001). Terms such as ‘win-win’ or ‘interest-based’ can be found in the literature concerning teacher contract negotiations, and many teachers advocate such an approach without really understanding how to accomplish it during the collective bargaining process. Currently, there are no empirical studies that find a relationship between the conversations that take place between the parties when they sit together at the bargaining table (‘table talk’) and the reaching of a collective bargaining agreement. There are also no empirical studies which establish a relationship between personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process and the manner in which the parties talked with each other in trying to resolve their differences.

This study will fill this void by surveying the parties who have recently sat together at the teacher contract negotiation table in thirty nine New Hampshire school districts. The research will have two main lines of query. First, participants will be asked a series of questions to determine whether their negotiations were more like a dialogue or a debate. The process of bargaining is essentially concerned with talking about interests and finding ways to resolve conflicts. Consequently, an understanding of dialogue and debate is important to the dynamics of successful and unsuccessful bargaining. Secondly, the participants will be asked about their satisfaction with the bargaining process they used and the outcomes obtained through that process. Key principles from Getting to Yes will be adapted into the second line of questioning. Questions relating to success with the collective
bargaining process will also be asked of the participants. The data collected via the survey instrument will contribute to the body of knowledge about teacher collective bargaining, and should point the way toward strategies that work to improve labor relations between teachers (labor) and school boards (management).

Across the country, there are thousands of teachers and school district representatives who are engaged in the collective bargaining process. The outcome of their contract talks will not only effect the livelihood of the millions of teachers who work in their schools, but also the ability of the schools to conduct their business or reform their operations. Clearly, collective bargaining is important to the landscape of education in the United States. Despite this importance, there is very little that is known about what happens at the contract negotiation table. Searches of the literature do not reveal any empirical studies about what happens when teachers and school board members or administrators sit down to negotiate a new teacher contract. Conversations would be central to the collective bargaining process. Yet, there is scant evidence about the nature of these conversations.

Much of the literature related to collective bargaining is based in theory. It tends to suggest strategies to get the job done. As outlined in this chapter, much of the research in the area of contract negotiations focuses on the attitudes of the parties and the relationship they have during the collective bargaining process. The relationship during the process is important because it carries over into the settlement and the time period when labor and management are not negotiating a contract but are working under an agreement achieved through collective bargaining. It would not be a positive
result if the parties managed to settle a contract, but were so bitter over the attitudes from the bargaining table that the working relationship was strained for years to come. Not only would this have a negative impact on future attempts to reach an agreement, it would make for a very unpleasant working environment and would be a wedge in the quest to move educational quality higher on the list of teacher union objectives. The notion of approaching the negotiation table with a lens for dialogue, and not for debate, is one way to look at the attitudes and relationship that exist between the parties. This approach strikes at the heart of the matter and creates a framework that will allow us to advance our understanding of collective bargaining and move toward a better way to approach a negotiation session.

Finally, this research will help those who are responsible for training teachers and school boards to negotiate. It will pave the way to future research in collective bargaining and help us to better understand a field that has tremendous impact on the educational climate in our country. By providing data on the approaches in place in the population being studied, it will contribute to our knowledge of bargaining teacher contracts as we shift from an adversarial approach to a facilitative approach. In the past, when the adversarial approach has failed to reach a settlement, the parties have moved to a mediation process known as fact finding. On some level, the work of the fact finder or mediator is focused on dialogue. The goal of the fact finder is to find common ground and broker a deal that is acceptable in the grand scheme, even if minor points are conceded in the process. If the overall settlement is seen as a win, then the small concessions do not seem like ‘losses’. This research could influence the way we approach professional unionism.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This chapter will discuss the following: research design; population studied and the sample selected from within that population; study limitations; development of the survey instrument; data collection procedures utilized throughout the study; and data analysis techniques. The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of the conversations that took place between labor (teachers) and management (school boards or school administrators) when the parties were negotiating a new teacher contract. Specifically, the research tool focused on the conversations that took place when the teams from management and labor sat together at the negotiation table to discuss the issues related to obtaining a successor collective bargaining agreement.

This research was designed to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table?

2. Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate?
Population and Sample

The population for this study was limited to school districts in the State of New Hampshire in which the teachers have selected the National Education Association (NEA-NH) as their exclusive bargaining representative. From this group, the population of the study was further refined to include only those schools that bargained a new teacher contract during the 2001-2002 school year. Finally, whenever a multi district supervisory union (SAU) had more than one school district engaged in teacher bargaining during this time frame, a provision was made to randomly select only one school district from that SAU for participation in the study. This final limitation was imposed for the sake of the central office staff who would be surveyed about their bargaining experience. In the case of the teachers, they would be asked to recall a singular bargaining experience since they are most likely members of only one bargaining team. However, central office staff (business administrators, superintendents, etc.) in multi-district supervisory unions may have several school districts bargaining at one time and would be likely to serve on several bargaining teams. Answering multiple surveys and trying to discriminate between bargaining experiences in various districts could have led to confusion. Therefore, only one of the districts in a SAU was randomly selected to participate in the study.

To begin selecting the schools to participate in this study, a meeting was held on August 19, 2002 between the researcher and both Karen McDonough, President of NEA-NH and Dennis Murphy, Executive Director of NEA-NH. At this meeting, the criteria of the research was explained and the assistance of NEA-NH was solicited. As a result of this meeting, it was determined that 59 NEA-
NH teacher locals were engaged in bargaining a new contract during the 2001-2002 school year. After sorting the 59 school districts by their associated school administrative units (SAUs) and randomly selecting one school district from each multi-district SAU, 39 school districts remained in the study. Representatives in these school districts were then contacted about the research as described under “Data Collection Procedures” that appears later in this chapter.

**Study Limitations**

This study generated data on the teacher collective bargaining process in the State of New Hampshire. All school districts in New Hampshire conduct their contract negotiations under a uniform collective bargaining law (RSA 273-A: 1-16). This law contains only three mandatory provisions: an obligation for the parties to “negotiate in good faith” (273-A:3) and that all “agreements shall be reduced to writing” and “shall contain workable grievance procedures” (273-A: 4). This is a somewhat minimalist law that neither limits the things that can be brought up at the table nor compels what must be brought to the table (aside from previous exceptions and subsequent court and PELRB rulings). Thus, the law leaves a good deal of autonomy up to the individuals who arrive at the table to negotiate a new contract for teachers. In New Hampshire, this is a time honored tradition of “local control”.

In New Hampshire, the individuals who represent management are typically members of the local board of education (also called the school board or school committee) and district level administrators (such as superintendents, assistant superintendents or business administrators).
representatives from the school district often employ attorneys who specialize in teacher contract negotiations to be their spokesperson while sitting with the teachers at the contract negotiation table. The individuals who represent labor are usually classroom teachers or specialists, and they are often represented or supported by a hired spokesperson from the teacher’s union.

The predominant teacher’s union in New Hampshire is the NEA. While the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) does have a presence in a few school districts in the southern tier of the state, it is the NEA that represents the teachers in most school districts. Of the approximately 2.5 million teachers nationwide who belong to the NEA, roughly 12,000 of them come from New Hampshire (less than one half of one percent of the national membership). Therefore, New Hampshire is a relatively small state affiliate of the NEA. The staff members who assist the various local unions with contract negotiations are called ‘UniServe Directors’. There are ten UniServe Directors that work out of the NEA-NH office in Concord. While each UniServe Director brings a unique set of qualifications and experiences to the collective bargaining process, the differences are minimized through a common training process that balances the goals of the state affiliate with the needs of each local unit.

Development of the Survey Instrument

The data for this research project was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: part one was designed to collect some background information on the people who negotiated the teacher contract, on the general outcome of the bargaining and on the individual’s perception of the success of the bargaining; part two presented nineteen
diametrically opposed statements that describe either dialogue or debate, and asked that each respondent select the statement that more closely resembled the conversations that took place when the parties sat together at the bargaining table.

The nineteen diametrically opposed statements in the questionnaire are an adaptation of "A Comparison of Dialogue and Debate" from A Guide to Training Study Circle Facilitators (1998) developed by the Study Circles Resource Center (Appendix A). The dialogue and debate comparison was created by Sheldon Berman and was adapted from a paper he authored. Permission to use Berman’s work was secured prior to the instrument being distributed (Appendix A). The original comparison consists of 15 diametrically opposed statements about dialogue and debate. The adapted questionnaire pits these statements against each other while utilizing a Likert type scale to determine whether the ‘table talk’ was more closely aligned toward a dialogue or a debate. The terms dialogue and debate do not appear on the questionnaire itself since the term ‘table talk’ has been inserted in the place of these terms. Also, for clarity, the original 15 statements in the comparison have been broken apart to create 19 diametrically opposed statements related to ‘table talk’.

The Likert type scale that appears on the survey is used to gauge an individual’s alignment with either the “debate” statement or the “dialogue” statement. The statements that are related to “dialogue” or “debate” have been scrambled and appear either in the left hand column or the right hand column. The scale is referred to as a “Likert type” scale because it asks the respondent to select a preference by checking a box, but does not have corresponding
number values associated with the boxes printed on the questionnaire itself. Completed surveys will later have number values assigned to the checked boxes by the researcher in such a manner that responses related to dialogue would have a low value (1) and responses related to debate would have a high value (5). A raw score on the questionnaire can be computed by summing the assigned values of the checked boxes. Based on the assigned values, a low raw score would reveal a tendency to engage in ‘table talk’ that is focused more on dialogue and less on debate, while a high raw score would indicate a tendency to engage in ‘table talk’ that is focused more on debate and less on dialogue.

Data Collection Procedures

NEA-NH provided the researcher with the name and home telephone number of the president of each teacher local that was included in the sample (39 school districts). Beginning on October 8, 2002, contact was made by telephone with the local president. At this time, several things were discerned:

1. Was the NEA information accurate about the status of bargaining in the selected local? (In one case, it was found that a school district which was reported by NEA-NH to have negotiated a new contract in the 2001-2002 school year was in fact in the first year of an agreement that was negotiated in the prior year.)

2. Was the president involved with the bargaining, or was there another person who could better serve as a key contact person for the labor negotiation team? (If another person was suggested by the president of the local, then that person was contacted about the research and became the key contact for that
3. Would the key contact be willing to distribute a research packet to each of the negotiators who are capable of commenting on the nature of the conversations that took place with the school district? Since all locals were willing to participate, each key contact was then asked about the number of people who served on the negotiation team. The number of team members in the various districts ranged from a low of two people in small single town school districts (three instances) to a high of nine people in a large multi town cooperative school district (one instance).

4. Research packets were then mailed to the key contact in each district for distribution to the individuals who served on the negotiation team. Each packet contained the following: a two part survey copied on green paper (Appendix B - the same survey was sent to both labor and management but on different colored paper); a letter from the researcher explaining the purpose of the research (Appendix C); an endorsement letter from NEA-NH (Appendix D); and a postage paid return envelope that was addressed to the researcher’s home.

Before mailing, the surveys were coded to identify the responding school district and survey number. In essence, this allowed the surveys to be tracked without any possibility of linking the results to the individual who completed the survey. In most cases, the only name known to the researcher was the key contact, and there was no way of telling which numbered survey was completed by that person. In total, there were 176 research packets mailed to teachers or labor representatives, and 113 of these were returned to the researcher. This represents a labor response rate of 64.2 percent.
To survey the people who were on the team for management, a key contact in the SAU office was made. The key contacts for management were more varied in position than those of labor. Depending on the school district, the research packets were mailed to: superintendents; assistant superintendents; business administrators; personnel administrators; and school board members. Since the contact for labor was always made first, the line of discernment was not the same for the management team. This process is described below.

1. The NEA-NH data about the status of bargaining in the selected local was already considered to be accurate.

2. Because the person contacted was recommended by the person who answered the phone in the SAU office, it was rare that an additional contact had to be made. However, this did occur more often with the key contact from management than with labor, mostly due to changes in school leadership or school board elections. There were numerous instances where a pivotal negotiator had either not run for reelection to the school board or had taken an administrative position in another school district.

3. Since all districts were willing to participate, each was asked about the number of people who served on the management negotiation team. This number of team members in the various districts ranged from a low of two people in small single town school districts (five instances) to a high of nine people in a large city school district (one instance).

4. Research packets were then mailed to the key contact in each district for distribution to the individuals who served on the negotiation team. Each packet contained the following: a two part survey copied on blue paper.
(Appendix B - the same survey was sent to both labor and management but on different colored paper); a letter from the researcher explaining the purpose of the research (Appendix B); an endorsement letter from the New Hampshire School Boards Association and the New Hampshire School Administrators Association (Appendix E); and a postage paid return envelope that was addressed to the researcher's home.

The surveys were coded to identify the responding school district and survey number. In essence, this allowed the surveys to be tracked without any possibility of linking the responses to an individual. In most cases, the only name known to the researcher was the key contact, and there was no way of telling which numbered survey was completed by that person. In total, there were 149 research packets mailed to management negotiators, and 77 of these were returned to the researcher. This represents a management response rate of 51.7 percent. Combining the management and labor groups shows that a total of 325 survey instruments were mailed to the population. Of these, 190 surveys were returned for a total response rate of 58.5 percent.

The research packets were mailed to the key contacts for labor and management beginning on October 9, 2002. The process of contacting each key contact by phone took some time and often resulted in numerous messages and call backs. The final packet was placed in the mail on November 6, 2002. The initial deadline for returning the packets was printed in the letter from the researcher as October 30, 2002. In the case of the packets that were mailed toward the end of October, this deadline was changed to November 12th. A follow-up postcard reminder (Appendix F) was sent to each key contact on November 6, 2002. In this reminder, the key contact (who was
the only person who knew the individuals that had been given a questionnaire) was told how many responses had been received from their team. Also, the deadline for the return of the questionnaires was extended to November 12, 2002 and the key contact was encouraged to ask their team members to complete and return any outstanding surveys. These steps were taken to ensure that the maximum number of surveys were returned for analysis, and that there was enough time between mailing them to the key contact and that person then distributing the surveys to the members of the negotiation team.

Table 1, on the following page, shows the number of research packets sent to the management team and the labor team in each school district. It also shows the number of packets received back from the teams by the researcher. The District ID is an internal reporting number assigned to protect the identity of each school district. The district ID numbers are in no way related to the individual school district, including but not limited to the school district's SAU number.

**Data Analysis**

The responses on the surveys were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program (2001). The responses were entered as they were received, with the last survey being returned about mid-December 2002. Data entry resulted in 6,426 data points being entered into SPSS. In February 2003, the researcher sat with an assistant and verified the computer representation of each datum from the original surveys. This process allowed for a correction of 39 bits of data (revealing an initial data entry error rate of 0.607%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District ID</th>
<th>Management:</th>
<th>Labor:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sent</td>
<td>Received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum:</th>
<th>149</th>
<th>77</th>
<th>176</th>
<th>113</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return Rate:</td>
<td>(51.7%)</td>
<td>(64.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Part I of the questionnaire, descriptive data (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) are used to characterize the background information on the people who negotiated the teacher contract, on the general outcome of their bargaining and on each individual's perception of the success of the bargaining and whether they agreed that their table talk allowed them to achieve a wise agreement as defined by Fisher and Ury. For Part II of the questionnaire, an individual's dialogue/debate score was tallied. Dialogue/debate scores for the two groups in this research project, labor and management, were determined. This allowed for a comparison between the two groups to determine whether they viewed their table talk in a similar manner. This helped to answer the first research question (Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table?). Additionally, dialogue/debate scores for the entire population were determined in order to gain information about the dialogue/debate concept as it applies to teacher collective bargaining. This is an exploratory study that seeks to describe both “the talkers and the talk” that occurred during teacher contract negotiations. Additionally, information about how the participants perceived the success and satisfaction of their bargaining experience was collected and analyzed through descriptive techniques such as mean scores and standard deviations.

The various dialogue/debate scores were then correlated (using a Pearson Correlation coefficient) to the responses on the success of bargaining and whether the table talk was reported as allowing the parties to reach a wise agreement. These correlations were critical to answering the two research
questions. Charts and graphs have been designed and developed to provide a visual representation of the responses from labor and management. These visual representations of the information collected by the survey compliment the statistical treatments applied to the data, and help to provide a better understanding of the talk that occurs at the bargaining table during teacher contract negotiations. The correlations and visual representations helped to answer the second research question (Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate?).

Reliability

A reliability analysis was conducted on the 19 statements that appeared in the second part of the survey (see table 2). This analysis showed an alpha value of 0.8820. Since an alpha value of 1.0000 would indicate that all of the questions are measuring the same thing, this is a fairly high alpha value and it supports that there is internal reliability to what is being measured by the 19 statements related to dialogue and debate. However, This analysis also shows that statement 19 related to dialogue and debate may not be a good fit to the collective bargaining process. This statement tries to ascertain if the “‘table talk’ remained open ended” or if it “was focused on conclusions”. The problem with this statement is that there is indeed a common goal to all of the ‘table talk’: a ratified and funded collective bargaining agreement.

Therefore, while preliminary discussions about an issue may in fact be open ended, at some point the talk would need to move toward a solution (or a
Table 2 - Reliability analysis of the 19 statements: Part II of the survey on dialogue and debate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement number</th>
<th>Alpha (if item deleted)</th>
<th>Alpha (if item deleted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8714</td>
<td>0.8812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8717</td>
<td>0.8818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.8713</td>
<td>0.8814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8774</td>
<td>0.8866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.8732</td>
<td>0.8825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.8776</td>
<td>0.8872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.8778</td>
<td>0.8873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.8753</td>
<td>0.8852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.8782</td>
<td>0.8876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.8820</td>
<td>0.8919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.8756</td>
<td>0.8855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.8812</td>
<td>0.8914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.8746</td>
<td>0.8839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.8738</td>
<td>0.8841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.8742</td>
<td>0.8840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.8732</td>
<td>0.8835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.8752</td>
<td>0.8851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.8716</td>
<td>0.8816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.8908</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability Coefficient: 0.8820 0.8908  
(Alpha) (With Statement #19) (Without Statement #19)
Therefore, the reliability analysis seems to support the elimination of question 19 as it has the least impact on the overall reliability of part II of the survey. With question 19 eliminated, the reliability coefficient rises to 0.8908 (closer to the ideal score of 1.0000). Again, this analysis reveals a strong relationship between the 18 remaining statements and suggests that they are in fact measuring the same thing (whether the table talk was perceived to be more like a dialogue or more like a debate).

To further support the high reliability established above, a factor analysis that was performed on all of the 19 statements that appeared on part II of the survey can be referenced. Originally, this factor analysis was an attempt to see if the four groupings reported in table 10 were due to different conceptual components that existed within the set of 19 diametrically opposed statements. Examining the statistical results of that factor analysis and looking closely at the 19 statements, no logical relationships could be established beyond a single group. Therefore, the factor analysis that was performed supported the existence of a single factor or component within the 19 statements. This coincides with the dialogue/debate concept embedded within this framework.

Validity

The survey instrument was adapted from a few different sources. Much of part one of the survey was designed to collect background information on the respondents and to determine the overall effectiveness of their bargaining. In addition to the demographic information, a question related to *Getting to Yes* was taken directly from the work of Fisher and Ury (1991). Since these two authors have extensive experience with the Harvard Negotiation Project, they
are considered to be experts in the field of negotiation. Using their definition of a “wise agreement” to see if the representatives from management and labor felt they had reached a wise teacher collective bargaining agreement is a valid way to assess the success of the bargaining that was being studied in this research. Furthermore, Berman’s *Comparison of Dialogue and Debate* (1991) has been used extensively by the Study Circles Resource Center to train people in how to engage in dialogue whenever they are engaged in public conversations that are controversial in nature.

Adapting Berman’s work into a survey to explore the link between the type of “table talk” people use and the success of their bargaining was another purpose of this research. Since Berman has been involved with the Boston Chapter of Educator’s for Social Responsibility (ESR) for a long period of time, and since the *Comparison of Dialogue and Debate* was developed in consult with members of ESR’s Discussion Group, and since ESR has used his work extensively and has included it in many of its publications, the work is deemed a valid way to frame the notions of dialogue and debate. Taking the 15 diametrically opposed statements published by Berman and reorganizing them into 19 statements separated by a Likert-type scale is a valid way to collect exploratory information related to the conversations that took place between labor and management engaged in teacher collective bargaining.

To deliver an assessment of whether the research instrument in fact measures what is was designed to measure, an expert was contacted and asked to comment on the validity of the survey. Dr. Bruce L. Mallory, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of New Hampshire, has participated in and organized *Study Circles* as a way to facilitate public

55

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
conversations. These Study Circles use Berman's concept of dialogue and debate. Provost Mallory found "the survey to be quite well constructed, with clearly interpretable items" (Appendix H). He determined that the content and wording of the items in the survey would apply to negotiators for either labor or management and that Berman's framework for dialogue and debate seemed to fit well with the purpose of the research. In his expert opinion, the instrument has "construct validity".

Summary
The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of the conversations that took place between labor (teachers) and management (school boards or school administrators) when the parties were negotiating a new teacher contract. Specifically, the research tool collected information on the conversations that took place when the teams from Management and Labor sat together at the bargaining table to discuss the issues related to obtaining a successor collective bargaining agreement. This chapter presented an overview of the research design; population studied and the sample selected from that population; study limitations; development of the survey instrument; data collection procedures utilized throughout the study; and data analysis techniques. The results of this study appear in the next chapter.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This study was designed to determine the nature of the conversations that took place between labor (teachers) and management (school boards or school administrators) when the parties were negotiating a new teacher contract. Specifically, the research tool focused on the conversations that took place when the teams from management and labor sat together at the negotiation table to discuss the issues related to obtaining a successor collective bargaining agreement. Berman's (1998) work defining conversation as a dialogue or a debate created the foundation upon which this research was constructed.

This research was designed to answer the following two questions:

1. Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table?

2. Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate?

The survey instrument was administered to both representatives from labor (teachers and any selected spokespersons) and representatives from
management (school board members, administrators and any selected spokespersons). As seen previously in table 1, these representative groups varied in size from the smallest total group size of four (with one representative from labor and three from management) to the largest total group size of 17 (this group size occurred twice, once with nine representatives from labor and eight from management and the other time with eight representatives from labor and nine from management). The preceding numbers represent total group size involved in the contract negotiations, not the number of respondents to the survey. While the overall response rate was 58.5 percent, there were 5 districts from which either labor or management failed to return any surveys (0.0% response rate). There were also instances of a district returning all of the surveys (100 percent from both labor and management occurred with three districts; 100 percent from either labor or management occurred with an additional 11 districts). As was seen in table 1, there were also 16 districts in which only one representative of labor or management responded to the survey. Finally, there was also an example from a small rural school district in the northern tier of the state in which only one teacher went to the table to represent a staff of fewer than 25 teachers during contract negotiations (and was joined at the table by three management representatives).

Due to the small sample sizes involved, it is not feasible to look for correlation within a team when the number negotiating (and therefore the sample size) is as small as one or two people. Nor is it feasible to look for correlation between two teams comprised of a few people on each team. In order to proceed with the data analysis in this exploratory study, it is necessary to develop techniques to sort and group the data beyond the individual
negotiating tables. This will allow for the data to be viewed as "labor" related information or "management" related information. In this broader view (labor or management), some correlation analysis can be conducted. From the analysis of data in this research study, conclusions can be drawn about how representatives from the two parties approach teacher contract negotiations.

The Talkers and the Talk

Throughout the collective bargaining process, there is usually an incredible amount of talking that takes place. Essentially, bargaining is talking. This study collected demographic data on the participants in teacher collective bargaining in New Hampshire (the "talkers"). Table 3 summarizes the experience of the respondents in this research study. There were 190 research surveys returned in this study (for a return rate of 58.5%), and one way to describe the "table talkers" is to take a look at their experience in public education and the prior experience they report having with teacher collective bargaining. In table 3, a summary of the reported number of years of experience in education and the number of times each respondent has participated in teacher contract negotiations is shown. Some generalizations can be drawn from this data:

1. On average, the participants from labor had over twice the number of years in the current school district as the participants from management (an average of 15.4 years for labor compared to 7.0 years for management).

2. Representatives from labor had on average 5 additional years of experience in public education (an average of 20.2 years for labor
Table 3 (Demographics of the talkers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean (s.d.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labor:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in District</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15.4 (8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Public Education</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.2 (9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times as a Participant in Bargaining, District</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.4 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times as a Participant in Bargaining, Public Education</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.4 (2.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in District</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7.0 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Public Education</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15.2 (12.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times as a Participant in Bargaining, District</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.2 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times as a Participant in Bargaining, Public Education</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6.1 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All respondents (Labor &amp; Management combined):</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in District</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>12.0 (8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Public Education</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.3 (10.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times as a Participant in Bargaining, District</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.3 (3.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times as a Participant in Bargaining, Public Education</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.5 (5.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
compared to an average of 15.2 years for management). The data collected in this research study does not allow for categorization as a school board member or administrator. It is probable that administrators have served a greater number of years in public education than school board members.

3. Even with the difference in years of service to the district discussed in item 2 above, the number of times each participant reportedly served as a member of that district’s bargaining team was nearly identical (an average of 3.4 times for labor and 3.2 times for management).

4. The experience factor shifts when one considers the number of times the participants have bargained a teacher’s contract for all of the districts in which they have been associated. In this case, the participants from management have had greater experience with teacher contract negotiations (it is in fact close to two times as often with 6.1 times for management’s participants compared to labor’s 3.4 times). It may be worth attempting to learn if members from management had prior experience negotiating as a teacher representative, which would give them a broader viewpoint of the collective bargaining process than someone who has sat on only one side of the negotiation table. The data collected in this study does not allow for this to be discerned, and additional data along these lines would need to be collected in order to determine if this is valid. It is also unknown how the additional time spent bargaining in other school districts has influenced bargaining strategies in the current district.

5. In total, the respondents to this research have spent 18.3 years in public
education with 12.0 years in the district for which they last bargained a new teacher's contract. On average, they have bargained a new teacher's contract 4.5 times (3.3 of those times in their current district). These data reveal that the bargaining teams representing 39 New Hampshire school districts consist of experienced educators with over a decade of experience in their current school district. In addition to their educational experience, they are experienced negotiators. Consequently, these data reflect the perceptions of mature bargainers and not novices. Presumably, these negotiators understand education and the process of collective bargaining. Their experience serves as a basis for determining the content, tenor and purpose of their 'table talk'. Their table talk is the result of choices made based on their experience. What is not known is whether the choices are made as a result of self reflection based on an explicit theory of bargaining.

Another line of inquiry related to the table talk was determining who did the majority of the talking while the parties sat together at the table. This is a critical decision made by each team. Will the table talk resemble a free-wheeling discussion involving all participants, or will the parties select a more controlled flow of the conversation? This information was ascertained by question number five, and respondents were asked to choose which statement best described the situation at their bargaining table. The results of this question are summarized in table 4 on the following page.
Table 4 (reported as percents of those responding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labor%</th>
<th>Management%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone present at the sessions engaged in the 'table talk'</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A chief negotiator engaged in the majority of the 'table talk'</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed a professional negotiator to conduct the 'table talk'</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows that about one half of the respondents report being participants in the ‘table talk’ (50.9% from labor and 50.6% from management engaged in “free-talk”), while the other half report using either a professional negotiator or a designated chief negotiator (49.1% from labor and 49.4% from management engaged in “designated-talk”). This seems to challenge the notion that only a spokesperson for each party should conduct the table talk (although that is exactly what is happening with the other half of the respondents). Note that a professional negotiator is employed in about one third of the cases that use the spokesperson approach. It is further worth noting that there does not appear to be any significant difference between labor and management in whether the negotiations were conducted using “free-talk” or “designated-talk”. It is reasonable to assume that the parties had reached an understanding of the format they would use, and each team acted according to the agreed format.

However, there is an interesting discrepancy in these numbers when they are analyzed by team. To uncover this discrepancy, an analysis by role (labor or management) was completed. Regardless of whether a respondent was representing labor or management at the table, respondents were asked
to describe who did the majority of talking while sitting together at the negotiation table. When all respondents (from both labor and management) reported who talked for management, the information in table 5 was collected:

Table 5 (Management talkers - percentages reported by role)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labor</th>
<th>Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone present at the sessions engaged in the 'table talk'</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A chief negotiator engaged in the majority of the 'table talk'</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed a professional negotiator to conduct the 'table talk'</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On examination, these numbers appear to be very similar (the differences in reporting between management and labor respondents range from 2.2% to 6.9%). Therefore, regardless of role, the perception of who is doing the talking is fairly consistent between teams. A Pearson Chi-Square ($X^2$) showed that there was no significant statistical difference between labor and management reporting who did the talking for management at the negotiation table ($X^2 = 1.339, p = 0.512$). This supports the conclusion that all respondents consistently described who engaged in the table talk for management.

However, the same does not happen when the data are analyzed for labor. Table 6 contains the results for who was perceived to be engaged in the table talk for labor, delineated by role (management or labor):
Table 6 (Labor talkers - percentages reported by role)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labor</th>
<th>Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone present at the sessions engaged in the 'table talk'</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A chief negotiator engaged in the majority of the 'table talk'</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed a professional negotiator to conduct the 'table talk'</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this case, there appears to be a clear discrepancy between labor's perception that everyone present for labor engaged in the table talk (56.3% reported by labor compared to 42.2% reported by management: a difference of 14.1%) and management's perception that labor had a "chief negotiator" (27.2% reported by labor compared to 45.3% reported by management: a difference of 18.1%). To determine whether there was a significant statistical difference between the percentage of labor respondents and the percentage of management respondents in their perception of who did the talking for labor, a Pearson Chi-Square was calculated (X² = 5.77, p = 0.056). Generally, a probability value of 0.05 is used as the threshold for determining that a significant difference does indeed exist. In this case, the value is only six one-thousandths greater than the normally accepted threshold; a margin which is hardly enough to say with certainty that the difference is not significant.

This discrepancy is very noteworthy. Clearly the respondents from labor and management were fairly consistent in describing who did the majority of the talking for management. After all, they were all parties at the table and determining whether management used a chief spokesperson, a paid...
negotiator or allowed everyone present to 'free-talk' should be fairly straightforward. However, when it comes to categorizing who talked for labor, the two sides are not in agreement. Labor perceived that they used a 'free-talk' approach, while management perceived that a 'chief negotiator' did the majority of the talking. The following are possible reasons for this discrepancy:

1. It is possible that one side simply was wrong in the way they described who did the talking for labor. However, considering how similar the participants were in describing who did the talking for management, it would seem that there is a deeper meaning to the discrepancy with who did the talking for labor.

2. It is possible that respondents from management tended to ignore some labor participants at the table, thus not giving them credit for participating in the 'table talk'. If a participant was perceived as being 'radical' or having a single pet issue, they may not have been given credit for their talk. Instead, management respondents may have passed credit for their talk onto a chief spokesperson.

3. Labor participants thought that everyone contributed to the talk, when in fact some participants may not have participated. Labor may have had a "chief" person who summarized the conversation (and got credit for it) or who was perceived as largely responsible for the 'table talk'.

4. Labor may be remembering and reporting conversations from caucus sessions, and not the talk that occurred when the parties sat together around the table. It would be reasonable to assume that all negotiators talk freely during a team caucus (when the other team is not present). However, when they arrive at the table with the other team, it is possible
that one individual’s thoughts are conveyed by a designated talker (with
credit for the talk being interpreted differently depending on role).

5. Management participants may have had better defined hierarchical
positions (superintendent, assistant superintendent, etc.) than labor
participants. This may have influenced how respondents perceived who
did the talking when the parties sat together to engage in ‘table talk’. If
labor lacked positional power, it may have been more difficult to discern
the idea of who did the majority of the talking.

Additional information would need to be collected to determine exactly why this
discrepancy was observed. However, the discrepancy itself is a noteworthy
finding since it suggests that negotiators from labor and management have a
different viewpoint on who engages in the talk at the negotiation table.

Another interesting point is the difference of opinion between labor and
management’s perception of an employed professional negotiator conducting
the table talk. Clearly, a professional negotiator would not go unnoticed at the
bargaining table. Its is also reasonable to assume that a professional
negotiator’s actions and role would be apparent to the other participants. But,
why there is any discrepancy in perception of that role is unknown. It is
reasonable to assume that the perception of the role of the outside negotiator
would be visible to both parties and would therefore result in a common
perception, but this is not the case.

In the survey, respondents were given the definition that ‘table talk’ refers
“to the conversations that occurred when representatives from both the
teachers (labor) and the school district (management) were sitting together at
the negotiation table.” They were asked to “try not to focus on a particular
conversation” when answering the survey questions. Instead, they were asked “to focus on the overall tone of the numerous conversations that occurred throughout the collective bargaining process.” This section of the analysis of data will summarize whether the respondents view the ‘table talk’ as related to the outcome of collective bargaining. Question number six on the survey was worded: “Our ‘table talk’ is related to the outcome of collective bargaining.” The results of this question are summarized in table 7 below:

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Extremely Related (5)</th>
<th>Related (4)</th>
<th>Neutral (3)</th>
<th>Unrelated (2)</th>
<th>Extremely Unrelated (1)</th>
<th>Mean (s.d.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>48 (42.5%)</td>
<td>58 (51.3%)</td>
<td>4 (3.5%)</td>
<td>2 (1.8%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.35 (0.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage.</td>
<td>31 (40.3%)</td>
<td>39 (50.6%)</td>
<td>4 (5.2%)</td>
<td>1 (1.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.33 (0.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79 (41.6%)</td>
<td>97 (51.1%)</td>
<td>8 (4.3%)</td>
<td>3 (1.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4.35 (0.64)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overwhelming number of the respondents to this survey (92.7%) felt that the table talk they engaged in with the other party was either related to the outcome of their bargaining or extremely related to the outcome of their bargaining. Clearly, the respondents viewed the talk at the table as an important part of the
collective bargaining process. It is further worth noting that there is no observable difference between roles (management or labor) and this view of the table talk. Whether a respondent was from labor or management, the reported relationship between the table talk and the outcome of bargaining is nearly identical as evidenced by the team percentages and means reported in table 7. It is reasonable to conclude from these results that ‘table talk’ plays a critical role to the outcome of the collective bargaining process and that the respondents from labor and management have nearly identical views on the link between the talk and the outcome of bargaining.

Success and Satisfaction

One of the main points of this research was to determine whether the participants in bargaining new teacher contracts were satisfied with their experiences and viewed them as successful. There were 190 research surveys returned in this study (for a return rate of 58.5%), and relatively few of the respondents reported they were not satisfied with their collective bargaining experience. Question number eight on the survey was the most direct attempt to determine the respondent's perception of whether the bargaining was successful. The question was: "Please rate the success of your most recent collective bargaining experience". The results of the responses to this question are summarized in table 8:
This indicates quite clearly that the vast majority of the participants in the study (81.3%) viewed their bargaining as either highly successful or successful. Only 6.9% reported that their bargaining was highly unsuccessful or unsuccessful. It is further worth noting that of the 13 respondents who felt the bargaining was unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful, 10 were associated with labor (76.9%) while only 3 were associated with management (23.1%). Also, labor respondents were four times more likely to respond in a neutral way to this classification than were respondents from management. To determine whether there was a significant statistical difference between labor respondents and management respondents in their view of success, a Pearson Chi-Square was calculated ($X^2 = 9.346$, $p = 0.053$). Generally, a probability value of 0.05 is used as the threshold for determining that a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Highly Successful (5)</th>
<th>Successful (4)</th>
<th>Neutral (3)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful (2)</th>
<th>Highly Unsuccessful (1)</th>
<th>Mean (s.d.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>20 (17.7%)</td>
<td>63 (55.8%)</td>
<td>18 (15.9%)</td>
<td>6 (5.3%)</td>
<td>4 (3.5%)</td>
<td>3.80 (0.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man.</td>
<td>22 (28.6%)</td>
<td>47 (61.0%)</td>
<td>4 (5.2%)</td>
<td>1 (1.3%)</td>
<td>2 (2.6%)</td>
<td>4.13 (0.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42 (22.5%)</td>
<td>110 (58.8%)</td>
<td>22 (11.8%)</td>
<td>7 (3.7%)</td>
<td>6 (3.2%)</td>
<td>3.94 (0.88)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
significant difference does indeed exist. In this case, the value is only three one-thousandths greater than the normally accepted threshold; a margin which is hardly enough to say with certainty that the difference is not significant. The conclusion that management respondents were more likely to view the bargaining as successful, than were labor respondents, tends to be supported by the data.

Another way to take a look at success is to see if the parties were able to reach a tentative agreement, have it ratified by their memberships (for labor that would be the union membership and for management that would be the full school board), and finally to have the ratified agreement approved and funded by the local legislative body (school district meeting, city council, etc.). There were 39 school district bargaining units that participated in the study. Only 2 out of the 39 districts reported that they were unable to reach a tentative agreement (5.1%). Of the 37 districts that achieved a tentative agreement, all had that agreement ratified by their respective memberships (100.0%). When the 37 districts with a ratified agreement took it before their legislative body for approval and funding, only 3 ratified agreements were rejected by the local voters (8.1%). In sum, 34 out of the 39 districts in the study (87.2%), were successful in obtaining an agreement that was accepted by their membership and funded by their respective legislative body.

Another attempt to gauge the success of the bargaining can be found in the survey question that uses the language of success found in Getting to Yes (1991). Fisher and Ury define a wise agreement "as one that meets the legitimate interests of each side to the extent possible, resolves conflicting interests fairly, is durable, and takes community interests into account" (p.4).

71
Question number seven on the survey was worded: "If a wise agreement is defined as one that meets the legitimate interests of each party to the extent possible, resolves conflicting interests fairly, is durable, and takes community interests into account, then our ‘table talk’ allowed us to reach a wise agreement". The results of this question are summarized in table 9 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Neutral (3)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Mean (s.d.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>30 (26.5%)</td>
<td>59 (52.2%)</td>
<td>7 (6.2%)</td>
<td>13 (11.5%)</td>
<td>3 (2.7%)</td>
<td>3.89 (1.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man.</td>
<td>18 (23.4%)</td>
<td>45 (58.4%)</td>
<td>5 (6.5%)</td>
<td>5 (6.5%)</td>
<td>2 (2.6%)</td>
<td>3.96 (0.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48 (22.7%)</td>
<td>100 (55.6%)</td>
<td>12 (6.4%)</td>
<td>18 (9.6%)</td>
<td>5 (2.7%)</td>
<td>3.92 (0.97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, the vast majority (78.3%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their ‘table talk’ allowed them to reach a wise agreement. The assumption is that achieving a wise agreement (as defined by Fisher and Ury) would indicate that the bargaining was successful and that the bargainer was satisfied with the bargaining process. To determine whether there was a significant statistical difference between the percentage of labor respondents
and the percentage of management respondents in their perception of whether their agreement was wise, a Pearson Chi-Square was calculated ($X^2 = 1.72, p = 0.787$). Generally, a probability value of 0.05 is used as the threshold for determining that a significant difference does indeed exist. In this case, the value greatly exceeds the normally accepted threshold; a margin which is enough to say with certainty that the difference is not significant.

**Dialogue and Debate**

The second part of the study focused on determining whether the respondents viewed their 'table talk' as being more like a dialogue or more like a debate. Respondents were presented with 19 diametrically opposed statements, and asked to select the statement that best described their 'table talk' (defined as the conversations that took place when representatives from both labor and management sat together at the negotiation table). The responses were later assigned a numerical value (from one (1) to five (5)) so that a high score (closer to five (5)) would represent 'table talk' that was more like a debate than a dialogue. Conversely, a low score (closer to one (1)) would represent 'table talk' that was more like a dialogue than a debate. Table 10 presents a summary of the responses to this section of the survey. For clarity, the original statements are presented along with the mean score from all respondents to the statement (N), the standard deviation and the difference between the mean scores for labor and management. The variations to N (from a low of 182 to a high of 188) indicate that a few respondents chose not to select between those two particular descriptive statements. In addition to the
total sample response, table 10 also reports the responses disaggregated by labor (L) and management (M).

Table 10 also contains a column showing the difference in mean response on each question between respondents from management and labor. For consistency, the management mean was subtracted from the labor mean. In 16 of the 19 questions, the labor mean was greater than the management mean (producing a positive difference for each question). Those three questions where the management mean was greater than the labor mean (question numbers 8, 13 and 19) are easily identified by a negative difference. Table 10 also contains a summary section (at the end of the table) that presents information on how the 190 respondents generally answered the 19 questions on part II of the survey. Based on an examination of the data presented in table 10, some tentative conclusions can be drawn about the way representatives from labor and management viewed their “table talk”.

To help provide a visual representation of labor and management mean scores on each question that appeared on part II of the survey, graph 1 was created. This graph, located on page 79 immediately following table 10, provides a different way to view the data collected from the respondents. Information from graph 1 is also used in the tentative conclusions that follow.
Table 10 (Analysis of part II of the survey on dialogue and debate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
<th>Difference (L - M)</th>
<th>Debate Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(score closer to 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(score closer to 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Our 'table talk' was collaborative</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>Our 'table talk' was oppositional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 111</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 71</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Our 'table talk' was focused on common understanding</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td></td>
<td>Our 'table talk' was an attempt to prove the other side wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 111</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 75</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The goal of our 'table talk' was finding common ground</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td></td>
<td>The goal of our 'table talk' was winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. During 'table talk', the parties listened to the other side</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>During 'table talk' the parties did not listen to the other side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Our 'table talk' sought to understand, find meaning and find agreement</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td>Our 'table talk' sought to find flaws and counter arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 108</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue Statement</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>s.d.</td>
<td>Difference (L - M)</td>
<td>Debate Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Our 'table talk' enlarged and changed our point of view</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>Our 'table talk' aimed to affirm our point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 111</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Our 'table talk' revealed a need to reevaluate our assumptions</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>Our 'table talk' defended our assumptions as the truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 110</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 75</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Our 'table talk' resulted in introspection of our position</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>Our 'table talk' resulted in critique of the other position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Our 'table talk' was open to a better overall solution than the solution that was first perceived</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>Our 'table talk' was closed to other solutions and defended the one solution as the best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. We knew the 'table talk' could have been wrong and were open to change</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>We knew the 'table talk' was right and were determined to prove it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 111</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 (Analysis of part II of the survey on dialogue and debate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
<th>Difference (L - M)</th>
<th>Debate Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. We approached the 'table talk' with an open attitude</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>We approached the 'table talk' with a closed attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. During 'table talk' we were able to temporarily suspend our beliefs</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>During 'table talk' we were wholeheartedly invested in our beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 111</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Our 'table talk' searched for basic agreements</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>Our 'table talk' searched for glaring differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The 'table talk' put forth our best thinking, knowing that the reflections of</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>The 'table talk' put forth our best thinking, and defended it against challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others would help it to improve rather than to destroy it</td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td></td>
<td>and to show that it was right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Our 'table talk' searched for basic strengths in the other position</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>Our 'table talk' searched for flaws and weaknesses in the other position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 (Analysis of part II of the survey on dialogue and debate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
<th>Difference (L - M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. The ‘table talk’ involved a real concern for the people from the other party, including their feelings</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. During ‘table talk’ we tried not to alienate or offend</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Our ‘table talk’ assumed that many people have pieces of the answer and that a workable solution will come from combining those contributions</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Our ‘table talk’ remained open ended</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 111</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 75</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debate Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ‘table talk’ had no concern for the people from the other party, especially their feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During ‘table talk’ other people were belittled or offended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ assumed that there was a right answer and that one party had it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was focused on conclusions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue-Debate Score</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Summary for all 19 questions)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L- 112</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M- 76</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph 1 (Mean Scores on Part II of the Survey)

Questions 1 to 19

- Labor Mean
- Management Mean
The following are some general observations about the data presented in table 10 and viewed in graph 1:

1. The summary and graph indicate that representatives from labor had a higher score on most questions than did representatives from management. There were 16 out of the 19 diametrically opposed statements in which labor representatives had a higher mean (and thus were more inclined toward the debate end of the scale than the dialogue end). The overall mean score from the summary section shows that the 112 respondents from labor had a mean score of 2.64, while the 76 respondents from management had an overall mean score of 2.46.

2. The overall standard deviations for the two groups, labor and management, are nearly identical (labor had an overall s.d. of 0.56 and management had an overall s.d. of 0.55). This shows that within the two groups, deviations from the mean were nearly identical. Therefore, the variance within the groups were similar. Neither group had significant outliers.

3. Labor and management both had a mean score below 2, indicating a strong tendency toward dialogue, on only 1 statement (statement 17 - during the table talk the parties tried not to alienate or offend). This is juxtaposed against four statements that had both labor and management mean scores above 3, showing both teams perceived a tendency toward debate (statement 6 - our table talk affirmed our point of view; statement 7 - our table talk defended our assumptions as the truth; statement 12 - during our table talk, we were wholeheartedly invested in our beliefs; & statement 19 - our table talk was focused on conclusions).
Statements 6, 7 and 12 are concerned with preconceptions that the teams bring to the bargaining table. In terms of *Getting to Yes* (1991), these data may point to the respondents being soft on the people (interest based bargaining) while also supporting elements of positional based bargaining by protecting the point of view, assumptions and beliefs the interests are built upon. Statement 19, which both parties scored toward the debate end of the scale and that management gave its highest mean score, requires different scrutiny. A post hoc review of this question may point out that the debate side of the statement (our table talk was focused on conclusions) is simply the logical outcome of collective bargaining. A ratified contract is a shared outcome of both parties (labor and management) which in effect concludes that round of contract negotiations. Thus, the scores on this question may indicate a shared desire to conclude contract negotiations with a ratified agreement, and not a tendency to engage in positional bargaining or debate. What is not known from the data is why management would have a score that is higher than labor on this particular statement.

Table 11 presents another way that the data can be analyzed. The two teams (labor and management) generally ranked the statements in a very similar manner. Within the two rankings, three distinct groupings can be identified in an overall ranking by both teams. The first grouping contains four statements (numbered 6, 7, 12, and 19). Both labor and management put these four statements at the top of their rankings toward the debate end of the scale. The second grouping contains eleven statements (numbered 1, 2, 3, 5,
Table 11: (Rank order of the mean scores for statements 1 - 19 on part II of the survey)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank by Mean</th>
<th>Labor Statement Number (Mean)</th>
<th>Management Statement Number (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (Debate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (3.74)</td>
<td>19 (3.49)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (3.58)</td>
<td>6 (3.26)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (3.35)</td>
<td>7 (3.21)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (3.26)</td>
<td>12 (3.18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (3.15)</td>
<td>8 (3.07)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (3.01)</td>
<td>10 (2.95)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (2.97)</td>
<td>15 (2.86)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (2.97)</td>
<td>14 (2.58)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (2.77)</td>
<td>1 (2.51)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (2.45)</td>
<td>9 (2.32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (2.41)</td>
<td>3 (2.25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (2.40)</td>
<td>2 (2.23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (2.24)</td>
<td>16 (2.18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (2.21)</td>
<td>5 (2.17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (2.13)</td>
<td>18 (2.00)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (Dialogue)</td>
<td>17 (1.97)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (1.97)</td>
<td>17 (1.74)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 and 18) which appear in both lists but with slightly different order. The third and final grouping contains four statements (statements 4, 11, 13 and 17) that appear in the last four places in each list, with statement 17 holding the last slot for both labor and management. Looking at these rankings reveals that both teams considered the statements in a fairly similar and consistent manner. Although labor tended to look at the statements more toward the neutral or debate end of the scale (based on the overall mean scores reported in table 10 and visualized in graph 1), both teams reported the table talk with a similar description based on this ranking of each of the 19 diametrically opposed statements.

When the statements are rank ordered by group (labor and management) starting with the highest scores (representing greater tendency to debate) to the lowest scores (representing greater tendency to dialogue), not only is there great consistency between team ranking but also an apparent link to the work of Fisher and Ury (1991). The top four statements appear to represent positional bargaining. As a subset, both groups used table talk to affirm their point of view (statement 6); were invested wholeheartedly in their beliefs (statement 12); and defended their assumptions as the truth (statement 7). These three statements, arguably, evince a stance in which a team uses 'table talk' to support the position (point of view, beliefs, and assumptions) they bring to the bargaining table. This is opposed to the other end of the response spectrum for these three statements in which a team could enlarge their point of view, temporarily suspend their beliefs or reevaluate their assumptions. The response of the participants to statement 19 ('out 'table talk' was focused on conclusions as opposed to remaining open ended), although not a position,
may support an argument that a focus on conclusions as opposed to open-ended discussion, is more akin to bargaining a position than problem solving.

The bottom four statements at the other end of the continuum (dialogue) can be categorized as process related rather than projecting a limelight on the product of bargaining. Both groups categorized their ‘table talk’ as listening (statement 4), being open (statement 11), searching for agreement (statement 13), and not offending or alienating (statement 17). These statements sound like what Fisher and Ury (1991) expect when they implore bargainers to “…separate the people from the problem” (p.10). Table 12 provides another view of these parameters:

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Point of View</td>
<td>Affirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>Defended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td>Invested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>Focused</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>When Talking</td>
<td>Listened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Search</td>
<td>Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>Not Offended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a surprising degree of consistency between labor and management on all 19 statements. However, what is equally interesting is the apparent consistency between the top four and bottom four statements. The top four tend to concentrate on what the teams bring to the bargaining table, while the bottom four concentrate on what is done while sitting together around the bargaining table. This implies a tension at the table: each team must "protect and get" while listening to the other side, having an open attitude and searching for basic agreements. Possibly both sides may perceive that they must debate their positions but dialogue how to secure them. Since most teams in this population successfully bargained a contract, they must have found a way to negotiate the tension of what they bring to the bargaining table with what they do at the bargaining table to form what they take away from the bargaining table.

What is unclear from this analysis is why labor tended to lean slightly more toward the debate end of the scale than management. However, the groupings established in table 11 reveals that there is a tendency for both teams to view the statements in a similar manner. Indeed, the statements appearing in the polar ends of the rankings in table 11 are very similar, indicating that regardless of role the participants had a similar tendency to relate their 'table talk' to the statement. An independent samples t-test was performed on the 19 statements to determine if the differences in the mean scores were significant. Using the established threshold of \( p=0.05 \), and making a Bon-Feroni adjustment to account for the 19 statements on the survey, the adjusted threshold becomes \( p=0.003 \). Only one variance (statement 6) was found to be significant. This analysis further lends support
to the congruency between labor and management and therefore to the use of
the dialogue / debate concept as a conceptual basis for examining teacher
contract negotiations.

The significant difference in mean scores between labor and
management on statement 6 is worthy of comment and exploration. This
statement had respondents select whether their “table talk aimed to affirm our
point of view” (debate) or if their “table talk enlarged and changed our point of
view” (dialogue). In this case, labor had a mean score of 3.74 (the highest,
most debate-like mean score on the survey) while management had a mean
score of 3.26 (much closer to a neutral stance). It seems as if labor arrives at
the bargaining sessions determined to use ‘table talk’ to affirm a point of view
or position they have established, while management in turn uses ‘table talk’ to
enlarge or change that point of view or position. This may be a function of
contract negotiations and may support the proposition that labor is out to “get”
better wages and benefits while management must balance the need to give
with the need to “protect” what they already have put into place. This may also
speak to management’s constant awareness that anything they negotiate must
be funded by the local legislative body. Therefore, they have a duty to enlarge
the point of view being affirmed by labor in an effort to reach a saleable
agreement.

The next point to explore is to see if there is a link between an
individual’s mean dialogue/debate score and the manner in which a person
reported bargaining success. To do this, three correlation coefficients were
run. Question number 8 asked the respondent to “rate the success of your
most recent collective bargaining experience”. As previously reported in table
8, most respondents felt that their bargaining was either highly successful or successful (81.3%). Question number seven used Fisher and Ury's definition of a "wise agreement" to see if people thought they had negotiated a wise agreement. As previously reported in table 9, most respondents (78.3%) thought their "table talk allowed [them] to reach a wise agreement". Finally, when the 19 diametrically opposed statements on part II of the survey were analyzed, the mean dialogue/debate score (D / D Score) as reported in table 10 for the entire sample was 2.56 (2.64 for labor and 2.46 for management).

Table 13 shows the Pearson Correlation Coefficients between an individual's response to the questions related to success (#8) and a wise agreement (#7) and their dialogue/debate score. These data are disaggregated by labor and management, but also reported for the entire sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>D / D Score - L N = 112</th>
<th>D / D Score - M N = 76</th>
<th>D / D Score - L&amp;M N = 188</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success (#8)</td>
<td>-0.277</td>
<td>-0.345</td>
<td>-0.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Weak)</td>
<td>(Weak to Moderate)</td>
<td>(Weak to Moderate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wise (#7)</td>
<td>-0.304</td>
<td>-0.519</td>
<td>-0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Weak)</td>
<td>(Moderately Strong)</td>
<td>(Moderate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87
These values support that there is a relationship, albeit weak to moderate, between a person's overall dialogue/debate score and whether that person reported success with bargaining. The table also shows that there is a weak to moderately strong relationship between the dialogue/debate score and whether they achieved a wise agreement using the definition developed by Fisher and Ury. The negative correlation established between the dialogue/debate scores (D / D Score) and how a respondent reported success means that the closer the score was to dialogue (a score of 1), the higher that respondent reported success (highly successful is a score of 5). The converse is also true: When the score was closer to debate (a score of 5), the respondents tended to report a lower score on the success question (highly unsuccessful is a score of 1).

The same thing can be said for the correlation between the dialogue/debate scores and whether the respondents reported that their table talk allowed them to reach a wise agreement. The negative correlation established between the dialogue/debate scores (D / D Score) and how a participant responded to the wise agreement question means that the closer the score was to dialogue (a score of 1), the more likely that respondent reported that their table talk allowed them to reach a wise agreement as defined by Fisher and Ury (strong agreement is a score of 5). The converse is also true: When the score was closer to debate (a score of 5), the respondents tended to report that their table talk did not allow them to reach a wise agreement as defined by Fisher and Ury (strong disagreement is a score of 1).

What is not clear is why there is a discrepancy between the correlation values based on team membership. The observed correlations in table 13

88
were stronger and better established for management (-0.345 and -0.519) than
the same correlations for labor (-0.277 and -0.304). The difference between
labor and management on the success question was 0.068, while the
difference on the wise question was 0.215. This is consistent with the
information reported in table 10 and visualized in graph 1 which showed
management leaning more toward the dialogue end of the scale and labor
leaning more toward the debate end of the scale. But, the reason that a
stronger correlation exists between the dialogue/debate score and the
success/wise questions for respondents from management than for
respondents from labor would need to be explored in another research study.
These data establish the link but are not able to offer an explanation.

The final point related to success requires reference back to table 8
which provided a summary of the respondent’s determination of whether their
most recent collective bargaining experience was successful. Recall that only
13 respondents (6.9%) reported that their bargaining was unsuccessful or
highly unsuccessful. This is contrasted against the 152 respondents (81.3%)
who reported that their bargaining was successful or highly successful. For the
sake of this analysis, those who reported a neutral stance (n=22, 11.8%) will
not be considered. To mine this information a bit more carefully, table 14 is
created to show how these two viewpoints play out in each of the 19
statements on part II of the survey. It is not possible to disaggregate these data
by role (labor and management) since the 13 respondents would be further
divided into two groups that would simply be too small for analysis. Therefore,
this analysis is strictly the viewpoint on the success of the bargaining,
regardless of team membership (management or labor).
Table 14 (Statements in italics* are significantly different at \( p=0.003 \))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>s.d.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>2 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>4 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>14 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>17 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>( D/D ) Score *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
An independent samples t-test was performed on the 19 statements after the entire sample was divided into groups (those reporting that their bargaining was unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful and those reporting that their bargaining was successful or highly successful) to determine if the differences in the mean scores were significant. Using the established threshold of $p=0.05$, and making a Bon-Ferri adjustment to account for the 19 statements on the survey, the adjusted threshold becomes $p=0.003$. This analysis found that there is a significant difference on five of the statements (numbered 1, 2, 4, 14, and 17). In addition, the overall mean dialogue/debate score (D/D Score) for respondents reporting that their bargaining was unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful is significantly different from the overall mean dialogue/debate score (D/D Score) of respondents reporting that their bargaining was successful or highly successful.

This indicates that those who reported that their bargaining was unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful tended to also report the following:

1. The ‘table talk’ was oppositional, and
2. The ‘table talk’ was an attempt to prove the other side wrong, and
3. During ‘table talk’ the parties did not listen to each other, and
4. The ‘table talk’ put forth our best thinking, and defended it against challenge and to show that it was right, and
5. During ‘table talk’, other people were belittled or offended.

These five items all represent a perceived defect in the bargaining process. They speak about the process, not the product, of bargaining. Consider that of these five statements, three statements (numbers 1, 2 and 14) did not appear on the polar ends of the continuum presented in table 11 (they actually...
appeared near the center of group 2 with identical rankings by role). However, two of the statements (numbers 4 and 17) appear in group 3 at the bottom of the continuum (indicating a strong tendency toward dialogue). In fact, statement 17 had the lowest mean for both management and labor, showing that overall the respondents perceived that "during 'table talk' we tried not to alienate or offend". It is highly notable that those who viewed the bargaining as unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful would report a discrepancy with this perception and feel that "during 'table talk' other people were belittled or offended". This would suggest that the way in which we communicate at the bargaining table carries great weight in the perception of success, perhaps more so than whether an agreement was achieved.

**Summary**

This chapter presented the results of an analysis of survey responses from 190 participants in teacher collective bargaining in the state of New Hampshire in the 2001-02 school year. The respondents represented both labor and management in negotiating a successor agreement. The results found that participants from both labor and management were fairly consistent in their perceptions of who conducted the 'table talk' for management, but revealed a discrepancy in their perception of who talked at the negotiation table for labor. Generally, negotiators viewed the table talk as related to the outcome of their bargaining and they reported that their negotiations were highly successful or successful. A more detailed description and discussion of the findings appears in chapter five.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter will review the purpose of the study and summarize the research methods used to collect and analyze the data. Results of the two research questions will be discussed, and recommendations for future practice and further research will be established. In addition, the limitations of the study will be explored and suggestions for replication will be made. Issues of reliability and validity will be examined as the generalizability of this exploratory research to the practice of collective bargaining in education is discussed.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of the conversations that took place between labor (teachers) and management (school boards or school administrators) when the parties sat together around the bargaining table to negotiate a new teacher contract. More specifically, this research was designed to answer the following two research questions:

1. Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table?

2. Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in
dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the collective
bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and
engage in debate?

A survey instrument was used to collect data from both labor and management
participants in recent teacher contract negotiations. As demonstrated by the
literature review in chapter two, very little is known about the type of talk that is
used while the parties sit together around the contract negotiation table. This
exploratory research was intended to begin filling the gaps in this field of
knowledge.

The literature review presented in chapter two traced the history of
collective bargaining from its private sector industrial beginning to the
contemporary movement toward professional unionism. Trends toward 'win-
win' or interest-based bargaining pointed out that issues related to the way
people talked with each other at the negotiation table needed to be explored.
Further, there is a complete void of research related to the talk that occurs
comparison of dialogue and debate was adapted into a research
questionnaire that asked negotiators to select between nineteen diametrically
opposed statements in order to describe the conversations between labor and
management during teacher contract negotiations. The responses to this
survey were tabulated using a Likert-type scale that allowed an individual's
response to be categorized as either more like a dialogue than a debate, more
like a debate than a dialogue or fairly neutral to the two opposing descriptors.
In addition, participants were asked for demographic information in order to
help define the bargaining experiences of the negotiators. Respondents were
also asked about their perception of the success of their bargaining sessions.

Participants in this study consisted of labor and management negotiators in 39 New Hampshire school districts that bargained new teacher contracts in the 2001-02 school year. The response rate for this study was 58.5% with a better return rate from labor (64.2%) than from management (51.7%). In multi-district school administrative units where more than one school district was engaged in teacher contract negotiations, one district was randomly selected to participate in the study in order to avoid confusion with management officials (who may have been present at multiple negotiation sessions, each with a different outcome or style of interaction). A reliability analysis was performed to ensure the internal consistency of the survey items. Descriptive statistics were used to define and describe the participants in the study. In addition, a descriptive analysis was performed to see if the participants were satisfied with their bargaining experience and thought their negotiations were successful. Correlational statistics were used to further examine the responses generated by participant group (labor or management).

Discussion of Findings

Research Question Number One

Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table? In analyzing the data, it was found that representatives from labor generally had a higher score on the dialogue-debate questions than did the representatives from management; thus, labor was more likely to view the table talk toward the neutral or debate end of the
scale. The management representatives tended to view the identical conversations more toward the dialogue end of the conversation continuum. However, this analysis does not allow us to determine why labor had a tendency to lean toward the debate end of the scale. This could be linked to the overall scheme of teacher bargaining in which labor typically approaches management and seeks to improve their terms and conditions of employment. They may simply enter into the discussions with certain needs or wants in mind, and therefore are more inclined to try and sell these positions through techniques that more resemble a debate than a dialogue. Representatives from management may be more accustomed to this “seeking needs and wants” framework and are therefore less likely to view it with a debate lens, but instead see it as more like a dialogue. This is put forth as one suggestion to interpret these nuggets of data, while acknowledging that additional information would need to be collected in order to reach a conclusion beyond that fact that labor tended to see things slightly more toward the debate end of the scale than did management.

However, as seen in table 11, the two parties had a fairly consistent rank order of the 19 statements. While labor had a higher average score on the dialogue-debate continuum (0.18 points higher), there are 3 easily identifiable groupings of the 19 statements. This supports that Berman’s conceptual framework of dialogue and debate seems to work nicely within the confines of collective bargaining due to the fact that the parties had a similar response to each statement. The diametrically opposed statements were seen in a similar manner by respondents from both groups (management and labor). These data show that representatives from management and labor have a degree of
consistency in the way they view and report the talk that occurs at the negotiation table. However, labor does have a slight tendency to view the table talk as more like a debate. Interestingly, both teams (labor and management) had nearly identical standard deviations within their teams (0.56 and 0.55). This shows fairly good internal consistency with the participants in each group, with neither group having significant outliers.

**Research Question Number Two**

Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction with the collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate? While the question of personal satisfaction was not directly asked on the survey, it can be surmised from the responses given to a few questions related to success. This does assume that a person who reports success with the collective bargaining process also feels personal satisfaction with the process that was used. Conversely, a person who reports that the bargaining was not successful is assumed to also have less satisfaction with the bargaining process.

In analyzing the data, the vast majority (81.3%) of the participants have a combined view that bargaining was either highly successful or successful. Only 13 out of the 187 respondents (6.9%) viewed the bargaining as unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful. This can be interpreted as meaning that the individuals have a fairly high level of satisfaction with the bargaining they engaged in with the other party. Interestingly, of the 13 respondents who reported that their bargaining was unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful, 10
were representatives of labor while only 3 were associated with management. The survey instrument does not allow us to discern a reason for this discrepancy. But, it is certainly worth noting that only 6.9% of the respondents reported a lack of success, and that 76.9% of those who felt that way were from labor. Is there a possible connection between the tendency on the part of labor to view bargaining as debate and a lack of success in bargaining? Or, could it be that labor does not get as much from management as it wants, and therefore does not perceive success? Or, as demonstrated in table 14, is it less dependent on the product of the bargaining but more dependent on the manner in which the parties conducted their ‘table talk’? This question begs for additional research to find a reason for this finding.

Another way to determine if participants were achieving success is to look at the outcome of the bargaining. If labor and management reach a tentative agreement, have it ratified by their memberships and have the ratified agreement approved and funded by the local legislative body, then the parties would have met success. In this study, 37 of the 39 participating districts reached a tentative agreement (94.9%), all 37 of those ratified the tentative agreements (100.0%) and 34 districts (91.9%) had the ratified agreements funded by the local legislative body. In total 87.2% of the districts achieved success when the measure was set as a ratified and funded collective bargaining agreement. This is important information as the link between the table talk (and whether it resembled a dialogue or a debate) and satisfaction with bargaining is explored.

If success is determined by whether a “wise agreement” (as defined by Fisher and Ury) was achieved, then 78.3% of the respondents agreed or
strongly agreed that their 'table talk' allowed them to reach a wise agreement. This assumes that the respondent would feel that a wise agreement is an indicator of successful bargaining, and that the negotiator is therefore satisfied with the bargaining process. There was no statistical difference between role (labor and management) in the reporting of whether a "wise agreement" was secured.

Finally, the most direct look at the relationship between 'table talk' (dialogue and debate) and success was obtained through correlation coefficients. Specifically, the dialogue/debate score was correlated to questions about the success of the bargaining (question #8) and whether a wise agreement was reached (#7). The correlations were found to be weak to moderate when the entire sample was considered. In general, this supports research question number two and establishes that those who engage in dialogue have a slightly greater personal satisfaction with the bargaining than those who approach the table and engage in debate.

Other Key Findings

Besides the two research questions, there were several other nuggets of information that this study uncovered.

1. Labor representatives had more experience in public education than management representatives. Participants from labor reported more then twice the number of years experience in the district as the participants from management (15.4 years for labor compared to 7.0 years for management). Labor participants had 5.0 additional years of experience in public education over management representatives (20.2
years for labor compared to 15.2 years for management). It is assumed that this was driven largely by the number of elected school board members who served on the management teams, since the administrative members of those teams probably had similar experience to the teacher members of the labor teams. Future research studies should attempt to determine if in fact this is the case.

2. Management representatives had more experiences with collective bargaining than labor representatives. Participants from management had negotiated an average of 6.1 teacher contracts, while participants from labor had negotiated 3.4 agreements. However, in terms of negotiating an agreement in the district that was being studied, the number of times each participant served on that team was nearly identical when sorted by role (3.4 times for labor and 3.2 times for management). Management may have experienced different styles or forms of collective bargaining due to the fact that they had negotiated in a greater number of places than labor. That does not necessarily mean that different tables employed different styles, but it does open the possibility that highly positive or negative bargaining experiences may have been brought to the current table by the representatives from management.

3. In attempting to determine who was doing the majority of the talking while the parties sat together at the table, question number five was asked of all respondents. Essentially, they were asked to report if the talk was conducted by everyone present ("free-talk"); or if a chief negotiator or professional negotiator conducted the table talk
("designated-talk"). The respondents were asked to report for both the team they were a member of and for the other team at the table (they reported for both management and labor). Several important nuggets of information were gleansed from this question:

a. Approximately one half of the tables engaged in "free-talk", while the other half reported using a "designated-talk" approach.

b. When describing who talked for management, all respondents (both labor and management) consistently described who conducted the 'table talk'.

c. When describing who talked for labor, respondents from labor perceived that they utilized a "free-talk" approach, while respondents from management perceived that labor primarily used a "designated-talk" approach, specifically employing a chief negotiator to conduct the 'table talk'.

The discrepancy in defining who talked for labor is very noteworthy due to the fact that respondents were highly consistent in the overall description of who conducted the 'table talk' and in categorizing who talked for management. Why the seemingly straightforward description of who talked for labor would produce a noteworthy discrepancy is not known, but it does indicate that for some reason negotiators from labor and management have differing viewpoints on who engages in the 'table talk' for labor.

4. This study established a clear link between the 'table talk' and the outcome of collective bargaining. An overwhelming number of the respondents (92.7%) reported that their 'table talk' was either related to
the outcome of the bargaining or extremely related to the outcome of the bargaining. No respondent (0.0%) reported that 'table talk' and the outcome of the bargaining were extremely unrelated! Prior to this study, it was common sense and probably reasonable to assume that the 'table talk' played a critical role in the outcome of the bargaining. But, this research lends quantitative data to support that bargaining is more than the exchange of proposals and that the participants view the 'table talk' as essential to reaching an agreement.

Limitations of this Study

There are several aspects of this study that were exploratory. The results generated are a first glimpse at who is doing the bargaining for new teacher contracts in the State of New Hampshire. Furthermore, many of the survey questions had never before been asked of the participants in collective bargaining for a teacher’s contract. The adaptation of Berman's descriptors of dialogue and debate is unique to this research study. Although it appears to be a good fit, it was never before used in this manner. As exploratory research, the results should be confirmed through a replication study to see if similar results can be obtained.

Additionally, the collective bargaining environment in New Hampshire is somewhat unique. While the parties negotiating are indeed able to enter into a tentative collective bargaining agreement, in most cases they are also required to submit that tentative agreement to a governing body in order to obtain funding for any cost items (wages, benefits, etc.). The great majority of school funding in New Hampshire comes from local property taxes, with the ability to
raise and appropriate any cost items associated with a teacher’s contract resting in the hands of the local taxpayer. This means that the labor and management negotiators conduct their ‘table talk’ while aware that a silent third party sits outside of the room. It is that third party who will fund the agreement, so the two sides must remain cognizant that what what seems fair and equitable at the bargaining table must also be seen as fair and equitable to the taxpayer. This unique view on revenue generation may influence the ‘table talk’, and therefore may limit the generalizability of the results of this study to other parts of the country.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the findings of this study, the following questions have been identified for additional research. They may be incorporated into a replication study or a study that expands upon these findings.

1. Labor reported five additional years of experience in public education than management. Why? Is this related to function or role (with administration more closely matching labor’s experience while school board members had less experience and therefore drove the average value lower)? Data should be collected in future studies to see if this is in fact the case. This could easily be accomplished by having respondents define their role (teacher, administrator or board member) within each team on the survey.

2. A few questions on part two of the survey should be examined before being used in future research. As discussed in chapter three in the reliability section, question 19 tried to ascertain if the ‘table talk’
remained open ended” or if it “was focused on conclusions”. While this is an important distinction between dialogue and debate, anyone who has bargained a teacher’s contract knows that while preliminary discussions may be open ended, the talk must eventually focus on a conclusion (usually a ratified and funded collective bargaining agreement). Perhaps this question needs to be modified into two parts: “Initially, our ‘table talk’ remained open ended / focused on conclusions” and “As our bargaining progressed, our ‘table talk’ remained open ended / focused on conclusions”. This may allow for greater distinction between the early phases of bargaining and the ‘table talk’ that occurs closer to the end of the process. Another possibility is to simply eliminate this question from future research surveys.

3. About halfway through the return of the surveys, one respondent wrote on part two to share a frustration with the bargaining (and apparently the survey itself). All of the questions on the survey refer to “our ‘table talk’”, and the directions clearly define this as the conversations that took place when both parties sat together at the bargaining table. However, this respondent noted that “our” talk resembled one side of the spectrum (in this case dialogue), while “their” ‘table talk’ resembled the opposing side of the spectrum (or the debate side). As this was a labor respondent, it was clear that this person felt that management was not engaging in the same type of talk as labor. This raised a question of how many other people felt torn between parties or interpreted the statement to mean “our” as in the group that they belonged to and not the overall assembly of parties. To avoid confusion in future research,
the word "our" should be replaced with "the" to make the phrase 'table talk' more distinctly highlight the conversations between the parties, and not as easy to interpret as the talk from one party.

4. The data show that labor respondents tend to view the conversations more toward the neutral or debate end of the scale, while management respondents viewed the same conversations more toward the dialogue end of the scale. The information reported in table 10 and visualized in graph 1 confirms this analysis. However, there is no reason for this, and it is worthy of further research to determine why this is the case.

5. As reported earlier, there is a discrepancy in defining who conducted the 'table talk' for labor (When describing who talked for labor, respondents from labor perceived that they utilized a "free-talk" approach, while respondents from management perceived that labor primarily used a "designated-talk" approach, specifically employing a chief negotiator to conduct the 'table talk'). Since this discrepancy did not appear in describing who talked for management, this is a very noteworthy difference. A future study should attempt to replicate these data or to study the discrepancy in depth.

6. As reported earlier, when the dialogue/debate score was correlated to the questions about the success of the bargaining (question #8) and whether a wise agreement was reached (#7) a weak to moderate correlation was found when the entire sample was considered. However, an analysis by role (management or labor) found a discrepancy with observed correlations stronger and better established for management (-0.345 and -0.519) than the same correlations for
labor (-0.277 and -0.304). What is not clear is why there is a discrepancy between the correlation values based on team membership. This bears further research.

7. As reported in table 8, of the 13 respondents who reported their bargaining was unsuccessful, 10 were from labor. This indicates that labor had a greater tendency to view the fruits of their efforts as unsuccessful. Additional research is required to see if this is significant.

Recommendation for Practice

As discussed in the opening chapter of this study, collective bargaining is the formal process that effects millions of teachers by determining their wages, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment. A greater understanding of teacher collective bargaining should benefit the public good through enhanced labor relations with the people who teach in our nation's schools. This study finds that Berman's (1998) notions of dialogue and debate can be successfully applied to the arena of teacher collective bargaining. Opportunities for training should focus on one key element. This research established a clear link between the 'table talk' and the outcome of the bargaining. Those who reported that their bargaining was unsuccessful or highly unsuccessful also perceived a defect in the 'table talk'. These respondents were more likely to report the most negative aspects of debate (offending, belittling, oppositional, not listening, and trying to prove the other side wrong) had occurred at their negotiation table. Specific training and attention must be given to the conception of 'table talk' in the future. Negotiation team members from both labor and from management will benefit
by increased awareness of the talk they generate when sitting with the other
team around the teacher contract negotiation table.

Concluding Remarks

Little is known about the nature of the conversations that occur when
representatives from management and labor sit together at the bargaining
table to negotiate a new teacher contract. The results of this study begin to fill
the gaps in our knowledge base of teacher collective bargaining. Public
education is under scrutiny, and in the eyes of some people the labor unions
are contributing to schools that are perceived as failing by protecting the status
quo and keeping mediocre teachers employed. The unions are fighting this
image in part by focusing on a new unionism that embraces a concern for the
teaching profession (Chase, 1999 & 1997). Before shifting labor union
discussions with management beyond “bread and butter” issues to also
embrace issues associated with teacher quality, student achievement, and
school district accountability, it will be necessary to enhance the relationships
between labor and management. This research shows that the parties are in
many cases engaging in ‘table talk’ that contains many elements of dialogue
as opposed to debate. Dialogue is a healthy way to proceed, and is best
suited to help the parties improve the educational climate in their schools. The
elements of dialogue do not necessarily come easy, and in many cases must
be specifically taught to the individuals who engage in a conversation. This
research supports that training in the techniques of dialogue is worthwhile if we
are to engage in difficult conversations about public education.
REFERENCES


109


Brown & Benchmark.


APPENDIX A

A Comparison of Dialogue and Debate

Permission from S. Berman to use his work in the research
A comparison of dialogue and debate

Dialogue is collaborative: two or more sides work together toward common understanding.

Debate is oppositional: two sides oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.

In dialogue, finding common ground is the goal.

In debate, winning is the goal.

In dialogue, one listens to the other side(s) in order to understand, find meaning, and find agreement.

In debate, one listens to the other side in order to find flaws and to counter its arguments.

Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant’s point of view.

Debate affirms a participant’s own point of view.

Dialogue reveals assumptions for reevaluation.

Debate defends assumptions as truth.

Dialogue causes introspection on one’s own position.

Debate causes critique of the other position.

Dialogue opens the possibility of reaching a better solution than any of the original solutions.

Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude: an openness to being wrong and an openness to change.

Debate defends one’s own positions as the best solution and excludes other solutions.

Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude: an openness to being wrong and an openness to change.

Debate creates a closed-minded attitude, a determination to be right.

In dialogue, one submits one’s best thinking, knowing that other peoples’ reflections will help improve it rather than destroy it.

In debate, one submits one’s best thinking and defends it against challenge to show that it is right.

Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one’s beliefs.

Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one’s beliefs.

In dialogue, one searches for basic agreements.

In debate, one searches for glaring differences.

In dialogue, one searches for strengths in the other positions.

In debate, one searches for flaws and weaknesses in the other position.

Dialogue involves a real concern for the other person and seeks to not alienate or offend.

Dialogue involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relationship and often belittles or deprecates the other person.

Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.

Dialogue assumes that there is a right answer and that someone has it.

Dialogue remains open-ended.

Debate implies a conclusion.

Adapted from a paper prepared by Shelley Berman, which was based on discussions of the Dialogue Group of the Boston Chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR). Other members included Lucille Burt, Dick Mayo-Smith, Lally Stowell, and Gene Thompson. For more information on ESR’s programs and resources using dialogue as a tool for dealing with controversial issues, call the national ESR office at (617) 492-1764.
Subject: Re: Seeking Permission  
Date: Sun, 28 Oct 2001 17:06:02 -0500  
From: "Sheldon Berman Ed.D." <shelley@concord.org>  
To: mrjette@mail.tds.net  
References: 1

Michael,

Sorry it has taken me so long to respond to your request. You can use the comparison of dialogue and debate piece. I would appreciate that you reference the authorship of it. There is an article that takes this further in ASCD’s book Developing Minds. There is also some additional material in the newsletters and materials from Educators for Social Responsibility, 23 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138, 617-492-1764.

Shelley

Dr. Berman,

I am a doctoral candidate at UNH and I am currently writing a dissertation proposal. I am interested in the teacher collective bargaining process, and would like to document the conversations that occur between teachers and school boards when they sit together at the contract negotiation table. Specifically, I am curious to learn if they have a greater tendency to engage in debate or dialogue and if this tendency can be linked to the history of labor relations in a school district (there would be two groups: those with a positive history related to collective bargaining and those with a stormy history related to collective bargaining).

Two things would help me to proceed with my research idea:

First, I would like your permission to adapt “A comparison of dialogue and debate” into a questionnaire. I envision taking the 15 diametrically opposed statements and placing them against each other on a Likert scale. The words “dialogue” and “debate” would be substituted with the term “table talk”. The individual’s responding to the survey would be asked to select on the scale which statement best describes the overall tone of the discussions that occurred while they were sitting together at the negotiation table.

Secondly, I would like some information on the paper that you authored and from which the “comparison” was developed. Was it published? If so, where did it appear? If it is an unpublished manuscript, may I obtain a copy of it?

I have spoken with the people at both the ESR office in Cambridge and the Study Circles Resource Center. Neither place felt that they could grant permission to adapt the comparison. Also, they did not have any information on the paper cited as the origin of the “comparison”. Thus, I am contacting you directly as they both suggested. My home phone number is (603) 796-6460 and can be reached there in the evening. I am the Assistant Principal of Merrimack Valley High School in Concord, NH and can be reached during the day at 753-4311 (although I am often out in the halls tracking down students or being visible). Please call if you have any questions or need any clarification about my plans.

Thanks in advance for your assistance.  
Michael Jette

114
APPENDIX B

The Survey

(Copied on green paper for Labor and on blue paper for Management)
Collective Bargaining Questionnaire

Part I: Background Information

School District Code: ________________

By completing this survey, it is understood that your name and affiliated school district will be held in confidence by the researcher. All reporting of the survey results will be by group. At no time will the individual school districts or the persons who completed the questionnaires be named in the report.

1. Select the statement that best describes your role in the collective bargaining process:
   - □ Labor representative (Teacher or negotiator)
   - □ Management representative (school board member, administrator or negotiator)

2. How many years have you been a teacher, administrator or school board member:
   - In this district? _________ years
   - In public education? _________ years

3. How many times have you been a participant in a teacher contract negotiation:
   - In this district? _________ times
   - In public education? _________ times

4. Respond to the following questions about the outcome of your most recent collective bargaining process:
   
a. We were able to reach a Tentative Agreement (TA).
      - □ Yes  (proceed to question 4b)
      - □ No  (stop question 4 here and proceed to question 5 on the back page)
   
b. We had our Tentative Agreement (TA) ratified by our complete memberships.
      - □ Yes  (proceed to question 4c)
      - □ No  (stop question 4 here and proceed to question 5 on the back page)
   
c. We had our ratified Tentative Agreement (TA) approved and funded by the legislative body (school district meeting, city council, etc.).
      - □ Yes
      - □ No
Throughout this survey, the term ‘Table Talk’ will appear. ‘Table talk’ refers to the conversations that occurred when representatives from both the teachers (Labor) and the school district (Management) were sitting together at the negotiation table. When answering these questions, try not to focus on a particular conversation. Instead, try to focus on the overall tone of the numerous conversations that occurred throughout the collective bargaining process.

5. For each side (both Labor and Management) indicate who did the majority of the talking while at the table with the other party (check the appropriate boxes):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labor</th>
<th>Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A chief negotiator engaged in the majority of the 'table talk'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone present at the sessions engaged in the 'table talk'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed a professional negotiator to conduct the 'table talk'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base your answers to the following questions on your most recent experience involving discussions at the bargaining table. Please consider both the relationship and the attitudes that existed between the parties while sitting together at the negotiation table. For each question, mark the box on the scale that best matches your response.

6. Our ‘table talk’ is related to the outcome of collective bargaining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Related</th>
<th>Related</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unrelated</th>
<th>Extremely Unrelated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. If a wise agreement is defined as one that meets the legitimate interests of each party to the extent possible, resolves conflicting interests fairly, is durable, and takes community interests into account, then our ‘table talk’ allowed us to reach a wise agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Please rate the success of your most recent collective bargaining experience:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly Successful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Highly Unsuccessful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY. YOUR CANDID ANSWERS TO THIS SURVEY ARE MOST APPRECIATED. Please complete Section II of this survey.
Collective Bargaining Questionnaire
Part II: Opposing Statements

School District Code:_______

Read each of the opposing statements in this questionnaire (one statement is called Statement A, while its opposing statement is called Statement B). From your own personal point of reference, consider the overall tone of the discussions that occurred when all of the parties sat together at the negotiations table (these discussions are defined as ‘Table Talk’). If your Table Talk most resembled Statement A, check the box closest to A; if it most resembled Statement B, check the box closest to B. The center box shows a neutral position relative to the two statements, and there are also boxes to indicate a lesser resemblance between the Table Talk and each statement.

Base your responses on your most recent experience with teacher contract negotiations. Try not to dwell on particular conversations, but instead focus on your general impressions from the numerous conversations that occurred between the parties while sitting together at the negotiation table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT A</th>
<th>Mostly A</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Mostly B</th>
<th>STATEMENT B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was collaborative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was oppositional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was an attempt to prove the other side wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was focused on common understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goal of our ‘table talk’ was finding common ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The goal of our ‘table talk’ was winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During ‘table talk’, the parties listened to the other side</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>During ‘table talk’ the parties did not listen to the other side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ sought to understand, find meaning and find agreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ sought to find flaws and counter arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ aimed to affirm our point of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ enlarged and changed our point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ revealed a need to reevaluate our assumptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ defended our assumptions as the truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ resulted in introspection of our position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ resulted in critique of the other position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was closed to other solutions and defended the one solution as the best</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was open to a better overall solution than the solution that was first perceived</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

118
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT A</th>
<th>Mostly A</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Mostly B</th>
<th>STATEMENT B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We knew the ‘table talk’ could have been wrong and were open to change</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>We knew the ‘table talk’ was right and were determined to prove it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We approached the ‘table talk’ with a closed attitude</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>We approached the ‘table talk’ with an open attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During ‘table talk’ we were able to temporarily suspend our beliefs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>During ‘table talk’ we were wholeheartedly invested in our beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ searched for glaring differences</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ searched for basic agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘table talk’ put forth our best thinking, knowing that the reflections of others would help it to improve rather than to destroy it</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The ‘table talk’ put forth our best thinking, and defended it against challenge and to show that it was right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ searched for flaws and weaknesses in the other position</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ searched for basic strengths in the other position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘table talk’ had no concern for the people from the other party, especially their feelings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The ‘table talk’ involved a real concern for the people from the other party, including their feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During ‘table talk’ we tried not to alienate or offend</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>During ‘table talk’ other people were belittled or offended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ assumed that many people have pieces of the answer and that a workable solution will come from combining those contributions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ assumed that there was a right answer and that one party had it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ was focused on conclusions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Our ‘table talk’ remained open ended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This survey was adapted from “A Comparison of Dialogue and Debate” by Sheldon G. Berman.

119
APPENDIX C

Researcher's Letter to Participants in the Study
Dear Negotiator,

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of New Hampshire, and I am writing to ask for your assistance with a research study that I have designed. For my doctoral dissertation, I am attempting to learn about the conversations that occur between labor (teachers) and management (school boards and administrators) while the parties sit together at the negotiation table during collective bargaining (these conversations are known as ‘Table Talk’).

To help answer the questions of my study, I have developed the enclosed questionnaire. This questionnaire has been distributed to the people who represented both management and labor in a recent teacher contract negotiation. The survey is brief, and is estimated to take approximately ten minutes to complete. Please be assured that all responses to the survey will be held in confidence, and that your participation in this study is voluntary. Your questionnaire is coded for tracking purposes only; at no time will the individual school districts or the persons who completed the questionnaires be identified in any publications or reports resulting from this survey.

Surveying school districts in New Hampshire presents a wonderful opportunity to conduct this study under a single collective bargaining law and with the presence of small and cohesive state affiliates of the National Education Association (NEA-NH) and the National School Boards Association (NHSBA). For more information, please see the enclosed endorsement letter from these organizations.

I would appreciate a response to this request no later than October 30, 2002. There are two parts to the enclosed questionnaire and a return envelope has been provided for your convenience. If you have any questions or concerns, I may be contacted at 796-6460 or by email at mrjette@tds.net. My advisor at UNH is Dr. Todd DeMitchell (862-5043 or tad@cisunix.unh.edu) should you wish to contact him for further information about this study or my credentials. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Julie Simpson in the UNH Office of Sponsored Research (862-2003 or julie.simpson@unh.edu).

Thank you for your participation in this research study.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Jette
Doctoral Candidate, University of New Hampshire
APPENDIX D

Letter from NEA-NH in support of the Research Project

(Included in mailing to Labor participants)
October 1, 2002

Dear Local Negotiator:

We urge you to set aside a few minutes of your valuable time to read the enclosed materials and to complete and return the research questionnaire. All of us at NEA-NH are greatly involved with, and committed to, collective bargaining in New Hampshire. Learning about the conversations that occur between teachers and school boards/administrators will help us to better prepare our members for the collective bargaining process.

Mike Jette, a doctoral candidate at the University of New Hampshire, has designed this research project. Mike taught chemistry and physics for the Merrimack Valley School District for 10 years, and has served the Merrimack Valley Federation of Teachers as their chief negotiator. He also has experience negotiating teacher and support staff agreements in other districts.

Guiding this research is a team of experienced educators and negotiators, including Brian Wazlaw, a member of the NEA-NH Executive Board from the Seacoast Region. Please be assured that:

All responses to the survey will be held in confidence.

The survey is brief, and is estimated to take ten minutes to complete.

The questionnaire is coded for tracking purposes only. At no time will the individual school districts or the persons who completed the questionnaires be identified in any publication or report resulting from this survey.

This questionnaire is being distributed to both labor and management representatives in recent teacher contract negotiations.

It is important that you complete and return the questionnaire before the deadline to ensure an adequate response rate from teacher negotiators.

Thank you for your participation. It will help all of us gain a better understanding of collective bargaining in New Hampshire.

Karen McDonough
President

123
103 North State Street • Concord, NH 03301-4340

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
APPENDIX E

Letter from NHSBA and NHSAA in support of the Research Project

(Included in mailing to Management participants)
September 10, 2002

Dear School Board Member or Administrator,

We urge you to set aside a few minutes of your valuable time to read the enclosed materials and to complete and return the research questionnaire. Your associations are greatly involved with, and deeply committed to, collective bargaining in New Hampshire. Learning about the conversations that occur between teachers and school boards/administrators will help us to better prepare our members for the collective bargaining process.

This research project has been designed by Mike Jette, a doctoral candidate at the University of New Hampshire. Mike taught chemistry and physics for the Merrimack Valley School District for 10 years, and is currently the assistant principal of the high school. He has experience negotiating contracts in his own district and has assisted other districts in reaching both teacher and support staff agreements. Guiding this research is a team of experienced educators and negotiators, including Dr. Joyce.

Please be assured that:

➢ All responses to the survey will be held in confidence.
➢ The survey is brief, and is estimated to take ten minutes to complete.
➢ The questionnaire is coded for tracking purposes only. At no time will the individual school districts or the persons who completed the questionnaires be identified in any publications or reports resulting from this survey.
➢ This questionnaire has been distributed to the people who represented both management and labor in a recent teacher contract negotiation.

In closing, we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. It is important that you complete and return the questionnaire before the deadline to ensure an adequate response rate from respondents.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael E. Eader
Executive Director
NHSBA

Dr. Mark V. Joyce
Executive Director
NHSAA
APPENDIX F

Text from the Reminder Postcard Sent to Key Contacts
Dear November 6, 2002

I recently mailed you a set of research packets to be distributed to your 2001-2002 negotiation team. As of today, I have received _____ out of _____ responses from your team.

Would you please ask your team members to complete and return any surveys that are outstanding? The deadline has been extended to November 12th, as I need to analyze the data over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Thanks for your help with my research project!

Mike Jette
Doctoral Candidate, University of New Hampshire
796-6460
APPENDIX G

University of New Hampshire
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval
The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research has reviewed and approved the protocol for your study as Exempt as described in Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46, Subsection 101 (b), category 2 with the following contingencies. You must respond to the stated contingencies to the IRB’s satisfaction before involving human subjects in your study.

- In the cover letter, the investigator needs to add a statement that participation is voluntary.
- In the second paragraph of the cover letter, the IRB suggests using the word “coded” instead of “codified.”

Please forward a copy of the revised cover letter to the IRB for the file.

Approval is granted to conduct the study as described in your protocol once you have fulfilled the contingencies. Prior to implementing any changes in your protocol, you must submit them to the IRB for review, and receive written, unconditional approval. If you experience any unusual or unanticipated results with regard to the participation of human subjects, report such events to this office within one working day of occurrence. Upon completion of your study, please complete the enclosed pink Exempt Study Final Report form and return it to this office, along with a report of your findings.

The protection of human subjects in your study is an ongoing process for which you hold primary responsibility. In receiving IRB approval for your protocol, you agree to conduct the study in accordance with the ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects in research, as described in the following three reports: Belmont Report; Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46; and UNH’s Multiple Project Assurance of Compliance. The full text of these documents is available on the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) website at http://www.unh.edu/osr/compliance/Regulatory_Compliance.html and by request from OSR.

If you have questions or concerns about your study or this approval, please feel free to contact me at 862-2003. Please refer to the IRB # above in all correspondence related to this study. The IRB wishes you success with your research.

For the IRB,
Julie F. Simpson
Regulatory Compliance Manager

cc: File
Todd DeMitchell, Education
EXEMPT STUDY FINAL REPORT

Upon completion of your Exempt study, please provide the information requested below and submit to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) along with a report of findings for this study, for audit purposes. Copies of abstracts, articles, and/or publications specific to the project are acceptable. Send to the IRB, c/o Office of Sponsored Research, 102 Service Building, 51 College Road, Durham, NH 03824-3585.

1. Please give termination date of study. 
   January 1, 2003

2. How many months have you actually performed the proposed investigation or activity?
   3 months

3. How many subjects have been studied or were involved?
   320 surveys mailed
   190 surveys returned

4. Have you conducted the research in accordance with the procedures provided to and approved by the IRB?
   Yes

5. Have any problems emerged, or serious unexpected adverse subject experiences been observed? If the answer is YES, please describe on a separate sheet.
   No

Principal Investigator/Advisor Signature: 

Date: 9/13/03

cc: File

Todd DeMitchell, Education
Provost Bruce Mallory
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Thompson Hall
University of New Hampshire
Durham, NH 03824

Dear Provost Mallory,

I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Education. My advisor, Dr. DeMitchell, has asked that I seek your opinion on the validity of an instrument used to collect data related to teacher collective bargaining in New Hampshire. My research questions are:

1. Is there a difference in the way representatives from labor and management report the use of dialogue and debate while sitting together around the collective bargaining table?

2. Do individuals who approach the negotiation table and engage in dialogue have a greater personal satisfaction and success with the collective bargaining process than those who approach the negotiation table and engage in debate?

I know that you are familiar with Shelley Berman’s work titled “A Comparison of Dialogue and Debate”. I also know that you have successfully participated in and organized Study Circles as a way to facilitate public conversations. Therefore, I am seeking your expert opinion on the validity of the instrument.

Enclosed are the following materials:

1. A Comparison of Dialogue and Debate authored by Dr. Berman,
2. Permission from Dr. Berman to adapt his work into my survey, and
3. The survey applying dialogue and debate to table talk at New Hampshire school district bargaining sessions.

Would you please review the materials and submit your expert opinion on whether the survey is valid in the way it measures Berman’s theory of dialogue and debate? A written response to the address above or to my email account [mjette@comcast.net] would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Jette
Doctoral Candidate
Dear Michael,

Thank you for asking me to review the draft survey on collective bargaining and the use of dialogue vs. debate. I found the survey to be quite well constructed, with clearly interpretable items. It seems that it will be equally applicable to labor and management negotiators in the way that items are worded and in the content of the items. Your use of the Berman distinction between dialogue and debate is innovative and seems to work well for your purposes. The instrument strikes me as having construct validity.

The only constructive suggestion I have is to provide greater space between the "Statement A" and "Statement B" headings and the first item on the list below ('Our 'table talk' was collaborative," etc.). You might also place a line under each heading. In the current version, given the close proximity, I initially thought that the first item was part of the heading, rather than a separate statement. I should also say that your directions to the respondent seem quite clear and concise.

Best wishes for a successful dissertation. Please let me know of your results when they are available.

--Bruce

Bruce L. Mallory
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of New Hampshire
Thompson Hall
Durham, NH 03824
603/862-3290