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ABSTRACT

As part of a program to test the feasibility of vouchering institutional vocational training in the Work Incentive Program (WIN) in Portland, Oregon, previous findings from a March, 1975 study of 27 public and private schools in which WIN participants were enrolled were checked against the experiences of 113 students surveyed in the summer and fall of 1975, after they had completed or left the program. (Selected data from interviews with vouchered trainees are presented on such areas as admission procedures, counseling and guidance, placement assistance, evaluation of instructional staff, and overall satisfaction.) In both the public and private schools the majority of the students indicated that they did not have the bad experiences sometimes encountered by vocational trainees, gave their instructors relatively high ratings, and were either highly or moderately satisfied with their training. The conclusions of the earlier study are essentially supported, although the data reflect some weaknesses of the private relative to the public schools. Private schools were rated slightly lower by the students, largely due to unfulfilled expectations from private recruitment practices and advertising. It also appears that private schools need to upgrade the quality of their instructional staffs. An executive summary of the earlier school report is appended. (MF)

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ASPECTS OF VOUCHERED WIN TRAINEES' EXPERIENCES WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOLS: Experiences With the Portland WIN Voucher Training Program

by

Bruce B. Dunning

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16. Abstracts A program to test the feasibility of vouchering WIN institutional vocational training was conducted in Portland, Oregon. Training vendors who enrolled vouchered WIN trainees were interviewed in March, 1975 and the results reported in Dunning and Unger, SCHOOLS' RESPONSES TO VOUCHERED VOCATIONAL TRAINING. This report utilizes selected data from interviews with vouchered trainees, obtained at about the time they left training, to check the impressions investigators got from their interviews with school administrators. The report covers such areas as admission procedures, counseling and guidance, placement assistance, bad experiences, evaluation of instructional staffs, and overall satisfaction. Trainees generally felt that their needs were met and that their training experience was good. Nonetheless, weaknesses were identified in both public and private schools and the investigators are less sanguine about the quality of private schools than they were following the earlier report.

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ABSTRACT

A program to test the feasibility of vouchering institutional vocational training in the Work Incentive Program (WIN) in Portland, Oregon, was undertaken in 1974 under Grant No. 51-11-73-02 from the Manpower Administration (now, Employment and Training Administration), U.S. Department of Labor.

In March, 1975, representatives of 27 schools in which vouchered WIN participants were enrolled for vocational training were interviewed. The study of schools was intended to determine the characteristics of schools where WIN participants used their vouchers, identify schools' operations and procedures that were relevant to the training of vouchered students and obtain the schools' reactions to vouchering. The study of schools was reported in Dunning and Unger, Schools' Responses to Vouchered Vocational Training: Experiences with the Portland WIN Voucher Training Program, Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Social Science, Inc., July, 1975.

In the present report, findings and conclusions of the earlier study of schools are checked against the experiences of 113 students who had enrolled in the schools with vouchers.

Relatively few of the students encountered admission requirements beyond general interviews at enrollment, although additional procedures were more prevalent in the public schools than the schools had indicated. Contrary to impressions gained earlier, public schools were more likely than private schools to require educational transcripts. However, essentially open-enrollment policies prevail in both types of schools.

Although some 70 percent of the students received counseling of one sort or another, much of that was with respect to determining training needs and courses that should be taken. In general, only minorities of the students received counseling in four other content areas about which they were asked (determining interests and occupational goals, assessing the suitability of interests and occupational goals, reviewing progress in training and personal counseling). But, among

those who did not receive counseling, substantial majorities in each of the content areas felt that they did not need it. Few of the respondents who received counseling felt that they needed more. Overall, students in public schools were only slightly more often in need of counseling than those in private schools, but there were noticeable differences between students in the two types of schools as to what kinds of counseling they needed. Students in public schools were somewhat more likely than those in private schools to need counseling related to the determination and assessment of interests and occupational goals; conversely, students in private schools were more likely than those in public schools to need counseling related to the training process itself.

Minorities of the students in either type of school received placement assistance (42% in private schools, 25% in public schools). But most of the students who did not get such assistance did not ask for it. The report suggests that differences in the prevalence of delivered placement services in the two types of schools are attributable, in part, to structural factors, particularly the motivating effects of promises of help more frequently made by private schools and the more passive style of public-school placement services which tend to rely more on students' initiative in obtaining services.

In both the public and private schools, substantial majorities of the students indicated that they did not have the bad experiences sometimes encountered by people in vocational training, gave their instructors relatively high ratings in interest, knowledge of subjects, and ability as teachers, and reported that they were either highly or moderately satisfied with the training they received.

While there were some detailed differences in the ways in which students saw their schools and the ways in which the schools pictured themselves, the conclusions of the earlier study are essentially supported by the present study. In several cases, however, the data from students point to weaknesses of private schools relative to public schools in areas which the representatives of private schools had identified as their strong points. Nonetheless, the investigator reiterates the final conclusion of the earlier study: that replications of the vouchering demonstration on a wider scale should not be inhibited by concerns about the motives and methods of most private schools.

ASPECTS OF VOUCHERED WIN TRAINEES' EXPERIENCES WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOLS[1]

Introduction

This report describes some of the experiences of a group of WIN trainees who were enrolled in vocational schools in Portland, Oregon, as part of their participation in the study of the feasibility of the use of vouchers for skill training in the WIN program. An earlier report[2] has described what the representatives of 5 public and 22 private schools told us about their conduct of and reactions to vouchered vocational training of WIN participants. This report utilizes the perceptions and experiences of the vouchered WIN trainees themselves as a means of checking the validity of what the schools' representatives told us about the schools' admission practices, counseling and guidance practices and placement services.

The Portland WIN office began issuing vouchers for institutional vocational training to WIN participants who desired them in April, 1974.

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[1]This is one of a series of reports on a study of the feasibility of vouchering in the Work Incentive Program (WIN), funded by Grant Number 51-11-73-02 from the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. The study is under the overall direction of Laure M. Sharp. Ann Richardson, Study Director, provided direct supervision and guidance for this follow-up as well as for the basic study of schools. Much of the data used in this report was prepared under the supervision of Lottie Mosher for use in her forthcoming report on the Portland project. Ellyn Bloomfield (now of Human Relations Research Organization) provided analytical assistance in the preparation of this report. Members of BSSR's Production Division, under the direction of Antonette Simplicio, prepared the report for publication.

[2]Bruce B. Dunning and James L. Unger, Schools' Responses to Vouchered Vocational Training: Experiences with the Portland WIN Voucher Training Program, Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc., July, 1975. The executive summary of that report is reproduced as Appendix A of this report.

The issuing of these vouchers initiated the first phase of research which includes a number of related data collection and analysis efforts.[3] One of these efforts was a survey of 27 public and private schools in which WIN participants had committed vouchers for vocational training. Another data collection effort was a survey of vouchered WIN trainees conducted in the summer and fall of 1975, after they had completed or left their vocational training programs.

In the study of schools, we relied on data obtained from the representatives of 5 public and 22 private schools. Because of widely publicized concern with the alleged exploitation of publicly funded students by private vocational schools, that study of schools paid particular attention to admission, screening and placement procedures.[4] The study concluded, among other things, that lack of systematic screening in both public and private schools could result in a number of students entering vocational training with little or no assurance on anyone's part that they were capable of completing such training successfully, and that in-training guidance and counseling practices were not likely to correct errors in choices made earlier. A more general conclusion of the study was that, although public and private schools implement somewhat different training philosophies in widely disparate structural settings, both types of schools generally were trying to provide effective vocational training. We concluded out report with the following words:

> It may be that the vouchered students' views of the schools and of the training they received will be somewhat different from the story we got from the schools. And any attempt at evaluating the effectiveness of training, whether on the dimension of vouchering/nonvouchering or on the dimension of type of school, will have to await analysis of posttraining labor force experience. Nonetheless, we would be less than truthful

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[3] Details on the development and early phases of the vouchering program will be found in Ann Richardson and Laure M. Sharp, The Feasibility of Vouchered Training in WIN: Report on the First Phase of a Study, Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc., December, 1974; and in Dunning and Unger, op. cit.

[4] See Dunning and Unger, op. cit.; and Appendix A.

if we did not admit that, in addition to establishing the feasibility of vouchering from the schools' standpoint and describing a number of relevant aspects of vouchered vocational training, we have gained an impression that is favorable to the private schools. We believe at this point that replications of the vouchering demonstration on a wider scale should not be inhibited by concerns about the motives and methods of most private schools.[5]

The interview data from 113 vouchered WIN trainees following their departure from 25 schools have provided us with an opportunity to check the impressions we formed after talking with school representatives against the perceptions and experiences of WIN participants themselves. Our concern in this report is with selected characteristics of the schools as viewed from the vantage point of those trained in them.[6]

Selectivity: Admission Procedures Encountered by School Applicants

In the previous report on the schools, we noted that screening of applicants appeared to be somewhat more widespread among the private than among the public schools, although rather unsystematic. In particular, we noted that they more often used testing as an admission procedure, but also that they more often said they interviewed applicants and examined school transcripts.

The admission procedures reported by the students themselves tend to confirm these impressions in general, but point up some differences in detail. A small proportion of the students (10% in public and 6% in private schools) said they simply registered without further ado (Table 1). Interviews by school staff members were the most frequently used admission procedure in each type of school but, as we gathered from what the schools told us, this practice was encountered more frequently by applicants to private than to public schools. Public and private schools seem to have been about equally interested

[5] Dunning and Unger, op. cit., p. 80.

[6] This report deals neither with the relationships between the characteristics of individual trainees and their experiences in training, nor with the evaluation of the schools in terms of their success in preparing trainees for employment. Such questions will be dealt with in later reports.

TABLE 1

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS REPORTING VARIOUS ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES ENCOUNTERED[a]
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
No requirements of any kind, just register	10	6	8
(n)	(48)	(64)	(112)
General interview with staff member.	74	94	86
(n)	(47)	(64)	(111)
Inquiry about earlier schooling	66	76	72
(n)	(47)	(62)	(109)
School transcripts requested	28	17	22
(n)	(47)	(64)	(111)
Inquiry about past work experience	43	49	46
(n)	(47)	(59)	(106)
References from previous employers requested	6	8	7
(n)	(47)	(61)	(108)
General intelligence test administered	15	13	14
(n)	(46)	(63)	(109)
Educational achievement test administered	19	13	15
(n)	(47)	(63)	(110)
Occupational aptitude test administered	13	21	17
(n)	(47)	(63)	(110)

[a]Multiple responses permitted, except for first item. Don't knows and no answers excluded from percentaging base.

in the prior educational experiences of applicants for enrollment. But, contrary to the impressions we got from talking to representatives of the schools,[7] students in public schools were somewhat more likely than those in private schools to have encountered requests for their school transcripts. Interest in prior work experiences was less evident from either type of school and references from employers were seldom requested. Combined, the data on tests encountered by the students indicate that 36 percent of the private school applicants and 29 percent of the public school applicants were administered one or more of the three types of tests. But, as indicated in Table 1, occupational aptitude testing was more prevalent in private schools, education achievement and intelligence testing a bit more prevalent in public schools.

In no case did a respondent report having been rejected by a school, either public or private. Further, none of our respondents reported changing from an original training plan as the direct result of performance on tests. Some 2 percent of the public school students and 13 percent of those in private schools reported, however, a change of training plans at the outset as a result of school staff influence.

The experiences of the students, thus, tend to confirm that interviews and the use of testing were more prevalent in private then in public schools, but point to somewhat more extensive requirements for school transcripts by the public schools.[8]

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[7] Representatives of 45% of the private schools, but only 20% of the public schools, told us that they examined the school transcripts of applicants. See Dunning and Unger, op. cit., p. 24.

[8] The reader should be aware that direct comparisons between the data in this report and those in the earlier report cannot be made. Schools were the units of analysis in the latter--i.e., the data were presented as proportions of schools giving a particular response. In this report, individuals are the units of analysis, aggregated to the level of types of schools--i.e., the proportions given are those of respondents in a particular type of school giving a particular response. Therefore, caution must be used in comparing findings and conclusions.

More importantly, however, the present data suggest that whatever the differences may be between public and private schools in their use of various admission procedures, there is little effect on selectivity. For all practical purposes, despite differences in policies, the practice in both types of schools seems to be one of open admissions--or close, the voucher people appeared to the schools to be qualified for training and to have made, in most cases, suitable choices of training programs.

Counseling and Guidance

Almost all of the schools' representatives with whom we talked for the earlier study described counseling and guidance services they said their schools provided. We drew two conclusions from these discussions:

1. The styles in which the two types of schools offered services were quite different. Public schools had formally established and professionally staffed counseling services. But such services usually were provided to students on an as-desired basis--our distinct impression was that the initiative in obtaining services rested, for the most part, with the students. Private schools, on the other hand, appeared to handle counseling and guidance on an informal basis, integrating it as a matter of course with everyday training activities. Because of this integration as well as because of the private schools' pragmatic concern with turning out graduates who would satisfy employers, we felt that the private schools probably reached more of their students than did the public schools.

2. Nonetheless, neither type of school appeared to offer systematic, integrated counseling services which would reach most students. In both cases, it seemed probable that substantial numbers of students might fail to get adequate supportive counseling and guidance during training as well as needed counseling with respect to their employment abilities, aspirations and needs.

Reports by the students themselves show that a substantial majority did receive counseling help of one sort or another; 71 percent received counseling help in one or more of five areas. But for many of those who received counseling, it was confined to help in determining training needs and what courses should be taken to train for the selected

occupations; 71 percent of the public school students and 45 percent of those in private schools reported receiving that type of help (Table 2). In each of four other areas, only minorities of the students received help from the schools.

TABLE 2

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS WHO RECEIVED COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE HELP FROM SCHOOLS (In percentages)[a]

Type of Counseling	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Help in deciding interests and occupational goals	22	28	26
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)
Help in determing the suitability of interests and occupational goals	29	38	34
(n)	(48)	(64)	(112)
Help in determining training needs and courses that should be taken	71	45	57
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)
Help in reviewing progress in training	47	43	44
(n)	(49)	(63)	(112)
Personal counseling	23	11	15
(n)	(48)	(64)	(112)

[a]No answers excluded from percentaging base.

The fact is, however, that few of the students who did not receive counseling and guidance felt that they needed it, and those who did receive it seldom felt that they needed more (Table 3).

TABLE 3

UNMET NEEDS FOR COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE
(In percentages)

Type of Help	Proportion of R's Who Didn't Receive Help, Who Needed It			Proportion of R's Who Received Help and Needed More		
	Public	Private	Both	Public	Private	Both
Deciding interests and occupational goals	21	11	15	9	11	10
(n)	(38)	(46)	(84)	(11)	(18)	(29)
Determining the suitability of interests and occupational goals	24	8	15	14	4	8
(n)	(34)	(40)	(74)	(14)	(24)	(38)
Determining training needs and courses that should be taken	21	20	20	3	7	5
(n)	(14)	(35)	(49)	(35)	(29)	(64)
Help in reviewing progress in training	15	28	23	4	15	10
(n)	(26)	(36)	(62)	(23)	(27)	(50)
Personal counseling	8	5	6	9	-	6
(n)	(37)	(57)	(94)	(11)	(7)	(18)

In the following sections of this report, we will focus in somewhat more detail on those students who needed counseling--or more counseling--and, additionally, make some comparative comments about private and public schools.

Deciding Interests and Occupational Goals

Nearly 9 out of 10 of the private school students and a bit more than 8 out of 10 of the public school students either received sufficient help in deciding interests and occupational goals or didn't receive such help, but didn't need it (Table 4A). But 18 percent of the public school students and only 11 percent of those in the private schools said they needed this kind of help or needed more of it.

TABLE 4A

HELP IN DECIDING INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONAL GOALS
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Received help, did not need more	20	25	23
Did not receive help, did not need it	61	64	63
Received help, needed more	2	3	3
Did not receive help, needed it	16	8	12
TOTAL	99	100	101
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)

Very probably, the relatively low level of need for this type of counseling was related to the fact that a very large proportion of the voucher recipients had already established occupational goals when they first started talking to WIN about vocational training and these predispositions were translated into decisions about training occupations more often than not.[9] Consequently, many of the occupational decisions were firm before schools were chosen. For example,

[9] Some 85% of the voucher recipients said that they had a sepcific occupation in mind for which they wanted to get training when they first talked with WIN about training. Of those, 82% ultimately chose to get trained in the occupation which they first had in mind: Bruce B. Dunning, Occupational Choices and Vocational School Selections; Experiences with the Portland WIN Voucher Training Program, Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc., forthcoming.

one voucher recipient said this about counseling on interests and occupational goals:

> "The counselor asked me if I was sure that that's (training occupation) what I wanted and I was sure there wasn't anything else I was interested in. We discussed farming machine shop work and that's it."

Trainees who needed help in deciding on interests and goals most often mentioned finding out about the availability of courses and programs for different occupations as specific help which they needed (44%), and help in determining their occupational abilities and aptitudes were mentioned by one-quarter of them (Table 4B).

TABLE 4B

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING NEEDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF HELP AMONG THOSE WHO NEEDED (MORE) HELP IN DECIDING INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONAL GOALS[a]
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Determining occupational capabilities and aptitudes	33	14	25
(n)	(9)	(7)	(16)
Knowing different aspects of occupations	11	14	12
(n)	(9)	(7)	(16)
Determining job opportunities in occupations	11	29	19
(n)	(9)	(7)	(16)
Determining availability of training courses and programs for different occupations	67	14	44
(n)	(9)	(7)	(16)
Finding out about program content and what is expected of students	11	14	12
(n)	(9)	(7)	(16)
Needed more personal attention	11	14	12
(n)	(9)	(7)	(16)

[a] Multiple responses permitted.

Need for help in finding out about courses was particularly prevalent in the public schools, possibly because of the wide variety of courses and programs usually offered by such schools. A student at a public school apparently had problems in both of the areas we have just mentioned:

> "Well, they just have all these brochures on various occupations and what courses you have to take and maybe I could've uses some help in choosing an occupation. Like at the very end of this quarter, I was. . .--you had to do a project--and the instructor said I should be in some other field, perhaps writing and that's when I first learned I was not doing as well as some other students in this field. He suggested I should consider something else. If I had been counseled in the beginning as to my capabilities--I mean the last quarter is kind of late."

Another public school student referred to the problem of assessing one's own aptitudes and capabilities and expressed rather detailed expectations as to what counseling should include:

> "More about what particular program would be suited for me personally. Not just--here are 1-year programs--take your pick. With an evaluation either by testing or interviews--you know, those tests (on which) you answer questions and feed it into a computer and it comes out what you're best suited for and interviews where they ask about past experience situations--what I liked and didn't like and how you handled things. Put them all together to determine where you're best suited."

A student in a private school was concerned with the lack of counseling there and attributed it to the school's commercialism:

> "He could have told me more about what I went for--he just started on data processing. He just sold me on data processing. As far as data processing goes, he told me plenty about that--he was just a salesman for the most expensive course they had."

Suitability of Interests and Goals

Again, only a small minority of trainees (13%) felt that they needed help in determining the suitability of interests and occupational goals (Table 5A). But needs for help in this area were expressed noticeably more frequently by students in public schools (21%) than by those in private schools (7%).

Specific needs in this area were most frequently expressed in terms of determining job opportunities in the training occupation and in assessing the trainee's suitability for the occupation (Table 5B). While the very small number of private school trainees who needed help in this area makes comparisons shaky, it appears likely that

TABLE 5A

HELP IN DETERMINING THE SUITABILITY OF INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONAL GOALS
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Received help, did not need more	25	36	31
Did not receive help, did not need it	54	58	56
Received help, needed more	4	2	3
Did not receive help, needed it	17	5	10
TOTAL	100	101	100
(n)	(48)	(64)	(112)
(NA)	(1)	(-)	(1)

TABLE 5B

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING NEEDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF HELP AMONG THOSE WHO NEEDED (MORE) HELP IN DETERMINING THE SUITABILITY OF THEIR INTERESTS AND OCCUPATIONAL GOALS[a]
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
If respondent was suited for the occupation. .	56	(-)	42
(n)	(9)	(3)	(12)
If respondent was suited for the training necessary for the occupation	22	33	25
(n)	(9)	(3)	(12)
Knowing different aspects of the occupation	33	33	33
(n)	(9)	(3)	(12)
Determining job opportunities in the occupation	44	67	50
(n)	(9)	(3)	(12)
Needed more personal attention	30	50	36
(n)	(10)	(4)	(14)

[a]Multiple responses permitted. "No answers" excluded from percentaging base.

finding out whether they were suitable for the occupation was more problematical for public school students than for those in private schools; the latter were a bit more likely to be concerned with finding out about job opportunities.[10]

Training Needs and Course Selection

Most of the trainees (89%) did not feel that they needed counseling--or more counseling--in determining their training needs and the courses they should take (Table 6A). But in contrast to other types of counseling, many had received this type from their schools. This was particularly true in the public schools in which 71 percent of the students received such help, compared to 45 percent in the private schools.

TABLE 6A

HELP IN DETERMINING TRAINING NEEDS AND COURSES THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN
(In percentages)

	Types of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Received help, did not need more	69	42	54
Did not receive help, did not need it.	22	44	35
Received help needed more.	2	3	3
Did not receive help, needed it.	6	11	9
TOTAL	99	100	101
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)

[10] Differences on similar items in Table 4B were in the same direction. This lends some strength to an assumption that the differences are valid.

In some cases, however, what was reported as advice on training needs and course selection was, in fact, simply the transmission of information on predetermined programs in which the student had little flexibility. For example, one public school student, when asked what kind of advice had been given said:

> "It was all set up. The courses were all set out--no electives or anything. They just told us what we had to take."

And another:

> "They gave you a printed form on each course--what classes you should take--they have forms for all programs at (a large community college)--they don't sit down with you, but if you had questions, they probably would answer them."

The same sort of thing happened at private schools:

> "They told me it was all mapped out ahead of time--they told me all the courses I had to take."

And, from another private school student:

> "They already had mapped out and have the courses already down. Some things you have to take that didn't involve what I was doing like business administration. They made you take it and I wasn't going to work with computers and I got a bad grade. Then when the course was over, the teacher left and I had no one to talk to about it. I don't even know why they had us take it. It had nothing to do with my courses."

As in the earlier cases, the numbers of trainees who needed help are too small to permit detailed comparisons. But, it seems clear that finding out what was available was the predominant problem among the public school students who needed help they didn't get (Table 6B). The comments of one public school student exemplified this situation:

> "Well, I originally went in for receptionist training. I went in so I could work. I didn't want to prolong it. That's why they transferred me to (a new program at a branch of a large community college). If I had known about it at the beginning, I could have started out there instead of here at the main campus."

Among the private school students, on the other hand, knowing more about the training they were facing was the predominant need. Quite often, an apparent lack of understanding about the level of effort that would be required showed up in comments of private school students who said they needed more counseling. When asked what she needed to know more about, one student said:

> "Typing courses and stuff like that because I started to be absent because of my shoulders. Some of the classes I wanted to drop. They piled too many classes on me and too much homework."

TABLE 6B

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING NEEDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF HELP AMONG THOSE WHO NEEDED (MORE) HELP IN DETERMINING TRAINING NEEDS AND COURSES THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN
(In percentages)[a]

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Determining availability of courses and programs for training occupation	75	11	31
(n)	(4)	(9)	(13)
Understanding program, content and what is expected of students	-	67	46
(n)	(4)	(9)	(13)
Knowing whether respondent would be able to handle course work	25	22	23
(n)	(4)	(9)	(13)
Needed help in scheduling classes	25	22	23
(n)	(4)	(9)	(13)
Needed more personal attention	-	22	15
(n)	(4)	(9)	(13)

[a] Multiple responses permitted.

Another student commented:

> "One time I talked to the WIN counselor. She helped put me back on the track. I was just having problems in school. Just trouble with not studying enough--didn't seem to be enough time."

Progress in Training

A bit less than half of the trainees said that they received help in reviewing their progress in training (Table 7A). Public school students were a bit more likely than those in private schools to have

TABLE 7A

HELP IN REVIEWING PROGRESS IN TRAINING
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Received help, did not need more	45	37	40
Did not receive help, did not need it.	45	41	43
Received help, needed more	2	6	4
Did not receive help, needed it.	8	16	12
TOTAL	100	100	99
(n)	(49)	(63)	(112)
(NA)	(-)	(1)	(1)

received such help and also were a bit more likely to feel that it was sufficient. Further, private school students who did not receive this type of counseling were twice as likely as their public school counterparts to feel that they needed this kind of help (16 vs. 8%).

For the most part, it was in knowing how they were doing as they went along that most of those who needed help felt that counseling had been lacking (Table 7B).

The frequency with which private school students who needed help singled out feedback on their training progress as the area in which they needed help warrants comment. Review of progress in training was most frequently mentioned by representatives of the private schools we visited in Portland as a type of counseling they provided.[11] Further, one of the points made to us repeatedly was

[11] Dunning and Unger, op. cit., p. 30.

TABLE 7B

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING NEEDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF HELP AMONG THOSE WHO NEEDED (MORE) HELP IN REVIEWING PROGRESS IN TRAINING[a]
(In percentages)

	Types of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Determining how respondent's work was progressing, grades	80	77	78
(n)	(5)	(13)	(18)
How improve work and study habits	20	-	6
(n)	(5)	(13)	(18)
Where to get extra help if needed	20	23	22
(n)	(5)	(13)	(18)
Whether respondent would be able to complete the course work	40	8	17
(n)	(5)	(13)	(18)

[a]Multiple response permitted. "No answers" excluded from percentaging base.

that smaller classes and a more informal, less bureaucratized atmosphere permitted them to give more individualized attention to their students. In fact, this individualized instruction was the advantage of private over public schools most frequently mentioned by the private schools' representatives.[12] This, as well as the private schools' lack of specifically designated counseling personnel, implies considerable reliance on instructors to fulfill guidance roles, including that of providing the students with feedback on their progress. Private school instructors would, thus, seem to be in a pivotal role. But the students

[12] Ibid., p. 37

from private schools were noticeably less likely than those from public schools to rate their instructors highly on their interest in how well trained the students were (Table 8). It may be that the private schools

TABLE 8

STUDENTS' APPRAISALS OF TEACHERS' INTEREST
(In percentages)

Level of Teachers' Interest	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Teachers were really interested.	78	52	63
Teachers were somewhat interested.	16	27	22
Teachers were not very interested.	6	21	14
TOTAL	100	100	99
(n)	(49)	(63)	(112)
(NA)	(-)	(1)	(1)

rely too much on informal contacts between students and instructors with respect to informing the former on their progress and that they are deluding themselves with respect to the efficacy of informal counseling and guidance systems. We take this all the more seriously because we think that this is an area in which the private schools, for the very reasons they state, should have an advantage over the public schools--an area in which they have the capability to improve if they mean what they say about their commitment to providing high-quality vocational training.

Personal Counseling

Only small numbers of the trainees--23 percent in the public schools and 11 percent of those enrolled in private schools--received personal counseling such as advice on family, financial or legal

problems, help with improving personal appearance, or psychological support and encouragement (Table 9-A &B). And, only a few felt the need for this type of counseling.

TABLE 9A

PERSONAL COUNSELING
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Received help, did not need more	21	11	15
Didn't receive help, did not need it	71	84	79
Received help, needed more	2	-	1
Did not receive help, needed it	6	5	5
TOTAL	100	100	100
(n)	(48)	(64)	(112)
(NA)	(1)	(-)	(1)

TABLE 9B

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING NEEDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF HELP AMONG THOSE WHO NEEDED (MORE) PERSONAL COUNSELING[a]
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Advice on family problems	25	33	29
(n)	(4)	(3)	(7)
Financial advice	-	33	14
(n)	(4)	(3)	(7)
Legal advice	-	33	14
(n)	(4)	(3)	(7)
Help with personal appearance	-	-	-
(n)	(4)	(3)	(7)
Personal support, encouragement	75	-	43
(n)	(4)	(3)	(7)
Just someone to talk to	50	-	29
(n)	(4)	(3)	(7)

[a]Multiple responses permitted.

With so few cases of expressed need for personal counseling, it is difficult to make any meaningful comparisons between the two types of schools. But the infrequency with which a need for personal help occurred or the difficulty of classifying the type of problem into some specific category should not be allowed to obscure the importance of help to someone who needs it:

> "Oh, just someone to talk to whenever I had a problem come up that didn't relate to WIN--problems about the children and personal problems. When you're the parent of a household it gets heavy now and then. I think (it was) because I was alone--I have no family close by. I think towards the end they were trying to find a place I could go for that, but that got to be more hassle because they wanted me to go and get counseling and hire a sitter and take the time and I really didn't have the time. If there had been someone at the school I could go to--and I think there was counseling at the school but they didn't want me to go there--I don't know if it was money or not. I think it was. In other words, they wanted me to go to a place where the counseling was free which meant more inconvenience and time for me. I had already had my limit."

And, in some cases, the availability of an understanding ear can make the difference between a potential graduate and a dropout:

> "At the time, I was sick--I was sick the last three weeks of the term. One of my instructors in a course--we didn't communicate well and I wish--well, if we had, I might have stayed with it."

Concentration of Dissatisfaction with Counseling Services

Students.--It would be possible, of course, for a few disaffected individuals to express needs for counseling in each of the five questions asked about that. In this way, a very few individuals could account for most of the apparent lack of counseling. This was not the case, however.

There were a total of 69 responses indicating a need for more counseling of one kind or another. As it turned out, these were made by 40 individuals (or 35% of the respondents).

Another way of looking at it is to note that 64 percent of the trainees who needed help of one kind or another were represented in only one or two of the questions about counseling (Table 10). Thus, while only a minority of the respondents felt a lack of guidance which they thought the schools should have given them, the existence of such feelings was more than simply a reflection of the responses of a few disgruntled individuals.

TABLE 10

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS NEEDING (MORE) COUNSELING ON NUMBER OF TYPES OF COUNSELING NEEDED
(In percentages)

Respondents who mentioned:	Proportion of All responses
Need for 1 type of guidance	32
Need for 2 types of guidance	32
Need for 3 types of guidance	13
Need for 4 types of guidance	23
TOTAL	100
(n)	(69)

Schools.--The prevalence of students who were more or less dissatisfied with the counseling they received was almost exactly equal at public and private schools; 35 percent of the students enrolled in the former and 36 percent of those enrolled in the latter mentioned one or more types of counseling they needed (Table 11).

A better measure of the concentration of dissatisfaction with counseling at the various schools is, however, provided by the rates of complaints per enrolled student. In the public schools, there were .65 complaints per enrolled student, compared to .58 complaints per enrolled student in the private schools (Table 12). Further, taking each of the two groups of schools in aggregate, there was a tendancy for dissatisfaction with the help received in determining and assessing interests and occupational goals to be more frequently expressed in the public schools than in the private schools. Conversely, dissatisfaction with counseling related to the actual training process was somewhat more intense in the private schools than in the public. There was, however, only a slight difference in the rate of complaints about personal counseling, with the private schools having the advantage by a bare margin.

TABLE 11

PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH SCHOOL
WHO EXPRESSED NEED FOR (MORE) ASSISTANCE
(In percentages)

School	Number of Enrolled Respondents	Percent of Enrolled Respondents Needing (More) Assistance
All Public Schools	(49)	35
C	(5)	40
D	(11)	63
G	(25)	24
H	(5)	40
O	(1)	-
X	(2)	-
All Private Schools	(64)	36
A	(5)	40
B	(6)	83
E	(5)	80
F	(1)	100
I	(1)	100
J	(3)	33
K	(20)	35
L	(1)	100
M	(6)	17
N	(1)	-
P	(3)	-
Q	(1)	-
R	(1)	-
S	(4)	-
T	(1)	-
U	(2)	-
V	(1)	-
W	(1)	-
Y	(1)	-

TABLE 12

RATES OF OCCURRANCE: UNMET NEEDS FOR (MORE) COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE
(Expressed as rate of items mentioned per enrolled student)

	(n)	Needed (More) Assistance To: Determine Interests and Goals	Determine Suitability of Interests and Goals	Determine Training Needs and Course Selection	Assess Training Progress	Personal Guidance	All Needs
All Schools	(113)	.14	.12	.12	.17	.06	.61
All Public Schools	(49)	.18	.20	.08	.10	.08	.65
School C	(5)	.20	.20	-	.20	-	.60
D	(11)	.27	.36	.27	.18	.18	1.27
G	(25)	.12	.16	-	.04	.04	.36
H	(5)	.40	.20	.20	.20	.20	1.20
O	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
X	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
All Private Schools	(64)	.11	.06	.14	.22	.05	.58
School A	(5)	.20	.20	.20	.20	.20	1.00
B	(6)	.17	.17	.50	.50	.17	1.50
E	(5)	.40	.20	-	.60	-	1.20
F	(1)	-	-	-	1.00	-	1.00
I	(1)	-	-	-	1.00	-	1.00
J	(3)	-	-	-	.33	-	0.33
K	(20)	.10	.05	.20	.20	.05	0.60
L	(1)	-	-	1.00	-	-	1.00
M	(6)	.17	.17	-	-	-	0.17
N	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
P	(3)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Q	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
R	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
S	(4)	-	-	-	-	-	-
T	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
U	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
V	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
W	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Y	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-

It appears, then, that the students in the two types of schools found shortcomings in the available counseling in different substantive areas. It is possible that this was related to the differences in structures of training in the two types of schools, as well as the different styles of their counseling services. In the public schools, with highly structured programs for which prepared information (syllabi, class schedules, etc) was provided to students and periodic grades gave students a guide to their progress, there was less need for counseling related to the training process itself. But, since counseling as such generally required some initiative on the part of the students, some students were apt to miss the guidance on their individual interests and goals that they felt they needed. Private schools, on the other hand, were more likely to deal with questions pertaining to the determination and assessment of interests and occupational goals during the admission process but, as we have seen, the informal, day-to-day counseling style that was prevalent in these schools was not as effective in dealing with training problems as the schools thought it was.

A second hypothesis explaining the difference in the rates of complaints about counseling relating to the determination and assessment of interests and goals is that private school enrollees would tend to have a more pragmatic orientation, including more firmly decided occupational goals, and that these students would have less need for and, therefore, less concern about counseling in this area. However plausible this might be, it seems to be discounted by the fact that firmly held occupational goals were a bit more prevalent among public school students than among those in private schools.[13]

Summary and Appraisal

The fact is, then, that except for public school students, 71 percent of whom received help in determining training needs and courses

[13] Among the voucher recipients enrolled in public schools, 80% said they had an occupation in mind when they first started talking about training with WIN and chose the same occupation as a training occupation. The comparable figure for voucher recipients in private schools was 73%.

that should be taken, only minorities of the students in either type of school said that they received counseling and guidance in the content areas about which we asked them. But, for the most part, those who didn't get help said that they hadn't needed it and only a few of those who received counseling said they needed more. For any given content area, less than one-quarter of the respondents attending either type of school said they needed counseling they hadn't received or needed more counseling that they got--usually, the proportion was considerably smaller than a quarter (Table 13). Nonetheless, it was not the same respondents who

TABLE 13

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS NEEDING (MORE) COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE[a]
(In percentages)

Type of Help Needed	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Deciding interests and occupational goals. . (n)	18 (49)	11 (64)	15 (113)
Determining suitability of interests and occupational goals . . . . . (n)	21 (48)	7 (64)	13 (112)
Determining training needs and courses that should be taken. . . . . (n)	8 (49)	14 (64)	12 (113)
Reviewing progress in training . . . . . (n)	10 (49)	22 (63)	16 (112)
Personal counseling. . . . . (n)	8 (48)	5 (64)	6 (112)

[a]Multiple responses permitted.

expressed needs for help in each content area about which we asked taken together. 36% of the respondents said they needed help--or needed more help--of one or more types.

There was little to choose between public and private schools on the overall prevalence of students who needed (more) counseling, but the concentration of complaints was a bit greater in public than in private schools. But the content areas in which students of the two types of schools were most likely to perceive unmet needs differed somewhat. And it seems possible that these differences may be linked to differences in the organizational structures, philosophies of training and approaches to the handling of counseling responsibilities.

From one viewpoint, the fact that expressed needs for counseling were not more frequent tends to validate assumptions about the self-reliance and decision-making ability of WIN participants. But, from another viewpoint, the fact that over one-third of the students were not satisfied with the help they got suggests the existence of a problem to which attention needs to be paid. From a humanistic standpoint, it is well and good--and consistent with the vouchering concept--when the student neither receives counseling nor feels a need for it. But, for the student who does perceive a need for help and is unable to get it, the consequences can be serious both for the individual's sense of well-being and for his or her progress toward achieving WIN program goals.

If one takes the view that the expressed needs for (more) counseling were of sufficient magnitude to make counseling problematic, the question as to whose responsibility counseling is becomes inevitable. In the earlier study of schools, both public and private school representatives rather frequently mentioned the need for screening and counseling either as a reservation to their agreement with the vouchering concept or as the source of their disagreement with that concept.[14] But a rather clear implication of their remarks was that they felt that this was something that should be accomplished by WIN prior to the students' applications to the schools. On the other hand, the provision of counseling and guidance is now well established as a responsibility of educational institutions and we believe, on the basis of our examination of the counseling services described to us by the schools as well

[14] Dunning and Unger, op. cit., pp. 71-73.

as by the students, that improvement in the provision of these services is well within the capabilities of both public and private vocational schools.

In any event, we cannot make a judgment on the excellence or lack of excellance of counseling and guidance in the public and private vocational schools in Portland, relative to each other. The differences were largely in the nature of strengths and weaknesses, rather than in magnitude.

Placement Services

Overall, the students enrolled in private schools were more likely than those in public schools to have received placement assistance for their schools; 42 percent of the enrollees in private schools and 25 percent of those in public schools said they received such assistance (Table 14).

TABLE 14

RESPONDENTS' RECEIPT OF PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE FROM SCHOOLS
(In percentages)

	School did not promise placement help		School did promise placement help		All schools		
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Both
R received placement help . .	21	12	32	46	25	42	35
R asked for, but did Not receive placement help. . .	4	12	11	12	6	12	10
R neither asked for nor got placement help.	75	75	58	41	68	45	55
Total	100	99	101	99	99	99	100
(n)	(28)	(8)	(19)	(56)	(47)	(64)	(111)
(NA)	(2)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(2)	(-)	(2)

Apparently, the students in private schools were more likely to want placement assistance; 54 percent of the private school students but only 31 percent of the public school students had asked for it. At the same time, it appears that whether or not the schools told the students they would get help in getting a job affected whether the students asked for it; the proportion of students who asked for such help in schools that did not promise it (25% in both public and private schools) was considerably lower than the comparable proportion in schools that did promise help (42% for public and 59% for private). And, since private school students were more likely than their public school counterparts to have been offered placement assistance (88% vs. 40%) they were more likely to ask for it. Whether or not offers of placement assistance stimulate the students' interest in getting it, or students who want placement assistance tend to favor private schools because of their promises, the private schools deliver placement assistance to more of their students than do the public schools.

Of course, one of the questions frequently raised about the private vocational schools is how often they pay off on their promises to assist students in getting jobs. In the Portland case, private schools which promised placement assistance did virtually as well as the public schools who made such offers; 12 percent of the students in private schools that promised assistance and 11 percent of those in public schools that made such offers said that their requests for assistance were not fulfilled. These proportions of unfulfilled promises may indeed be too high, but there is little difference between public and private schools in this respect.[15] Overall, however,--including both schools that made promises and those that didn't--the public schools come off somewhat better, with only 6 percent of their students being denied help they asked for compared to 12 percent in the private schools.

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[15] The effectiveness of placement services is another question. We will see in the following section of this report that a substantial proportion of the private school students, but only a small proportion of those in public schools, felt that their schools had exaggerated the chances of getting a job.

It will be recalled that 68 percent of the public school and 45 percent of the private school students neither asked for nor received placement assistance. Some of these had not asked for such assistance because they had not finished training (34% of the public school students and 23% of those in private schools). Even eliminating these, public school students were less likely than those in private schools to have asked for help in getting a job, by a 48 to 71 percent margin. A number of other reasons for not asking for assistance were given by the remaining people (Table 15). Most notably, 11 percent of the public school students and 2 percent of those in private schools were out of the labor force; 9 percent of the public school students and 5 percent of those in private schools already had jobs; and 6 percent of the public school and 2 percent of the private school students did not know that placement services were available.

Although lack of knowledge about placement services was a bit more prevalent in the public than in the private schools, it is clear that this was not a major reason for not asking for assistance in getting a job.[16] Nonetheless, it is our impression from the data described in this section as well as from our observations during visits to the schools in Portland that the differences in the ways in which two types of schools tended to structure and view the role of placement services had much to do with differences in the extent of usage by students. The public schools, as we have noted above, are less likely then private schools to promise placement assistance even though it is available; they rely much more on students' initiative in utilizing the services; in short, the services in these schools tend to be passively available. Private schools, on the other hand tend to see the promise of placement assistance as an important selling point and many of them recognize that they must back up these promises to some extent.[17] Consequently, we think, the private schools tend to

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[16] Excluding those who had not completed training, lack of knowledge about placement services still prevented only 10% of the remaining public school students and 3% of those in private schools from asking for such services.

[17] See Dunning and Unger, op. cit., pp. 31-36.

TABLE 15

REASONS FOR NOT ASKING FOR PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
SUBTOTAL: DIDN'T ASK FOR HELP	68	45	55
Didn't complete training	34	23	28
Already had a job	9	5	6
Wasn't looking for work at the time	11	2	5
Was looking for work on my own	4	5	4
WIN counselor said he/she would help	-	3	2
Didn't know placement services were available	6	2	4
Heard the placement services were not helpful, thought it would be a waste of time	2	3	3
Other	2	3	3
SUBTOTAL: ASKED FOR HELP	31	54	45
Total	99	99	100
(n)	(47)	(64)	(111)
(NA)	(2)	(-)	(2)

be somewhat more aggressive in delivering their placement services to their students. But we want to emphasize that these conclusions and, indeed this whole section of the report, speak only to the issue of the delivery of services, not to the relative quality of such services in the two types of schools.

Respondents' Evaluations of Schools

The preceding sections of this report have dealt primarily with whether vouchered WIN students experienced or did not experience specific aspects of the schools' operations that can reasonably be presumed to be associated with quality of training. In this section, we shift to indicators that are more explicitly evaluative.

Bad Experiences

We asked our respondents to tell us if they had encountered any of six "bad experiences" sometimes encountered by people in vocational training (Table 16).

One of the charges frequently levelled against private vocational schools is that they do not fulfill the explicit or implicit promises they make to potential students. Our data suggest that, in comparison with public schools, there is some merit in these charges. None of the respondents who attended public schools but 14 percent of those who had been in private schools, said that their schools advertised or promised training that was not given. Further, only 8 percent of the public school students, but 36 percent of those in private schools, said that their schools exaggerated the chances of getting a job at the end of training.

Part of the rather large difference with respect to exaggerating job opportunities might reflect the increased chances that such charges will be made because of the more active style of private schools in pushing their placement services. Nonetheless, the fact that over one-third of the private school students felt that their schools had exaggerated employment opportunities suggests that the private schools too often do succumb to the pressure to sell their training. And it casts some doubt on the validity of the private schools' arguments that they must deliver on promises of employment assistance both to maintain their reputations and to avoid increased governmental regulation.

A third are in which the private schools were at a noticeable disadvantage as viewed by the students was in the equipment used in training. Private school students were markedly more likely than those

TABLE 16

PROPORTIONS OF RESPONDENTS REPORTING VARIOUS UNDESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOLS[a]
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
chool advertised or promised training it did not give.	-	14	8
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)
chool exaggerated chances of getting a job at the end of training.	8	36	24
(n)	(49)	(63)	(112)
chool gave training unrelated to the training occupation.	24	23	24
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)
chool used outdated equipment.	6	22	15
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)
chool gave training student prepared for or for which the student didn't have the necessary background.	18	16	17
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)
chool gave training in material student already knew or which was too elementary.	18	23	21
(n)	(49)	(64)	(113)

[a]Multiple responses permitted.

n public schools to say that they had encountered outdated equipment in their raining.[18]

[18]This is generally consistent with what the school's representatives aid in the earlier study. Representatives of public schools frequently (50%) entioned better training facilities as an advantage of public schools. epresentatives of the private schools seldom said this. See Dunning and ager, op. cit., p. 37.

In the earlier study of the schools, we pointed out that public schools tended to stress vocational training within a broader educational context, while private schools tended to concentrate their efforts in teaching only the skills they considered necessary for employment in specific occupations. The students, however, failed to confirm this distinction, at least in their perceptions of training that was unrelated to occupational requirements. Just under one-quarter of the students in each type of school said that they encountered training that was unrelated to the occupation for which they were preparing. Students in the two types of schools also were quite similar in the proportions who said that training was not commensurate with their preparation and background--either not up to the student's level of preparation, or beyond it.

Respondents' Assessments of Instructors

While the representatives of private shcools we talked with in the earlier study had been more likely than their public school counterparts to cite individualized instruction as an advantage of private vocational schools (50% vs. 20%), they were considerably less likely than the representatives of public schools to mention better qualified staffs as an advantage (9% vs. 60%).[19] Insofar as this implied a recognition by the private schools that the public schools had an advantage in the quality of their staffs, the students tended to confirm the appraisal. We have already noted that the voucher recipients enrolled in private schools gave their instructors somewhat lower ratings in interest than did those in public schools.[20] The private school students also were less likely than those in public schools to give their instructors high ratings on the instructors' knowledge of their subjects (Table 17A) as well as on their ability in teaching (Table 17B). While it is clear that the private school students did not rate their instructors as highly as did the public school students,

[19] Dunning and Unger, op. cit., p. 37.

[20] See p. 20, supra.

TABLE 17A

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENTS OF INSTRUCTORS' KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECTS
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Instructors knew subjects well	92	71	80
Instructors knew subjects some	8	24	17
Instructors knew subjects little	-	5	3
TOTAL	100	100	100
(n)	(49)	(63)	(112)
(NA)	(-)	(1)	(1)

TABLE 17B

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENTS OF THE ABILITY OF INSTRUCTORS AS TEACHERS
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Instructors were very good	67	44	54
Instructors were pretty good	31	40	36
Instructors were poor	2	16	10
TOTAL	100	100	100
(n)	(49)	(63)	(112)
(NA)	(-)	(1)	(1)

we should also note that relatively few students in either type of school saw their instructors as being really unqualified in the subject they taught, or as poor teachers.

Overall Satisfaction with Training

Sizeable majorities of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the training they got (Table 18). But despite the fact

TABLE 18

RESPONDENTS' OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING
(In percentages)

	Type of School		
	Public	Private	Both
Very satisfied	57	36	45
Somewhat satisfied	38	34	35
Not very satisfied	4	16	11
Not at all satisfied	2	14	9
TOTAL	101	100	100
(n)	(49)	(62)	(111)
(NA)	(-)	(2)	(2)

that a majority of the students who attended each type of school indicated some measure of general satisfaction, there were noticeable differences between the appraisals of public school students and those of the private school students. Among the former, 95 percent indicated at least some satisfaction as compared with 70 percent of the latter. At the extremes of the satisfaction scale, over half (57%) of the public school students and only 36 percent of those in private schools said that they were

"very satisfied" with the training they got; conversely, only 2 percent of the public school students and 14 percent of those in private schools indicated that they were "not at all satisfied."

The schools in which at least some dissatisfied students were represented included two of the four public schools and ten of the twenty private schools. However, in all but four of these schools in which some students were dissatisfied, the proportion expressing some measure of satisfaction was at least equal to the proportion of disatisfied students (Table 19). By and large, then, expressions of dissatisfaction usually were more than counterbalanced by expressions of satisfaction within the same school.[21] While the schools clearly

TABLE 19

LEVELS OF SATISFACTION IN SCHOOLS WHERE DISSATISFACTION WAS REPORTED (In percentages)[a]

	School											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Very satisfied	64	50	50	40	40	25	22	17	--	--	--	-
Somewhat satisfied	18	25	-	40	20	50	40	33	--	--	--	-
Not very satisfied	9	25	50	-	-	-	22	50	100	100	-	-
Not at all satisfied	9	-	-	20	40	25	17	-	-	-	100	100
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	101	100	100	100	100	100

[a]Letter designations of the schools are not the same as those used in Table Percentaging bases (n's) not shown.

[21]The number of students enrolled in the schools represented in Table 20 are not shown because of anonymity considerations. However, we should note that only a very small number of students were enrolled in the four schools in which all students said they were dissatisfied.

varied in their ability to elecit student satisfaction, these data suggest that the prevalence of dissatisfaction depended more on the particular students enrolled than on the qualities of the schools themselves--that is to say that dissatisfaction was reasonably well distributed among the schools.

Summary

In both the public and private schools, substantial majorities of the students indicated that they did not have the bad experiences sometimes encountered by people in vocational training, gave their instructors relatively good ratings, and reported that they were either highly or moderately satisfied with their training. But, on all of these measures, the private schools did not come off quite as well as the public schools.

Conclusions

A main point to be made on the basis of these data is that, by and large, most of the students who used their WIN vouchers to enroll in vocational training at either public or private schools seem to have had reasonably good experiences in their training. Unfulfilled, perceived needs for guidance and counseling, denial of requested placement assistance, bad experiences encountered in training, low evaluations of instructors, and dissatisfaction with the training received were, in general, described by only rather small minorities of the students in either type of school.

As we pointed out earlier, the differences between public and private schools in their provision of counseling and guidance were most apparent in terms of the nature of counseling and guidance needs most frequently unmet. Students in public schools were more likely than those in private shools to feel that their needs for counseling with respect to interests and occupational goals were unmet. Conversely, those in private schools were the more likely to feel that needs for counseling with respect to training itself were unmet. What constitutes an acceptable level of counseling services is, of course, a value judgement. But it is our opinion that so long as some students

feel that they received inadequate counseling in one or more important areas, schools should make efforts to improve their services. Our data suggest to us that each of the two types of schools in Portland displayed some characteristic weaknesses in their counseling services and that each should concentrate efforts to improve those services in the areas of apparent weakness. In general, then, we feel that the impressions we formed during our earlier study of the schools--that there are some gaps and shortcomings in the provision of counseling services--seem to have been corroborated and amplified by the data we obtained from the students.

In considering the provision of placement services, we are faced with the paradox that private schools provided placement services to larger proportions of their students than did the public schools, but that the public school students were less likely than private school students to ask for placement assistance. This may, in part, result from a tendency for students who want placement assistance to select private schools which are more likely to promise it. But the data also suggest to us that differences in the structure and style of placement services in the two types of schools also affect the situation. It is our impression that at least some of the apparent lack of interest in obtaining placement assistance on the part of public school students reflects the combination of passiveness on the part of students and placement services which largely place the initiative for usage on the students. We believe that the public schools could assist their students by adopting more aggressive outreach programs in their placement services. On the other side of the coin, however, the students in private schools were more likely than those in public schools to see themselves as having been denied placement assistance when they asked for it (although this was true only in the schools which had not promised such assistance). Further, the private school students were more likely then those in public schools to feel that the schools had exaggerated the efficacy of their placement services. Consequently, it appears to us that the private schools should put effort into improving the quality of their placement services.

Quite clearly, the private schools came off a bit less well than public schools in terms of the problems students said they encountered in training, in terms of the student's evaluations of instructors, and in terms of general satisfaction with training.

It was in the areas of unfulfilled expectations--advertising training that the students said they didn't get and exaggeration of the chances of getting jobs--as well as in the use of outdated training equipment that the private schools fell short of public schools in the eyes of their students. Solutions to these problems would seem to be relatively straightforward: more attention to insuring that applicants know what they will and will not get and, insofar as resources permit improvement of training equipment. Other problem areas need attention also, but by both public and private schools. These problems shared by both types of schools in almost equal degree are related to the focusing of training on occupational requirements as well as adjustment of training to the needs of individual students. It is worth noting, however, that these are areas in which the private schools tend to picture themselves as superior to public schools.

But, as we interpret the data obtained from students, the most crucial need of the private schools is to upgrade the quality of their instructional staffs. Representatives of the private schools emphasized their reliance on individualized instruction as well as on the conduct of counseling during informal, day-to-day contacts between staff and students. Yet it was in the areas of setting up their training programs and reviewing their training progress that the students in private schools more often felt that they needed more help. If the close relationships between staff and students that the private schools told us about were really effective, these types of counseling would seem to us to be almost automatic outcomes. Support for the hypothesis that a considerable part of the responsibility for lower effectiveness of the informal counseling systems in the private schools lies with the instructors comes from the lower evaluations given to instructors by private school students with respect to the instructors' interest, knowledge of their subjects and ability as teachers.

In the end, we are somewhat less sanguine about the private schools than we were following completion of the earlier study of schools in Portland. But, where the data obtained from vouchered students have pointed toward a number of weaknesses of private schools that must concern us, they also have pointed to some problems in the public schools. More importantly, however, our purpose is not to determine if one type of school is "better" than the other; it is to determine if our earlier report failed to reveal the existence of problems in either type of school that were pervasive enough to cause us to question the advisability of a vouchering system open to all types of schools. In this respect, the significant finding is that the data pointing to weaknesses of either type of school are, generally, reported by rather small proportions of the respondents.

In this light, we feel justified in reiterating the final conclusion of our earlier study:

> We believe at this point that replications of the vouchering demonstration on a wider scale should not be inhibited by concerns about the motives and methods of most private schools.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOLS' RESPONSES TO VOUCHERED VOCATIONAL TRAINING: EXPERIENCES WITH THE PORTLAND WIN VOUCHER TRAINING PROGRAM

Executive Summary

Introduction

This is a report of a survey of the schools which provided training to Work Incentive Program (WIN) participants in an exploratory program to test the feasibility of introducing a voucher system for the purchase of skill training.

Vouchering is a mechanism for modifying the relationships between public agencies and their clients by replacing the provision of goods and services in kind with a certificate or some form of authorization which will permit the client to select and "purchase" what is needed from some range of goods or services as well as from a more or less specified range of vendors. Proponents of vouchering hypothesize that its application will, on the demand side, broaden the range of services and vendors available to clients, increase chances of meeting the clients' needs adequately as they choose their own services and vendors, and enhance clients' self-esteem, sense of personal efficacy and commitment by allowing them to make their own decisions. On the supplier side, it is hypothesized that vouchering will increase responsiveness to clients' needs and improve the effectiveness of services by increasing competition among vendors.

In early 1974, the Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc. (BSSR), under a grant from the Manpower Administration, designed an exploratory program to test the feasibility of vouchering institutional vocational

training in WIN. The program was intended to determine the administrative feasibility of vouchering as well as to identify problems and develop procedures in a limited setting before testing the program on a larger scale. Portland, Oregon, was selected as a test site; the first of some 200 vouchers was issued in April, 1974.[1]

The vouchers issued to Portland WIN participants authorized them to purchase vocational training up to 1 year in duration from any public or private school in the metropolitan area. Training could be for any occupation and no limit was placed on cost, except that any training costing more than $2,500 had to be approved by the Regional Assistant Director for Manpower in Seattle. Trainees were to locate their own training sources and make their own arrangements for training which would lead to a reasonable expectation of employability.

In March, 1975, interviews with officials in 27 schools were conducted by the authors of this report, to determine the characteristics of the schools where vouchers were spent, identify the schools' operations and procedures relevant to the training of vouchered students, and obtain their reactions to vouchering.

A summary of the findings from this survey follows.

The Schools

The schools interviewed included public and private schools of varying sizes and degrees of specialization (Figure 1).

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[1] Details on the development and early phases of the program will be found in Ann Richardson and Laure M. Sharp, The Feasibility of Vouchered Training in WIN: Report On the First Phase of a Study (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc., December, 1974). Subsequent reports will cover analyses of data obtained from the vouchered WIN participants following their training.

ACADEMIC

Large

FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY - 1

MULTIPLE OCCUPATIONS

Large

COMMUNITY COLLEGES - 3

COMMUNITY COLLEGE BRANCH - 1

Medium

Correspondence School - 1

BUSINESS/COMMERCIAL OCCUPATIONS

Medium

Business and Secretarial Schools - 3

Business and Radio/TV Broadcasting School - 1

Commercial Art School - 1

Floral Design School - 1

Small

Business and Secretarial School - 1

Secretarial School - 1

Real Estate Schools - 2

MEDICAL AND DENTAL ALLIED OCCUPATIONS

Medium

Medical and Dental Allied School - 1

Small

Medical and Dental Allied School - 1

PERSONAL SERVICE OCCUPATIONS

Medium

Child Day Care Aide School - 1

Small

Beauty Schools - 3

Barbering School - 1

Dog Grooming School - 1

INDUSTRIAL/TRANSPORTATION OCCUPATIONS

Medium

Truck Driving School - 1

Metal Trade, Machinery Repair and Electronics School - 1

Small

Upholstering School - 1

Note: PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHOWN IN CAPITALS; Private Schools in Initial Capitals.

FIGURE 1

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS, SIZE AND PROPRIETARY STATUS OF SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY VOUCHERED WIN STUDENTS

The public-private distinction turned out to be essential on a number of dimensions. Public schools were very large, private schools were medium-sized or small. Public schools had programs relating to a number of occupations in more than one occupational field. Private schools, with one exception, had programs within one occupational field or taught the skills of a single occupation.

Concentrations of WIN students and students from other manpower training programs were very low in all but one of the public schools. In the private schools, these concentrations tended to be somewhat higher. But, even in these private schools, vouchered WIN students, for the most part, did not comprise notably large proportions of the overall student bodies.

Differences between public and private schools are not, however, confined to structural characteristics--they extend to matters of educational philosophy, perceived objectives of vocational training, and pedagogical styles. These differences and some of their consequences are addressed later in this report.

Despite the higher concentrations of manpower students in a number of the private schools, and their apparent dependence on revenues from manpower training programs, in a few cases, there was little evidence that private schools exploited the shift to vouchering in WIN.

The Schools' Operations

The schools used a variety of methods to attract students. Public schools made considerably more frequent use than private schools of methods which involved direct contact with the public by school representatives. Perhaps because opportunities for exposure are more limited, the private schools more often used commercially available

means. Word-of-mouth advertising was important for the private schools and some were quite dependent on referrals by government agencies.

Only a minority of the schools had personnel who were specifically assigned to recruiting--such assignments were more prevalent among the public than among the private schools.

Almost all of the schools said they offered counseling services both prior to and during training. In the public schools, counseling usually was available on an as-desired basis while the private schools reported much more frequently that all students were counseled. But all of the public schools had formally-established, professionally-staffed counseling services, while this was seldom the case for private schools, where counseling tended to be informal and incidental to other activities. In neither case did we find much evidence to indicate consistent efforts to design training on the basis of systematic appraisal of students' needs, aspirations and abilities.

All but one of the schools said that they provided placement services for completing students. In public schools, such services were likely to include a permanent center and/or a full-time placement director and to emphasize job information services. Private schools were much less likely to have a separate placement center or a full-time placement director, and tended to emphasize contacts with employers as a means of obtaining entrance to job opportunities for their graduates.

The public and private schools differed considerably in what they felt to be the advantages and disadvantages of training offered by by their category of schools. Public schools tended to stress economy, superiority of facilities and instructional staffs, and their capability to broaden the educational backgrounds of their students. Characteristically,

the public schools reflected the orientations of professional educators. Private schools saw themselves as considerably more pragmatic in their approach to vocational training, stressing as a major advantage their ability to provide concentrated training in basic occupational skills required by employers. They also felt that they were better able to treat students as individuals and to adjust to the particular problems encountered by their clients. Schools in each class tended to mute criticism of the other class of schools, and to admit some useful role for the other. At the same time, the respondents from each class of schools quite clearly indicated a belief--which usually impressed us as sincere--that their approach to vocational training was the better.

Matching Students with Training Occupations

Increased freedom of choice is a central aspect of the vouchering concept. Those who oppose, or are skeptical of, vouchering in manpower training programs have expressed concern that schools--particularly private schools--might accept students indiscriminately with no attempt to determine whether they are qualified by background or aptitude to achieve reasonable success in the training selected. A related concern has been that schools might alter their programs solely to meet the length and cost limitations placed on the vouchers. The data from the school survey were examined for indications of the validity of such concerns.

Overall, the data suggest that private schools are somewhat more selective than public schools and somewhat more likely to take the initiative in urging changes in students' objectives to make them more consistent with demonstrated capabilities. But in neither case does

there seem to be any comprehensive, systematic effort to evaluate the appropriateness of applicants' choice of occupations and training.

In line with their open enrollment policies, none of the public schools had rejected WIN registrants seeking admission. A few of the private schools said they had done so, but the number of rejected applicants was small and the schools were unable to provide details as to the reason for rejection.

None of the public schools used tests as a general, normal means of determining whether or not applicants were qualified for entry. Educational achievement and occupational aptitude testing were available on request but were used as a screening mechanism only for a few programs where special requirements existed or where selectivity was required to avoid overcrowding of particular programs. Roughly one quarter of the private schools used occupational aptitude tests for all applicants and smaller proportions used some other type of general intelligence or educational achievement tests. In a few private schools, informal appraisals during enrollment interviews seemed to be the basis for rejection of applicants.

Despite the relative lack of systematic screening procedures, we felt that the private schools did make efforts to guide applicants into appropriate choices, partly because of the schools' pragmatic concern with turning out employable graduates. Public schools seemed to rely more heavily on student initiatives.

The schools felt that the students' occupational choices were appropriate in a large majority of the cases. In large part, these evaluations were made on the basis of the students' performance in

training. Most of the students whose choices were felt to be inappropriate had reportedly been given advice regarding changes.

About 8 percent of the WIN students--all in private schools--made changes in their original training choices; three-quarters of these changes were made after training had started. These changes were about evenly divided between upgradings and downgradings, usually as a result of capabilities demonstrated in training.

None of the public schools modified program length or content to accomodate voucher regulations, but such changes were made in a few cases by private schools. These changes, however, seem quite clearly to represent adaptations to the special needs of particular students rather than to the vouchering system.[2]

On balance, despite the relative lack of systematic selection, we do not feel that there is much basis for concern about widespread exploitation of the voucher program or voucher students. Despite the general absence of formal screeming procedures, there is evidence of informal adjustment to the students' needs and capabilities, particularly in the private schools.

The Schools' View of Vouchered Students

Vouchered students were enrolled in some 48 training occupations. The largest number were enrolled for training in clerical occupations, with professional and technical occupations next in frequency. Together, these groups of occupations accounted for two thirds of the students.

[2] Information from sources other than the schools indicates that there were some additional students enrolled in training programs which exceeded the one-year limit. The excess time, however, was financed by the students or was at no cost to WIN.

By and large, school officials seemed to hold good opinions of the vouchered students. They felt that most of these students were in the right place for their training. A majority of the vouchered students were evaluated as average or above on class performance and substantial proportions of those for whom we have individual data were similarly evaluated on aptitude, attendance and motivation. Only a few of the schools' officials said that they had experienced problems with vouchered students and these usually involved particular students--not WIN students as a group. Lack of prior counseling, attendance and personal problems were mentioned as the major problems. But despite the attendance problems in individual cases, a majority of the respondents said that attendance rates for manpower students, including WIN students, were equal to or better than those for vocational students in general.

Just under one third of the vouchered WIN students had left training before completion by the time of the school survey. Of these, only a small group had been expelled by the schools and the expulsion rate was on a par with that for all vocational students. The remainder, who had left training of their own volition, usually did so because of personal problems, according to the respondents from private schools; public school officials frequently did not know the reasons for voluntary withdrawals.

The Schools' Reactions To Vouchering

Overall, vouchering did not seem to make a great deal of difference to the schools. Only insofar as vouchering reduced pretraining counseling

and screening of vocational trainees did it contribute to negative attitudes toward the program.[3]

Only one-third of the respondents said that their schools had experienced some sort of administrative or business problems. But in only two cases were such problems directly related to features of the vouchering system. The remaining problems--billing schedules, slow payment, and so on--appear to have been directed more at WIN than at vouchering itself. For two thirds of the schools, neither advantages nor disadvantages were noted. There was only one explicit statement to the effect that the vouchering system was easier to administer than the conventional system.

Public schools found the one-year limit on training restrictive; a corrective measure suggested by some of these respondents was to provide for extensions in individual cases. Private schools, on the other hand, generally did not find the time limit to be restrictive, though some also thought that provisions should be made for extensions, or that limits on length of training should be related to the training occupations. In general, the $2,500 cost ceiling was not seen as restrictive. But here, too, some suggested adjusting cost limits to the training occupations.

In their reactions to a description of the vouchering idea, substantial proportions of both public and private school respondents indicate agreement to the vouchering rationale, although some qualified their agreement by citing a need for more counseling and screening of trainees prior to enrollment. Some of the officials, however, disagreed with the concept largely on the same lack of counseling grounds.

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[3] Client-centered, vocational counseling was made available as part of the voucher program, but participation was voluntary. We shall be able to assess the rate of use of this counseling when analysis of data from participants' questionnaires is completed.

In a final attitudinal battery, the respondents indicated rather limited confidence in WIN participants' ability to make viable decisions about occupations and training. Public school respondents were a bit more likely to lack confidence in the WIN registrants, but they were more sanguine than those from private schools about the WIN clients' ability to withstand the blandishments of commerical schools once they had made a training decision.

The relatively low confidence in WIN students' ability to make good occupational choices, as indicated in these attitudinal data, seem to contradict the high marks which the schools gave their vouchered WIN students on the appropriateness of their occupational choices. We suggest that this may reflect a stereotyping phenomenon. Viewed impersonally as a group, WIN registrants are assumed to have limited resources in making occupational decisions. At the individual level, however, the WIN registrant becomes a student like most other students and is evaluated in this context.

Finally, we note that for both public and private schools, there were few indications of stigmatization of WIN participants among students.

Conclusions

Our conclusions are, of course, based on the data which representatives of the various schools gave us and on the impressions we formed while talking with these respondents. We now have a much better feel for how the schools involved in the vouchering program interpret their own operations and how they look at the vocational training situation.

Beyond that, we know that the voucher system, per se, posed no particular problems for the schools. We think that this specific finding can be generalized to a larger population of schools with sufficient confidence that vouchering of institutional training can be applied on a wider scale without undue concern on that point.

Moreover, the schools so far do not seem to have behaved unethically or in an over-eager manner with respect to vouchering; the private schools, about which concern is most often expressed, apparently did not tailor courses especially for the program, they professed reasonable insistence on attendance and performance standards, and there were efforts aimed at preventing students from pursuing inappropriate training objectives. At the same time, one cannot conclude from this that problems will not arise if vouchers do become available on a larger scale and over a longer period of time.

Two themes, developed from the interviews, suggest that established private schools are particularly dependent upon and sensitive to public opinion concerning their operations and are reluctant to jeopardize their reputations in the community. From the interviews we learned that private schools, to a greater extent than public schools, are largely dependent on word-of-mouth "advertising" or their reputation among former and potential students as a means of recruiting new students. Respondents in private schools also indicated their need for protecting their reputations among employers for turning out employable graduates. It appears that the established private schools, to a greater degree than the public schools, are restrained from overly zealous recruiting or exaggerated claims for performance out of a need to retain a high regard among both potential students and prospective employers of their graduates.

It may be that the vouchered students' views of the schools and of the training they received will be somewhat different than the story we got from the schools. And any attempt at evaluating the effectiveness of training, whether on the dimension of vouchering/nonvouchering or on the dimension of type of school, will have to await analysis of post-training labor force experience. At this point, we have established from the schools' standpoint and here described a number of relevant aspects of vouchered vocational training. Contrary to our expectations, we have also come away with an impression that is favorable to the private schools. We believe at this point that replications of the vouchering program on a wider scale should not be inhibited by concerns about the motives and methods of most private schools.

APPENDIX B

BUREAU OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH, INC.
PUBLISHED REPORTS ON THE PORTLAND WIN
VOUCHERING PROJECT

Portland I (Institutional Vocational Training)

Richardson, Ann and Laure M. Sharp. THE FEASIBILITY OF VOUCHERED TRAINING IN WIN: Report on the First Phase of a Study. BSSR Report No. 0085-2, December, 1974.

Dunning, Bruce B. and James L. Unger. SCHOOLS' RESPONSES TO VOUCHERED VOCATIONAL TRAINING: Experiences with the PORTLAND WIN Voucher Training Program. BSSR Report No. 0335-3, July, 1975.

_____. OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES AND SCHOOL SELECTIONS: Experiences with the PORTLAND WIN Voucher Training Program. BSSR Report No. 0335-4.

_____. PRECIS/-OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES AND SCHOOL SELECTIONS: Experiences with the Portland WIN Voucher Training Program. BSSR Report No. 0335-6.

Portland II (On-the-Job Training)

Richardson, Ann and Laure M. Sharp, THE EARLY EXPERIENCE IN VOUCHERING ON-THE-JOB TRAINING: A Report on Progress in the Portland Voucher Project. BSSR Report No. 0085-5, December, 1975.