

May 17, 1999
Albuquerque Teachers Federation (ATF)
8009 Mountain Road Place
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Phone: 505-262-2657

Data Collection: Bill Harju, Interviewer
Data Source: Wilson Wilson - Staff Representative and Chief Negotiator
Ellen Bernstein - President

A. Demographics

Number of Schools: (122 Schools)

Elementary: 79

Middle Schools: 24

High Schools: 11

Other: 9 Alternative Schools

Total number of employees by classification:

Certified: 6350 in ATF Bargaining Unit including teachers, counselors, nurses, librarians, and all non-supervisory certified staff. Substitute teachers in Albuquerque are unrepresented.

Classified: 4,000

Management/supervisory: 700

Current enrollment by level: 87,000 Total. The enrollment in Albuquerque has declined in the 1990's by approximately 6,000 students, as a new school district - Rio Rancho - was created from a portion of what had previously been the Albuquerque district.

Elementary 30,000

Middle School: 30,000

High School: 27,000

Current enrollment by race/ethnicity

Caucasian: 44%

Hispanic: 45%

Black/African American: 3.6%

Asian: 1.8%

Native American: 4.1%

Other: 0.8%

Language Issues: Students identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP): 18% or 15,933. The figure is based upon 1998 data. The district has since been reviewed by US Dept. of Education, OCR Division. As a result, the district has been questioned about how students are classified as LEP, thus Wilson believes that the figure is substantially higher - perhaps up to 25%. While there are a few schools with several different Asian languages and dialects are spoken, the majority of the LEP students are native Spanish speakers.

Average Class Size by level:

Primary: 22

Upper: 25

Middle: 30

High School: 30

Private School enrollments in area/trends: There are 3 main private schools and several small religious schools. Wilson estimates that no more than 4,000 students are enrolled in private schools within the boundaries of the district.

School District Budget

Total expenditures: \$360,000,000 for operations

Expenditures per student: \$4,135

B. Significant Background Information:

. Union Structure/Roles

Officers:

President, Don Whatley - President for the past 16 years.
Executive Vice President - Ellen Bernstein - 10 years
Secretary - Clara Lopez - 10 years
Treasurer - Peter Doane - 2 years
High School Vice President - Peggy Dowdy
Middle School Vice President - Georganna Eller
Membership Vice President - Valerie Valdez
Elementary Vice President - Janet Montoya Schoeppner
Elementary Vice President - Joy M. Monahan

Executive Body The above officers form the Executive Council of the ATF.

Representative Body The Federation Representative Council which is composed of members elected from each site, based upon the number of members at the site, forms the representative or policy making body. The Council meets monthly during the school year.

Committees Union: Committee chairpersons are appointed by the President of ATF. Members of committees are volunteers from among the membership, and often are recruited by the committee chairperson. The ATF has the following internal committees:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Committee on Political Education (COPE) | 7. Nurses |
| 2. Grievance | 8. Counselors |
| 3. Elections | 9. Social Workers |
| 4. Special Education | 10. Physical Education |
| 5. Gay and Lesbian Concerns | 11. Music |
| 6. Librarians | 12. Bilingual Education |

Committees 1-4 Are the most active ATF committees. The remaining committees become active when issues regarding their sphere of influence are surfaced.

Committees: Joint:

Professional Standards Council - Establish teacher qualifications for the district. The committee was established and functioned during a brief period under a previous superintendent. The committee attempted to provide improved standards for teachers hired by the district. With changes in district leadership, the committee has become defunct.

Staff:

- 3 full time professional staff who report to President
 - Wilson Wilson, a former 4 year Albuquerque teacher who has held his position with the Union for 7 years.
 - John Boyadjian - 10 years, former Albuquerque Teacher for 6 years.
 - Ed Monjaras - 2 years, former 16 year Albuquerque Teacher.
- 1.5 Clerical Staff

Principal means of communication with members:

1. "TV" or Teachers Voice - about eight times per year (sample attached)
2. Flyers and Position Papers (sample attached)
3. Joint Publication between NMFT and NMEA: "The Advocate's Voice and Challenge" (sample attached)

Union Partnerships:

Albuquerque Business Education Compact - A coalition of representatives of community businesses, Teachers Union, some nonprofit organizations and community organizations designed to address common goals. The compact meets monthly. The ATF President represents the Union. Most of the Compact's business revolves around legislative agendas.

Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce - ATF belongs to the Chamber, ATF President represents the Union. Worthy of note, the Chamber chose not to support vouchers at the state level.

State Parent Teacher Association - Works with the Union together on funding issues at the state level.

Education Partners - A coalition of education unions, school board associations, superintendents and the State Department of Education. The coalition takes positions on educational issues at the state level when common ground exists, and works to lobby for these positions.

Significant recent budget developments (cutbacks, infusions) if any:

Funding has been stable, however it is inadequate. Albuquerque generates about 40-45% of the state tax revenue, however the return is about 26%.

In order to understand this district, what is it necessary to know/understand?

Labor-management relationship:

The union maintains a schizophrenic relationship with management. The ATF membership maintains significant anger toward administration, based to a large extent, on rumor and misinformation. Further, the district administration has traditionally evidenced a distinct disregard and lack of respect for the teaching staff, creating a feeling of mistrust coupled with low morale. The administrative portion of the budget is not overly large when compared to other large districts but there is a feeling among the membership that middle management levels are growing. Finally, the district does a terrible job in communicating with the teachers. Personal relationship between leadership and staff of union and the District employee relations department is fairly positive, allowing for personnel matters to be handled without a great deal of acrimony. Currently, there is no partnership between the district and the union around issues of education reform, however, the district is resting upon a previous reputation as a reform oriented district.

Key crises:

The LEP issue mentioned above has created a huge crisis with the district. The Union has contract language providing 13 hours per year for training - to be developed as a result of shared decisionmaking. During the negotiations over this agreement, the district knew that it would be mandated to provide LEP training for all staff, yet did not divulge this fact to the union. Rather, the parties negotiated what the union thought was a joint commitment to effective staff development. The District, however, has unilaterally mandated that teachers participate in LEP training for their thirteen hours. The training provided was an insulting presentation of video taped lectures that further increased the ire of the teaching staff and union leadership. The parties were unable to resolve the issue which subsequently went to arbitration. The arbitrator's decision was wishy-washy, in effect, directing the parties to go back and work out the problem. The issue remains unresolved, and has created strained relations between the Union and the District and has caused some members to have dropped their Union membership.

On another front, the ATF recently won a major arbitration in the arena of site based decisionmaking. In Albuquerque, each site establishes a "Site Restructuring Council (SRC)," composed of 50% teachers plus administration, representation from other site based bargaining units, and parents. SRC's are charged with making decisions which relate to instructional improvement. The arbitrator defined the SRC's decisionmaking authority much more broadly than has the district. As the decision was rendered only recently, the actual result in terms of changes in districtwide practice remains to be seen. (See attached Federation Post Hearing Brief for further information)

Measured outcomes - test scores, college acceptance rates (1997-98 & 1998-99)

Some data included in the attached document "Educational Initiatives in the Albuquerque Public Schools," pp. 11-15.

Current Superintendency:

The current superintendent is Dr. Brad Allison. Allison came to Albuquerque from Davenport, Iowa where he had been the Superintendent. His administration is relatively new, as this is his first full school year in the District. Allison sees himself as a reformer and appears to be "up to speed" on many of the current wave of reform issues. Despite this knowledge, however, he so far seems unable to move district forward. Dr. Allison is a very likeable and unpretentious individual.

Management team:

The current district management team includes the Superintendent, three Associate Superintendents (Leadership, Finance, Learning), an Assistant Superintendent for Dropout Prevention and four Cluster Assistant Superintendents each responsible for a geographic area of the District. Operationally, the "Cabinet" which is composed of the above titled personnel, rarely meets. The Cluster Superintendents and the Associate Superintendent for Leadership preceded Dr. Allison and do not appear to be part of the Superintendent's immediate decisionmaking group.

Current leadership of union:

Officers

(See listing above)

Term limits

ATF officers are not subject to term limits.

Permanent union staff, names, positions, tenure

(See listing above)

Other employee unions (Name, approximate unit membership, relationship to teachers)

Secretarial/clerical:

The Secretarial/Clerical unit is represented by the Albuquerque Secretarial/Clerical Association (ASCA). ACA has approximately 150 members in unit of about 900. The unit is a local of the New Mexico Federation of Teachers (NMFT). Relationship has been positive, though somewhat strained due to teachers receiving a higher increase than other staff.

Maintenance/Bus drivers:

The maintenance and operations unit is represented by the Communication Workers of America (CWA). Approximate membership is unknown. There is very little communication between the ATF and the representatives of this unit.

Food services:

The food services workers are represented, in a separate bargaining unit, by the CWA. The unit has fewer than 100 members with a potential of 500-600 individuals who work mostly part time assignments. There is very little communication between the ATF and the representatives of this unit.

Principals:

There exists a Principal's Association that has established a "meet and confer" relationship with the district. The Association is not a recognized bargaining agent. The ATF has had a positive relationship with the leadership of the organization. At school sites, however, the relationship between principals and their staffs is fair at best. The problems between sites and staff exist in part due to lack of clear direction from the district regarding site based decisionmaking. While sites are seeking greater decisionmaking authority through the SRC's, the district insists on holding the principals accountable for everything at their schools. As a result, the sites struggle to determine how SRC's can become effective in this arena.

Security Staff:

The district maintains its own security staff which includes about 24 policemen. These employees are represented by the Fraternal Order of Police.

Instructional Aides.

Instructional aides are represented by the Albuquerque Educational Assistant's Association (AEAA), which is affiliated with the NMFT. The AEAA has approximately 700 members out of a potential of 1800. The relationship between ATF and the AEAA is cooperative, but programs are not integrated.

Status of contract:

Expiration of current agreement: July 1, 2000

Agency fee:

The ATF contract does not contain an agency fee provision. The ATF has approximately 2700 members out of 6350 potential.

Binding arbitration:

Yes.

Strikes:

None

Unfair labor practices:

In 1998 the ATF filed an Unfair Labor Practices charge against the district over the issue of requiring teachers to utilize the contractual 13 hours of training time exclusively for LEP training. The District crossfiled a charge on the same issue. Following informal proceedings, the complaint was settled without a hearing.

Significant litigation:

None

Approximate number of grievances per year:

Actual number filed: 30 per year. ATF enjoys a fairly positive relationship with the Employee Relations Director, so that many grievances are settled before becoming formal. The number of grievances appear to be increasing due to Principals lack of information regarding the negotiated agreement, and unwillingness to work with the Union.

Union role in community:

Political endorsements:

The ATF endorses candidates for school board member, state legislature, and most statewide elections. There is little ATF involvement in city politics, though the Union did endorse a mayoral candidate in '94 due to his strong support for education. The ATF has an active COPE which raises funds, primarily through a fifty cent per pay period per member raised through payroll deduction.

Community involvement:

Other than that listed under "partnerships" above, the ATF has no other community involvement.

C. Education Reform

Union posture:

Pro/anti reform:

The official union position is positive on reform issues though the reform agenda does not fit in with the trends around the country. Discussions around quality pay, quality teaching within the union are extensive, and in fact, the ATF is currently engaged in a membership education campaign on the issues of quality pay for quality work and peer intervention. Currently, the ATF is the only organization in the education community in Albuquerque that is advocating reform.

Membership attitudes

The ATF membership is upset about low salaries, and are concerned about contract gains and they are not necessarily supportive of the leadership's pro reform stance. In recent weeks, the Union has been conducting site visits to educate the membership on ATF positions regarding peer intervention and quality pay for quality teaching. The meetings appear to be productive in terms of bringing the

membership along, at least for those who attend the meetings. Turnouts at these meetings have been low.

Financial commitment to education reform

The ATF has no specific fund in the local's budget which is devoted to education reform. During the spring of 1999, however, a majority of staff time involves bringing ATF positions on pay and peer intervention to the sites through site meetings.

Reform elements in contract:

The Contract contains site based management language which establishes a School Restructuring Council (SRC) at each site. While the language is impressive on paper, it has not worked well due to resistance by Principals - who have received no training or support from the District Administration.

Organization/structure for reform:

Central coordinating structure:

There exists a "Strategic Issues Management Coordinating Team (SIMCT)" made up of teachers elected by bargaining unit members in the clusters, community members selected from SRC's, and administrators appointed by the Superintendent. The purpose of the SIMCT is to coordinate school improvement issues within the district, and to improve the teaching and learning process in the Albuquerque Public Schools. The SIMCT has existed since 1995, and initially attempted to make decisions, has received little support from constituent groups, including the Board of Education. As a result, the SIMCT is seen as a defunct organization.

Prior to the SIMCT, the contract contained a "Joint Restructuring Leadership Team (JRLT)." The JRLT included teachers appointed by the Union President and other members appointed by the Superintendent. Under this structure, the district applied for and received a major Rockefeller Grant for the development of a professional development infrastructure. New district leadership eliminated the JRLT, and substituted it with the SIMCT with language less clear and vision more cloudy, resulting in the demise of the previous efforts at partnership.

District office structure for education reform

None.

Union structure for education reform:

There exists no specific structure for education reform within the Union. Education reform issues are developed by the Executive Council of the ATF, and are approved by the Federation Representative Council.

Responsibility/Accountability for reform within the Union

Responsibility/accountability for reform is not specified, but would generally be within the executive council of the union under the leadership of the President.

Organization around standards

There exists no major initiative around standards within the district. Significant discussion is occurring around the issue with the Superintendent having developed a set of "Performance Counts Indicators," which were issued by a media release and a PowerPoint presentation. Included in various documents produced by the district is rhetoric regarding the need for standards, concerns that the New

Mexico state standards are not comprehensive enough, and references to standards developed in other states and urban districts.

Professional Development

Program description & Operation:

The District employs a staff development unit. There is no money in the budget, and no time commitment other than 13 contractual hours. The staff development offered is severely limited, and inadequate to the needs of the teaching staff.

Relationship to union:

The ATF has no relationship to or input into the district staff development program. Union has a program entitled "Educational Research and Dissemination" which is implemented through the New Mexico Federation of Teachers. The program involves instructionally based training geared to assist teachers in the classroom. ATF offers members classes in the ATF office at a reduced rate*

Relationship to colleges/universities:

The ATF has significant and long-lasting relationships with the University of New Mexico (UNM). The relationship is triangular in nature as programs are developed jointly by UNM, the Albuquerque Public Schools and the ATF. Programs include support for ATF members who desire to become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, programs where classroom teachers are released for a specified period of time to work at UNM and others. As a part of this three way relationship, the district has won a major grant for staff development by the Rockefeller Foundation.

Union structure/organization:

None.

Low performing Schools

No district program. The district is working on redesigning the lowest performing cluster in town around Rio Grande High School. District is using a consultant, John Porter, from National Center for Education and the Economy in the redesign plan. Union has an MOU that requires union members to be part of the redesign team. The redesign plan is in process and should be made public at any time.

Incentives for school improvement - measures to raise student achievement or teacher quality:

None. The Union is working to implement a quality pay for quality teaching plan (position paper included) through first, a membership education program and second, through the next round of negotiations over a contract which, if successful, will commence on July 1, 2000.

Peer review:

No program in existence. The Union has a major initiative in the area of Peer Review with a membership educational campaign going on (position paper included), and with a major effort to negotiate a peer review plan in the next round of negotiation. Once membership understands the ATF proposal, they seem to accept it.

Program description:

(From ATF Position Paper) Currently, Principal notifies unsatisfactory teachers in writing of less than satisfactory performance. If no improvement is evident, principal places teacher in "intensive" evaluation. Under ATF proposed peer review, mentor teachers selected jointly by union and district, would be released from teaching assignments and would be assigned to mentor teachers in intensive evaluation. Program would deal only with those needing intensive evaluation and would not apply to new teachers.

School based management/decisionmaking related to school improvement

Program structure:

School Restructuring Councils established at each school. The SRC must be made up of at least 50% teachers. Other members include the Principal, site members of other bargaining units and parents.

Role of site teams:

The SRC is to set its own agenda to make instructionally based decisions at the school site. Decisions cannot conflict with board policy, state law, the contract or district directives. The language regarding the role of the SRC is vague and subject to interpretation. This lack of clarity has caused tension between teachers and principals at the sites and between the ATF and the District. A recent arbitration decision determined that district directives affecting a site must first be presented to the SRC's. Since the decision was rendered only two months ago, its impact on practice is unclear.

Site budgets:

Sites receive a minimum amount of discretionary money annually which the ATF believes should be controlled by the SRC's. A handful of site teams are able to work with the Principal, and can deal with budgetary issues. In most cases, however, the Principal has blocked SRC access to site funds.

Contract/rule waivers:

The Contract provides that contract waivers are possible. The ATF has a procedure for internal procedure for processing waiver requests (copy included)

Other major reform efforts (Description, scope, relationship to union)

None

Attachments:

1. List of officers and committee chairpersons.
2. ATF Constitution & Bylaws
3. Union Budget - 1998-99
4. 1998-2000 Collective Bargaining Agreement
5. March, 1999 "TV" or Teachers Voice" newsletter
6. April, 1999 "The Advocate's Voice & Challenge" newsletter
7. ATF Position on Teacher Pay
8. ATF Position on Peer Intervention
9. Federation Post Hearing Arbitration Brief
10. Summary of Arbitrator's decision - Arbitrator Anne Holman Woolf
11. Educational Initiatives in the APS - The District Context
12. Recommendations: APS Performance Counts by APS Educators

13. ATF Policy on Contract Waivers
14. ATF Bargaining Survey