THE PROCESS OF DISSEMINATION

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Reaching an audience in the teaching community with information about earthquake preparedness can be a frustrating task. How can you increase the chances that your materials and message are seen and heard by the classroom teacher? What channels are best to use for communication directly to the teacher? Which ones work best for dissemination? For communication with administrators? For response? For support? How can and will the teacher fit your materials into the existing curriculum?

What options exist for materials distribution and communication through the science education profession beyond the direct routes within a school or school system, e.g., mailing lists, meetings, conventions, conferences, workshops, organizations, newsletters? For example, the NSTA Membership Office notes that there are 45,000+ (P-C) members. This group includes approximately 15,000 high school teachers and 8,000 elementary school teachers. Knowing professional membership information can guide dissemination decisions.

There are practical do's and don'ts for many of these questions. Several suggestions and techniques will be mentioned that may stimulate ideas and channels for you to try as you strive to encourage the implementation and use of classroom materials you prepare.

It's important to know about your audience and what technique will work best for the dissemination of information to that particular group. It's also important to know which channels work best for communication (see Figure 1) with administrators (legislative), for response, and for support (PTA). It is also important to know your audience in order to see how the teacher will fit the new materials into the existing curriculum (see Table 1). Teachers learn in a variety of ways (see Table 2). Locally they do it at workshops, at professional organization meetings, through newsletters, on field trips, at the library, and in various centers, i.e. science centers. Nationally they learn about new materials and curricular information through meetings, various professional organizations, journals, newsletters, directories of information, and networks such as ERIC. Another source is through computer bulletin board systems and networks. It's important to know what computer bulletin board systems and networks exist that science teachers frequent for information. The NSTA bulletin board system is one computer bulletin board system that is used by science teachers: (202) 328-5853.

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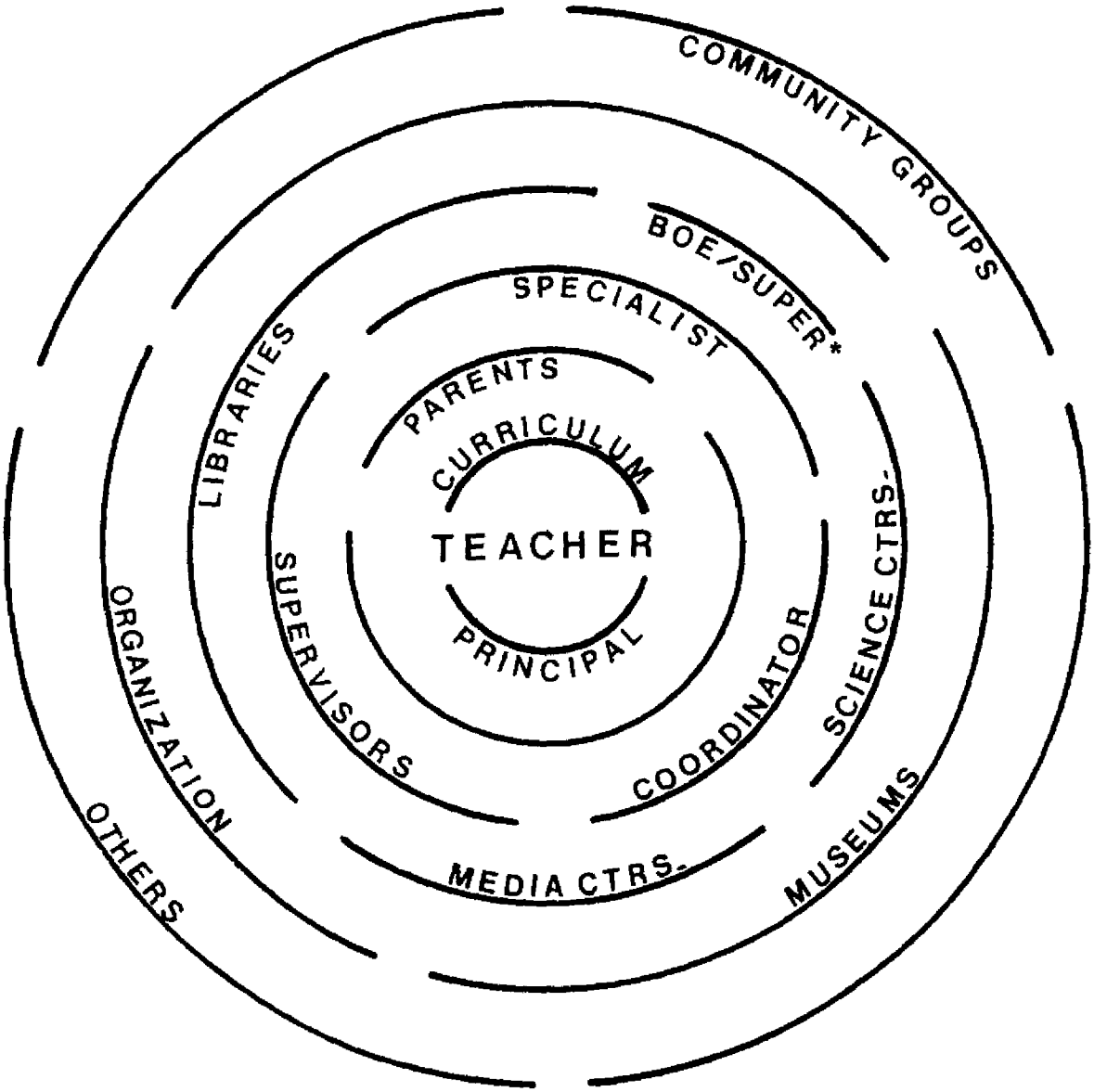
SUPPORT SYSTEMS SURROUNDING A TEACHER



Workshops
Conferences
Publications/Periodicals
Suppliers
Electronic bulletin boards
Community members

Figure 1

* Board of Education/Superintendent

Table 1*

TABLE 17.
SUBJECTS TAUGHT BY DEPARTMENTALIZED ELEMENTARY (1976-1986) AND SECONDARY TEACHERS (1961-1986)

Subject	Elementary[a]			Secondary					
	1976	1981	1986	1961	1966	1971	1976	1981	1986
Agriculture	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	1.6%	0.6%	0.6%	1.1%	0.6%
Art	4.6	8.4	4.5	2.2	2.0	3.7	2 4	3.1	1.5
Business education	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.6	7.0	5.9	4.6	6.2	6.5
Driver education	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.4	. .[c]	0 7	0.7	1.3	0.6
English	32.1	28.9	31.8	19.0	18.1	20.4	19.9	23.8	21.8
Foreign languages	0.0	2.4	0.0	4.1	6.4	4.8	4.2	2.8	3.7
Health and physical education	10.7	9.6	15.9	8.2	6.9	8.3	7.9	6.5	5.6
Home economics	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.1	5.9	5.1	2.8	3.6	2.6
Industrial arts	0 8	0.0	0.0	5.5[b]	5.1	4.1	3.9	5.2	2.2
Mathematics	15.3	15.7	11.4	11.4	13.1	14 4	18.2	15.3	19.2
Music	6.9	15.7	9.1	1.7	4.7	3.8	3.0	3.7	4.9
Science	7.6	7 2	4.5	11.7	10 8	10 6	13.1	12.1	11.0
Social studies	8 4	6 0	4.5	12.9	15 3	14.0	12.4	11 2	13.6
Special education	13.0	4.8	13.6	. . .[c]	0.4	1.1	3.0	2.1	3.5
Vocational education	0 8	0.0	0.0	. . .[d]	. . .[c]	2.1	3.3	1.3	2.2
Other	0.0	0.0	4.5	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.6
(Number responding)	(131)	(83)	(44)	(778)	(1,088)	(707)	(670)	(619)	(463)

[a]Elementary teachers not tabulated separately in 1961, 1966, and 1971.
[b]Includes vocational education.
[c]Data not available.
[d]See Industrial arts

*From: Status of the American Public School Teacher, 1985-1986 (p.28), 1987, Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Table 2*

TABLE 44.
PERCENTAGES OF ALL TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH ACTIVITIES, 1971-1986

Activities	1971	1976	1981	1986
Workshops sponsored by school system during school year	58.6%	68.3%	67.4%	72.7%
Workshops sponsored by school system during summer	20.5	21.9	13.4	15.1
College courses in education during school year	40.1	45.4	21.3	21.1
College courses in education during summer	30.4	33.8	13.3	12.4
College courses in fields other than education during school year	26.1	25.9	12.7	9.2
College courses in fields other than education during summer	21.5	16.2	5.7	4.3
University extension courses	32.6	33.8	18.7	15.0
Association-sponsored activities	24.5	23.3	27.1	31.5
Curriculum committees	40.8	44.7	34.2	30.5
Committees other than curriculum	35.3	38.6	32.6	33.9
Educational TV	11.3	12.2	13.4	12.9
Educational travel, not sabbatical	26.4	23.0	14.7	9.6
Sabbatical leave—travel	3.8	7.2	2.4	17.6
Sabbatical leave—full-time college	2.4	3.7	0.6	0.6

*From: Status of the American Public School Teacher, 1985-86 (p. 49), 1987, Washington, DC: National Education Association. Copyright 1987 by the National Education Association. Reprinted by permission.