

Summer 1998

## Do Teachers in Portable Classrooms Feel Connected?

Kenneth R. Gorman

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/graduate\\_projects](https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/graduate_projects)



Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#), and the [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#)

---

Do Teachers in Portable Classrooms Feel Connected?

---

A Research Project Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

---

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the requirements for the Degree

Masters in Teaching with Certification

---

By

Kenneth R. Gorman

August, 1998

# Do Teachers in Portable Classrooms Feel Connected?

By

Kenneth R. Gorman

August, 1998

---

## Abstract

This report was an analysis of a specific population of teachers who taught in portable classrooms. The focus of the research and questionnaire was to determine whether these teachers feel connected to students, other teachers, administration, and the rest of the school because they are in portable classrooms. Research includes current reports and studies on portable classrooms nationwide and a local questionnaire. The study concludes with suggestions and recommendations for future teachers and administrators.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Frank Carlson and Dr. Steven Schmitz for all of their encouragement and support during this project and my entire Master's program.

I also thank Dr. Erlice Killorn for her assistance in helping me complete my Physical Education Minor during this project.

In additional, I wish to thank all of my fellow students involved in the Masters in Teaching pilot program.

Finally, I thank my parents, family, and especially my wife for supporting me through this past year.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	Introduction.....	1
	Background Information.....	1
	Reasons for the Study.....	2
	Limitations.....	2
	Definitions of Terms.....	3
CHAPTER II	Review of Literature.....	5
	Literature Search.....	5
CHAPTER III	Review.....	6
	Report, Research and Other Literature...6	
	Site Visits.....	8
	Teacher Questionnaire.....	8
	Meetings with Administrators.....	9
CHAPTER IV	Results.....	10
	Questionnaire Results.....	10
	Site Visits.....	15
	Meetings with Administrators.....	16
CHAPTER V	Discussion and Recommendations.....	17
	Summary .....	17
	Conclusions.....	18
	Recommendations.....	18

REFERENCES .....21

APPENDIX A – Questionnaire Cover Letter.....24

APPENDIX B – Questionnaire to Teachers.....26

APPENDIX C – Questionnaire Results.....29

APPENDIX D – Survey Area Map.....36

---

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the entire project. Subjects covered are background information, reasons for the study, limitations of the project, and definitions.

#### Background Information

With the steady increase in school age children in this country, providing adequate educational facilities has become more and more important. Most school districts that use portable classrooms are using buildings that are 30 years and older, and are facing high maintenance costs, overcrowding, and out-dated technology (Hamme, 1995). The vast majority of school districts nation-wide are using portable classrooms, with many districts relying heavily on them. Currently over half of the school districts in the nation rely to some degree upon portable facilities (Cooke, 1993).

Portable classrooms are less expensive, easier and quicker to build, and offer more flexibility to districts and schools than do fixed structure buildings (Kauffman, 1996). However, there are other considerations that affect teachers, students, administrations, and the local communities. One of the primary concerns of teachers and students is the lack of connected-ness with the rest of the school. Since most portables are physically separated from the rest of the school buildings, teachers and students are more spread out on campuses. There

is a greater possibility that schools with portables have a student body and teaching staff that is less cohesive, strapped for time, and more fractured (Cooke, 1993).

### Reason for This Study

There are numerous concerns and problems with portable classrooms. The majority of these problems stem from the fact that the portables are most often physically separated from all other aspects of the school. Teachers and students in portables are away from administration, cafeteria, bathrooms, drinking fountains, and lockers. Students usually must cover a greater distance to get to the portables, where access in inclement weather is more difficult and lighting is inadequate (Naylor, 1997). Teachers must content with unusual acoustics, lack of communications and technology access, and aesthetics differences.

The focus for this project will be on the perceived or real effects portable classrooms have on teacher's connectedness with the school at which they teach. Research will include literature review, interviews with administrators, site observation, and a teacher questionnaire. Once the data has been gathered and reviewed, specific suggestions, curriculum, and ideas will be proposed.

### Limitations of the Project

The vast majority of portables used are in larger school districts. The largest school districts in the country are in California, New York, and Florida



(Cooke, 1993). Direct questioning and observation of those schools, districts, students and teachers will not be possible. Information from those sources, however, will be used.

Many educational and governmental organizations have information on schools, facilities, and finances. There are few studies by these organizations specifically on portable classrooms, and very little research on teacher attitudes observations. Also, obtaining information from these organizations can be tedious and slow. However, they will be contacted and any information received in a timely manner will be included.

Local school districts do not use as many portable classrooms as those west of the Cascade Mountains and other larger urban areas. Research from these districts will rely upon phone calls, letters, faxes and e-mail responses from those in-state sources. Data will be gathering in person from local school districts.

### Definitions

The following is a list of terms used in this report:

Portable classroom – Structures built off-site to be used at a school that are not part of the original design and construction. These structures are usually intended as a short-term solution, and can be moved from site to site as needs and populations change. They have a standard 20-year life span.

Connected-ness – The ability of the teachers and students in portable classrooms to develop contacts and maintain a sense of community with the rest of the school facilities, other staff, and other students.

Fixed structures – The original buildings constructed at a school site. These facilities are designed to be permanently located at the site they were built. These include but are not limited to classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, offices, storage, and others.

Relocatables – Another name for portable classrooms, with emphasis on the ability to move the structure to other sites as needed.

Temporaries – Another name for portable classrooms, specifically those that are intended to become permanent classrooms and will not be moved.

Walkways – access to and from a portable classroom to a fixed structure. These walkways can range from paths that cross dirt or grass to concrete sidewalks with overhead coverings.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter literature related to the project is discussed. Also included is a review of additional information that was gathered, such as site visits, the teacher questionnaire, and meetings with administrators.

Literature dealing with portable classrooms and similar topics was searched through local, state, and national databases. These resources included the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), the card catalog and computer data bases at Wenatchee Valley College and Central Washington University, Washington State Department of Education, the Internet, and the World Wide Web.

Materials and documents collected were reviewed for their accuracy and relevancy. There were generally divided into three categories: general information on portable classrooms; positive comments and statements on portables; negative comments and problems with portables.

#### Reports, Research and Other Literature

The vast majority of the literature was focused on either the lack of funds that school districts have for building additions, the need for inexpensive additions to their current facilities, or the age of current portables. The first two categories dealt mainly with rationale used by school districts in using portable

classrooms. Of primary concern was the lack of sufficient funds to construct fixed structures for current or projected increases in enrollment of a particular district. Many schools districts are also dealing with annually fluctuating enrollment numbers, and are faced with the need to move portables on a regular basis (Fleming, 1997). Since many districts are growing at such a phenomenal rate or requiring a reduction in class size, the only way to get students into classrooms is to provide portables (OFM Survey, 1992).

The second major category concerns the age of portables currently being used. Although most portables used nation wide are 15 to 20 years old, some portables have been in use for over 30 years (Sun Sentinel, 1997). There are many resources from students, teachers, administrators and parents stating their concern over the age of many portables. Some of these concerns are poor or missing walkways, creaking floors, inefficient heating and cooling systems and major structural revisions.

Third, there was a limited number of articles and other research devoted specifically to teacher and student perception of the portables they use. Typically these articles were negatively oriented, with teachers commenting on limited space, poor air quality, renovation needs, and their concern with not being connected with the rest of the school (Cooke, 1993). However, some teachers believed teaching in a portable allowed them more privacy, less distractions, and greater control over lighting and temperature (Newquist, 1997).

Two surveys found interviewed teachers with regard to the general school environment, not specifically focusing on portables. This report found that building satisfaction, classroom position and distractions were considered major dimensions in teacher satisfaction (Gehrke et. all, 1982). It also found that the vast majority of teachers interviewed believed that their contacts with other teachers was influenced by their location on the school grounds (Gehrke et. all, 1983).

Most of the research found concerned portables in the state of Florida. A vast number of newspaper articles explained dissatisfaction from teachers, students, and parents. Some quotes given including a Coral Springs, Florida who said "It's like a ghetto within the school system" (O'Conner, 1997) and Florida State Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz, saying "Portables have become our monument to mediocrity" (O,Conner, 1997).

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES

This chapter explains the data gathering procedures used in the study. A review of site visits, the teacher questionnaire, and meetings with administrators is covered.

#### Site Visits

Each school in the district was visited to view whether or not they had portable classrooms on campus, their location on site, and to get an overall perception of the school. Each school that had portables was noted so questionnaires could be sent to those teachers. The portables were viewed from each school's parking lot and from the surrounding streets. Other site visit questions included distance from other fixed structures, types of access to the classroom, whether or not there were covered walkways, number of buildings used as portables and the overall quality of the buildings.

#### Teacher Questionnaire

Only one other piece of research indicated teacher opinions as part of their overall work (Cooke, 1993). The Cooke survey was the basis of development for this report's questionnaire. A 37 question questionnaire was developed specifically for teachers who were currently teaching in a portable for this school year. The questionnaire was reviewed by two Central Washington

University faculty, and a number of other students. No other teachers at any school, nor any administrators, were asked to reply. The questionnaire was divided into four categories: general information about the teacher and school; distances from the teacher's portable to other areas on the school grounds; yes and no questions covering student behavior, physical aspects of portables, and teacher feelings of connectedness; questions using a five-point grading scale on issues of interaction with other staff, teaching styles and preferences, and feelings of connectedness.

Every teacher who uses a portable was given the opportunity to respond, as the questionnaires were hand-delivered to each of the schools with portables. All of the questionnaires returned were used together with no distinction given in the results as to the grade being taught or location of the portable.

#### Meetings with Administrators

Administrators were contact primarily to ask for permission to distribute the questionnaire. Included in this list are all superintendents in all surrounding districts and principals at each school with portable classrooms. Since the focus of the questionnaire is on teachers, it will not be given to the administrators except for their approval. Any additional information received from administrators will be included in the results.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This chapter gives the results of the teacher questionnaire. Each section of questions is discussed, with the responses of the teachers given after each individual question.

#### Questionnaire Results

A significant part of the information used for this report came from the teacher questionnaires. Since teachers are in the portables on a daily basis, their observations and comments are invaluable.

The questionnaire contained 37 questions. The questions were grouped into four categories: teacher and school information; yes and no questions; a group of questions using a five-grade scale; two open-ended questions asking for comments. Of the twenty questionnaires given to teachers, all eighteen were returned. The results are listed below by question number, starting with question #6. Questions #1 - #5 are information regarding teacher's name, grade, school, and number of portables. All results that asked for numbers were rounded off when needed, and are understood to be the individual teacher's best guess.

#### Section One – Distance of Specific Locations from a Portable

Questions #6 through # 12 asked teachers to estimate the distance (in feet) from their portable to other locations in their school. Listed below are the average distance, the nearest response and farthest response given.



(#6) Bathrooms:

Average = 120 ft.                      Nearest = in portable                      Farthest = 400 ft.

(#7) A sink with water:

Average = 105 ft.                      Nearest = in portable                      Farthest = 300 ft.

(#8) Main School Office:

Average = 515 ft.                      Nearest = 100 ft.                      Farthest = 600 ft.

(#9) Library:

Average = 290 ft.                      Nearest = 50 ft.                      Farthest = 570 ft.

(#10) Drinking Fountain:

Average = 105 ft.                      Nearest = in portable                      Farthest = 300 ft.

(#11) Cafeteria:

Average = 230 ft.                      Nearest = 75 ft.                      Farthest = 1,000 ft.

(#12) Gym or location for PE:

Average = 220 ft.                      Nearest = 50 ft.                      Farthest = 480 ft.

### Section Two – Yes and No Question

Questions #13 through # 22 asked teachers to answer either yes or no to those questions.

(#13) Students usually arrive on time:

Yes – 14      No – 2      Yes and No - 1

(#14) I have higher tardies and absences in my portable:

Yes – 1      No – 13      Yes and No –2

(#15) I have a bathroom and/or a drinking fountain in my portable:

Bathroom – 3      No bathroom – 14      Drinking fountain - 1

(#16) I have a phone in my portable:

Yes – 12      No - 4

(#17) There are covered walkways to my portable:

Yes – 1      No - 16

(#18) I have Internet / e-mail access in my portable:

Yes – all teachers

(#19) Noise from other classes is a problem:

Yes – 3      No - 15

(#20) I have adequate storage inside the portable:

Yes – 5      No - 12

(#21) I feel connected to the rest of the school:

Yes – 7      No - 10

(#22) I have received specific training for work in portables:

All respondents answered no.

### Section Three – Questions with A Graded Response

For section three, teachers were asked to use five different responses to answer questions #24 through #35 : strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neutral (N), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SA). A table of the responses is listed in the appendix.

(#24) Students in portables feel connected to the school:

SA - 2      A - 6      N - 6      D - 5      SD - 0

(#25) Student enjoy classes in portables:

SA - 5      A - 4      N - 8      D - 2      SD - 0

(#26) Parents like have their children in portables:

SA - 0      A - 4      N - 14      D - 2      SD - 0

(#27) Student behavior is similar in a portable as in a regular classroom:

SA - 4      A - 10      N - 1      D - 3      SD - 0

(#28) My discipline management is similar to other teachers:

SA - 6      A - 11      N - 0      D - 2      SD - 0

(#29) I have plenty of interaction with other teachers and administrators:

SA - 4      A - 3      N - 3      D - 7      SD - 2

(#30) I feel isolated from other classes and teachers:

SA - 2      A - 8      N - 2      D - 3      SD - 4

(#31) I feel equal with other teachers:

SA - 8      A - 4      N - 3      D - 4      SD - 0

(#32) This school has made adjustments for teachers in portables:

SA - 0      A - 4      N - 7      D - 7      SD - 2

(#33) I prefer a portable over a regular classroom:

SA - 4      A - 1      N - 5      D - 5      SA - 4

(#34) I make an effort to stay connected with other teachers:

SA – 5      A – 13      N – 1      D – 0      SD – 0

(#35) I need to be more creative in my portable:

SA – 1      A – 4      N – 9      D – 4      SD – 1

#### Section Four – Comments

This section asked teachers two questions designed to allow for any type or length of response. The quotes and comments listed below are a sample of the answers.

(#36) Teaching in a portable classroom is – answers fell into three categories.

The first set of answers were positive:

Heaven!...I like the independence...Super for pre-school programs

The second set of answers were neutral:

OK...Tolerable...Not the best environment...Less desirable...School within a school...Just fine...No different...Feel isolated sometimes

The third set of answers were negative:

Limiting to teaching style...Distracting

(#37) Other comments / ideas / suggestions – answers were varied:

“Make sure teacher has personal contact with other teachers”

“Need connecting doors between portables”

“Not being close to other buildings is a huge problem”

“I feel safer with a phone...”

Problems with lack of a bathroom and storage

Teacher isolation

Depends upon the teacher

### Site Visits

Each school in both the Wenatchee School District and the Eastmont School District was personally visited, both during the initial research and when the questionnaires were distributed. The original visit was to determine which school were currently using portables and to directly observe those schools. Observations were made both from the surrounding streets and parking lots.

All of the portables were clearly visible. Each looked to be in either good or excellent condition, with no observable problems. Most had access both by steps or ramp, and a few had small covering over the door. None of the portables observed had covered walkways.

The most number of portable buildings at any one school was three, with that school having four classrooms total. Although the majority of the portables were away from the fixed structures, none appeared to be a great distance. Only one school required students to cross a short driveway to get to the rooms. None of the portables had any specific landscaping, and most were skirted so you could not see under the portable.

### Meetings with Administrators

Contact was made with all district superintendents asking permission to distribute the survey. One superintendent offered a few pieces of information concerning his district and portable classrooms (Gordon, 1998). Only one principal was available for an short interview at the time the questionnaires were distributed. His accepted the fact that his facility needed the space, but was not satisfied with the location, positioning, or design of the portables on campus. He mentioned his understanding of the financial limitations of building fixed structures, and realized these portables were the only solution for his school and the district.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a summary of specific recommendations. These recommendations are addressed to any school district with portables, or any school district considering using portables.

#### Summary

At the present time, the Wenatchee School District and the Eastmont School District are using portable classrooms in a limited manner. None of the schools in either districts are severely overcrowded, and none are expecting any significant enrollment increased in the next few years. However, the current number of portables will remain the same, with the possibility of one being moved to another school but not being removed or replaced (Gordon, 1998).

Since the likelihood of a teacher being in a portable is small, these two districts are not as concerned as large districts, such as those in the Seattle / Tacoma area or larger districts in California, Florida and New York.

Those teachers who responded to the questionnaire generally had a good impression with the portable they were teaching in. They did understand the reasons behind the school district using the portables, and were able to cope with the problems and concerns. There were a number of positive responses and

suggestions for improvement that are reflected in the recommendations in this paper.

However, over half of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire have either neutral or slightly negative feelings with regards to portable classrooms. Those teachers felt the distance of their portable from other fixed structures increased their concerns about being connected with other staff and the administration. These teachers seem to have a good understanding of these concerns, and have developed strategies to either overcome their feelings or cope with them. As with other concerns, these teachers have accepted the lack of connectedness as part of their job.

### Conclusions

There seems to be no doubt that all school districts, regardless of size or location, will eventually need to use portable classrooms. Those districts that develop a proactive program of site development, teacher training, and evaluation will be more likely to benefit from these classrooms. Teaching in a portable classroom can be a positive experience for the teacher and the student, and providing everyone with opportunities to stay connected with the entire school will be a major goal to ensure educational success.

### Recommendations

There are three specific ideas that have developed through the research.



First, schools and districts that are using few or no portables should take advantage of the opportunity to conduct research now, before they have a need for portable classrooms. The likelihood that any school will be using portables in the near future is great. Due to the high cost of new fixed structures, portables offer an inexpensive option to house additional students. Even when new schools are built, portables are often needed to house students while the fixed structures are completed. Schools and districts that are using few portables should interview teachers and study their current portables to be able to make better decisions when additional portables are needed. Those schools and districts that have no portables should begin to develop strategies and options as part of their future planning. Often times when portables are needed, they appear to be randomly thrown onto the site with no consideration to appearance, relationship to other building, and aesthetics (Graves, 1996). This planning should include the type and number of portables, which schools would be most likely to need them, and also the impact upon teachers who would be using them.

Second, school districts should include specific training on the differences between teaching in a portable and teaching in a fixed structure. Since none of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire mentioned any specific training for teaching in portables, there is definitely a need. This training could be incorporated into regular faculty development, or given to just those teachers in portables. A unique task force or team could be started to train all teachers and

give continued support and assist with problems as they surface. The topics of connectedness, alienation, and separation could be covered for all faculty, giving those in fixed structures a better understanding of their role in staff unity.

Third, portable classrooms should be updated and improved. The lack of drinking fountains and bathrooms should be the first improvements, with additional storage, better access, and covered walkways also considered. The more closely a portable classroom resembles a fixed structure classroom, the more connected a teacher should feel. Ideally, all teachers should be given identical teaching environments regardless of the physical structure or location in which they teach.

## REFERENCES

- Barszewski, Larry & Collie, Tim (1996). A Fixture in Florida: portable classrooms. Sun Sentinel, Sunday, May 11 .
- Field, Gisela. (1997). Dade County Public Schools. [On-Line]. Available: gfeild@sbab.dade.k12.fl.us.
- Fleming, James A. (1997) The Saga of Relocatable Classrooms. The School Administrator, p. 14-21.
- Cooke, Steven J. (1993). The Use of Relocatable Classrooms on the Public School Districts of Florida. The Florida Center for Community Design & Research. Florida Department of Education / Office of Educational Facilities. University of South Florida, Tampa FL.
- Gehrke, Nathalie (1983). Curriculum, Teachers and the School Environment: A Descriptive Study. A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, – University of Washington, Seattle, WA.
- Gehrke, Nathalie.(1982) An Analysis of Teacher's Perception of Their School Environment. A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, Houston, Texas. University of Washington.
- Girardi, Steven (1997). Distractions Abound in Portables. The Tampa Tribune. October 1997.

Gordon, John (1998). Telephone Interview with Wenatchee School District Superintendent.

Graves, Ben. (1996) Ten Ideas for Better Schools. American School and University. 68(8), p.42.

Hamme, Kimberly (1995). The Modular Solution. American School and University, 67(7) p. 27-29.

Kauffman, Susan (1996). A Mobile Proposal. American School and University, 68(12), p. 74-75.

Naylor, Charlie (1997). Teacher Safety in Portable Classrooms. BCTF Research Department.

Newquist, Colleen. (1997) Living with the Permanence of Portables. Education World. [On-Line]. Available :[http://education-world.com/a\\_admin/admin027.shtml](http://education-world.com/a_admin/admin027.shtml).

O'Connor, Lona & Patrick, Kelly (1997). House Bill debate about portable classrooms. The Sun Sentinel, October 30.

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.(1992). OFM Portable Classrooms Survey. State of Washington.

Patrick, Kellie. (1997). Coping with Portable Classrooms in Palm Beach County. The Sun Sentinel, Thursday August 7.

Sjoberg, Kurt J. (1991). Portable Classrooms in California School Districts: Their Safety, Uses, Costs, and the Time it Takes to Acquire Them. Office of the Auditor General of California.

Some Facts about Palm Beach County's Portable Classrooms (1997). Sun Sentinel, August 7.

APPENDIX A

---

Questionnaire Cover Letter

April, 1998

Dear Teachers;

My name is Kenn Gorman and I am a graduate student at Central Washington University working on my Master's in Education degree. The topic for my project is portable classrooms. As part of my research I have decided to develop a questionnaire for teachers who are currently teaching in a portable classroom in the Central Washington area.

I have taught in the Broward County School district, the second largest district in Florida and one of the largest in the nation. Portable classrooms are widely used in that district, and will be the predominate building choice for many years to come. Although Central Washington does not have the number of students or use the number of portable classrooms as other districts, I believe with our growing population there will be additional need for more classrooms and more schools. We have the opportunity to study and prepare today for an almost guaranteed need in the near future.

Please fill out the attached questionnaire, and feel free to give whatever comments you desire. You may choose to remain anonymous, but I am asking all teachers to give their school and grade. No teacher names will be used in the final report.

I understand how busy you are, and appreciate your time and effort in assisting me. I believe the final report will be a very useful tool to any school district that is anticipating and planning for growth. If you or your school would like a copy of the final report, please mark your request on the bottom of the first page.

Sincerely,

Kenn Gorman

Home phone:

APPENDIX B

---

Teacher Questionnaire



## Portable Classrooms Questionnaire

### Masters In Teaching Program – Central Washington University

Developed by Kenn Gorman, Graduate Student  
Spring, 1998

#### Section One – General Information

(1) Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (2) School: \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(5) Total number of portables at this school: \_\_\_\_\_

Distance of current portable from: (approx. feet)

(6) Bathroom: _____	(10) Drinking fountain: _____
(7) Sink: _____	(11) Cafeteria: _____
(8) Main office: _____	(12) Gym / PE: _____
(9) Library: _____	

#### Section Two – Yes or No Questions

Please answer YES or NO to the following statements:

- |  |         |        |
|--|---------|--------|
| (13) Students usually arrive on time                         | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (14) I have higher tardies and absences in my portable       | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (15) I have a bathroom / drinking fountain in my portable    | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (16) I have a phone in my portable                           | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (17) There are covered walkways to the my portable           | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (18) I have Internet / e-mail access in my portable          | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (19) Noise from other classes is a problem                   | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (20) I have adequate storage inside the portable             | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (21) I feel connected to the rest of the school              | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (22) I have received specific training for work in portables | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |
| (23) I would like a copy of the final report                 | [ ] YES | [ ] NO |

### Section Three – Rating Scale Questions

Please refer to the scale below when answering this section. Check only one for each statement.

Strongly Agree (SA) / Agree (A) / Neutral (N) / Disagree (D) / Strongly Disagree (SD)

SA	A	N	D	SD	
(24)	Students in portables feel connected to the school	—	—	—	—
(25)	Student enjoy classes in portables	—	—	—	—
(26)	Parents like have their children in portables	—	—	—	—
(27)	Student behavior is similar in a portable as in a regular classroom	—	—	—	—
(28)	My discipline management is similar to other teachers	—	—	—	—
(29)	I have plenty of interaction with other teachers and administrators	—	—	—	—
(30)	I feel isolated from other classes and teachers	—	—	—	—
(31)	I feel equal with other teachers	—	—	—	—
(32)	This school has made adjustments for teachers in portables	—	—	—	—
(33)	I prefer a portable over a regular classroom	—	—	—	—
(34)	I make an effort to stay connected with other teachers	—	—	—	—
(35)	I need to be more creative in my portable	—	—	—	—

### Section Four – Comments

(36) Teaching in a portable classroom is:

(37) Other comments / ideas / suggestions :

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

APPENDIX C  
Questionnaire Results

---



## Section Two – Yes or No Questions

No.	Question	Yes	No	Other
13	Students usually arrive on time	16	2	1
14	I have higher tardies and absences in my portable	1	15	2
15	I have a bathroom and/or a drinking fountain in my portable	6	15	1
16	I have a phone in my portable	12	6	
17	There are covered walkways to my portable	1	18	
18	I have Internet / E-mail access	19		
19	Noise from other classes is a problem	3	17	
20	I have adequate storage inside the portable	5	14	
21	I feel connected to the rest of the school	8	11	
22	I have received specific training for work in a portable		18	

Portable Classroom Questionnaire  
Section Three – Rating Scale Questions

Scale –

- SA = Strongly agree
- A = Agree
- N = Neutral
- D = Disagree
- SD = Strongly Disagree

No.	Question	SA	A	N	D	SD
24	Students in portables feel connected to the school	2	6	6	5	0
25	Students enjoy classes in portables	5	4	8	2	0
26	Parents like having their children in portables	0	4	14	2	0
27	Student behavior is similar in portables as in a regular classrooms	4	10	1	3	0
28	My discipline management is similar to other teachers	6	11	0	2	0
29	I have plenty of interaction with other teachers and administrators	4	3	3	7	2
30	I feel isolated from other classes and teachers	2	8	2	3	4
31	I feel equal with other teachers	8	4	3	4	0
32	This school has made adjustments for the teachers in portables	0	4	7	7	2
33	I prefer a portable over a regular classroom	4	1	5	5	4
34	I make an effort to stay connected with other teachers	5	13	1	0	0
35	I need to be more creative in my portable	1	4	9	4	1

Portable Classrooms Questionnaire  
Section Four – All Comments

# 36 - "I stay connected with other teachers by...":

Teaching is no different – other than the lack of sink, water, etc.

OK I'm only there ½ of the day. The rest of the time I'm in the bldg. The rooms are very nice...

Limiting to teaching style...

Tolerable...

Not the best environment for optimum learning...

Distracting – I can hear other classrooms...

Heaven! No lockers – noise in the hallway...

I like the independence a portable allows. We haven't the flexibility to work outside on warm days to control our own heat/air, and to exercise when it gets "draggy". Also, when we are creatively noisy we don't disturb any other classes. I do feel isolated from other adults sometimes; more storage & smaller class loads would make it easier – I have no room from supplies or kids!

Portables allow people in large schools to operate samples of "a school within a school".

Very quiet, no hallway noise...

Easier for a specialist! The classroom used before bothered other nearby classrooms – draw back is that class must walk through the various weather conditions through the year. Mud and snow and cold wind in the winter months are major drawbacks when kids go through temperature changes of indoors and outdoors between classes.

Less desirable than teaching in the main building...

Super for our preschool program. Before we had the portable, we shared the high school art room on a concrete floor and the preschool had to be set up and torn down each day we were in session. Our preschool portable has been remodeled and added to for the size of our preschool and the special needs preschools (i.e. – ramp to permit wheel chairs, etc.).

Just fine. Keep in mind that the purpose of this portable is to house preschool class on the campus of the high school so the high school child development class can “interface” with 3-5 year olds. The separation issue is a benefit in some ways, but yes – the preschool teachers don’t seem particularly connected to the HS teachers. The two portable preschool teachers do feel connected to the other preschool staff housed inside the main building because we have weekly meetings together.

Great – the teacher makes the difference. It can be an adventure and a lot of fun.

Interesting. I feel that teaching in a portable is challenging due to space, weather gets in the way and tends to interrupt our class.

Other comments / ideas / suggestions:

Make sure the teacher has personal contact w/another adult by having a door connect the rooms if more than one.

It is different for kids who are there for more than one period at a time. Math class is independent of others.

Comment – the number above I got responses from my 7<sup>th</sup> grade core students. They are out in the portable for 3 periods, some four, because they have math there too. It works fairly well because they have lunch in between.

Not being close to my teaching partner is a huge drawback. Some days we don't connect.

Comment – bathrooms would ease time lost. Since the phone was put in feels safer. Only 2 of us have quick access – the other 2 could be locked out.

Lack of a bathroom, lack of storage, teacher isolation, and the musty smell that seems to be a part of my classroom are the major drawbacks.

We should at least have modifications done, such as sinks, bathroom, telephone, drinking fountains, to make life easier.

Bathroom – in main building; sink – in next door portable (& drinking fountain); all others are in main building. I can't even estimate how many feet away they are.

E-mail is a must...

These comments based on only a few portables at the school. Answers might change if there was a large number instead of a few. Answers might also vary depending on the experience (number of years taught) of the teachers. You might also want to have a questionnaire for parents.

I do think having portables in pairs or pods is important. Teaming at the middle school in portables seems to work well; I happen to be an individual who believes that a more self-contained environment is best for the middle school child.

Some students tend to get more excited before class because they've been outside on their way to our portable and it takes them longer to settle down for instruction.



Portable would be better located by the gym – all programs are there! I put on a minimum of 6 programs a year and must move the piano (and all other sound equipment, props, etc.) and push to the gym on the other side of our campus.

I am not a regular classroom teacher. Students come to any portable to work on reading in Spanish for 45 min. a day.

For our preschool – It has been an ideal solution to our problem of a needed classroom for our preschoolers. We have always been concerned about only one door exit – in case of fire – but have been reassured we meet code.

Portable Classrooms Questionnaire - Other responses or marks

Section one – we're a long way from everything!

#11 – no cafeteria, lunch served in halls

#12 – phone – 100 ft

#13 – sometimes

#14 - these two should not be in the same question; yes to tardies only

#14 – more headaches

#15 - no bathroom, yes drinking fountain

#15 - drinking fountain, no bathroom

#15 – I keep a large container of fresh water in my room

#15 – yes bathroom, no drinking fountain

#17 – not completely covered

#20 - absolutely not! – big problem

#21 – another big problem

#22 - not necessary

#35 – I shouldn't have to expend more effort than a regular classroom

APPENDIX D

---

Survey Area Map



