

SPECIAL ED
TEACHER MAN

SPECIAL ED TEACHER MAN

Bob Anterhaus



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Dedication

*To Sister Cornelia, the Catholic nun who saved me from
myself when I dropped out of high school.*

*To Joanne Ducotey Anterhaus, my wife, who liberated me
when I was just a “successful failure.” She was also the angel
who enlisted me to become a teacher.*

I dearly love you both!

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BOB ANTERHAUS was born and raised on the wrong side of the tracks in St. Louis, Missouri. He graduated from Southern Methodist University and holds a Master's Degree from the University of Dallas. Bob is married to Joanne Ducotey Anterhaus and has two sons, a disabled stepson, and a stepdaughter. Bob also had a Down syndrome brother who died at 27 years old.

Bob was a special education teacher in the Dallas Independent School District for twenty years. He retired in January of 2012 because his students were moved to other schools and his contract wasn't going to be renewed at the end of the school year. If those circumstances had not occurred, he would still be teaching. He taught autistic students in three different elementary schools for 11 years and special education for regular students who needed help in reading and math for nine years.

Although he didn't realize it, his many successes and failures, including dropping out of high school, all led him to become a special education teacher. He never thought he would be so successful in life and didn't think he would even live this long.

INTRODUCTION

I NEVER PLANNED TO BE A TEACHER as a young person, in fact teaching was one of the last occupations I would have chosen. Interestingly, in the process of writing *Special Ed Teacher Man*, it occurred to me that everything I experienced during my life led me toward becoming a special education teacher. All my successes and failures have been excellent tools that molded me into the type of teacher who has been able to help many students and their families. Throughout this book, I share those molding experiences resulting from my childhood, early adult years, life at Mobil Oil, and my military service in Texas, California, and Vietnam.

Below is an Email I wrote to the Editor of the Dallas Morning News on January 5, 2012 before writing *Special Ed Teacher Man*.



Dear Editor of the Dallas Morning News

My name is Robert Anterhaus and I am writing in hopes that you can recommend a capable and reputable person to help me write a series of articles or a book about my 20 years as a special education teacher in the DISD.

I taught at three schools, two of which were blue ribbon schools (Walnut Hill and Ben Milam). I also taught at Tom

Gooch. I began teaching at age 48 after my career at Mobil Oil came to an end due to downsizing in 1992. I went through the Alternative Certification Program and taught autistic students for 11 years and Inclusion and Resource students for nine years. I am retiring January 31, 2012, because my class was eliminated, and I accepted the excess employee package.

Below I have included my three minute presentation given to the DISD School Board on November 11, 2011. The presentation can also be found on the Alliance Teachers' Union web site. I gave the presentation to expose the fact that the DISD board members broke the Spirit of Federal Education Laws when they closed Milam and several other inclusion classes forcing home school students to attend other schools.

I have kept a full daily journal for the last 39 years, so I have much information to draw on. I have seen inspiring, ridiculous, humorous, tragic, common, and unbelievable things happen over the course of my teaching career. I believe what I have seen and done in the Dallas School District should be told. My desire is to tell the story, obviously for myself, but also for all my former students and for all the teachers and assistants I have known and worked with.

I've had a blessed career as a Special Education teacher. My assistants and I have helped a lot of students and parents. I would like to continue that legacy by telling my personal story of advancing from a well-paid dismal business manager to a happy, successful, professional educator.

I wrote a technical book for Mobil Oil years ago, but now would like to work with another person in order to save time. I am also not aware of publishing or legal considerations. I would be happy to meet with you, anyone on your staff, or whoever you can refer me to so I can fully explain my feelings and future plans.

PRESENTATION TO THE DALLAS SCHOOL BOARD NOVEMBER 11, 2011

My name is Robert Anterhaus. I have been a DISD special education teacher for 20 years and have taught in 3 different elementary schools (Walnut Hill, Tom Gooch, and Ben Milam). I taught autistic students for 11 years and resource/inclusion for the last nine years. I have a degree from SMU and a Master's Degree from the University of Dallas. I was Teacher of the Year for Tom Gooch one of the years I was there.

I've been teaching the last 11 years at Ben Milam, which is a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School. Unfortunately, at the end of June last year, my class was eliminated, and in August my special education students were forced to leave Milam and go to other schools. When I first found out I didn't think this was legal. The thought occurred to me it couldn't be legal to move special education inclusion students, especially Milam's home schooled students, to other schools. They also moved the autism class, so now Milam has only one special education teacher. She is a speech therapist and comes only one day a week.

Later, I found out they could legally eliminate my class, but I still wondered if the action taken was morally right. I am concerned that no future students will be put in special education at Milam; instead they will be forced to go to other schools. There are two questions we should all be concerned about:

1. Was it just Milam or were other schools involved in the inclusion class closures?
2. Because of the spirit of special education laws, could these class closings be overruled in a Federal Court of law?

The parents and students were devastated. One student had been at Milam five years and only had one more year before completing 5th grade. Tears were shed by all, including teachers. Another student entered special education at Milam just a few months before the end of the school year and had to start a new school in August. The mother was very upset.

Tonight, we are here to think about imploding the career of over 200 teachers who have valid contracts in order to save money. Please keep in mind these are decent professional people who have families, money should not be the only reason that governs what happens.

THIS EVENING I ONLY ASK THAT WHATEVER YOU DECIDE TO DO SHOULD BE WHAT YOU TRULY BELIEVE TO BE THE HONEST, FAIR, AND MORALLY RIGHT ACTION TO TAKE FOR ALL CONCERNED.

Thank you for your attention.



It wasn't included in my prepared presentation, but I spontaneously ended with, "God bless everyone here. We're all on the same side, folks." Same side meant the 100 to 200 people in the auditorium audience, which included teachers who were about to get the ax and the school board members. Giving my presentation was what I thought was the right thing to do for my students and families. Especially, since parents of the various ethnic groups, like the Hispanics, were not standing up to the school system to protect their children's rights. I felt we should all be united together in determining what would happen to our children of the future.

Sadly, I was the only speaker, which reminded me of Germany in the mid 1930's. No one dared speak up or stand up to the Nazis. Please forgive me; I am not comparing the school board to the Nazis. However, on the night of my presentation, the look in the

board members eyes and their body language appeared to me as that of a professional poker player. They exhibited absolutely no feeling or emotion. My perception was that they didn't care what I had to say and were intent on carrying out their selfish agenda. Thus, I am going to share my experience in Vietnam and challenge you, the reader, to be open to the parallel between the abuses which occurred in Vietnam with the abuses I witnessed during my tenure at DISD.

I am pleased that the Morning News Editor did not answer my Email request for assistance, because I needed to tackle this project on my own. Writing the book has been a difficult labor of love. Oh, I got a few laughs and experienced fond memories reflecting back on my career, but also encountered memories that were difficult for me. Despite everything, I sincerely thank the Morning News for ignoring me, because it forced me to use my own style of phraseology and mode of expression.

Before writing the book, I knew how to express myself in writing, but as I expressed in my Email to the Morning News Editor, I knew nothing about publishing or the legal considerations. In fact, when I told my wife I was going to write a book, her first words were, "Oh no! We want to keep our lives private, and you are going to get us sued!"

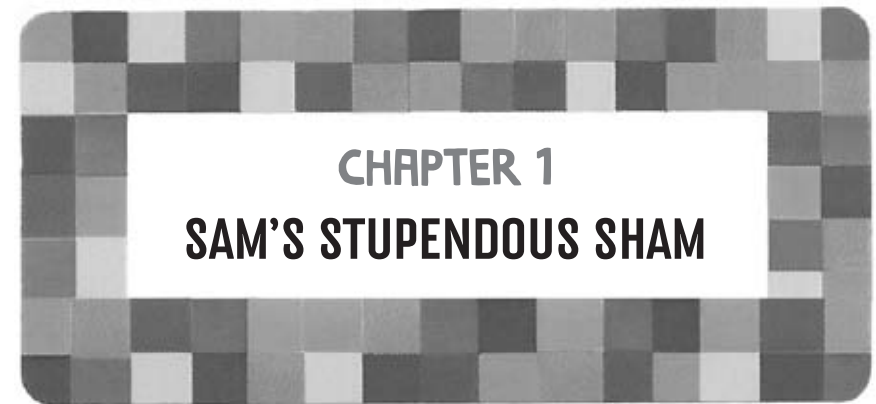
Well, I am too old to care about my private life, but out of respect for my wife I have no desired to get sued. Therefore, I do not use the real names of many of the DISD personnel, especially some administrators and out of respect for my students' privacy, I have changed their names to pseudonyms. However, the names of my friends are correct, including military friends, assistants, principals and some administrators. My friends should be proud of their accomplishments, in fact we should all commend them for the work they have done. I share many of those accomplishments within this book.

Some of my Dallas School District colleagues reading this book may ask, “Why are you telling us what we already know?” To these colleagues my answer would be threefold.

1. There are many improvements that need to be made. Obviously, not everyone in the DISD will agree with what I have to say, which is sad.
2. The book will be of exceptional value to those in special education. Maybe it’s a pipe dream, but I would love to touch educators from various countries. Educators and their students throughout the world share many common bonds, so it is my hope, that this book will help them and be of interest to everyone associated with education.
3. Most everyone has a disabled person in their family, extended family or a friend’s family so it is my hope that the book will be of interest to the average person as well.

For this project I felt it only necessary to share my personal experiences and perspectives. Please note, if I ever decide to write another book on the subject, I plan to interview teachers, assistants, parents, principals, government officials, and last but not least, some of the DISD administrators. I will definitely interview the students, because the most in depth and momentous material will come from them. It is, and always has been, about the students! I thank God for calling me to the teaching profession and for all the students I have encountered over the years.

Now let’s get started by addressing the issue of the drunken sailor who’s been staggering around in the Dallas Independent School District for a long time.



WHAT WOULD YOU SAY if I told you there was a drunken sailor or working in the Dallas Independent School District? You might ask, “Who is this drunken sailor and how did he get into the School District? After all, isn’t the DISD one of the largest school districts in Texas or even the United States?” To which I would respond, “Yes it is one of the largest districts, but to answer the question about who he is and what he is doing in the district, I would like to make a comparison by relating an experience I had in Vietnam. The story takes place in 1966 in the city of Nha Trang.

I was in a crowded bar one evening when several US sailors wearing enlisted men’s uniforms came in. I did not know what rank they were, because I did not understand the U. S. Navy. After all, I’d never seen any other navy men during my tour in Vietnam. I assumed they were on some special assignment because Nha Trang is located on the South China Sea and the large US Navy port of Cam Ranh Bay was about thirty miles away.

They were already half shot (drunk) when they came in, and as they continued drinking they started to get more rowdy. It was a very small bar crowded full of US service men, a few contract civilians, and a Vietnamese staff including several bar girls wearing miniskirts. The navy guys started to banter back and forth with some army men. One sailor got up to use the hole, an actual hole in the floor referred to as the restroom, when he tripped over a chair and fell on a table where some army men were seated drinking “33” Beer. His clumsiness created a problem. “33” was a brand of beer and though terrible tasting, was the only brand the bar offered and it wasn’t cheap. It cost about 100 piasters a beer, which was about 96 cents-big money for an enlisted man.

About the same time, another navy man grabbed a boy waiter and yelled that he didn’t get the right change. Soon he had the lad in a headlock. The bar was run by an old looking woman who was referred to as Mamasan, the Tiger Lady, who ran over to intercede. She first told the army men at the table she would replace their beers free of charge. Her offer surprised those listening because seldom was anything free in a Vietnamese bar. Next she pried her way between the boy and the sailor and shouted something in Vietnamese. The boy responded by quickly taking off his pants and handing them to her. Then the lad just stood there in his shirt and underwear awaiting her next instruction. Through the entire ruckus most of the patrons were oblivious to what was happening. After all, they were nursing their drinks and had other priorities in mind, like the little ladies wearing miniskirts.

I was still halfway sober and sitting at a table next to them, so I was paying attention. I weighed the situation carefully not wanting to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. The Tiger Lady turned the boy’s pants pockets inside out revealing they were empty. Then, she started beating the pants on the floor and

shouting something in Vietnamese, which got all of the sailors’ attention and soon they were bursting with laughter. Next she told them she was going to have cyclo drivers take them to get a boom-boom and then bring them back in a better mood. Cyclos were bicycle taxis.

One navy man, who must have been new in Vietnam, asked, “What’s a boom-boom?”

His buddy standing next to him roared, “A damn good piece of ass; let’s go!” The Navy men quickly quaffed down their beers and followed her outside to go on the adventure tour. The cyclos held two men, each sitting side by side with a driver who pedaled sitting behind them. She told the drivers what cathouse to take them to and that was the last I ever saw of them.

All in all, I think everyone was happy. The sailors got a little fresh air and something to help them calm down. The bar patrons got more “33” beer and continued to see what they could work out later with the bar girls. The shrewd Mamasan kept the money rolling in, both at the bar and at the house of pleasure, where she probably got a cut of the money spent by the men she sent there.

As for me, I soon left to get a cucumber and sardine sandwich on a small baguette from a street side vendor and took a military bus back to the base. The sandwich only cost 30 piasters or about 28 cents in US money. I tried to spend money wisely since I was living on about \$85 a month. We got paid in U.S. Military currency and of the \$400 I earned each month the government sent \$315 to Anna Marie, my first wife, whom I will discuss later in the book. She was living with her parents in Jennings, Missouri, which was not near a military base, so our son, Rob, was born in a Catholic hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. Rob’s birth cost us \$25, but he was worth every penny. Unfortunately, I was not present to witness Rob’s birth, because I had been shipped off to Nam two months before.

Now to answer the question, “Who is this drunken sailor and how did he get into the Dallas Independent School District?” There is a drunken sailor in every public school district; he is our own Uncle Sam. Yes, the US government! Like the drunken sailors in Nha Trang, he freely spreads his money around and insists that his needs be quickly catered to. I do not have to state what my sailor friends in Vietnam wanted. As for our good ole Uncle Sam, he wants needless paperwork, which requires high salary administrators who do not teach a single student. He wants to intrude on the teachers’ time by requiring ridiculous reports, and, of course, he wants to make some unrealistic laws.

I was in Vietnam one year as a US airman, which I will elaborate on more in chapter three. Upon my return to the states I worked for several companies before joining Mobil Oil where I spent 19 years and another 20 years employed as a special education teacher with DISD. Looking back, I see many similarities between my military service in Vietnam and my teaching in the DISD System. On the positive side, I worked with many good and decent people and in both jobs did a lot of good overall. On the negative side, I saw corruption, a tremendous waste of money, bad leadership, and political blunders. Through this writing I will show these comparisons between Vietnam and DISD. I will also share places and events during my life that contributed to my successful teaching career.

At times, I will use the sarcastic expression “Welcome to the DISD,” meaning in my opinion, the Dallas Independent School District has its own peculiar (and at times unethical) way of doing things. I believe that the DISD is much like Vietnam, just another third world country. Granted, it’s a sophisticated one, but still it’s still an inexpedient organization that I find hard to explain fully. But despite the many structural hindrances, it’s my opinion that

the teachers and school staffs have always done an admirable job in working with the students.

Unlike the situation at the bar in Vietnam, everyone is not happy. Only Uncle Sam and many of the administrators are happy. Many teachers are unhappy because they feel their job is to teach children, not satisfy the political agenda of Uncle Sam. I believe that some of the principals are happy because their job is partially to be yes people to the administrative system. I believe some principals do not care for parts of the present system. Unfortunately, any principal who shows concern about the setup is considered by the upper echelon not to be a team player and may have to pay a consequence. Being a principal is one of the hardest jobs I can imagine, so my intention is not to say anything negative about principals, but I believe the statement I just made is correct. To be on the team, they have to be considered a team player. I think too highly of my past principals to say they were all yes people. More probably, I could say they had to be diplomatically correct in regard to the school system and its alien policies.

I am not familiar with any school district except Dallas, but I am guessing that many other districts, especially the large ones, are similar to Dallas. They probably have similar problems in that they have too many administrators, waste funds, and spin their wheels on political maneuvers. I am also guessing that there are some very good and efficient school districts. I wish there was some way to study these districts and apply the good parts to the DISD. This idea is not original because teachers have copied ideas, lessons, and classroom structures from other teachers since day one. So why not continue the practice of studying other school systems and implementing the positive programs?

I realize this is easier said than done, and some might say we’ve already tried implementing programs and it didn’t work. Or they

might say what works in a small district won't work in such a large district. Granted some programs will not work, but it doesn't alter my point-the DISD is dysfunctional in so many ways. Let's begin the process to make it better. Maybe it will never be running at 100%, but if it's at 50% now, let's try for 60%, and when we reach that, let's go for 70%, and continue the process to keep going upward. My percentage guess of 50% may even be too high, but it's the general idea I want to convey. This sounds like a somewhat simplistic approach, but I think something that is workable is preferable to an overly complicated, non-workable solution.

Let's take this concept even further and look at the successful education systems in other countries. Many countries are ahead of the US, especially in math and science. A complete study needs to be made as to what these countries are doing right and then to determine if we can take steps to copy some of their processes and systems that would benefit our students. I know that some naysayers will say that the students in some countries attend classes more hours a day or more days a year. They may state that our special education laws and system or our multicultural challenges are holding us back. I don't know all the answers, but what I am suggesting is that we take a look at both the positive and negative factors in both our educational system and the systems of some other selected countries. We should examine positive and negative factors in an honest manner and to the fullest extent possible.

I'm sorry, if by stating the facts or offering my opinion, I have offended you, but it's high time that educational funds, both state and federal, be fully used to educate students. When funds come from Uncle Sam or from public bond issues, the money issued, oftentimes results in a blissful opportunity for DISD cash-keepers of the treasury to plunder. I won't go into it now, but it's a fact that we did have one of our DISD lady superintendents sent to

the penitentiary several years ago for misuse of funds. In 2005 the DISD Technology Chief was caught in a money laundering scheme involving computer contracts. I think he was also sent to the pen, but I'm not into technology, so I didn't follow his scheme. Besides after the superintendent was sent up the river, I considered the other tricky soul's impropriety secondhand news, because it was no big surprise to me.

There were other clear-cut cases of fraud. A few years ago, many DISD personnel including administrators were using school credit cards for their own use, including buying gift cards. As I recall, one secretary was charged and the rest got off without any charges. I assume it was the Superintendent who let them get away because he wanted us to forget the fraud so the district could move forward. Welcome to the DISD.

I've seen so much money wasted. One example occurred when bond money was used to put a new roof on the Walnut Hill Elementary School. I was an autism teacher at the school. The old roof did not leak, but after they put on the new roof, water came pouring in during the first rain storm and ruined the art fair projects in the library.

Another example occurred when I was a teacher at Tom Gooch Elementary School. Five DISD employees were putting in a sidewalk right outside our room, thus, we could see them well. One man was doing most of the work while the other four were loitering. I thought, maybe the fella doing the work was new or had more energy than the others. However, later that day around 4:00 as I was walking past the auditorium I heard very pleasant piano music. I looked in the auditorium and saw the same hard working gentleman playing the piano and the four men were sitting enjoying the concert. I have no idea if they were on overtime pay, but I did know they had no business being in the school auditorium

staging a piano performance. Granted this happened about fifteen years ago when times were a little mellower. In DISD at the time this activity was just a normal event that many didn't really consider abnormal. At the time, even I thought it was a little humorous.

The system we have today is putting kids at risk because Administrators are making poor decisions. To make this point clear, one day I was in a grocery store with my second wife, Joanne, who was a retired special education teacher. We ran into a lady whom she knew from when she taught at City Park Elementary School. The lady was a reading coach at the time. She related to Joanne that she too had retired from teaching, but was now a Reading Consultant for DISD making two hundred and twenty dollars an hour. Joanne's friend was a nice lady, and we were glad she could collect her monthly retirement plus earn big bucks as a consultant. We did however question the wisdom of the DISD administration in this costly arrangement. The problem was that this one case was just the tip of the iceberg, there are probably hundreds or thousands of similarly sugar coated arrangements. Maybe the DISD justifies the arrangements because the money came from some government grant. Shouldn't the bigger picture have been looked at and the monies used in a more efficient manner? It's my belief that these same arrangements continue to this day, and it is time some controls and policies are put in place to make sure our educational funds are being put to better use.

I've seen many school shams over the years, one of which occurred when I was at Tom Gooch School. The autism administrators hired two consultants to come down from Tulsa, Oklahoma, once every six weeks. One was a psychologist and the other an occupational therapist. They came to meet and examine one student at my school and one student at another school. They flew

down in the morning, rented a car, spent the day at the schools, and flew back to Tulsa that afternoon. I would assume they spent additional time in Tulsa writing their reports and documenting their findings. Hiring two consultants from another state had to cost the district a lot of money. I often wondered why they hired two consultants from another city rather than use consultants in Dallas or, even better, DISD employees. Could it be because it would be more beneficial to have outsiders evaluating the case if DISD ever faced a lawsuit involving the two students? There were many DISD administrators, outside agencies, parents, and teachers involved with both students. I still don't know the reason behind hiring outside consultants, but it doesn't take a mental giant to know that the cost was tremendous.

Yes, I have seen a lot of money thrown away. Common logic for much of the waste was that the money came from federal grants. The belief was, if we don't use it, then someone else will. Let's stop a minute, folks. Let me ask a question. Who pays income taxes to Uncle Sam? All of us do, so it's a catch 22 situation. They are probably correct in assuming that if we don't get the grant money, then someone else will. Unfortunately, the common belief has become that we had better be the first one to tap Uncle Sam's colossal flow of unlimited riches.

When I first started teaching, several times I was told by the autism administrators to quickly submit a list of supplies that were needed for my class because they were applying for a federal grant. Most of the autism teachers would make a list with costs totaling \$1,000 each. Whenever the administrators applied for a grant, the process would take each teacher hours to complete. The specific items we selected along with costs, vendor item numbers, and so forth had to be listed on the correct forms. Frequently, we did not win the grants so a lot of time was wasted. I guess Uncle

Sam, knowing we didn't need the money, would say, "You can fool me some of the time, but not all the time." He might add, "I may be a fool at times, but I'm not a damn fool all the time!"

Before I caught on to what grants were all about, I filed for a grant for \$527.00. I was talking to another teacher about my ideas about how to help my autism students at Tom Gooch learn from outside activities away from our classroom. My field trips were always expensive because I had just a few students. Due to budget cuts at the time there was no money allotted for our field trips and the bus fare was too much for each student's parent to pay. My teacher friend suggested I file for a grant to pay the expenses and being somewhat naïve I agreed. The only good that came out of filing the grant was as a learning experience for me.



GRANT PROPOSAL

- A. School:** Tom C Gooch
4030 Calculus
Dallas, Texas 75244
- B. Class:** Total Communication class composed of six students, one teacher and two assistants.
- C. Amount:** \$527.00
- D. Purpose:** Community based instructions to enhance autistic students' real life community learning experiences in the three main areas of communication, social skills, and independent functioning. These will be customized to each student's individual education objectives.

E. Details:

The Science Place at Fair Park—\$110.00 for bus transportation, \$49.00 for entry fees

- Benefits:
- Practice fine motor skills with use of tactile manipulation (self-help)
 - Parallel play with peers in group activities (social skills)
 - Increase receptive vocabulary (communication skills)

The Environmental Center in Seagoville—\$110 for bus transportation

- Benefits:
- Participate appropriately in activities involving waiting turn, sharing, and following directions (self-help and social skills)
 - Practice good behavior in a setting with general education students (social skills)
 - Expand abilities to appreciate nature (independent functioning)
 - Increase task persistence and attention span in a practical learning environment (self-help)
 - Increase receptive vocabulary (communication skills)

*Samuel Farm in Mesquite \$110.00 for bus transportation,
\$23.00 for entry fees*

- Benefits:
- Students will follow adults 2 and 3 step directions (communication skills)
 - Interact with peers with adult supervision (social skills)
 - Increase gross motor skills in an unfamiliar setting (self-help)
 - Increase receptive vocabulary (communication skills)

*Sunshine Day at Fair Park \$110.00 for bus transportation,
\$15.00 for drinks and snacks*

- Benefits:
- A relaxing opportunity to mingle with neighborhood districts and community residents in a relaxed fun filled environment.
 - A day the students can be 'free to be me'

F. Behavior: All four above community based instructional opportunities will increase appropriate behavior. This is as directed by the Tom C. Gooch Campus Improvement Plan and the Total Communication Behavior Modification Plan. When autistic students learn to control and practice good behavior opportunities learning abilities and practical independent skills are greatly multiplied.

I knew this was a good proposal and would greatly help my autistic students. The total amount of \$527 was a small amount and would definitely provide the students a wonderful experience. The decision for this grant was to be made through the Special Funds Acquisition and Monitoring department of the DISD so I contacted them on the telephone, had the request typed and approved by my principal, and sent it to the appropriate person. The department didn't say yes, but they didn't say no. They just never even bothered to answer me. Interesting that much larger grants were being funded without the money directly impacting student lives. Despite what happened, I'm glad I applied because I had the satisfaction of knowing I did all that I could to help my students. Such is the strange world of grants. Welcome to the DISD.

Some of my readers might now be thinking that Uncle Sam throws money away in all directions, not just on education. I would agree that this statement is probably valid. I can quickly think of two examples. The first was the publicized bridge to nowhere in Alaska that cost millions of dollars. The second occurs every year when I file my Federal Income Taxes. I do not itemize, but with the constant changes each year I gladly pay hundreds of dollars to have my federal taxes done rather than attempt to do them myself. One year I did the taxes for my stepson Warren. I filed a simple return on the EZ form. It seemed simple at the time, but I must have done something wrong because the IRS sent Warren back a correction and a refund larger than I filed for.

I'm glad Texas has no state income tax. Each year, I tell the person doing my federal tax return that the tax system is too complicated. I relate a lot of money and time could be saved with a much simpler system minus a lot of the deductions and complicated considerations. She never really answers me, maybe because her job depends on the present tangled income tax system. The fact is

that I do not know a lot about the tax system or the other money draining protrusions our good uncle rules on. I do, however, know a heck of a lot about the waste, inefficiency, and political corruption in our current education system.

Educational corruption is just one reason I am writing this book. However, it is my intention to also give credit for all the considerable good things our Uncle Sam accomplishes. I have always and still think we live in the best country in the world. That being said, let's proceed to the main reason for writing this book; the improvement of our education system.

We need to devote our full attention and funds to educate our students, but making constructive change is going to be a difficult challenge. I don't know the best way to begin, but I'm sure the usual procedure of hiring expensive consultants is definitely not the answer. I do not really know how effective it would be to start at the grass roots level with parents, teachers, and school staff because the process is so complicated. It's a beginning, but there are issues they could never resolve.

I propose starting at the congressional level by selecting a group of influential congressmen to form a high priority investigative committee. Working closely with them would be representatives from the Department of Education, volunteers from various school districts, and unpaid representatives from private industry. The industry people would be very important because they would have the necessary business and management skills, but nothing personally to gain. Specific goals and time lines would initially be established so that the project would not get bogged down or pushed aside. The committee process would need to be set at a higher priority than the way it is now with everyone complaining and making their own useless laws and accusations, much like people shooting shotguns at the moon.

In the following chapters, I am going to share my journey through life, which has been a wonderful ride that led me to the Special Education profession and my passion to express improvements necessary if we are to preserve the foundation and future growth of our present school system.