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RESTRUCTURING

SCHOOLS

ISSUE EDITOR: CHARLES A. SLOAN

PERSPECTIVES ON RESTRUCTURING BY

BANDLOW, COOPER, EVERETT, FABRI,
FULMER, GLASS, HESS, JEROME,
SEDERBERG, SLOAN, SULLIVAN

Restructuring Schools

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Editor's Notes

by Charles A. Sloan

Restructuring or Reforming is a persistent and recurring phenomenon in education. Restructuring or reform, whichever name it is given, can be found in education literature throughout history. Some have said that a reform reoccurs every 15 years in some form or another. At any rate, restructuring is currently in all of the literature, regardless of area of interest or discipline. Moreover, policymakers, legislatures, and administrators are currently beset by mandates which cause restructuring effort to be debated and implemented in some form.

Because of the mandates and the need to implement change, this issue sought to explore plausible means of

restructuring. The Northern Illinois Cooperative in Education (N.I.C.E.) designated its 1991 Spring Conference to such an effort. Hence, this issue of *Thresholds* was given to the exploration of potential organizational considerations for Restructuring.

The issue of *Thresholds* includes three continuing questions of broad-ranged opportunities and/or constraints with regard to restructuring. The first article considers the national problem of providing funding for education in new ways. Secondly, the notions of legal principles and constraints are addressed. Thirdly, in this area the question of reforming local policy groups, known as local school boards, was addressed as a potential future consideration toward restructuring.

The remaining six articles address specific initiatives which are means of reforming schools. Three articles address reforming comprehensive school districts, small school districts, and the Chicago "experiment" of local school councils and school-based management. The other articles address (1) district planning methodology in the area of curriculum; (2) school choice; and (3) consolidation.

Thresholds and N.I.C.E. hope these efforts stimulate your thinking and clarify some leading restructuring concepts in moving education forward in the next decade. The notion of restructuring will be before us again, and again, and again!



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Restructuring School Finance

by R. E. Everett

Introduction

The amount of dialogue and discussion on the myriad of possible topics that can be and are related to the educational reform movement started in the 80's is truly staggering. Most of the efforts to provide leadership in reforming the public schools have at best been disjointed, isolated, uncoordinated and basically lacking in viewing in total the problems, issues and alternatives that could serve as solutions to the nation's overall concern about the product of our schools. Whether the schools can and will actually be reformed or restructured is partially a function of availability of and the manner of distribution of resources. Restructuring school funding should be a very important consideration of state policy makers, state officials, local boards and their administrators, the students and their parents, and the other supporting citizenship.

Those who know the most about restructuring school finance from the field have formed study groups in order to be pro-active rather than re-active to potential changes. The main goal was to get the legislative branch and executive branch of government and the state board of education to not only focus on the proper questions, but to develop a framework by which they might test proposed solutions before implementation is begun. The following is a description of the perspective taken by the Illinois Association of School

Business Officials and the Educational Policy Assembly.

Illinois ASBO: One Perspective

In May of 1990, 32 selected members of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (Illinois ASBO) met in Springfield, Illinois, for a two day working conference to share ideas and concerns about school funding practices in the State. Staff members from the Governor's Office, Bureau of the Budget and the Illinois State Board of Education served as resource people to this group as the past, present and future were explored.

The outcome of this working conference was the development of some concepts and guiding principles that those responsible for redesigning or reforming school funding in Illinois might follow or consider. Also the purpose of these principles was to help develop and evaluate the various proposals that might go before the Legislature and/or the State Board of Education. The principles developed fell into four categories:

1. Equity/Adequacy Issues;
2. Property Tax Relief/Reform Issues;
3. Income Tax and Other Non-Property Tax Revenue; and
4. General State Aid and Categorical Aid Distribution.

Unanimous agreement to these principles was not sought even though strong consensus from the group was indicated. These principles were later

adopted by the Illinois ASBO Board of Directors.

The following statements reflect the concepts and principles that emerged from the working conference.

Equity/Adequacy Issues

Equity occurs when all districts can reach an adequate level of education.

An adequate level of education encompasses three main areas: program, financial and managerial. The Illinois State Board of Education shall determine what is expected in each area and the Illinois General Assembly shall ensure that sufficient resources are available in each of the three areas for Local Boards of Education to attain the expectancies.

1. Program

The State Board of Education shall determine the expected program in terms of curriculum, facilities and class size. Local Boards of Education shall be responsible for determining how those expected programs will be attained within available resources.

2. Financial

The Illinois General Assembly shall ensure that sufficient resources are provided to Local Boards of Education to provide the expected programs.

These resources shall take into consideration:

- Determining expected costs and revenues per pupil;

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- Operating expenses per pupil;
- Neutralizing regional differences including geographic location and cost of living;
- Neutralizing differences between district types;
- Differing levels of program; and
- Providing equal access to educational opportunities and accounting for socioeconomic differences and community preferences.

3. Managerial

Local Boards of Education shall be responsible for determining appropriate organization and expenditures for personnel necessary to attain an adequate program with available resources.

Property Tax Relief/Reform Issues

The State of Illinois should have property tax reform/property tax relief. The Illinois General Assembly has provided tax relief through property tax exemptions, property classification systems, reduced sales tax for food and drugs, use of dated formulae to calculate corporate personal property replacement taxes and tax-increment financing.

1. Revenues generated through local property taxes should be based on the following principles:
 - Ability to pay;
 - Benefits received;
 - Adequacy, flexibility and stability of yield; and
 - Efficiency and ease of administration.
2. The property tax process/cycle should be reformed to:

- Produce annual and equitable reassessments;
 - Have multiple, timely and standardized distributions;
 - Provide uniform assessment practices throughout the state;
 - Use prior year's Equalized Assessed Valuation for levy and tax rate development, but begin the process after all property has been reassessed for that year and allow a hold-harmless provision for new construction;
 - Allow Cook County to have township multipliers;
 - Provide compliance with Truth-In-Taxation requirements whenever a district increases its levy by five percent (5%) or more than the regional Consumer Price Index, whichever is greater;
 - Eliminate homestead exemptions;
 - Provide prompt notification to a school district if any property within the district has a reduction in equalized assessed valuation of more than \$100,000; and
 - Permit Local Boards of Education to minimally tax beyond state provided resources without referendum.
3. Local property taxes should be frozen for citizens 65 and older if they are below certain income levels.
 4. Property tax relief to individuals or groups should be accomplished by deductions or credits on their state income tax.

Income Tax and Other Non-Property Tax Revenue

An equitable funding system shall provide access to the fiscal re-

sources necessary to provide an appropriate education for every child in the state. Resolving equity and adequacy issues will require additional tax dollars.

The temporary state income tax increase shall become permanent with all revenues from that increase going to education. Any increased income tax revenue shall be earmarked for schools.

Additional sources of revenue for education shall be considered by the Illinois General Assembly, and all additional resources received by Local Boards of Education shall supplement not supplant current resources for districts determined to be below adequate funding levels. Additional sources of revenue may include:

- Reduced exemptions on farm equipment, food and drugs;
- Sales tax on professional services;
- Utility tax;
- Licensing fees for training workers;
- Hotel and entertainment tax;
- Regional income tax;
- Educational materials publisher tax; and
- Statewide educational property tax.

General State Aid and Categorical Aid Distribution

A General State Aid formula shall guarantee sufficient state and local revenues for Local Boards of Education to operate an adequate educational program. Equity should be approached primarily through the process of leveling-up per pupil resources through additional general state aid.

The General State Aid formula shall neutralize:

- Effects of factors beyond the control of Local Boards of Education which cause differences in real resources or service levels per pupil; and
- Differences caused by the three (3) different types of school district organization.

Categorical State Aid should remain separate from the General State Aid formula, and the Illinois General Assembly shall fully fund these categories at the mandated levels.

Some may attempt to argue that the pronouncements declared as a result of the working conference are not new and are too general to be of any practical use. These critics are encouraged to read them again, more carefully. Significant suggestions and guidelines are declared.

Educational Policy Assembly: Another View

It is useful to compare these outcomes with those developed six months later by a group identified as an Education Policy Assembly. This Assembly was composed of representatives from the major professional organizations and associations that have a mission or have been a significant player in the school finance arena in Illinois: Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance; Chicago Urban League; ED-RED; Illinois Association of School Boards; Illinois Association of School Business Officials; Illinois Farm Bureau; Illinois Federation of Teachers; Illinois Education Association; Illinois Principals Association; Illinois Chamber of Commerce; Large Unit District Association; PTA and Taxpayers' Federation of Illinois to name most, but not all. Representatives from the just mentioned groups were joined by Illinois Association of School Administrators members from each legislative district in Illinois. All

of these participants were organized into smaller groups to explore critical issues relating to school finance and to try to reach some consensus on future policy directions. The key issues used as starting points for each group were grouped according to the following topics and focussed or defined by the accompanying questions.

School Finance Formula Reform

What should the school finance formula attempt to do?

What are the critical issues in developing a new formula?

How should these issues be addressed in public policy?

Some of the more salient statements that the questions brought forth included there must be adequate funding through a combination of state and local resources for (a) programs or (b) outcomes, expectations of and not attainment of, to meet the "State Goals of Learning" (as stated in the 1985 School Reform Act) for ALL children.

The critical issues in developing a new formula must focus on:

- 1) disparate property and income wealth;
- 2) assessment practices;
- 3) foundation base;
- 4) distribution of non-residential property taxes;
- 5) collection and distribution of taxes;
- 6) funding of district by type and size;
- 7) predictable, reliable and stable funding;
- 8) effort neutrality between sources of all tax revenues;
- 9) consideration of differing needs of children;
- 10) total cost for taxpayers of Illinois;

- 11) a self-correcting mechanism to prevent our current disparity problem;
- 12) Robin Hood effect: "Rob from the rich to give to the poor";
- 13) regional differences in the cost of doing business, but not be entirely based on teacher salaries;
- 14) fund consolidation;
- 15) flat grants;
- 16) local income tax for schools;
- 17) formula related to inflation rate;
- 18) formula related to growth/declining enrollment;
- 19) minimum local effort; (a) property tax rate; (b) income tax; and
- 20) management of disparity (this issue generated much discussion with no consensus), (a) permit: local effort determined by board with no limit; or (b) reduce: level up to reduce disparity; set "caps" or limits on amount of disparity allowed throughout the State.

Survival of a quality public school system for the children of Illinois is the State's top priority and any new funding policies should:

- 1) provide a guarantee by the state and be responsible for the primary funding of education and for fully funding State and federal programs; federal programs were purposely included for the reason that local taxpayers should not have to shoulder the burden if the federal government does not fully fund its programs;
- 2) provide taxpayer equity;
- 3) provide a phase-in period with any new funding formula or formula revision;
- 4) permit interests to have input in a collectively developed and improved system for accountability (accountability is of the utmost importance, but accountability should not be dictated by non-educators); and

- 5) provide that the state must fund education as its first priority.

Tax Policy and Revenues for Education

How should revenues for public elementary and secondary schools be raised?

What are the critical issues in tax policy?

How should these be addressed in public policy?

These questions resulted in the following ideas:

The State of Illinois must insure a continuity of funding for school districts and not subject them to the "stops" and "starts" of the economy resulting from national and global influences. If the educational system in Illinois is going to meet the needs of students so that this nation's workers are as productive as those in Japan and Germany, then schools must have consistent and adequate funding. Legislators must see funding as a priority. Dollars for education have not been a priority and this fact helps explain Illinois' severe drop in rank when compared to other states and their funding of education.

There are three critical issues in tax policy:

Wealth - A fair and realistic system of assessment to provide continuity across the State is needed. Assessments, county to county, school district to school district are not equitable -- State assessment or some method of control to insure that property values are accurately assessed should be part of the effort to improve school funding.

Effort - The State should retain the local property tax system as a vital part of school funding because it gives school districts a great deal of year-to-year stability. The State must assume an increased responsibility to fund education, but the property tax must be maintained if any growth in school revenue is to be obtained. Consideration should be given to incorporation of a minimum operating tax rate, with the local tax rate above the

minimum left to local citizens. All school districts should have access to the same minimum operating rate without referendum.

Distribution of Resources - The point that must be addressed is the great disparity existing between local effort and available resources, as well as State support. Redistribution of resources across the state is necessary. The distribution of educational dollars should be made on an index which determines what those education dollars will buy in a given community. The Resource Cost Model may have merit.

The distribution of extraordinary tax revenues generated by commercial property in some districts across the State or at least to surrounding districts shall be examined. Some school districts enjoy a greater level of prosperity not available to other districts. The financial impact of redistributing tax revenue must be explored. Some districts reaping extraordinary high local funds from commercial property tax may have to tax at a set operating rate with recapture of the excess monies by the State.

School and School District Organization

What is the relationship of school organization to the goals of education?

What is the relationship of school organization to school finance?

How should state policy address the issues of school and school district organization?

The concepts and ideas that evolved were:

School organization should be kept separate from formula reform.

There should be no preferred pattern of school organization in the State of Illinois. The goals of education can be met regardless of the organizational pattern. There should be no preferences for unit or dual districts. The organizational structure is not the key.

Size of the school is important only to the extent that it does or does not meet educational objectives.

State education funding and district organization policy should:

- 1) be neutral with respect to consolidation where educational objectives are being met;
- 2) not be neutral with respect to consolidation where educational objectives are not being met; incentives should be offered;
- 3) provide that the new funding formula be totally separate from the issue of consolidation; the formula should not attempt to encourage or discourage consolidation;
- 4) provide equity in taxing powers equal to the combined permissive rates for dual districts;
- 5) prohibit current law and Illinois State Board of Education policies from favoring one organizational pattern over another;
- 6) give consideration to providing independent taxing authority for special education cooperatives rather than financing them through the member districts; and
- 7) the State should see to it that the quality of physical facilities is not a function of the district's local wealth.

Summary

What is reflected in the four major areas just discussed has not, as of this writing, been accepted by the Illinois General Assembly. Whether or not some form of consensus or endorsement is obtained should not detract from the overall message and the similarity that the outcomes of the Working Conference and the Policy Assembly achieved. Any long lasting educational reforms must be accompanied by some form of school finance reform. Efforts to help define the problems involved, propose solutions and to develop new means to guide policy and evaluate policy in the school finance area must always be cultivated and welcomed.



Legal Implications in the Restructuring of Schools

by *G. Robb Cooper*

Introduction

A call for the restructuring of schools is a common theme in the current literature in education. The call for restructuring typically includes examining the curriculum and the delivery model, consideration of choice in attendance sites, deliberation concerning administration and decision making, and greater flexibility in the selection and assignment of teaching personnel.

Each of the areas of curriculum and instruction, choice, administration, and personnel involve significant legal issues.

Although space constraints do not allow an in depth consideration of each of the issues, this article will highlight some of the issues, using Illinois as a model, and should serve as a basis for further discussion as the restructuring debate continues.

Curriculum and Instruction

Legal constraints in the area of curriculum and instruction revolve around the current mandated areas of instruction and contractual issues. As more state legislatures have taken up the banner of educational reform, they have entered into the field of mandated areas of curriculum. For example, the General Assembly of the state of Illinois has mandated no fewer than 15 areas of instruction in the last three years. These additional required areas of instruction include

such diverse subjects as the dangers of the use of anabolic steroids, the role of women in history, the Holocaust, the prevention, transmission and spread of AIDS, consumer education, the conservation of natural resources, the prevention and avoidance of abduction, the prevention and avoidance of drug and substance abuse, the inclusion of a "Just Say No" Day in each calendar year, and parenting education (see Note 1). These additional requirements, coupled with such common requirements as physical education, English, social studies, math, science, health, and the arts leave very little freedom for the schools to restructure the curricular offerings without expanding the school day or lengthening the school year.

As schools consider changes in the curriculum and instruction, they must also consider the impact on working conditions of the instructional personnel. More than forty states have now enacted statutes that grant collective bargaining rights to exclusive representatives of educational employees and such statutes typically include the obligation for the employer to bargain over changes in working conditions (see Note 2). Although such statutes often reserve decisions on policy issues to educational employers, it should be expected that employee groups will demand to bargain both the actual decision as well as the impact of any attempt to eliminate course offerings because of the potential loss of jobs, increase in the number of preparations, additional training required in order to teach new offerings, and increase in the amount of student contact time or

change in the configuration of the student day.

The demand to bargain over the changes in curriculum and instruction will not be fatal to restructuring the curriculum nor will it eliminate the possibility of changing the delivery of instruction. However, it will slow the process, make it subject to non-educational pressures, and most probably alter the actual implementation of any changes.

Choice

"Choice" may certainly mean many different things to many different people but for purposes of this discussion it shall be defined as allowing parents to have any degree of discretion in the selection of a school for their children irrespective of the residence of the child or the type of school. While "choice" has achieved considerable favor in some quarters, it faces at least three rather significant legal challenges.

The first challenge involves the use of tax dollars, in whatever form including vouchers, to support sectarian education. The United States Supreme Court has allowed the claiming of a state income tax deduction for the expenses associated with the provision of tuition, textbooks and transportation of children at the elementary and secondary level (see Note 3). While the Court recognized that it was permissible to use tax policy to advance the interest of the government in "assuring the continued financial health of private schools, both sectarian and nonsectarian", it did not address the constitutionality of vouchers of any sort and should not be construed as providing a basis for a

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claim that vouchers are constitutionally permissible.

To date, the constitutionality of vouchers has not been determined for use at sectarian, nonsectarian or public schools. Certainly, it should be expected that there will be challenges to the use of vouchers for sectarian education as well as nonsectarian private education by those who oppose aid to non-public schools in any form.

The use of vouchers to allow students to attend schools outside the local district may face challenges as well. Most states have guaranteed a minimum level of financial support for each student but have allowed local districts to provide greater support at the discretion of the taxpayer. Taxpayers who have elected to levy an additional tax to provide greater local financial support for public education are likely to challenge any use of local tax dollars to provide education for students who are not residents of the local district. While some states, notably Wisconsin and Minnesota, have instituted choice programs, it has not been without resistance by taxpayers and that resistance is likely to continue.

The third concern involving choice involves the possibility of creating racially identifiable schools. Choice has been typically considered as a response to a claim that schools were segregated. However, unfettered choice may result in racially identifiable schools unless transportation concerns and criteria for admission to selected attendance sites are addressed as part of the choice plan.

One attempt to address this concern has been the development of "controlled choice" plans like those advocated by Alves (1984; 1986). Although the controlled choice concept has met some success, it encoun-

tered significant legal and political opposition in both Seattle and Milwaukee.

Administration

A good deal of attention has been given to changing the ways in which decisions are made and to who has the actual power to make the decisions. "Site based management" and "teacher empowerment" have become powerful and value laden terms when educators speak of the restructuring of schools. These concepts also face some legal constraints.

The first set of constraints arise from the statutory obligations imposed on school boards and administrators. In Illinois it is clear that the school board has the duty to employ teachers and fix the salary of teachers, to select the branches of study, textbooks and teaching apparatus, and to establish the attendance units (see Note 5). While some school boards may be willing to relinquish these duties, others may not. At any rate, it is an open question as to whether a school board may relinquish these duties if they are nondelegable.

Similarly, administrators in most states have a set of imposed obligations that they may not be able to delegate even if it was their desire. Again, in Illinois, the superintendent is required to "make recommendations to the board concerning the budget, building plans, the location of sites, the selection, retention, and dismissal of teachers and all other employees, the selection of textbooks, instructional material and courses of study" (see Note 5). While it is certainly appropriate to gather input from teachers, there is no explicit

statutory basis for allowing them to make the decision.

Personnel

Personnel issues permeate any discussion of restructuring schools. Issues such as transfer, reduction in force, assignment, teaching load, class size, planning time, teacher evaluation, length of school day and year, frequency and nature of parental contact, elimination and addition of curricular offerings, inservice training requirements and increased accountability for student achievement are all subject to demands to bargain. In fact, some districts may currently have contractual provisions restricting their ability to restructure. The union and the administration must come to agreement regarding the contractual implications of restructuring.

In addition, alternative paths to certification may face challenges from teacher training institutions and/or teacher unions certainly will require modification of certification laws.

Conclusion

The discussion of restructuring schools must include a consideration of the legal implications. The legislatures must be willing to suspend or set aside statutory requirements, the unions and administration must come to agreement, and constitutional issues must be resolved. In addition, besides the issues discussed above, the concerns of parents involving attendance, curriculum offerings and access to quality education may take the form of legal action.

References

Alves, M.J. (1984). Cambridge desegregation plan succeeding. Integrated Education XXI (Nos 1-6): 178-85.

Alves, M.J. (1986). Toward maximizing parental choice and effective desegregation outcomes, in Family Choice and Public Schools, Massachusetts Department of Education, pp. 39-53.

Notes

1. A sample listing of recently required curricular offerings in Illinois can be found in 122 Ill. Rev. Stat. Sections 27-1, 27-9.1, 27-9.2, 27-12.1, 27-13.1, 27-13.2, 27-20.2, 27-20.3, 27-21, 27-22, 27-23, 27-23.1, 27-3.2 and 27-3.3.
2. See the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act, 48 Ill. Rev. Stat. Section 1701 et. seq. as an example. The statute was enacted effective January 1, 1984 and is representative of collective bargaining statutes for educational employees.
3. Mueller v. Allen, 463 U.S. 388, 103 S. Ct 3062, 77 L.Ed.2d 721 (1983).
4. 122 Ill. Rev. Stat. Sections 10-20.7 and 10-20.8. Most states have similar and/or additional duties.
5. 122 Ill. Rev. Stat. 10-21.4.



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Should School Boards be Restructured?

by *Thomas E. Glass*

Schoolboards and School board members are important members and participants in the functioning of the nation's schools. But during the past ten years of focus on school reform, boards and board members have seldom been mentioned in the literature. Why is this? Is it because educational reformers are satisfied with the present lay governance system and the elected officials, who in theory control it? Or is it because they think it is a "scared cow" and should not be disturbed?

Also, does the present system of lay governance with elected school boards enhance or discourage the possibility of meaningful reform in most school districts? The literature seems to suggest that reform policy should evolve from policy leaders outside the school district, be adopted by policy makers at the local level and be implemented at the school level through a vehicle such as site based management. Is the typical school board wise and experienced enough to distinguish between functional and worthwhile policy and that of current "Fads" which do little to change but merely provide a public relations camouflage?

Certainly, most school boards rely heavily on the policy input they receive from superintendents and other district administrators. Also, some districts have teacher advisory groups which might also present policy initiatives. But how do board members develop the knowledge and skill to select from policy initiatives and wisely use public tax dollars and

staff resources to implement reform programs which are effective in accomplishing desired goals and objectives?

It seems logical to assume that if present trends continue with more state intrusion into funding, curriculum, staffing and program evaluation, the role of the school board has been dramatically diminished (Konnert and Augenstein, 1990). However, is this really true? And, if most of the decision-making is removed from local school boards why should they continue to exist? Especially, if the decision making areas formerly the preserve of school boards have been removed to state control or are so complex that lay persons have insufficient expertise to make productive decisions.

The typical American school district has 5 to 7 elected board members, usually serving four year terms. There were 15,499 school districts listed by the U.S. Department of Education in 1988. Surprisingly, about 4000 of the districts have less than 400 students. This means, in many ways, being a board member in a small rural district is much different than in a large urban school district. In other ways board members face the same challenges but only in scale. One thing is for sure and that is the school board always has the last word (if it chooses) for local policy implementation. However, as school district functions have become more complex in the past several decades, are lay school board members the right people to govern a multimillion dollar complex organization (Lewis, 1989)?

The future of the American school board just does not seem to be

of much interest to educational writers or researchers. This is unfortunate as lay governance of schools is well embedded into the society and will likely continue. In fact, it seems that much of current school reform literature focuses on what school professionals should be doing differently and not what their governance system should be doing differently. The implicit assumption seems to be made that once school professionals see the necessity for some reform which is advocated by either parents, the political sector or the academic community, school board members will fall in behind the reform bandwagon and decree the reforms be implemented. This assumption is fraught with many dangers since both board members and administrators, let alone teachers, many times are not risk takers or want to disturb the "status quo" in a significant way. In fact, school systems historically have been quite impervious to change and this includes school boards. Change implies conflict, conflict is uncomfortable and is often perceived by administrators and board members as not being in the interest of the school district. Hence, reform/restructuring is potentially a high conflict endeavor.

There seems to be two central areas which should be addressed in restructuring school boards. The first area is that of selection and preparation of individuals wishing to be board members. The second is the actual role the board might play in district policy and management.

Today, board members in thousands of school districts are no longer professional and business leaders in the community as they once were several decades ago (Institute for

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Education Leadership, 1986). Probably, a majority of board members no longer are individuals who understand the importance of consensus in organizational management nor are they experienced in a leadership role. Many are "single issue" candidates with a few very narrow reasons as to why they seek a board position. Still others are out of their depth in understanding complicated financial or legal issues on which they are asked to make decisions. What are some strategies which might produce more appropriate board members for school districts? One of the first alternatives might be to tighten the qualifications for eligibility to run for the school board. Some might argue this is not a very democratic response since almost all national political offices require nothing but citizenship and in some cases a specified age. However, there are offices such as attorney general, health agency directors, county school superintendents, and others, which require special experience or qualifications. Why shouldn't school board members be required to possess post secondary education and some type of leadership experience? Or perhaps they should be required to attend specialized training before being allowed to file for a board position. Currently, some states require that board members attend a set number of in-service hours per year after election. It would seem just as appropriate to require a number of in-service hours prior to taking office.

The setting of qualifications to be eligible to run for board positions might discourage some persons from running but would probably in the long run discourage those having an axe to grind or who are running for a board seat to establish a base on which to run later for a higher office, which happens in many cases. Also, voters are oftentimes apathetic about school board elections and this might not be so prevalent if well qualified and respected people in the community were running. The important product of setting sets of solid qualifications

for school board membership would be a better pool of candidates. A criticism often heard is that good candidates do not currently run for board positions because it is a "thankless" job and can potentially have negative effects on their businesses or professions. With the advent of adversarial collective bargaining with teachers, a proliferation of lawsuits, and strong community reaction to certain curriculum materials and school programs, many well qualified individuals have been discouraged from running for board seats. Also, the number of hours now needed to be a productive board member has probably doubled in the past twenty years since school districts now have so many program and legal mandates to conform with, all meaning much more reading and paperwork for board members. This is a reality which must be taken into consideration when restructuring school boards for the future. Extremely well qualified people who might run for the school board must be assured that an inordinate amount of time or liability will not be expected of them while occupying board positions. What needs to be done to create capable boards and board members beyond what has already been discussed?

With respect to policy and management restructuring one move which might make board positions more attractive would be to remove the more contentious aspects of collective bargaining. For instance, if a state would adopt a statewide salary schedule for school employees much of the acrimonious wrangling that accompanies negotiations would be removed for board members. Collective bargaining has been a chief culprit in discouraging many people from running for board positions (Anderson, 1982).

Another restructuring move which is much more feasible than state changes in collective bargaining and teacher dismissal is in the contract a board establishes with its superintendent and perhaps other administrators. Currently, most admin-

istrative contracts basically spell out compensation and benefits. Some discuss the evaluation and rehiring of the superintendent. The author has never seen a contract between a board and a superintendent which clarifies what is management and what is policy (Glass, 1991). And, what precisely is the role of the superintendent in managing the district and implementing policy established by the board? A recent research study demonstrated that in Illinois there is tremendous disagreement between board members and superintendents as to what authority the superintendent possesses in managing the district without consultation or approval of the board (Glass, 1990). Thus, there is much confusion as to what is policy and what is management. Boards are often criticized for trying to "run" a school district. If very clear lines of demarcation were established between the superintendent and the board in a written manner a great deal of nonproductive time probably could be eliminated in most school districts for both superintendents and board members.

A final area of district administration which might be changed and which surprisingly would assist boards and board members is the manner in which districts are staffed administratively (Cunningham and Hentgiss, 1982). One of the organizational weaknesses of almost all school districts is that the span of supervision is too wide. For instance, it is normal for building principals to supervise 30 employees such as teachers, aides, secretaries and janitors. The central office staff is generally much too small to be efficient in acting as a paper completion unit, and providing leadership in the district and community. In brief, central office administrators generally do many things, most of which are done on the principle of expediency. This has caused task overload.

The preceding are but a few of the possible changes which could be made in school districts to lessen the time commitment and hassle associ-

ated with board membership. There are many more which might be considered both on the state and local level. The initiatives mentioned in this paper, among others, should be examined by policy leaders since most agree that school boards are not

currently functioning up to the level which will be necessary to restructure American schools for the 21st century. Generally, most policy discussions have focused on in-classroom programs or reform of the ways in which funds are raised for schools. So

far, little or no discussion has taken place on how schools are governed under layperson leadership. With restructuring initiatives now under consideration it is important to discuss the future role of the school board.

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When Everything Changes at Once

*By Maurice Sullivan, Sarah Jerome,
and G. Robb Cooper*

In examining the conditions of the urban schools in the 1990s, school leaders may find a morass of social problems, politics, financial crises, demanding stakeholders and unwilling publics. This is contrasted to the noble ideals set forth by our forefathers in education when the leader's sublime and singular guiding vision was furthering the purposes of scholarship and education. Educators now face the need to restructure schools in complex, multi-faceted environments. These conditions require leaders capable of complex, multi-dimensional thinking who serve as catalysts for change (Bolman and Deal, 1988).

A review of urban school history reveals change has been a slow and subtle process during the first 150 years. Prior to the 1980s, most urban school districts were controlled by large, conflicting, politically manipulated school boards with diffuse lay management. Proponents of the status-quo (or decentralized system) suggested that grass roots interest in schooling and widespread participation in school politics was healthy and necessary in large cities. The administrative progressives or centralizers cited the situation as outmoded, parochial and corrupt. The twentieth century brought the centralization movement composed of business and professional elites, including university professionals and new school manag-

ers. They orchestrated a shift in the control of urban education which vested political power in small committees composed of "successful" men. They patterned the process of decision making implemented by boards of directors of modern business corporations. They planned to delegate almost total administrative authority to an expert superintendent so they could redesign schools to fit the new economic and social conditions of an urban industrial society. The expressed aims were: increase accountability, cut bureaucratic red tape, organize enlightened coalitions to advance educational reform, recognize realities of class and power conflicts in American society. By 1923, the size and number of school boards had diminished by two-thirds and were predominated by business and professionals.

The progressive reformers had a common ideology and platform, identifiable coalitions and had gained substantive power over urban schools. Their reform succeeded because alliances of leading citizens and professional experts advanced and promoted structural innovations. They campaigned for "non-political" and rational reorganization of schooling and managed to change the occupational and class origins of the decision-makers--the school boards.

Between 1890 and 1940, another important change occurred--implementation of the corporate model with directors and expert managers. The superintendents were given increasing power while the board's

power declined. Public school managers saw their "major stockholders" as the business leaders and emphasized the interests of business leaders, for example, in vocational education and citizenship training. "Progressive" school superintendents found the Chamber of Commerce and businessmen natural allies in reform. They concentrated power at the top and installed experts. This effort to centralize control of schools on the corporate model and to make urban education socially efficient was promoted by university presidents, professors of educational administration, "progressive" urban superintendents, leading businessmen, lawyers and white civic clubs (Tyack, 1974).

Changes and the need to change management/leadership in urban school systems have accelerated in the 1990s. While there are many similarities, some major differences exist. For example, in the 90s, leaders are seeing a confused majority culture where minority cultures have become more vocal and forceful. Moreover, with the onset of changing social processes and unstable social forms, disintegrating urban centers have emerged. Destabilized families in uncohesive neighborhoods have replaced stable families in orderly neighborhoods. Conglomerate schools have replaced neighborhood schools. Urban schools have made three major changes:

- 1) from American enculturation to social conservation;

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- 2) from shared civic values to unrestricted free expression, a situational ethic rather than a prescriptive ethic; and
- 3) enforced attendance, a contrast from required attendance.

Hence, the school has become the quick service restaurant for basic skills, vocational skill training, social mobility, moral education, integration, drug education and chief educating source for socialization (Tyack, 1974).

In this context, the restructurer must have knowledge for managing complex systems of human behavior and decision making in organizations. This person or group will need a wide range of strategies and new mental sets in order to meet successfully the complex and confounding organizational management problems (Mitroff and Bonoma, 1978).

The state of the organization will be the result of the interaction of all of the organization's many stakeholders. Therefore, the organizational change strategy must be based on behaviors of stakeholders, networks, and the organization's power to change relevant relationships (Mitroff and Kilmann, 1975). However, no one person can with absolute certainty know all these dynamics and therefore, must be willing to take action without certainty (Bolman and Deal, 1988).

The urban school setting has a broad array of stakeholders such as students, with many different needs and agendas, parents, teachers, secretaries, board members, custodians, taxpayers, bus drivers, media personnel, teacher union leaders, athletic support groups, fine arts support groups, academicians who oppose expenditures for athletics, ethnic groups, politicians, business interests, and other sub-groups that realign and coalesce on changing issues (Tyack, 1974).

Special interest groups often present conflicting interests in an arena of finite resources. They exert power and influence to achieve individual and group self-interests. In this battleground of conflicting ideas, the manager/leader must be ever mindful of the dynamic interplay of these components where one action triggers reaction spontaneously and simultaneously in a circle of varied stakeholders (Mitroff and Kilmann, 1984).

The elements of the change process that must be managed and nurtured with dynamic, visionary leadership include:

- Change must be purposeful and focused on student outcomes and on how students learn.
- Change or restructuring must be based on local needs perceived by the community of internal external stakeholders.
- Change must be appropriate for the social or cultural milieu.
- Change requires extensive staff development or training.
- Change requires recognition of internal and external pressures, e.g., legal, financial, political, unions, business community, media.
- Change requires thoughtful tolerance of ambiguity and recognition that linear thinking will not accommodate the complex multiplicity required of spinning many plates in the air at once.
- Change can be advanced through the establishment of organizational symbolism which inspires vision, cohesion and consensus. The use of organizational stories taps the unconscious phenomena that pervade organizations and becomes a

valuable source of data for the organization.

- Change requires an effective manager/leader who realizes that total control and total command of the plural agendas and continually shifting dynamics are not feasible in the schools of the 90s--a leader who can manage "on the edge" without complete control or certainty of every dynamic.

- Change requires a process to maintain alertness and sensitivity to all levels of the interacting dynamics which is both crucial and feasible.

Rockford, Illinois is a community and a school district reflecting many, if not most, of the social, economic and political changes outlined. In an urban P,K-12 school district of approximately 28,000 students, long-term substantive improvement necessitates strategies that are cognizant of those broad-based changes. In essence, any change strategies must focus on multiple organizational entities. Failure to do so denies complex interrelationships of our community/school social system. Hence, the change strategies being employed in Rockford is a multi-faceted attempt to unfreeze multiple elements. Such unfreezing occurs not in a linear fashion, but rather they are multi-dimensional (Mason and Mitroff, 1981). Concurrent change efforts extend across organizational purposes, functions and constituencies. This school system is steeped in "status quo" with diminishing credibility of the community. For example, bureaucratic freezing and unresponsiveness to constituencies is the perception if not the fact. Hence, comprehensive, multi-dimensional efforts may be the only effective long-term approach to organizational improvement. It is certainly a time when everything changes at once!

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Restructuring by Consolidation: When the Whole is Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts

by *Ray J. Bandlow*

Restructuring conjures up images of numerous definitions and stereotypes. As jargon, the term seems to have replaced such shopworn, all-encompassing notions as "reform" and "excellence." Richard Miller, Executive Director of the American Association of School Administrators, suggests that restructuring can best be described as renewal. Restructuring includes:

- 1) Improving curriculum;
- 2) Broadening participation in decision-making;
- 3) Creating a collegial atmosphere; and
- 4) Guiding students to become active learners by changing teaching styles, curriculum focus, and student expectations (Lewis, 1989).

The following is a case study, wherein the restructuring of a medium-sized Illinois school district is analyzed.

The Change

In the summer of 1984, Kaneland Community Unit School District 302 effected a total restructure of its attendance centers and its way of doing business. That restructure completely changed the face of the district.

Before 1984, the district operated four small K-5 elementary schools, one located in each of its four major population centers, a large, centrally-located middle school serving grades 6-8, and a centrally-located high school for grades 9-12 located adjacent to the middle school.

In a bold and far-reaching action, the Board of Education closed the four small elementary schools, converted the middle school into a large K-6 elementary school and changed the high school into a 7-12 junior-senior high. Not only was every student in grades kindergarten through eighth thus reassigned to different facilities, but also every member of the staff, except sixth grade teachers, was similarly affected. While high school teachers didn't have to change buildings, the composition of their building was changed drastically with the addition of the seventh and eighth grade students and staff. The addition of the two lower grades meant a reorganization of the building, with academic classrooms for junior high students located in one wing, and core facilities such as the media center, lunchroom, and gymnasiums shared by all.

This total restructuring of a conservative, stable school district was by any measure a solid success, especially at the elementary level. It resulted in large-scale savings in operating costs, significant program improvements despite staff reductions, a streamlined administrative structure, and the more efficient utilization of limited resources.

The reorganization was made possible by a unique combination of demographic factors, financial pressure, and visionary leadership. This Board of Education seized a situational opportunity to make drastic changes with the support of its professional staff and the acquiescence of its citizenry. Citizen acceptance was later demonstrated by the fact that not a single member of the school board lost a board seat because of this action, and the superintendent who carried out the reorganization still serves in that capacity.

The Changing Nature of the Community

Kaneland CUSD 302 is a consolidated school district in the Fox River Valley of metropolitan Chicago. It includes the small towns of Elburn, Sugar Grove, Maple Park, Kaneville, and Virgil and more than 65 rural subdivisions located amid thousands of acres of productive farmland. With some 137 square miles of largely unincorporated territory, Kaneland is geographically one of the largest districts in the state of Illinois.

Kaneland contains no single population center, no active park district, no golf course, movie theater, bowling alley, or other means of recreation. The school is truly the center of the district, because it provides the focus of recreational as well as educational activities. Kaneland possesses its own sense of community, and the school district is the only legal

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entity that binds all its diverse elements together.

Its farmland location belies its constituency. The central campus stands out among corn fields and bean fields, but the student population is not farm-oriented . . . and has not been for years. So erroneous is the farm image of Kaneland, that even persons in next-door neighboring communities think of Kaneland as possessing an agricultural population. But the reality is that in 1991, fewer than 1% of Kaneland's students come from farms.

Kaneland's population is largely suburban in nature. Its residents work in the valley cities and western suburbs, and choose to live in a rural setting for quality of life reasons, not to harvest the crops.

The First Consolidation: A Central High School

In 1948, Kaneland CUSD 302 was formed by the combination of Maple Park, Elburn, Kaneville, Big Rock, and Sugar Grove. For a decade the district operated with two high schools. Then, in 1956, after several unsuccessful attempts, voters approved a bond issue to build a new, central junior-senior high school. But the district continued to operate small elementary schools in each community, while building a new elementary school in Sugar Grove. These elementaries were a source of community pride, helped salve the wounds of losing their separate high school identities, and, in the early years were reasonably well-located in proximity to the district's population. In 1965, an addition was built onto the junior-senior high and Sugar Grove Elementary to accommodate growth. In 1969, more additions were constructed at Sugar Grove and Kaneville.

Meanwhile, Big Rock voters had opted to deannex from Kaneland, and consolidated with another small district further west.

The Second Consolidation: A Central Middle School

The next major reorganization came in 1976, when the middle school was opened on the central campus. Grade 6 was moved from each elementary school, and grades 7 and 8 were relocated from the junior-senior high. This facility was designed with a maximum of flexibility, containing few interior load-bearing walls. That adaptability made its later conversion to an elementary school possible.

The creation of a central middle school was a logical next step in the consolidation of the district, and furthered the development of a sense of community bound together solely by its schools.

Recession and Retrenchment

Kaneland changed from a small town school district to a suburban school district in the 1970s, though few of its residents acknowledged its slow, steady population shift. The rural estate subdivisions proliferated during this decade, and by 1980, both Elburn and Sugar Grove, surrounded by numerous country subdivisions, had emerged as the leading population centers.

K-12 school enrollment reached a high of over 2,400 students in 1977. Then came the protracted recession and dismal housing market of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Kaneland's growth, driven by new housing, ground to a halt. At the same time, demographic trends which mirrored those experienced nationally worked to bring about declining enrollment. Persons of child-bearing age chose to have fewer children, and to have them later in life. Kaneland experienced ten straight years of enrollment decline, bottoming out in 1986 at fewer than 1,900 students.

In the late seventies and early eighties, the district might have met

the challenge of declining enrollment by closing some of its antiquated, inadequate facilities, especially those located in areas which had not experienced growth, and were declining from what had always been modest numbers. This is to say that the schools were no longer located where the people were.

Board members were resistant to closing any of the schools, though the old elementaries especially were obsolete and deteriorating. Persons in the towns whose schools were jeopardized were both vocal and effective in lobbying for the preservation of their schools. Community pride considerations superseded those of efficiency. And educational considerations, which would have underscored the inadequacy of those buildings, were not in the forefront of the debate.

The central middle school and three of the four elementaries were grossly under-utilized, and begged relief.

The Crises of 1982-84

In 1982, a series of crises loomed in Kaneland. Fueled specifically by reductions in state aid and reductions in farm land assessment, the district experienced fiscal problems caused by shrinking revenue, not excessive spending. Significant program reductions were effected, and the professional staff was also significantly reduced in 1982-83.

As the 1983-84 school year began, the revenue side worsened. A new superintendent was hired, who urged fiscal restraint and asked for time to deal with the problems. But the teachers were incensed by the reductions the board had already adopted, and patience was in short supply. Teachers demanded that the school board go into deficit financing to maintain programs and staff, while the school board vowed it would not spend in excess of its revenues. In late October, the teacher association launched a strike that would last for 13 long days.

The community was split between the two sides, but in the board election of that fall, the incumbent board members largely prevailed. The strike only served to turn the community against both the teachers and the school board alike.

The Board decided to go to its voters in March of 1984 to seek a large increase in both the education fund rate and the operations and maintenance fund rate, totaling \$1.15 per \$100 EAV. This was defeated, as disillusioned teachers essentially sat out the election, and angry parents took out their wrath on the board.

This referendum defeat was a turning point in Kaneland, and the origin of the new order that would, six months later, completely change the Kaneland School District. The school board embarked upon a series of "town meetings" to solicit community advice and perceptions about the district's future directions. Three developments emerged from those meetings and subsequent deliberations:

- 1) Both the teacher union leadership and the board realized that they needed to work together, and each determined it would do all it could to please the other. A firm commitment to site-based management and to teacher empowerment was born.
- 2) A consultant from the State Board of Education was brought in to examine the utilization of school facilities. He concluded that Kaneland's elementary buildings, with the school program provided at that time, were used for only 49% capacity (Ennis, 1984).

The board resolved that it no longer would sacrifice the educational program for the sake of operating inefficient, obsolete, unneeded schools. When voters rejected the March, 1984 referenda, they forced the board to choose either buildings or program. Despite massive community protests, threats, litigation, and petitions for successions, and raucous standing-room only meetings, the

board stood its ground and voted to close all four of the small elementary schools.

- 3) And, the board decided to go back to the voters with another rate increase referendum, while threatening to make further, deeper cuts in program if voters rejected it.

The 48 cent education fund increase passed the next fall, as did a 66 cent education fund increase in 1988.

The Third Consolidation: A Central Elementary School

The school administration and teaching staff were faced with an enormous task in the summer of 1984. With the number of operating schools being reduced from six to only two, a great migration of staff, equipment, supplies, furniture needed to be managed. Teachers by and large were most supportive of the board's decision, since they too realized it was the closing of schools that made saving educational programs and services possible. Many felt like refugees on the road, having to leave classrooms they'd nested in for as many as four decades. Accustomed ways of doing business were suddenly up for grabs. Administrators responded to the challenge with a determination to make it work, though their job security was not assured. And parents watched every move intently, with anxiety, and with great reservation.

Elements of the Re-structure

While the greatest impact was clearly seen at the elementary level, the changes that evolved in the following years were district-wide. Here are some of the improvements the district enjoyed and the process that came about through Kaneland's restructuring.

Improving Curriculum. The scope of student services and programs was greatly expanded by:

- Restoring elementary art, vocal music, and physical education, all of which had been eliminated in the reductions of 1983.
- Expanding elementary remediation services and adding developmental programs such as a "bridging" program between kindergarten and first grade.
- Providing summer school for low achievers and the gifted.
- Implementing computer instruction at the elementary and junior high levels in state of the art labs staffed by computer specialists.
- Broadening the scope of special education services, including pre-school, resources, and self-contained.
- Increasing the range of instructional support services to include full-time counselors and media specialists at the elementary and junior-senior high schools.
- Putting into place a comprehensive program for the gifted in grades two through eight.
- Improving the junior high language arts program with seventh grade developmental reading and additional instructional time for eighth grade language arts.
- Enriching the high school curriculum with the addition of advanced and college level courses such as Japanese and German, via an interactive television network.
- Increasing high school graduation requirements.

Broadening Participation in Decision-Making. Restructuring means building new coalitions of support

and new concepts of accountability. Kaneland's new view of participatory management included:

- Reducing administration by 27% and creating a flatter, streamlined organization. In 1987, only one administrator still held the same position he had held in 1982.
- Site-based management, with an emphasis on the school staff as the primary agent for school improvement.
- Commitment to parent involvement in decision-making. The district's stated beliefs include a pledge to include parents in every educational decision which affects their children.
- Strategic planning in a process that purposefully focuses the energies and resources of the district, involving more than 125 staff and citizens.
- Fostering parent assistance, including dozens of volunteers and an elementary school parent organization which provides extra funds for equipment, enrichment, and the best assemblies available in metropolitan Chicago.

- Creation of a foundation to raise funds and support enrichment learning opportunities. In its first three years, the foundation raised over \$150,000, and funded innovative projects such as the interactive television instructional network.

Creating a Collegial Atmosphere. The 1983 strike was largely due to a deep-seated feeling on the part of teachers that they were not being treated as professionals. In the time since that disastrous event, great strides have been made in teacher empowerment, including:

- A teacher-directed staff development program that includes subsidized graduate studies, on-site staff improvement programs, and a ten-fold increase in the staff development budget.
- An evaluation program developed and monitored by staff which is goal-centered and which includes the utilization of mentor teachers.
- The involvement of staff in every decision affecting them.
- Curriculum articulation and collegial planning. In Kaneland's former facility organization, some

elementary schools had only a single teacher teaching each grade. Now, with all of them under one roof, a first grade teacher can consult with a half-dozen of his or her peers.

Guiding Students to Become Active Learners. Fundamental changes in teaching and learning are underway as Kaneland has taken steps which include:

- A whole language approach to language arts, in order to emphasize comprehension and to develop an appreciation of literature.
- "Math Their Way" and the usage of math manipulatives to gain an understanding of math concepts.
- Cooperative and collaborative approaches to learning, and a focus on critical thinking skills.

Conclusions

Kaneland Community Unit School District 302's restructuring is far-reaching. Its numerous aspects have fundamentally altered how schools are organized, how decisions are made, the way teachers provide instruction, and both what and how students in Kaneland learn.

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Instructional Leadership Teams: The Vertical Team Concept

by *Connie L. Fulmer*

Wanted: Educational Improvement

The Coleman study (1966), which sounded an alarm about the ineffectiveness of schooling in our country, was echoed by other studies (Jencks 1972; Silberman 1971), and provided the stimulus not only for the erosion of public confidence in schools but also for researchers to focus on schools that, indeed, do make a difference in the educational lives of students. The findings of effective schools research have been interpreted by some to be the answers to the problems identified by the earlier studies. Consequently, recent prescriptive reform efforts aimed at educational improvement have received mixed reviews from the participants (administrators, teachers, legislators, parents, students, school board members, community, and business people) in the educational process. In any event, the wanted poster has been firmly tacked to the school house wall.

Two Waves of Reform

As the first wave of reform, "legislated learning" (Wise, 1987) subsides, site-based management and participatory decision making are evidence of the emergence of a second wave of reform, "empowerment." This new view proposes that teachers and administrators are a part of the solution, rather than the problem. Restructuring, the new buzz word, is

linked to teacher and administrator preparation programs and educational organizations. The new focus is to push decisions down into the educational hierarchy where the teaching and learning experience can inform educational decision making.

While compelling, the empowerment wave is not without problems. New roles and relationships need to be discovered and nurtured into permanent patterns of communication. The physical structures of schools have recreated the one room school house pattern (one teacher and a room full of students). This structure limits meaningful professional adult interaction. Compounding the structural problem are those of time and money. Perhaps the most difficult problem will be for teacher and administrator preparation programs to alter the curriculum and delivery system to produce educational personnel with the interpersonal skills to unlock the power of working interdependently with each other (Mackett and Fulmer, 1990).

Vertical Teaming

Vertical teaming is suggested by Wood and Gresso (1990) as a structure through which to implement school district restructuring efforts. The team is composed of members that cut across district organizational levels. The membership of a vertical instructional leadership team includes a board member, the superintendent of schools, a central office administrator responsible for instruction, a principal from each level, a teacher from each level, a businessman or woman, and a parent (Paden, 1990).

The vertical team is not only an implementation structure, but also a process. The role players from different levels in the vertical organization become part of a team in which members are treated as equals. Each player sets aside his or her role at the door and becomes an equal participant learner on a team that focus on instructional improvement. The team does not function as an elite decision making team regarding instructional issues, but rather it serves as a cadre of personnel responsible for transferring the process of discovering solutions to instructional issues to other teams, committees, and members of the school district. The vertical team process offers the promise of a group forged vision rather than one which is imposed from the top and resisted from the bottom.

Outcomes of Vertical Teaming

Vertical teams can expect three outcomes for their efforts in the process. Each member of the team will experience personal and professional growth regarding interpersonal behaviors and instructional issues. Secondly, the team will become the support network that nurtures individual growth as well as dialogue focused on the resolution of instructional issues. The third outcome occurs when the interpersonal skills developed by individual team members are transferred to other educational personnel and committees, teams, or cabinets within the district. In this process all who participate become learners. Districts benefit not only from the growth of individual staff members

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but also from the team products of knowledge, understanding, trust, and a group forged vision.

School Readiness for Restructuring

The vertical teaming program is based on eighteen assumptions which for the purpose of this article have been turned into questions. The success of a vertical team program in any district depends on the degree to which the district is ready for restructuring. Before committing time and resources to a vertical team process both the district and the potential team members should review the assumptions of the program. If answers to the questions listed below are not in the affirmative, chances are the district is not ready for restructuring as offered through the vertical team process. If the assumptions listed as questions below represent district values, vertical team processes focused on instructional issues should be considered.

1. Does the district have faculty and staff from different levels who are willing to work and commit to educational improvement?
2. Would the district support the efforts of the team?
3. Would restructuring efforts be aimed at improving instruction for students?
4. Would team members be willing to mentally convert environmental obligations and expectations into opportunities?
5. Would team members participate in developing a climate of openness and trust?
6. Would the district provide a variety of alternatives for professional development?
7. Would team members view transition as a process of continuous growth?

8. Does the district seek ways of improving programs, operations, and instruction?
9. Does the district accept the notion that meaningful change takes three to seven years?
10. Does the district believe that change will more likely occur in a school when all interested parties are involved in the decisions and monitoring of change in current practice?
11. Would the district's focus on change or improvement in education be on the school rather than individuals in the district?
12. Does the district believe that school improvement requires systematic strategies which take into account students, teachers, administrators, facilities, materials, organization of schools, etc.?
13. Would the district provide the resources necessary for school improvement - time, funds, staff, and materials?
14. Does the district believe that staff development is essential for school improvement?
15. Do the principals believe they are key people in determining whether and how new programs will be implemented and continued in a school?
16. Does the district believe that school improvement should focus on improvement for individual students?
17. Does the district believe that support for school improvement depends on a positive school climate (trust, open communication, and peer support)?
18. Does the district believe that the home, school, and community ought to work together more effectively to increase the learning opportunities?

Track Record

Paden (1990) reports that forty school districts located in eighteen different states have experienced the vertical team program which was developed and refined by the Danforth foundation and I/D/E/A. Three school districts in Iowa started vertical team programs in October of 1989. In the same month in 1990 four Illinois school districts (Pekin, Mount Vernon, Joliet, and Mendota) completed the vertical team training session. Each district made a commitment to develop a statewide communication network of facilitators and teams involved in vertical team processes. While research on the vertical team processes is scant at this point in time, the information that is available suggests that the journey of each vertical team is idiosyncratically mapped in response to the instructional issues of each individual district. In addition, because solutions to instructional issues were developed from within the district by team members, implementation promises to be less of a problem.

Something Old, Something New

Brainstorming techniques (silent, round-robin, free wheeling), consensus building activities, active listening skills, and other processes used by vertical teams are not new. Neither are the instructional issues upon which they are focused. Districts have continuously revisited issues of grouping students for instruction, tracking, staff development, individualized instruction, mainstreaming special education students, gifted programs, curricular development, and educational assessment and measurement. School district participants (administrators, teachers, specialists, and central office personnel, school board members, and outside consultants) have been working on these issues but usually in isolation, each trying to individually make a

difference in the lives of his or her staff members or students.

What does appear to be new in the vertical team process is the relationship that develops between people newly engaged in a dialogue (rather than a discussion) focused on instructional issues. Senge (1990) defines the difference between a discussion and a dialogue. In discussions, the discourse is back and forth resembling a ping pong game. In a dialogue, "people actually feel as if they are building something." When individuals attempt to work on the complex problems of schools many times their efforts are in conflict with each

other. The vertical team process presents the opportunity to explore the content and complexity of instructional issues with the most relevant stakeholders, those people closest to the problems.

Don't be fooled, however, that vertical team processes will eliminate alternative view points and controversies. Alternately, do not be discouraged by the existence of conflict in an educational organization. Consider it a strength. The potential for solutions to complex instructional issues promises to be greater when members who have been successful in developing the interpersonal skills and a climate

of trust are able to turn differences of opinion into the building blocks for new flexible school structures.

If a school district is able to qualify in meeting the eighteen assumptions list above, and if the educational stakeholders of that district are ready to commit to a period of both personal growth and as well as team learning, the vertical team process promises to produce educational improvement in that district. The vertical team process enables the participants to become active in the solutions of instructional issues and aligned with the second wave of reforms.

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Rural School District Reorganization: A Continuing Agenda

by Charles H. Sederberg

Planning for the future of school district organizations remains on policy agendas because of

- 1) changing economic and demographic characteristics of communities and
- 2) increasing educational expectations.

School district reorganization tends to focus on small rural communities where the effects of socio-economic change are most pronounced. Appropriate policy goals of school district reorganization are to increase:

- 1) equity in access to educational opportunity;
- 2) efficiency in use of resources; and
- 3) effectiveness in achieving learner and social outcomes.

While these goals have rational appeal, the process is difficult because new plans must be drawn on a slate that is cluttered with the chalk of traditions and economic interests that may conflict with educational reform.

A Wave of Reorganization

A major wave of school district reorganization followed World War II because of a prolonged lag between educational expectations driven by socioeconomic change and the organizational capability of school districts to provide required services. During the formative period of westward expansion, elementary schooling was considered the minimum essential

education for an agrarian society and thousands of common districts were organized to provide instruction in grades 1-8. Scientific discoveries, inventions, capitalism, and mass production were among the forces that transformed the United States into an industrial society. With mechanization of agriculture, motorized transportation networks, larger farms operated by fewer and smaller families, and migration of surplus rural labor to urban centers, high school was increasingly accepted as the minimum essential education in an industrial society.

Formation of K-12 and high school districts in rural towns was a precursor of the wave of district reorganization that was to follow. For children in the countryside, attending grades 1-8 in a rural common district and grades 9-12 in a town district on a tuition basis became a common pattern. Instead of becoming part of the organizations that provided high school education for their children, common districts were maintained as shields against the taxing powers of K-12 districts. Common districts continued to exist long after increasing farm size and migration reduced their enrollments to make them classified as "non-operating." World War II marked a watershed for change in the United States. Employment opportunities in the defense industry and increased demand for agricultural products accentuated trends in migration and scale of farm operations, widened the gap between educational expectations and organizational capability of school districts, and shifted more power from rural to urban representatives in state legislatures.

In 1945, 101,382 school districts in the United States operated a total of 24,134 secondary schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 1989). State legislatures and departments of education responded to the organizational lag with efforts to reorganize existing school districts into viable administrative units that were capable of providing K-12 education. After prolonged, contentious, and politically stressful state efforts, the number of school districts nationwide was reduced to 15,912 by 1980 with 24,362 secondary schools operated by these remaining districts (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1989). This dramatic reduction marked the end of a major wave in school district reorganization that emphasized reduction in numbers.

Continued Socio-economic and Educational Change

While school districts were being reorganized to meet the elementary secondary educational expectations of an industrial society, a new, vaguely defined post-industrial society characterized by global markets, applications of high technology, different lifestyles, and higher educational expectations was beginning to emerge. Possession of a high school diploma offered diminishing assurance of employment that afforded home ownership, health insurance, rearing a family, and a modestly comfortable lifestyle in either small or large communities.

Following World War II, growing multi-national corporations increased foreign investments, shifting

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production to countries where introduction of new technology, access to raw materials, and lower labor costs yielded higher profits. New technology in communications and transportation supported the development of global markets in which decisions by the large multi-national corporations affected national use of natural resources, employment opportunity, and quality of life (O'Connor, 1987). Higher energy and lower commodity prices in the world market, applications of technology to agriculture, forestry, and mining, decentralization of manufacturing, mass media, and emergence of a few large towns as regional trade centers continue to change rural United States. Many small towns with declining service center economies are now competing to attract industries with private sector development incentives such as free or reduced cost of land (e.g., industrial parks) and subsidized capital (e.g., loan guarantees) as well as seeking public sector transfer payments to subsidize their continued existence (Stinson, 1990). In spite of these efforts, population forecasts for many rural counties predict continuing decline. Assessments of the future economic vitality of small towns that cannot attract new industries are not optimistic (Hart and Bendiksen, 1989).

Educational policy responses to these broad socio-economic changes was symbolized by *A Nation At Risk* (National Council on Excellence in Education, 1983) which spawned a flurry of national, state, and local studies and educational reforms. The over arching goal that emerged from the reform movement was a better educated workforce, particularly in mathematics, science, and technology, that could compete successfully in global markets. Means toward this goal included improved teacher pre-service and inservice training, enriched curriculum, higher standards, and more effective school organizations. While "excellence" was the prevailing theme in the education reform movement, there was also a less

pronounced call for increased social intervention by school organizations because of the undesirable effects of socio-economic change on family life, (Coleman, 1987). Similarly, a framework of traditional stereotypes is not useful in describing the context of education in contemporary rural United States (U.S. Department of Education, 1989).

The Continuing Agenda

Uncertainty exists as to what should be placed on the school district reorganization agenda for action, but organizational structure remains a matter of policy concern. Three studies illustrate principal areas of concern: organizational viability, program quality, and economic effects. A trend analysis during the period 1980-81 through 1985-86 across all districts in one state (Minnesota) stratified by enrollment size concluded:

Compared to other geographic enrollment size categories of Minnesota school districts, rural districts with fewer than three sections (61 to 90 students) per grade experienced greater adverse effects as the result of community demographic and economic change. Results of the study indicated that these low enrollment districts

- a) experienced the largest percent enrollment decline,
- b) face a percent projected enrollment decline greater than the state as a whole through 1990-91,
- c) have had the smallest increases in adjusted assessed valuation,
- d) have had the largest percent increases in delinquent taxes receivable in total and on a per pupil unit basis, and
- e) experienced declining enrollment and rising costs which have combined to cause operating expenditures per pupil to have larger percent increases than districts in other geographic/enroll-

ment size categories (Sederberg and Hendrix, 1989).

The second study, focused on quality of high school programs, reported:

For districts where high school students are few, we understand that heroic means may now be the only way to deliver a curriculum of any breadth. Yet, notwithstanding these special efforts, our results show that smaller districts provide fewer academic courses (by any method) and cost substantially more to operate. The practical effect for students is that some cannot enroll in high school courses which are routinely available to their peers (State of Minnesota, Office of the Legislative Auditor, 1988).

State school aids constitute a large transfer payment to the biggest employer in many smaller rural towns. An exploratory study of the economic role of school districts in selected rural counties indicated that school district operations were

- 1) of greater economic importance in less prosperous communities,
- 2) perceived as essential in maintaining both commercial and residential property values, but
- 3) should not be regarded as economic development in the same way, or in place of, new agricultural products, food processing, mining operations, forest product development or tourist attractions that employ people to produce goods and services that are sold in a larger marketplace (Sederberg, 1987).

As of 1987, approximately 6,227 or 30 percent of the 20,758 secondary schools in the United States had fewer than 300 students enrolled (National Center for Education Statistics, 1989).

The most extensive recent study of organizational alternatives for small rural districts was conducted by Monk and Haller (1986) in New York. They concluded that:

1) traditional consolidation to form larger districts could not be relied on to result in either educational equity or economic efficiency;

2) intermediate units had potential for helping small districts offer comprehensive programs, but had not lived up to expectations;

3) instructional technology was not truly an organizational alternative, but ". . .the current state of computers and computer software has little to offer to the solution of problems faced by small rural schools"; and

4) interactive telecommunications showed promise, but limited experience indicated problems with student scheduling and supervision, restriction of opportunity to motivated students, finding competent teachers, and high costs. Because of variability among small schools, they recommended multiple organizational alternatives as opposed to a single solution such as consolidation. The short list of proposed alternatives included

a) partial reorganization (e.g., regional high schools),

b) institutionalized sharing (e.g., districts jointly offering services under a contractual agreement with a state subsidy), and

c) "necessity aid" for small rural schools where educational problems transcend organizational solutions.

Conclusion

Reducing the number from approximately 101,000 to 15,000 does not mean that the problem of maintaining viable school district organizations has been resolved. Economic and demographic changes continue to increase educational expectations and threaten the viability of small town and school district infrastructure in rural areas. Restructuring must now

focus on the quality of reorganized school districts in terms of equity, efficiency, and effectiveness as opposed to merely reducing the number of administrative units being combined in order to justify the effort and stress involved. State macro educational policy should require planning for district organization which uses a system approach to insure that:

1) a newly reorganized district could anticipate sufficient financial resources to provide all mandated instructional and support services for at least a five-year projected enrollment period (programmatic viability);

2) adequate plant facilities exist or can be remodeled/constructed to adequately house mandated services; and

3) periodic research and/or monitoring provide accountability for effectiveness. District restructuring is a governance/administrative means toward educational ends which must adapt to socio-economic change.

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Choice as a Means of Restructuring Schools

by Lee A. Fabri and Charles A. Sloan

For the past several years the topic at the forefront of many discussions in the educational community about the future of education has been "choice". Resulting from the growing disenchantment with the school restructuring process and the procedures and progress of school reform, "choice", the get-tough-marketplace approach to school improvement where parents are allowed to determine which schools their children will attend, has become yet another solution to the perceived problems of public schools. The phenomenon of school choice has received support from the grass roots level to the White House, from local school boards to the state and national legislatures, and has been promoted in many different forms. The term has been used to describe everything from the way schools are organized and managed, to the way teachers are trained and paid, to the way students are taught and tested. Choice has become the panacea of the educational reformation and restructuring of our schools and, as such, has been used to define at least a portion of almost every current attempt to improve the educational system as it exists today.

The President of the United States and the Congress have proposed legislative measures in the past year which will encourage the adoption of choice plans through financial incentives from the federal government for states and districts wishing

to experiment with choice plans in their restructuring efforts. Former Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos has reaffirmed the Bush Administration's commitment to choice as the cornerstone of its educational policy by announcing the establishment of a choice "outreach office" with a Choice Hotline and a resource bank of experts available as consultants within the education department. The Illinois State Board of Education has received funds from the Illinois Legislature to promote restructuring and the development of choice plans in public school districts.

States, such as Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Washington, have enacted laws and regulations designed to increase the spectrum of schools from which families can select for their children's education. Other states, such as Alaska, Colorado, and Iowa, have adopted school choice plans designed to allow students, under certain circumstances, to attend schools other than those in their local communities. Further, states, such as Missouri, New York, and Wisconsin, have created school choice plans which use magnet or specialized schools to promote desegregation. School districts in Cambridge, St. Louis, and Milwaukee have developed programs which allow for some form of school choice as a means of alleviating a perceived problem within their school system boundaries. The State of Illinois is currently examining the potential of school choice plans for implementation in its school districts which, according to data recently released from Northern

Illinois University's 1990 Illinois Policy Study, many Illinois residents support (McCrary, 1990). Almost half of those surveyed by the University indicated that they are in favor of allowing parents to choose the public school which their children will attend, no matter where they live. Allowing parents to select the schools which their children will attend is a concept as American as baseball, apple pie and motherhood with examples of the exercise of the right of citizens to select schools based upon their preferences and beliefs dating back to the colonial period of America's history. Parental choice in education is enjoying growing support among both minorities and whites (Rossell & Glenn, 1988). Proponents of choice argue that increasing educational options will improve the relationship between individual educational goals and public schooling. They claim that allowing parental choice will provide an organizational climate which will encourage initiative, competition, and accountability in the public school arena.

The Consortium on Educational Policy Studies at Indiana University suggests in its policy brief, "Educational Choice", that effective educational choice plans ought to incorporate clear statements of goals; information and counseling in order to assist parents in making the best choice for their children; fair and equitable admissions procedures for all children, not just those who are first to apply; procedures to ensure racial integration; and program development assistance to school fac-

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ulty. They also propose that all choice plans must equitably compensate schools that receive students from poorer districts, but at the same time, be careful not to siphon funds from schools that need money the most. They continue by reporting that choice plans must also provide transportation to schools that are within a reasonable geographic area so that all families can choose among the greatest number of schools possible (Consortium, 1990).

There are concerns, however, about the effectiveness of this educational option's ability to improve the perceived deficiencies of our public schools today. These difficulties, in the minds of some educators, parents, and legislators are inherent in the implementation of choice plans and must be addressed prior to acceptance of school choice as the panacea for eliminating the perceived educational discontent of the public. Some of these areas of concern are the basic inequity upon which choice is based, the potentially substantial administrative and transportation costs, the advantages of choice for the upper class and academically talented students over those of the lower class and below average academic ability, the failure of choice plans to address the

needs of small and rural school districts, and the basic need of schools and school districts for increased funding and parental support.

Dr. Lewis W. Finch (1989), former superintendent of Anoka-Hennepin School District 11 in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, who states that "as I look at the open-enrollment program that allows any student here in Minnesota to choose any school statewide, I am reminded of the snake-oil salesman who plays on the great American passion for quick, cheap remedies to complex ailments." He indicates that Minnesota is using choice to force a restructuring of the state's public elementary and secondary schools and in lieu of adequate, equitable funding of public schools. He also opines that choice is a thinly veiled attempt to include private and parochial schools in the options available to parents in spite of constitutional restrictions on such an action.

The American Association of School Administrator's (AASA) Executive Director, Richard Miller, states that, while the AASA believes that all children should receive the best education possible and supports choice as a local district or building option, open enrollment choice plans, as conceived, would drive this nation

even further in the direction of a two tiered society. Monies that would normally be spent on education would be used to promote or advertise schools, hardships would be placed on parents whose children attend school many miles away, the academically and athletically talented would benefit while those less fortunate would be left behind to stagnate, if choice were to be given free reign (Miller, 1990).

While involving parents in the education of their children is hardly a new concept and the right of parents to select their children's school has been an American tradition, the concerns of educators with regard to school choice merit consideration. If the only purpose of restructuring our schools is to bring about change, then choice would seem to be as logical a method to obtain this result as any other current fad. However, if the goal of restructuring is to provide a better education for our children, a more effective and efficient school system, until the choice advocates have found solutions to the problems inherent in choice plans when implemented on more than a local school or school district level, choice would seem to be more harmful than beneficial to the restructuring process.

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School Restructuring: Chicago and the Nation

by *G. Alfred Hess, Jr.*

School reform in the United States has progressed through two major waves during the 1980s. The first efforts at reform were designed to heighten accountability of professional educators to the public, at large. Stung by the rhetoric of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission, 1983), legislators across the country raised graduation requirements, raised certification requirements for teachers, began to test teachers, and began to tie test results to public reporting requirements. In a few places, these tougher accountability requirements were matched with higher compensation, under the image, "You produce more, and we'll pay you more."

In Illinois, this first wave of reform culminated in the statewide education reforms included in 1985 legislation, P.A. 84-126, which established a statewide testing program (The Illinois Goal Assessment Program) and school report cards for every district and school in the state. It also established a set of state support programs including early childhood programs for the disadvantaged and a Reading Improvement Program which ended up being a direct, per pupil grant to all school districts, wealthy and poor, across the state. Across the nation, with a few notable exceptions such as in South Carolina, this accountability movement had little impact on student achievement.

During the mid 1980s attention began to focus on a different approach to improving our nation's schools, restructuring. School and school sys-

tem restructuring became a watchword, though the concept itself includes many different efforts. Closely associated with the notion of restructuring is school based management or shared decision-making.

Richard Elmore (1988) has suggested there are three competing models of how schools should be improved. The first is the technical transfer model under which academics claim they know how to fix schools if they could just get local school people to listen to them and to adopt their approaches. The Chelsea (Massachusetts) experiment in which Boston University accepted a ten year management contract to run the system is the ultimate test of this approach, but all over the country, schools of education run clinics for school superintendents and teachers, encourage professionals to continue their education and earn advanced degrees, and offer themselves as expert consultants in seeking to transfer their technical expertise to the school level. Despite the continuing supply of teacher graduate students and the lucrativeness of educational consulting, the continuing low achievement levels of the nation's students attest to the ineffectiveness of the technical transfer model.

The real contest for supremacy in the school reform effort is being waged between the remaining two models: professionalization and client empowerment. School based management or shared decision-making is one strategy being employed under each of these models. The professionalization model emphasizes the expert knowledge of teachers in the classroom, who know from first hand experience what needs to be done to

improve their schools. Academic expertise is seen to be complex and not always rooted in the realities of day to day classroom experience. Under this model, the reason that schools do not perform well is that they do not have the level of organization needed to sustain professional involvement. The locus of authority should be in the classroom, where teachers are in contact with children. If the bureaucrats would stay out of the way, the teachers would get the job done. The emphasis here is really on giving the workers in the system greater input into managerial decision-making (Carnegie Forum, 1986) and in this way, it is closely related to the current participative democracy theories of business management most popularly discussed under the images of quality circles (Deming, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Not surprisingly, both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have embraced the professionalization model of school restructuring. The AFT has aggressively pursued replications of their earliest pilot program launched in Hammond, Indiana where the union contract in 1983 included a commitment to develop School Improvement Teams at every school, primarily composed of the principal and teachers, with token parent and community representation (O'Rourke, 1987). Those teams now operate in each of Hammond's 23 schools, and the model has been replicated in Dade County (Miami), San Diego, Los Angeles and other less known cities. Somewhat different models have been pursued in Pittsburgh (teacher retraining system-wide) and Rochester (teacher respon-

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sibility and compensation ladder) and in other places. The NEA more recently launched its restructuring efforts under its 21st Century School program. The revamping of teacher preparation in schools of education is seen to be an integral part of the effort to enhance the professionalization of public schooling (Holmes Group, 1986).

There are two forms of the client empowerment model of school improvement. One form focuses on enrollment choice, whether in its more radical form of vouchers (Friedman & Friedman, 1981; Coons & Sugarman, 1978; and most recently, Chubb & Moe, 1990) or its more restrained form of choice within the public school context (Nathan, 1989; National Governors' Association, 1986). To date, implementation of choice has been most notable in a few local districts such as East Harlem's District 4 (Fliegel, 1989) and Cambridge (Peterkin, 1989) and in a number of statewide plans such as those in Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa and Vermont (Nathan, 1989).

A second form of client empowerment is a system restructuring which grants governance control to clients, parents and community representatives. Of course, in most small school districts in the nation, parents and community representatives exercise that governance control directly through elected boards of education. In Illinois, outside of Chicago, the average size of some 955 such school districts is about 1,350 students in from one to four schools. Parent and citizen control is assumed to be appropriate in all of those situations. The Chicago School Reform Act appropriates that same principle by creating parent and community dominated Local School Councils at each of the city's 542 schools, 46 of which enroll more students than does the average school district in the state. But the restructuring of the system to move primary power to the school unit and then to give a dominant voice to parents and community residents is

the most radical form of client empowerment now being attempted.

The Chicago School Reform Act

The effort to reform Chicago's schools grew out of heightened public awareness of the failure of the Chicago system to educate its young people. While many assume the 1987 19-day teacher strike gave rise to the reform effort, that event simply culminated an effort which had already been in process for more than a year. Responding to reports of a 43 percent dropout rate (Hess & Lauber, 1985) and the inability of graduates to read at national norms (Designs For Change, 1985), Mayor Harold Washington had convened an Education Summit in 1986. The 1987 strike just reemphasized the failure of the professionals to be able to collaborate and their intransigent unwillingness to do anything which would improve learning opportunities for students. With the self-discrediting of the professionals, a client empowerment model of school reform was the only remaining possibility.

The Chicago School Reform Act (P.A. 85-1418, now replaced by P.A. 86-1477) has three major components:

- a set of goals;
- a reallocation of resources; and
- a mechanism for school based management.

The goals call for the system to provide an education to the city's children which will enable them to achieve at national norm levels within five years. The reallocation provision caps the non-instructional proportion of the budget at the statewide average for such costs, and in the process moved \$40 million to the school level during the first year of implementation. It also targets funds towards those schools with the most disadvantaged students and requires that those

funds be expended at the discretion of the local school. But the most noted aspect of the act is that it establishes ". . . the individual local school[as] the essential unit for educational governance and improvement. . . ." (P.A. 85-1418, Sec 34-1.01.B).

School based management was established in the form of governing Local School Councils (LSCs) composed of six parents, two community representatives, two teachers and the principal (in secondary schools, a non-voting student was elected by his/her peers). These councils were given three primary responsibilities:

- 1) to adopt a school improvement plan (drafted by the principal in consultation with the council and the teachers and the community);
- 2) to adopt an expenditure plan to undergird the improvement effort; and
- 3) to select (or terminate) the principal for a four year performance contract.

Principals were given the right to select on the basis of merit, not seniority, educational personnel to fill new or vacant staff positions. In this way, local school staff, parents, and community members were given the charge to restructure their individual schools to improve the educational opportunities for the students who attended them (see Note 1).

Currently (February, 1990), the Chicago reform effort is in its second year of implementation. The first year was designed to be a training and planning year. LSCs received training about their responsibilities. They adopted their first School Improvement Plans (all but 80 had completed them prior to the end of the 1989-1990 school year), adopted budgets in all but 40 schools (*Chicago Tribune*, August 15, 1990), and, in all but a few schools, have selected their educational leadership for the next four years. The principal selection process was to take place over two years, with half the schools making selections in the first year and half in the second.

At the end of the first year, about 150 principals of the 276 selected were new to their schools since the enactment of the school reform legislation (Andreoli, 1990). At this point, 198 of 251 schools selecting this year have offered contracts to their incumbent principals (*Chicago Tribune*, February 14, 1991), meaning 53 will be choosing new leadership. Thus, some 203 principals (38.5 percent of the total) will be providing new leadership to their schools under the reform effort.

Prospects of the Success of School Reform in the 1990s

To date, most of the efforts to improve schools under the professionalization and client empowerment models of school reform are too new to show any significant indications of success or failure. It is easy to point out that school based management approaches have not yet shown much change in student achievement (Rungeling & Glover, 1991), but with the exception of Hammond, most are too new or too partially implemented to have had much prospect for changing student achievement. Pittsburgh's curriculum realignment and teacher training program have raised that city's achievement scores above the national norms (Johnston, et al.,

1990). Similarly, both Cambridge and East Harlem report significantly improved student achievement, with Peterkin and Fliegel ascribing the improvement to choice, through a careful reading of the accounts of those districts leads this author to conclude it was the reorientation of school programs by dedicated teams of professionals at the school level which had the prior effect on student achievement.

School restructuring should be distinguished from system restructuring. In school districts where professionals are leading the movement to improve schools, the focus is more on sharing decision-making among the professionals and seeking to get greater professional commitment to improving student achievement at the local school level. Thus, the emphasis is on sharing decision-making in schools rather than on developing power on the school level. Where professionals have been unwilling to lead the movement for improvement, such as in Chicago, there is naturally more interest in forcing professionals to change their behavior, in creating local accountability of professionals to parents who are interested in seeing improved opportunities for their children.

The issue to be resolved in this contest between the professionalization model and the client empowerment model of school system restruc-

turing revolves around the ultimate impact on schools. Carl Marburger (1985), one of the first advocates of school based management, makes the point that school improvement happens *One School at a Time*. Thus, the issue is, will any of these approaches result in school level change that gives kids a better chance to learn? For the client empowerment approach, that translates into the question, "Can an approach that is based on confrontation (accountability) lead to collaboration among professionals and between them and parents, so that real change at the classroom level might be enabled?" For those engaged in the professionalization approach, a corresponding question arises, "Will professionals use their new opportunity to be involved in school management to focus on improving opportunities for students, or will they only focus on improving their own working conditions?" But behind either of these two complementary questions lies a third, "Will school professionals know enough about what might lead to school improvement to adopt plans which might lead to real change?" The Pittsburgh model of intensive staff development is more focused on this last question, and that system's results make its model important for all others involved in the school reform movement of the 1990s.

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Notes

1. For a full account of the Chicago school reform effort, see the author's *School Restructuring: Chicago Style*, Corwin Press (a division of Sage Publishing), 1991.



Errata

(This is to correct the editor's note appearing on page 75 of the Thresholds in Education issue, "Research in Education: Selected Student

Research at NIU," February and May 1991, Vol. XVII Nos. 1 and 2.)

The Fenstermaker study was not based upon a secondary analysis of

Cosky's dissertation research, but upon original research using the same population sample.

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