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THE INFLUENCES AND CONTROLS OVER LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

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THE DEFINITION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AS THE SELECTION, ASSIGNMENT, STIMULATION, GUIDANCE, AND EVALUATION OF HUMAN EFFORT TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN QUALITIES IS USED AS A FUNCTIONAL DEFINITION FOR IDENTIFYING AND CLARIFYING THE INFLUENCES AND CONTROLS OVER LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS. IF INFLUENCE REFERS TO THE POWER OF PRODUCING EFFECTS BY INVISIBLE OR INSENSIBLE MEANS, AND IF CONTROL REFERS TO THE EXERCISE OF RESTRAINT OR DIRECTION OVER SOMETHING, THEN CONSIDERATION CAN BE FOCUSED UPON 2 LEVELS OF INFLUENCE AND CONTROL WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM. THE FIRST, FORMAL INFLUENCES AND CONTROLS, ORIGINATES WITH THE JUDICIAL, LEGISLATIVE, AND EXECUTIVE AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. THE SECOND LEVEL OF FOCUS INVOLVES THE INFORMAL INFLUENCES AND CONTROLS, ORIGINATING FROM THE FORCES, AGENCIES, AND INTERACTIONS OF THE TOTAL SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT. THIS LEVEL OF INFLUENCE AND CONTROL IS A RESULT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS INDIGENOUS TO A PARTICULAR SCHOOL SYSTEM. SCHOOL BOARDS AND SUPERINTENDENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF SUCH FORCES IN ORDER TO ADOPT PROCEDURES TO DEAL OBJECTIVELY WITH THE TOTAL FIELD OF FORCES INFLUENCING EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS. IN ORDER TO REALIZE SUCH PROCEDURES, A MATRIX FOR PLANNING AN ADMINISTRATIVE ATTACK IS PROPOSED IN ORDER THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT MIGHT OBJECTIVELY DEAL WITH THE SELECTION, ASSIGNMENT, STIMULATION, GUIDANCE, AND EVALUATION OF IDEAS, PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS. THIS ADDRESS WAS DELIVERED TO THE ADMINISTRATORS OF FIVE STATES AT THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS DRIVE-IN CONFERENCE (LOUISVILLE, APRIL 30, 1967). (GB)

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**THE INFLUENCES AND CONTROLS OVER LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS<sup>1</sup>**

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The definition of school administration as stated in 1932 by Dr. John Guy Fowlkes, Professor of Educational Administration, University of Wisconsin, is as follows: "Administration is the selection, assignment, stimulation, guidance, and evaluation of human effort toward the development of human qualities." This definition stands now in its fourth decade without much improvement from others' efforts. It is a functional definition that serves the purpose of theoretical consideration and practical analysis. It is used here as the basic definition of school administration as a vehicle for discussing the influences and controls over local school systems.

There are action words in this definition. These action words claim the superintendent as their subject and society's expectations as their object. The human effort and the development of human qualities focus in this discussion on those efforts and those qualities which are related to the described and assigned responsibilities of the public school system. The action words which claim the superintendent as subject call for knowledge, judgment, and determination if they fulfill the intent of the definition.

The definers of the expectations placed upon the schools are many and varied in motives, procedures, and strength of conviction. The definers of expectations often are self-chosen and, at other times, officially elected. They may evolve from the simple, sincere and direct efforts of the "people" to find their fulfillment in the vehicle of its organization called the school. Each definer has unique conditions which temper his value system. He defines according to his motives, to his interests, and to those things which he uses

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<sup>1</sup>Address delivered to the administrators of five states at an AASA Drive-in Conference, Louisville, Kentucky. April 30, 1967.

as criteria of mobility, hope, and achievement. Each definer may be different from every other definer simply because of his background of existence and experience which help him or direct him in living as he does, in hoping as he does, and in imposing his beliefs upon another.

The superintendent of schools is as unique in his own beliefs as are his role definers or the definers of the school expectations. The superintendent, however, has a professional and a contractual commitment. The definers of the expectations of the school seldom have a professional and contractual commitment directly related to or involved in the school as an agency of society. The definer of expectations indeed may represent a competing agency, a thwarting agency, or a supporting agency. The definer of expectations may be a professional in another field in which he has many and varied definers of his expectations. The professional and contractual commitments of the superintendent of schools, then, are subjected to an infinite variety of influences and controls from an equally infinite variety of sources.

The above statement is not to plead the impossibility of the superintendent's need to achieve rationality in his position but rather to indicate an understanding of the kinds of stresses and strains, pulls and pushes, demands and encouragements, thrusting and thwarting which characterize his many-faceted task. The major interest in this discussion is that of identifying and clarifying the influences and controls over local school systems as these influences and controls get to the local school system through its chief executive officer.

Definition of terms, then, seems to be in order and such attention is given to two major terms. The Harper and Row American College Dictionary defines influence as the "power of producing effects by invisible or insensible means" and control as "to exercise restraint or direction over"; "dominate"; "command". The influences and controls on the school, then, can be consolidated into the

one concept of successful efforts to influence the purposes and processes of the schools by means that are not always visible or identifiable. The perception of the processes of exercising this influence must mature to the point where it constitutes actual restraint or absolute direction in the purposes and processes of the school as a social institution.

The analysis presented here will keep the two terms as defined in proper focus. The focus is upon the identification of some of the influences or controls as well as some observations on the processes by which influences may and controls do occur. The organization of this paper from this point will involve three parts. The first part will be a discussion of the formal influences and controls originating in the judicial, legislative, and executive agencies of the federal, state, and local governments. Examples only can be given. Any attempt to provide an exhaustive list would be sheer folly. Even though time and ability were equal to a full cataloging of what has occurred in the past, it is readily and immediately recognizable that within the next hour new ones might be added in every category. Relying upon examples seems the only practical attack to make.

The second part will involve a discussion of the informal influences and controls originating in a vast variety of agencies, interactions, and conditions. Material assistance in the discussion of this part of the problem draws heavily upon the work done by Dr. William W. Wayson, Professor of Education, Syracuse University. Appreciation is expressed for the diagram which carries the foot-noted credit.

The third and final part includes a summary exploration of the superintendent's role as an evaluator, acceptor-rejector, mediator, coordinator, and expediter of influences and controls either accomplished or attempted as they relate to the purposes and processes of the school system.

## THE FORMAL IMPACTS

The discussion here is related to the judicial, legislative, and executive influences and controls of the federal, state, and local levels of government. The matrix, as presented in Figure 1, is designed to provide only examples of the kinds of actions that may influence or control the schools at the local level. The figure may be read vertically or horizontally. The discussion here will be directed to the vertical columns only for, otherwise, too much duplication would occur as the purpose is achieved.

There will be found in the first column some examples of federal influences and controls. It must be kept in mind that the definitions of influence and control indicate that there is a sequential or level relationship. The statement of opinion by the chief executive of the federal government might impress the local school administrator to the extent that direction to his own action and leadership in the school system would be affected. It does not constitute a control, however, until the expressions of that chief executive become embodied in the statutory form which requires legislative action and, in many instances, a review and approval or disapproval by the judicial branch of government. Thus, in any one instance, it ought not to be concluded that the example is final. The executive opinion, request, or urging may take the form of support to legislation or of contradiction to legislative effort. The statutory provision cannot be considered final since it too is subject to review by the judiciary and might be supported or denied.

The purpose of this presentation is not that of determining the governmental processes at any level but rather to look from the front step of the superintendent's office to the influences and controls which are beamed in his direction from the agencies and divisions of agencies indicated above. The

FIGURE 1

A MATRIX FOR SUMMARIZING THE FORMAL INFLUENCE  
AND CONTROL IMPACTS<sup>1</sup>  
(Some examples)

	Federal	State	Local
JUDICIAL	Released Time Desegregation "Lord's Prayer and Bible Reading" cases	Corporal Punishment  Statutory Intent re: Allocated Jurisdiction  Salacious and Pornographic	Tort Liabilities  Employment- Dismissal Procedures  Delinquency
LEGISLATIVE	NDEA Economic Oppor- tunity Act Civil Rights Act	Fiscal Support Teacher Tenure  Special Obser- vances	Budgetary Controls Zoning Ordinances  Building Codes
EXECUTIVE	Compliance Grant Approval  Evaluation of Accountability	Financial Aid Requirements  Curriculum Bulletins  Professional Negotiations	Welfare Services  Legal Services  Protective Services

1. Professors Lanore A. Netzer and Glen G. Eye, Department of Educational Administration, University of Wisconsin, 1965.

examples used in the federal judiciary, namely, released time, desegregation, and the prayer and Bible reading cases bring many instances to mind for any superintendent of schools in any part of our country and leave little doubt that his operation at the local school level has been influenced and often controlled. The released time decisions has many different interpretations at the present time. These interpretations for some may seem absolute or relative in their acceptability or unacceptability. They are, nevertheless, to be observed. The judicial declaration may be far from absolute and thereby leave a problem of interpretation which is often perilous in concluding and acting at the local level. The federal judiciary, a number of years ago, was referred to as the "black robed school board". Many of the decisions of the United States Supreme Court have had terrific influences and controls upon the ways that a local school system might go about the fulfillment of the expectations placed upon it by the state and by the community.

Look next to the examples of the federal legislative influences and controls. The National Defense Education Act is recent and prominent in our thinking. It has, through categorical aids and other means, influenced and controlled the emphasis that would be given to various subjects at the local level. Many schools have experienced through the NDEA influence a rearrangement of perceptions in staffing. The number of counselors provided in many schools systems are directly attributable to the kind of support that came through this legislative action. The Economic Opportunity Act has had many influences upon the schools with school officials often wondering why, both in this act and the Civil Rights Act, the process of the education of youth should be handled in order to accomplish some goals apart from those properly charged to the public schools. Regardless of the political justification or rationalization, the influences and the controls have been real and most school administrators have felt their impact.

The third influence and control category at the federal level is the executive. The executive is not limited to the chief executive officer but to the many agencies that constitute the broad range of accomplishments demanded of the chief executive's office. In this category the schools see the U.S. Office of Education as the primary agency of the chief executive. The U.S. Office of Education operates within certain legislative and judicial limitations. It operates under the direct declaration or delimitation of autonomy defined by the chief executive. When that office is given the authorization to approve or disapprove proposals for grants of money, the judgment and the conclusion constitute an influence and often a control upon the local school system. Many local school systems have had much experience with the demand for compliance. Compliance often relates to aspects other than the purpose and direction of education but nevertheless constitutes a condition under which federal aids and assistance might be granted. The fact that the U.S. Office of Education is an arm of the executive branch of government means that it possesses the responsibility which it exercises to evaluate the outcomes of many of the grants. So long as there is evaluation for the purpose of determining accountability, a part of the process of relationship between the local school district and the executive branch of the federal government is that of looking ahead to determine which criteria might prove the accountability most rewarding and least threatening.

These are some of the examples that demonstrate the impact of the federal government through its three major branches upon the local school district. There is no intent either in the selection of the items as examples or in the words chosen to analyze these relationships to imply an evaluation of their worth either in purpose or in process.

Look next in Figure 1 to the second column, namely, the State. Each superintendent of schools has observed, no doubt, the action of the state



court in cases of corporal punishment. Statutory intent of legislative acts which require interpretation as well as approval or disapproval for some school districts found the state courts to be exercising judgments with respect to the quality of literature that might be placed upon the library shelves in the schools. In the same fashion the local schools and their chief executive officers, the superintendents, have felt the impact of the state legislatures in their fiscal support for local school districts in the statutory provisions for the employment of professional staff and in the requirements representing special interest groups desire to use the schools for special observances of many types. The third category in the state impact is that found in the executive department. As in the federal agencies, they are arms of the chief executive and they may exercise influences and controls over financial aid requirements, curriculum developments, and professional negotiations.

The third column in Figure 1 needs little discussion since your daily experiences find you with much better knowledge of the proper selection of examples than an outsider might bring to this discussion. They are categorized in terms of the same levels of government, namely the judicial, the legislative and the executive. Most superintendents probably experience occasionally the action of local courts in dealing with tort liabilities, the employment and dismissal procedures and with the delinquency of school age children.

The superintendent likewise has almost daily contact with the results of the actions of the municipal legislative body usually designated as the city or village council. Many schools find that the municipal agency through its legislative body exercises some influences or controls over its budget and over the location of school-needed facilities as they relate to zoning ordinances in the planning of the school plant.

Depending upon the nature of the municipal organization, the executive branch of the municipality may have little or it may have much influence and

control over the school operation. The peer agencies in a community, such as the welfare department, must receive some attention from the local school administrator in order that all services at the local level may be mutually supportive or at least not contradictory. Most school districts either do not or cannot employ legal counsel and must depend upon the local municipality to supply its legal counsel for the school agency and its needs. Few local school systems would presume to carry out the functions of their unit of society without at least friendly and cooperative working relationships with the various protective services such as the police and the health departments. In the three columns, then, there have been given some examples of the formal influences and controls which have impacts upon the local school system. Many more, as indicated earlier, could be enumerated.

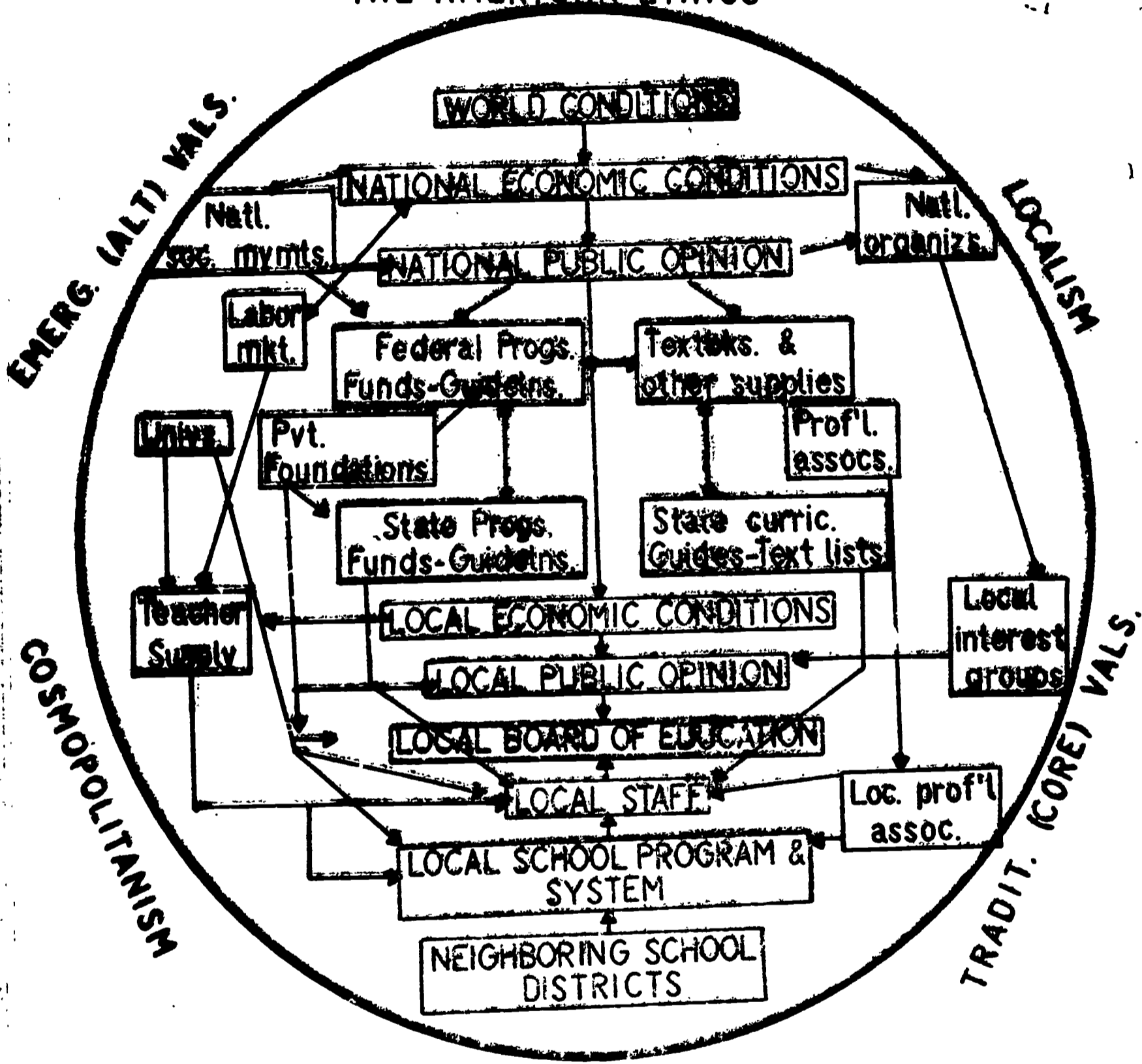
The purpose here is to bring into focus an awareness of the fact that the local school system has a wide array of formal influences and controls directed toward it. Sometimes these impacts are easy to accept and are helpful in both process and purpose. In some instances, the local school administrators may feel that the impact of influence and control from these levels of government may be both thwarting and dangerous to the purposes and processes of the agency. One seldom needs to question in our society, however, that the intent, purpose, or motive of any level of government through any of its agencies is other than designed to be positive and rewarding. When they are, they should be acknowledged and reinforced. When they are not, it is the great privilege of our people in our form of government to so express feelings that corrective measures may be taken without reprisals upon the persons initiating them.

### THE INFORMAL IMPACTS

It was indicated earlier that much assistance has been gained from the work of Professor William W. Wayson of the School of Education, Syracuse University in gaining a pictorial presentation of the many facets involved in the informal influences and controls placed upon the local school systems. The Figure 2 presented here is the summary frame of a four phase transparency and it shows a very complex but most comprehensive view of the many forces, agencies, and interactions assuming a part in this informal impact. It is obvious from the figure and from the previous discussion on formal impacts that the informal impacts relate to those factors, aspects, or variables affecting the local system which are not of the legally constituted type of effort and services needed to accomplish the products of governmental services. Some of the informal influences are self-selected with respect to offering their concerns for public education. Many of them exist as tangential aspects of formal organizations which have an impact upon the schools and many of the informal impacts are constituted because the local school system seeks or accepts them.

It should be noted in Figure 2 that the local board of education is the item around which all of the other aspects are clustered. Professor Wayson developed this diagram for presentation to local boards of education. It does not seem to be a violation of the intent of this means of communication to simply insert the superintendent of schools in the cell provided for the local board of education since the superintendent of schools is the chief executive officer of the board. An interesting aspect in Figure 2 is the inference that we possess somewhat of an unseen environment which constitutes the residue of past experiences, good and bad. The American ethics, the American myths, the traditional values, localism, and other factors make up this unseen environment which may constitute influences and controls far

# THE AMERICAN ETHICS



# THE AMERICAN MYTHS

## LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION WORK WITHIN THE AMERICAN VALUE SYSTEM

From: William W. Wayson, *Effective School Board Relationships* (Syracuse University: Bureau of School Services, 1966) Mimeo. P. 4A.

beyond our knowledge.

There is a film of rather old vintage but still carrying a terrific message that is called "The Invisible Committee". The potent fantasy presented in that film shows a group of people sitting around a table discussing what is presumed to be a common problem. The interesting thing in the fantasy is that, eventually over each committee member's shoulder, we find a core of several people speaking to him of their wishes with respect to the issue at hand. One committee member may hear again the guidance and counsel of the wise father. Another member may find the urgings of his immediate family for the security or protection of their immediate desires. Still another may hear the voice of the organization in which he holds membership and which has interest directly bearing upon the issue presented for decision. In this fantasy it becomes apparent that it is not the matter at arriving at consensus among five people around the table, but of the 25 to 30 people most of whom are unseen and yet all of whom bring some influence to the considerations and decisions to be made. Thus it is in Professor Wayson's diagram that we see this environment of influences. We know they exist. We do not know all that they connote but we should be aware of the fact of impact upon actions at the local school system level.

Within the circle one finds a myriad of organizations, legally constituted, not at all subversive in nature, not intentionally destructive of the educational program, not essentially seeking to use the schools for a personal purpose, but all of which because of the purposes of existence desire to exercise a potent influence upon the decisions of local school administrators in order that the schools may meet in some fashion the demands of their particular interests. If a simple mathematical formula could be used to simply add together the desires of all such informal organizations to influence and divide by the total number, life for the school administrator

would be exceedingly simplified. Such is not and cannot be the case. Each administrator must identify, understand, interpret, and digest the desires of each agency or influence in order that it can be melded into the formal structure of the local school system.

The following quotations are from the concluding pages of Professor Wayson's statement in which the reference is directly to the board of education and the parenthetical insertion of the superintendent of schools is indicated as appropriate according to an earlier statement in this paper. Professor Wayson says:

"The caution is not to label any of the described influences as harmful or bad but merely to suggest that the weight of unrecognized pressures may be infinitely greater than the weight of those controls which school boards (superintendents) have traditionally opposed and they are less under the control of the school board (superintendents).

Our enumerating these major forces bearing upon the work of the school board (superintendent) in America is not intended to arouse resentment or fear to cause board members (superintendents) to strike out against these hidden and subversive invaders. Nor is it to represent them as dangerous or even nefarious. They are no more subversive than a wife causing her husband to dress more tastefully and in many cases they may be as beneficial. The only judgment we would universally apply to them is that they are. They exist; they influence school operations. Effective school board members and educators should know about them for the same reasons that effective farmers know about seasonal cycles and weather predictions. By knowing about them they are less at the

mercy of nature and in better position to utilize, if not to shape its forces for desirable ends.

School boards (superintendents) do not have to react passively to these forces rather they can (and often do) exert counter-influences and they can help to shape the forces with which they deal. The essence of effective educational statesmanship in the next decade may well be abandoning old resistance to straw men in favor of adopting procedures to affect positively the total field of forces influencing educational decisions."

#### THE PERCEPTION AND THE ATTACK

The two previous sections have dealt with the formal and the informal impacts upon the local school superintendent. Examples were given and descriptive statements were offered. It is hoped that these provide sufficient basis for acquiring the ability to gain a perception adequate to the totality of the variety of influences or controls beamed toward the local school system.

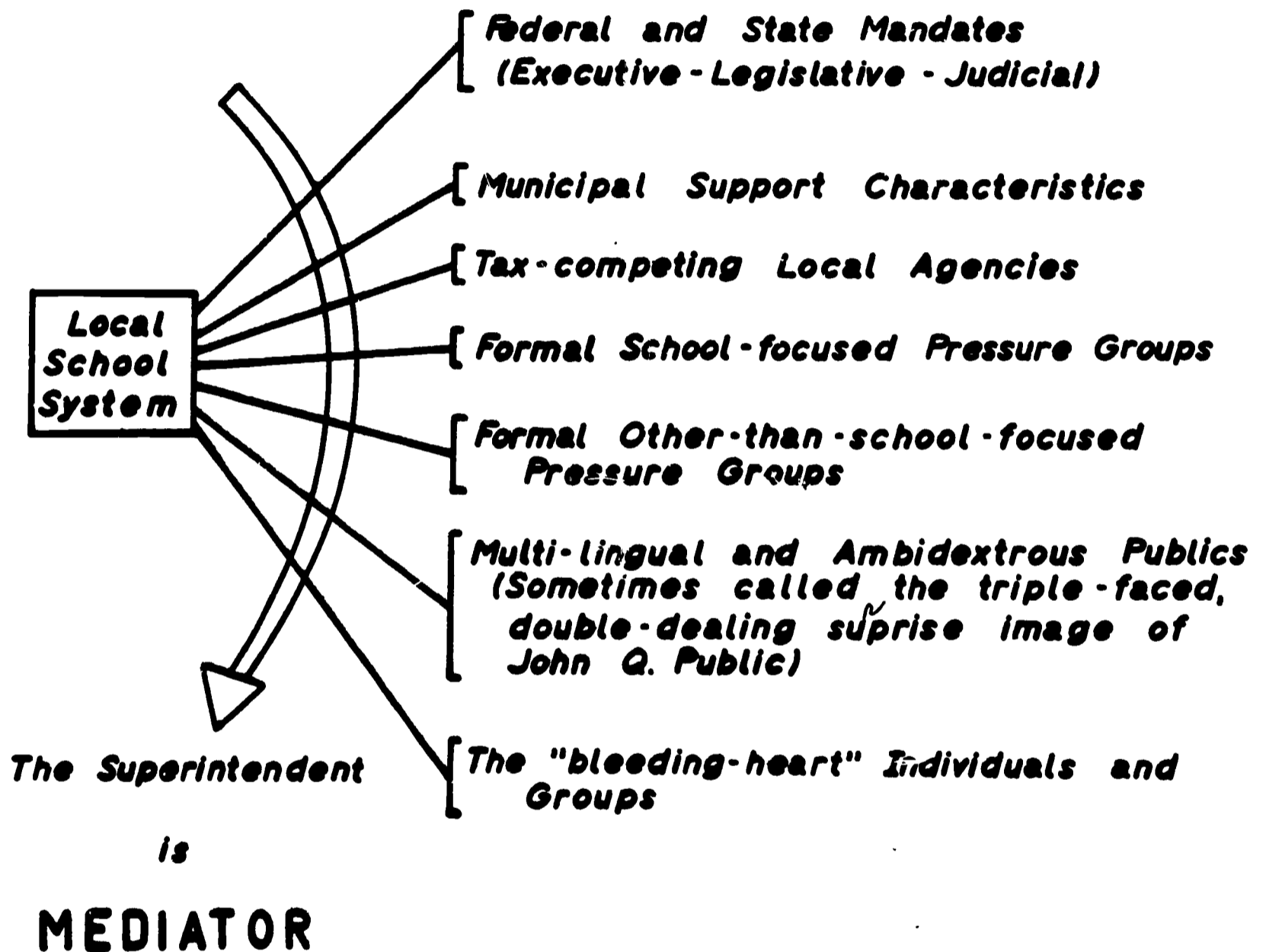
Three figures are being presented here in order to bring about the broad perception of impacts, environmental as well as internal, and to provide a plan of attack which may be adapted to each local school system with all of its infinite variety of differences from any other school system. Credit lines indicate in Figures 1 and 5 that assistance was sought from my colleague and co-author in the Department of Educational Administration, Professor Lanore A. Netzer. This is acknowledged at this point to indicate that an adequate understanding of anything as complex as the topic attacked here demands help from colleagues as well as from professional friends in institutions several states away. It indicates also, an admission that any assistance

probably will be inadequate to the gaining of a complete perception that will serve to the satisfaction of any one individual charged with as many responsibilities in as complex array as that which confronts the superintendent of schools.

Figure 3 indicates that there are influences playing upon the local school system which are termed environmental in nature. Among these are found the federal and state mandates and the municipal support characteristics. These are the formal agencies discussed earlier in the paper. Add to these agencies the tax competing local agencies within the municipality, the formal school focused pressure groups, and the formal other-than-school pressure groups within any single community. The two items toward the end of the list in Figure 3 may seem facetious in nature. They are,--but only in part. They are the multi-lingual and ambidextrous publics. It is indicated parenthetically that they are "sometimes called the triple-faced, double-dealing, surprise image of John Q. Public". The other item is the "bleeding heart" type of individual or group that is common to the experience of every superintendent of school. The next to the last one, namely, the multi-lingual and ambidextrous seriously presents a description of many of the kinds of influences that come to the superintendent of schools. People often do not say all that they mean. Often there are inferential statements that can leave one puzzled. Often there are people who are contacting, by requesting, demanding or threatening, who are unable to maintain a persistent position on any topic. Thus the pleasant request of one day may be the instrument of crucifixion on the next. The 'bleeding heart' individuals and groups represent those who make an emotional approach to a decision and expect all others to accept their emotions as hard thinking and demanding. The superintendent must face all of these singly, doubly, or in a complex array of impact and interrelationships. At any rate, the superintendent is the mediator of all



**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS of INFLUENCE and CONTROLS  
UPON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS!**



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1. Professor Glen G. Eye, Department of Educational Administration, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1964

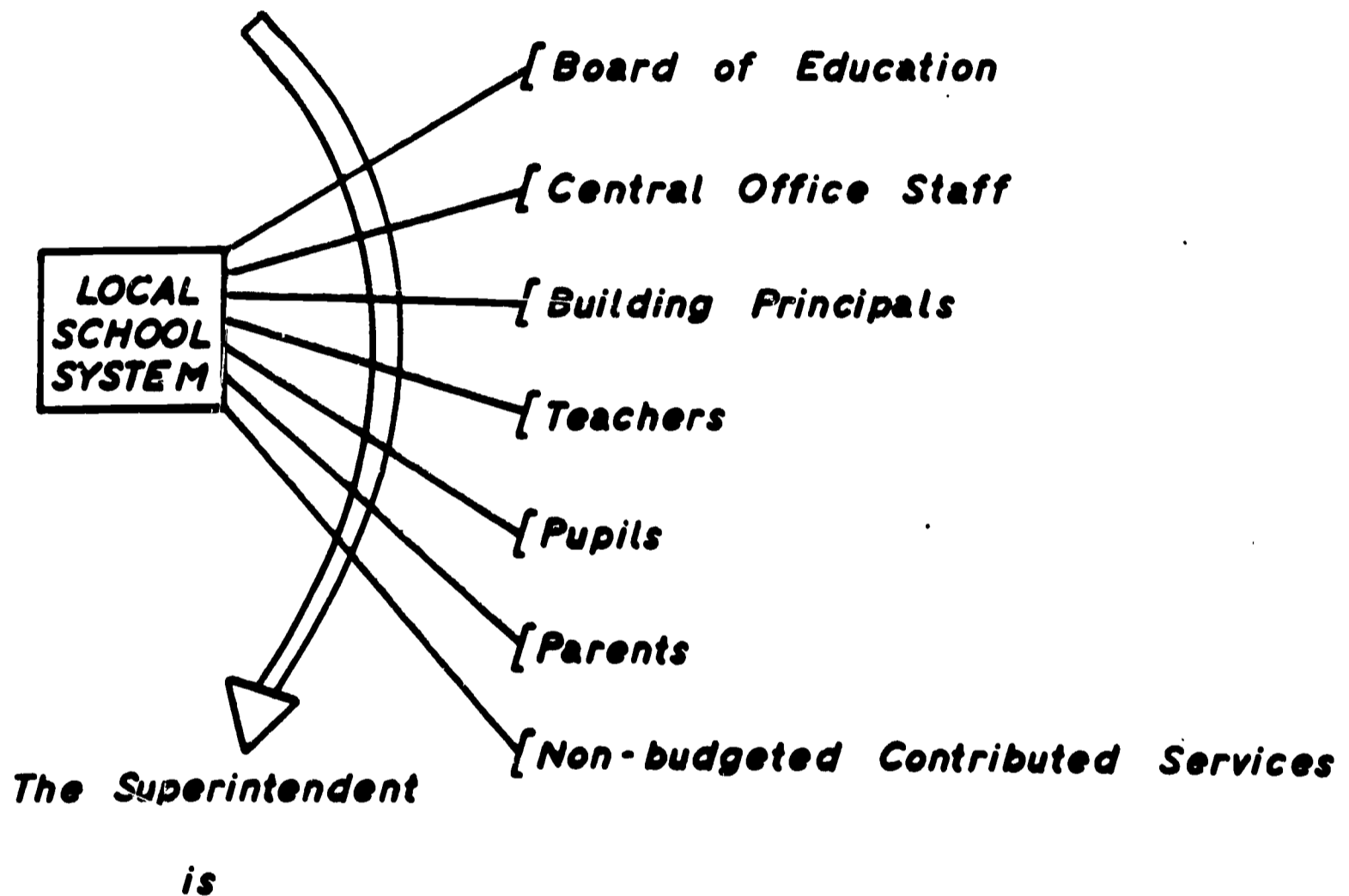
of these people who come knocking at the school door.

A legislator from the state of Illinois, some years ago, defined a congressman as that person who stands at the crossroads trying to keep conscience driven people from murdering each other. There is little doubt that the superintendent of schools often is in this position. Rational people present a problem which may be difficult but is solvable. Irrational people driven by high-powered consciences whether appropriately supported by values or not constitute an impact upon the superintendent that may or may not be amenable to mediation at all. The fact remains that the superintendent stands in this position and finds this kind of influence and control being focused upon him.

The internal factors of influence and control are presented in summary in Figure 4. Here the local school system finds the superintendent of schools being confronted from within the formal organization by the board of education, the central office staff, the building principals, the teachers, the pupils, the parents and the non-budgeted, but contributed service that may come from the municipality or from the state organizations. The superintendent here must face all of these agencies singly, doubly, or in complex array of interrelationships. Here the superintendent is not the mediator. He is much more directly responsible for harnessing these influences and controls for the accepted best outcomes of the school system's energies. The superintendent is the coordinator and in this array of influences or influence agents he is the coordinator of peers, subordinates and superordinates. It does not present the elements of a simple life but it does present the challenge of an interesting one.

Finally, there is presented in Figure 5 a matrix for planning an administrative attack. Note here that all of the cells are empty. From the left margin or axis you find rows for selection, assignment, stimulation, guidance,

**INTERNAL FACTORS of INFLUENCE and CONTROLS  
UPON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS!**



**COORDINATOR of  
Peers-subordinates - superordinates**

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**1. Professor Glen G. Eye, Department of Educational Administration,  
University of Wisconsin, Madison 1964**

**A MATRIX FOR PLANNING AN ADMINISTRATIVE ATTACK!**

	<b>IDEAS</b>	<b>PEOPLE</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>THINGS</b>
<b>SELECTION</b>				
<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>				
<b>STIMULATION</b>				
<b>GUIDANCE</b>				
<b>EVALUATION</b>				

1. Designed by Professor Lanore A. Netzer, Department of Educational Administration, University of Wisconsin, Madison 1966

and evaluation. These are the terms of the definition of school administration quoted from Dr. John Guy Fowlkes in the opening paragraph. A definition has a function other than that of declaration of meaning. One of its most important functions is to provide the essence of a matrix for planning and for evaluation. Professor Netzer has suggested in Figure 5 that there are four elements that must be subjected to selection, assignment, simulation, guidance, and evaluation. These are ideas, people, place, and things. Perhaps the five action words cannot apply to all of these in any one instance or perhaps ever. The point is that some of them either singly, doubly, or in complex array may be helpful to the superintendent who must analyze that array of influences and controls focused upon him and the expectations placed upon him by the board of education and the peoples of a community. Careful and appropriate analyses constitute the first major step to the solution of problems as well as to the planning of the constructive and creative acts next to be taken (a series of illustrations to be given). Thus, it is hoped that in this paper the analysis and categorization of influences and controls can help in establishing an accurate, appropriate, and a functional perception of these factors in school administration. It is hoped, also, that the superintendent in his local situation can use the matrix for planning and designing the next interesting experiences in his life as a professional school administrator.

Administration is the selection, assignment, stimulation, guidance, and evaluation of human effort toward the development of human qualities.

Professor John Guy Fowlkes  
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