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REVISING AND UPDATING THE JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP SIMULATION
MATERIALS. FINAL REPORT.

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UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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A 1957 SIMULATION PROGRAM FOR THE TRAINING OF PRACTICING
AND PROSPECTIVE EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS WAS UPDATED IN
1966 TO REFLECT EMERGING PROBLEMS AS WELL AS CHANGES IN
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION, TEACHER SALARIES, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. THE REVISED PROGRAM
INCLUDED-- (1) SIMULATION ROLES FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT, FOR
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND
INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICE, AND FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, (2) TEAM PROBLEMS REQUIRING INTERACTION
AMONG ADMINISTRATORS, AND (3) PROTOTYPE MATERIALS PROVIDING
FEEDBACK ON DECISIONS. A SCHOOL-COMMUNITY SURVEY, POLICY
HANDBOOK, FILMSTRIPS WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION, A
CURRICULUM ABSTRACT, TAPE-RECORDED INCIDENTS AS DECISION
PROBLEMS, AND RELATED AUDIO-VISUAL ITEMS WERE AMONG THE
MATERIALS DEVELOPED FOR TRAINING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS.
(JK)

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
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TOWNSHIP SIMULATION MATERIALS**

**Jack A. Culbertson, Executive Director
The University Council for Educational Administration
Columbus, Ohio**

December 1967

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

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J.A.C.

I. Background of the Project

The original "Jefferson Township" Simulation Materials were produced in a study initiated in 1957 and originally called "The Determination of the Criteria of Success in Educational Administration."¹ This study, which was financed through a \$250,000 grant from the Cooperative Research Branch of the United States Office of Education (O. E. Contract No. 214[6903]) was located at Teachers College, Columbia University and was sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA).

In order to study the administrative behavior and personality factors of elementary school principals in a controlled context, data were collected on an actual school district and a school system called "Jefferson Township." In the research project, 232 elementary principals from various parts of the United States became "principals" of the simulated Whitman Elementary School within the "Jefferson Township," and they made decisions about problems with which they were confronted.

An overview of the major aspects of the simulation materials can best be communicated by describing the experiences which the 232 subjects, who served as "principals" of the simulated school, actually encountered in the test situations:

After the 'guided tour,' the principals turned to a survey entitled, 'The Jefferson School-Community,' a 152 page document which summarized the political, economic, historical, and social facts about the community. It also gave a general description of the school system with detailed information about personnel, instruction, funds, facilities, school-community relationships and related matters. After the principals had examined the survey, they were shown a sound-color film which depicted such internal aspects of Whitman School as faculty meetings, interviews with parents, and teachers working with classes. They were then given a floor plan of the school, a roster of all staff members in the school, personnel folders on the teachers and non-certified staff members, and the report of a special study of intra-staff relations within the Whitman faculty. Study guides were provided.

1

For a report of the study see John Hemphill, Daniel Griffiths and Norman Frederiksen, Administrative Performance and Personality, (New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia University), 1962.

Although the books and reports were available throughout the week as references, the principals completed the intensive study of the materials already described on the first day.

On the morning of the second day, several types of printed materials were given the principals: a staff handbook, a school board handbook, excerpts from the legal code controlling Jefferson Township, copies of the school census, a class-size list, pupils' achievement test scores, and a calendar of school events. A portion of the morning was spent in reading these materials with study guides. In addition, they were presented tape recordings of parent-teacher conferences, informal conversations of teachers, school board meetings, and other situations which are typical of a school system.

Each principal assumed the principalship of Whitman School on the afternoon of the second day. He began by preparing and making a recorded speech to the 'first meeting' of the Whitman School Parent Teacher Association. During the remainder of the second day, he wrote an autobiographical statement for the local paper and an article for the Whitman School magazine. On the third morning, each principal was seated at his desk which had the usual facilities including an in-basket. In the in-basket were placed items which the elementary school principal typically faces. Some were very routine problems such as a note from the secretary saying the business manager had telephoned and that he would be in the next day to check the heating plant. Other more complex problems involved delicate personnel decisions. One hundred and three in-basket items were presented on the third and fourth days of the week. In solving the various problems in the in-baskets, each principal wrote memoranda, made notes in preparation for interviews, prepared agenda, planned meetings, or noted other activities which, in his opinion, were appropriate. In each case, he made a written record of his act or plans for action and his reasons.

In addition to the in-basket items there were problem situations which had been recorded on tape. Thus, to simulate a situation demanding action, a secretary reported a problem to the principal in his office. As in the case of the in-basket, some of the taped items represented routine problems while others were more complex.

Three films of teachers instructing their classes in Whitman School represented still another type of simulated material. Each principal was asked to view the films and then to evaluate the teaching by filling out a probationary form for each teacher. He was asked to

plan an interview with each teacher in which his purpose was to help her improve her instruction.

In summary, then, a variety of simulated materials were used in an integrated fashion to re-create as nearly as possible the setting and problems of Whitman School. From a scientific standpoint, one great advantage of simulation was the attainment of standardized situations in which administrative behavior could be expressed. The 232 principals reacted to the same situations with the same instructions.²

The simulated materials resulting from the project just described were made available by UCEA in 1961 for use in administrative training programs. Providing a range of reality-oriented situations in which practicing and prospective educational administrators could practice decision-making and problem-solving skills, the materials represented a major innovation in preparatory programs for educational administrators. It is estimated that more than 20,000 students experienced the simulated situations during the 1961-66 period.

The major purpose of the project described in this document was to update and revise the "Jefferson Township" simulated materials. The need underlying the revision and updating of these materials stemmed from the fact that portions of them became increasingly obsolescent. Numerous professors felt that the materials did not deal with emerging problems in educational administration and that the data supplied in the "Jefferson Township" Simulation Materials were outdated by changes in school organization, teachers' salaries, and other information. Students were alleged to perceive aspects of the simulated situations as unreal, and this interfered

2

Jack Culbertson and William Coffield (Eds.) Simulation in Administrative Training, (Columbus, Ohio: The University Council for Educational Administration, 1960), pp. 3-5.

with their thinking and decision processes and was judged to be detrimental to instruction.

The objectives of the project described in this report were, therefore, the following: (1) to identify the obsolescent characteristics of the "Jefferson Township" simulation materials with reference to (a) outdated information in the materials and (b) significant educational problems which had arisen since the initial simulations were undertaken in 1957; (2) to develop the necessary content and media specifications for revising and updating the Jefferson Township materials; (3) to have a group of experts assess and ensure the adequacy of the specifications; and (4) to produce and distribute the simulation materials in line with the revised specifications for use in universities.

Simulation roles were to be developed for the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Business Management, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Service, the Secondary Principal, and the Elementary Principal. In addition, attention was to be directed to the development of "team problems" which would require interaction among the various administrative role incumbents. Finally, the creation of prototype materials which would provide students feedback on in-basket decisions was another developmental goal of the project. The new products were to be called the "Madison" simulation materials.

Background information was to be collected and presented through a variety of media in order to create a common basis for the development of each of the roles to be simulated. Such information, when organized, was to provide prospective students evidence for decision making and to enable them to see relationships

between decision problems and their contexts and between theory and administrative facts. Background information specific to each of the five simulated roles was also to be developed.

II. Procedures for Development

Ten professors of educational administration from seven universities throughout the United States, consultants from the actual school district on which the simulation was based, personnel in the Speech and Photography Department of the Ohio State University, and staff members of the University Council for Educational Administration, Columbus, Ohio, were involved in the development of the materials. The ten professors from the various universities developed general background materials for the school and community, written background materials for the various roles simulated, in-basket items to which students could respond, tape-recorded problems, and filmstrips with accompanying taped narrations which could give students additional information and insight into the community, the school district, and the individual roles simulated. By drawing upon talent from a number of universities a development team uniquely equipped to take on the revision of the simulation materials was assembled and deployed. The products achieved in the project clearly could not have been achieved without the efforts of an inter-university team.

The UCEA central staff planned the project, defined the functions to be performed, and coordinated the work. Specific steps in the development process were the following:

- (1) Data about those aspects of the Jefferson simulation materials most in need of updating were obtained through (a) an analysis of data in evaluative studies available in doctoral dissertations;