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This report of the Advisory Committee on Decentralization examines the status of school decentralization in New York City, particularly the progress of three demonstration projects, IS 201 in East Harlem, Two-Bridges in the Lower East Side, and JHS 271 and IS 55 in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn. Because it is felt that the degree to which district superintendents are consulting with local school boards is inadequate to achieve administrative decentralization, the Committee recommends that the central Board of Education (1) plan elections to permit communities to elect their own local school governing boards, (2) institute learning programs for governing boards and district superintendents, (3) make the governing boards responsible for visiting schools, and (4) delegate to the boards the right to hire and fire district superintendents, consult with district superintendents on every tenure appointment, and approve budgets and curriculum. The Committee also presents guidelines for decentralization (number of districts, role of the community, etc.) and suggests a transitional plan. (EF)

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Statement by Mrs. Lillian Ashe pertaining to the July, 1968

"Final Report of the Advisory and Evaluation Committee on Decentralization"

Footnote for Ch. I, p. 4 and Ch. V "Some Guideline Thoughts on Decentralization"

My reasons for dissent from this recommendation (Some Guideline Thoughts on Decentralization) are many and complex. However, a few of the major arguments against this plan are stated here briefly for the record:

1. The proposal injects an intermediate administrative level, thus adding to, not lessening bureaucratic complexity.
2. By weakening the central city board and setting up regional divisions, it proposes, in effect, seven separate school systems, whereas educationally, and in the political framework, New York City is an entity: educationally, because of the high rate of student mobility from one part of the city to another, and the common bond of urban school problems; politically, vis-a-vis the city, state, and federal governments with respect to money allocations, administrative regulations and legislative actions. Fragmentation into several school systems would weaken and divide official spokesmen for the city public schools in these confrontations, in which the educational interests of the city as a whole should be represented for the most effective results.
3. The thrust of decentralization, to be most meaningful, should be at the district level. Centering a high degree of authority at a Divisional level would tend to defeat the very purpose of decentralization, since each of the seven divisions would be larger than most other city school systems, and just as far removed from community participation.

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**FINAL REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON DECENTRALIZATION**

**Submitted to
The Board of Education of the City of New York**

July, 1968

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CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy of Administrative Decentralization: The Board of Education

Findings

The Administrative Decentralization Plan depends to a large extent upon each District Superintendent working out a process of consultation with his local school board and his principals. In the five districts which we studied we found many examples of weakness in the development of effective consultation. However, we also found encouraging proof that some superintendents and their local boards are learning to work together on a highly satisfactory level. The three districts where this high level of cooperation has been attained have one feature in common: the District Superintendent and the chairman of the local school board (LSB) have developed a trustful personal relationship.

There follows our assessment of the way decentralization is working in relation to the most important areas of school operation¹:

Appointment of Principals. Probably the most successful use of consultation between District Superintendents and local school boards occurred in the appointment of new principals, although there still are instances of LSBs being bypassed in one way or another.

¹A detailed account of the findings of the Advisory Committee is contained in Chapter II.

Personnel: Assignment of Teachers. The assignment of a pool of substitute teachers on the district level allows the District Superintendents somewhat greater flexibility in meeting the staffing needs of their principals.

Personnel: District Office Staff. Of the ten positions allotted to each district under decentralization, only three are mandated. This arrangement has allowed the District Superintendent flexibility in his staffing arrangements. However, each District Superintendent feels that staffing is inadequate for the new responsibilities. The Committee did not ascertain the validity of this opinion.

The Budget. Involvement of the LSBs in budgetary matters has been limited. For the most part, consultation on budget between the District Superintendents and the LSBs has been inadequate. For example, one LSB did not participate at all in the budgetary process, while a second merely approved a fait accompli presented by the District Superintendent. In two of the districts studied the joint thinking and decision-making by LSBs and District Superintendents were admirable.

The range of responsibility given to the Business Manager is a basic reflection of the personal demands that were being made on him by the District Superintendent. The duties and responsibilities of this newly created position remain unclear to most LSB members.

Curriculum and Zoning. The Committee did not find evidence of meaningful involvement of the local school boards or universities in planning for curriculum and zoning.

Books and Supplies. No decentralization seems to have occurred in the procedures whereby the schools select and obtain these instructional supplies.

Recommendations

I. Functions and Authority of the Local School Boards

The Advisory Committee believes that the present nature and amount of consultation by the District Superintendent with his local school board is not an adequate basis for achieving a desirable degree of decentralization. Furthermore, the recent legislative mandate empowers the Board of Education to delegate, with the Regents' approval, any and all of its own powers, thus giving the Board of Education an opportunity to take the initiative in maximizing flexibility in the decision-making and operations of the schools. The Committee therefore recommends that the plan of the Board of Education include, and that in the meantime and prior to the adoption of the plan it carry out, the following:

- A. Plan for elections to make the LSBs "legitimate" in the communities they represent.
- B. Plan continuing learning programs for LSB members and District Superintendents, including training in specific skills where needed.
- C. Delegate the following rights, duties, and responsibilities to the LSBs:
 1. Hire and fire District Superintendents.
 2. Approve all appointments of professional staff upon recommendation of the District Superintendent.

3. Consult with the District Superintendent on every tenure appointment, provided there is appropriate appeal mechanism for the professional staff and that such decisions by the LSB will not bar appointment elsewhere within the entire school system.
4. Responsibility for visiting the schools in the district.
5. Approval of the budget within allocations established by the Board of Education.
6. Approval of the curriculum within minimum standards established by the Board of Education and the State Education Department.

II. Some Guideline Thoughts on Decentralization

The Advisory Committee recommends* that the Board of Education, in deciding upon the proposed plan for decentralization that it will submit to the State Legislature, the Regents, and the Mayor of New York City, consider some Guideline Thoughts on Decentralization devised by the Advisory Committee and discussed with the Superintendent, Mr. Giardino, and a representative of the Commissioner (see Chapter V for details). The plan accepts the reality of New York City as an entity while at the same time admitting that the present size of the school system requires division. In summary, we would retain the present thirty districts. These would be organized, however, into approximately seven divisions, each having a Divisional Superintendent. Each division

*This recommendation is concurred in by five of the six members of the Advisory Committee.

would be similar to an autonomous school system of some 150,000 pupils, small enough, for example, so that the Divisional Superintendent could know every principal personally, yet large enough to be economically viable and permit flexibility in the assignment of personnel as well as innovation in secondary and special education programs. In addition, it would make possible greater racial and socio-economic integration.

Under this proposal the overall Board of Education would be known as a Central Coordinating and Planning Board; its chief executive officer would be the Superintendent of Schools or Director of Services. A School-Management Committee would be the chief means of bringing the professional educators and the community together.

Since a true school-community system depends primarily upon involving parents at the individual school level, our proposal places great emphasis upon individual School Councils. Even in neighborhoods where parents are assumed to be hostile, there is confidence on the part of the parents in the teachers (see Chapter IV). Therefore, these councils would consist of parents and teachers. The format can be adapted through Teacher Associations and Parent Associations where they exist and through their development where they do not exist.

Although the Advisory Committee has not worked out in detail the authority of these School Councils or School-Community Committees, it sees them as having an important functional relationship to the program of each school. The councils should review and make written recommendations concerning budget, community relations, personnel, and curriculum; these recommendations should be furnished the District Superintendents.

Probably there should be some involvement in the review of tenure appointments. Appropriate appeal mechanisms would be required.

III. A Transitional Plan

There is a profound need for a transitional plan of operation to give new emphasis to providing support and leadership for an orderly and effective process of decentralization. We therefore recommend that the Board immediately appoint a top executive who will report directly to the Superintendent of Schools and will reflect his authority and power and who will do everything possible to cause the decentralization program (including the Demonstration Projects) to succeed. This executive must be an outstanding man, preferably one who already is part of the bureaucracy and is knowledgeable about the system, who is known for his independence and action. At the same time he must be in tune with the community and able to work harmoniously with administrative and community leaders. Such an appointment would require effective and widespread publicity. It should symbolize the determination of the central administration to get on with decentralization. It should be seen as an attempt to relate the power of the chief executive officer directly to the needs of the local community and its representatives.

This official should have an appropriate title, such as Special Assistant for Decentralization. However, the position should not be given tenure; rather it should be undertaken on an ad hoc basis.

The responsibilities of the Special Assistant in relation to the three Demonstration Projects are discussed in the second section of this summary chapter. In relation to the citywide decentralization effort, the position should have the following aspects:

- A. On the administrative level the Office of the Special Assistant on Decentralization should function as a distinct and visible organization, with the District Superintendents reporting directly to this office on all operational problems related to decentralization.**
- B. The Special Assistant should make every attempt to involve the LSBs actively in the decision-making and responsibility for the success of the program.**
- C. It should be the responsibility of the Special Assistant to help the LSBs in their efforts to seek separate funds and to ensure that the programs are consonant with the legal and educational requirements of the overall system.**
- D. From the central staff currently at Livingston Street the office of the Special Assistant would be assigned a sufficient and necessary staff to guarantee the success of the operation. A substantial portion of this staff should spend nearly full time in the field, serving as resource and assisting personnel in the local districts.**
- E. The Special Assistant should encourage the use of various positive models for the development of responsible leadership in local communities, for example, the United Parents Association's Self-Help Program and the United Bronx Parents Leadership Training Program.**

The Three Demonstration Projects

Background of the Projects

The three Demonstration Projects present a welter of misunderstandings, attack and defense, and disappointments--for the administration, the Board of Education, the Project Boards, parents, teachers, principals, project administration, and, we are sure, the children.

The Advisory Committee has tried to separate fact from opinion and from time to time has made recommendations to the Board of Education which it thought would encourage movement toward the solution of the problems and misunderstandings.

We believe it important--if the past is to serve as a guideline to a more successful future--to try to summarize for the Board of Education what seems to us to be the nub of the problem. Why--given the desire on the part of the Board to create a few more comprehensive experiments in community control beyond those which were inherent in the Administrative Decentralization Plan summarized by the Board on April 19, 1967--have the three Demonstration Projects faced and created so much turmoil?

There are many important details, but the central cause of the difficulty is the fact that from the inception of the Demonstration Projects the Board of Education and the Superintendent have had one set of purposes and expectations, while the groups seeking and wielding local power have had a different and incompatible set.

The Board of Education wanted planned experiments, yet the local groups had no interest in serving experimental ends. Apparently the

original action came from existing Council Against Poverty (CAP) groups in each community, supported by a representative of the Ford Foundation and individuals from two universities.

The development of each Demonstration Project flowed from documents called Proposals which were approved "in principle" by the Superintendent. (Members of the Project Boards assert that UFT representatives also gave their approval.) These proposals had no true experimental design. In the Superintendent's mind they were only general first steps which were to be followed later by carefully worked out plans which he would study, amend, and finally recommend to his Board for approval. For the planning councils, however, the approval "in principle" meant victory in a first step toward full local control. Movement was pushed as rapidly as possible toward local elections of Project Boards, loosely defined both as to composition and function, for local special school districts equally vaguely conceived. In the case of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project the administration and the Board of Education suddenly were confronted early in August, 1967, with the fact that an election was in full swing. No guidelines or stipulations concerning legitimacy of procedure had been laid down by the Board of Education and none were expected by the local planning council. The Board of Education expected that ensuing action would await the full approval by the Board of a plan for each local project; the local representatives had no intention of waiting for such a procedure to occur but moved to establish themselves in power.

The Board of the school system let a situation develop with their apparent blessing which in reality they could accept only reluctantly.

The Board did not make clear from the outset which powers could be delegated within the legal limits placed upon it, nor did the Board assume the degree of leadership necessary to cause the projects to succeed. This is not to say that the Board of Education has not made important accommodations in an effort to make the projects develop satisfactorily. For example, the Board has created the position of Demonstration School Principalship, waived the standards for Project Administrators, and instituted the lump sum budget for the Project Administrator's staff.

By December, 1967, the elections of all three Project Boards had taken place and been accepted or approved by the Board of Education. The suggested guidelines prepared by this Committee attempted to formulate the actual authority to be delegated to the Project Boards. In March, 1968, however, the three Demonstration Projects agreed upon a "consensus" document which demanded full authority, although the Board of Education could not go beyond the legal limits placed upon it by the state education law. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project chose to bring this conflict to a head by requesting the transfers of nineteen members of the supervisory and teaching staff, later demanding their dismissal, and applying the Taylor Law against those teachers who stayed away from their classes to demonstrate sympathy with their colleagues. This confrontation alone has cost most of the children in the district thirty-eight days of schooling.

Two major lessons are to be learned from this confrontation: one is the need for a legal base or legislation to transfer sufficient

authority for an adequate decentralization program, the other is the fact that in some local communities militant groups may be expected to continue to demand powers for which no one yet has proposed legislation. That is, in order for those who want to control all aspects of their local schools to accomplish their objectives, legislative changes would be required that would seriously affect many legal and contractual relationships pertaining to conditions of employment, such as tenure, that go far beyond the power presently held by the Board of Education. On the other hand, the new legislative mandate to prepare its own plan for decentralization gives the Board an opportunity to adopt a flexible response to the special problems found in the disadvantaged areas of the city.

Survey of "Demonstration Project" Parents

A survey of parent attitudes based upon interviews with 200 parents in each of the three Demonstration Projects revealed that parents in those districts favor decentralization of the New York City school system and greater opportunities for community influence by a ratio of two to one. Also, twice as many Negroes as whites approve of decentralization. Those who seek more community influence also are more critical of the existing school system than those who believe the community has enough influence or who advocate less influence. There are some differences among the groups in the three Demonstration Projects: the parents in Two Bridges generally are both less informed and less critical of decentralization than those in the Ocean Hill and IS 201 projects. In the latter two

communities decentralization has resulted in more open controversy, with leaders articulating sharp criticism of the schools and creating greater awareness of problems--teachers, curriculum, textbooks, school buildings, and so forth. Despite these differences the following generalizations can be made about all three districts.

The parents in general are critical of the job being done by the educational leaders--the Board of Education, the Project Board, the principal, and the Project Administrator. However, two out of five parents are not sure about the Project Administrator. In the recent Ocean Hill-Brownsville controversy over the transfer or dismissal of teachers, only 29 per cent of all the parents supported the Project Administrator, while 24 per cent supported the teachers.

However, in evaluating these officials' responsiveness to the community, almost twice as many parents believe the Board of Education will act on its own rather than do what the parents want, while they perceive the Project Boards as much more responsive to the parents. The perception of responsiveness of the Project Administrator to the parents' wishes ranks between that of the Board of Education and the Project Boards. This opinion may reflect the dual position of the Project Administrator as both a representative of the community and an administrator in the larger educational system.

A majority of the respondents think the community has more influence in the schools today than it did a year ago. However, nearly half the parents believe that the community still has too little to say about determining curriculum, spending money, and hiring and firing teachers,

principals, and supervisors. The majority of the parents believe that if a strong decentralization plan were to be set up and the communities assumed responsibility for their neighborhood schools, both parent leaders and/or the professional school staff would have the greatest influence. When asked who should have the greatest influence, a slight plurality of the parents choose the professional school staff over parent leaders.

Teacher performance and teacher-parent, teacher-student relationships receive less criticism than textbooks or curriculum. Half the parents rate the job done by teachers positively, that is, they consider the teachers either "excellent" or "pretty good." However, the three groups of parents show significant differences in their opinions of the teachers: three-fifths of the parents in Two Bridges, one-half in IS 201, and only slightly less than two-fifths in Ocean Hill-Brownsville rate the teachers positively. These results may reflect the fact that the controversy in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project has focused on the teachers. Furthermore, to a vast majority (82 per cent) of the parents it "doesn't make any difference one way or the other whether their children are taught mostly by Negro or white teachers." Even in Ocean Hill-Brownsville only one-fifth of the parents prefer Negro teachers.

Generally, the teachers are considered to be interested in the children and to have good relationships with both students and parents. Once again, parents in Ocean Hill-Brownsville are far more critical of teacher behavior than are parents in the other two areas. Twice as many parents rate the curriculum negatively than rate it positively. A clear majority think that too little Negro history is being taught in the schools. Parents in all three communities consider the textbooks poor.

The majority of parents think that "not enough is being done to improve the schools," although they are satisfied with the steps being taken to improve discipline, reduce class size, and recruit Negro teachers. However, they do not agree on a strategy for improving the schools. One-third think the most effective way to bring about improvement is to elect better public officials, while one-fifth think that putting the community groups legally in charge of the schools will accomplish this end. Nor are they clear on how the Project Boards should be selected. Most parents, however, see themselves as having a major role.

A third of the parents report that they voted when given an opportunity to elect members of the local Project Boards. Less than a quarter voted in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, while two-fifths voted in IS 201.

The parents interviewed seem somewhat intimidated about actively participating in the community. One-third feel that if they were to take a public stand on an unpopular issue, they would be regarded as "troublemakers." Two out of five of them fear that protesting an action taken by school officials might influence the way their children are treated in school.

Given these conditions, we predict continued frustration for both the Demonstration Projects and the Board of Education. A shift in power may result in a heightened commitment to education and greater interest and pride in their schools on the part of the local communities. But the problems of these schools will not yield quickly or to simple answers. Regardless of who wields the power, teachers teach in the same way and administrators perpetuate the same concepts of curriculum. Nor

will emphasis upon "loyalty" produce better teaching. In the case of frustration, the first inclination will be to find scapegoats. Great emphasis upon the half-emptiness of the library shelves--but no change in the way the schools use those library shelves that are half full--is no solution to the pressing problems facing the educationally disadvantaged.

Shifts in power may be a necessary condition for change; the Committee cannot be sure. Certainly this is not a sufficient answer--and unless there is a joint effort to improve the learning-teaching process, the children will continue to suffer.

Recommendations

I. The Functions and Authority of the Demonstration Project Boards

The Advisory Committee believes that the three Demonstration Projects not only should be continued but should be formally recognized and given the necessary power and responsibility authorized by the new legislation to operate the schools in the project areas. Until the Board of Education feels confident that these three Demonstration Projects are working smoothly, our Committee believes that additional projects should not be established.

We are aware that the Board of Education does not have as much authority over personnel, budget, and curriculum as those in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project are demanding or as those in the other projects may demand. There are, of course, the limits of mandates and other controls placed upon the Board of Education that must be understood and perhaps changed to ensure flexibility and responsiveness in the

educational system. These include state education laws, regulations of the State Commissioner, the New York City Charter, municipal controls, and negotiated union contracts. However, we believe that the Board of Education does have the legal right to make the following delegation of authority to the Project Boards:

- A. The Project Boards should have the authority and responsibility to allocate school funds once their proportionate share has been determined by the Board of Education. Union contracts and other budgetary procedures must be observed. The Project Boards should be able to apply directly to governmental and private agencies for additional funds for which they are eligible.
- B. The Project Boards should have the authority to approve all appointments of the professional staffs on recommendation of their Project Administrator to the Board of Education. The state school laws and union contracts must be observed in all requests for transfer or dismissal of personnel.
- C. The Project Boards should have authority over development and adoption of the curriculum, instructional materials, and all matters relating to the instruction of children. State and city standards must be observed.

II. The Composition and Election of the Project Boards

The Advisory Committee, aware of the many charges of unrepresentativeness of the memberships of all three Project Boards, recommends that one-third of each Board stand for reelection as soon as possible. The

names of these members will be drawn by lot. The relatively moderate voting turnout of the past election, coupled with unremitting criticism, has produced unrest, dissatisfaction, and serious challenge of the legitimacy of the present incumbents. Every effort should be made to restore the community's confidence in this opportunity to more effectively involve the parents in their schools.

Since interim by-laws, by which the Demonstration Projects now are operating, provide for reelection procedures, the Board of Education should ask that new elections be held in time for both reelected incumbents and new members to participate in the budget-making process for the 1969-1970 school year. However, the Board of Education, in concert with the Project Boards, the New York City Board of Elections, and the State Education Commissioner, should prepare a full set of election procedures. These should include a legal voter registration list, nomination procedures and rules and regulations for the campaign, such as proper public notice and supervision of the procedures on the day of election.

In addition, the role of the professional staff on the Project Board should be reassessed. We repeat our original suggestions as to possible alternative types of organizational machinery that should be considered:

- A. The professional staff representatives should be invited to assume a direct and fully responsible role in participating on the Project Board with regard to all decisions coming before it.
- B. The professional staff representatives should assume an indirect advisory role, either constituting an Advisory Committee

to the Board or sitting on the Board but with limited voting responsibility.

- C. A bicameral or dual council approach should be established-- one for parents and community, the other for the professional staff. Each body should assume responsibility for different aspects of the operations of the schools, with the professional council being limited to pedagogical matters.

III. The Professional Staff and the Demonstration Projects

In addition to the recommendations already offered above, the Advisory Committee recommends a thorough reexamination of the relationship between Project Boards and their professional staffs. The efforts to screen teachers in the IS 201 Demonstration Project upon the opening of school, the attempt to transfer and then dismiss teachers in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project (which has kept students from their classrooms for thirty-eight days this past spring), the failure of the proposed teacher representation on two Project Boards, the court suit brought by the Council of Supervisory Associations (CSA) against the creation of the demonstration school principalship--none of these bodes well for future effective working relations. The vigorous opposition of the UFT and CSA to legislative proposals for decentralization also indicates that any effort to increase community involvement in the schools must take the role of the professional educator into serious and careful account. Similarly, the educator must initiate and utilize opportunities to involve the parents in the educational process, especially in the disadvantaged schools. It is important for all to bear in mind

the fact revealed by the survey of parent opinions in the Demonstration Projects (see Chapter IV) that parents feel a considerable degree of confidence in the teachers of their children.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee recommends that every effort be made in the Demonstration Projects, as well as in the regular districts, to develop what we have called School Councils which will bring the parents and the professional staffs together to work on specific tasks involved in educating children. These councils could well operate at the various school levels--for instance, early childhood, primary grades, and upper elementary grades. The councils should examine, discuss, and set up reasonable means of communication on educational matters, such as curriculum, staffing, budgets, and school-community relationships. The major purpose of the parent-staff councils should be to discover and build the best means for mutual understanding and responsibility of parents and teachers as partners in the education of children.

IV. Establishment of the Office of the Special Assistant to Decentralization

In order to see that the Demonstration Projects work and to ensure the effective implementation of the above three recommendations, the Advisory Committee recommends that specific responsibility relating to the Demonstration Projects be added to the overall responsibilities of the Special Assistant on Decentralization proposed in the first section of this chapter. These additional responsibilities should be:

- A. The Special Assistant should be motivated by a realization of the importance of the success of the Demonstration Projects

to the entire decentralization effort. He must approach his task in terms not of the difficulties inherent in the situation but of the possibilities for expediting the effective operation of the Demonstration Projects.

- B. The Special Assistant should meet regularly with--and consistently utilize the advice and services of--a committee composed of himself and the chairmen of the Project Boards and the unit administrators of the three projects. The committee should prepare regular progress reports.
- C. The Special Assistant should be given those responsibilities and authorities over the budget which ordinarily reside in the office of the Superintendent. He should also have at his disposal a developmental fund for fostering important innovations within the project schools.

CHAPTER II

REPORT ON THE POLICY AND EXPERIENCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION

Introduction

The belief is almost universal that the public school system of New York City should be decentralized and the means found to increase community involvement as proposed by the 1967 session of the New York State Legislature. Criticism of urban education has come from both outsiders and insiders. There is general agreement with Mark Shedd, Superintendent of Schools in Philadelphia, who points to two major reasons for "the massive failure of big city school systems." These reasons are:

1. The sheer mass of urban systems has created bureaucracies which convert instructional tradition, educational cliches and general pedagogical inertia into a stifling philosophical and procedural rigidity.

2. The pupils of urban systems, particularly low-income pupils (white and Negro), are unable or unwilling to conform to our commonplace and usually complacent notions of what children and/or schools should be. The results cast in bold relief the irrelevance of so much of the school experience to the basic concerns and needs of children and young people.¹

¹ Mark R. Shedd, "Decentralization and Urban Schools," Educational Leadership (October, 1967), p. 32.

The response to these conditions has been varied. Action has been taken in such diverse settings as the legislative halls in Albany and the streets of New York City. Two major proposals for change have developed. The first is administrative decentralization, as put forth by the Board of Education. The second is community control, articulated by the Mayor's Advisory Panel on Decentralization (the Bundy Report). The Board of Education established the three experimental projects in order to explore more effective means of increasing community involvement in the schools.

The major thrust of the policy on decentralization published by the Board of Education on April 19, 1967, is summarized here.

Summary of Board of Education's
Policy on Decentralization

Decentralization of the schools in New York City generally means increased decision-making authority in the office of the district superintendents. Much of this new power can be exercised only after consultation with the Local School Boards. This consultative role is to be exercised in the following areas: (1) appointment of district superintendents; (2) appointment of principals; (3) allotment of teacher positions to schools; (4) allocation and uses of teacher aides; (5) zoning; (6) expenditures of lump sums to be allocated to each district for maintenance and repairs, supplies and equipment, innovation and experimentation; (7) development of curriculum articulation

¹ Board of Education, Decentralization--Statement of Policy (New York: Board of Education, April 29, 1967).

between the various levels of the schools in the district; (8) community education services.

The Role of the District Superintendent

In order to be effective the district superintendent must maintain direct, personal contact with parents' associations and others in the community.

I. Appointment or Transfer of Principals

- A. The district superintendent will discuss vacancies with the Local School Boards which, in turn, will acquaint the district superintendent with the special needs of the schools and the qualities of leadership required to fulfill those needs.
- B. The appointments of principals will continue to be made in accordance with the legal requirements governing these positions.
 1. The Office of Personnel will submit to the district superintendent three names, in order of seniority, of those serving as principals and who seek transfer to the particular school.
 2. The Office of Personnel will submit to the district superintendent names of the eligibles on the list for appointment. In the case of elementary school principals the choice must be made from the top three names on the list; junior or senior high school principals can be selected from the total list of qualified persons.

- C. The district superintendent shall consider the recommendation of the Local School Board regarding those eligible for appointment. He will then make his recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools, who will make the appointment.
- D. The district superintendent and the Local School Board jointly will set up procedures for their discussions with regard to the appointment of principals.
- E. Under exceptional circumstances and after consultation with the Local School Board, the district superintendent may appeal directly to the Superintendent of Schools for special consideration of a qualified appointee.
- F. Assignment or transfer of principals into a district will be the responsibility of the district superintendent after consultation with the Local School Board and with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

II. Appointment and Transfer of Teachers

- A. The initial assignment of teachers shall be to a district rather than to a specific school.
- B. The district superintendent will be furnished a profile of each assignee to facilitate placement.
- C. The allotment of positions to individual schools will be made by the district superintendent after consultation with the Local School Board and with due regard for the needs of schools as described by the principal. Allotment of positions to the different schools will be based on a formula developed

by the Office of Personnel under the supervision of the Superintendent of Schools.

D. The training of teachers and pedagogical supervisors will proceed according to the following considerations:

1. Training shall be the responsibility of the principal, directed by the district superintendent. The district superintendent should be allotted a budget for a training program with authority to plan and implement citywide salary and time regulations.
2. The district superintendent will review the release of teachers and supervisors for assignment to headquarters.
3. The district superintendent can reassign personnel within his district, including teachers and supervisors.

III. Nonpedagogical Positions

Following assignment of positions to the district by headquarters, the district superintendent, consulting with the Local School Board, will allocate positions throughout the district.

IV. Budget

A. The district superintendent will receive a lump sum from the Superintendent of Schools to cover:

1. Maintenance, repairs, and painting
2. Books, supplies, materials, movable equipment, and so forth
3. Innovation and experimentation.

These funds will be expended by the district superintendent after consultation with the Local School Board.

- B. The district superintendent, after consultation with the Local School Board, will review and revise projected yearly allotments to schools before these allocations are determined. The district superintendent can reallocate unused funds to other schools.
- C. Each school will have a general "purchase of small value" fund to be used for direct purchase of minor items under \$150.
- D. The district superintendent will assign vehicles for field trips and other special transportation of children as required by the individual schools.

V. Books and Supplies

- A. The district superintendent will consult with the headquarters staff and draw up a formula for allocation of funds to districts for books and supplies.
- B. Allotments to individual schools will be made by district superintendents after consultation with the Local School Boards about the needs of each school.
- C. Individual schools will purchase books and supplies directly and make direct payment for repairs to office and educational equipment, not to exceed \$50. Allowances based on a per capita sum will be made to each school. All items greater than \$50 will be ordered by the principal through the district superintendent's office.

VI. Curriculum

- A. Headquarters will be responsible for developing basic curricula and courses of study on a citywide basis.**
- B. The district superintendent may adapt curricula to suit the needs of the area and experiment with new methods and materials.**
- C. The Local School Board will consult with the district superintendent regarding curriculum development in existing and new areas of learning.**
- D. The district superintendent, after consultation with the Local School Board, will be responsible for developing curriculum articulation among the various levels of the schools in the district.**
- E. The district superintendent and principals shall interpret the curriculum to the Local School Board, the parents, and the community.**
- F. The district superintendent shall continue the practice of establishing a direct line to universities for the development of special materials and methods.**

VII. Zoning

- A. The district superintendent shall propose zoning changes within the district after consultation with the Local School Board and then report these to the Central Zoning Unit.**
- B. Final authority with regard to zoning rests with the Superintendent of Schools.**

- C. The district superintendent will continue to consult with representatives of parents affected by rezoning proposals.

VIII. Community Education

- A. The district superintendent, after consulting with the Local School Board and the professional staff, will develop the exact nature and extent of community education services.

IX. Organization of the District Office

- a. Business Managers will be appointed in the district office to handle the projected increase in budgetary responsibilities.
- B. Possibilities of providing a building and maintenance coordinator for each district will be explored.
- C. Efforts will be made to provide space in the district office for the exclusive use of the Local School Board.

X. The Role of the Local School Boards

- A. The Local School Boards shall consult with the district superintendent in all matters heretofore mentioned.
- B. The following qualifications have been established for Local School Board members:
 - 1. They must reflect the views of the community.
 - 2. They must be democratically selected from the community.
 - 3. They must be knowledgeable about the community and dedicated to education and the educational needs of the area.
 - 4. They must maintain informal contacts with the community and also hold public hearings to listen to complaints from parents, citizens, and community groups.

5. They must establish contacts, maintain liaison, and work with the agencies in the area concerned with education, such as parent associations, civil rights groups, social welfare agencies, and so forth.
- C. The Local School Boards shall consult with the Superintendent of Schools regarding vacancies in the office of district superintendent.
1. The Local School Board will discuss with the Superintendent of Schools the needs of the district and the qualities of leadership required to meet these needs.
 2. The appointment or transfer of the district superintendent shall reside finally with the Superintendent of Schools.
- D. The Local School Boards shall hold capital budget hearings prior to consultation between the Office of School Planning and the district superintendent in December. The Local School Board shall make recommendations prior to drafting the budget.

XI. Expense Budget

The Local School Boards shall hold expense budget hearings by October 1 so that their (LSB) recommendations may be available to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education when they draft the citywide budget.

The Experience at the District Level

The Advisory Committee conducted a survey of five districts in order to assess the operation of administrative decentralization and to hold personal discussions with educational leaders at the district and individual school levels about their experiences and opinions. These districts

were visited and revisited over a ten-month period from September, 1967, through June, 1968.

The basic approach of the Committee's investigation was the open-ended interview with the district superintendent and the chairman of the Local School Board, in addition to informal conversations. On the basis of these contacts, it is possible to draw some conclusions as to the procedures and effects of decentralization thus far. It must be kept in mind, however, that the conclusions are tentative and subject to reevaluation over a longer period of time. All the respondents to date have agreed that it is too early to assess the overall effects of decentralization and that the district staff is still in the process of feeling its way and probing the opportunities presented under the newly enunciated policy.

Compositions of the Districts

The districts concerned (two in Manhattan, two in the Bronx, and one in Queens) cover a broad spectrum of socio-economic sections of New York City, ranging from predominantly white, middle class to disadvantaged minority areas. In three white middle class districts, however, there are slum areas. In two of these three there is a strong distinction between a segregated area located in Central and North Harlem, respectively, experiencing all the consequences of ghetto education in terms of poor academic achievement, and a more or less integrated area where one finds a higher educational achievement level and a school population that is progressively more white and middle class. Each of the five districts is experiencing in one way or another some contact with the newer immigrant

groups and/or a poorer nonwhite school population. This contact necessarily has led to an increased awareness on the part of those interviewed of the problems emanating from a more "problem-oriented" school population.

Relationship between the District Superintendent
and the Local School Board

Any attempt to evaluate how well decentralization is being implemented must take into consideration the influence of the Local School Board (LSB) vis-a-vis its ability to bring about real change in the community school system. Within the present framework of having "advisory powers" only, much depends on the working relationship between the district superintendent and the LSB. So, too, the willingness and ability of the chairman of the board to devote a considerable amount of time and effort to activities of the board and to bring his or her leadership to bear on the other members of the board is indicative to some extent of the influence the lay board may have in its working with the district superintendent. Lastly, the ability of the board to establish and maintain contacts with the community and its organized groups in order to gain real knowledge as to sentiments and feelings of the parents and residents will serve the board in its representative function and can also be used as a means of support if a dispute with the district superintendent should arise.

Our survey gained some knowledge on the first point, that is, the working relationship between the district superintendent and the LSB. In addition, it became quite clear that each of the LSB chairmen interviewed devoted more than a fair share of time to school board activities,

but we have not determined the extent to which they have exerted their influence on the rest of the board, nor can we state with certainty that the LSBs have necessary and sufficient community contacts.¹

Depending on the role played by the LSB in the particular district, the activities of this body were necessarily of greater concern to some district superintendents than to others. Where the LSB had not as yet established itself as a viable and working institution, the district superintendent felt free to operate in his usual manner, although he may now be more aware of his responsibility to inform the LSB of his impending decisions and to bring board members into the discussion before these decisions are made.²

However, where the LSB saw itself as the spokesman for the community--and in one instance the LSB was backed by some aggressive and vocal community groups--it adopted an adamant position with respect to its recommendations to the district superintendent. In this district the recommendations of the board were viewed as decisions which the district superintendent was expected to implement. In this instance the consultative

¹The chairman of one district board stated that her board engages in no independent research to investigate community needs. Rather, the board's role has been to respond to stimuli from the community and/or the district superintendent.

²This conclusion refers to a particular district and was drawn prior to the interview with the chairman of that Local School Board. In the course of the interview the chairman stated that the LSB decides broad policy and the district superintendent works out a program of implementation which he first submits to the board for approval. However, the chairman also stated that his board does not work as much as he would like and left the impression that he alone was the working board. In addition, the district superintendent commented that the board meets only twice a month and thus is ineffective for consultative purposes. Who really holds the reins of power in this district is a matter for future investigation.

role of the LSB became a determinative one, and the district superintendent, fearing loss of his position, felt obliged to accept its determination. Thus, decision-making with respect to the appointment of personnel and other matters generally was taken out of the hands of the district superintendent and his role became one of implementing the wishes of the LSB.¹ The district superintendent, forced to operate within this framework, questioned the competence of the LSB in evaluating decisions by the administrative head, although it was perhaps indicative of ambivalent feelings in the educational system that the district superintendent noted the reasonableness and capability of the LSB chairman.

In another district there seems to be a feeling of mutual respect and trust between the district superintendent and the chairman of the LSB. The latter has great faith in the competence and integrity of the district superintendent. The chairman of the board is extremely active and knowledgeable about the community and thus is able to exert his influence on the rest of the board members in terms of accommodating the various interests represented.

In the fourth district the relationship between the district superintendent and the LSB is cordial but distant. The LSB chairman has commented that the local board is not consulted consistently on any particular matter but rather receives neat memos of the actions taken and the decisions made by the district superintendent. The district superintendent, in turn, believes this local school board to be of high caliber, but

¹ This conclusion also is deduced from an interview with the district superintendent. Whether the LSB really is this powerful requires additional study.

he expressed the opinion that in the final analysis the superintendent's responsibility to exercise professional judgment must prevail.

In the last district a working partnership has been established between the two parties, although relationships have been strained. However, it is quite evident that the LSB is unhappy over what it considers the "organization-type" qualities (such as not bucking the system) of the district superintendent. In turn, the latter is concerned over what he terms the divisive effect of the LSB in its consultative role. According to this district superintendent, consultation always has been the role of the board. However, he believes that increasing consultation without necessarily increasing real power (which is the effect of the present decentralization plan) tends to confuse rather than ameliorate the situation.

All the district superintendents agreed with the concept of an advisory LSB. One implied that he would rather have left the advisory role on a personal basis, that is, to be worked out between the district superintendent and the LSB, instead of being mandated in a policy statement. Three other district superintendents saw problems implicit in the relationship when the two parties disagreed, but nevertheless they felt it incumbent upon the district superintendent to exercise his professional discretion. The last saw his power eroded by the advisory status of the board, because his prerogatives as administrative head were preempted by an inflexible board and/or community interests.

The District Office Staff. Additional positions have been established in the district office to cope with the increased responsibilities on the district level. Three of these positions are mandated.

One of the mandated positions is that of District Administrative Officer (DAO) or Business Manager. With regard to this position the Board of Education recruitment circular stated that the duties would be to "assist a district superintendent in the coordination of nonpedagogical functions of the district with particular emphasis on fiscal management and controls, allocation and control of supplies, budgeting, liaison function, etc." The extent to which the DAO performs these functions, however, depends upon the district superintendent's perception of the job. In one district the DAO handles all district matters relating to figures and monies. He takes care of records, books, Title I affairs, and consults with the proper persons regarding Title I allocations. In another area the DAO functions more as a high-level clerical officer. In a third the DAO has helped in the assignment of teachers.

There is a built-in evaluation of this position in the form of a committee of district superintendents and central board personnel. The committee intends to determine whether the DAO is functioning in a very narrow sense and is relegated to purely fiscal duties or whether his responsibilities extend to activities in zoning, maintenance, and other spheres. In any event, the DAO will have to meet certain civil service standards because the position is nonpedagogical in nature and consequently must comply not only with Board of Education standards but also with city standards.

The appointment of a District Maintenance and Operations Coordinator has met with mixed reactions. There seems to be some confusion on the part of the district superintendents as to the direct line of responsibility of this person. The coordinator still is assigned to the Borough

Division Office and thus is directly responsible to the division head and only secondarily to the district superintendent. Clarification of accountability is necessary.

Because the District Coordinator still is appointed on a borough-wide rather than a districtwide basis, repair and maintenance have been expedited only to a small degree. The real impact of this position seems to be psychological; the district superintendent and the professional staff now deal with one man who has become familiar to them rather than with a number of individuals at headquarters, most of whom the field staff never has met.¹

Assignment of Teachers. Teachers now are being assigned to districts rather than to individual schools. However, in one area the teachers came to the district office with slips of paper stipulating their assignments to schools according to individual arrangements between the principal and the teachers. The district superintendent, reluctant to create antagonism, countenanced these prearrangements.

Profiles of the teachers stating their individual capacities, interests, and similar information are being sent to the district offices. However, as in the case cited above, the profiles become meaningless for the district superintendents. In one district the superintendent did not have time to match individual teaching capabilities

¹The third mandated position is that of Supervisor of Community Education. This person coordinates the after-school centers, the youth and adult centers, and the like. The survey did not determine the effectiveness of this position.

to particular schools; thus, he assigned teachers on the basis of a common branch license to a common branch school.

District superintendents now have the power to reassign teachers to schools throughout their districts. The local school boards have had little, if any, role to play in teacher assignments.

Books and Supplies. Materials and supplies still must be ordered through central headquarters. The determination and evaluation of reading materials, however, recently has been assigned to the district level, although the Board of Education distributes a list of available materials for guidance purposes.

The Problems of Administrative Decentralization as Viewed by the District Superintendents

Although the district superintendents are committed to the concept of decentralization and the benefits which may accrue from increased parent involvement in the schools, they are more concerned with the operational burdens that decentralization places on the district level. They perceive these burdens to be:

1. The lack of a timetable or preplanning for the implementation of decentralization.
2. The failure of the Board of Education to prepare both the district superintendents and the LSBs for the dimensions of their new responsibilities.
3. The inability of the district superintendent to carry on the supervision of instruction. Decentralization has changed the function of the district administrative position by emphasizing a managerial and public relations role instead of creating an improved environment for the supervision of instruction.

4. The increased influence of the UFT on the district level. The district superintendents and principals are much more aware of the need to obtain union approval before attempting administrative or policy change in the schools.
5. The additional clerical work involved in the compilation of the budget. Most district superintendents seem to agree that the additional positions of District Administrative Officer and secretary are not sufficient for the enormity of the task.
6. The increased possibility of a divisive relationship with the Local School Board.
7. The increase in the status of the LSB. It is feared that this change may encourage the injection of personal considerations over professional qualifications in the selection of personnel. In addition, a radical and articulate element in the community is better able--under a decentralized structure--to bring pressure to bear both on the district superintendent and on a responsible LSB.

Moreover, the district superintendents believe that the architects of the decentralization policy, although responding to a real need of the school system to involve the community in educational affairs, have failed to anticipate and plan for the protection of personnel already part of the system. This attitude has led to resent^{ment} on the part of the staff and fear of the total decentralization policy.

Recommendations of the District Superintendents. The following recommendations have been made by the district superintendents:

1. The district superintendents should be allowed more complete fiscal responsibility. They should be permitted to deal directly with publishers and manufacturers in ordering books and furniture, respectively.
2. Decentralization should have provided for teacher training on the local level.
3. Each school needs an administrative assistant in charge of the budget in order to relieve the principal of the burden.
4. The district office should remain open all summer in preparation for the fall term. This policy, of course, would assume that people are available both at headquarters and in the individual schools.

The Role of the Local School Board in the Appointment of Principals.

Four of the districts have had experience, with varying degrees of success, with the selection of principals, and it is within this area the decentralization has been most evident. However, there do not seem to be any common procedures within which consultation takes place.

In the first district there have been four vacancies in the office of principal. In the case of the first vacancy, the LSB and the district superintendent agreed upon a candidate, who subsequently was appointed. In the case of the second vacancy, the first choice of the board did not coincide with that of the district superintendent. The district superintendent was persuaded to appoint the candidate who was the board's first choice, but later this person declined appointment and the administrator made his second choice without benefit of consultation with his

Local School Board. It is the belief of the school board chairman that the second candidate had strong support from a minority element in the community and that, had the board been consulted, it probably would have approved the appointment. However, there was some concern on the part of the board because its advice was not sought in the final selection. The LSB has stated that the district superintendent is inconsistent in consulting the LSB regarding matters in which it is concerned.

In the case of the third appointment, the district superintendent and the lay board again disagreed. However, the board's recommendation was unanimous and was supported by the Parents Association of that school. This concert of lay opinion resulted in the appointment of the board's candidate over the preferred choice of the district superintendent.

It was the fourth vacancy, however, which created the most friction between the district superintendent and the LSB. According to the district superintendent, future incidents of a similar nature might cause irreparable harm to the ability of the parties to work together.

The vacancy occurred in a Harlem school which had a Negro acting principal at the time. The parents in the school felt strongly that the acting principal should be retained in the position. The district superintendent informed his board that regulations required him to appoint from the list of eligibles. The board, in turn, unaware of the method of "plugging" the position¹ in order to retain the acting principal, explained the situation to the school parents. The board then interviewed several candidates and decided that the candidate preferred

¹ This is accomplished by keeping the regularly appointed principal on sabbatical leave.

by the district superintendent was acceptable. At this point the parents sent a delegation to the district office to demand the retention of the acting principal. Under this type of pressure the district superintendent relented and employed the tactic of plugging, thereby retaining the acting principal. However, he did not inform the LSB of his decision or suggest that they might wish to interview the acting principal. Thus, the appointment was made without consulting the lay board.

In the interview the district superintendent made it clear that he questioned the competence of the acting principal. The interview took place before final appointment, and at that time the district superintendent was reluctant to "beat the system" by the device of plugging. He explained that he considered himself a product and instrument of the system with a responsibility to uphold its regulations. However, as this appointment occurred in the atmosphere of decentralization, when community pressure was being brought to bear more heavily on the choices and alternatives of the district head, it is apparent, in this case at least, that the community preferences took precedence over professional prerogatives.

A question was raised by the LSB chairman as to why the district superintendent misled the LSB by stating initially that there was no possible way to appoint the acting principal and secondly by choosing to ignore the board in the final selection. In any event, a divisive note has been introduced in the relationship which does not bode well for the future amicability or working relationship between the parties.

Two other districts have had a more pleasant and productive experience in the appointment of principals, a fact which may be due in part

to the cordial working relationship between the district head and the chairman of the LSB. In one district the district superintendent suggested four persons on the list of eligibles, all of whom had her confidence. The LSB made its choice from this list and in the process became more aware of and developed a greater respect for candidates with experience--at least according to the district superintendent.

The vacancy in the second district occurred in February, 1967, before the issuance of the Board of Education's guidelines. However, the LSB, disinclined to set a precedent, determined to interview the appointee selected by the district superintendent. The latter, having received affirmation from the superintendent of schools, decided to grant the request. As it turned out, the board was satisfied with the new principal, especially in light of the fact that the chairman, through his brother, knew the candidate personally. The injection of this personal note was a cause of concern to the district superintendent, who foresaw the possibility of personal rather than professional factors playing a dominant role in the selection of candidates.

The fifth district superintendent discussed his efforts to appoint Negro principals in several schools. In two instances he appointed acting principals to the positions by resorting to the "plugging" method mentioned above until the time when the appointees met the qualifications of the job. In one case, however, the candidate has failed the examination for principal three times.

At another school in the district some elements in the community demanded the transfer of the regularly assigned principal. The district

superintendent advised the principal to transfer, but at first the latter refused. However, with continuing pressure from the community he finally requested and received a transfer.¹

With the demand from the militant elements in this community for a determining voice in the selection of principals and other personnel, it is evident that the district superintendent believes his own range of authority to be extremely limited. It would also appear, however, that he has demonstrated his willingness to adjust to community demands by appointing the Negro acting principals mentioned earlier. Nevertheless, a letter from one community group, accusing him of "racist" attitudes, makes it uncertain that the demands will not increase to the point of depriving him entirely of his professional judgment.

The Role of the Local School Board in the Budgetary Process. The budgetary process in each district begins with the district superintendent's request for each principal to draw up a budget for his own school.² These requests are submitted to the district office for approval, adjustment, and the like, and then forwarded to central headquarters. Because of the teacher strike and inadequate knowledge and experience in the district office as to the budgetary operation, some principals were given only three days in which to complete their budgetary requests. Conse-

¹ It was not ascertained what role, if any, the LSB played in the final decision of the principal to leave.

² In some districts each principal was instructed to speak with his staff and parents associations in order to ascertain their views on the needs of the school.

quently, there was very little time for the Local School Boards to become involved in the process. In fact, one board had no role whatsoever in determining budgetary allocations and was limited to approving a fait accompli presented to it by the district superintendent.¹

In another area the administrative head and his board met jointly to consider budgetary requests and to determine budgetary allocations. It was in the last district, though, where the budget received the most detailed attention from both the district superintendent and the LSB. Although the district superintendent still was not satisfied with the budgetary procedures (she had hoped to involve teachers, parents, and others), she stated that time did not permit the principals in the district to discuss the school budget with their teachers. Rather, it was possible only for the district superintendent and the principals to confer jointly.

The procedure followed by the LSB in this district was for two members (the chairman and another member) to meet with the various principals and discuss their needs for the coming year. After this series of interviews the chairman collated the requests and presented them to the full board for its consideration. The next step was the joint conference with the district superintendent and final determination of the district budget.

¹ The chairman of this district board noted that his board did not feel competent enough as yet to question the technical expertise of the district superintendent's staff.

There is general consensus among the assistant superintendents that the budget compilation on the district level is a great clerical burden. The individual principals have not received additional clerical help to properly undertake this task. And aside from the business manager and a secretary, the district office has not received additional secretarial positions to help with the increased workload.

It should be noted that while the district superintendents welcome the assignment of another district staff position in the person of the business manager, and they extol the virtues of receiving more help, the duties and responsibilities of the position remain unclear to most of the LSB chairmen who were interviewed.

The Role of the Local School Board in Zoning Matters. There has been very little consultation with the LSBs in the districts visited with respect to zoning matters. In one district, however, the LSB played an important role in the determination of a zoning policy. It had decided some time earlier that integration of the student population was desirable. In this respect it had received feedback from the parents and principal of one school (with an almost totally Negro and Puerto Rican enrollment) that the problems of the school emanated in large part from overcrowded facilities. The chairman of the board, in his subsequent investigation, traced the dropout rate of those students entering the junior high school in the area. He found that one quarter of the students coming from the overcrowded school would drop out before they graduated from the junior high school.

Another public school in the area with an almost all-white enrollment, underutilized, and destined soon to become an intermediate school (grades six through eight),¹ offered a very good opportunity for implementing integration. The LSB took its case to the district superintendent, who devised a plan for transferring grades two through five to other schools in the neighborhood. This move would make room for 130 sixth-graders to be transferred from the overcrowded facility to the predominantly all-white school.

Most of the students transferred out of the receiving school were white, while the majority of children transferred in were of Negro and Puerto Rican descent. There ensued a demonstration by parents of the receiving school, who protested the busing out of their children, and a subsequent modification of the plan,² negotiations for which included the participation of the top administrative elements in the city school system.

For the purposes of our survey, the case is an example of the expectations implicit in the consultation between a lay board and an administrative head to correct what they considered an undesirable situation in the school district. Of course, when confronted by the pressures

¹ This is one of the few schools in the city to cover all the elementary grades (one through eight).

² Only the fourth and fifth grades would be transferred; the second and third grades would remain.

of community forces, they found it necessary to dilute to some extent the intent of the original plan.¹

This case raises important questions as to whether the present decentralization policy is or will be an effective means to correct racial imbalance in the New York City schools. Can the district superintendents, by consulting with the LSBs, bring about meaningful desegregation decision through community involvement, or will the district superintendent be overwhelmed by local pressures to resist change? Yet, this does not mitigate what might be accomplished by a district superintendent and LSB in a particular area with respect to implementing the letter and spirit of the decentralization policy.

The Role of the Local School Boards in Designing Curriculum. There is very little consultation with the LSBs in the areas of curriculum. However, the attempt in one district to overcome an undesirable situation deserves special comment and is perhaps indicative of what might be accomplished under a decentralized structure, given the components of an active Local School Board, an interested community, and a sympathetic parent, teacher, and supervising group.

The Local School Board was advised by several parents' organizations and individual parents that there was too much ethnic homogeneity in the schools. Most classes were organized on a segregated basis. The local board brought the problem to the attention of the district superintendent,

¹ The Board of Education, in attempting to achieve a solution acceptable to all parties, brought pressure to bear on the proponents of the plan, which resulted in modification of the original proposal.

who devised a plan to correct the racial imbalance. At first, many teachers and parents responded negatively to his idea, the teachers because of the difficulties ensuing from teaching in a heterogeneous situation, the parents because of the fear that their children's education might suffer. However, the positive community voices were well organized and overcame incipient parental and professional opposition. The parents were able to obtain state aid for retraining teachers for a heterogeneous classroom setting. At this date regular meetings are being held between parent, community, and professional representatives to assess continually the results of the program.

The Problems of Administrative Decentralization
as Viewed by the Local School Board Chairman

According to the Advisory Committee's survey, it would seem that the LSBs are much more committed than the professional staff to the spirit and intent of the decentralization effort. They are seeking clarification of the role and functions of the local boards in the areas of curriculum, personnel appointment, zoning, and so forth.

There is also confusion as to the accountability of the district superintendent--to whom is he responsible, the central Board of Education and its administrative staff or to the LSB?

Finally, many LSBs are experiencing difficulty in overcoming professional inability or unwillingness to relate to the parental and sub-community groups.

Recommendations of the Local School Board Chairmen. The following recommendations result in part from our conversations with LSB chairmen,

together with the suggestions for positive action as formulated by the Committee of Local School Boards on Decentralization.

The central suggestion is that the phrase "in an advisory capacity only" be deleted from the Enabling Statute and that Local School Boards be invested with real power over personnel, budget, and other matters. The following suggestions from LSBs are in line with this proposed new power:

1. Personnel

- a. Authorize LSBs to hire their district superintendent on a contract basis.
- b. Authorize LSBs to hire their supervisory personnel from noncompetitive lists established by qualifying examinations, administered by the central agency.
- c. Require action for the granting of tenure to teachers and supervisors by LSBs.
- d. Permit the central agency to assign pools of teachers to districts.
- e. Authorize LSBs the power to assign such personnel within the districts.
- f. Authorize LSBs to transfer personnel between districts without loss of tenure.
- g. Authorize local recruitment and assignment of personnel after central certification and processing.

2. Budget

- a. Develop a formula for allocation of funds to LSBs by the central agency after consultation with local staff and LSBs, considering district needs and differences, and recognizing efforts toward innovation and experimentation.**
- b. Authorize maximum control of such money to district LSBs.**
- c. Retain control of capital funds at central level but require full consultation with LSBs as to the allocation and use of such funds.**

3. Curriculum

- a. The local districts shall have the responsibility to improvise and to innovate in any areas not covered by Regents requirements, with central administration of basic curriculum development.**
- b. The central agency shall have the responsibility to enforce educational standards.**
- c. The central agency shall have the responsibility to evaluate and report publicly on district performance of the educational program.**

Summary Findings on Administrative Decentralization: The District Level

As a result of the Advisory Committee's survey and in our numerous informal contacts with the participants on the educational scene, which serve to substantiate our investigative efforts, we believe that certain findings as to the extent and effectiveness of administrative decentralization can be suggested. They are listed as follows:

Personnel

1. Appointment of Principals:

- a. Decentralization has been most evident in the area of principal appointment. Most district superintendents seem to be aware of the mandate to consult with their LSBs regarding principal candidates. However, the procedures for consultation vary among the districts and even within a particular district with respect to multiple vacancies.
- b. The extent to which the LSB exercises influence in the choice of a principal depends in large part on the nature of the working relationship between the district superintendent and the LSB. In districts where there is a spirit of cooperative undertaking, the district superintendent and the LSB more often than not agree on the same candidate. In other districts where only a modus vivendi has been established, there is friction between the LSB and the district superintendent and a more determined effort must be made to reach an accommodation.

2. Assignment of Teachers

With the assignment of a pool of substitute teachers on the district level, the district superintendents have somewhat more flexibility in meeting the staffing needs of their principals.

3. District Office Staff

Of the additional positions established on the district level under decentralization, only three are mandated. This practice

has allowed the district superintendents more flexibility in their staffing arrangements. Now a district superintendent can appoint a principal to his staff and perhaps dispense with one or two coordinator positions (if his budget does not allow for all of them). Prior to decentralization the highest professional staff position permitted on the district level, with the exception of the district superintendent, was that of assistant principal.

The Budget

1. The experience in budgetary matters under decentralization has been limited, at least with respect to LSB involvement. Consultation between the district superintendent and the LSB is haphazard and inconsistent. Some local boards did not participate at all in the budgetary process, while others approved a fait accompli presented to them by the district superintendent.
2. The range of responsibility of the District Administrative Officer (Business Manager) reflects the personal demands made on the position holder by the district superintendent.
3. The duties and responsibilities of the District Administrative Officer remain unclear to most LSB members.

Curriculum and Zoning

Lay consultation in the areas of curriculum and zoning is, except in a few radical instances, practically nonexistent.

Books and Supplies

Books and supplies still must be ordered through central headquarters. The determination and evaluation of reading materials, however, take place on the district level, although a Board of Education list of available materials is distributed for purposes of guidance.

The Experience at the School Level

In order to follow up our preliminary survey of administrative decentralization on the district level, we conducted interviews with principals and Parent Association (PA) presidents in twenty-two schools in the five sample districts undergoing administrative decentralization. In contrast to schools in the Demonstration Project areas, these twenty-two schools were essentially middle class. The median family income ranged from \$4,200 to \$12,000, with more than half falling over the city average of \$6,091. Similarly, two-thirds of the adult population were above the city median of school years completed. The third-grade mean reading scores of these schools ranged from five months below grade level (3.3) to one year seven months (5.7) above grade level. Only three schools had average scores below grade level, while the averages of sixteen were at grade level or above.

The Principals and Decentralization

We interviewed both the principals and the presidents of each Parent Association. This section reports on the interviews with the principals.

Generally, the principals believe there has been some movement within the past few years toward greater flexibility and communication in the operating patterns of the individual schools. However, most of the principals interviewed attributed this change to forces other than decentralization, i.e., their particular working habits and increased community awareness.

In the area of personnel, most principals professed always to have had good relationships with their staffs. They stated that their "doors have always been open" and their teachers feel free to come in to discuss problems and ideas.

The principals feel hampered by the UFT contract in terms of limiting time for staff conferences, but they believe that their respect for contract obligations insures and supports the existing, positive principal-staff relationship. Some principals credit the UFT with helping to open lines of communication between teachers and supervisory personnel by means of frequent staff meetings.

Decentralization was credited with minor improvement in the recruitment of personnel. A pool of teachers now is assigned to the district office, and this procedure has facilitated the filling of vacancies in the schools. However, the pool is exhausted rather rapidly, and the principals once again are left to their own devices with respect to staffing their classrooms.

The Advisory Committee found that, generally, under decentralization, little change has occurred in the area of curriculum innovation. Perhaps because of the pressures exerted by decentralization upon the

TABLE VII

PARENT ASSESSMENT OF HOW SCHOOL OFFICIALS WOULD RESPOND TO PARENTAL PROBLEMS
(IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| Board of Education | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 40 | 27 | 49 | 43 | 36 | 45 | 47 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 27 | 36 | 14 | 30 | 33 | 20 | 13 |
| Ignore | 20 | 23 | 18 | 17 | 21 | 15 | 23 |
| Not sure | 13 | 14 | 19 | 10 | 10 | 20 | 17 |
| Project Administrator | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 44 | 46 | 37 | 51 | 48 | 39 | 41 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 17 | 18 | 14 | 20 | 19 | 14 | 16 |
| Ignore | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 1 |
| Not sure | 33 | 29 | 43 | 23 | 25 | 41 | 42 |
| Local Project Board | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 55 | 56 | 46 | 64 | 60 | 51 | 44 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 12 | 14 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 7 | 14 |
| Ignore | 4 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| Not sure | 29 | 24 | 41 | 19 | 80 | 37 | 41 |
| Principal | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 64 | 52 | 73 | 68 | 60 | 72 | 64 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 19 | 28 | 13 | 15 | 21 | 11 | 27 |
| Ignore | 6 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 5 | -- |
| Not sure | 11 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 22 | 9 |
| Teachers | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 65 | 51 | 76 | 68 | 60 | 75 | 71 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 15 | 23 | 9 | 14 | 21 | 7 | 10 |
| Ignore | 6 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 7 |
| Not sure | 14 | 18 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 |

principal to involve his staff and school community in pedagogical decisions, the psychological effect seems to be the reverse. In other words, those who were interviewed took refuge in an even more determined commitment to their professional responsibility to decide what is best for their schools. In a few important instances, however, parental suggestions have been implemented (for example, more emphasis on individualized math instruction).

The small funds now available to the individual schools for curriculum innovation have enabled the principals to implement somewhat more effectively the suggestions for changes in the curriculum. To this degree they feel more efficacious in dealing with recommendations from staff members and parents.

With reference to community relations, most principals seem uninvolved with groups other than parent groups. Many professed a belief that the principal should be involved in certain community issues but felt that the clerical work and meetings created by decentralization and community involvement drew them away from the classrooms and their roles as educational leaders. Their involvement with community groups ranged from active participation in some programs to only a vague knowledge that a group existed. This response is correlated to the range of reactions on the part of principals to their parent groups. On the one hand a principal might listen and implement suggestions; at the other end of the range, his response would be, "My PA is very obliging--they don't give me any trouble." It may be assumed that the extent to which a principal is involved in his community reflects his individual personality and his capacity to handle and engage in group interaction.

Almost all principals confined their discussion of decentralization to developments in the Demonstration Projects. They expressed grave doubts about the competence of the administrative personnel now running the Demonstration Projects. In light of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville battle they categorically opposed giving the community the right to hire and fire professional staff. Almost all of them believed that a break should be made from Livingston Street and that community consultation was essential in running the schools effectively. However, they felt that total community control without professional guidance was a poor policy. They questioned the ability of the community to deal with such problems as implementing the curriculum and determining professional performance without regard to race.

It was generally agreed that there is a greater degree of consultation and communication between the principals and the district offices under decentralization. Many principals now perceive the district superintendent as an educational leader, not merely a rating officer. They suggested that prior to decentralization an innovative district superintendent had to struggle with the central office to obtain approval of his plans. Now, however, he has been given official "status," thus lessening to some degree his difficulty in bringing about meaningful change.

In conclusion, decentralization is given little credit for opening up the doors of change. Rather, professionals look to their own abilities and competence as educational leaders as the major factor in engaging the interest and participation of parents and teachers. Administrative decentralization generally is viewed favorably as a necessary step, but it

it is apparent that many professionals are conditioning their reactions to the program with an eye to the events occurring in the Demonstration Projects. These developments have increased the negative responses with respect to the possible or potential benefits of the total decentralization program. While lip service is paid to the concept of community involvement, the underlying attitude is one of caution, perhaps even fear and resentment of the idea of increased parent participation in the schools. But, as has been demonstrated in the two cases already mentioned that involve zoning and curriculum, it is evident that, given an active and interested community (Local School Board, parents, and so forth), a cooperative district superintendent, and a professional staff willing to experiment, a decentralized structure can create the environment in which meaningful change can occur.

The PA Presidents' Views of Decentralization

The majority of the PA presidents in the twenty-two schools indicated their belief that little effect has been felt in their schools as a result of the Board of Education's decentralization policy of April 19, 1967. Among these presidents there appears to be considerable confusion as to whether decentralization actually is in effect and/or what decentralization really is all about. Many seem to consider decentralization as something yet to come. In all five districts, and even within a particular district, the understanding of the program among PA presidents ranged from one extreme to the other. That is, one PA president declared that decentralization is not yet in effect, while another had full knowledge of the policy and its implementation in the same district.

Although most PA president said that the Board's decentralization policy has not affected their schools, several mentioned that the district superintendents have been "nicer" and a few others mentioned that principals have been more responsive to suggestions. Many PA presidents said that they have none of the particular problems which decentralization normally is believed to alleviate. A few stated that their principals always have been able to get whatever was needed for the school. Generally, in those cases where there is a good working relationship with the principal, there is little desire for decentralization. Those who believe that decentralization could improve conditions mentioned the need for flexibility in staffing; better communication between parents, teachers, and administrators; less red tape in getting textbooks, supplies, repairs, and new construction; an ability to question accepted procedures; and an increase in parent involvement. As one respondent expressed it, "If parents knew their rights and influence, you would get better participation."

Sixteen of the PA presidents interviewed said that the Board's policy has not increased parent or community involvement. However, several stated that it has encouraged those who have been involved to continue their involvement and it has resulted in a more responsive posture on the part of principals and district superintendents. In the words of one PA president, "We have had to fight for each step of parent involvement. Under decentralization, it won't be a fight, it will be a right." It should be noted that the majority of PA presidents interpret parent involvement as membership in the PA and attendance at PA meetings. According to this definition, involvement generally is considered to be slight

to moderate. PA presidents want more parent involvement, but many consider that the lack of such involvement results from parent indifference, lack of time, and feelings of inadequacy rather than from a particular policy of the administration.

According to the PA presidents, the Board's policy on decentralization generally has improved the relationship between the district superintendents and the LSBs where improvement was needed. The respondents in one district stated that the district superintendent consults the LSB but feels intimidated by not knowing whether or not he can be dismissed by the LSB. The presidents in another district said that although the district superintendent still does as he wishes, he tends to give the impression that he is consulting the local board. One respondent said, "He can still jam ideas down your throat." Parents are aware that this district superintendent has openly questioned whether he will remain in the district if further decentralization occurs. The PA presidents in a third district have noticed that the district superintendent now attends almost all LSB meetings, whereas previously he attended only a few. Another group of PA presidents saw the Board's policy as having caused their district superintendent to feel uncertain and change his mind more often. In addition, they said that the policy now served as an excuse to do nothing on the rationale that nothing can be acted upon until "decentralization comes through."

Only three PA presidents were themselves consulted on selection of principals or knew of other parents who were. Parents in one district were told that they would have a voice in the selection of a principal.

When they found a candidate whom they wished to interview, they asked their LSB and district superintendent to call him in. The meeting was scheduled. Only after the parents arrived did they discover that another applicant was present instead of their nominee. At this meeting the president of the LSB told the parents that they must decide on the present applicant then and there. Subsequent to accepting the applicant, they discovered that he had been found unacceptable in the school he previously administered and had, in fact, been called up on charges. The parents were incensed at the manner in which the LSB and the district superintendent handled the selection of that principal.

In another case parents were assured by the district superintendent that an applicant was "impeccably" qualified to administer their school. They accepted the recommendation, only to discover later that the principal had been unacceptable to parents in a school similar to theirs. The parents were dissatisfied about the handling of that principal's selection and at present are displeased with his performance.

In one district the five principals directly involved parents in the budget considerations. The principals consulted their PA presidents and their executive boards and they reviewed the budget item by item. Most PA presidents in other districts were not consulted at all on their budgets. The few who were the exceptions were asked informally what they needed or wanted. In several cases the PA presidents and executive boards were consulted on the use of Title I funds.

Similarly, six PA presidents or parents were consulted on curriculum matters. The only consultation was about curricula using Title I.

funds, i.e., after-school reading clinics, adult language classes, and after-school Negro history classes. Classes were held for PA leaders of one district on the subjects of narcotics and sex education. In one case the PA president and the executive board were introduced to textbook salesmen and permitted to select books for the library.

Seven PA presidents believed that their principals were opposed to decentralization. However, many did not know their principals' opinions. Nine PA presidents said that the district superintendent supported the Board's policy on decentralization, even though several thought the district superintendent felt threatened by decentralization. Three PA presidents said the district superintendent was opposed to decentralization; the others did not know his opinion. The LSBs were considered overwhelmingly to favor decentralization because it would give them more power, although one respondent said, "The LSB says that they want to work for decentralization but they are not living it or practicing it. They are trying to fool us." Half of the PA presidents believed that the teachers oppose decentralization. The other half stated that the teachers support the UFT position. A letter posted on the teachers' bulletin board in one school related the bad experience of a teacher, formerly in that school, when she moved to a Demonstration Project school.

PA presidents generally were confused by the various plans for decentralization, i.e., the Bundy plan, the Mayor's plan, the Regents' plan, and the Board's plan. The majority, however, opposed the Mayor's plan as one which would introduce politics into the schools. A large number also regarded the Bundy plan and the Regents' plan with disfavor because of the Mayor's power to select members of the community boards

or, in the case of the Regents' plan, the paid commissioners. Many presidents opposed community involvement as distinct from parent involvement. They viewed community control as a means of eliminating or reducing the effectiveness of the PAs. One PA president stated, however, that only with a plan like the Bundy plan would "teachers and administrators be forced to face reality." Many PA presidents emphasized that they were not interested in any kind of decentralization that would cause the sort of upheaval occurring in IS 201 or Ocean Hill.

Approximately half the PA presidents stated in one way or another that education should be left in the hands of professional educators. They thought that personnel and curriculum should be decided by the experts, as should the budget. They felt that parents should be informed, consulted, and listened to with respect but not given the final word. However, there was a genuine desire on the part of many PA presidents for parents, including themselves, to become more knowledgeable in the areas of curriculum and budget.

Three PA presidents stated the need to continue with a central board of education, fearing that further decentralization could only bring about "chaos." One PA president said, "The philosophy of decentralization will have a divisive effect. It is contrary to the feelings of democracy." Three presidents predicted that decentralization probably would mean a loss of funds allocated to their schools. As it is, one president stated, "Too much is put in these poverty areas, too much on the underprivileged, too much for the black guy."

Nevertheless, the opinions expressed throughout the interviews were that there should be greater flexibility in the assignment of special personnel, the method of recruitment of teachers should be reviewed and changed, incompetent teachers should be weeded out, the red tape involved in obtaining books, supplies, repairs, and new schools should be eliminated, and the needs of the individual schools should be recognized and met. It was acknowledged that some change is necessary but the feeling was expressed that the plans of decentralization thus far presented have been unacceptable and have raised anxieties about the conduct of education as it affects the children. However, since there are no better alternatives, the majority of PA presidents are content to work within the existing framework.

In conclusion, there is a general lack of knowledge, information, and understanding of the Board of Education's Plan for Administrative Decentralization. The PA presidents may be expected to react to the administrative decentralization which they are supposed to be experiencing, but they appear to perceive and react to the form of decentralization reported in the mass media concerning the Demonstration Projects.

While most PA presidents are not aware that any basic changes are taking place in their particular schools, they generally approve administrative decentralization which will give additional authority to professional educators who are responsible for the conduct and operation of the local schools.

However, most PA presidents express their concern with the anticipated and unanticipated consequences of decentralization associated with the Demonstration Projects.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST YEAR OF THE THREE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Introduction

Three Demonstration Projects, operating with varying degrees of authorization by the Board of Education, have existed in the City for all or part of the 1967-1968 school year. The first, in East Harlem, is known as the IS 201 Demonstration Project and consists of IS 201 and its four feeder elementary schools. The second, on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, is known as the Two Bridges Demonstration Project (JHS 65). Four elementary schools feed into JHS 65. The third, in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, is known as the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project (JHS 271 and IS 55). Six elementary schools feed into these two schools.

All three districts have in common the fact that they are located in disadvantaged areas or neighborhoods. According to the U. S. Census, in 1960 the median family income ranged from \$3,000 to \$5,100. One-third to two-thirds of these families had incomes under \$4,000, as compared to the average of \$6,091 for New York City. Much of the housing in these areas was dilapidated and deteriorating, especially in the IS 201 area, where half to two-thirds of the population lived in unsound dwelling units. The level of education in these areas was somewhat lower than that for the city as a whole. The median years of education completed by the adult population was one to three years

below the city's average of 10.1 years. The residents were predominantly Negro except for the Two Bridges area, where there was a balance of whites, Negroes, and Puerto Ricans, with enclaves of Chinese.

Rhody McCoy, Project Administrator for Ocean Hill-Brownsville, has described his area as being characterized by the problems of the "invisible" people. His description is appropriate for the other two areas as well:

In Ocean Hill-Brownsville there are people groping in the dark, who for a long time have felt themselves outside the mainstream of public concern. The city takes no notice of them. In the midst of a crowd or wherever groups of people assemble or pass, these people are obscure, unnoticed, as though they do not exist. They are not censured or reproached; they simply are not seen. They are the invisible residents of a demoralized, poverty-ridden, inner city. To be ignored or overlooked is a denial of one's rights to dignity, respect and membership in the human race. These residents have been frustrated at every turn in their attempt to reverse the process.¹

Most important is the fact that the three areas are "educationally depressed." Again McCoy describes the educational conditions he must work with:

With increasingly poor academic performance of the pupils attending our schools, with all the schools having student reading levels at least two years below city grade norms, there exists the continuous production of imageless children who take no special interest or pride in school achievement. This manifests itself in the increasing dropout rate even at the Junior High School level. The physical plants are for the most part unfit to house students, let alone to permit teachers to perform in an effective manner. Many have been condemned only to be subsequently reactivated. The alarming turnover in staff, coupled with high pupil mobility and the aforementioned conditions, result in minimal qualitative learning.²

1

Rhody A. McCoy, "The Year of the Dragon," paper presented at the Conference on Educational Sub-Systems, Harvard University Graduate School of Education, January 24-26, 1968, p. 1.

2

Ibid.

These pupils are predominantly and increasingly Negro, except in the Two Bridges area, where, as noted above, there is a mixture of Puerto Ricans, whites, Chinese, and Negroes, in that order. Half the elementary schools in the three Demonstration Projects are operating at the proper degree of utilization, five schools are operating at only 70 per cent utilization, and one, operating at 130 per cent, is over-utilized. All have been designated special service schools and are eligible for supplementary remedial services. Although four schools do not use substandard rooms (as these are defined by the Board of Education), half the rooms in two others are substandard, and the remainder of the schools have 10 to 15 per cent substandard rooms. A large number of building code violations was recorded in 1965. One example is PS 73 in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, which was described as follows: exits padlocked, windows boarded; window glass missing; scuttle openings padlocked; plaster broken, loose, and missing; metal corroded and partly missing; paint peeling; door not fitted to frame; tiles missing. Most buildings in the Demonstration Projects are assigned low priority for replacement and/or renovation. It should be noted, however, that each project area has gained one or two new buildings within the last few years.

Since the schools involved have been designated as special service schools, the instructor-pupil ratio is low, ranging from 12.5 to 15.7 students per teacher in IS 201, from 14.0 to 18.0 students per teacher in Two Bridges, and from 13.2 to 19.8 students per teacher in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The standard class size generally has decreased over the past few years. The proportion of regular teachers assigned to

these schools ranges from 50 to 80 per cent, with most falling above 70 per cent. The proportion of teachers having three years of experience or more ranges from 25 to 83 per cent, with the figure for most schools falling under 50 per cent. In only two schools do more than 10 per cent of the faculty have fourteen or more years of experience.

All the schools have Head Start programs. One has Intellectually Gifted Classes (IGC). All schools were given new library facilities during the academic year 1966-1967.

The per capita pupil operating costs are comparatively high, especially for the IS 201 Demonstration Project, where they range from a little over \$900 to just over \$1,000. The per capita costs for the Two Bridges schools range from just over \$700 to nearly \$,800. (The higher figure results from special programs, e.g., for blind children.) The per capita costs in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville complex are lowest, ranging from just under \$600 to somewhere over \$900.

The students' achievement level in all three Demonstration Projects is below average. The third grade average reading scores range from nearly a year to a year and a half behind grade level. The sixth grade average scores are from one-half to nearly two years behind. John Bremer, first Project Administrator of the Two Bridges schools, issued the following report on the reading scores in those schools:

In June 1967, there were 557 children in Third Grade in our four elementary schools. Only 493 children were tested in April, which means that about 64 children were not tested at all. Of the 493 children tested, 391 were at or below grade level in reading. The test is designed so that half of the children should be above grade level.

| | <u>Our Results</u> | <u>New York City Standards</u> |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Above grade | 102 | 278 |
| Below grade | 391 + 64 = 455 | 278 |

These same children were also tested under the New York State Pupil Evaluation Program last year. This test uses New York State standards and not New York City standards. This testing shows that out of our approximately 557 Third Grade children, 78 were not tested at all, 290 were below the minimum level of competence, 165 were average, and 24 were above average in reading. The test is designed so that half our children should be average, a quarter above average, and a quarter below the minimum level of competence.

| | <u>Our Results</u> | <u>New York City Standards</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Above average | 24 | 140 |
| Average | 165 | 280 |
| Below minimum level of competence | 290 + 78 = 368 | 140 |

These figures are typical¹ for other grades, and also for arithmetic as well as reading.

The Advisory Committee has not made a detailed study of these statistics.

Suffice it to say that everyone, Superintendent as well as parents, is dissatisfied with the achievement levels in the schools.

The remainder of this status report on the three Demonstration Projects is organized on the basis of the four phases through which they have been proceeding toward full operational authority: (1) planning, (2) the elective process, (3) the quasi-operational process, and (4) the granting of formal approval.

The Planning Phase

IS 201 Demonstration Project

This Demonstration Project first began to develop in the fall of 1966 as a result of the community controversy surrounding the opening of IS 201.² Many agencies, including the office of the late Senator Robert Kennedy, the State Commission of Education, the Mayor's office, and the Ford Foundation,

¹Memorandum from John Bremer to all members of the community, November 29, 1967.

²Thomas Mintor, Intermediate School 201, Manhattan: Center of Controversy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Graduate School of Education, 1967).

became involved in efforts to resolve the conflict. No fully acceptable plan was formulated during this period, but there was a wide range of participation from the local community, including some militant advocates of change. In September, 1966, a school boycott demanded that the Board of Education either integrate the student body or give the community control of the school. The boycott failed, the demand was not acceded to, and the academic year ended in June, 1967, on a note of frustration, bitterness, and despair.

Once the Parent Planning Council received a Ford planning grant of \$51,000 in June, 1967, they retained a Project Administrator, who left within a few weeks. The early phase of the planning period was marked by a constant struggle between the various community factions. The planning itself, however, involved parents, teachers, and community leaders. Community activists appeared to be most influential in the planning phase. These people were primarily poverty workers or ex-poverty workers associated with MEND.

Representatives from the UFT participated actively in the early stages of formulating the proposal. They were especially interested in expanding educational programs, such as the More Effective Schools program.

The initial proposal for IS 201, prepared by Harry Gottesfeld and Sol Gordon in the spring of 1967, was entitled "Academic Excellence: Community and Teachers Assumed Responsibility for the Education of the Ghetto Child." According to this plan a local governing board, after undergoing a training program, would assume the responsibility, in consultation with university and other experts, to select an administrator, set educational goals and standards, recruit and select a staff, determine curriculum changes, determine policy toward public and private

agencies, maintain fiscal control, and contract for an independent evaluation of its performance and accomplishments.

The proposal overlooked or was unclear on a number of important considerations involving the transfer of authority to a local Project Board. These points were as follows:

1. How were the members to be chosen?
2. What were the plans to train members of the Project Board?
3. What would be the particular criteria and procedures for selecting the Project Administrator? Would state and city standards be used?
4. Were present methods and personnel to be ignored in setting educational goals and standards?
5. Was it realistic to expect to recruit a teaching staff on a completely voluntary basis? What would happen if this method failed to provide a full complement of staff?
6. Would all current methods of reviewing teachers' performance be abandoned?
7. The procedures suggested for selecting teachers were ambiguous. Would the Project Administrator interview, assess, and then propose the applicant to the Project Board, or would the Project Board initiate the process?
8. Should the principal be selected after consultation with teachers and parents, but with final appointment by the Project Administrator with the approval of the Project Board?

9. Would there be citywide standards and goals for curricula to ensure that the student who moves about the city can do so without serious problems?
10. Should budgetary control mechanisms (auditing) be a central function?

During the summer of 1967 there was little communication between the IS 201 Planning Council and the Board of Education beyond the initial statement, which was the basis upon which the Ford grant was awarded. Council members seldom appeared at the Board of Education to discuss with Superintendent Donovan their progress, their specific problems, and the like. On occasion, however, they expressed their desire to formulate a more comprehensive approach to education, i.e., to find the means to ensure community control over all youth-serving activities in the local area. In October their proposal, which essentially reproduced the Ocean Hill proposal, was submitted under the guidance of planning consultant Berlin Kelly, a trained social worker formerly with MEND, who, however, was not familiar with the New York City school system and its inner workings.

A second planning consultant, Herman Ferguson, was an influential member of the Planning Council. Ferguson, an assistant principal, was suspended by the Board of Education in the spring of 1967, pending charges of an alleged plot to assassinate civil rights leaders Whitney Young and Roy Wilkins during the preceding summer. At the present writing, he has just been convicted of the charges. He was first a consultant in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project, where he played such a prominent role as assistant to Rhody McCoy that the teaching faculty and supervisory

staff complained sharply. In concert with David Spencer and Berlin Kelly, Ferguson attempted to bring together the deep-seated divisions and factions within the IS 201 Planning Council and mobilize their energies to take a militant position. The teacher walkout at the beginning of the school year in September, 1967, created a situation which allowed them to strengthen and mobilize this more militant approach.

Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project

In February, 1967, partly in response to the controversy surrounding IS 201 in Manhattan and partly as the result of a parent movement to gain representation on the Local School Board, members of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community began to plan for some means to participate more directly in school affairs. From that time until they received their Ford planning grant in July, 1967, a number of key participants, including poverty workers, parents, neighborhood association leaders, and religious leaders, met to discuss how they would assume control of the schools in the area. They were in contact with the Mayor's office and held exploratory discussions with members of the Board of Education's administrative staff.

Once they received the Ford grant of \$44,000, they set out to complete the planning phase according to a deliberate, twenty-six-day timetable. Parents, community leaders, and teachers became involved. A number of parents were paid on a weekly basis to participate. They met regularly, both day and evening, to discuss the various specific means for achieving community control of the schools.

Most teacher representatives were appointed by their respective faculties at staff meetings held before the close of the school year. For

the most part these were teachers who indicated that they would be in New York during the summer and were willing to participate in the planning phase. At this time the teachers were participants in the Demonstration Project, which they characterized as having the following conditions:

1. Full participation by parents, teachers, and community in the planning and implementation;
2. Confidence of each group in the others;
3. An absence of attitudes detrimental to the plan;
4. Open, honest, and unbiased discussion of all issues;
5. Consensus on all items involved in a plan;
6. Impartial procedures for selecting the best qualified personnel to become involved in the plan;
7. Maintenance of the highest professional standards;
8. The primary objective of improving education through the use of every resource and concentrating on educational programs;
9. Accountability to all interested parties throughout the planning.¹

Later, toward the end of September, the teacher representatives were to complain bitterly that they had been bypassed in the planning phase and that in fact they were seldom listened to. They described the general atmosphere of the planning meetings as follows:

. . . extremely hostile and negative. There was a constant stream of remarks to teachers which stated that teachers were bigoted, incompetent, disinterested, obstructive, and were attempting to sabotage the plan.

¹Statement by the teachers of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Experimental District, September 27, 1967.

The atmosphere became so hostile that teachers hesitated even to ask a question or express an opinion. Any attempt at teacher comment was met with insults and charges of obstruction.

On July 29, at the end of the twenty six days, the Planning Council produced a written document which they submitted in August to the Board of Education. This differed from the original proposal used to secure the Ford Foundation grant in that it changed the method of selecting the Project Administrator and principals when vacancies should occur. It also abandoned the request that the project schools be given the More Effective School (MES) status and other supplementary educational services. The teachers later opposed the changes.

The specifically proposed powers, responsibilities, and functions of the Project Board, as stated in their document, were as follows:

1. The Board will be responsible and answerable to the New York City Superintendent of Schools and the State Commissioner of Education in all matters pertaining to the schools of this district.
2. The Board will be responsible for selecting and recommending for appointment a Project Administrator.
3. The Board will approve the Project Administrator's recommendations of principals for existing vacancies at PS 178, PS 87, PS 155, PS 144, and IS 55.
4. The Board will select and recommend for appointment a Business Manager.
5. The Board will select nominees for community-relations liaison and community-school worker positions from among community residents.
6. The Board will determine policy for the guidance of the Project Administrator in areas of curriculum, program, and professional personnel.
7. The Board will determine budgetary needs and allocate funds for same. In line with this, the nature of such an experimental school unit makes it imperative that needs be met as they

arise. The Projects, therefore, shall be permitted to apply directly for federal, state, and private funds to supplement the School Board's allotment.

8. The Board shall make provisions for periodic evaluations of the total program. Such evaluations will include the Project Administrator, principals, teachers, community workers, etc. This is not to be construed as meaning the Board will do the evaluating. Existing Board of Education procedures for evaluating teachers will remain intact.

9. The Board will make periodic visits to schools in the experimental unit as provided by state regulations.¹

During the summer the Planning Council held a number of meetings with Superintendent Bernard Donovan and his staff in order to clarify their intentions and differences. During this planning period the Council conferred with a variety of consultants, especially persons connected with Brooklyn College. In addition, they retained as their Project Administrator Rhody McCoy, an assistant principal with eighteen years of service in the New York City school system.

Two Bridges Demonstration Project

The antecedents to this project were the activities of the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council and the Parent Development Program activities. As their poverty funds began to dwindle, the Neighborhood Council began to look for foundation support. They persuaded the Ford Foundation to assist them in determining their focus on education, a request which came at a time when the IS 201 controversy was well developed. They, too, used university personnel, especially from Yeshiva University, to put together their preliminary thoughts and secure the Ford Foundation planning grant of \$40,000 in July, 1967.

¹"A Plan for an Experimental School District: Ocean Hill-Brownsville," July 29, 1967.

The initial Two Bridges proposal was entitled "The Quest for a Child-Centered School System." During many discussions with the Superintendent of Schools this proposal came more and more to assume the form of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville proposal.

During the summer there was a fairly intensive effort to involve parents, teachers, and the community in the planning phase. Among the several factions, the teachers seemed to play a prominent role. The Planning Council selected as their chief consultant John Bremer, Professor of Education at Long Island University. He succeeded in getting the proposal into writing and attempted to involve the many elements of the community in the planning phase. He was the unanimous choice of the Planning Council for Project Administrator. Later, however, Bremer's alleged aloofness from Council members and the Project Board created suspicion and eventually led to his resignation.

One serious technical problem in the planning phase for the Two Bridges project was the extremely inappropriate feeder pattern that was developed, whereby one school which was to feed the junior high school (the center of the project) was excluded from the project and one school with a large proportion of children not going to the junior high school (not a feeder school) was included. At the point when this error was discovered, it was decided not to rearrange the feeder pattern.

The Electoral Process

Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project

A vigorous campaign was waged in Ocean Hill-Brownsville for election to the Project Board. A brief training program for parents was

instituted during the planning period. All the procedures and supervision of this election were established by the Planning Council without consultation with or advice from the Board of Education. It was an unorthodox election, but observers considered it one in which an honest effort was made to obtain the votes of all parents of the schools. It extended over a period of three days. The first day was normal; people came to the individual schools to vote. The Planning Council secured police cadets and students from Brooklyn College to actually conduct and/or supervise the election. Although the cardboard boxes and desk drawers which were pressed into service as ballot boxes could easily have been opened and tampered with, no charges were made or misdeeds observed. For the next two days those parents who had not voted were canvassed at their homes and thus given an opportunity to vote. There was no evidence of coercion during the nominating process or during the election period itself.

Once the parents and teachers who were members of the Project Board were selected, they in turn designated the community representatives.

IS 201 Demonstration Project

During the planning period the IS 201 Planning Council set up a formal series of training workshops for all residents who wished to be prospective candidates for the Project Board. Ten sessions were held at which Preston Wilcox, Professor of Social Work at Columbia University, and other speakers were brought in. An early prerequisite for candidacy was that a person must have attended all ten workshops. Later this was revised to require attendance at six workshops. On the final night of the nominating period, however, nominations were received from the floor.

There was a last-minute problem in establishing a working relationship with the Honest Ballot Association, which contracted with the Planning Council to supervise the election. The names of the nominees were not submitted as agreed upon by the Planning Council, thus making the printing of the ballot quite difficult. The Council mimeographed the ballots. The HBA supervised the actual election process and certified that there was no evidence of wrongdoing or coercion in the election.

There were many bitter disagreements and chaotic disputes during the nominating process, as well as an actual boycott of parents on election day in one school. Some parents complained that they were not informed about the proposed means of achieving community control of the schools or about the actual election procedures. There were charges of coercion by the UFT and countercharges by the Planning Council. Both were addressed to the State Commissioner of Education, who set up a commission to investigate the conditions in all three demonstration projects. As yet there has been no public report by this commission.

The election results indicated that nearly a quarter of the parents voted, as did half the teachers and two-thirds of the supervisory staff. The parent turnout varied among the schools, ranging from a high of 46.1 per cent in PS 133 to a low of 9.1 per cent in PS 68 (see Table I).

Two Bridges Demonstration Project

An extensive election campaign was developed in the Two Bridges project area to provide for meaningful community dialogue and involvement, as well as to inform both parents and candidates about the situation in their schools and how community involvement or the Project Board might facilitate the program or achieve specific resolutions.

TABLE I
ELECTION RETURNS, IS 201 PROJECT BOARD
NOVEMBER, 1967

| | Number Eligible Voters | Number Actual Votes | Per Cent |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| IS 201* | | | |
| Teachers | 89 | 64 | 71.9 |
| Parents | | | |
| Supervisors | | | |
| PS 133 | | | |
| Teachers | 40 | 32 | 80.0 |
| Parents | 362 | 168 | 46.4 |
| Supervisors | 2 | 2 | 100.0 |
| PS 39 | | | |
| Teachers | 42 | 14 | 33.3 |
| Parents (Mothers)** | 277 | 46 | 16.6 |
| Supervisors | | | |
| PS 24 | | | |
| Teachers | 38 | 20 | 52.6 |
| Parents | 327 | 125 | 38.2 |
| Supervisors | 3 | 2 | 66.7 |
| PS 68 | | | |
| Teachers | 71 | 20 | 28.2 |
| Parents | 845 | 77 | 9.1 |
| Supervisors | 4 | 2 | 50.0 |
| TOTAL | | | |
| Teachers | 280 | 50 | 53.6 |
| Parents (Elementary schools) | 1,811 | 416 | 23.0 |
| Supervisors | 9 | 6 | 66.7 |

* No list was available for this analysis.

** The analysis of PS 39 votes is based on a list of mothers only.

Factional disputes within the Planning Council delayed the election itself until December. At that time several items were put on the ballot, including the names of the candidates for membership on the Project Board, the by-laws, and amendments to the by-laws. Prior to the election the Board of Education stated that the vote on the by-laws would not be recognized because this was a matter for the elected representatives of the Project Board to decide. The by-laws were rejected and a number of amendments were voted in, but the HBA ruled that the amendments would have to be declared null and void because the primary documents (by-laws) were rejected.

There seemed to be little coercion in the nominating process or in the election. However, a few charges were made, for example, of a principal or assistant principal standing in the polling booth area; their presence was alleged to have influenced the votes of Chinese parents whose cultural pattern lays great stress on obedience to authority figures. The community factional disagreements that appeared on the Planning Council still persist on the Project Board, so much so that as late as February, 1968, no one person could assume the responsibilities of chairman and a rotating chairmanship was instituted. In March, however, a permanent chairman was elected.

According to the election results, nearly a quarter of the parents voted, as did 60 per cent of the teachers and 85 per cent of the supervisors. The parent turnout varied from a high of 38 per cent in PS 26 to a low of 11.8 per cent in PS 42 (see Table II).

TABLE II
ELECTION RETURNS, TWO BRIDGES PROJECT BOARD,
DECEMBER, 1967

| | Number Eligible Voters | Number Actual Votes | Per Cent |
|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| PS 126 | | | |
| Teachers | 48 | 36 | 75.0 |
| Parents | 1,026 | 390 | 38.0 |
| Supervisors | 3 | 2 | 66.7 |
| PS 2 | | | |
| Teachers | 57 | * | * |
| Parents | 1,133 | 252 | 22.2 |
| Supervisors | 3 | 1 | 33.3 |
| PS 42 | | | |
| Teachers | 64 | 41 | 64.0 |
| Parents | 1,156 | 136 | 11.8 |
| Supervisors | 6 | 6 | 100.0 |
| PS 1 | | | |
| Teachers | 51 | 38 | 74.5 |
| Parents | 1,196 | 362 | 30.3 |
| Supervisors | 3 | 3 | 100.0 |
| JHS 65 | | | |
| Teachers | 100 | 80 | 80.0 |
| Parents | 2,251 | 390 | 12.7 |
| Supervisors | 5 | 5 | 100.0 |
| TOTAL | | | |
| Teachers | 320 | 195 | 60.9 |
| Parents | 6,759 | 1,530 | 22.6 |
| Supervisors | 20 | 17 | 85.0 |

* Figures unavailable.

The Quasi-Operational Process

Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project

Once the election was over in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, the Project Administrator began to pull his staff together and proceed with a training program for the new board members. He encountered a number of problems in securing the necessary agreements to assemble a staff for the Demonstration Project that would be able to move into the regular school system at the end of the experiment. He tried to secure tenure and other benefits for the employees who would join him in this experiment. At the same time he tried to create either new positions or new classifications of positions in the Project Administrator's staff. He succeeded in gaining a relative degree of flexibility when he was given a lump sum budget for his central staff. A formula was developed to give him his proportionate share of financing for a normal District Superintendent's office having comparable problems. Nevertheless, McCoy complained that it was insufficient. He appealed unsuccessfully for aid from the Ford Foundation and now remains within the amount allocated him by the Board of Education. However, as in the other Demonstration Projects, he receives technical assistance from the Ford Foundation-sponsored Institute for Community Studies of Queens College.

The Project Board immediately was faced with a number of vacancies at the supervisory level. For example, four principalships were open at the beginning of school. The remaining four positions either became open during the semester or will be filled at the beginning of the 1968-1969 school year. The vacancies occurred as incumbents requested reassignment

or as the newly built IS 55 created a new principalship. There were also some rearrangements as one junior high school became an elementary school. Thus, the Project Board in concert with the Board of Education and the State Commission of Education evolved a new concept called the Demonstration Principalship as a means of recruiting a supervisory staff that would be more sensitive and responsive to the special needs of the local community (in this case the disadvantaged minority--Puerto Rican and Negro--areas). This concept has been successfully challenged in the courts by the Council of Supervisory Associations (CSA) and the UFT.

In setting up new criteria for the Demonstration Principalships, Superintendent Donovan appointed a committee consisting of the Board of Education's administrative staff, a representative from the State Commission of Education, and the Project Administrators from the three Demonstration Projects. The committee and the Board of Examiners formulated the following criteria for examining candidates for principalship positions in these Demonstration Projects:

Preparation: (a) A permanent New York State Certificate valid for service as principal of an elementary school or a New York City license as principal of elementary school; or

(b) A baccalaureate degree and in addition 30 semester hours in approved graduate courses; said preparation shall include 32 semester hours in appropriate professional courses, 8 of which shall be in supervision and administration or organization.

(c) Preparation under (a) or (b) above shall include or be supplemented by 6 semester hours, in either graduate or undergraduate courses, in one or more of the following fields: community organization, urban education, urban planning, community planning, urban social problems, or social psychology.

Experience: (a) Three years of teaching in day schools, one of which shall be under regular license and appointment including either two years of teaching in a disadvantaged area (as defined in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or as defined by the Board of Education for the purposes of said Act) or two years of teaching in a special service school or one year of supervisory experience under regular license and appointment in such a disadvantaged area or in a special service school; and

(b) Two years of full time supervisory experience in youth or community activities or two years of supervisory experience under appointment in a school in a disadvantaged area as described above or in a special service school, said experience to be in addition to experience offered under (a) above and not concurrent therewith; and

(c) Candidates must render 100 hours of non-compensated service in school or youth or community activities in an authorized Demonstration Project area or in a disadvantaged area as defined above. Said non-compensated service must cover a period of not less than three or more than ten weeks.

Time Extension: For the first examination only, the 3 semester hours in supervision and administration or organization required under Preparation (b) and the 6 semester hours required under Preparation (c) may be completed within three years from the date for meeting the academic and professional qualifications as prescribed in Section 238. Upon the failure of a candidate to complete said requirements by such date, the license shall terminate.¹

The final recommendations are now before the Board of Education, as of July, 1968. No action has been taken on the proposals.

It should be noted that the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project now has a virtually new set of top administrators, including the Project Administrator and seven of the eight principals of the schools in the cluster. As the 1967-1968 school year opened, most (seventeen of twenty-one) assistants to principals offered their resignations. These supervisors are in the process of being transferred out gradually. The

¹"Eligibility Requirements for Principal of Demonstration Elementary School," memorandum from Bernard E. Donovan to the Board of Education, March 19, 1968.

gradual procedure is due, on the one hand, to the desire to ensure stability for the Demonstration Project, and on the other, to find vacancies for the supervisors in other parts of the system. All new assistants to principals for the Demonstration Project must come from the competitive list. The Project Board asked to apply the concept of Demonstration Principal to this position as well. This request was denied by both the Superintendent of Schools and the State Commissioner of Education.

As school opened in the fall of 1967, a twelve-day teacher walkout created considerable community tension. The Project Board tried to man the classes. At the same time the teachers lodged serious complaints against the Project Board and its administrative staff, charging lack of community support for their walkout as well as the fact that the Planning Council did not listen to or consult with the teacher representatives. At first the teachers refused to assume their roles or places on the Project Board, which has four teacher representatives from the eight schools. These teachers were elected in "rump" session at the opening of school, but they are not recognized by the UFT. A meeting in November, 1967, of the Project Board and the top leadership of the UFT failed to resolve the problems between the Project Board and the professional staff, but it did formulate the principle that the professional staff would treat this situation like any labor-management relationship and urged a wait-and-see attitude on the part of the teachers. If at some point the conditions become unworkable, the professional staff may decide to strike. These conditions prevailed in May, 1968, when the Project Board attempted to transfer and/or dismiss nineteen members of the professional staff.

IS 201 Demonstration Project

The transition from the planning to the operational phase of the IS 201 Demonstration Project has been extremely ambiguous. It is not clear who has been in charge of the five public schools in the cluster since the formal election in November, 1967.

Only as recently as February 16, 1968, was a name formally proposed for Project Administrator to the Board of Education and the State Commissioner. The credentials of the applicant, Charles Wilson, fell short of the specific requirements established for state certification. In spite of this fact, on March 27, 1968, the Board of Education approved Wilson's appointment, overcoming legal obstacles by naming him consultant to the IS 201 complex. Prior to this appointment, however, no professional staff other than consultants had assumed formal responsibility for this project. When members of the Project Board learned through rumor, rather than by direct communication from either the District Superintendent or the Board of Education, that the entire supervisory staff of IS 201 would leave at the beginning of the second semester, the Project Board moved immediately to announce the appointment of Ronald Evans, a teacher in PS 145, as principal. Evans lacked full credentials for state certification as principal; nevertheless, the Board of Education decided to cooperate and he was appointed acting principal of IS 201 on March 20, 1968, by the Superintendent of Schools.

Another problem occurred with regard to the teachers. As school opened in the fall of 1967, the Planning Council attempted to screen the teachers when they returned from their walkout. This move was halted by the Board of Education. Although the Project Board has been recruiting

teachers, it maintains that it was not informed by the District Superintendent's office or the principals of requests from the professional staff to transfer out of the Demonstration Project.

In addition, since the Project Board had no Project Administrator until March 27, it did not receive funds from the Board of Education for operating its central office. Thus, it had to rely on the Ford Foundation planning grant and two supplementary grants to pay consultants and the office staff. On one occasion, when the telephones were disconnected in the District office, the staff had to rely in part on the nearby office facilities of Bank Street College's Educational Resource Center to carry on its work.

As of March 8, 1968, the consultants to the Project Board were released. This action stems both from the controversy created by the Malcolm X Memorial Day program on February 21, 1968, and the uncertain role of consultant Herman Ferguson. The second semester began with a lack of supervisory personnel in IS 201 itself. Amid the publicity of newspaper reports of chaotic conditions, District Superintendent Martin Frey moved his office temporarily into the building and assumed supervision of the school. As a result of the Malcolm X memorial ceremony and the ensuing trouble, the Board of Education reestablished complete authority over the school. This authority was relinquished, however, upon the appointments of Wilson as Project Administrator and Evans as acting principal of IS 201.

The transfer of authority has created other operational problems for the Project Administrator. As an indication of the Board of Education's support of the Demonstration Project, but apparently without

consulting Wilson; on March 28 District Superintendent Frey notified the principals of the five schools in the project that they no longer were responsible to him but should now report to the Project Administrator. Wilson, however, lacking the central staff to make his office truly operational, responded that the "announcement was both unfortunate and premature . . . you have pictured the completion of the transition period as if it had been accomplished rather than just beginning." Wilson believed that operating responsibility could not be meaningful without first establishing in his project office a staff parallel to that which now is located in the district office. Following this incident a series of meetings have been held between the Project Administrator, the District Superintendent, and the Superintendent's liaison officer. These meetings should result in a timetable and a system of priorities which will make for a smooth and meaningful transition of operational power.

Two Bridges Demonstration Project

John Bremer, the first Project Administrator of Two Bridges, was appointed upon nomination by the Planning Board, by formal resolution of the Board of Education in September, 1967, at the same time as the Project Administrator of Ocean Hill. This, of course, was several months before the Two Bridges Project Board was elected. Bremer pulled his staff together much more gradually. He complained that he did not receive a grant sufficient for the personnel needed to operate the five schools in this complex. He stated that he had to shortchange the

instruction in the schools in order to provide full coverage for the coordinating staff in his office.

Although no vacancy has occurred at the supervisory level in this project, the supervisors have shown some resistance to the Project Administrator. The one supervisor who was a member of the Project Board resigned in the spring of 1968.

The Project Administrator held in-service training workshops with the professional staff as a means of working with and developing his educational leadership. Furthermore, he asked each staff person to account for the achievement scores of his students this past spring. On one occasion he planned to dismiss one principal. However, he was informed by the Board of Education's administrative staff that he could not do so without preferring formal charges.

Bremer's strategy in administering this complex was to remain cautious and aloof from the various internal forces as well as from those outside, whether representatives from the State Commission of Education, the Board of Education, or members of the Advisory Committee's staff. He not only avoided these contacts but also condemned most efforts to evaluate the Demonstration Project. He explained his policy as an effort to remain above internecine warfare, so that the goals of the project would not be subverted by any one group. The strategy did not succeed. Partly as a result of its failure, Bremer lost the confidence of his Project Board. He resigned in March, 1968, condemning the Board of Education for acting in bad faith and stating that the Demonstration Project cannot be successful if the Board of Education retains the ultimate authority.

The Project Board since has retained as Project Administrator Dr. Daniel Friedman, who was approved by the Board of Education on May 22, 1968. In the meantime the Project Board has come under attack from the presidents of the Parent Associations of the four elementary schools.

They charge that:

1. Four members of the Governing Council are ineligible to be on it.
2. The Governing Council never had the full sixteen members as designated by the election rules. Because of the resignations, it now has no teacher or supervisory representatives.
3. Parents of the children are disenfranchised, have no voice or participation.
4. When we voted in December 1967, the next election was slated for June 1968. (The Governing Council members were to serve for staggered terms). Now the Governing Council itself has decided that the next election will be June 1969.
5. There are no checks and balances, no democratic procedures, no built-in safeguards, no "watch-dog."
6. The unfair involvement of a local anti-poverty agency, with \$125,000 yearly at its disposal, which is controlled by the same people who control the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council.¹

The presidents have proposed that these four schools be returned to District 3, where Dr. Elliott Shapiro is the Superintendent. They also asked that elections be held during June, 1968, for the following three purposes: (1) to reelect one-third of the Project Board; (2) to vote on the by-laws; and (3) to implement the amendment on conflict of interest, which was overwhelmingly approved last year. These elections were not held.

¹ Letter to Alfred Giardino from Parents Association Presidents of the Two Bridges Model School District, April 4, 1968.

Granting Formal Approval

Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project

During the summer of 1967 the members of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Planning Council formulated their own proposal. They held many discussions with representatives of the Board of Education and met directly with Superintendent Donovan and the Board of Education. Throughout this period many key issues were clarified. There appeared to be general understanding and agreement of the specific allocations of authority that were proposed to be granted the Project Board. In fact, the local community interpreted the appointment of the Project Administrator as formal recognition of the Demonstration Project. However, the Board of Education did not explicitly grant full recognition, because they, in turn, sought explicit acceptance of their own guidelines by the Project Board. Both parties are still awaiting the specific delineation of powers and authority to be granted.

The Project Board has been meeting since September, 1967, to resolve operational problems in concert with the Project Administrator. They have spent considerable time formulating specific by-laws to guide their own conduct and decision-making procedures. In January, 1968, they were given a copy of the suggested guidelines on the structure, function, procedures, and grants of authority, as prepared by the Advisory Committee and approved by the Board of Education. They discussed these guidelines both with representatives of the Board of Education and among themselves at their own meetings. These discussions developed the following points, which they have held from the very beginning: (1) The Project Board want their Project Administrator to be responsible solely

to them. (2) They are dissatisfied with the arrangement for evaluation. They insist that the academic year 1967-1968 not be considered as one when they had control of the schools, i.e., they want the process of evaluation to be considered as beginning in the academic year 1968-1969.

The Board of Education, on the other hand, disagreed with the Project Board's proposal on four points and made the following four recommendations:

1. Provision for a fixed term in office for Project Board members.
2. Recognition of the responsibility of the Project Board to (the) central Board of Education.
3. Application for Federal and State funds--this must be done within the framework of existing laws.
4. A statement indicating the Project Board's acceptance of the requirements of the Board of Education's Guidelines.¹

The Project Board met with the Board of Education and stated at the outset their dissatisfaction with the suggested guidelines. They want a more specific delineation of their authority and power; for example, they have expressed the need to control their own budget) on a number of occasions they have proposed that they have their own bank account). They want the right to hire and fire the staff and to engage in contracts and subcontracts, using local citizens, of course. They have candidly discussed all three issues with the Board of Education.

A meeting also took place between the Project Board's lawyer and representatives of the Board of Education. On this occasion the Project Board representatives reiterated and expanded on four requests:

¹ Letter to Rev. C. Herbert Oliver from Norman Brombacker, Special Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools, February 19, 1968.

(1) to apply directly to the federal government for funds (they do not agree that all federal and state funds must be channeled through the city, which recognizes only the Board of Education as the legal educational entity); (2) to bypass city requirements entirely in establishing curriculum subject only to state standards; (3) to establish at least one school in the Demonstration Project as a training school, with the result that selection of personnel need not follow normal procedures (this section, although still part of state educational law, has not been invoked for several decades); and (4) to intermingle funds, for example, to apply part of the money allocated for textbooks and supplies against maintenance needs (the representative of the Board of Education responded that permission would have to come from the city budgetary officer).

The issue of obtaining outside funds also came up at this meeting. The representative of the Board of Education stated emphatically the Board's commitment to experimenting with the ways and means of increasing parental participation. Thus, if the Demonstration Project gains substantial sums from other sources, then the possibility of showing the effectiveness of local control will be uncertain. The Board contends that experimental variables must be limited in order to pinpoint the cause-and-effect relationship so that the experience can be replicated in other areas. To significantly increase the amounts of monies spent in the Demonstration Project would not prove the value of community involvement. The Board prefers to test whether community involvement will affect student achievement levels. However, former Board President Alfred Giardino stated that the Board would welcome

any new funds, although such monies must be channeled through and approved by the central agency.

Both the Board of Education and the Project Board had hoped that this phase of securing formal approval might be concluded in time for formal approval and full authority to be granted by the end of March. The Project Boards did not share in the normal budget-making process, which began in April. The Board of Education has not yet granted formal approval to the Project Boards because they were constrained by the State Education Law and union contracts to accede to the demands of the Project Board. This impasse has given rise to a series of problems concerning the operation of the three Demonstration Projects and raised the question of who has authority to operate the schools. At this point the controversy over operational powers with respect to assignment of personnel is focused on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project.

In May, 1968, the Project Board sent notices of termination of service to nineteen professionals (one principal, five assistant principals, and thirteen teachers) on grounds of what the Project Administrator called "intolerable conditions and a general worsening of the situation between certain professionals and the people in the community." The nineteen were referred to the Board of Education headquarters for reassignment. This move was interpreted by the professional staff, the community at large, and the press as dismissal. The Project Board has steadfastly denied these allegations, arguing that they simply requested that the staff members be transferred out of the district. This request was rejected by the Superintendent; the UFT demanded written charges, thus placing the request for transfers (for which no charges are required) into the realm of dismissal. Initially no formal

charges were filed against the nineteen professionals. The Project Administrator stated that school safety was a factor in the "ouster," charging that those involved had allowed "hazardous conditions" to exist which set an "unhealthy tone" for the schools. Formal charges have been filed against six professionals; two have voluntarily requested transfers; one has been reinstated by the Project Board. In addition, the Project Board has even prepared formal charges against a substitute teacher, a procedure not required by normal administrative regulations.

The Project Administrator regards the strict interpretation of his action by the Board of Education as an attempt to diminish his authority as District Superintendent. He claims that, as the administrative head of a school district, he has the power to reassign personnel. Although this is true to the extent that a District Superintendent operates within his own jurisdiction, the lines of authority are not formally delineated nor do they extend when a District Superintendent attempts to reassign personnel, via central headquarters, to another area.

The direct confrontation in Ocean Hill-Brownsville made it a focal point of controversy. Under normal circumstances the Demonstration Project might have been able to accomplish the transfer of "unsatisfactory" personnel informally, but a larger struggle was being waged in the New York State Legislature over a general proposal to decentralize the entire school system. Thus, the events in Ocean Hill-Brownsville became a precursor of what could happen under community control of the schools. The project became a looking glass, and any likelihood of working out informal arrangements in such a sensitive area as professional performance and transfer became most difficult. Parenthetically, it should be noted

that the Project Administrator had tried to reassign teachers within the school project, a move which was within his authority according to oral information he had received. The Board of Education attempted to resolve this impasse but failed when certain teachers refused to transfer.

In any event, the children in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville project have lost fifty-two school days. These include the April 10 and 11 boycott of the schools by the parents to support the community call for meaningful control; the boycott by parents and the walkout by teachers over the "dismissal" controversy, when a substantial proportion of students lost thirty-six days of schooling in May and June; and the fourteen-day citywide teacher "strike" at the beginning of the school year (September, 1967).

A proposal for binding arbitration to resolve the dispute was suggested and accepted by the Board of Education and the UFT. The Project Board rejected this approach and suggested mediation instead. They recommended that Commissioner Allen establish a panel, of which he would also be a member, to come forth with a settlement acceptable to all parties. The union rejected this idea, mainly because they considered that Allen's support of the Regents' plan before the State Legislature would be prejudicial. The Project Board, anticipating the union's response, then sought to have Allen exercise his authority to remove the Board of Education. Allen rejected any involvement in the mediation effort, a response which seems to rule out more drastic action on his part. He also suggested that the Project Board avail itself of the services of Theodore Kheel, a lawyer and prominent labor mediator.

Both sides agreed on Kheel as mediator. He, in turn, made several recommendations, including the suggestion that all teachers involved, with the exception of those six formally charged, return to school pending the outcome of the mediation. The Project Board rejected this recommendation.

The school year ended in a stalemate; the teachers were not in school; the children were not being taught; the battle for community control still raged and may well be carried over into the next fall term.

IS 201 Demonstration Project

The Planning Council of IS 201 was the last to submit its preliminary proposal; this it did in October, 1967, with very little discussion with the representatives from the Board of Education preceding the submission. The proposal proved almost identical to that of Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

Following the election of members in December, 1967, the Project Board itself did not submit a formal proposal to the Board of Education until February 2, 1968. The chief planning consultant and acting chairman of the Planning Board held one discussion with representatives of the Board of Education about the suggested guidelines. They raised several points: (1) that the terms of office of the Project Board members be for a fixed period of three years, with service terminating on a staggered basis; (2) that the integrity of the Demonstration Project be maintained, regardless of the proposals for decentralization pending before the State Legislature; (3) that if the design for evaluation should include a base year for purposes of comparing student achieve-

ment under different structures, then the IS 201 Project Board should participate in designating that year (that is, the best year should not be chosen as a base for comparing the success of the Demonstration Project); and (4) that the selection of an evaluator be mutually agreed upon and an equal amount of money be allocated to the second- and third-year evaluations (in the second year the money would be allocated by the Central Board to the Project Board so that the latter might engage in self-evaluation; in the third year there would be a joint evaluation).

On March 1, 1968, the Project Board met with the Board of Education to discuss the proposal and its conformance to the guidelines. The Board of Education earlier had raised several points for discussion: (1) provision for a fixed term in office for Project Board members; (2) deposit of all monies in a bank or banks designated by the Project Board (however, the Board of Education does not receive actual cash and therefore cannot comply with this request); (3) application for federal and state funds (this must occur within the framework of existing laws); (4) contracting directly, in order to give as much flexibility as possible (however, direct contracting involves problems relating to other city departments and administrative procedures); (5) reservation of the right to expand power (the Demonstration Project must remain within the schools in the present complex); (6) a statement indicating the Project Board's acceptance of the Board of Education's guidelines.

With regard to maintaining the integrity of the project, the Board of Education stated that only under a specific legislative mandate would it violate its commitments to the project. In such a case it would

publicly "oppose" any effort to destroy the present boundaries of the Demonstration Project.

It should be pointed out that the Project Board of IS 201, like that of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, is concerned with the design for evaluation and the period when the Demonstration Project is considered to have been initiated. The Board of Education refers to September, 1967, as the first year, while the Project Board considers that September, 1968, should be designated as the official commencement date of the project.

During the spring of 1968 the Project Board representatives received technical assistance from the Board of Education on such matters as program planning and the budgetary process, school organization in the district, and anticipated budgetary allocations on which to plan their allotments. The Project Administrator is in the process of establishing relationships with representatives of the Board of Education in order to anticipate problems before they arise. He is attempting to prepare the way for a smooth transition of power in which working relationships already will have been established with the professional and administrative staffs in the complex. September, 1968, is his goal for the transfer of full operating responsibilities.

Two Bridges Demonstration Project

The Planning Council submitted their proposal in August, 1967. They held a number of preliminary discussions with Superintendent Donovan to clarify the various areas of disagreement. Recent meetings between members of the Project Board and the Board of Education have revealed considerable misunderstandings. The Project Board still seeks a virtually autonomous or independent

system, while the Board of Education has made clear what it considers should be the limits of the powers and authority of the Project Board.

Conclusion

The specific issues still unresolved are summarized here, for they apply to all three Demonstration Projects.

Unresolved Issues on the Delegation of Authority

The confrontation between the Project Boards and the Board of Education concerns the ultimate rights, responsibilities, and control of the operation of the schools within the project areas. In an attempt to define its authority and to give coherence and cohesion to its demonstration efforts at decentralization, the Board of Education developed guidelines whereby it retained the final authority in areas of personnel, contracting, budgeting, and evaluation of the demonstration design. The guidelines provided a general framework which would grant as much flexibility as possible in each of these areas--but only within and not contravening the existing city, state, and contractual obligations.

The Project Boards' response to the guidelines has been negative. They perceived the framework of the document as too general and merely another manifestation of what they have come to expect of the Board in terms of lack of understanding and delay. The three Project Boards have conferred and joined together in a "consensus document" setting forth their opinions of what powers and authority the Demonstration Projects should have. Their major demands are for the power to:

1. Hire and fire teachers;
2. Set curriculum and methods of instruction;
3. Use freely a lump sum of money given annually by the Board of Education;
4. Construct and renovate schools as needed;
5. Contract for maintenance, textbooks, and other services and supplies;
6. Apply directly for federal and state funds and for private money for education;
7. Make supplemental agreements with teachers' and supervisors' organizations.

Their legal advisor contended even before passage of the new legislation that the Board of Education has the authority to delegate much of the power requested. The new decentralization bill passed by the 1968 State Legislature gives the Board the opportunity to formulate those powers which they wish to delegate to the Project Boards, according to Section 2564, Part 3:

The Board of Education, with the approval of the Regents, shall have the power to delegate to such local school boards . . . any or all [italics supplied] of its functions, powers, obligations, and duties in connection with the operation of the schools and programs under its jurisdiction.

At this stage three points of view or sets of guidelines are suggested for the delegation of powers to the Demonstration Projects. The following chart compares in detail the variation among the Board of Education guidelines, the Demonstration Projects' "Consensus Document," and the Board of Regents' legislative proposals. The State Legislature has allowed the Board of Education to delegate its own powers to the Project Board (see Chart I).

CHART I

COMPARISON OF PROPOSALS FOR THE
ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION OF LOCAL COMMUNITY BOARDS

| Board of Education | Demonstration Projects | Board of Regents |
|---|---|--|
| <u>Selection and Composition of Boards</u> | | |
| Parents, community, and teachers, with parents and community forming majority. | Parents, community, and, if so designated, professionals. | All eligible voters in residence; 6 elected, 2 appointed by Mayor. |
| <u>Functions of Boards</u> | | |
| <u>Instructional Functions</u> | | |
| PBs determine policy for guidance of PA in curriculum, programming innovations, experimentation within larger framework to be set by central board. | PBs establish curriculum, select and purchase texts directly, determine method of instruction, and control educational policy in schools. | LSBs have authority over selection of texts and other instructional materials and all matters relating to instruction of children. |
| <u>Personnel</u> | | |
| PBs shall recommend to Bd of Ed candidates for PA and business mgr; PBs shall recommend for appt PAs principals. PBs can create or fill positions within existing budgetary and contractual limitations. Any deviations to be negotiated with Bd of Ed. | PBs shall appoint a PA. PBs shall have power of appointment of all instructional and supervisory personnel now exercised by present PBs | LBs shall appoint local supt. Right to appoint, assign, promote, discharge, and determine duties of all employees within contractual arrangements. State certification minimum qualification for promotion and appointment of all personnel. |
| | | Central Bd shall draw plans for control of transfer of employees from one district to another. |
| | | Central Bd shall negotiate with union, keeping communication with local boards open in advisory capacity. |
| <p>PB - Project Board PA - Project Administrator LSB - Local School Board</p> | | |

CHART I (continued)

| Board of Education | Demonstration Projects | Board of Regents |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|

Functions of Boards (continued)Budget

PB to submit requests to Supt of Schools.

Bd of Ed to allocate a sum of money based on per capita grant per registered pupils.

City Bd shall allocate funds to LSBs equitably. Plan should be devised to give LSBs maximum control and encouragement to experiment.

PBs may apply directly to govt or private agencies for funds.

PBs may apply directly to govt or private agencies for add'l funds.

PB should have funds for construction and major renovation of schools within the district.

State Ed Dept should provide funds for development and plans.

Project Administrator

Powers delegated by PB.

Powers delegated by PB.

Attend all PB meetings. Report to and prepare annual report to PB. Should be a NYC licensed elementary or secondary school principal or have NY State certification for same position. Responsible to PB and the Supt of Schools.

Responsible to PB; carry out their mandates.

Evaluation

PBs shall maintain continuing evaluation and submit annual reports to community.

Bd of Ed shall formulate immediately criteria of evaluation. Bd of Ed shall employ an independent, mutually agreed upon party to make initial evaluation of base year.

After 8 yrs from creation of each special district, City Bd shall determine whether district shall continue.

Second yr of operation-- Bd of Ed shall provide funds for self-evaluation.

1971--PB should be allocated funds for self-evaluation.

Third yr of operation--Bd of Ed should have qualified independent agency evaluation.

1973--Bd of Ed should employ a mutually agreed upon independent agency for evaluation.

Until it is finally decided which powers shall be delegated, the current status of the Project Boards' powers can be summarized as follows:

Budget. The amount of the 1968-1969 fiscal year budget has been established. The Project Board will have the authority and responsibility to determine the allocation of funds within the project schools. Union contracts and other budgetary procedures must be observed. Nevertheless, the Board has some leeway in making expenditures. For example, it can decide to hire a librarian instead of a teacher. The Board also can go to private foundations for additional funds, but all applications for state and federal funds must be processed through the Board of Education, as required by state and federal laws.

Personnel. The Project Board does not have the authority to hire and fire, but it can recommend appointment to the Board of Education and bring charges against personnel through regular procedures. The Project Board can transfer personnel and convert OTP slots into other uses, but this procedure must be accomplished within the provisions of the union contract.

Contracting. The Project Board cannot engage in direct contracts for new buildings or those involving substantial repair. The latter can be processed through the Board of Education. However, the Project Board can contract with universities for certain services. The Superintendent is exploring ways for the Project Board to buy textbooks and supplies directly. These procedures, however, must be carried out through competitive bidding. Any new textbook must be approved by the Board of Education, as required by law.

Summary of Findings on Community Involvement
in the Three Demonstration Projects

I. Planning

- A. From the outset the planning initiative was taken by the disadvantaged communities, their leaders, and their supporters--the Ford Foundation and university personnel. These groups selected the areas for demonstration purposes; they articulated the functions and powers to be transferred; they established most of the conditions under which the Demonstration Projects were to operate.
- B. The Board of Education did not have an experimental design, which should have considered a number of important factors pertaining to community involvement. The Board of Education permitted the planning to go ahead with "approval in principle."
- C. Communication between the Project Planning Councils and the various sectors of the local community, including teachers, was inadequate. There was little effective consultation, for example, with teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville or with parents in IS 201, a lack which resulted in factionalism.

II. Elections

- A. There were no guidelines for election procedures; these should have covered nominations, campaigning, and voting.
- B. Preparation of eligible voter registration lists was inadequate; supervision of the electoral process was insufficient. There was no formal acceptance of the election results by the Board of Education in Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

- C. Complaints from the community about election procedures and the unrepresentative nature of the Project Boards were left unresolved, thus spawning further factionalism and community controversy. The Board of Education should have provided opportunities for the contending factions to explore their differences and take constructive action for the children's education.

III. Quasi-Operational Aspects

- A. The struggle to establish a new staff for the project offices revealed the inflexibility of classification of school personnel. Difficulties arose over efforts to provide job security for this staff on an experimental basis, thereby reducing the ability of the Project Administrators to recruit the necessary new talent. The adoption of a lump sum budget provided a more effective approach than a line item budget.
- B. The Board of Education was responsive in discovering new methods and criteria for the selection of the top administrative positions for Project Administrators and Demonstration School Principalships. The Project Boards have selected responsible and qualified professional educators for these positions.
- C. The Project Boards and their professional staffs had considerable difficulty in securing adequate information and learning the technical details of current administrative practice. So much time and energy were consumed in discovering how the "system" works that there was little opportunity to concentrate on devising innovative educational practices.

- D. The Board of Education provided insufficient preparation and training for the Project Board staff to handle personnel (especially in grievance procedures) and budget-making.
- E. The liaison function of the Board of Education staff was, for the most part, one of reacting to the initiative taken by the Project Board staff rather than assuming the initiative and sensitively exploring the means to anticipate operational problems as they arose.
- F. The dual role and responsibility of the Project Board staff to both the Project Board and the Board of Education was not adequately developed and articulated in operational terms by all parties, thus creating tension, misunderstandings, and distrust. Exchanges, as they are presently conducted between the parties, have not been so realistically oriented as to develop and build a mature, responsive, and responsible working relationship that makes the greatest use of the potential insights, talents, and resources of all partners to the education of our children.

IV. Formal Approval

- A. The transfer of authority and responsibility has been marked by ambiguities, confusion, and tension. Neither the public nor the major participants (parents, teachers, administrators, and board members) have clearly understood the delegation of power to the Project Boards and the local community. The Board of Education has not issued a clear written statement on exactly which powers were being transferred.

- B. Communication patterns on the meaning of key words and concepts, such as "control" and "consultation," have been unresolved in terms of common reference.**

CHAPTER IV

THE "DEMONSTRATION PROJECT" PARENTS

ASSESS THEIR SCHOOLS

Introduction

Many statements, demands, and prescriptions have been made about the conditions and proposals for changes in educating the children in disadvantaged areas of New York City. There have been few attempts, however, to measure systematically how the parents view the schools and what role they play or would like to play in shaping the character and content of the education provided their children. Although the onlooking critics of the schools and the educational establishment itself have argued loud and long with one another, they have not had sufficient knowledge of how the parents and the community assess the present conditions of the schools and what they believe can and ought to be done to improve them.

Many questions have been raised about who speaks for the best interests of the child--professional educators, selected policy-makers, articulate community representatives, and/or the parents. Certainly the controversy of the past year over the three Demonstration Projects revealed the intensity and diversity of views that exist and must be understood as proposals for change are developed. The views of the

parents, who have the greatest stake in the educational system, are most often stated by representatives who may or may not speak for the parents. Therefore, the Advisory Committee commissioned a survey of parent attitudes toward the schools.¹ Some 600 parents were interviewed: 212 in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, 211 in Two Bridges, and 198 in IS 201.

Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Parents

In socio-economic terms, all three Demonstration Projects are located in disadvantaged areas of New York City. The racial composition of the three districts varies, with Ocean Hill-Brownsville and the East Harlem areas being predominantly Negro (see Table I). Only 1 per cent of the parents in IS 201 are white, 4 per cent in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, and 12 per cent in Two Bridges. The Two Bridges area is the most racially mixed, with Puerto Ricans constituting nearly half the community and orientals 16 per cent.² A quarter of the parents in Ocean Hill-Brownsville are Puerto Rican.

Relatively few of the respondents were born in New York City. Nearly three-fourths of the Negro parents have come up from the South, while two-fifths of the Two Bridges respondents were born in Puerto Rico. Therefore, the population is quite mobile, with two-fifths having lived in their current neighborhoods for less than five years and only one-fourth

¹ The Institute for Community Studies of Sarah Lawrence College conducted the study in cooperation with Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

² Throughout this discussion the oriental parents have been included in the white sample. This explains the "white/other" entry in the tables.

TABLE I
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENTS (IN PERCENTS)

| <u>Race/Ethnic</u> | <u>Total Sample</u> | <u>Ocean Hill</u> | <u>Two Bridges</u> | <u>IS 201</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| White | 6 | 4 | 12 | 1 |
| Negro | 58 | 71 | 23 | 81 |
| Puerto Rican | 29 | 24 | 46 | 17 |
| Oriental | 6 | 1 | 16 | -- |
| <u>Level of Parent Education</u> | | | | |
| 8th grade or less | 37 | 29 | 41 | 30 |
| 9th-11th grade | 37 | 39 | 31 | 41 |
| High School | 26 | 27 | 25 | 26 |
| Some College | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Under \$5,000 | 54 | 54 | 43 | 66 |
| \$5,000-\$7,000 | 34 | 33 | 45 | 25 |
| \$7,000 or more | 12 | 13 | 12 | 9 |
| <u>Occupation</u> | | | | |
| White collar | 13 | 16 | 13 | 8 |
| Service | 17 | 14 | 20 | 15 |
| Skilled | 20 | 27 | 22 | 11 |
| Unskilled | 13 | 13 | 12 | 14 |
| Other | 9 | 6 | 13 | 8 |
| No Answer | 28 | 24 | 20 | 44 |
| <u>Birthplace</u> | | | | |
| New York City | 19 | 18 | 24 | 14 |
| South | 42 | 51 | 13 | 62 |
| Puerto Rico | 27 | 21 | 44 | 15 |
| Other | 12 | 10 | 19 | 10 |

for more than ten years. Ocean Hill-Brownsville has the highest proportion (56 per cent) of short-term residents, while Two Bridges has the highest proportion of long-term residents.

As for the educational background of the parents, three-fourths of the total sample have not completed high school. Puerto Rican parents are less educated than either Negroes or whites, which may account for the fact that four-fifths of the Two Bridges parents have received less than an eighth-grade education. Half the parents report total family incomes less than \$5,000; almost one-fourth (22 per cent) have incomes under \$3,000, the poverty level. Only 2 per cent of the population have incomes of \$10,000 or more. Puerto Ricans in our sample earn less than Negroes; Negroes earn less than whites. Most of the wage earners hold skilled, service, and unskilled jobs, with only 13 per cent employed in white collar jobs.

Assessment of Neighborhood Problems and Schools

Despite the heavy emphasis on education in the Demonstration Project areas, schools are not considered the most important community problem. In fact, they rank as the fifth most important problem facing all the residents. Crime, dope addiction, housing, and more police protection are cited as more important than education (see Table II). In Two Bridges education is not even listed among the top five problems, although two-fifths of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville parents cite schools, as do one-fourth of the IS 201 parents. The public controversy in these two areas may have emphasized education and made it a more salient issue. Education also may be viewed as one public institution upon which the community can have some effect.

TABLE II

FIVE BIGGEST PROBLEMS (IN RANK ORDER)
FACED IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD BY DISTRICT AND RACE

| Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/Other |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Crime, robberies, vandalism (54) | Crime, robberies, vandalism (56) | Crime, robberies, vandalism (60) | Addiction, dope (62) | Crime, robberies, vandalism (53) | Crime, robberies, vandalism (57) | Crime, robberies, vandalism (54) |
| Addiction, dope (44) | Decent housing, slums (44) | More police protection (47) | Decent housing, slums (53) | Addiction, dope (46) | Addiction, dope (45) | Decent housing, slums (39) |
| Decent housing, slums (39) | Better schools, education (38) | Addiction, dope (44) | Crime, robberies, vandalism (46) | Decent housing, slums (45) | More police protection (37) | More police protection (39) |
| More police protection (30) | Clean up streets, garbage (28) | Decent housing, slums (22) | Better schools, education (25) | Better schools, education (27) | Decent housing, slums (30) | Addiction, dope (37) |
| Better schools, education (25) | Addiction, dope (27) | Jobs, employment (18) | Jobs, employment (23) | More police protection (25) | Jobs, employment (24) | Better schools, education (24) |

One-half of the parents maintain that their neighborhood is "not as good" a place to live in now as it was a few years ago. The residents of Ocean Hill-Brownsville are the most critical of their neighborhood (three-fifths as compared to half of those in the IS 201 district and a third of those in the Two Bridges neighborhood). Four-fifths of the IS 201 parents express considerable dissatisfaction with their neighborhood as a place for their children to grow up; two-fifths in Two Bridges and two-thirds in Ocean Hill express similar dissatisfactions.

Few parents in the total sample (only one-fifth) believe that the schools in their neighborhoods have improved in the last few years, while nearly twice as many think that the schools are not as good as they were in the past (see Table III). The residents of Ocean Hill-Brownsville are the most critical of their schools; Negroes are more critical than either whites or Puerto Ricans. As for the future, most parents are pessimistic about the possibility of improvement of their schools. Scarcely one-third feel that the schools will get better, while almost one-fourth think they will stay the same, and still another fourth believe they will grow worse. The parents in Ocean Hill are the most pessimistic; those in IS 201 are the most optimistic. Negro and white parents are almost equally divided in their predictions of improvement or worsening of the schools.

Virtually no one believes that the Negro child is receiving a better education than the white child. In fact, two-fifths believe that the whites are receiving a better education, while another two-fifths think Negro and white children receive education of about the same quality.

TABLE III
ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PAST
AND IN THE FUTURE (IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Past Improvement | | | | | | | |
| Better | 19 | 8 | 32 | 18 | 17 | 23 | 26 |
| Same | 30 | 19 | 40 | 30 | 25 | 38 | 29 |
| Not as good | 42 | 61 | 23 | 42 | 47 | 31 | 40 |
| Not sure | 9 | 12 | 5 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 6 |
| Future Improvement | | | | | | | |
| Get better | 30 | 20 | 31 | 40 | 33 | 24 | 29 |
| Stay same | 22 | 20 | 27 | 18 | 16 | 32 | 23 |
| Get worse | 26 | 38 | 16 | 24 | 31 | 17 | 27 |
| Not sure | 22 | 22 | 26 | 17 | 20 | 27 | 21 |

Slightly more than half the parents of Ocean Hill-Brownsville and IS 201 students believe that the whites' education is better, while only 16 per cent of the Two Bridges parents agree.

Most striking, however, is the fact that three-fifths of the Negro parents believe that education for the white child is superior, while two-thirds of the white and oriental and three-fifths of the Puerto Rican parents see no difference in the quality of education received by the various races. Only in the "mixed" school district--Two Bridges--are there more parents who believe that the education is equal for all children than parents who believe that white children receive a better education. The reasons most frequently mentioned for believing that whites receive a better education are that "white schools have better teachers" (28 per cent) and "white children have better schools" (19 per cent).

Educational Facilities, Services, and Programs

The educational programs receiving the most positive ratings from all groups of parents are the special programs for the disadvantaged, such as Operation Head Start, toward which well over half the parents express a favorable opinion (see Table IV). The conditions of the school buildings and the quality of textbooks and counseling are viewed favorably by half the parents. Lunches, curricula, and programs for the gifted child are considered with less approval. The parents in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville and IS 201 districts are more critical of the

TABLE IV

PARENT ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND PROGRAMS
(IN PERCENTS)

| | Text Books | Build- ings | Lunches | Coun- seling | Programs like Head Start | Programs for gifted | Curriculum |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Total Sample | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 51 | 52 | 44 | 48 | 59 | 41 | 42 |
| Negative | 38 | 46 | 46 | 33 | 17 | 22 | 47 |
| Not sure | 11 | 2 | 10 | 19 | 24 | 37 | 11 |
| Ocean Hill | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 42 | 38 | 36 | 42 | 51 | 36 | 29 |
| Negative | 53 | 59 | 51 | 40 | 20 | 24 | 60 |
| Not sure | 5 | 3 | 13 | 18 | 29 | 40 | 11 |
| Two Bridges | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 62 | 68 | 56 | 56 | 60 | 38 | 50 |
| Negative | 22 | 31 | 33 | 23 | 12 | 19 | 33 |
| Not sure | 16 | 1 | 11 | 21 | 28 | 43 | 17 |
| IS 201 | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 52 | 52 | 40 | 57 | 67 | 49 | 46 |
| Negative | 40 | 46 | 54 | 35 | 17 | 23 | 49 |
| Not sure | 8 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 16 | 28 | 5 |
| Negro | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 43 | 45 | 39 | 47 | 63 | 44 | 37 |
| Negative | 47 | 52 | 53 | 37 | 18 | 24 | 56 |
| Not sure | 10 | 3 | 8 | 16 | 19 | 32 | 7 |
| Puerto Rican | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 56 | 64 | 50 | 54 | 48 | 36 | 49 |
| Negative | 29 | 33 | 40 | 29 | 19 | 22 | 32 |
| Not sure | 15 | 3 | 10 | 17 | 33 | 42 | 19 |
| White/Other | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 77 | 66 | 57 | 61 | 70 | 47 | 54 |
| Negative | 18 | 35 | 33 | 23 | 7 | 15 | 34 |
| Not sure | 5 | 0 | 10 | 16 | 23 | 38 | 12 |

Positive: Respondents rated the school as either "excellent" or "pretty good"
Negative: Respondents rated the school as either "only fair" or "poor"

schools than the parents in the Two Bridges district. Negroes are more critical than Puerto Ricans; Puerto Ricans are more critical than whites. Those parents who are most critical of the schools are those who contend that the community should have more influence in running the neighborhood schools.

When asked about the rigidity of the curriculum and the freedom of teachers to adapt the curriculum to suit different classes, half the parents in all three school districts indicate that the curriculum is not too rigid, a quarter believe that the curriculum is too rigid, and a quarter are unsure. As for teaching of Negro history, virtually no one thinks that the subject is overemphasized. Almost three-fifths of the population think there is too little emphasis and 15 per cent consider the emphasis about right. Three-fourths of the parents who favor more community influence in the schools think too little Negro history is being taught in the schools, while only 46 per cent of those who favor less influence share this feeling.

Educational Leadership

Teacher performance and teacher-parent, teacher-student relationships are regarded less critically than textbooks or curriculum (see Table V). Half the parents rate the teachers "positively," that is, either "excellent or pretty good," and nearly the same proportion rate them "negatively," that is, "only fair or poor." The ratings differ considerably among the three projects: three-fifths of the parents in

TABLE V

PARENT ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM (IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|--|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| Teachers | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 49 | 38 | 58 | 50 | 43 | 55 | 58 |
| Negative | 47 | 58 | 35 | 47 | 52 | 38 | 34 |
| Not sure | 4 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 |
| Teachers interest in children | | | | | | | |
| Very interested | 25 | 17 | 36 | 21 | 21 | 27 | 41 |
| Somewhat interested | 45 | 41 | 41 | 54 | 49 | 45 | 33 |
| Hardly interested | 24 | 37 | 17 | 18 | 25 | 21 | 22 |
| Not sure | 6 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| Teachers under- standing of district life | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 45 | 34 | 61 | 44 | 39 | 57 | 60 |
| Negative | 47 | 58 | 31 | 51 | 54 | 35 | 33 |
| Not sure | 8 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| Parent-teacher relationships | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 52 | 35 | 67 | 55 | 45 | 61 | 63 |
| Negative | 40 | 56 | 25 | 40 | 47 | 34 | 27 |
| Not sure | 8 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 10 |
| Student-teacher relationships | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 48 | 30 | 56 | 51 | 44 | 54 | 57 |
| Negative | 45 | 36 | 32 | 43 | 48 | 38 | 38 |
| Not sure | 7 | 6 | 12 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 5 |
| <p>Positive: Respondents rated the school as either "excellent" or "pretty good"</p> <p>Negative. Respondents rated the school as either "only fair" or "poor"</p> | | | | | | | |

Two Bridges, half in IS 201, and only one-third in Ocean Hill-Brownsville rate the teachers positively. The last results may show the effect of the controversy over the transfer and dismissal of teachers in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project. Three-fifths of the whites and orientals view the teachers favorably, as opposed to two-fifths of the Negroes. Those parents who are most critical of teachers favor a greater degree of community influence.

The same breakdown appears when the parents evaluate the interest of teachers in the students: a quarter of the parents believe that teachers are "very interested," while nearly half think teachers are only "somewhat interested" in the children. Again, the parents in Ocean Hill are far more critical of teacher interest than those in either Two Bridges or IS 201. Twice as many whites (41 per cent.) as Negroes (21 per cent.) believe that teachers are very interested. But those parents who favor less community influence are much more likely to feel that the teachers are interested in their children than are those who favor more community influence in the school system. This pattern also holds true for those who think that teachers have a real understanding of the "problems the child faces in growing up in this neighborhood." Those who are more skeptical of the teachers' ability to understand life in the immediate school area favor greater community influence. Negroes also are more skeptical than whites and Puerto Ricans on this matter.

Parent-teacher relationships are rated somewhat more positively by the parents than are student-teacher relationships. Whites and Puerto Ricans think both these relationships are better than do the Negroes.

The parents in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district are more critical than others.

When asked, "If you had a choice, would you rather have your children taught mostly by Negro teachers, mostly white teachers, or doesn't it make any difference one way or the other?" the overwhelming majority (82 per cent) of all the parents--whites and Negroes--reply that it makes no difference to them. Only 17 per cent of the Negroes, 9 per cent of the whites and others, and 1 per cent of the Puerto Ricans prefer Negro teachers. The greatest preference for Negro teachers occurs among the Ocean Hill-Brownsville parents (one in five). Only 10 per cent of the parents in the IS 201 district and 3 per cent of those in the Two Bridges district express a preference for Negro teachers.

The parents generally criticize the performance of the educational leaders--the Board of Education, the Project Administrator, and the Local Project Board. Certainly none is rated as doing an excellent job. The Board of Education receives the most criticism from the parents, with nearly three-fifths of them evaluating the Board's job as "only fair or poor." Negroes are more critical than whites (69 per cent as opposed to 46 per cent). The principal is the most highly esteemed educational leader (see Table VI). Half the parents rate his performance positively. Negroes, however, are far less satisfied with the performance of principals than are other groups. The parents of children in Ocean Hill-Brownsville also are much more critical of their principals than are the parents in the Two Bridges or the IS 201 districts.

TABLE VI

PARENT ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS (IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|---|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| Board of Education | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 33 | 24 | 45 | 31 | 27 | 44 | 41 |
| Negative | 58 | 69 | 43 | 63 | 69 | 43 | 46 |
| Not sure | 8 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 13 | 14 |
| Unit Administrator | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 27 | 29 | 27 | 26 | 30 | 17 | 33 |
| Negative | 28 | 44 | 14 | 38 | 31 | 25 | 24 |
| Not sure | 44 | 28 | 59 | 46 | 38 | 58 | 42 |
| Local Project Board | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 34 | 31 | 34 | 38 | 37 | 28 | 37 |
| Negative | 39 | 47 | 26 | 45 | 44 | 31 | 39 |
| Not sure | 27 | 23 | 39 | 17 | 20 | 41 | 24 |
| Principal | | | | | | | |
| Positive | 53 | 40 | 66 | 55 | 48 | 60 | 67 |
| Negative | 36 | 49 | 22 | 34 | 41 | 29 | 25 |
| Not sure | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 9 |
| Positive: Respondents rated the school as either "excellent" or "pretty good" | | | | | | | |
| Negative: Respondents rated the school as either "only fair" or "poor" | | | | | | | |

It is more difficult to evaluate the parents' assessments of the Project Administrators and the Local Project Boards, since these are new and in the developing stages. In both instances, but particularly in the case of the Project Administrator, significant numbers of parents are "not sure" how to evaluate these leaders' performances. The Project Administrator draws more criticism than the Project Board. Only one-fourth of the parents rate him as doing an "excellent or pretty good" job. About 40 per cent of the parents in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville and IS 201 Demonstration Projects believe their Project Administrator is doing only a "fair" or a "poor" job, compared to 14 per cent in the Two Bridges Demonstration Project. The criticism most frequently leveled at the Project Administrator in Ocean Hill is that the "kids are not getting any schooling" (15 per cent). With regard to the recent controversy over the transfer and dismissal of teachers in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration Project, only 29 per cent of the total sample support the Project Board and Administrator, while 24 per cent support the teachers.

Patterns of Influence in School Matters

The parents discuss what they think happens when they contact school officials about school problems and whether they feel they will get a sympathetic hearing and action. There is considerable trust in the professional staff; two-thirds of the parents believe that the teachers and principals will understand and try to help them (see Table VII). Slightly more than half think the local Project Boards will understand and try to

TABLE VII

PARENT ASSESSMENT OF HOW SCHOOL OFFICIALS WOULD RESPOND TO PARENTAL PROBLEMS
(IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| Board of Education | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 40 | 27 | 49 | 43 | 36 | 45 | 47 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 27 | 36 | 14 | 30 | 33 | 20 | 13 |
| Ignore | 20 | 23 | 18 | 17 | 21 | 15 | 23 |
| Not sure | 13 | 14 | 19 | 10 | 10 | 20 | 17 |
| Project Administrator | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 44 | 46 | 37 | 51 | 48 | 39 | 41 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 17 | 18 | 14 | 20 | 19 | 14 | 16 |
| Ignore | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 1 |
| Not sure | 33 | 29 | 43 | 23 | 25 | 41 | 42 |
| Local Project Board | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 55 | 56 | 46 | 64 | 60 | 51 | 44 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 12 | 14 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 7 | 14 |
| Ignore | 4 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| Not sure | 29 | 24 | 41 | 19 | 80 | 37 | 41 |
| Principal | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 64 | 52 | 73 | 68 | 60 | 72 | 64 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 19 | 28 | 13 | 15 | 21 | 11 | 27 |
| Ignore | 6 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 5 | -- |
| Not sure | 11 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 22 | 9 |
| Teachers | | | | | | | |
| Understand/try to help | 65 | 51 | 76 | 68 | 60 | 75 | 71 |
| Listen/avoid doing anything | 15 | 23 | 9 | 14 | 21 | 7 | 10 |
| Ignore | 6 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 7 |
| Not sure | 14 | 18 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 |

help them. But only two-fifths of the parents expect the Project Administrator and Board of Education to be as responsive. In fact, a fifth believe the Board of Education will ignore them and their problems. As expected, those who favor more community influence believe the local Project Board will understand and try to help. But they also expect the principal and teachers to understand and try to help. Like the Negroes, they do not expect as great a response to parental problems from the Project Administrator as from the local Project Boards.

In answer to the question whether educational policy-makers "generally try to do what most parents in this neighborhood want, what those with more influence want, or do they generally act pretty much on their own?" the parents and citizens consider the local Project Board more responsive to parents than either the Project Administrator or the Board of Education (see Table VIII). Two-fifths of the parents in the sample believe that the Board of Education generally acts pretty much on its own. Half the parents in Ocean Hill-Brownsville and half the Negro parents in the total sample believe that the Board of Education will act independently. However, they think that the local Project Board will respond to the parents. The response of the Project Administrator is expected to fall somewhere between--he is not quite as likely to act on his own as the Board of Education or to be as responsive to the parents as the local Governing Board is expected to be.

In discussing the most effective way to make their views known about some school program, one-third of the parents say they would contact the local principal, one-fourth would contact the New York City

TABLE VIII
PARENT ASSESSMENT OF WHO SCHOOL OFFICIALS ARE SEEN AS RESPONDING TO MOST
(IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| <u>Board of Education</u> | | | | | | | |
| Parents | 24 | 19 | 28 | 24 | 23 | 26 | 26 |
| Influentials | 20 | 21 | 16 | 23 | 20 | 15 | 26 |
| Act on own | 43 | 50 | 37 | 42 | 48 | 35 | 37 |
| Not sure | 13 | 10 | 19 | 11 | 9 | 24 | 11 |
| <u>Project Administrator</u> | | | | | | | |
| Parents | 30 | 28 | 26 | 35 | 30 | 26 | 31 |
| Influentials | 19 | 24 | 16 | 17 | 20 | 19 | 17 |
| Act on own | 18 | 22 | 12 | 27 | 23 | 13 | 9 |
| Not sure | 33 | 26 | 46 | 21 | 27 | 42 | 43 |
| <u>Local Board</u> | | | | | | | |
| Parents | 42 | 47 | 35 | 44 | 41 | 44 | 40 |
| Influentials | 11 | 12 | 9 | 12 | 14 | 6 | 11 |
| Act on own | 18 | 17 | 15 | 22 | 23 | 12 | 6 |
| Not sure | 29 | 24 | 41 | 22 | 22 | 38 | 43 |

Board of Education, and one-fifth would go through the local Parents Association. One-third of the parents in IS 201 and a quarter of those in Ocean Hill-Brownsville would contact the New York City Board of Education. Two-fifths of the parents in the Two Bridges district would go to their local principals. Approaching the New York City Board of Education is considered the least effective way to make their views known.

Community Influence in the Schools

There is little doubt that change has taken place in the field of education during the past year. Almost two-fifths (38 per cent) of the parents believe that the community "has more influence in the schools now compared with a year ago," while only a tenth of them feel that the community has lost influence. The most striking finding here is the opinion of half the Negro parents that there has been an increase in community influence.

Nevertheless, two-fifths of the total sample believe that the community has too little influence in running the schools (see Table IX). Half the Negroes believe there is too little influence. On specific items, such as designing curricula, determining how money will be spent, hiring and removing teachers, hiring and removing principals and supervisors, two-fifths to one-half the parents believe that the community has too little influence. This is the range of opinions for the items as rated by the parents in both the Ocean Hill-Brownsville and IS 201 districts, compared to only one-third of the parents in the Two Bridges district.

TABLE IX

PARENT ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY INFLUENCE IN RUNNING OF THE SCHOOLS (IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|--|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| General | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 16 | 19 | 6 | 24 | 21 | 9 | 10 |
| Too little | 42 | 46 | 33 | 49 | 49 | 34 | 36 |
| Right amount | 20 | 16 | 28 | 15 | 18 | 20 | 25 |
| Not sure | 22 | 19 | 33 | 12 | 12 | 37 | 29 |
| Determining Curriculum | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 10 | 11 | 4 | 16 | 13 | 7 | 4 |
| Too little | 46 | 56 | 34 | 50 | 54 | 35 | 42 |
| Right amount | 24 | 15 | 32 | 23 | 20 | 26 | 26 |
| Not sure | 20 | 18 | 30 | 11 | 13 | 32 | 28 |
| How Money Will Be Spent | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 6 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 1 |
| Too little | 47 | 50 | 38 | 55 | 54 | 39 | 36 |
| Right amount | 17 | 12 | 20 | 19 | 16 | 17 | 22 |
| Not sure | 30 | 29 | 39 | 20 | 23 | 38 | 41 |
| Hiring Teachers | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 12 | 16 | 8 | 13 | 16 | 9 | 6 |
| Too little | 47 | 53 | 35 | 52 | 54 | 34 | 39 |
| Right amount | 19 | 12 | 27 | 18 | 15 | 24 | 26 |
| Not sure | 22 | 19 | 30 | 17 | 15 | 35 | 29 |
| Removing Teachers | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 15 | 19 | 9 | 16 | 18 | 11 | 7 |
| Too little | 44 | 48 | 30 | 53 | 51 | 32 | 38 |
| Right amount | 18 | 13 | 27 | 12 | 14 | 22 | 20 |
| Not sure | 23 | 20 | 34 | 19 | 17 | 35 | 35 |
| Hiring Principals and Supervisors | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 12 | 15 | 6 | 15 | 16 | 8 | 4 |
| Too little | 44 | 52 | 31 | 50 | 52 | 30 | 38 |
| Right amount | 18 | 10 | 25 | 18 | 15 | 22 | 17 |
| Not sure | 26 | 23 | 38 | 17 | 17 | 40 | 41 |
| Removing Principals and Supervisors | | | | | | | |
| Too much | 13 | 17 | 8 | 16 | 17 | 9 | 6 |
| Too little | 42 | 51 | 27 | 50 | 51 | 31 | 28 |
| Right amount | 17 | 10 | 26 | 16 | 13 | 21 | 26 |
| Not sure | 28 | 22 | 39 | 18 | 19 | 39 | 40 |

If a strong decentralization plan were to be set up and the communities assumed responsibility for their neighborhood schools, a majority of parents believe both parents and the professional school staff would have the major influence, with somewhat more choosing the parent leader (see Table X). However, when asked who should have the greatest influence, a slight plurality of parents choose the professional school staff over parent leaders. Virtually no one believes Black Militant groups or local politicians should have the greatest influence, although 10 per cent of the parents think that the Black Militants would have influence and 20 per cent of the parents think the politicians would be influential.

Parents want more influence over the school system.¹ Criticism of the school system leads to a desire for more community influence. An overwhelming majority of the parents who are critical of the schools want more community influence. Seventy per cent or more of the parents

¹ In order to determine the desire for more influence or less influence the following two questions were asked: "Generally, do you feel the community has too much influence in the running of the schools in this neighborhood, too little influence, or just about the right amount of influence in the running of the schools in this neighborhood?" and "How about compared with a year ago--do you feel the community now has more influence in the running of the schools in this neighborhood than it did then, less influence, or about the same amount of influence it had then?"

Parents were classified as wanting more community influence if they responded "too little influence," "right amount," or "not sure" to the first question and "strongly in favor" or "somewhat in favor" to the second question. They were classified as wanting less community influence if they responded "too much influence" or "right amount of influence" to the first question and "strongly opposed" or "somewhat opposed" to the second question.

TABLE X

**PARENTS ASSESSMENT OF INFLUENTIAL GROUPS UNDER A STRONG DECENTRALIZATION PROGRAM
(IN PERCENTS)**

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| <u>Would be Influential</u> | | | | | | | |
| Parent Leaders | 61 | 56 | 64 | 62 | 64 | 58 | 47 |
| Professional | | | | | | | |
| School Staff | 51 | 43 | 55 | 56 | 52 | 55 | 41 |
| Local Politicians | 20 | 19 | 24 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 30 |
| Local Poverty | | | | | | | |
| Workers | 17 | 23 | 11 | 16 | 17 | 16 | 19 |
| Local Religious | | | | | | | |
| Leaders | 22 | 27 | 19 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| Civic Leaders | 33 | 39 | 34 | 25 | 31 | 34 | 43 |
| Black Militant | | | | | | | |
| Leaders | 10 | 14 | 2 | 15 | 13 | 6 | 3 |
| <u>Should be Influential</u> | | | | | | | |
| Parent Leaders | 28 | 26 | 25 | 35 | 33 | 20 | 26 |
| Professional | | | | | | | |
| School Staff | 35 | 39 | 38 | 26 | 31 | 39 | 44 |
| Local Politicians | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Local Poverty | | | | | | | |
| Workers | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Local Religious | | | | | | | |
| Leaders | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | -- |
| Civic Leaders | 5 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 13 |
| Black Militant | | | | | | | |
| Leaders | 2 | 2 | -- | 3 | 3 | -- | -- |

*Sum equals more than 100 per cent because respondents could give more than one answer.

who rate the school personnel negatively think the community should have more control. This also is the opinion of parents who criticize the curriculum, the textbooks, the special programs, and the school buildings. But even those persons who rate school personnel and equipment positively favor more community influence, although to a lesser degree than those who are critical of the

schools. This belief is strongest with regard to the student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships, the textbooks, the local Project Board, and the Project Administrator. In the case of the Project Administrator, four out of five parents who rate him positively want more community influence, which may indicate that either they view him as an important means of securing community influence or they see a need for him to be more receptive to the community.

Strategies for Change

The majority of parents think that "not enough is being done to improve the schools." Three out of five parents view the reduction of overcrowding as the most important step toward improving their schools. Better discipline ranks second, with slightly under one-half the parents choosing this alternative as a necessary step to improve the schools. Most parents believe, however, that steps have not been taken in the Demonstration Project schools to reduce overcrowding, teach Spanish, train teachers' aides, improve discipline, reduce class size, hire more Negro teachers, and provide organized store-front school operations.

However, the parents fail to agree on a strategy for improving the schools. One-third think the most effective way to bring about improvement is to elect better public officials, while one-quarter would write letters to and petition public officials, in comparison to the one-fifth who think that putting the local community legally in charge of the schools will accomplish this end. Only 13 per cent believe that demonstrations and boycotts will improve the schools. Nor are the parents clear on how the Project Boards should be selected. Most parents, however, feel they should have a major role in the process of selection. Thirty-five per cent think

the majority of the local Project Boards should be elected by the community, with the rest appointed by the Mayor and the New York City Board of Education. Thirty-one per cent think that the local Project Board should be elected by the parents or the community. More Negro parents than whites choose this method--35 per cent as compared to 20 per cent.

Almost a third of the parents report that they voted when given an opportunity to elect members of the local Project Boards this past year (see Table XI). Less than a quarter voted in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, while two-fifths voted in IS 201.

TABLE XI
VOTE IN LAST ELECTION FOR LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD
(IN PERCENTS)

| | Total | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Other |
|--------------|-------|------------|-------------|--------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| Voted | 30 | 22 | 31 | 42 | 31 | 28 | 33 |
| Did not Vote | 55 | 66 | 50 | 49 | 60 | 50 | 49 |
| Not Sure | 14 | 12 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 21 | 18 |

The parents interviewed seem intimidated about actively participating in community affairs. One-third feel that if they take a public stand on an unpopular issue in the community, they will be regarded as "troublemakers." Two-fifths of them believe that protesting an action taken by school officials may influence the way their children are treated in school. This does not mean, however, that the parents are

inactive in school affairs. Two-fifths of the parents in the sample belong to Parents Associations; almost 90 per cent report that they visited their schools last year. Although most of these parents went on Parents Visiting Day, nearly one-third visited principals or teachers.

The demand for community control comes partly from the failure to integrate IS 201 and the general difficulty in desegregating the public schools. It is important, therefore, to note that more than half the parents in the sample desire integration of schools (see Table XII). Only among the IS 201 parents (46 per cent) and the white parents (33 per cent) are there larger or equal proportions of parents who prefer to improve the quality of the segregated schools rather than integrate the schools.

Assuming a general desire on their part for an integrated education, the respondents were asked their opinions of two quite different approaches to achieve this objective. The first is busing of students within New York City; almost half (47 per cent) of the sample oppose this move and 39 per cent favor it. Only 16 per cent of the whites favor busing, while half the Negroes approve. The second approach is the expansion of the New York City school system to include parts of the nearby suburbs just outside the city. Nearly half the total sample think this is a good idea.

Parents and the Dilemma of Decentralization

The three Demonstration Projects clearly are located in disadvantaged areas where few parents view their schools as excellent and many voice dissatisfaction. The parents do not believe that their schools have improved in the last few years--if anything, they have become worse. In

TABLE XII
SCHOOL INTEGRATION, BUSING, AND EXPANDING SCHOOL SYSTEM
(IN PERCENTS)

| | Total Sample | Ocean Hill | Two Bridges | IS 201 | Negro | Puerto Rican | White/ Others |
|--|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| Position on: | | | | | | | |
| Integration | | | | | | | |
| Integrate schools | 56 | 58 | 79 | 46 | 54 | 71 | 33 |
| Improve segregated schools | 40 | 40 | 12 | 50 | 42 | 25 | 33 |
| Not sure | 4 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 34 |
| Bussing within New York City | | | | | | | |
| Favor | 39 | 48 | 19 | 52 | 48 | 30 | 16 |
| Oppose | 47 | 43 | 60 | 38 | 43 | 53 | 56 |
| Not sure | 24 | 9 | 21 | 10 | 9 | 17 | 28 |
| Include suburbs in New York City system | | | | | | | |
| Good idea | 47 | 48 | 34 | 61 | 54 | 39 | 31 |
| Not good idea | 27 | 23 | 27 | 29 | 26 | 25 | 31 |
| Not sure | 26 | 29 | 39 | 10 | 20 | 36 | 38 |

addition, they are pessimistic about the possibilities for future improvement. Those parents who are more critical of the school system--its facilities, services, programs, and those who run it--believe that the community should have more influence in shaping the character and content of their children's education. However, they are not particularly well satisfied with the performance of the three Demonstration Projects.

Public support for the schools in disadvantaged areas may never have been strong, but intense and prolonged controversy over educational matters raises questions about and criticism of the school system. Parent dissatisfaction with the schools includes the educational personnel--the Board of Education, the local Project Administrator, and the local Project Board--who are subject to criticism and some feeling of distrust on the part of the parents. On the other hand, the parents express confidence in approaching the principals and the teachers with their specific problems. The local Project Boards are viewed as sources of influence and mediators between the community and the Board of Education.

Although twice as many parents support as oppose the concept of decentralization, they do not believe that it means they or any local group will or should have complete control. They view decentralization as an opportunity for greater community participation, but they expect and prefer that professional educators participate in planning the education their children receive.

Those who will determine the future direction of the public schools of New York City, education for the disadvantaged, and decentralization

face a dilemma. On the one hand, dissatisfaction with the present educational system has led many to advocate change, specifically the need for increased community involvement in the schools, if not outright control of the local schools. On the other hand, the experience of this past year has not only created anxiety on the part of the general community and professional staff, but the parents have given only qualified support to those who assume leadership in the local Demonstration Projects.

The Board of Education now can and should designate more substantial powers to the local Project Boards, but it should do so only with adequate safeguards to protect the rights of the professional staff, especially the teachers and principals, whom the parents consider reasonably trustworthy. The delegation of additional authority to the Demonstration Projects, as long as there is an adequate means of organizing the professional staff and parents in a meaningful partnership, should reduce the time and energy that have been expended this past year in the struggle for power.

Of course, our discussion of the parent survey has been conducted on the attitudinal level; it should be clearly stated that there is no substitute for serving the clients. One solution to the dilemma would be to develop a flexible system that will create opportunities for the participants in the educational process--students, parents, teachers, supervisors, and board members--to share in a more effective working relationship.

CHAPTER V

SOME GUIDELINE THOUGHTS ON DECENTRALIZATION

The Advisory Committee does not have another decentralization plan to propose. During the year, however, the Committee has discussed a general scheme for a decentralized school system which may prove suggestive to the Board of Education as the Board prepares its recommendations to the Regents and the Legislature.

The basic dilemma facing us is that the City of New York in many ways is an entity. This fact cannot be ignored in the organization of the city's school system, even if there were no reasons of economy or educational quality to justify some kind of centralization. On the other hand, the centralized system is so big and the resulting bureaucracy so complex that involvement and accountability for parents, teachers, and principals is difficult at best and often nonexistent. Effective decentralization must achieve a reasonable resolution of this conflict.

It seems to the Committee that any plan for decentralization should deal with four levels:

1. The individual school
2. Districts of schools
3. Divisions--perhaps seven or eight--each containing four or five Districts

4. A central apparatus consisting of:
 - a. A School-Management Committee composed of the chairmen of the Divisional Boards, the Divisional Superintendents, and the citywide Superintendent.
 - b. A Central Education Agency--a coordinating and planning board.

Any discussion of these four levels as a means to improve education of children must stress the motivation of parents and teachers as the prime target.

Boards at all levels that include parents will tend not only to stimulate the interest of those parents who are directly involved but through them to arouse the interest of other parents in the schooling of their children. This does not mean that all educationally unmotivated families can be reached; however, parents are in a better position than school officials or even teachers to reach these families. This, in turn, does not mean that parents should control the techniques of teaching, which are professional skills.

Any plan for decentralization should also be aimed at increasing the motivation of teachers. To accomplish this goal it is necessary both to diminish the influence of the administrative hierarchy and to increase the role of teachers in the planning, appraisal, and development of education. They should be encouraged to experiment with the curriculum and to adapt teaching methods to the local cultures from which their pupils come.

The Central Education Agency

The Central Education Agency, composed of nine members chosen by the current screening-panel procedures, would be a coordinating and planning board. Within the framework of the state system the Agency would establish general curricula and standards for the selection of teachers and supervisors. It would set general policies for special high schools, special vocational schools, and other special schools in order to make them available for children in all Divisions. It would establish goals, review performance, and adjudicate unresolved differences between the community and professional and administrative interests. Disputes should be determined at the lowest possible level, subject always to the right of at least one appeal. The Agency would serve as the principal liaison between the entire school system and other agencies of the city and state, such as health and welfare, whose operations have a bearing upon the role of education in the total life of the city. The Agency also would adopt citywide operating and capital budgets after each Division has submitted its proposed budgets. It would draw up citywide contracts.

The Central Education Agency would have as its principal mission long-range planning for the school system, including all areas of interest appropriate to the system: planning of facilities to meet changing demographic conditions; planning of policy to anticipate problems, such as integration, personnel recruitment, and development; organizational planning to meet needs of growth and changing environment; planning of

programs to more intimately relate the school's mission with those of other city agencies, such as welfare, health, employment, and so forth.

A small central staff appointed and headed by the city Superintendent of Schools (we would prefer a title such as "Director of Services") would report to the Central Education Agency. The responsibilities of this staff would be similar to those outlined for the Superintendent of Schools by the Bundy Report. For example, the staff would collect information and data, propose a coordinated budget of the city, and propose other standards to the Central Agency. It would be the arm for providing the details for planning. It would also act as the secretariat for the School-Management Committee.

The Central Education Agency would appoint advisory councils composed of qualified citizens to advise upon such matters as (1) educational policy, (2) community relations, (3) executive and personnel developments, and (4) research development.

The School-Management Committee

The School-Management Committee, consisting of the chairman of each Divisional Board and the Superintendent of each Division, would constitute the principal management structure for reviewing citywide operational problems, preparing a schedule for the allocation of resources, developing citywide standards in certain cases, and negotiating with the UFT and other unions. The Superintendent of Schools would be its presiding officer.

The School-Management Committee would be the point where professional and community interests come together in a relationship of joint responsibility. It would be the forum where basic conflicts between

the professional and the lay points of view would be argued. Its composition would make it sensitive to conflicting needs; its existence would be marked by a continual changing and realignment of forces. This is a healthy process, one which is totally lacking in present school administration.

Using the central staff as secretariat, the Committee could be the point for originating most policy changes, suggesting items for study, responding to the Central Education Agency's request for information and advice. The central staff would prepare studies and make recommendations on policy questions proposed by the Central Agency and/or the School Management Committee. The lay members of the Committee could bring to bear the community and political opinions of citizens and parents at a crucial, high level and in so doing be responsible for bringing about sensible and early decisions and policy recommendations.

Divisions

The city system would consist of seven or eight semi-autonomous school systems known as Divisions. All state-granted powers not vested in the Central Education Agency or specifically reserved to the Districts or individual schools should be vested in the Divisional Boards of Education. These Divisional powers should correspond to the powers of the Community School Districts envisioned in the report of the Mayor's Panel. Divisional boards should appoint their Divisional Superintendent, who in turn would appoint all members of his staff. All special high schools, vocational schools, and other special schools within a Division would

be under the control of the Division Board of Education and the Divisional Superintendent.

The Divisional Superintendent would be assigned sufficient staff to enable the Divisional office to be the true operating center for his segment of the city school system. Any central staff function would exist as a service to the Divisional Superintendent and might be bypassed at the discretion of the Division. Because of the generally rigid nature of the educational system, there would be a tendency to locate staff services at the "proper" levels, particularly if the Divisional executive had the right to complain, criticize, approve, or ignore the central staff's performance. Careful study of present central staff facilities must be undertaken in order to sensibly reassign the personnel and functions to the Divisions. The Divisional Board should have the power to create experimental districts within the Division, to finance these within the regular budget or with special funds awarded the district outside the regular budgetary income.

Districts

Each Division would consist of Districts, each District having its own Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools. There would be a total of approximately thirty Districts. The District School Board would be a listening post, appoint its Superintendent, and propose to the Division Board its operating and capital budgets. The Division Board, in turn, would transmit its operating and capital budgets to the Central Agency after reviewing the proposed District budgets. Each District

Superintendent would appoint the principals and teachers in his District from lists of qualified persons maintained by the Divisional Boards and the Central Agency. Each District Board would be responsible for regular and thorough visiting of its schools. The Board would make an annual report of its findings concerning the schools of the District to its Division Board, which in turn would report on the state of the schools of its Division to the Central Agency.

The School

Each school would have a School Council composed of parents and teachers. The principal would be the presiding officer. In larger schools there might well be Councils for the kindergarten and lower grades, for the intermediate grades, and so forth. In high schools there might be Councils to deal with subject matter, grade, or track (academic diploma, vocational diploma, general diploma, or business diploma). Students should participate in the activities of the Council.

The Councils should review and make recommendations concerning budget, community relations, personnel, and, as indicated above, curriculum. These recommendations should be transmitted to the District Superintendent. Probably the Councils should be involved to some extent in reviewing tenure appointments.

The Organizational Form: A Dual System of Management and Measurement

The proposed organization suggests that there is an interface between the professional, administrative, and community interests at five

points: (1) the School Council, (2) the District Board, (3) the Divisional Board, (4) the School Management Committee, and (5) the Central Education Agency.

At each of these points it is possible for parents and others in the community to be heard. For example, the relationship between the District Board and the School Councils should be such that the latter or individual community members could approach the Board directly with complaints, suggestions, and opinions. If this dialogue proves unsatisfactory, the lower agency then could take its case directly to the Divisional Board or the Divisional Superintendent.

On the other hand, the professional management of the schools would have clear-cut channels for communication. The appointment of chief executives of the divisional and district units on a contract basis would assure a heightened sensitivity throughout the system. It would be possible, assuming the development of proper leadership, for the individual classroom teacher to engage in new and exciting teaching. The ability of Districts to seek direct funding and assistance from outside the system would also be an encouraging factor.

The structure is organized on a modified pyramidal line, using boards of public membership to guarantee interaction and expression of public approval or disapproval. The organizational system would be designed to provide two cooperative and contesting arms--one the direction of the professional/administrative structure, the other the reflection of public interest and authority. The decentralized character of the executive functions would make it possible to force contact with elements of

the community. Each board level would be composed of membership drawn directly from public expression. In the case of the School Councils the participation would be direct and locally determined.

The net result of this type of management structure and operation would be two operational lines. One would be the line operation extending down from the State Commissioner of Education, through the Central Education Agency and divisional management, right to the local school building with its teachers and pupils. The other line would extend upward from the School Councils, District and Divisional Boards, through the Central Education Agency, representing the interest and expectations of the community. Encouragement of a dialogue between these two viewpoints and forces at several places in the structure would increase the probability that the system will remain sensitive, problems will be detected earlier, and response will occur as a result of participation of both professional and community membership.

The report of the Mayor's Panel could serve as the basis for developing this organization, complete with missions, responsibilities, and authorities. Programs for implementation could be developed to guarantee safeguards during the period of changeover. The present Board of Education and executive staff could be used as the principal mechanism for bringing the new system into existence. Indeed, methods must be found to utilize the skills and dedication of the present administration, for in practical terms we must get from where we are to wherever we want to go by starting with what we have.

Several positive aspects of the organizational plan are not readily apparent. First, Divisional and District boards would be points of

hearing, review, and adjudication. Formal mechanisms would be set up to allow the smallest School Council to express its views, complaints, and suggestions. A review procedure could be established to allow progressive appeal, so that in the case of really urgent or important matters any group or individual in the community could force review and hearing to the very top. This plan might seem to threaten professional and administrative staffs with a continuing dialogue of friction and defense. But with the proper public relations and staff work, this kind of review could redound to the benefit of the total system.

Second, the primary responsibility of District Boards would include formal school visitation, with reporting required to the Divisional Boards, the Central Agency, and the State Education Department. School Councils also would be used for a limited type of school visitation and reporting. A regular flow of criticism and suggestions would arise from the process. Such information would make the professional and administrative system more sensitive to the community. Also, it would serve as an early warning system, alerting the Divisional Boards and Central Agency to problems so that solutions and strategies could be planned in advance of need.

Third, strong District Boards that are truly representative of the community would help the school become a cohering force in the community. Many exciting programs could be undertaken within the Districts, including adult education, job counseling and placement, day care centers, and the like. The basic mission of the District Board, after participating in the selection of the chief executive officer and formulation of the

budgets, would be to monitor the operations of the schools according to specific criteria established by the District Board and the Central Agency.

Program for Executive and Personnel Development:
Preparing for Change

One step takes precedence over all others in making the transition to a new decentralized organization--whatever its nature. This is the requirement to prepare the community for the anticipated changes. All citizens will be required to play new roles, deal with new kinds of situations, develop new skills. This requirement applies not only to executive and professional staffs, but even more insistently to the community members involved. A carefully thought-out program must be mounted with the maximum possible speed to get ready for whatever change occurs.

Assuming a positive program of implementation, the following suggested approach and schedule are offered:

1. Review the proposed plan with all interested parties and groups. Publicize the reasons behind each major aspect of the plan. Elicit from the communities their questions and suggestions.
2. After consolidation of plan and formal acceptance, announce firm timetables for implementation. These should include executive and personnel development programs.
3. Educate the present Board of Education to the role it will play in transition.
4. The present Superintendent must become thoroughly familiar with and be committed to the plan. He should be a principal actor in the selection of personnel and preparation of programs.
5. The present board should establish an advisory committee on manpower development. This committee, drawn from industry, government, universities, and professional groups, would assist in establishing programs for each level of participation.

6. Fifty to Seventy-five top-level persons should be selected from the present professional and administrative staffs for immediate training experiences.
7. As soon as possible after the first training wave, some of the outstanding participants would be chosen to lead training sessions for lower levels in the administrative ranks.
8. The Superintendent would begin a separate program to train teachers and assistant principals.
9. Concurrently a program would be set up to train present District Board personnel on a voluntary basis. The hope would be to retain as many high potential people as possible who already are associated with the system.
10. As soon as possible community leadership training should begin for those who might want to join District Boards or School Councils.

The Board of Education should establish an Office of Executive and Personnel Development to assist in the development and implementation of training programs.

The following suggestions for training programs are offered:

1. Keep communication lines open so that everyone knows why the program is necessary and where he fits into the scheme of things.
2. Do not select only people from the previous hierarchy. Show some daring in appointments. Pick some bright young men and women from the lower ranks.
3. Make the programs difficult, require long hours, exact total commitment of time, and some experience in a different environment, at least for the high-level development programs.
4. Don't be afraid to use peers as teachers. One of the best ways to "infect" the system is by making converts and giving them an evangelical mission.
5. Make use of outside talent (from both the school system and the educational profession) to assist in the teaching.

6. Review the skills that one may assume already are known. Basic management tools need sharpening in order to decentralize and sensitize at the same time.
7. Be prepared to spend time and money to stretch both minds and emotions--sensitivity training, attendance at other professional schools, cultural activities, and the like.
8. Include problems of self-development, confrontation, and role-playing. These should be regarded almost as on-the-job training.
9. The program should include training in inter-group relations, especially among different status levels of the system, and among staff, parents, and community representatives.