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The aim of this report is to contribute to the literature on the identification, description, and interpretation of available alternatives for the accomplishment of effective statewide improvements in education. The report covers the organizational innovation of an Office of Planning, and the endeavors, problems, accomplishments, and goals of the Texas Education Agency in its effort to meet the responsibilities of its leadership role through the adoption of new concepts and methods of educational planning. Included is a supplementary statement entitled "Implications for Leadership Performance" by Laurence D. Haskew of the University of Texas at Austin. (Author/LS)

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**THE EVOLUTION OF PLANNING  
IN THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY**

Report of a Study  
Sponsored by  
The Texas Education Agency  
and the Project,

**Improving State Leadership in Education**



Denver, Colorado  
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### Introduction

This case study illustrates how planning has evolved in a state department of education, some of the resultant experiences, and future hopes. To this study Professor L. D. Haskew of The University of Texas at Austin has contributed the section "Implications for Leadership Performance" which deals with the question of state education agencies exerting leadership for educational change in desired directions. The aim of this report is to contribute to the literature on the identification, description, and interpretation of available alternatives for the accomplishment of effective statewide improvements in education

J. W. Edgar  
Commissioner of Education  
State of Texas

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## Section One

### FROM INNOVATION TO BREAKTHROUGH

In 1966, the Texas Education Agency designed and installed what was for it an organizational innovation. In 1970, it appears this innovation may have developed into a major breakthrough in the functional performance of that state education agency.

The organizational innovation was an Office of Planning, an entity not present in the Agency before. The resulting breakthrough in 1970 is not now an office, however. It is a reorientation of a considerable portion of the Agency's endeavors around planning and plan-execution.

By definition, a plan is something for the future. Hence, this state education agency has begun to devote energy to meeting responsibilities and opportunities of the future by planning ahead and acting in accord with previous planning. From such beginnings, a redefinition of the functional characteristics of a state education agency may be emerging.

#### Pressures Toward an Organizational Innovation

In 1966, a "changing" Texas was producing a variety of needs for the educational enterprise. In shifting from an agricultural, rural state to a multi-ethnic, substantially urbanized industrial community of 11 million people, Texas presented educators with the challenges of:

- Providing full educational opportunities for 2.3 million pupils; and
- Accommodating a diversity of urban centers and sparse rural areas, 1,200 school districts, and the effects of a multi-lingual, mobile population.

Forces outside the Texas Education Agency were combining to focus attention on the need for statewide comprehensive educational planning. Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) was requiring state departments of education to plan for educational innovation. Title V of the same Act provided resources for strengthening state departments of education. The Fifty-ninth Texas Legislature established the Governor's Committee on Public School Education to make a pervasive study of Texas schools and to submit findings and recommendations to the Legislature in 1969. The same Legislature established the Planning Agency Council for Texas (PACT) as a division of the Governor's Office, designed to involve all State agencies in comprehensive planning. These events provided the opportunity for the Agency to cooperate with other State agencies in the development of plans.

Within this context, the State Department of Education was confronted with the problem of maximizing the benefits from increased Federal financial assistance to education as well as providing leadership to meet new statewide educational needs. Outside pressures for planning were met with unreadiness at both the State and local levels. The first responses to these new needs were largely improvised by the Agency, and divisional in nature.

In the summer of 1965, the Texas Education Agency initiated a self-evaluation to determine its present status and future needs. The United States Office of Education bulletin, Resources of State Education Agencies, a Program Analysis, provided a guide for this study. Particular emphasis was given to promising alternatives for providing leadership to local schools in the development of educational programs to meet the needs of all pupils. Investigation was conducted on Agency problems, operational procedures, utilization of resources, and the professional competencies of the staff. Using the results of this study as a foundation, a proposal under Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was developed to provide the Agency with a new planning capability through an organizational innovation.

### Occasion for the Innovation

Students of organizational innovation point out that many structural inventions may come as a response to a decisive pressure exerted upon an organization. In the present instance, the activating pressure was Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965. More specifically, it was the responsibilities the Texas Education Agency voluntarily assumed in providing the benefits of Title III to local school districts in Texas. The effort to produce widespread educational advances from Title III projects required a degree of concentration--not then present--upon planning, coordinating, evaluating and disseminating.

The demand for a structured device to assume these functions for Title III was irresistible. Forthwith, an Office of Planning was devised. However, it was not made entirely occasion-specific. The multiple pressures and visions antecedent to Title III were quite evident in the first charter for the Office, as will be seen. The creators of this structural modification apparently had great expectations in mind, reaching beyond alleviating the immediate Title III pressures.

### The First Office of Planning

The proposal for the first Office, developed by Agency staff with consultation of outside groups, stated eight functions to be discharged by this organizational innovation:

- Coordination of the instructional planning and evaluation of the twenty-three divisional programs administered by the Agency;
- Evaluation of instructional programs and assessment of outcomes in terms of identified goals;
- Development of new approaches for meeting the needs identified from results of research and from innovation;
- Development of realistic measurement of educational outcomes;
- Cooperation with other educational institutions in educational research and demonstration projects;
- Translation of pertinent findings from research into action programs for immediate use in the classroom;

- Administration of the State's leadership responsibility for Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and
- Dissemination of information to Agency and local school personnel and the lay public.

Its temporary title was the Office of Innovation and Assessment. Established in April 1966 and made a part of the Commissioner's Office, after two months the name was changed to Office of Planning. Its chief officer became the Associate Commissioner for Planning. Within the organizational framework, the Office was soon given two additional functions:

- Coordination of the planning activities of all Agency programs related to instruction--academic, vocational, compensatory, special, and adult; and
- Providing leadership for developing change-oriented projects under Title III, ESEA.

The second of these functions implied another--disseminating information portraying the experiences with Title III projects in Texas. The rationale was that if these undertakings were to promote desirable change in education for Texas, results of innovative projects would need to be widely disseminated. Inevitably, this rationale led to a third function being added to the complement for the Office of Planning--that of ensuring competent evaluation of each Title III project.

To perform these functions, two divisions were established within the evolving Office of Planning: the Division of Innovation and Communication and the Division of Assessment and Research. However, divisional lines were not rigid and supplementary groupings of staff evolved to perform specific tasks.

#### Evolution to Meet Perceived Needs

The Office was strongly field-oriented at first. Its leadership was directed toward promoting and nurturing Title III proposals--and, later, projects--which would contribute toward statewide renewal of education. Office personnel worked chiefly with local school districts and/or consortia. From the outset, however, "office personnel" came to mean many individuals drawn from other administrative divisions--especially instructional divisions--in the Agency. Three results ensued from this field involvement with project design and execution.

First, the notion that innovative efforts should be concentrated on pressing needs was reinforced. This meant that the Agency staff became increasingly concerned with identifying what the "pressing needs" were in Texas. Guided self-renewal of Agency personnel began to occur, manifested in search for new competence in need identification and needs assessment. Many formal and informal training opportunities were provided. A cadre of needs-oriented personnel was planned and developed among several divisions of the Agency. Simultaneously, the Office of Planning came to be identified more and more as the leadership entity for targeting all Agency endeavors toward identifying, and then addressing, a set of priority needs for educational attention statewide.



Since priority need determination is the first step toward comprehensive planning, the Office of Planning was being cast in a role much broader than that of Title III executive.

Second, engagement with the development of plans for Title III projects produced concern for the methodology and content of educational planning. Expertise began to be developed here also, aided by conscious efforts toward acquiring competence on the parts of staff members. In turn, the acquired competence began to be demanded for educational planning in general. Gradually, the Commissioner, as well as officials in an increasing number of divisions, began to expect the Office of Planning to be the fountainhead for planning in a widening variety of fields. In response, the Office of Planning began to view itself increasingly in that fountainhead role.

Third, evaluation-designing for Title III projects underwent transmigration through processes similar to those just described. That is, as competence grew, the scope of its responsibility changed from Title III projects alone to a wide range of endeavors. In 1970, although progress has been made, evaluation's integration with the planning function has not occurred extensively. It is still regarded largely as a service to divisional projects of various kinds, called in after most other planning has been done. Within the Office of Planning, however, a different role for evaluation is being supported. That role is to provide an information base for planning and for the execution of plans.

Dissemination has changed little from its original orientation. In effect, its location in the Office of Planning is accounted for by proximity to sources of information it needs and by the original conception that the Office was to promote innovation.

Internal structures of the Office of Planning have shown some response to changing roles. Certain functions and activities have been assigned to each Division.

The Division of Assessment and Evaluation has the responsibility for coordinating assessment of educational needs of the State, coordinating evaluation of educational programs and providing technical assistance service to educational service centers and local school districts in the areas of need assessment and program evaluation. To fulfill these responsibilities, the division:

- Assembles data on pupil and teacher populations;
- Manages study groups and planning committees;
- Assists local school officials in building evaluation procedures;
- Conducts evaluations of projects under ESEA Title I and Title III; and
- Cooperates with other agencies, such as the United States Office of Education, in the coordination of data-gathering techniques and evaluation procedures.

The Division of Program Planning is responsible for establishing and periodically re-appraising priority educational needs of the State, coordinating and integrating pilot projects conducted by the Agency, assisting in the refinement of consolidated applications and reporting procedures for local school districts and providing technical assistance to local school officials and education service centers in planning effective programs.

The Division of Dissemination is responsible for coordinating Agency efforts to identify and disseminate innovative and exemplary practices, for preparing news releases and radio-television materials for public information, for directing and refining Agency internal communications activities, for handling information for recruiting personnel to the educational enterprise in Texas, and for providing consultative services to education service centers and school districts in the area of dissemination.

## Section Two

### PROCESSES OF PLANNING

Regardless of title, the Office of Planning has served from the beginning chiefly as a catalytic agent. Although characterized as a producer of change, the Office itself did develop some operational, on-going functions. In most cases, however, once a planning mission was accomplished, executive operations for the program were transferred to other divisions and departments. But the initial task of the Office--the establishment of machinery to facilitate Agency-wide instructional planning--led to its assumption of continued executive operation and the monitoring of the planning groups.

#### Establishing Agency-wide Machinery for Planning

Working under the philosophy that each department, division, and professional staff member of the Agency should have an essential role in instructional planning, the Office developed a "Design for Agency-wide Instructional Planning, April 1967." (The term "instructional planning" is used to emphasize that planning for facilities, personnel, transportation, etc. is done within the context of supporting the learning environment for pupils.) Although specific responsibilities of each of the program divisions varied, certain functions were believed common to them all--needs identification, program planning and development, staff development, evaluation, research and communication. A structure to give the professional staff who shared the foregoing common functions the opportunity to think together in fruitful new ways was identified as a salient need. Under the design created for Agency-wide coordination of instructional planning, the Associate Commissioner for Planning was responsible for assisting the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners, and other staff members in the functions of research, planning, program evaluation, and communication through the following channels:

- A Commissioners Coordinating Council, composed of the Commissioner (Chairman), Deputy Commissioner, Associate Commissioner for Planning, six Assistant Commissioners, and the Investment Officer. In addition, the directors of Internal Management, Personnel, Administration and Staff Development, and the Division of Innovation and Communication met with the Council.
- An Executive Planning Committee consisting of directors of major Agency divisions.

- An Agency Planning Council composed of program directors and selected consultants.
- Continuing committees and task force groups for special purposes.

The Appendix illustrates the planning structure of the Texas Education Agency in 1970. The objectives established for this structure are global in scope. For example:

- To meet oncoming change, to cause desirable change, and to prevent undesirable change in public school education;
- To facilitate the development of staff competence in inventing, designing, piloting, demonstrating, evaluating, and disseminating educational innovation in keeping with educational needs and goals of the State;
- To coordinate instructional planning among departments and divisions of the Agency, to assist in achieving a quality instructional program;
- To provide a structure for continuous evaluation and assessment of public school programs and of the Agency's instructional planning capability; and
- To facilitate communication between the Agency, the educational community and the public.

#### Operating the Planning Machinery

The role of the Office of Planning in the processes of internal planning within the Texas Education Agency has been both developmental and supportive. To assist in the renewal of the planning machinery and in the planning to meet priority needs, the Associate Commissioner for Planning serves as the executive officer of both the Commissioners Coordinating Council and the Executive Planning Committee. He is responsible for preparing agendas, conducting meetings and disseminating results to Agency staff.

The Commissioners Coordinating Council meets twice a month to attain its goals of:

- Establishing objectives for instructional planning;
- Assessing programs and plans of each department and division;
- Allocating Agency resources to instructional plans; and
- Coordinating the Agency's instructional planning functions with planning by other agencies.

Interacting with the Commissioners Coordinating Council in its planning activities is the Executive Planning Committee which is composed of twenty-five directors of major divisions in the Agency. This group also meets twice a month, alternately to the Commissioners Coordinating Council.

The agendas of these two planning groups reveal similarity in the topics for consideration. This similarity evidences that the development of plans may

originate with either body and that many of the items considered by the Executive Planning Committee are forwarded to the Commissioners Coordinating Council for final approval.

Written reports of all meetings of these two bodies are prepared and distributed by the Office of Planning. Because these summaries are valuable communication tools, copies are sent to all members of top echelon planning groups and to chairmen of continuing committees and task forces. Agency directors and program directors are responsible for informing their staff members of the processes and products of internal planning.

#### Additional Planning Mechanisms

The design for coordination of Agency-wide instructional planning provides for two additional structures: continuing committees and task force groups. Membership on these groups broadens staff participation in Agency-wide planning activities.

With inter-divisional membership, the committees are chaired by people from operating divisions. Because the Office of Planning is responsible for coordinating the work of the committees, each group includes a representative from the Office. The chairmen schedule the meetings, decide on the agendas (in response to internal and external needs) and prepare a summary report of the actions taken.

Originally six continuing committees representing the functions shared by program divisions were established by the Associate Commissioner for Planning on recommendation of the Commissioners Coordinating Council and the Executive Planning Committee. These committees were:

- Instructional Materials, Media, and Physical Environment;
- Communications and Publication;
- Program Evaluation and Research;
- Pupil Personnel Services;
- Program Development; and
- School Staffing and Staff Development.

These committees were established as one means of bringing together staff concerned with similar functions to discuss and plan for these functions, to raise significant questions and to seek answers. As Agency structure has evolved in the light of new demands, so has the mission and design of the continuing committees.

The final groups in the hierarchy of planning structures have been among the most active: task forces, the groups that perform specific planning tasks. Members of planning task forces are selected by the Executive Planning Committee and approved by the Commissioners Coordinating Council. Task force groups are assigned relatively short-range planning tasks. Upon completion of the assigned responsibility, they report to the appropriate planning body and a report is usually forwarded to the Commissioners Coordinating Council for final action.

Major thrusts in Agency planning are indicated by a review of the following titles of a few of these groups:

- Task Force of Regional Education Service Centers;
- Task Force for Development of a Unified Plan for Preschool Programs, Including Kindergarten;
- Task Force for Pupil Diagnostic Services;
- Task Force for Bilingual Education;
- Task Force on Careers in Health Development;
- Task Force for Educational Personnel Development; and
- Task Force for Packaging Federal Funds as a Step Toward Comprehensive Planning.

This list is only illustrative. The numbers and varieties of task forces functioning over the 1966-1970 period have been immense. The Office of Planning is designated as the coordinator for all task force endeavors.

### Section Three

#### PLANNING IN ACTION

"In five years," observes one Texas Education Agency official, "we have accumulated forty years of experience with planning." This testimony has foundation in fact. Planning in 1970 is almost the motif for the Agency's leadership and managerial roles.

The purpose of this section is to illustrate some of that experience and then set forth some generalizations derived from that experience. From more than one hundred ventures in which planning and execution-according-to-plan were the rationale, four have been selected for and are briefly described in this case study.

#### Regional Education Service Centers

In 1967, the concept of regional education services was being discussed in Texas; in 1970, there are twenty education service centers in full operation and rapidly extending their usefulness. This structural innovation is not unique to Texas, of course. This State's experience with the Centers is due largely to the centrality of planning in their formation, activation and development.

The concept itself was crystallized through an assignment to the Office of Planning. It conducted an assessment of needs for regional services, explored constraints and opportunities affecting service organizations, canvassed related developments and their relationships to service centers. Findings from this assessment were examined by the Agency's Executive Planning Committee and a decision to develop a plan for regional education centers was made.

Further planning was assigned to the Office of Planning. Twelve areas of service appropriate for such centers were identified after in-depth exploration of alternatives by many groups, including legislators, Agency administrators, local educational personnel and professional organizations. Leading the list of services was "provide a base for coordinated planning of education in the region." Planning led to proposed ways and means for operationalizing each of the services. Concurrently, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner was directing a study of the structural and fiscal aspects of center activation. One decision made was that the new centers would incorporate the already existing regional media service centers. Other structural matters had not been developed sufficiently for presentation to the State Legislature, but the prospectus developed by the planning processes was sufficient to convince the Legislature that an authorizing statute should be passed. It was, and in such a flexible form that detailed plan-making could proceed unrestricted.

Several task forces, advisory committees, and consultants--coordinated by the Office of Planning--combined to produce installation, staffing, and activation plans for twenty regional education service centers, each to be self-governed by a lay board of directors. These plans went through the Agency's planning review mechanisms, were approved, and then executed by the Deputy Commissioner. By September 1967, all were in operation. An Assistant Commissionership for Regional Services was established to maintain Texas Education Agency liaison with the centers.

In effect, however, the centers had only a "hunting license" for what they would do in addition to operating media services. Their first year was spent chiefly in getting established and responding to requests for service. Many of these requests came from the Agency where all types of plans were being developed for statewide endeavors, such as data processing, special education extensions, and so on. Very early, the education service centers found themselves involved into statewide endeavors and consulted with respect to planning. By the end of the first year, they were not only part of the Agency planning machinery, they were beginning to make plans for themselves.

This set the stage for the cultivation of planning expertise. The centers could not hire it, therefore their own staffs set about developing it. The centers became eager patrons of the Planning Process Laboratories, a training mechanism developed by the Office of Planning with consulting-firm assistance. Center staff members participated widely in the pilot project in local school district planning. Some staff members worked on Agency task forces--for the Educational Management Information System, for example. They were drawn more and more into shaping State plans being projected by Agency divisions and adding to their command of disciplined planning in the process.

In 1969-70, the centers launched upon an exceedingly ambitious project--producing five-year plans for their own development. Missions were clarified, priorities were weighed and highly-disciplined planning procedures were followed. In July 1970, most service centers had produced five-year plans and seemed to be committed to implementing them. They were also very much in business: operating staff development enterprises for local school districts, doing pupil appraisals for special education, providing centralized educational data processing, directing curriculum construction enterprises, providing media services, conducting driver education, consulting on planning with school districts and in many other ways establishing themselves as useful additions to the Texas

ways of improving education. Without planning, they might have been doing some of the same things; however, consensus seems to be that the collateral effects of planning markedly accelerated their growth in stature.

#### Federal Funds Packaging

This venture, launched in 1967, became an incubus for endeavors in planning. Looking back upon it from a 1970 point of view, many observers say the thrusts it incubated may be of more value than the goal-achievements it accomplished.

The motivating idea basically was this: through appropriate planning, Texas could produce an integrated utilization of Federal funding opportunities to advance total educational achievements, instead of merely mounting segmented categorical forays. On the basis of a plan to do this, Federal programs funds would compose a single package. When they came to Texas the package would be opened, its contents parceled out to supplement state and local funds and then targeted for impact in chosen priority areas of concern.

United States Office of Education officials, in January 1968, gave preliminary approval to planning on this basis. The Texas Education Agency obligated itself to have an initial "Comprehensive Statewide Education Plan for Optimum Utilization of Federal, State, and Local Resources" in shape for negotiation with the Office of Education by June 30, 1968 and operable in Texas for the 1968-69 school year. Only nine months was available to produce and operationalize a plan of such complexity and scope.

Obviously, considerable exploration of feasibility had occurred in the Agency prior to the "go-ahead" signal. Promptly, the Office of Planning was given responsibility for coordinating and directing the planning effort, working always in close liaison with the Deputy Commissioner who was executive officer for the project. A fifteen-person Agency Steering Committee for the project was established. A commitment was made--but never realized--to assign twenty professional and administrative officers of the Agency full-time to the planning project.

Planning began with an ambitious scope. Here are some of the objectives that were established:

- Arrive at a set of priority concerns for educational development, collating national, Federal government, statewide, and local demands/needs;
- Design Agency funds management to handle the packaging concept and to apply funding as a tool to control educational planning statewide and in local school districts;
- Design a consolidated application format for Federal funds for school districts to be accompanied by comprehensive plans for achievements toward the priority concerns and put this into effect for the 1969-70 application;
- Develop a plan to secure competent technical assistance for local school districts' comprehensive planning and to provide such assistance;
- Plan a Pilot Project in Educational Planning to secure intensive development of exemplary planning in a sample of school districts and Education Service Centers;

- Develop a plan for a three-year manpower development enterprise aimed to produce an adequate supply of skilled planners and planning technicians;
- Design and pilot test an Educational Management Information System for Texas, to serve planning and managerial decision-making needs of school districts, education service centers and the Texas Education Agency; and
- Produce a master plan for staff development and personnel recruitment strategy in the Agency to enable movement into leadership, as contrasted with administrative roles.

The range and demands of planning activity were equally ambitious. To comprehend such scope and produce such variety of plans--let alone to initiate implementation thereof--soon became manifestly impossible in the time span allotted. Cutbacks, postponements of certain elements and compromises with precision had to happen. Confusion and lack of communication were common, but the processes did move on with notable cohesion. Products rolled out and plans to achieve further refinements of products over the next two or three years made up for some of the necessary omissions.

In short, packaging was made a tangible reality for 1969-70. The deadline agreement with the United States Office of Education was kept. A consolidated application form for Federal funds was produced and an application was filed pursuant to its provisions by local school districts for 1969-70. And, as indicated, this enormous attempt served as incubus for many more endeavors which are being conducted in 1970 and will continue far beyond that. But, lest this account leave a false impression, let it be stated that Texas has not yet fully achieved significant "packaging" of Federal funds, nor anything which closely approaches true comprehensive planning by either the Agency or all school districts, nor a statewide computer-based Educational Management Information system.<sup>1</sup>

Several outcomes of this endeavor were outstanding. One deserves special mention. It was possible to generate a set of priority concerns, small in number, to direct educational planning. The set of nine priority areas of concern received remarkable acceptance throughout the State and by the majority of operating divisions of the Agency. They appeared in many planning endeavors far removed from the federal funds packaging syndrome. More important, the "priorities strategy" of planning has become widely followed as evidenced by an increasing willingness to target plans and a concentration of extra resources to completely achieve some of the objectives.

#### Planning-Capability Development

The Office of Planning became the locus for concern with the absence of capability-to-plan, both within and without the Agency. The Deputy Commissioner shared the concern. Hence, as already noted, the development of a sophisticated Educational Management Information System became a targeted accomplishment. Also, attention was given to improving the intra-Agency communications subsystems for information-flow and common-cause identification. A third line

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<sup>1</sup>A more complete account of this project may be found in Bascom B. Hayes, et. al., Consolidation of Federal Programs To Achieve Comprehensive Educational Planning, Parts I and II. The University of Texas at Austin: Office of Sur- and Studies, August, 1969.



of endeavor stemming from the Office was that of trying to get improved intra-division understanding of what the modern discipline of planning really required. All of these are structural or hardware aspects of planning-capability. Appreciable progress has been achieved toward each, but experience therewith will not be described here.

Another aspect of planning-capability is personal: the understandings, commitments and expertise of staff members. Much work has been committed to the development of this type of capability. One staff development activity initiated by the Agency was the development and operation of a Planning Process Laboratory. A team of seven full-time and five part-time staff members worked seven weeks to develop an intensive, one-week seminar in the processes of planning. The Laboratory was based on experience obtained from:

- A seminar on planning conducted by a consulting firm;
- A university course on educational planning;
- Group dynamics sessions;
- Printed resource materials; and
- Past experience in planning.

The development was coordinated by the Office of Planning and personnel from several departments of the Agency were involved. Implementation of the Laboratory was managed internally by the Agency's Director of Personnel and Staff Development. The extensive calls from the field for Planning Processes Laboratory training sessions, which soon arose, were serviced by the Office of Planning unit, however. The Laboratory provided opportunity for formal presentations of concepts used in planning; each of these was followed by the development of plans in areas of interest to participants. Initial priority was given to Planning Processes Laboratory training of Agency division and program directors. As mentioned, regional education service centers were eager to have their personnel gain such experiences. The Laboratory offering was expanded to include participation of more than 350 Agency and service center staff members. Service center personnel accepted invitations to assist in conducting Planning Processes Laboratories and a cadre of competent leaders was developed. The activity is currently being replicated by several regional service centers for local school district personnel.

Another major thrust in the development of planning capability was a pilot project in Educational Planning. One goal of this project was local capability to execute planning for the Consolidated Application for Federal Assistance. Another purpose was to provide a vehicle for:

- Dissemination of planning techniques;
- Feedback for statewide planning and program development; and
- Piloting innovative concepts of educational planning.

Staff members from the Agency and the service centers served on planning-assistance teams for the first phase of a multi-year undertaking to enhance planning capability--statewide, regionally and locally. One or more school districts in each of the twenty service center regions volunteered to become a pilot center. Each pilot center furnished its own planning staff and was assisted by an Agency team for that region.

The project helped staff members from the Agency and service centers to broaden their vision and upgrade their competence. Field reaction to the Agency's regulations and procedures helped considerably in fostering changes. Learning sessions for the pilot center and Agency teams, conducted with assistance of a consultant on educational planning from the University of Texas at Austin, helped keep the focus on planning rather than on filling out application forms. By the end of the first year, several school districts had developed programs for effective local management of planning which could be replicated elsewhere. Modification in the project's second year of operation has provided for the piloting of a rationale for longer-range educational planning. The major thrust is still upon the production of plans that will work to advance priority concerns in the pilot centers.

The third instance of developing planning capability through engagement in planning is the effort launched in August 1969 of the twenty regional education service centers to produce five-year plans for their own development. Through systematic data collection and needs assessment, each of the centers developed five-year goals and specific short-range objectives for their operation. Three statewide work sessions of directors and staff associates, held with the assistance of outside consultants, focused attention on the total planning cycle, using partial products from the education service centers as clinical materials. This maximized cross fertilization. The plans that were developed are quite impressive. One by-product was greater consensus between the Agency and the service centers on relative weight to be given to statewide projects versus indigenous undertakings. Another was the impact of planning toward foundational State financial support for the education service centers.

#### A State Plan for Special Education

A pervasive study of special education in Texas provided the initial thrust for the development of a new concept of services offered to handicapped children. Upon recommendation of the Agency, the Sixty-first Legislature enacted Senate Bill 230 which authorized a new program of comprehensive special education services to handicapped children.

The Agency's Division of Special Education developed a first draft of a new State Plan for Special Education to implement the new legislation based on previously assessed needs and established priorities. The first draft was reviewed at twenty regional conferences which were conducted in cooperation with the regional education service centers, local schools, institutions of higher education, professional organizations and parents. Results of the regional reviews were collated by the Service Centers with particular attention to the capacity of local school districts to produce the services expected. This process produced many recommendations for modifying the original draft: chief among these were plans for combined services, such as in pupil appraisal.

Reactions from these twenty cooperative review sessions were sent to the Agency in written form. These field reactions were systematically reviewed by divisional committees and summaries were used to refine the drafted plan. Agency involvement in planning was continued as the final draft was submitted to Agency planning mechanism and approved by the State Board of Education. A second set of twenty regional conferences then was held to inform all interested persons of the final plans adopted for special education in Texas.

#### Section Four

#### SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE WITH PLANNING

##### Whole-Agency Involvement

In a comparative sense, whole-Agency involvement in planning has been remarkable. But, it did not stem primarily from an Office of Planning. Its fountainhead was a Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner who made planning important--the chief order of the day--and who aimed at ambitious goals.

Involvement has been chiefly around special projects not belonging to an operating division. The number of these "specials" has been very large. Most have focused on something new, rather than upon a re-casting of what has been. And, involvement has been largely individual, not divisional. That is, the persons involved seem to function chiefly apart from their divisional obligations. Genuine co-divisional planning has occurred, but not very often.

Planning within divisions has proceeded much more commonly along long-established lines, in traditional format, than in liaison with Agency models. Division-initiated collaborative planning with another division or several divisions, has occurred only a few times. The Commissioners Coordinating Council has not notably enhanced the willingness of a division head to call upon other divisions to join in planning for which he is responsible.

##### Staff Time and Manpower for Planning

Since 1968, the Office of Planning has been assigned tasks of operational nature, devoting significant portions of its manpower resources to such things as:

- Producing public information television capsules;
- Operating a public information service including press releases and weekly newsletters;
- Collecting data and writing annual evaluation reports for programs operated under Title I, ESEA; and
- Managing data collection for interstate projects in planning and evaluation in cooperation with the United States Office of Education.

These diversionary, although important, assignments have reduced the availability of manpower for planning.

Time for staff development in planning has been scheduled--for the Planning Process Laboratory and for meetings of top echelon planning groups, for example--but has been made available only to a few. To carry most of the work in planning for special projects, overload is the norm. In effect, leadership and workload for Agency-wide planning is performed by a few but does not get distributed among the total potential manpower.

### Roles of the Office of Planning

The Office of Planning has been used as a utility-unit for important "emergency" assignments. It has prepared reports, conducted conferences, managed operational projects, and performed many other necessary--but tangential--duties. Some of these it has initiated itself; most have been delegations from top management. A recent study showed nearly twenty-five percent of the total man-hours available to the Office being devoted to such endeavors.

The Office of Planning is designated as responsible for development of Agency-wide activities in the areas of planning, needs assessment, innovation and program evaluation. It continues to be charged with dissemination of information about exemplary and promising school practices of all varieties. Functions prescribed by the current *Operation Procedures for the Texas Education Agency* for the Office of Planning are:

1. Identify and describe educational goals of the State; provide leadership for continuous study and identification of educational needs; relate educational needs to public school programs; establish priorities of needs, invent or adapt new approaches from results of research and from innovation for meeting of these needs; develop, implement, and field test instruments, and coordinate evaluative efforts at State levels and local levels; include such information into replanning and refining; and disseminate information about educational activities.
2. Maintain communication and cooperation concerning comprehensive educational planning and evaluation among all divisions and programs within the Agency. Provide general coordination to the Agency-wide planning structures and mechanisms. Create new planning structures as needed.
3. Cooperate in educational research and demonstration projects; serve as liaison with research and development programs of colleges, school districts, state education departments and other groups, evaluate the findings of these projects and programs in terms of the educational needs of Texas; and translate these findings into action programs for immediate use in the classroom.
4. Participate in interstate meetings, projects, and activities related to assessment, evaluation, planning, and dissemination with a view toward improving the quality of education within the State. Cooperate with other State of Texas agencies in planning approaches toward meeting statewide needs.

To generalize, the cafeteria-line menu theoretically laid out for the Office of Planning is much larger than the trays furnished to carry the food. But, the trays do get fully loaded.

### Duration of Plans

In 1969, most planning endeavors of the Agency were toward short-range targets; that is, one or two years. Consideration of this situation by an Agency task force resulted in a decision to move toward middle-range planning endeavors at State and local levels. The regional education service centers led the way, but Vocational Education was on their heels. The task force identified the following needs to be met by mid-range plans:

- Meet new requirements of Federal legislation and regulations such as the 1968 amendments to the Vocational Education Act;
- Provide consistent direction for growth and enough time to grow;
- Provide a base for research and development, for experimentation and for innovation; and
- Assist in the projection of anticipated funding requirements.

Current efforts are directed at moving both Agency divisions and local school districts toward three to five-year planning. Experience seems to indicate that one-year and two-year plans result in very inadequate attention to the realities of making fundamental change. Quickie, one-shot enterprises are planned for instead of a carefully-laid groundwork for solving a problem over the span of time required for a lasting advance.

### Task Forces

Task forces have been the most active and the most productive of the planning strategies utilized by the Agency. They have also played a major role in the development of staff planning capability. Often, data needed by these groups were not available and time constraints were prohibitive. Still, they have made major contribution to the planning in the Agency as already mentioned. However, a recent Agency study indicated some weaknesses in task force operation:

- The majority of divisional personnel do not serve on task forces; hence, task forces *tend to plan for instead of planning with* the executors of plans; and
- Task forces frequently flounder because of lack of precision in:
  - membership selection;
  - task identification;
  - procedural operation; and
  - providing adequate resources and time for task completion.

## Section Five

### PROGNOSIS

Like most infants, the Office of Planning has grown rapidly and experienced many of the problems of a new entity. Encountering the usual difficulties of making its place in an established context, the Office attained many

of its perceived objectives and has left others for future achievement. As efficiency and planning capabilities increase, the Office can assume a more effective role in functional planning for the Agency. Current efforts of the Office of Planning are centered around the development of five-year plans for division operation, multiple funding patterns for the Office and a refocusing on internal planning rather than operational duties or technical assistance to local school districts.

Recently, the State Board of Education established a set of goals for improving the planning and evaluation functions of the Texas Education Agency. Five of these are targeted for achievement two years hence:

- All of the divisions within the Texas Education Agency will develop five-year plans for their own internal operations;
- The Texas Education Agency will develop and implement a coordinated, comprehensive system of evaluation and statistical reports from local education agencies;
- On-site monitoring visits to local school districts conducted by the various divisions of the Agency will be planned, coordinated and conducted in such a way that duplication will be reduced and local school districts being visited, as well as persons making the visits, will benefit from increased efficiency in scheduling;
- Program divisions of the Agency will design and conduct a thorough evaluation of their internal operations, at least annually, based upon their approved Annual Program-Budget Plans; and
- The products of the "Belmont" system of reporting for programs receiving Federal assistance will be implemented in Texas public schools.

It is significant that three of these five goals are for the Agency to plan for itself; that is, plan its own development as an effective service organization.

Following the recommendations of Agency officials, the State Board of Education has approved a plan for Texas to enter into a special agreement with the United States Office of Education for resources to:

- Provide additional technical assistance to the Agency staff to meet the goals specified above;
- Design and develop internal planning and evaluation procedures, instruments, and guidelines; and
- Provide training for the Agency staff in the use of these procedures.

With an emphasis on its own management and internal planmaking for the Agency, the Office of Planning will continue to move toward the development of comprehensive, functional planning for the Texas Education Agency. Positive change is being planned over a five-year period with the commitment of the Agency to meet the responsibilities of its leadership role through the adoption of new concepts and methods of educational planning.

## SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT

### IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE

by Laurence D. Haskew

Can a state education agency actually exert leadership? That is, can it be an incubus for change in a desired direction? And, can it incubate a change in the directions that are desired?

The persons responsible for preparing the case account just presented asked me to examine it with the foregoing questions in mind. I, although Texan, am a sort of neutral outsider who engaged in benign observation of the developments described by the author. Now I try to set forth some reasonable valid implications for this thing called the leadership role of the state education agency, deduced from the experience of the Texas Education Agency with planning.

#### A State Education Agency Can Be Leaderly

This one was, at least. And, I have seen dozens of other instances in other states. An exacting definition of leadership is being used here, by the way. When a cowboy rounds 'em up and heads 'em out, that is not leadership by this definition. But when one critter spies a gap in the corral fence, makes for it, and a large number of other critters follow him through--that is leadership.

What we have seen here is an idea put out by a few people in a state education agency, then genuinely adopted, expanded upon and followed by many other people in the Agency. In turn, the expanded idea (really a colony of ideas) was followed by hundreds of local education agency people. All without many cattle-prods in evidence. And, the leadership phenomenon persists; planning as a way of educational life in Texas, by all indications, will be more widespread in 1970-71 than in the previous year.

To be leaderly means: (a) to have ideas for change; (b) to proffer those ideas in form that others can and do identify with; (c) to provide implementing nurture for those ideas until their promise is apparent to potential followers; and (d) to attract intelligent followership. This particular State Education Agency in this instance was leaderly. Others have been, and are.

Why? The remaining implications will be hypotheses in response to that question.

#### The Content of the Leadership Idea Is More Important than Its Label

Twenty or more state education agencies set up Offices of Planning during the period covered by this report. At first it looked as if the Texas Education Agency was also adopting a fad, like its employees were adopting salmon-colored shirts. But "planning" became *the* idea, not "office." Planning has lots going for it, educationally. It has rationale, hard-nosed substance, almost infinite collateral impacts upon what's wrong with schools and schooling, demonstratable power to overcome the very problems educators are most itchy about, a fairly well-developed technology, currency in respected circles,

appealingness to wielders of power and an almost built-in immunity against bumper-sticker pseudo-followership.

The more I study state education agencies' essays at performing in the leadership role, the more struck am I by the complexity and sophisticated content of the ideas which seem to evoke impressive and persisting followership. The phenomenon of leadership seems to depend in significant degree upon arousing and holding support for an idea among able and bellwether-type early adopters. An idea with depth of content and promise of fundamental impact seems to do that. Ideas that are of pie-in-the-distant-sky or panacea type usually fail. The same is true for simplistic increments to old ideas--adding another prefabricated "course" to the repertory of vocational education, for example. The talent a state education agency needs on its leadership team--from within the agency and from local education agencies--is choosy these days; they tend to buy only worthwhileness because their "while" is spoken for so vigorously by competing ideas.

#### The Vitality of Leadership Actions Mirrors the Vital Engagement of Topside Management

In the instance reported herein, I have great admiration for the role-performance of the Office of Planning. But it was not that performance which made the difference. It was the highly visible and almost unbelievable input from two positions--the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner. This was more than a contribution of pious endorsement and public pronouncements. Nobody in Washington, the the Agency, or in the field had any doubt where the powerhouse was located. The occupants of these positions did not farm out planning. They farmed it. The results, far from earthshaking but decidedly better than from most such forays, seem to support an axiom. Measure the life-energy and positional power a chief state school officer puts into a leadership project and you have a very good index to how much the project achieves. That is especially true when one is trying to get a total organization to be leaderly--as contrasted with one self-contained division of the organization.

#### Structural Innovation Is a Weak Reed to Lean Upon for Leadership--Even in the Organization Itself

It may be the strongest one at hand, but it is still weak. Tangibly, state education agencies have realized little mileage toward planning--even within the agencies themselves--by establishing Offices of Planning; little mileage toward staff development by establishing Offices of Personnel; and so on. Charters to new structures are always fuzzy. Issues of executive domain are seldom really settled because power-battles are distasteful to top administration. New structures are designed topside, but the underside too seldom knows what they are for even if vaguely aware they do exist. It is awfully hard to set up a new structure that doesn't meddle with what several other structures traditionally do, and inertia is a force as well as a state. New structures tend to get located in organizational anterooms rather than in the throneroom. This catalogue could go on indefinitely.

Two other entries should be recorded because of their particular pertinence to offices for planning. Some structures are natural "fall guys" for diversionary duties--"while you are up, get me a bottle of beer." Their leadership potential gets buried under organizational maintenance and fire-extinguisher delegations. Second, some structures are defined almost exclusively



by the talents of the person procured for their headship. In the Texas Education Agency, the first of these has been a decided bane; the second, a positive blessing. Unusual headship talent, not structure, has been the Office of Planning.

#### An Organization Seeking to Be Leaderly for Others Does Well to Look to its Own Capacity

In 1967, the staff of the Texas Education Agency had meager capacity to be even a follower, much less a leader, in planning technology. To this observer, the most dramatic part of the story since is the way that staff--mostly the same people on the 1967 payroll--has lifted itself toward the necessary expertise. They took training--by order from above, to be sure, but also by individual initiative. Topside offered them multitudinous opportunities. They turned up others. They learned by pooling experience, by organized teaching of each other, by evaluation--sometimes excoriating--from the field. The organization probably retarded their growth with too many pop-and-run Great Name Consultants, but gratifying takeover prowess is beginning to emerge. Perhaps most gratifying of all are indications that the Agency officialdom sees prowess development of its staff as a top agenda item for the next five years. The point of this implication is perhaps best made by my classic story of the parent complaining about his child's teacher, concluding with, "Mr. Haskew, you can't no more teach what you don't know than you can come back from where you ain't never been." There is a price which must be paid for agency leadership, the price of learning--sometimes by crash endeavor--what the agency staff does not know.

In this instance, however, organization capacity has another important dimension. Planning for and with local education agencies and others for statewide improvements in education is exciting--even if sometimes baffling--business. The Texas Education Agency found it so. But only now is it waking up to another business it must be in. That business is planning for itself. It "has" priority areas of concern for education in Texas. But, no priority areas of concern for replenishment and renewal of its own staff and its own internal organization to service those statewide priorities. It has managerial objectives for six-month performances of its service units, but no five-year objectives for improvement (which in some cases might mean abandonment) of those services. Like most state education agencies, it is relying on change, Providence, the Federal Government and the State Legislature to set the parameters of Texas Education Agency capacity for leadership in 1975 or in 1980. Within the past year, however, at least some people within the Agency are saying this is not the way it has to be; by taking forethought and foreaction, the Texas Education Agency can possibly add cubits to its own stature, where cubits are most needed. This sparks hope that *planning* for future leadership capacity is beginning to emerge. Such emergence is almost essential, it appears, if educational leadership by state education agencies becomes at all endemic.

#### Leadership Roles and Regulatory Roles Do not Compose a Dichotomy

Seldom have I seen a leadership performance by a state education agency that was not intertwined with the regulatory syndrome. That was true in this case. The regulatory function of passing out, monitoring and keeping up with funds was pervasively present--a sanction, if you please, which gave initial and continuing impetus to followership. At sundry times, flagging voluntarism by followers was fanned--whether by accident or design, I do not know--by regulatory inputs. The device of deadlines, a regulatory deviltry, is for example

one of the best galvanizers of planning activity. For another example, school accreditation has furnished an indispensable regulatory context for many leadership-type curriculum improvement projects in various states. The regulatory function, in short, can be and has been a buttresser of leadership.

As is true for most good medicines, however, regulatory power is dangerous. Administered to local school district clients as school accreditation so often is, it benumbs and evokes token behavior rather than enthusing and evoking proprietary followership. In the case described here, the regulatory forms distributed to local school districts for reporting their "plans" came nigh nipping the whole planning idea in the bud. Leadership-bent state education agencies need to remember that the partnership between leading and regulating, while natural and productive, is something like four parts ideas to one part regulations. Regulatory action is notoriously anemia-producing; it tends to replace the red blood cells of a thoughtful search for achievement with the pale liquid of complacency of gestures.

#### Leadership Phenomena Are Population Explosions

Of people who get into the act, of facets or angles added to the original proposal, of man-hours consumed in the endeavor, and of time on the calendar, the explosion, however, is effect and not cause.

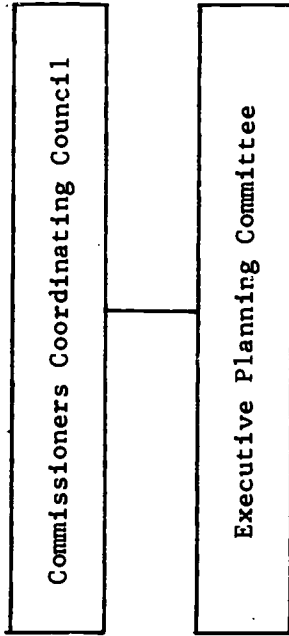
Participation, that sacred word, does not in itself produce leadership phenomena. Entrancement with participation has aborted more leadership opportunities than it has spawned. In planning particularly, getting some more people together to talk about a problem over and over again is on the dysfunctional side. It causes dishevelment and disillusion, not planning. But, getting more and more people into the act is a consequence of moving in leadership fashion. They simply have to come in if the idea is to become more than that--an abstract idea. Leadership-type developments are carried by people who own ideas, and a state agency embarking on leadership can contemplate being up to its eyebrows in people. People, the agency in this story apparently thought, who count themselves co-proprietors of the undertaking.

People in the picture mean new ideas on the scene. Almost always, as the author of this case account discovered, the accurate story of a leadership foray cannot be written around the thematic conception which began it. Instead, one is soon describing a multiplying litter of progeny--another type of population explosion. This geometric multiplication of balls bouncing can, and often does, destroy the juggler's act. That is where another prowess of a leader comes into play--the prowess of keeping the universe of endeavor down to the size of available human energy without losing people in the process. I cannot pass out to the Texas Education Agency gold stars on display of this prowess, but that is a personal hindsight. The Agency *has* kept the show on the road, remember.

A foray of this kind inevitably explodes all predictions of the man-hours required and calendar spans allotted. It is extremely difficult for a state education agency to accommodate to either. It begs, borrows, and steals man-hours from division chiefs. It learns to be less wasteful of the precious man-hour commodity--cutting down unnecessary meetings, re-examining routine man-eaters such as token visits and paper-handling, restricting the number of individuals tied up by Washington reviewers, and so on. It moderates the deliveries originally contemplated for a certain date and/or pushes dates forward. But

pathetically, compromise with quality and genuineness of product are its chief coping mechanism--largely because that is the only alternative open. The only one, that is, except taking thought in advance--gearing the agency to perform leadership roles, staffing to comprehend the unpredicted, tabling its regulatory endeavors with such clarity of Program Evaluation and Review Techniques (PERT) that leeway man-hours can be retrieved quickly and boldly giving stated priorities real priority--in short, by planning.

If these seven implications add up to depict the leadership role of state education agencies as intricate and exacting technology, that is intentional. If, however, they imply that leadership demands loss of the common touch, they are in error. The leaderly position of the Texas Education Agency rests heavily upon its identification by local school districts as one of us common folk. At the same time, however, its leaderly products in this instance arose chiefly from its courage and capacity to be at some points above the mundane.



Continuing Committees				
Assessment Evaluation and Research	Communications and Publications	Pupil Personnel Services	Program Development	Policies and Procedures
				Staffing and Staff Development

Task Groups as Needed				
Bilingual Education	Pupil Appraisal for Needs Assessment	Nutrition Education	Drug Education	ETC.