DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 047 428 24 EA 003 392

AUTHOR Weiler, Daniel; Guertin, Jeane
TITLE School-Community Relations: Some Aids to Analysis and Planning for the School Administrator. Final Report.
INSTITUTION System Development Corp., Santa Monica, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY National Center for Educational Research and Development (DHEW/CE), Washington, D.C.
BUREAU NO BR-0-0275
PUB DATE 29 Jan 71
CONTRACT OEC-0-70-3348
NOTE 125p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$6.58
DESCRIPTORS Community Attitudes, *Community Involvement, *Community Organizations, *Public Relations, School Community Cooperation, *School Community Relationship, School Support, *School Surveys

ABSTRACT

This report was prepared to assist school administrators in analyzing and planning their districts' policies and programs in community relations. The contents are based on results of an analysis of information sources on school-community relations, community conflict, and group behavior as well as on a survey of school administrator needs. The materials are presented in four sections: (1) a suggested procedure for analyzing school-community relations, (2) an outline checklist of items and categories of potential concern in the analysis of school-community relations; (3) composite case studies in summary form, and (4) an annotated bibliography for further study and investigation. (Author)

FINAL REPORT

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# SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

## SOME AIDS TO ANALYSIS AND PLANNING FOR THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Daniel Weiler
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# SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

## SOME AIDS TO ANALYSIS AND PLANNING FOR THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

### INTRODUCTION

These materials have been prepared to assist school administrators in analyzing and planning their district's policies and programs in the area of community relations. The materials are presented in four sections:

I. Guide to Analysis (p. 7)

A suggested procedure for analyzing school-community relations, keyed to the itemized checklist that follows.

II. Summary Checklist (p. 25)

An outline checklist of items and categories of potential concern in the analysis of school-community relations.

III. Case Studies (p. 35)

Composite case studies in summary form, drawn from actual cases and put together so as to illustrate a wide range of school-community problems.

IV. Bibliography (p. 113)

An annotated bibliography for further study and investigation.

These materials have been prepared on the basis of an analysis of available primary and secondary sources of information on school-community relations, community conflict, and group behavior, as well as a survey of the needs of school administrators. They have been designed for brief perusal and ready reference, in the knowledge that school-community relations are a vital aspect of the daily concerns of school administrators, but that the time available to them for study and analysis is severely limited. For additional references, the annotated bibliography may be consulted.

The reader may be interested in the results of a brief survey of school administrators' views on school-community relations, conducted as part of the background work for this document.

In June of 1969 a questionnaire entitled "School-Community Relations and Educational Change" was mailed to the superintendents of the 182 school districts in the United States with over 25,000 pupils enrolled. Thirty-eight of the questionnaires, or 21% of those sent, were completed and returned. Ten districts responded to indicate their inability to complete the questionnaire. Five of these responses were on printed form letters. Thus, 74% of the 182 districts failed to respond at all. The low response rate, coupled with comments received, indicates that districts are surfeited with questionnaires used for descriptive research. One district estimated that it received 30 per week.

Administrators were asked questions regarding the frequency of discussions or confrontations with community groups, the issues involved, the outcomes, and factors which contributed to these outcomes.

The frequency of such issues varied greatly, probably due in part to different interpretations of the questions. The issues varied greatly, but they fell into four categories; those involving the students, people other than students, school finance and facilities, and the school structure or organization.

One hundred and four of the issues involved students within the district; their rights and responsibilities, dress and appearance, curriculum and special programs, classmates, and school setting.

Twenty-seven of the issues mentioned involved people other than students. These concerned the involvement of community members, school visitors, the role of parents, the role and authority of school personnel, the selection of staff, and teacher rights.

For the third area, that of finance and facilities, twenty-six issues were reported. Problems mentioned were tax issues, preparation of the budget, building programs, and the improvement and equipment of schools.

Thirty-seven issues involving the system and organization were reported; for example, school and district boundary lines, school procedures, district organization, and the location of schools.

Nearly half of the districts reported outcomes which were positive both in terms of improving the educational program and in eliciting an interest in the schools. Most of the other districts reported some positive and some negative results. Negative outcomes were characterized by misunderstanding, alienation, distrust, and dissipation of school support. Most districts perceived events such as boycotts and strikes as symptomatic of a larger problem, and acted accordingly.

Thirty of the thirty-eight districts reported as positive factors those which involved both school and community groups; in other words, positive outcomes depended on both groups. Examples of these were mutual willingness to compromise, open lines of communication, mutual understanding of the issues involved, mutual sincerity, and a mutual desire for constructive change. Other factors which led to a positive outcome were a desire to share power, awareness of limited resources, supportive staff members, an effective student council, access to information, frank reporting by the school, good press, and keeping people informed.

Twenty-two districts cited factors leading to negative outcomes as external to the school system itself. Examples of such external factors are ideological rigidity, delays by city officials, misinformation or lack of information, unreasonable demands, national dissent, misunderstanding of the role of the school, bad press, rumor, traditional viewpoints, political or geographical problems, prejudice, refusal to listen, vested interest, and lack of communication skills.

Some of the other factors cited for negative outcomes were insurmountable social, economic, and political differences, scarcity of financial support, poor communication, maldistribution of decision-making authority, unwillingness to make long-range plans, financial structure, wide difference of opinion, lack of staff involvement, resistance to change, preestablished outcomes, and extreme statements by school personnel and board members.

Eighteen respondents indicated that the negative factors in school-community interactions were external in nature, but that internal changes were needed in order to improve. This does not include respondents who

indicated a sharing of responsibility for negative factors or for needed change. It may be easier to identify a need for personal change than it is to accept the blame for past failures.

Thirteen districts were subsequently interviewed by telephone in order to clarify their responses and to elicit further information. The titles of respondents included words such as community relations, urban affairs, school-community relations, human relations, public relations, and communication. Such terms indicate an awareness in these districts of the need for coordination and cooperation with the community. Most of the positions had been created within the past five years. As the titles imply, they are an attempt to soothe a troubled community and present positive aspects of the school system. Most respondents believed the schools needed to respond more to community needs, but felt powerless to act. They were usually placed in a position of promoting human relations and resolving conflicts, rather than in enlisting community help for planning educational programs. Because the positions are new, and were appended to an existing structure, they usually carry no decision-making authority. There is confusion, transmitted to the community, about what should be done and who should do it; consequently, most community groups go directly to the superintendent.

It is often feared that the administrator in charge of community relations will make a mistake, so he is not permitted to act at all. Apparently, in many cases, this administrator and the superintendent, frequently a new one, are in agreement, although the community relations administrator has little authority. Principals listen to his recommendations, but often do not act as recommended. Thus the administrator hired to facilitate school-community interaction may actually inhibit communication by coming between the community and the principals, and delaying communication between the community and the superintendent. Insightful and sophisticated members of the community are likely to be further irritated, seeing such a position as an effort to "wear us down" or "shut us up."

In some districts an effort was being made actively to solicit the aid of the community in improving education. These districts were attempting to gather information from reluctant groups, as well as more vocal ones. Regular meetings were somewhat successful, but tended to die unless specific issues were before the group. Groups stayed more active and more helpful when their decisions or recommendations were followed. Many districts had formed advisory groups in order to elicit community assistance, but such groups often tended to become part of the establishment, and were distrusted by the community. Groups which generated their own agenda tended to focus on rather insignificant issues, such as mailing expenses, and did not discuss issues of substance until the community at large had become inflamed over a particular problem. When groups discussed significant issues, they usually found that the board was "already working" on them. Most groups tended to discuss issues rather than present more formal proposals. Many boards had passed resolutions encouraging community participation, but were unable to obtain it.

Most districts wanted to solicit community participation in education, rather than just keep the community quiet and happy, but had difficulty in doing this. Much of the difficulty, evidently, had come from within the system, from "old-timers" who distrusted the community, who were unwilling to share power, or who delayed action until community members gave up. School administrators were discouraged when the community was not willing to deliberate at length, although many community members were employed elsewhere and were unable to spend as much time on an issue as were school personnel.

In some districts a long-term study of the community or community problems had been made, with recommendations for educational change. Often the changes had not come about, but the study was pointed to as evidence that an effort was being made. When districts became discouraged with the lack of movement on the part of community groups, they often gave up, feeling that they had done their part, and now it was up to the community to make the next move. Sometimes schools felt they were being unfairly asked to correct the ills of society.

Some community members are unwilling to interact with the schools. Some feel the schools only come to them for money. Other point to a history of always being wrong, being called to school and told that their children are lying, or being listened to and then ignored. Often, these people have been so hurt that they have given up presenting their ideas and feelings, and it would take a great deal of effort to solicit their help. In other cases the schools lose credibility because of there reaction to a crisis. When, in a crisis situation, a school official resorts to telling half-truths, or tries to defend irresponsible action, the schools lose credibility. It is difficult not to appear defensive and inflexible when trying to survive a crisis.

School districts appear increasingly aware of the role of the community in educational planning. Educators sense the need for help from this source, but find it difficult to obtain the thinking of representative members of the community. On the questionnaire, twenty-one respondents believed there are school-community confrontation situations where knowledge and information are essentially irrelevant to the outcomes. Some of the particular situations listed were: sex education, racial balance, student dress, and the closing of schools. In most cases, however, respondents believed information to be relevant and necessary. Twenty-eight different kinds of information were listed as usable if they were available. Much of this information is presented in the following pages. Some information, of course, could not be included, such as results of local surveys, or "deals made between officials that I learn about later in the game."

## GUIDE TO ANALYSIS

The factors that are responsible for school-community conflict are varied and complex. Even with the most sophisticated tools of social science, we are unable to make high confidence predictions about how and where conflict will appear, or high confidence prognoses about the outcomes of important disputes. Nevertheless, if the wide range of factors that must be taken into account in planning for effective school-community relations can be explicitly delineated, experienced administrators will often be able to make sound judgments and head off potential trouble. A list of such factors is presented in the section immediately following. While doubtless incomplete, it may serve as a useful beginning for administrators who wish to lay out for explicit and ordered consideration the range of variables that must be examined as part of the planning process. In this section, we comment on the items in this list in more detail, and discuss the relative meaning and potential importance of the various categories.

It is probably fair to say that for the school administrator every school-community relations problem is unique, and different in its details, from every other problem that sounds similar but was dealt with in another time or place. The administrator who analyzes school-community relations must begin, therefore, not by asking, "what works?" but "what kinds of things work?" He must try to utilize his experience and judgment in order to identify patterns and similarities that will give him insight into some general rules that might be followed in attempting to head off or solve important problems.

What the analyst must largely hope for is not a reliable recipe, or formula, but a way to ask the maximum number of right questions prior to making decisions or recommendations for action. He must behave as a good diagnostic clinician, testing successively refined hypotheses and carefully reviewing all the potentially important variables on a case-by-case basis. The relative importance that any given variable will have cannot be determined in advance; there is no general rule of thumb for the school administrator that will tell him when to assign special weight to one set of factors as opposed

to others, as a great deal will depend on the particular circumstances of time and locale. Nor does it necessarily make more sense to examine some variables first and others last; the order in which such items are reviewed and analyzed need have no particular impact on the conclusions reached. Thus, the order in which our checklist categories are presented is one that strikes us as useful and logical, but should not be deemed the only (or best) approach to analysis. The individual style of the district administrator should determine what is the most comfortable approach for him. We begin here with a consideration of background factors of importance to the analysis of school-community relations.

## Social Climate

Some school-community conflicts have their genesis outside the school district, in a national opinion climate that affects local views and values. In the early 1950's, fear of Communist subversion was sufficiently widespread to generate many bitter school-community controversies. More recently, intergenerational conflicts have become common, as the issues and romance of the "youth revolution" lead to clashes between high school students and administrators. When important social tensions can be seen to be affecting the life of the community, it is wise to be prepared for trouble, regardless of how efficiently one considers his school district to be operated. At the same time, the relative presence and depth of feelings of community identity will bear heavily on the course of any school-community conflict that may emerge. Feelings of community identity tend to modify disagreements and create informal restraints on the behavior of opposing parties. Where the community and its values remain more important than the settling of a given issue, generally recognized boundaries appear--such as limitations on personal attacks and derogation--and most people will generally be reluctant to step over such boundaries. Where disputes become heated and in danger of generating their own self-perpetuating, lasting animosities--and the seeds of future trouble--an appeal to larger community values can often succeed in calming the disputants. But in the absence of reasonably strong feelings of community identity, one should be prepared for school-community disputes that are characterized by less

restraint, more personal attacks, and a potential residue of bitterness. In these situations, appeals to community values are largely a waste of time, and the wisest course in many cases will be to move as quickly as possible to head off or end such a dispute before it gains momentum, for delay in the hope that it will die down, or remain moderate in tone and outcome, may be a greater risk than the risk entailed in moving swiftly. Exactly where the line should be drawn must remain a matter for individual judgment on a case-by-case basis, but the school-community relations analyst should keep these dangers in mind in assessing the particulars of his own situation.

Economic and Political Conditions

The school-community relations analyst must be sensitive to economic and political situations where community problems may find expression through issues related to education, despite the fact that the school district may have little or no influence over the basic economic or political forces at work. Thus, in a period of high or rising unemployment, large salary and wage boosts for district personnel may be met with community opposition and resentment, notwithstanding the fact that such increases may be well deserved and overdue. In such a period, there may be a number of men in the community who are idle, angry, and available to seize temporary leadership of ad hoc groups in order to launch a damaging campaign against the district on some issue that administrators might have considered relatively innocuous. If economic conditions would pose special demands on the district (e.g., if in a period of rising unemployment more wives went back to work, and there was a greater need for preschool and child-care services), it would be advantageous to have contingency plans prepared that helped the district to respond to such special circumstances.

There is abundant evidence that high socioeconomic status families tend to participate more fully in public affairs than do families of lesser means. Thus, where there are economic class differences among sections or neighborhoods of a school district, wealthier families tend to make themselves heard more consistently than poor families, who become "under-represented" in

school district affairs. At the same time, when lower socioeconomic status people do participate, they often tend to be less constrained in their presentation of grievances and demands, and more willing to resort to personal attack. This tendency can easily be aggravated by their under-representation, which may see issues and grievances build up until they reach the "explosion" stage. The school-community relations analyst must therefore be aware of areas or locales where economic conditions may produce this kind of cycle, and make special efforts to prevent its occurrence. There is also some evidence that upper- or middle-class citizens who had not previously participated in school affairs are more apt to behave in this manner. For either case, then, community participation measures suggest themselves (see below under that heading).

Some sensitivity to special political conditions of concern would also be appropriate. If the district is not fully independent, it may find itself in jurisdictional or resource conflicts with other agencies of local government (e.g., over recreation or child-care facilities and control), and may thereby jeopardize some measure of its public support. And if educational issues are considered "fair game" by local politicians--whether or not they are running for a public office related to education--the district may find itself embroiled unexpectedly in a dispute of political origins. The views of major political personalities are also worth knowing, since they may influence public opinions. Often there is not too much that can be done about incipient problems in this area, but where necessary a district may wish to seize the political initiative by raising some issues--publicly or in discussions with community representatives--before they are raised elsewhere.

Demographic Structure

A clear understanding of a district's demographic profile and trands has long been a major requirement for sound educational planning. The same demographic information can be useful to the school-community relations analyst as well. Rapid shifts of population within a given locale will often bring together the older residents and a large number of "newcomers."

The values of this community may be heterogeneous and in flux; the chances of intergroup conflict increase; attendant school-community problems may be anticipated in the absence of special efforts on the part of the district. The ethnic distribution and trends will have a bearing on such issues as school attendance area boundaries, transportation and open enrollment plans, desegregation plans, and site choices for new plant construction. And a portrait of residential densities by race and social class, together with social profile information, can give an analyst a number of clues about the kinds of social tensions that can emerge in school-community difficulties. If potential trouble areas, or "hot spots," can be identified in advance, more systematic and detailed investigation should reveal whether or not the potential for trouble is actually fairly high or merely theoretical. And appropriate action could then be planned to cool community tensions and increase school-community understanding.

Educational Conditions

The school administrator will need no reminder of the importance of physical plant conditions, adequate classroom space, student achievement, and related factors. These matters are his chief concern on a day-to-day basis. And he is naturally sensitive to the ways in which shortcomings in educational plant or program impact on the community. If there is any problem in this area that tends to be underestimated, it is that of uneven intra-district resource allocations. Often, it will appear to the conscientious administrator on the basis of his formal records that resources are distributed fairly and evenly throughout his district. When part of the community alleges "discrimination" he may be unable to find any evidence to substantiate such a charge. It is the informal distribution system he should be looking at--the unwritten priorities followed by lower level administrators in processing requests, or by workers at the warehouse or other supply distribution points. And he should be concerned as well with one other important resource--teacher experience. If there is informal discrimination (usually against schools in poorer or minority neighborhoods), and if teacher experience is an entitlement to transfer to "easy" schools, the complaints of the community may be justified to some degree--and may lead eventually to

an explosive confrontation that could be avoided through careful analysis of system operation and sound planning at an early stage.

Political Participation and Public Support

The school-community relations analyst will want to keep track of political participation trends in his district, as one index of community interest in education. And he will want to have a profile of public support in order to get some sense of how much decision-making latitude the district has in matters that will impact directly on the community; how much room for change, innovation, and experiment the district may have; and how much "homework" may have to be done in the community before the district can safely count on broad support for changes in the educational program, or for additional public financing in the form of new taxes or bonds. The question of interest is essentially whether, under ordinary circumstances, the district can count on a healthy margin of consistent, broad community support for its programs, or whether the district is always skating on thin ice; whether levels or community support are unpredictable from issue to issue, and could go either way. An examination of historical patterns should give some clues to the analyst, and provide one indication of the health of school-community relations in his district.

After he has examined these important background factors, the analyst may want to turn to a consideration of those issues which may have a direct bearing on school-community relations. He might begin by attempting to judge the relative importance of the issues he can identify.

Relative Importance of Different Issues

For any given issue of concern, different groups and individuals in the community will be affected in different ways; they will have different interests and values, and may have different perceptions regarding the nature of the issue in question. The analyst should therefore begin with a clear idea of what the district's internal priorities are, and this may require a fairly explicit evaluation of the plans and views of district decision makers. Since it is often the case that the business of the

district is conducted without such a clear ordering of priorities, this may become an essential first step. The analyst should then concern himself with the perceptions that may be held by various groups and individuals in the community, and attempt to ascertain whether there is an confluence between the priorities that have been established within the district's planning councils, and those that may be held within the community. It may turn out, for example, that the district is concentrating a large amount of staff time on curriculum work, whereas the community feels that student behavior problems have the greatest urgency. The district may feel that there is a direct connection between an improved curriculum and student behavior--but this is an argument that should be made explicit and examined with care, not one that is allowed to stand by assumption.

One can imagine many other potential differences between district and community views on outstanding issues. Indeed, the community--or parts of it--may have concerns that the district is largely unaware of. That is, there may be some issues or potential issues that are not on the district's priority list at all. Needless to say priorities and issues will change, and the beginning analysis suggested here should not be allowed to obscure the probable contradictions and certain complexities that are bound to arise. Without some specific intellectual framework for analysis, however, it is unlikely that district and community views on the relative importance of the various educational issues will be reconciled, and the district will be in a poor position either to respond affirmatively to community views by shifting its planning priorities, or to make its case to the community for priorities and procedures it considers most sound.

History and Characteristics of Different Issues

If the school-community relations analyst is to benefit from the lessons of history in his district, he must ask a number of questions about the ways in which issues of current concern have come up before. He will of course wish to know how often a given issue has arisen, as a gross indication of its importance and a first-cut predictor of the likelihood of its arising once again.

But he will be more concerned with the quality of what took place. He will want to know how a given issue had been resolved, and the depth of controversy it created, for the residuum of past conflicts will be an important clue to the ways in which potentially concerned parties may be disposed to act in the present. An attempt should be made to determine whether past conflicts were in fact issue-centered, or whether they were really the result of intergroup hostilities or leadership struggles, which found expression around an issue that simply catalyzed these incipient differences. Both the incidence of an issue's occurrence and the nature of the conflict at the time will be an indication of whether the passage of time may have healed past wounds, or whether old controversies still smolder, waiting for some new and unpredictable incident to bring them to life again.

In serious controversies, issues become transformed as the dispute gains momentum and more people are drawn in. The first stage in this transformation is usually a shift from the specific to the general. Discrete problems of special concern take a back seat as more general dissatisfactions are voiced. The deeper the cleavages of interests and values in a community, the more likely is this pattern to occur. Thus, what may begin as a dispute over the siting of a single new school may end as a bitter debate over the entire philosophy of education pursued by the district. The second stage in the transformation of a serious controversy is the emergence of new and different issues; ones that were not originally expected to come up. The introduction of new issues will often be a deliberate strategy on the part of a contending group, aimed at diversifying the conflict and broadening their base of support by appealing to groups with other interests. Finally, disagreement will change to antagonism and bitterness, as positions get frozen and the original cause of the dispute is largely ignored.

The analyst who discovers this pattern should be aware that it may say more about intergroup and interpersonal differences within his community than it does about the issues that were in dispute. As a guide to district behavior in the future, it suggests both a special effort to keep the attention of opposed parties on the original issue of concern, and the importance of bringing opposing parties together outside the scope of their substantive disagreement. The latter activity may be particularly important: one should

not assume that the substantive issue in question is necessarily what is really at stake in the dispute. If broader dissatisfactions are dormant, waiting to be triggered by a discrete disagreement, or if a particular issue is merely the vehicle for an intergroup or interpersonal power struggle, one would be ill-advised to assume that a technical solution to the issue that has been raised will be at all adequate. For the school-community relations analyst, then, attention to the history and characteristics of issues of importance should reveal as much about the social dynamics of past and potential future disputes as it does about the substantive or technical aspects of the problems that he identifies.

Present Effects and Possible Solutions

For each issue that can be identified as being of potential concern to school-community relations, an attempt should be made to estimate as explicitly as possible both its present impact and the range of possible solutions. Hard answers to these questions will often be difficult to come by. Nevertheless, the exercise will be a valuable one, as it will illustrate, at the very least, those areas where more detailed information gathering or analysis might be appropriate. In the absence of attempts at systematic analysis, the district is more likely to be caught by surprise when an issue surfaces in community controversy, and less likely to have in hand adequate contingency plans to deal with the problem.

Consequences of Issue Remaining Unresolved

This analytic exercise is corollary to the two preceding it; its utility should be self-evident. If the school-community relations analyst will attempt some prediction of the consequences to his district of a given issue continuing to be a problem of wide concern, he will not necessarily emerge with some portrait of the future, but he will certainly have created a first-step litmus test for the district's planning priorities. Again, the point here is the importance of actually going through the exercise, as a way of sharpening one's appreciation of the relative potential importance of the district activities and planning in this area. The goal is not so much that of finding highly reliable answers as it is that of clarifying one's thinking about the range of problems that may have to be faced.

Having surveyed the range of problems associated most directly with school-community issues themselves, the analyst may wish to turn directly to a review of the importance of community groups.

Basis of Association and Organizational Structures

In dealing with community groups, the school-community relations analyst will first want to know what has brought group members together; why they have joined in some common cause. Associations based on personal interest are likely to behave pragmatically, and to be responsive to an approach that deals frankly and directly with the substance of issues of concern. Associations based on shared ideological positions, on the other hand, may be more volatile, less disposed to want to deal with practical details, and more inclined to broaden discrete disputes to more general considerations of a normative or philosophical character. Similarly, service groups of long standing are often less hostile or combative than are ad hoc groups that have come together over some specific issue. Service groups, on the other hand, may be more tenacious and have a greater long-range impact on broader public support, whereas ad hoc groups often lack the cohesion and staying power required to see a complicated issue through to some resolution. Of course, many groups display some combination of associational characteristics. Civil rights groups, for example, may be composed in part of white liberals who have joined for ideological reasons, and in part of black parents who have a direct and practical interest in ending racial discrimination. Such groups often have difficulty staying together, precisely because the reasons for members' associations are diverse and complex; because people are in the group in order to satisfy potentially different personal objectives. But when a practical and lasting basis for group cohesion is found, such groups can often be extremely effective and valuable community participants in debates over educational goals and programs.

The importance of group organizational structures will be clear to the school-community relations analyst, for they affect the capacity of a group to act concertedly and swiftly. Elaborate structures are ordinarily a barrier to effective group action, and may be a cause of delay in the ability

of a community group and district decision makers to agree on a specified course of action. Groups that are dependent on a strong personality, rather than on recognized rules or procedure, tend to be less predictable, less reliable, and more susceptible to later reversals of a position that had been taken on a given issue.

Group Staffing Patterns and Activity Modes

Group staffing patterns are of course an additional and very important indicator of a group's capacity to act. Although volunteers can often accomplish a great deal, especially for brief periods of time, as during some intense crisis, the group that maintains a full- or even part-time paid staff is much more likely to be well organized, better informed, and more influential. Virtually every group will have a modal form of activity and a preferred style of operation. An understanding of these modes and styles can be important if the analyst wishes to deal with a community group on a basis that will offer the most hope for the resolution of outstanding issues, or at least for some common understanding as to why a given issue cannot quickly be resolved.

Thus, if a community group is activist by nature, its representatives may not be impressed with a suggestion that the group study an issue and come back to the district with a preferred technical solution. Such a suggestion may, in fact, look to this group like a deliberate delaying tactic, and may serve only to exacerbate district-group relations. Nor would one want mistakenly to rely on a group that was oriented toward the conduct of technical studies and recommendations, for disseminating information about district programs to the larger community, or for active political support in a bond or tax election. And if a group known for its reliance on court action to effect its goals were to take a sudden interest in an issue, the district might want to pay special attention to the legal ramifications of its policies and positions.

Group Membership Profiles

The analyst's interest in group membership profiles will be related to his interest in group associational bases. Heterogeneous groups are more likely to have difficulty agreeing on a group position on important issues that is uniformly acceptable to all group members, and umbrella groups will rarely be able to adopt a position that is consistent with the preferences of all their member groups. Open membership groups may be broad based but relatively disorganized and diffuse, while groups with membership restrictions or special qualifications are more likely to be purposive and cohesive.

Group Objectives and Resources

A portrait of the key objectives held by important community groups will be useful if the district wishes to be able to anticipate group positions on any policies that may be in the offing. Such a portrait should contain information that goes beyond consideration of group positions on substantive issues; it should allow the analyst to obtain some idea of the depth of group commitment and the potential flexibility of group positions. Groups that have diverse interests are often more flexible, for example, than are groups whose interests are restricted entirely to educational issues, or to a subset of such issues. Groups with multiple educational objectives will ordinarily be more prepared to bargain--to consider policy trade-offs--than will groups with a relatively narrow or restricted focus. Of particular importance is the whole matter of how groups perceive their proximate educational objectives--whether as ends more or less sufficient unto themselves, or as means to other objectives. In one sense, this may come down to whether a group is essentially "altruistic" or "self-serving," and whether, accordingly, the best way to approach the group is through an appeal to their self-interest or through a direct discussion of the issue in hand, which would take the group's professed interests at face value.

More broadly, this question will have an impact on the way in which any given educational issue is approached, for if an educational policy is perceived by a group largely as a means to a broader social end, it may be possible to deal with the broader issue in a way that will resolve the issue

of educational policy at the same time. Thus, if ethnic studies courses in the local high school are perceived by a community group as primarily a means to the equalization of educational opportunity for minority youngsters, the wisest approach to a discussion of this issue could well be one that deals with the larger issue first, and tries to resolve the broader question of how equal opportunity could best be achieved in the long run with the resources that are available. Alternatively, dealing with the specific issue of ethnic studies may bring a temporary solution to a discrete problem, but the real issue will not have been dealt with, and similar problems could therefore be expected to come up on a regular basis.

Knowledge of group resources will help the analyst understand the kind of group behavior that might be expected, and possibly to predict the impact of a given group's interest in an issue. One particularly important resource a group may have is influence over other groups. If a group is sufficiently prestigious or well thought of to serve as a reference group for other community organizations, or for individuals who may identify with the group's position, it can draw other groups or individuals into a school-community dispute, and wield power in the community far beyond what it would command by itself. Formal coalitions are, of course, one variant of this condition.

Group History

Finally, the analyst would want to familiarize himself with a group's "track record." The consistency of a group's behavior and objectives will tell the analyst something about what he might expect from that group in the future. The age of the group's organizational format and present leadership will tell him something about the reliability of predictions about group activity modes, and about the relative level of social and political sophistication he might expect from the group. Of particular importance here is the question of group morale. If the group perceives a reasonable chance of obtaining its objectives through its preferred mode of operation, it would be reasonable to expect the group to adhere to that mode. If the group is frustrated--if, for example, it has decided that

opportunities for achieving its objectives by working "within the system" are limited or nonexistent--then its behavior becomes much less predictable. If relatively predictable and acceptable behavior is in fact desired from a group--if it is important to the district that a group continue to work "within the system"--then clearly some opportunity for success, some evidence of the possibilities, must be afforded that group, or it may be driven out and forced in the direction of less acceptable behavior.

Having reviewed the community groups in his district, the school-community relations analyst will also want to pay some attention to personalities. We touch on this issue only briefly here, since the impact of personalities is so idiosyncratic. The major impact of recognized leaders in the community will usually be that of opinion formation. They will form reference points for other individuals or groups, much as groups may become references for others. The identification of leaders, their views, and their preferred styles of leadership can therefore be of critical importance to the analyst, who will want to be able to foresee the consequences to the district of either hostility or support on the part of a particular personality, and who will want to keep district relations with important community leaders on a basis that does not foreclose any possibilities for open communication in both directions.

One of the most important concerns of any district will be the kinds of community participation in educational affairs that can be obtained. The first analytic step in this area must clearly be a careful review of district policies and programs in order to ascertain exactly what formal and informal participation opportunities actually do exist for the community. These opportunities may then be compared with identifiable community desires for participation, and with district plans, if any. If discrepancies exist between community desires and district plans or policies, the district should be aware of the fact that conflicting expectations regarding participation opportunities have been one of the most common causes of school-community conflict. As a basis for moving towards an amelioration of any existing conflict of expectations, the analyst should explicitly compare the relative benefits that might be anticipated from increased community

involvement with the potential costs of such a program, and try to devise ways in which these potential costs can be reduced or eliminated, in order to make such participation more attractive to the district, and thereby to reduce the chance of district-community conflict over this issue.

Finally, the analyst should carefully review the patterns of communication that obtain in his district. In times of crisis, information sources tend to get out of control, and community groups obtain their information mostly through highly unstructured and informal channels--through rumor or personal contact, for example, rather than through the formal news media or through regular district channels. The analyst will want to insure that community groups are adequately informed before a dispute surfaces; that communications are adequate both as to the scope of the information covered and the extent of its dissemination. This often means that a district will want to rely on the widest possible variety of communications modes, and should try to make information about district plans and policies readily and regularly available and convenient to obtain, so that community groups do not come to rely on less structured and more unreliable sources of information, such as personal relationships with district staff, partial information gleaned under informal or social circumstances, or rumor fed by groups or individuals who are pursuing their own special interests.

Some final points of a general nature:

- When and how one intervenes in an incipient dispute can be as important to its resolution as what one proposes as a solution.
- Events that lead to a dispute must touch on an important aspect of people's lives, must affect different people in different ways, and must make possible some action that will impact on the situation. If one of these ingredients is missing, a potential dispute may remain dormant.
- Economic interests, the desire for power, and values are the most common bases of response to a given issue, and will usually in some mix determine the dynamics of any controversy.

- The most typical ingredients of school-community conflict are the presence of a few dedicated activists who oppose district policies, a climate of distrust and suspicion, and inadequate district-community communications, or rather loose district-community relations. Concentration on the elimination of any one of these factors can often head off serious conflict.

- A typical pattern of a dispute that can seriously weaken a district administration is one in which the administration is placed on the defensive on some issue or issues by a few activists, while most of the community remains at first inactive and neutral, and a few activists support the administration's views. A turning point is reached when the passive or neutral majority becomes actively concerned or involved because of a change in the general climate of opinion or an administration blunder on some issue that is important to the majority of the community. The opposition is then often able to capitalize on a new atmosphere of hostility or of receptivity to their charges, and the administration is forced to back down, leaving a residue of bitterness and the seeds of future disputes.

- As the controversies develop, important changes can take place in the community, so that precontroversy analysis of community values and positions will no longer have any validity. Social relations can polarize and ad hoc partisan organizations can form suddenly, often with new and untried leaders who have only marginal identity with the community or loyalty to community values, and who will not hesitate to further rend the fabric of school-community cooperation through resort to personal attack, rumor, inference of scandal, or similar tactics.

- The organizational density of a community is a clue to the potential violence of controversies that may develop. A highly organized community is one in which most individuals will feel a great deal of pressure to take sides in a dispute (with one or more of the groups to which they belong), but also one in which group cross pressures on the individual will tend to moderate his views and will help to create feelings of identity with the community and loyalty to overriding community values. A lack of interlocking group ties suggests potential lines of community cleavage and dispute, as positions and loyalties harden.

. "Studying the problem" is often an attractive temporary solution when demands are made on a district by community groups. However, this solution almost always sets other forces in motion, as expectations are raised and the desire for definitive action is frustrated. In the long run, a quick decision to take positive action of some kind, despite the absence of sufficient information to make such a decision a comfortable one, may often be the course that risks the least controversy.

## ITEMS FOR REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

### SUMMARY CHECKLIST

This checklist presents a summary outline of items and categories of potential concern to school administrators in their analysis of school-community relations. For maximum effectiveness, the list should be used in conjunction with the guide to analysis presented in Section I, and items on the list should be kept in mind when reading the case studies in Section III. The list may be amended or expanded as needed, and may be used as the basis for analytic worksheets to be filled in at regular intervals. The list contains some redundancies, which have been allowed to stand for the sake of organizational convenience. Many familiar items will be encountered--areas where data gathering and analysis are more or less regular activities in any school district. These activities are often highly compartmentalized, however, and their inclusion on this list is meant to serve as a reminder that data gathering and analysis so performed can serve not only their own discrete planning purposes, but can also be examined within a framework of the analysis of school-community relations.

#### BACKGROUND FACTORS OF SPECIAL CONCERN

##### Social Climate Affecting Community Values in the District

- Nature, depth and persistence of national, regional, or local social tensions, if any, e.g., fear of a depression, anxiety over internal subversion, tension regarding crime or political radicalism, etc.
- Relative presence and depth of feelings of community identity--a sense of roots, belonging, and loyalty; a need to preserve community peace and community values.

##### Economic Conditions That Might Impact on Community Views

- Employment: rates and trends, by social class and ethnic group.
- Taxes and prices: current levels, trends, and rates of change.
- Housing, recreation opportunities, health care, public transportation, and related public services: conditions and trends, by social class, ethnic group, and residential location.

Political Conditions of Concern

- Extent of school district independence from other agencies of local government.
- Education and the schools as common issues in local political campaigns.
- Views of major political personalities regarding education and the school system.
- Elected or appointed school board; board members' tenure; impact of members' tenure and public accountability on their decisions.

Demographic Structure in the District

- Growth, trends, and size of population served by schools.
- Ethnic distribution, trends, movements, and rates of change.
- Residential densities, by social class, ethnic group, neighborhood locales.
- Educational, occupational, and political profiles of population served by schools as well as of all school district voters.

Educational Conditions

- Age and condition of plant and equipment throughout district.
- Adequacy of classroom space.
- Location of schools and ease of student access. Transportation problems.
- Student achievement profiles and trends.
- Percentage of high school graduates who go to college, by ethnic group and social class; trends.
- Dropout rate, by ethnic group and social class; trends.
- Student behavior record and special conduct problems.
- Ratio of faculty and counselors to students.
- Condition of athletic programs.
- Differences between schools or between groups of schools: for all items above.

Political Participation in the District

- Voting turnouts by type of election: national, state, local, school-related; partisan and nonpartisan.
- Political activism levels, especially as related to school board elections, and to bond and tax-override elections.

Public Support of Schools

- Is support marginal, adequate, or heavy; restricted to a few dedicated supporters, or broad-based; occasional, random, frequent, or steady and reliable?
- Patterns, if any: the impact of different school-related issues on quality and quantity of public support for the schools.
- Impact of voter turnout percentages on election outcomes where school-related issues are voted upon.

ISSUES BEARING ON SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Relative Importance of Different Issues

- Rank ordering: which issues have priority in planning?
- Perceptions of different audiences: does everyone have the same priorities?
- Short run vs. long run: How does the time frame affect priority judgments?

History of Each Issue of Concern

- Incidence relative to other issues, and absolute incidence: How often has the issue been an important one?
- Most recent occasion on which issue has arisen.
- Outcomes: Has issue been resolved before? Led to serious problems? Faded away? Been replaced by other issues of greater concern?
- Probable reasons for these outcomes.
- Important changes in facts, details, circumstances: why might outcomes today differ from those that have obtained before?

Characteristics of Different Issues

. Primarily normative or empirical.

. Primarily procedural or substantive.

. Primarily educational, social, economic, or political.

. Breadth and intensity of feelings on all sides.

. Characteristics of groups most actively concerned.

. Length of time issue has remained unresolved.

Present Effects on Community and Schools

. Educational

. Social

. Economic

. Political

Possible Solutions

. Techniques that seem most promising.

. Potential costs--financial, economic opportunity, manpower.

. Time required to effect preferred solution.

. Anticipated permanence of solution.

. Potential side-effects accruing from each possible approach to solution.

. Anticipated perceptions of different audiences regarding adequacy of preferred solution.

Consequences of Issue Remaining Unresolved

. Educational--impact on schools, students, staff.

. Social--impact on community views and activities; on student behavior.

. Economic--impact on district resources.

. Political--impact on public support of schools, voter behavior.

. Short vs. long run consequences for each category above.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Basis of Association of Group Members

. Ideological or philosophical: shared beliefs and values.

. Geographic proximity, e.g., neighborhood.

. Political: shared goals.

. Participatory: ad hoc temporary association for cooperation in achieving specific goal.

. Economic: shared interests.

. Service: common activities.

. Affiliatory: local chapter of larger organization.

Group Organizational Structures

. Formal, hierarchical, rigid.

. Informal, diffuse, ad hoc.

. Institutionalized by rules or convention.

. Personality dependent--run largely by strong leader, rather than by rule or convention.

. Simple → complex: many decision-making levels, elaborate committee and subcommittee structure, many group officers?

Group Staffing Patterns

. Full-time paid staff.

. Part-time paid staff.

. Volunteers, full- or part-time.

Group Activity Modes and Styles

. Conducts studies and investigations.

. Proposes programs or policies to district or to individual schools.

. Makes public appeals for support of position on school issues.

. Political activism--vote drives, board candidate or slate selection, etc.

- Mediation/conciliation--between schools and community.
- Community organization--organizing the poor or other groups for political action.
- Militancy → civil disobedience.
- Private lobbying with staff, board members, legislators, others.
- Information dissemination to community.
- Legal actions--reliance on lawsuits rather than political action.
- "Watchdog" functions--keeps track of district policies or programs of special interest.

Group Membership Profiles

- Heterogeneous membership characteristics--members have diverse occupations, incomes, educations, social outlooks, or residential proximity.
- Homogeneous characteristics--uniformity of views and backgrounds, etc.
- Umbrella group--subsumes many member groups, with diverse views and styles.
- Open membership--anyone may join.
- Qualifications or restrictions on membership--special membership requirements.
- Broad based--mass membership; group strength sought in numbers.
- Restricted base--selective membership; group strength sought in special qualities brought to group by members, such as special dedication or expertise.
- Members active → passive: to what extent do members actually participate in group activities? Are most decisions deferred to leadership?

Group Objectives and Interests

- Specific or general.
- Primarily schools and education related interests.
- Primarily interests other than education.
- Are interests consistent, or do they vary?

- Does the group generally pursue single or multiple objectives?
- Are the groups interests related primarily to schools, or are they related only apparently to schools, and in reality to the dynamics of inter- or intra-group conflict and cooperation?
- Does the group regard school policies largely as ends in themselves, or as means to other, more broadly perceived objectives?

Group Resources

- Financial--regular or sporadic.
- Manpower--cadre for performing daily or special tasks.
- Experts or consultants.
- Information networks--telephone trees, mailing lists, etc.
- Political or related influence--access to and influence on legislators, executive decision makers in public or private sector.
- Coalitions with other groups, or access to resources of national affiliate, parent, or umbrella group.

Group History

- Continuity of group identity and organizational form--extent of well defined group traditions and style.
- Consistency of objectives over time.
- Experience--organizational "age" with present cadre.
- Record of group relations with schools and with district decision makers.
- Morale--group's perceptions of its chances to achieve important objectives through its traditional or preferred style of operation.

PERSONALITIES

Leadership in the Community

- Personal styles of recognized and accepted community leaders.
- Consistency of these styles and apparent objectives.
- Continuity of leadership--extent to which leaders change, and new leaders emerge.

Influence and Effect of Personalities

. On their immediate group.

. On related groups.

. On other leaders.

. On the public at large.

PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY

Formal and Structured Opportunities

. Advisory groups with well-defined roles meeting with district decision makers at regular intervals.

. Sanctioned service groups (e.g., PTA).

. Individual activities--regular consultation with influential citizens.

. Scope and level of these opportunities in the district.

. Influence of these activities on policies and programs in the district, and on levels of community satisfaction with opportunities to be heard.

Informal

. Access at different levels to school administrators.

. Campus activities in support of school programs.

DISTRICT PLANS FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL AFFAIRS

Range of Options Open to Members of the Community

. Study or policy review committees.

. Formal advisory groups.

. Volunteer or paid paraprofessional services in schools, full- or part-time.

. Participation in police/security functions in schools.

. Organization and leadership of school extracurricular activities.

. Training and education for adults, using district facilities.

. Child care services--community volunteers.

- Communications--disseminating information to public.
- Participation in student guidance programs.
- Service groups such as PTA.
- Informal access opportunities--school staff and school facilities.

Relative Benefits Anticipated from Citizen Involvement

- District as a whole
- Individual schools
- Students

Possible Problems

- Inability to meet community expectations generated by plans for participation.
- Escalation of community demands for participation beyond what district considers sound.
- Burden on district staff time.
- Interference with regular educational programs.
- Too costly.
- Source of intergroup friction and potential group polarization and conflict.

COMMUNICATIONS IN DISTRICT

Modes of Communication Generally Relied Upon

- Mass media.
- Newsletters, bulletins, memoranda.
- Regular presentations to community groups.
- Regularly scheduled open board or committee meetings.
- Informal face-to-face communications with individual or small groups.
- Primarily through established intermediaries, rather than face to face.

Patterns of Communication

- Formal and structured, or informal and loose?
- Regular intervals, or random?
- Frequent or occasional?

Communication Resources Available

- District staff assigned to this role.
- Normal media channels.
- Community groups.
- Established institutions in district (e.g., churches, businesses).
- Personal contacts.

Outcomes of Communications Policies to Date

- Adequacy of coverage for substantive information to be communicated?
- Adequacy of coverage--reaching enough people and key leaders in community?
- Variations in perceptions of policies held by different audiences.
- Effects on tensions and misunderstandings in community.

LIST OF CASE STUDIES

## CASE STUDIES

### Introduction

To illustrate the process of analyzing school-community relations, seventeen case studies have been prepared. These cases are examples against which the school administrator can apply the checklist and the guide to analysis described in previous chapters. The case studies have been selected to illustrate a variety of interactions with diverse kinds of groups, in which a number of modes of resolving conflicts were employed. A broad range of experiences are presented for the administrator to analyze and to react to in order to help prepare him for similar experiences within his own district.

The case studies have been compiled from actual experiences of school districts throughout the United States. Each study is a composite picture drawn from several districts. The names and places appearing in the narratives are ficticious. The focal topics giving rise to the school-community tensions depicted in the case studies were selected from those appearing most frequently in the literature, and those suggested by school administrators. The questions at the end of each case study were designed to assist the reader in gaining experience in analyzing actual or potential conflict situations.

Case 1 - School Segregation in the North

Glen City was a large metropolitan area in the North which was experiencing a typically deteriorating inner city core. White residents had for the last ten years been moving to the suburbs, leaving behind an area depressed in its economy and inhabited by a black population. Attempts to break through the barriers of segregated housing patterns were frustrated by the location of public housing in the inner city, which provided improved housing but cemented the ethnic character of the community. As could be expected, the schools in the inner city were racially segregated, and did not have the adequate facilities enjoyed by suburban schools in the same district.

The Glen City school superintendent had been with the district for 12 years and had throughout that time had a close working relationship with the school board. The board had changed little in its composition since the superintendent had arrived, and tended to be the older, more conservative small businessmen of the city. The schools were well administered and had good fiscal policies but had not gained recognition as having creative or innovative approaches to educational programs.

Early in the fall of 1962 the Glen City chapter of the NAACP, in coalition with parents' groups representing three of the segregated inner city schools, disrupted a school board meeting and demanded that their children be placed in racially balanced schools immediately. This demand had been anticipated by the all-white, five-man school board. Over the past year requests had been received from civil rights groups to have an open hearing regarding the board's alleged practice of de facto segregation. The board had ignored such requests on the ground that a policy of segregation did not exist within the Glen City schools. Furthermore, they believed that such a meeting would stir racial unrest in the city and would be of no value. The outburst at the board meeting confirmed the fears of the board that a few radical parents would cause trouble sooner or later.

When the police had cleared the meeting room, the board briefly discussed the segregation claim and passed a resolution to study the matter further.

Two days later the chairman of the school board held a press conference announcing the appointment of a citizen's committee to investigate the charges brought by the NAACP. The board had carefully chosen the members of the committee to include blacks, but not any of those associated with the civil rights coalition. The group was filled out by selecting conservative white members of the community. No outstanding community leaders from either the black or the white community appeared on the roster of the highly publicized citizens' committee.

The citizens' committee met in obscurity, and the civil rights groups by midwinter became disappointed that no information had been requested from them or given to them by the committee. The committee continued to remain in view of the public, but its actual deliberations and recommendations were not disclosed. Tensions within the black community began to reach the same high level as during the previous fall's confrontation.

The committee itself met twice a month and received reports from the school staff and from the city planning commission. The superintendent met with the committee regularly and made every effort to justify the neighborhood school policy of the district, which had led to the segregated inner city schools.

By spring verbal attacks on the apparent inactivity and slow progress of the citizens' committee increased dramatically. The two city papers carried a full coverage of the NAACP and parents' groups complaints. New, impatient leaders emerged from the parents' groups who were articulate and specific in their demands. More parents as well as others in the community joined the ranks of the coalition, strengthening their numbers significantly.

Sensing the developing tension in the black community, the mayor and other prominent members of the city's government personally urged the school board to help the citizens' committee conclude its work and publish its recommendations.

Before the citizens' committee made its report public, the momentum of the developing civil rights groups had led them to action. A one-day school boycott was called and success was claimed by its promoters. The school

board could not deny this claim. The rising militancy of the civil rights coalition propelled it into action on two other fronts as well. Personal accusations of "Uncle Tom" were directed at the black members of the citizens' committee. The blacks on the committee had endured the frustration of the committee in hopes of being an influence on the deliberations and recommendations. Fearing for their futures when the public attacks mounted, all but one black resigned from the citizens' committee. In their resignations they denounced the committee's procedures and forthcoming report. Energy which was not directed into the boycott and the discrediting of the citizens' committee was used to develop a list of twelve demands which were prepared with help from the national staff of the NAACP Education Committee.

The citizens' committee report finally was released in late spring. In essence it supported the neighborhood school policy of the board as the best educational program for the city's children. The civil rights forces of the city resoundly denounced that report.

During the summer of 1963 the civil rights coalition was greatly expanded in numbers and leadership, by the total failure of the citizens' committee report to deal with the school's problems. With increased conviction they presented their twelve demands to the school board. Prior to the meeting the NAACP prepared a press release which was given to the city's papers, radio stations, and television news bureaus. The meeting was therefore well covered by the news media. Heading the list was the demand that the school board must publicly acknowledge that de facto segregation was a reality in the city's schools. The board chairman ruled the speaker for the civil rights coalition out of order. He used as grounds for his ruling that the demands had been placed on the agenda as items to improve the local schools, and since this first item had nothing to do with the schools of Glen City the speaker was out of order. An attempt to reverse the ruling of the chairman was denied by the board in that they too felt that de facto segregation neither existed as a policy of the board nor was it relevant to the discussion of improving schools. The board further pointed out that no attendance area for city schools was determined by racial considerations.

The civil rights representatives walked out of the meeting. The news media covered the rising conflict in detail as it unfolded in the next days. The board accused the NAACP of precipitating a stalemate and creating unnecessary hostility in the community through use of inflammatory language. The NAACP responded that the board was purposely avoiding the issue of equal education for black children and threatened further action to see that its demands were met.

By September the civil rights movement gathered more allies and was able to enlist the support of nationally known entertainers and political figures to support their second successful boycott of the schools. Politically embarrassed by the publicity given Glen City, and fearful of rising racial tensions, the mayor appointed a committee of prominent citizens to study the problems of the city's schools. By November the committee released its findings to the public: Sixty of the city's seventy schools were racially unbalanced. In consultation with civil rights leaders and professors from the State University, the mayor's commission proposed a list of recommendations for improving the racial balance of the schools as well as improving the total educational quality of the inner city schools.

In hopes of delaying the acceptance and implementation of the commission's recommendations, the board proposed a series of public hearings. These meetings were scheduled for the beginning of the new year. The civil rights coalition was well prepared for these meetings. The overwhelming criticism of the recommendations which the board had counted on from the conservative white leaders in the city was not forthcoming. Each meeting was well attended and fully covered by the press. The news media indicated that the community and its leaders favored the implementation of the recommendations.

The civil rights coalition had learned from past experience that they could never relax their efforts. During the same period of time that the school board hearings were being scheduled, they sought legal advice from the legal department of the NAACP. By February a suit had been filed in court on behalf of children attending racially segregated schools. This added to the forces which they had been able to marshall.

Faced with the mounting public pressure and the realities of legal pressure as well, the board capitulated and accepted the mayor's commission recommendations in the early spring. They stipulated that the program could only be implemented over a three-year period beginning with the next fall's term.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the background factors which resulted in the pressures faced by this school board?

2. What resources were commanded by the various factions in this dispute? Were they used effectively?

3. How did the organization and strength of the civil rights coalition change during this period? What most influenced this change?

4. What were the critical decisions made in this case which influenced both the immediate future and the final resolution of the conflict?

5. What alternate strategy could have been used by the board that would have made a more positive contribution to relieving the tensions of the community and worked toward a positive solution to the problem?

6. What kind of citizen involvement was there in working out the solution to this problem?

7. What are the prospects for this city with the decision made by the board in their acceptance of the mayor's commission recommendations? Has the board a style of operation which is conducive to reducing tension?

Case 2 - Working Towards Racial Balance in City Schools

Brookside is a large city in its own right but finds itself also a part of a larger metropolitan complex. The older part of the city along the floor of the valley was inhabited by a large number of minority families along with the older white working class families who had originally settled in that part of the area. The base of the foothills and the hill section itself contained upper middle class and upper class white families with little or no minority housing opportunities. Included in the hillside area of Brookside were a number of liberal white families who were employed by a near-by university and by research-oriented firms. This population mix of Brookside had stabilized and did not show any signs of impending change.

At the most recent election, for the first time in over 80 years, a black had been selected for a seat on the Brookside City Council, and another for the city's board of education. The same election seated other city and school officials who broke the long standing control of conservatives. Liberal members now had a clear majority of votes on both governing bodies. These events took place against a background of long frustration for the large minority population in the city, as their various complaints had in the past gone unheeded by the city and the school board. Equally frustrating for many parents in the district was the inability of the school board to conduct a successful school bond election, and schools in all parts of the city were suffering from the lack of adequate financing.

In the spring following the election, the black community renewed its complaints in hopes of finding a more receptive atmosphere. A delegation from CORE charged the board of education with de facto segregation and demanded a change. Housing patterns created in part by geographical barriers had a long history of promoting segregated schools in the city.

The board was sympathetic to the demands which were made, and acknowledged both that the problem existed and that a plan for action was needed. The board postponed action on the demands until further study could be devoted to the problem, and in particular until they completed their first attempt at a bond election. The success of this bond campaign initiated other planning considerations, and the board had to be reminded again in September

that it had a problem still pending--segregation in the city schools. In response to the renewed charges by the Brookside Chapter of CORE, the newly hired superintendent suggested to the board that a citizens' committee be appointed to determine the extent of the problem and to make recommendations on what alternatives were possible to remedy the situation. The board accepted the superintendent's suggestion and appointed a committee which was carefully chosen to represent all geographical areas and to have minority members on the committee in the same proportion as they were found in the city itself.

The committee convened in January 1963, and met bimonthly until June. From the beginning the committee considered only compensatory education and bussing as logical and acceptable plans for action. However, other events helped direct the committee's course of action. As they investigated their city's schools they discovered noticeable differences in test scores among the schools, the lowest being from the predominantly black schools. Reports of unsuccessful bussing programs in other large cities were reported to them and discouraged them from their original plan, which now seemed fraught with problems.

A city-wide fair housing referendum would have helped solve the increasingly complex problem, but that measure was defeated at the polls, leaving the committee with even fewer alternatives. Returning to its tasks, the committee renewed its determination to do something significant for the black community now that the fair housing issue had been lost. A serious outburst of racial conflict at the national level further helped put the committee in a position of feeling both a sense of guilt for the inequities that existed, and a sense of determination that racial tension would not erupt into open conflict in Brookside.

Scrapping their original plans, the committee now eagerly sought other solutions. They realized that starting with integrating elementary grades was not a politically astute move. Consequentially they turned their attention to the three junior high schools. Redistricting seemed now to be the only solution, although it was awkward due to the geographical location of the three schools, and the natural barriers separating them.

By September the committee had agreed on a plan, and the final report was submitted to the board in November. The board scheduled open hearings on the proposed plan through December and January. The meetings were well attended and positive statements for the plan were especially evident coming from members of CORE, NAACP, and the local Democratic Party. Although the hearings indicated acceptance of the plan, the board had some reason to doubt that all was well.

Early in January, the local newspaper carried an announcement for a meeting of the Citizens for Neighborhood Schools Committee. Each day thereafter through editorials, feature articles, and reports of the findings of the Citizens for Neighborhood Schools Committee (CNSC), it became evident that the local paper did not accept the redistricting as an answer to the schools' problems. With the assistance of the paper the CNSC conducted a poll to indicate support of the plan. Contrary to the votes at the hearings, the paper published results that claimed 80% of the city was against the redistricting plan.

Sensing opposition which could lead to a disruptive conflict, the superintendent and his staff initiated two actions. First, they asked the administrative staff and teachers for suggestions for alternatives to the redistricting plan which would still achieve the result of racially balanced schools. This quest was successful, and an alternate plan of having one grade in each school was carefully studied by the administrative staff and found to be more feasible than redistricting. Second, the superintendent and his staff carefully analyzed the groups that were both for and against the schools' efforts to achieve racially balanced schools. CORE, NAACP, and the Democratic Party were strongly in favor of the concept and supported the board's efforts to achieve this end by any means necessary. The supporters of the plan were well organized and had leadership which had developed over the past five years or more in their community efforts to achieve racial justice. This group, however, did not represent a clear majority of the voters.

The groups opposed to changing the ethnic mix of the schools were divided roughly into four factions. First were those who did not want racially balanced schools, now or ever. This faction became the core of the Citizens for Neighborhood Schools and was supported by the local newspaper. Two other viewpoints were far less vocally expressed by those who did not want to disturb the status quo out of fear of racial conflict, and those who approved of integrated schools as an abstract concept, but balked when their own children were involved. These two factions seemed to be afraid to be called bigots by their more liberal friends, and did not speak out publicly. As district leaders saw it, they were disorganized and not likely to offer strong opposition. The fourth faction wholeheartedly endorsed the concept of integration but not the particular plan being proposed by the board. If the right plan could be devised, this group could join with the already well organized support group, and a majority vote would be insured.

Fortunately, the board now seemed to have an acceptable alternative to redistricting. As a trial run the superintendent polled the teachers of the district to find out which of the two plans, redistricting or one grade per school, would be the best from the standpoint of classroom management. The superintendent also met informally with the leaders from CORE, NAACP, and the Democratic Party to explain the new plan and to gather their support. The Citizens' Committee, who wrote the original redistricting report were also included as reviewers of the plan before the board accepted it in May. The board, in a 4-1 decision, approved the new plan as recommended by the superintendent. The board-approved plan also included a compensatory education component, as recommended by the Citizens' Committee, and revisions of teaching methods, a suggestion submitted by the teachers.

Three days after the board's decision, the Citizens for Neighborhood Schools filed a petition for recall of the board members who voted for the plan. The program was labeled an unwarranted social experiment. The board members went into the recall election in October, with a comfortable margin of support. In desperation, the opposition became more and more extreme in their attacks. As a result they began losing the moderate supporters of

their cause who could not bring themselves to be associated with the radical viewpoints being expressed by the Citizens for Neighborhood Schools. The incumbents, as a result, fended off recall by an overwhelming majority.

The following April, at the regular election, the incumbents won reelection by a comfortable margin. The board's plan for racially balancing the city's schools was put into effect and planning got under way for implementing racial balance in the other segments of the school population.

Questions for Analysis

1. How important were political and social influences in determining the outcome of school desegregation plans? Could the board have reached its goals without the intervention of outside occurrences?

2. Which groups were key influences leading to the success or failure of the desegregation plan? How did their organization, methods, and resources differ?

3. Of what importance was the superintendent's analysis of the opposition?

4. What factors contributed to the strength of the opposition? What strategies did they use?

Case 3 - A Struggle for Adequate Financing

Blue Lake, a large midwestern school district, was faced with a rapidly worsening financial crisis. The members of the board, who were politically appointed, consisted of older businessmen who had over the past years established a reputation for conservative financial policies. In the eyes of the community, the primary goals of the board were to avoid controversy and limit school expenditures. They had gained this reputation by settling all controversies in executive session, so that board meetings themselves were routine and no opportunity existed to interact with the public. Community criticism of the schools had traditionally been discouraged and avoided by any means possible.

The financial problems of the Blue Lake School District were made more complex because the district lacked control of the local school tax rate. The state legislators set the maximum rate, and only at the insistent urging of local politicians were such rates adjusted. The growing costs of urban government caused local political leaders to find it politically unwise to be responsible for any further tax increases on the city's population. The school board did not challenge this decision.

Superintendents who had to deal with this situation did not stay long in the district, as they quickly became frustrated in their attempts to meet the educational needs of the children of the city with such limited funding. In the absence of strong continuous leadership from the superintendent's office, the business manager became the most powerful member of the administrative staff. He always sought approval of the budget from city hall before it was presented to the board. Detailed budgets were never available to anyone without the business manager's permission, which was seldom, if ever, given.

Combined with the isolation from the community, the financial policies of the district had resulted in a crisis situation for the schools. School plants were obsolete, teacher pay was low, and overcrowding was widespread. The civic community was enraged at the lack of action, civil rights groups

were adamant in their demands and teacher morale was at low ebb. This was the condition of Blue Lake in 1962.

Prior to the turning point in the growing school crisis of 1962, the community had become increasingly aware, informed, and involved in the affairs of the schools. In 1958, a new member of the board had been appointed. Unlike her colleagues, as she learned more about the operation of the schools she urged reforms that were long overdue. She encouraged debate at board meetings, and encouraged community groups to become aware of their schools' problems. Civil rights groups needed little urging to become active as overcrowding, lack of teachers, and poor educational programs had all become important issues. The local leadership of the NAACP sought help from the education consultants of the parent organization and in the 60's began making their demands known to the school board and formulating plans for action.

Through the influence of the new board member, who alerted the larger city-wide community leadership of the impending school crisis, a coalition group was formed. At the core of the coalition was the only civic group solely concerned with education, the Citizens' Committee for Better Education (CCBE). Joining with the CCBE were business groups, other civic groups, and civil rights groups. The new organization, the City-wide School Movement (CSM) was frustrated by the lack of public information about the schools, and undertook a study of their own using their own researchers. They originally focused on personnel but realized that the underlying problems were in the area of financial administration and the selection of school board members. The study was thorough, and as a consequence the CSM published an attack on the board and its fiscal and administrative structure. In essence, this was a vote of no confidence in the board eminating from well-known civic groups and community leaders. The report had a strong impact on the community. The CCBE followed through and urged more civic participation in school reform.

In late 1961, the business manager retired, and shortly thereafter in 1962, the chairman of the school board resigned. This gap in the power structure left the board open for reform. By then, the community groups were becoming strong and information about the plight of the city schools was

becoming widely circulated. In early 1962, the local NAACP filed a suit against the board, claiming that overcrowding, poor staffing, and inadequate facilities compounded the segregationist policy of the city schools. This event further mobilized community interest and participation in school affairs.

The newly appointed board chairman was a person identified with the school reform movement and active in the CSM. Under his leadership, the board took positive steps to involve the community in seeking solutions to the schools' problems. New staff was hired, and task forces were mobilized to seek ways of avoiding a crisis.

Despite the efforts of the school board and its strong community support groups, lasting solutions could not be found without an increase in school financing. The school board president urged the city government to endorse a CSM recommendation that the taxing power be shifted from the state to the city, and that the school board be elected instead of appointed. He also urged the state legislature to pass the enabling bill on a nonpartisan basis, despite their difference in political alignment with the city government. But it was an election year, and the promises of support never became a reality. The school district plunged further into a financial crisis.

After the elections, the CSM again tried to gain support for local control of taxing powers. They found that the governor of the state, realizing the crisis, supported their recommendations. The opposition side found city officials and local party leaders who were unwilling to assume responsibility for new taxes. This local political coalition had many friends in the state capital who openly opposed the CSM-sponsored bill, which granted nine taxing powers to the city and home rule for the school district. The CSM worked hard at both the state and local level to gain passage of the bill. The community was strongly in favor, and through their civic groups made their wishes known in the state legislature. The bill fared better than the previous attempt but was amended and changed as it proceeded through the legislative process. When it arrived at the governor's desk only three

taxing powers remained. Even the city's own delegation did not support the bill. The teachers' union urged the governor to sign the bill or the city would be faced with a teachers' strike. The teachers strongly felt this was the only way in which the salary crisis could be met. The leaders of the CSM and the reform members of the board, realizing that the new taxing power might well be useless in the hands of a politically appointed school board urged a veto of the bill. The CSM was fortunate in having leadership who were personally able to approach the governor and explain the position of the school district.

The governor refused to sign the tax bill without the home rule provision. The publicity the CSM obtained through its coalition of civic groups and community leaders was effective, and city officials could no longer ignore the stand of the city's leading citizens on the issue. When the bill was resubmitted to the governor, both broader taxing powers and the home rule provision were contained in the bill.

The work of the CSM was not finished. A plan had to be submitted to the voters for the selection and tenure of the local school board. Relying heavily on the resources of the CSM, the school board, reinforced by another reform member, presented a plan which insured that the board would be free from political influence. Further, the plan provided that the school administration structure would insure community access to information and the opportunity to participate in the process of policy decisions. Although city officials and local party leaders still did not favor such a plan they felt it politically expedient not to expend a great deal of their resources in opposing the well organized, experienced, and broadly based leadership of the CSM.

The struggle to adequately finance the city's schools took over five years to resolve but the issues and the power structure involved were complex. As a result the city gained the ability to finance its schools and to insure a qualified school board to use these resources. In addition it also gained a community interest and concern for its schools and an experienced, knowledgeable leadership group who were available to the district.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the main issues in this case? Which had top priority?

2. What were the key reasons that this school district was unable to finance its program?

3. Who were the key individuals in the resolution of this problem?

4. What political forces were involved in this situation and what stake did they have in its outcome?

5. What was the key event or events that led to a favorable outcome?

6. Would a strong superintendent have been able to resolve this problem in any less time?

7. As superintendent of this district, what would you have had to know about the politics of Blue Lake schools? What skills and resources would you have needed?

Case 4 - Teachers Strike a Big City School District

Ocean City was a large sprawling industrial city. Its downtown area had long since lost its vitality as higher economic level families had migrated to the rolling hills of a nearby county. Shopping centers and even some of the well established businesses of the city were following the move to the country, leaving the inner core of Ocean City in a depressed state. Large sections of the city had become low income housing and marginal businesses. Urban renewal had failed to breathe life into the center of Ocean City.

The schools of Ocean City, especially those in the inner city, were built some years ago and were showing the ravages of time and wear. School programs had suffered in the past years as the low salaries paid teachers had failed to attract fully qualified teachers for the most "difficult" schools. The schools had to compete for the tax dollar along with increasing welfare, public transportation, police and fire protection costs, pollution, and city government. Despite the increased demands of minority children for special programs, the school district was actually having to curtail more services each year. Two attempts to pass a tax increase had failed decisively at the polls. School bonds had suffered the same fate.

Compounding the problems of the Ocean City Schools was the diminishing state aid. At one time the school budget had been 55% state supported. But the current administration in the state capital had run on a decrease taxes campaign and had kept its promises. State aid to Ocean City schools fell to an all-time low of 30%. Although federal funds were available for special projects in the city, these funds did little to help the plight of the classroom teacher.

Ocean City had three rival teachers' organizations just prior to its current fiscal crisis. One was affiliated with a union, one with the statewide NEA organization, and one a local district organization. Despite their divergent philosophies, two of the teachers' groups came closer together, joined by their concern for better salaries, overcrowded classes, and generally poor working conditions for them and poor learning conditions for their students.

The Ocean City school board was well aware of the problems facing the district financially, and the problems facing the teacher in the classroom. After the failure of their third attempt to raise the local tax rate, the board had to initiate cost savings that were anything but popular. During the coming year it was proposed that teachers not get a cost of living raise, that class size be raised five students per class, and that music, art, and physical education teachers be eliminated at the elementary school level, and that all extracurricular activities as well as one period a day be eliminated at the high school level.

This announcement of austerity measures by the board was the catalyst that united two of the largest teachers' groups in the city. Seeing that their numbers alone had an advantage in negotiating with the board, the two groups formally merged and readied a list of demands. Higher salaries, smaller classes, restoration of the deleted period at the high schools, special remedial services for inner city children, increased fringe benefits for teachers, and a written contract for all teachers were all on their list. The board was given two weeks to respond to the demands before a strike vote would be taken. But the board was powerless to act on any of the issues as the voters had determined the tax rate and the state legislature had fixed the state support. Despite the obvious harm that a strike would inflicet on the students, the board almost welcomed the strike, as it would publicize the dilemma that it had been struggling with for the past years. The board reexamined the school budget but could find no way to meet even some of the demands of the teachers. The new teachers' group did not accept the board's efforts as being sincere when they published their public statement. The teachers knew, however, that their target was not just the school board, but that the local voters as well as the state legislature must become aware of the seriousness of their problems.

As could be expected, the teachers voted to strike. Even before the strike action was voted on, the large, city-wide teachers' group had solicited the support of parents who were concerned about the conditions in the classrooms and wanted better educational programs for their children. They used already existing groups as their nucleus in building parent support of their

cause--PTA's, civil rights groups, and community associations. When the strike deadline drew near these groups were well organized and knew their role in the strike action.

The first day of the strike showed the board that the majority of the teachers were well organized into the new teachers' association and that they were supporting the strike stand of that organization. Pickets appeared at all the city's schools consisting of both parents and teachers. In the case of the high schools even the students became involved as they boycotted their own classes.

The first week of the strike indicated to the larger city community that the teachers meant business and they were supported by a significant portion of the parents at each school. The inner city schools in particular were noticeably vacant both in terms of students and teachers. In many of the schools supervisory personnel were used to take attendance and to run a very minimum program.

The teachers' strike received full coverage in all the news media of the city. The striking teachers' organization purchased a two-page ad in each of the two city newspapers spelling out in detail all of the conditions of employment they were asking of the board. The board's statements were kept quite simple--there was nothing they could do. The typical recriminations against both sides were heard but negotiations were pretty well understood by both parties as being somewhat of an academic exercise.

The second week of the strike showed no progress and the community began to become alarmed. The board issued statements regarding the impending possibility that seniors would not be able to meet the requirements for graduation. The teachers responded by setting up tutoring centers outside of school but still refused to return to work.

Local politicians, especially state assemblymen, began to feel the pressure from their constituents to come to the rescue of the local schools and find extra state funds to relieve the financial crisis of Ocean City. Quickly a bill was introduced into the state legislature to provide emergency funding to the district for the coming year. The bill passed both houses with the skillful guidance of the senior members of the legislature from

the Ocean City area who not only had a large delegation but who were also politically astute. The bill passed in record time only to be vetoed by the governor as an inflationary measure. He publicly stated that Ocean City must cut the frills in their rising costs and live within their budget.

The governor's action dimmed the hopes of the teachers ever reaching a settlement on any of their conditions of employment. Negotiations now took a new tack within the Ocean City board. Compromises were eagerly sought as no other alternative seemed to present itself. Hoping to establish themselves as the champions of good education for all students, the union finally made an offer to keep the same salaries if the class size could be reduced. This seemed to be the best course of action as by the third week of the strike teachers were beginning to return to the classrooms and parents were becoming worried about their children missing so much school. To hold out for impossible demands in the face of the declining effectiveness of the strike seemed to be a route to be avoided by the new teachers' group. Subsequentially the settlement was made and the contract, as demanded by the group, was spelled out.

The board accepted the compromise but it had not yet seen the end of its troubles. The third and smaller teachers' group in the city brought suit against the district in an attempt to declare the contract invalid under state law. The legal aspect of the aftermath of the teachers' strike was not to be settled for many months.

Even the actual conditions of the strike settlement were never able to be met. The state legislature again reduced the percentage allotments to the local school district, making it difficult at best to meet the payroll requirements without any additional burden of reducing class size. In short there were no victories by any of the parties involved. The ones to suffer were the students themselves who had the burden of making up missed work.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the background factors in this case which were critical to the course of action that the crisis initiated?

2. What were the groups involved and what was their interest in the outcomes of the strike?

3. What could have happened if the teachers did not have any supporters?

4. What key moves were made by people outside the school structure which influenced the eventual course of this problem?

5. Where was the actual opposition to bettering conditions in Ocean City? What was the source of power of these groups or individuals?

6. What could possibly be the next steps in this case history once the teachers realize that they have not gained anything by their strike and that it is not entirely the responsibility of the school board?

Case 5 - Academic Freedom Defended

The Irving High School was located in a middle-class area of the city. The teachers in the school took pride in their work. They attended conferences, workshops, and classes at the university, and in other ways kept themselves well informed, not only on the content of their courses, but in teaching methods as well. The principal was proud of his faculty and made it known in his various contacts with service clubs and other civic groups.

The community itself was very stable. Few changes had been made over the past 10 years, and the residents for the most part had lived in the community since it had been founded. The churches and civic groups were strong and shared a common core of leadership. The community was known for its conservative political views and values.

During the fall of the year a well-known foundation sent a notice to all the district's high schools requesting a nominee for an award to be given to a social studies teacher for excellence in teaching. The principal of Irving High School immediately thought of Miss Ann Thomas, a young dynamic history teacher who was the pride of the social science department. She was well liked by her colleagues and students. Through her inquiry techniques, group discussions, supplementary reading lists, films, and other teaching techniques, she had stimulated an interest in American history which was well beyond what might normally be expected. She had often been invited to give demonstrations of her teaching methods at statewide professional meetings. The principal felt she was a good candidate for the award and nominated her for it. The national reviewing committee agreed with the principal and consequentially the foundation granted the award to Miss Thomas.

The publicity which was given the granting of the award was widespread. The district was honored by having the recipient on its staff, and got city-wide news coverage of the event. The principal arranged even more publicity and some public meetings honoring Miss Thomas. He was not only proud of the accomplishments of his teacher, but felt the publicity would increase the community's interest and pride in its high school.

The principal's success in stimulating interest was soon evident. The leader of a strong veterans' group in the community brought to the attention of his executive committee that the foundation sponsoring the award appeared on a list of foundations alleged to be sympathetic not only to liberal but to socialist causes. Feeling that it was an afront to the community to have a teacher honored by an unpatriotic organization, they prepared a resolution strongly critical of the foundation and recommending that Miss Thomas be instructed to return the award. The resolution passed at the next general meeting of the veterans' group, and the large number of members present quickly disseminated the information with variations and embellishments. The recommendation was presented at the next school board meeting, which was well attended by concerned community leaders who strongly favored the veterans' organization views. Most articulate in the matter was a local minister and the president of the Irving High School P.T.A.

The board explained that they had no power in the matter as the award was given to the teacher and the choice of accepting it or rejecting it was hers alone. The delegation of community people who felt they had been denied satisfaction by the board appeared at the high school the next day, and demanded that the principal take immediate action in having Miss Thomas renounce the award. The principal reaffirmed that Miss Thomas had the right as an individual to accept the award or reject it as she saw fit. Frustrated in their attempts to get action, the protesting group organized the Concerned Parents League. Their first tasks were to investigate more thoroughly the activities of the foundation in question and become better acquainted with the personnel policies of the school district.

Miss Thomas herself was stunned by the reaction to her coveted award. She had no intention of returning it and made her position clear in a letter to the school board. The news media picked up the story, and in an interview Miss Thomas explained her position. She felt that the work of the foundation had been misjudged, and went on to explain how the foundation had been instrumental in improving the teaching of history. In good faith, Miss Thomas believed that faced with the facts the community could use reason to calm the unfounded fears which seemed to be arising.

However, the veterans' group, at a specially called meeting, now included Miss Thomas on a list of "fellow travelers" because of her support of the foundation. They questioned whether it was wise to have an "unpatriotic" instructor teaching history to the impressionable youth of the community. The participants in the meeting spread the alarm quickly throughout the community. Aware of how rumors had gotten so quickly out of control in the past, the principal publicly announced at the P.T.A. Open House that Miss Thomas' record as a teacher was outstanding and her teaching methods and knowledge of her subject matter were beyond reproach. He invited those who were concerned to stop by her room, talk to her, and examine the materials she was using.

That night, Miss Thomas only met those parents who supported her and her position. It was obvious that the community had already polarized into two camps.

The Concerned Parents League had quickly moved ahead with its task of proving that the foundation was not only unpatriotic but anti-business and anti-Christian as well. Their research consisted of quotations from conservative, patriotic publications, without the benefit of the examination of any of the foundation's own publications, statement of purpose, project reviews, or other materials. With this task completed, and with its ranks now enlarged by concerned conservatives, small businessmen, and local church members, the C.P.L. was ready to branch out on another project.

Their new attack was directed at the schools in general and Miss Thomas in particular. They accused the school district of white-washing the fact that they had not only made a mistake in hiring a young teacher from a radical state college, but were continuing to let this teacher "poison the minds" of the young people at Irving High School. The school board investigated the charge and responded that in their examination of the available records and the classroom performance of Miss Thomas, they found no evidence to support the C.P.L. charges.

This response clearly defined the next task of the C.P.L. They set about to collect evidence to support their position and to lay the groundwork for Miss Thomas' dismissal. Her book list and supplementary reading materials were thoroughly combed for questionable authors and statements. A list of quotations taken from her recommended readings was presented as evidence of Miss Thomas' procedures of thorough indoctrination in "socialistic" philosophy and undermining of Christian beliefs. A student equipped with a specially designed hollow book containing a tape recorder provided classroom excerpts which added to the arguments supported by the parents. The C.P.L. made their presentation of evidence to several church groups, the veterans' group, and a small group of parents who were friends of the P.T.A. president.

It was an alarmed group of citizens who were present at the next board meeting when this evidence was finally presented to the board along with the demand to fire Miss Thomas. Also present were Miss Thomas and a student supporter from each of her classes. Miss Thomas was quick to admit that the quotations were from her readings and that it was indeed her voice on the tape recording. She pointed out that all of the quotations were taken out of context and that both sides of every issue had been carefully covered. She explained that she urged her students to analyze each position before formulating their own viewpoints. The students verified to the board that indeed this was the case and that at no time did Miss Thomas favor one particular philosophy over another.

After a dramatic confrontation between Miss Thomas and her opposition, the board announced its intention of retaining Miss Thomas. Undaunted, the C.P.L. called for a review of the school and its practices by the state legislative committees on educational practices and un-American activities. This move, coming as it did in conjunction with the biased methods of collecting evidence used by the C.P.L., lost many supporters for its cause. The C.P.L.'s continuing barrage of supposedly new evidence, which essentially was in the same vein as before, further alienated the community. The support for Miss Thomas continued to grow throughout the spring. Although

the supporters were never organized, they increasingly were present to challenge the evidence of the C.P.L. at civic meetings, church meetings, the P.T.A. and even the veterans' organization itself.

In June, when a joint legislative committee arrived for its investigations, the whole issue was opened again. This time the opposition was prepared and ready to discredit the evidence being presented. The tide of public opinion seemed now to be on Miss Thomas' side. The school was quickly cleared of any wrongdoing, as was Miss Thomas.

Miss Thomas' final remark as she prepared to leave for the summer was: "This community wants to limit academic freedom by only granting the freedom to teach what the community believes." Unfortunately, Miss Thomas did not return to the district.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the main tactics of the Concerned Parents League? Did they change? What is the defense for such a strategy? What channels of communication did they use?

2. Could the school district have avoided this confrontation? If so, at what point(s)? Would such actions have precipitated other reactions equally as undesirable?

3. What factors in the makeup of the community added to the quickly mobilized opposition to Miss Thomas?

4. What outcome would you predict if the board had not upheld Miss Thomas?

5. What future does further curriculum experimentation have at the school?

Case 6 - Charges of Subversive Activities Leveled at Schools

The community in which Mrs. Morton was becoming involved had always maintained an active interest in their schools. In general they were pleased with the educational program offered and with the school's administration. The school board and the administration had a record of good relationships with the community and had traditionally involved them in policy formation as well as the general exchange of information. Before moving to this community--a city in the Northeast--Mrs. Morton had been active in a citizens' group that was known for its unrelenting attacks on schools. Quickly she became known in her new community for her outspoken criticism of the public schools. The attacks were often very general, and when specific, ranged over a large number of topics. Mrs. Morton ran for school board in the spring election and was soundly defeated.

After her defeat, Mrs. Morton publicly announced the withdrawal of her children from the public schools. Thereafter, Mrs. Morton dropped from public view until December of that same year. Simultaneously, an open letter was published in the local paper and leaflets were distributed throughout the city by members of a citizens' group with which Mrs. Morton was formally associated. Both documents attacked the superintendent as being poorly trained for his position, and soundly reprimanded the board for hiring someone educated at Columbia Teacher's College. She went on in her statements to accuse the board of being a rubber stamp and allowing the superintendent to destroy the schools by subverting the educational process with unproven theories promoted by Teacher's College.

The board did not feel it needed to respond to such charges and ignored the first of what was to be a series of encounters with Mrs. Morton. At the first meeting of the new year, the board was faced with their protagonist herself, who presented a protest against a long standing administrative code regulation. She passed out a prepared statement to the board and audience quoting the regulation and presenting her evidence that the regulation placed too much power in the hands of the superintendent. Such a situation left the district open to manipulation and subversion from

outside influences. The board politely explained how such regulations could be changed through the appropriate processes and in addition defended the regulation as it stood.

Two months passed before Mrs. Morton was to be heard from again. Another pamphlet appeared in March bearing the sponsorship of Citizens for Basic Education, a heretofore unknown organization in the community. The attack was more general in nature this time, rallying concerned citizens to stop the plot that educational leaders had designed to subvert the schools by introducing "foreign doctrines." Over 2,000 of these pamphlets got into the hands of parents, with the cooperation of some volunteers from the Citizens for Basic Education. Mrs. Morton requested that the school district assist in the distribution of pamphlets but they quickly declined.

This document was quickly followed by yet another, condemning the social science curriculum as being watered down and full of un-American doctrines. It ended with an immediate call for parents to demand that history and geography be offered as separate subjects. An insert in the leaflet gave a list of speakers from the Citizens for Basic Education who were available to disclose the true conditions in the city's public schools.

April saw increased activity by Mrs. Morton not only in her literary efforts but in her public appearances. So far the board had been polite but noncooperative in regard to her demands and the local news media had given low-key coverage to her attacks and proposals. However, Mrs. Morton was not one to live in anonymity. The document which she produced and distributed on the first of the month was lengthy and printed professionally in an eye-catching style. It reviewed and quoted broadly from articles warning of growing illiteracy, and subversion and infiltration in texts and curriculum of socialistic and immoral teachings. A whole chapter was devoted to a master plan of educational leaders to systematically silence those who opposed them. A bibliography was included in the document which indicated that Mrs. Morton had become well acquainted with the literature and resources of four national organizations who were active in criticizing the public schools.

One week later Mrs. Morton published a smaller leaflet that was a checklist of school practices, which indicated that the city's schools were well down the road of progressive education, which was equated to education for socialism. On the back of the leaflet was a list of public meetings scheduled to inform the public of the growing crisis in their schools.

The board meeting at the end of April was marked by a loud public demonstration headed by Mrs. Morton, two friends from her former community, and a handful of local parents. Her attack again was on the domination of the schools by progressive education. She invited all in attendance to join her at her group's next meeting to hear the evidence that progressive education was linked to juvenile delinquency.

The local papers gave full coverage to the protest movement but in the same issue also carried an article prepared by the board in reply to Mrs. Morton's previous attacks. The article defended in detail the practices of the schools. The day after the article appeared, the parents in the district received a mimeographed letter repeating the defense of the board's position.

Through the rest of the spring and summer, the board did not have any further confrontation with Mrs. Morton. Her organization was growing slowly, but its participants were dedicated to their cause. When school opened again in September, the Citizens for Better Education were ready for a renewed attack on the schools. Their focus now was on textbooks. A new document edited by Mrs. Morton included an attack on a history textbook which was "slanted." The material was liberally sprinkled with comments from experts (all drawn from the ranks of an ultraconservative national critics group) condemning the book. Included was a list of 150 school library books that were labeled socialistic or communistic.

The school board felt that, with a bond election coming up, they could ill afford the publicity Mrs. Morton's group was producing. Hoping to dampen enthusiasm for the textbook attack, the school board granted Mrs. Morton an open hearing for her to produce her evidence. At the meeting the parents attending overwhelmingly expressed the desire that their children be able

to read and discuss all viewpoints on any issue. In the morning paper Mrs. Morton accused the board of stacking the meeting to oppress the honest concerned views of parents.

The influence of the Citizens for Better Education began to be felt more broadly in the community. The upcoming bond issue and the attempts to raise teachers' salaries had provoked the ire of a home owners' group in one of the neighborhoods of the city. Mrs. Morton's group had raised sufficient doubt about the quality of the public schools that the home owners now had material to feed into the campaign against the bond issue. Her group also became involved in the support of a principal who had made a public attack on the administration after receiving notice that he would be dismissed.

The Citizens for Better Education, however, did not experience the growth it had hoped for during the fall. They sought more sensational charges in order to gain news coverage and to polarize the community in favor of their cause. After a build-up of three weeks of repeated attacks on the schools ranging over a wide variety of subjects, the Citizens for Basic Education printed a letter in the largest newspaper demanding a wholesale investigation of the schools.

In January, the controversial principal resigned due to the overwhelming evidence the school board was able to present in defense of its decision. Enraged by having lost an ally within the school system itself, the Citizens for Basic Education flooded the papers with demands for the resignation of the superintendent and the board. They also renewed their other demands, which had been ignored for the past months. The response to these demands came rather quickly, not only from community leaders, but from individual parents who were becoming impatient with the unproven attacks and the extreme position of some members of the Citizens for Basic Education.

The board sensed a growing need to air the issues being raised and to bolster the confidence of the public in the schools and their operation. They scheduled their January board meeting in a large auditorium and had a capacity audience. Mrs. Morton and her supporters were prepared with a

written statement demanding the resignation of the superintendent. A retiring board member rose and paid tribute to the superintendent for his efforts in improving the quality of education in the city's schools. The audience supported the superintendent and rose to their feet for a standing ovation.

The bond issue took top priority with the board, and after its successful passage in February, they returned to the task of dealing with the problem of restoring faith of the community in their schools. The results of the bond election indicated that the extremist position of the Citizens for Basic Education had lost them supporters, but the superintendent felt that more needed to be done. Late in February, a speaker from the NEA was invited to be the keynote speaker at the district's city-wide PTA leadership conference. The topic of his address was "Attacks on Our Schools." Mrs. Morton condemned the choice of speaker and the work of the NEA and picketed the meeting. Only a few loyal supporters joined her.

In the face of rising public support for the schools the Citizens for Basic Education published a few more inflammatory documents which were ignored by the community without further action from the board. By summer Mrs. Morton had determined to move to a city which had more concern for the well-being of its students.

Questions for Analysis

1. What conditions in the district retarded the growth of the Citizens for Basic Education?

2. What support did Mrs. Morton have? Where was it from and what could have been the reasons for it?

3. What strategy did the board employ? What alternatives did it have? Would these alternatives have resulted in the same outcome?

4. Is Mrs. Morton's strategy common to other causes or groups? If so, which? What was the general nature of the issues she raised and how did they change?

Case 7 - Disputed Textbooks

Farmdale was a large suburban community on the outskirts of a large Northeastern city. Most of its residents were commuters, interspersed with long-time established families of the area. The basically middle-class community expected quality education for their children and had accepted a high tax rate to insure this goal. The superintendent and his staff attempted to design and implement the best curriculum possible for the schools. Experts in many fields had been consulted in the selection of materials for the schools and in the in-service training of the staff.

Mr. Richards was a long-time resident of Farmdale and a collector of antiques. Through his interest in antiques he attended a lecture on the early history of his home state, and subsequentially got his name on the mailing list of the Daughters of the American Revolution, who had sponsored the lecture. Although he usually did not read unsolicited mail, one piece from the DAR caught his attention. Although a bachelor, Mr. Richards took a great interest in the youth of the community and was alarmed by the material he found in his hands. It was a list of books which the DAR claimed to be unpatriotic. Not knowing how to proceed, he enlisted a friend to help him compare his list with the books being used in the local schools.

He was upset to find that many books that appeared on the list were used by the schools in Farmdale. He became concerned that there might be others also, and through the DAR was able to make contact with the Sons of the American Revolution, American League, America's Future, Inc., Florida Coalition of Patriotic Societies, and Parents for a Better Education, all of whom furnished him with lists of books which they felt were undesirable in the hands of impressionable youth.

One year after making his initial discover, Mr. Richards and his colleague completed a 30-page document comparing the various lists he had obtained with the books used in the Farmdale schools. The two men had worked in secret, so the opening of the school textbook issue took the community by surprise. Under the banner of "subversion of our children by undermining their faith and allegiance in God and Country" the document was first released to the city's newspapers. The report leaned heavily on quotations

from DAR materials. It attacked content in the texts themselves, and even went further, to condemn the suggested readings included in the texts as well as the authors of the books.

The school was totally unaware of the study that was being conducted by the two men, as they had never been contacted for information at any time. Upon reading the report in the morning paper, the school superintendent hurriedly called experts from the local university to seek their views on the main list of texts being attacked. They responded that the texts were the finest available and most appropriate for the grade level to which they had been assigned. Within the next 24 hours the superintendent, in consultation with the board, prepared a rebuttal to the report, in part based on his discussions on the phone earlier in the day. The chairman of the board, a leading doctor in the community, presented the board's report to the community which discredited the expertise of the writers, the report itself, and the organizations who had prepared the lists which had been used in Mr. Richard's investigation. The board's statement was quoted in its entirety in the local paper.

Mr. Richards got immediate response, not only from the board, but also from the conservative segment of the community. Encouraged by their sympathy for his cause he and his colleague sought to organize a group to help combat the school board's obviously inflexible and short-sighted views on school texts.

Mr. Richards' supporters quickly organized and focused their efforts on removal of 10 history texts as their first objective in their long-range plan to purge undesirable books from the public schools. Several church groups and one of the local DAR chapters provided not only support but a forum through which these views could become more widely spread. The community was continually bombarded with quotations from the black-listed books, accompanied by vignettes of the authors' views, associations, and private life.

Interestingly enough, the city's second DAR chapter refused to join the textbook crusade. None of the very influential American Legion posts formally joined the battle against the schools either. The ensuing alignment of power was based more on who publicly announced they were not associated with Mr. Richards than on who was standing with the board. The superintendent and the board carefully prepared their defense, using outside experts and staff within the school district. The way the community was responding to the issues, the board felt it was well to stand alone without the formal endorsement of community groups, rather than risk seriously dividing the community. Equipped with their defense, they tried to appeal to the good sense of the community leadership.

Six weeks after the initial report in the papers, the board announced a public hearing regarding the disputed textbooks. The press were fully informed of the purpose and date of the meeting to ensure good news coverage. Both sides were prepared for the hearing, and a large gathering of the community were in attendance. Mr. Richards, riding on the crest of the enthusiasm of his supporters, had enlisted the services of the state Anit-Communist League. The resulting presentation led from the 10 history textbooks to broader charges of subversion in the entire field of education. The meeting was marked with emotional outbursts from Mr. Richards' supporters who liberally used quotations ranging from J. Edgar Hoover to the Bible. The audience was stunned by the eloquence and emotionalism of the performance.

In defense of the texts, the superintendent had enlisted the aid of the assistant superintendent of instruction, who described the process used in adopting the texts, and included the recommendations of well-known historians from the local university. A guidance counselor, a citizenship teacher, and a history teacher all added to the testimony by explaining how the texts were used in the classroom, what supporting activities were provided and what other supplementary reading was suggested.

Upon hearing both sides of the textbook issue, the board voted to continue the use of the texts. In the audience the night of the hearing was the editor of one of the largest papers in the city. Intrigued by the wide

divergence of the two opposing views of the same textbook list, he initiated his own investigation. In a series of well documented articles he exposed the influence of outside organizations and discredited the report as poor research and sensationalism without a solid foundation of fact.

In the meantime the board remained firm in its position of keeping the books and the curriculum of which they were a part. Through its own releases to the paper parents were invited to read the texts and visit classes. This, in addition to the editor's support, based on his own independent evaluation of the issue, reassured many in the community whose concerns had been raised but who lacked information to make a firm stand. Gradually, calm returned to the community, and Mr. Richards' group voluntarily disbanded.

Questions for Analysis

1. Who were the key people that the superintendent used in his strategy? How did they contribute to the school's position? What other kinds of supporters could he have used if he had chosen to do so?

2. What was the base of Mr. Richards' support? What kinds of organizations were involved? Of what influence were outside organizations? What in his strategy was most effective? Least effective?

3. What typical organizations in your community would you expect to be aligned with a person like Mr. Richards?

Case 8 - Selecting a Site for a New School

As with all expanding large cities, the core of Summerfield had become populated almost entirely by blacks. The dividing lines between all-white and all-black neighborhoods were easily identifiable, as were the school attendance boundaries. The local NAACP had not let these conditions go unnoticed, and had steadily been increasing its activities regarding school issues. Since early 1960, they had charged the politically appointed board of education with supporting an active program of discrimination, with the result that ghetto children concentrated in the inner core of Summerfield were being denied equal educational opportunities. Overcrowding and poor facilities were, in fact, the rule rather than the exception.

As the pressures from the NAACP became greater, the board decided it must act to avoid an open conflict. In late 1961, the board agreed to build a new high school to relieve overcrowding at one of the all-black schools. The decision to build was simple enough, but where to build was not so easily resolved. The board limited its discussions of locations to executive sessions, and finally narrowed its choice to two locations, one in the heart of the black community and one on the edge of it. The five-man board had come to an impasse, with two members strongly in favor of each site and the fifth man undecided.

At a regular meeting of the board in April, the problem was solved. Only three members were present, with the two members favoring the location in the heart of the inner city in the majority. Although the location of the high school was not on the agenda, a vote was taken with predictable results. The news of the decision was a blow to the civil rights groups, who had hoped for a site which would have made a racially balanced school more of a possibility. At the next meeting of the board, the civil rights groups and black community leaders came out in full force in an attempt to have the 3-0 decision rescinded. Their attempts were futile. Throughout the rest of the spring, feelings ran high in the black community for having lost the chance to have an integrated high school. Charges of racism were

hurled at the school board. The issue was kept alive by a local radio station's nightly talk show, which would not allow the issue to die and continually stimulated a mounting feeling of frustration and hatred.

Meanwhile, the board was facing another crisis at the elementary grade level. Projected enrollment figures indicated lack of space in the predominantly black schools in the inner city. Local and district staff analyzed the situation and reported to the superintendent that transferring 600 black children to four predominantly white schools would solve the problem. The board approved the recommendation. Heretofore, the white community had not actively concerned itself with the school's problem. But with the announcement of the bussing plan, they actively mobilized their forces to oppose it. They, too, took to the air waves, and now the local radio station could claim to be presenting both sides of the issue. The callers to the station exhibited prejudice and hatred, and the program further split the black and white community.

The superintendent felt that, with the community reaction that had developed around the bussing plan, he should go to the community and defend the plan recommended by his staff. This task had its risks. In early May, a PTA meeting in an all-white school almost erupted into mob violence as the superintendent explained the bussing program.

Coming to the superintendent's rescue, the board immediately announced that the next two board meetings would be held first at a black high school, then a white to discuss both the bussing and the high school location issues. The meeting at the black school did not go according to schedule. One of the board members took the floor to denounce the superintendent, and then moved to postpone the second scheduled meeting in order to avoid conflict with a forthcoming primary election. The discussion that followed was lengthy and lively and was all broadcast again by the local radio station. Faced with massive opposition, the school board decided to rescind the bussing program and the site selection for the high school. Essentially, they were back where they started from, with the exception that community feelings were running high.

Now that bussing had been eliminated, the district staff began looking for a new compromise. In rechecking their figures they found an error which had triggered the original bussing recommendation. With just a few minor transfers among black schools, the problem could be easily taken care of. This announcement helped calm some of the tensions, especially in the all-white communities. Open racial conflict, however, remained a possibility. To prevent this possibility from becoming a reality, the Chamber of Commerce urged the board to cancel the second meeting it had scheduled. The daily newspapers gave full coverage to the cancellation, explaining that it occurred because the bussing program was no longer necessary.

The Chamber of Commerce also urged the local radio station to discontinue airing the school racial issue. Altogether the actions taken reduced further community tensions, at least on the surface. The black community still was left in a state of frustration, with hopes for a new school, but with the site still not determined. Sensing that no help was coming from the board, the black community took their next step by initiating court action.

Questions for Analysis

1. What actions taken by the board intensified this problem? Why did the board respond in the manner that it did? How did the political situation affect the way the board operated?

2. How important was the part played by the local radio station in this issue?

3. How would you describe the superintendent's relationship with the community? At what points could he have formed a more positive relationship with the community? What groups could he have used and how could he have involved them?

4. What steps should be taken next by the school to avoid future conflict?

Case 9 - Achieving Racial Balance in a Southern School

Twin Rivers, a medium-size city in the southern part of the country, had traditionally observed segregated housing patterns. The school district had deliberately located schools and attendance boundaries so as to maintain segregated neighborhood schools. For three years the all-white board had been confronted with increased demands from four separate civil rights organizations in the city to break this pattern. Feeling that they must do something before these groups initiated court action, the board announced that a special task force composed of city and school district staff had been charged with devising a plan to introduce more racial balance into the public schools.

The task force began its much heralded work in October. Their discussions were lengthy, as no solution seemingly would please all parts of the community. The deliberations of the staff were conducted with utmost secrecy, as the board feared that any information released by the task force would prematurely cause community conflict.

As time passed, the community speculated about the outcomes of any attempt to introduce racial balance in the city's schools. The white parents who disapproved of any kind of integration could predict that whatever plan was devised, they, in principle, could not support it. From the onset of the board's action to form the task force, they began organizing the United Parents Association. Many of the well-to-do white families in the city gave generously to the new organization. With other donations from parents, the UPA was able to hire a research staff and an executive secretary.

While the task force secrecy did not hinder the segregation forces, the civil rights groups reacted quite differently. The frustration of their past three years of futile encounter with the Twin Rivers school board was now being compounded by the delay and secrecy surrounding the task force. Impatient for action, the four groups devised plans of their own and the black community was soon embroiled in a debate on the merits of their own programs. While the city had already experienced the polarizing of the black and white communities, the black community itself now began to fragment.

The staff task force finally presented its plan to the board in March. The plan called for pairing of 24 schools. Bussing would occur between paired sets of schools to insure an improved racial balance. The board accepted the plan, but there was no indication what kind of balance was being sought, or which 24 schools would be chosen. The board recommended that the task force help implement their recommendations by holding hearings at each school to determine which schools would elect to be part of the plan.

The UPA, with its staff resources and a well unified membership, were ready for the hearings. Their research staff had prepared for them arguments against any type of integration program. The executive secretary had united well organized white parents' groups in a majority of the schools and was able to provide them with information as needed. The task force members themselves were prepared for the meetings too, as they had a stake in the program. Also, as staff they would be responsible for administering the newly integrated schools and dealing directly with any resulting problems.

In instructing the staff task force, the board mandated that the hearings not cause any problems and that rabble rousers not be given an opportunity to disrupt the meetings. With this goal in mind, the task force decided to hold the hearings without the civil rights and desegregation groups' leaders. The civil rights groups were caught off guard by the board's plan and the task force's decision, and they moved now to quickly mend their differences and respond as a united front. They failed in this effort. No one was surprised that, when the hearings concluded in late May, the local white community groups defeated the participation of their schools in the pairing plan. This was a stunning blow to the civil rights groups.

A lack of leadership by the board was evident during the whole deliberation process. Their concern with avoiding a community crisis had obtained for them something less than the desired results. The UPA was in a position of power in the community and had openly flaunted that power in a public fashion. The city's news media and some of its leading citizens did not let this go unnoticed. An editorial in the daily paper made a pointed attack on the school board for its indecision, its isolation from the community, and its inability to solve the problems of the district. Shortly thereafter a

feature article appeared exposing the membership of the UPA as racist in philosophy and practice. The systematic exclusion of the civil rights groups' leaders from the hearings held to decide which schools would participate in the board plan was documented in detail and put before the public as a subversion of the democratic process.

As the summer unfolded, the civil rights movement gained support. Feature articles in the paper further exposing the inequalities of the educational program brought more support from segments of the white community. The civil rights groups now had a common cause which was drawing them together. Reinforced by the experience they had as separate factions, they now had a large, broadly based leadership. Discarding the bussing plan as another in a series of inept attempts by the board to solve community problems, the combined civil rights movement behind a united front now sought far more basic structural changes in the school system beginning with the board.

Questions for Analysis

1. What was the consequence of having an all-staff task force? What kind of community participation would have been useful?

2. What tactic(s) of the board contributed to the problem?

3. How did the organizational patterns of the UPA and civil rights groups differ? What was the reason for this difference?

4. What role could a strong superintendent or district administrator have played in this issue? What power base would he have needed?

Case 10 - Open Enrollment Fails

Oaktown is a medium-sized community in the midwest within commuting distance from a large metropolitan area. It had been attempting to deal with the rapidly changing racial balance of its schools. New industry was rapidly occupying the older part of the city along the railroad tracks. White families quickly moved to the suburbs and unskilled and semiskilled black factory workers had immigrated into the heart of Oaktown in search of jobs and the housing which had been vacated by the older white families. The board of education felt powerless in its ability to cope with the situation and to prevent a segregated school situation. Warnings were coming from emerging civil rights groups that action needed to be taken. On the other hand, the school board did not wish to offend powerful white leaders by imposing interracial schools on the community. These leaders were descendants of the original founders of Oaktown and had traditionally lent their support to the town's schools. The board also knew that the principals and teachers who had traditionally taught white children had indicated to them that they were not able to relate to the needs of the newly arrived black children, and resented their presence in their schools.

From the beginning of the school year, the demands of the civil rights groups were becoming harder to ignore. The board promised each group it encountered that it would look into the matter, but no further action was taken. When an actual confrontation occurred with parents in the black community, the board was unprepared for action. The parents' groups from each of the two downtown high schools had banded together with a list of grievances which they presented to the board. They were concerned with the adequacy of the school buildings and the quality of teaching and educational programs. They asked for both remedial and enrichment courses so all their children would have equal educational opportunities. The board promised to appoint a special Commission on Integration. A month passed before such a Commission was publicly named. In general it was conservative in nature but with several minority members and consultants from outside the city.

The Commission met continuously until March, its work largely done with no attention focused on it by either the board or the larger community. Its recommendations, when drawn up, were forwarded directly to the board and were not made public. The board met in executive session to consider the recommendations and to further initiate cost and feasibility studies of their own. Their deliberations were marked with caution and presented an appearance to the black community of deliberate stalling. Sensing their restlessness in the absence of action, the board promised to present a definite plan before the next school year began.

At the end of June the board finally recommended an open enrollment plan, but made no effort to publicize it after its adoption. In answer to inquiries from civil rights groups, the board and administration referred all questions to local school administrators.

As the summer drew to a close, it was evident that the district and building level administrators did not support the open enrollment plan. They did not openly oppose the plan, but in subtle ways made it difficult for parents to gain information and further found ways to inconvenience them when they pursued the objective of the plan. Few parents sought permission to enroll their children elsewhere due to lack of knowledge of the program, and even fewer succeeded in successfully accomplishing the transfer of their children.

The local staff, due to the summer recess, were not prepared for the plan and neither were the pupils. In general, the dissemination of information regarding the plan, and the training of the personnel involved, was not sufficient to make the plan a success.

Shortly after the beginning of the school year the black parents, in yet another confrontation, demanded that the board demonstrate its progress in maintaining a better racial balance in the schools. The board members pointed with pride to their open enrollment plan, and then presented statistics that showed few transfers of black students to predominantly white schools. The board charged that it had initiated the plan in good faith and at considerable expense only to find that Negro parents really

did not want to transfer their students to white schools. This appeared to put the responsibility for integrating the schools back on the black community.

Coming to the defense of the black parents' association were two organizations, the Urban League and the American Jewish Committee. These groups offered to publish a pamphlet giving instructions to parents on how to take advantage of the open enrollment plan and the procedures that needed to be followed. The pamphlet strongly urged parents to become involved in the program. The board was asked to help distribute the pamphlet but refused to do so. The two community groups used their own volunteers to mount a door-to-door distribution of the pamphlet throughout the black community in Oaktown.

The plan, which on paper looked quite good, had a favorable response from the black community once it got the information. Consequentially, pressure on the board was reduced significantly. Pleased with the results of these organizations' efforts, the board revised its previous decision and distributed the brochure at local school offices.

Increased numbers of parents, armed with their information booklets, requested the transfers. However, school principals continued to oppose the plan with a variety of techniques. "Sending" schools often painted a dark picture of the bussing problems, or racial tensions at "receiving" schools, and held out promises of a better educational program at the home school. Receiving schools often placed all black children in remedial classes, or otherwise segregated the students so that, in effect, there became a school within a school.

Despite efforts to make information about the plan widely available, the frustrations of the reality of the program turned the mood of the black community into one of hostility and mistrust. Their plight was well documented in the local press and the Urban League and the American Jewish Committee pledged their resources in seeking redress for the grievances expressed by the black community. The board's "well we tried" attitude further added fuel to the fire, and school-community relations deteriorated rapidly.

The resources of the local paper, the Urban League, the American Jewish Committee, and the local black community were a formidable force to deal with. Seeing that direct confrontation had not worked, the coalition began a total community education program. The main figures in the city's power structure were carefully identified and were personally contacted and taken on tours of the city schools. The economic realities of good schools--as encouragement to new industries to stay in Oaktown--were emphasized along with the other social values brought by racially balanced schools.

Pressure now began to rise in influential places, which in turn made itself known to the school board. The board itself still seemed helpless in dealing with the situation, and did not seem to want the responsibility of making a decision. Sensing the course of the stalemate, the Urban League and the American Jewish Committee urged the increasingly frustrated black community to join them in a political campaign to unseat incumbent board members, and for the duration of the campaign minimize any direct confrontations. The results of their carefully made plans led to the replacement of three board members. The new board, augmented by new members, was much more able and willing to make decisions and to take those steps which would lead to reduced tensions in the community.

Questions for Analysis

1. What was the board's strategy? Was it successful in the long run?
2. If the board had been sincere in its efforts, what groups would have been included in the planning and implementation stages?
3. How could the board have avoided opposition to the enrollment at the local school level?
4. What community forces will the new board be responsive to, and why?
5. What background factors were critical in both causing and relieving the school problem?
6. What was the role played by the Urban League and the American Jewish Committee? What resources did they have that the black community leaders did not have?

Case 11 - Decentralization

Seaside, a large metropolitan school district, had grown and expanded its boundaries with the growth of the city. It now found itself in the position of administering a large number of schools over a large geographical area. The school population represented communities whose characters were distinct and varied widely from one another. As could be expected, the parents and teachers in individual schools felt isolated from the central administration and chafed under rulings and policies which they felt inappropriate to their communities. To this was added their frustration in not being able to participate in any way in the policy formation process of the schools, or the allocation of the district's dwindling resources.

Pressure mounted, especially in low income communities, to have more local control of those things which most directly affected the quality of education for their children. Sensing a conflict of major proportions with city-wide implication, the board tried to avoid a confrontation by setting up two experimental decentralized districts in areas where the pressure for local control seemed to be the greatest. The authorization for the experimental local boards was drawn up quickly with provisions for election procedures and a mandate to the new boards to be responsible for those policies necessary for the operation of the local school.

The elections were held as prescribed and the community people went about the process of getting organized. None of them had any experience to draw upon, and the administrative staff assigned to them seemed to suffer from the same deficiency. This circumstance was further compounded by the fact that the scope of operation of the local board was not clearly defined by the central board's mandate. The central board itself was ambivalent about what powers really did exist at the local level, and did not provide any leadership regarding the resolution of this problem. The authority to make decisions was still jealously held by the central administration, while responsibility to make decisions was delegated to some local units.

One of the first considerations undertaken by one of the local boards was the issue of personnel. There had been a long standing feeling within the

community that one of the principals and many of the teachers were racially prejudiced, and not sensitive to the needs of the community's children. They believed that reaching their goal of improved educational programs could only be accomplished by changes in personnel. Consequently, one of their first actions was to vote for a resolution that would transfer some of their teachers and the principal out of their local school. Their second action was to state that the policy of the board would be to select replacements for this personnel on the basis of their own criteria, regardless of city-wide eligibility lists. The local board proceeded as though this was a power delegated to them, and a city-wide crisis was thereby precipitated. It was compounded when the other local boards adopted the same action. At the focal point of the ensuing debate was the Seaside teachers' union. Initially they had been in favor of the decentralization of schools. A large portion of their membership was from the minority community and it was an expedient position for the union to take. Now that they were faced with the circumvention of the eligibility lists which the union had waged a long and successful battle for, they were faced with a dilemma. After an examination of the issues at stake and the new possibilities that could arise with each local board responsible for personnel policies, the union strongly protested the actions of the local board. The central board, pressured by local civil rights groups, reluctantly backed the local boards and transferred the personnel as requested. The union countered by threatening to strike if appointments were made from other than the eligibility list.

Again the central board was in a tenuous position. The union, just the preceding year, had threatened to strike over a wage dispute. Calling their bluff, the board had not bowed to their demands and had experienced a very successful strike with the result that the mayor and governor had interceded to see that the union wage demands were met.

Not wishing to endure another teachers' strike so soon after their first, the board reversed its decision, reinstated the personnel it had earlier transferred, and invoked a law which indicated that all personnel matters

were the responsibility of the elected board, which in this case they claimed to be, as the local board was an exception granted on an experimental basis.

The two communities and their local boards were enraged at this switch in positions. They charged that the central board had entered into the experiment in bad faith, giving them the structure of change but not the reality of power to implement it. To them the whole experiment had been an exercise in futility.

Dejected, but not defeated, the local boards were determined to make local control a reality. With the help of the local CORE chapter the communities introduced into the state legislature a bill which would make them a school district independent from Seaside. Having been introduced at the end of a legislative session, the bill did not have sufficient support to be enacted. The timing of legislative political maneuvers was not within the experience of the new community leaders, but this was rejected as a legitimate excuse for failure of the bill. Feelings ran so strong that the mayor of the city interceded in behalf of the two communities.

Realizing that the bill that was defeated in the legislature lost because it did not have sufficient endorsement, the mayor appointed an Advisory Panel, chaired by a nationally prestigious scholar. The Advisory Panel, under the dynamic leadership of its chairman, thoroughly studied the matter and within two months sent its recommendations for city-wide decentralization to the mayor. The recommendation spelled out the number of districts and their boundaries. The power to regulate budget, personnel, and curriculum was delegated to the elected local boards and control over basic standards, capital expenditures, and administrative control services rested with the city-wide board. The final report was strongly favored by the mayor, governor, and state board of education. The school board received the report but did not take a public stand on it.

The Advisory Panel proposal contained one item--local control of personnel--which was a controversial issue, not only with the teachers' union, but with

the Administrators' Council as well. This was the first time in their history that these two groups had shared like views. Combined, the union and the Administrators' NEA affiliate had many resources in the state capitol.

Unfortunately, the recommendations contained in the Advisory Panel's report reached the legislature during a session in which a crucial election year battle had developed. Not wanting to alienate any votes, legislators initiated a delaying action. As a temporary measure, they increased the number of elected members on the city-wide board, to better represent the diverse communities within Seaside. The decentralization plan itself was referred to the newly constituted board with the mandate that they present a plan to the next session of the legislature.

The combined efforts of the union and its supporters from other lobbies and the NEA and its powerful lobby ensured that the bill included a prohibition against delegating personnel responsibilities to local boards.

The legislature was successful in postponing a controversial decision until after the election and the union and NEA had been successful in deleting from any future decentralization program a provision which was adverse to them. The school board now was left with the thankless task of proposing a plan that, regardless of its form, would be opposed by the community control forces, as the key issue had been predetermined by the legislature.

Questions for Analysis

1. What was the typical manner of response used by the power structure throughout this period of time of the schools' history? What was the outcome of this strategy?

2. What was the role of political forces in shaping the future of the school?

3. What major coalition blocked efforts at decentralizing the city schools? Did they have any common causes? Did they have any formal coordinating structure linking them together?

4. What community groups would you expect would support decentralization? From the list you have drawn, what do you feel would hold this group together so they could act as a powerful united front?

5. Did the intervention of individuals or groups change the course of action in this case? Who were they and what was their influence? At what points were they most effective?

Case 12 - Sex Education Defeated

At the request of the Faculty Curriculum Advisory Council, the Riverview School Board approved a two-year study to design a district program for sex education. The Riverview District served a sprawling suburban area that had experienced a tremendous amount of growth over the past years. The District was composed in part of long-time residents of the area who had been engaged in the rural economy of the original community. The majority, however, occupied middle- and upper middle-class neighborhoods, commuting to the nearby city for employment and recreation. The parents took pride in their schools, which were mostly new and modern. The District staff prided themselves in putting up-to-date programs into the schools, and were the leaders in the state in experimenting with new teaching techniques and curriculum designs.

The Sex Education Study Committee worked diligently for two years and consulted with authorities on the subject, nationwide as well as locally. Parents and teachers throughout the District were invited to review the instructional materials that were already available and were given an opportunity to suggest others which could be developed locally. The Committee finally prepared a curriculum guide for sex education for grades 1 through 12. The topics were carefully geared to the child's social and physical development at each grade level.

The board accepted the report and approved it for implementation for the coming school year. A special training program for all teachers participating in the program was initiated before the opening of school in the fall. Parents were invited to come to the school and view the films, charts, and texts to be used in the new courses.

In the fall of 1965, the program began as planned. At the end of its second year of operation it had gained statewide recognition as an exemplary program. The State Department of Education recommended that staff from other districts visit Riverview and become acquainted with their highly successful program.

In the fall of 1967, the editor of the local paper had the program called to his attention. A newly arrived resident of the community who had been a friend during college days raised questions about the school's program in sex education. Neighbors had repeated some incidents which reportedly had occurred in the high school class and they alarmed the newcomers who were anticipating sending their two daughters to the school. The editor set out gathering the rumors and the picture they represented to him was one of immoral teaching and conduct in the city's classrooms. Upon request, the District allowed the editor to examine the program in detail. Predominant in the instructional materials were items published by a national organization engaged in research and development of teaching aides in sex education. The journalist recognized one of the board of directors of this organization as one who had friends who were often accused of being communist sympathizers. Whereas the previous rumors had caused concern, this new item of information was so alarming that he felt he must expose the school's program for what it was--a communist plot to undermine the morals of American youth and to destroy the American family--the cornerstone of democracy.

The resulting front-page article stirred interest throughout the community and particularly with ultraconservative political and fundamentalist religious groups. Women who belonged to both of these groups formed a Mothers for Morality group which continued to examine the issues raised in the news article.

Rumors about misconduct on the part of teachers, instruction in techniques of the sexual act, and approval of homosexuality stunned the community. These unsubstantiated events caused many parents to question whether the school was assuming a responsibility for a type of education that rightfully belonged in the home, and in the church. It seemed to them that the family's moral values were in danger of being undermined. The district staff at first dismissed the criticisms as atypical, and judged, from the lack of inquiries at the schools to examine the materials, that the critics were certainly a small portion of the population.

As the rumors increased in intensity and became indisputable events in the minds of the Mothers' group and certain of the outspoken church leaders, the staff began to search out documentation to dispute the claims of the opposition. Again they publicly invited parents to view the materials used in the program and to talk with the teachers. The superintendent issued statements assuring the community that only the materials recommended by parents, teachers, and experts in the field were being used and then only within those limits of the curriculum guide approved by the District. The rumors were shown to be contrary to the facts involved. These statements got more coverage in the metropolitan paper but were regularly ignored or disclaimed in the local paper.

Despite the efforts of the schools, the opposition's emotional appeal of a communist conspiracy and the destruction of American values was overwhelming, and the tide seemed to be turning against the school's program.

The school board decided to go to the public with a series of meetings to defend the sex education program. The first meeting resulted in utter chaos. The superintendent was shouted down by those opposing the program and the platform was monopolized by emotional attacks and accusations following the same theme that had been expressed in previous months. Apparently, the superintendent's efforts to inform the public as to the facts of the case had been of little use.

The next open meetings were more controlled, but the opposition managed to dominate. Speeches were made by local parents as well as experts from the community--doctors, physicians, marriage counselors--all of whom opposed the program. Repeatedly the superintendent tried to explain that what these people objected to was for the most part not being taught and that the materials from the national organization which started the initial investigation were scientific, not political in nature. The board began to feel a sense of hopelessness about its ability to bridge the information gap which was now becoming so pronounced.

Further complicating the board's ability to deal with the situation, a child psychiatrist enlisted by the local anti-sex education forces proclaimed that

sex education was a traumatic experience for many young people and had damaging effects on their ability to function as adults. This message was not only successful in further undermining the program but, encouraged by the response in Riverview, the address was repeated many times throughout neighboring communities.

Not to be outdone, the community's state legislator presented a bill in the state legislature to outlaw any form of sex education without the written permission of the parent. The State Director of Education, soon to seek higher political office, joined in the attack, not only on the school's program, but on sex education programs in general. His staff, who were familiar with the program and had originally enthusiastically endorsed it, were now forced into a position of embarrassed silence. The intensity of the rhetoric at the state level was sufficient to ensure passage of the bill.

Two members of the Riverview school board faced reelection during this adverse publicity promoted by the anti-sex-education forces. The two board members who had strongly favored the school's program lost their elections by small margins to the opposition's candidates. This still left a 3-2 margin in favor of the program, which the board and superintendent continued to defend. Despite renewed efforts to inform the public, the monopoly the opposition had on the local paper made such efforts difficult. The opposition remained strong and even more determined.

Almost overshadowed by the District's curriculum problems was a growing financial crisis caused by the influx of school-age children into the new housing in the community. Existing schools were overcrowded and double sessions were becoming common. A bond election was desperately needed.

As the board began to campaign for much needed additional financing, they were met head-on by the anti-sex-education forces, now solidly aligned with a major taxpayers' group. Their message was quite clear: continue sex education and no money. The past year had been a trying one for the board, and each of the continuing members of the board had suffered a great deal of personal abuse from the community. After receiving threatening and

obscene phone calls at all hours of the day at home and his place of business, the chairman of the board resigned. His position was immediately filled by an anti-sex-education proponent who now swung the power to that side of the board. The first order of business was to immediately suspend the whole sex education program and disallow the use of any of the materials for any purpose. Keeping their work, the opposition quickly changed its approach to the bond election, and although the District lost its sex education program it won the bond election and was now able to expand its facilities.

The board was now faced with the question of what to do with the sex education program. The most vehemently opposed member of the board was appointed chairman of a joint faculty and parent committee to revise the disputed program. The result of their deliberations was a watered down program minus all but two of the original films and limited to a syllabus to be prepared by a panel of teachers and advisors. The program was designed for only the 11th and 12th grades and, of course, only with the written consent of the parent.

Unable to function within the repressive atmosphere of the community, the superintendent and many teachers and supervisory personnel left the District. The well-organized anti-sex-education forces, encouraged by their victory, began to consider the social science curriculum as their next target.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the issues involved in this case? Which was the central issue?

2. In what way(s) could the board have avoided this confrontation? What resources could have been called on to help the school district?

3. What were the strategies used by the community to defeat the school's program? Could the techniques used by the opposition be equally effective with other parts of the school curriculum? Who was the key to the success of the opposition?

4. What is the prospect of further curriculum development in this district? What strategies would have to be used? What community groups and key leaders would have to support such development?

Case 13 - Planning for Differentiated Staffing

Elmwood was a largely residential district within a large metropolitan area. The community had a history of supporting its schools and encouraging innovation. Without any large industries to help provide a large tax base, the board was very conscious of getting their money's worth for each tax dollar. The board encouraged the superintendent to seek ways to use his personnel to the best advantage and to improve services to the students without raising the school budget.

The superintendent and his assistant were given permission to go to several universities which were involved in the planning of new structures and organizations for public schools. They reported back to the board at the end of their year's investigation and individual study, recommending that the board initiate an in-depth study to see whether or not it was feasible to design a plan of flexible scheduling combined with a differentiated staffing pattern. With the approval of the board, the superintendent sought financial aid from a large foundation to finance this study.

Throughout the next year consultants from local universities and colleges explored the various possibilities that scheduling, curriculum and staffing patterns could have. The changes they recommended were quite drastic, but the anticipated outcomes seemed to fit the needs of the community. A far better educational program for the children seemed likely, with a system that would keep good teachers in the classroom and yet give them leadership responsibility in the district. As plans evolved, the costs were carefully projected and found to be feasible within the tax support that could be provided by the district.

As the superintendent looked ahead at the planning and changes which would be needed, and the personnel that he now had in the district, he realized that the whole plan's success or failure would depend on the cooperation of the teachers and the principals. As a first step the principals were retained on duty for the next summer. Consultants were brought in to explain the whole concept of the new patterns of organization being proposed with an emphasis on the personnel requirements and the changing role of the

principals. A special focus of the summer's activities was the human relations aspects of change. The administrative staff participated in two weekends of sensitivity training to enable them to learn how to deal with conflict and anxiety. Besides focusing on their own needs, they also learned techniques for working with groups and involving people in decision making.

The next entire school year was devoted to explaining to the staff the plan for differentiating staff and revising curriculum. Small groups of teachers met to have their questions answered and to give suggestions as to how detailed plans should be formulated. From the very beginning there was a group of teachers, most of them union members, who objected to having anything but a single classification for classroom teachers. They objected to having some teachers promoted to higher salary schedules than others, particularly on the basis that no fair means of evaluation existed. The superintendent had anticipated this response and was ready to deal with it.

After the proposed plan for change had been fully explained, the superintendent announced that district-wide study committees would be established to work out the details of the plan. One committee would be devoted to curriculum and the other to staffing. Each school would elect two representatives to each committee and the superintendent would select three members. The elections took place during January, and the staffing committee had very few of the union teachers elected to it. The superintendent used two of his appointments to involve a union leader from both the elementary and high school level.

The staffing committee met at the end of January, under the leadership of a principal who was particularly skilled in group dynamics. With the principal's guidance the group was able to establish the benefits of a change in the traditional pattern of the one-teacher, self-contained classroom. The union members continued to oppose the plan, however, and were inhibiting the progress of the committee. The members of the group, who had become quite open with one another, asked the opponents to put in writing the specific items which made the plan unacceptable to them. When they returned to the committee with their list, the committee separated

the items into two categories--role definition and selection. The group asked the union members whether, if these two items could be clarified, they would personally support the program and they responded in the affirmative.

The principal recommended to the group that the committee split into two subcommittees, each taking one of the areas mentioned by the union members. It took these two committees the rest of the year to wrestle with their problems. The role committee listed all the duties that a teacher had and projected what duties could be added to improve the educational program of the school. When they had completed the list they separated the tasks into categories which could be identified by a given skill level. From these task groupings they were then able to determine the qualifications and criteria for promotion to the various levels.

The selection committee struggled with their problem and finally devised a procedure whereby faculty were involved in the selection of all levels of differentiated staff above classroom teacher. Finding that the structure they proposed could be used for the annual evaluation of all staff, they included that in the recommendations also.

The final products of the two committees were thoroughly supported by all the members that worked on them. Meeting as a group, they made minor revisions in each other's plans, and made adjustments so that staff levels and procedures were in accordance with one another. The combined efforts were then put together in report form. The principal then asked the committee what should be done with the report now that it was completed. The committee members responded by taking the plan back to the schools they represented. After the local presentation, each school was asked to recommend any changes that they considered necessary.

By the end of the school year, each of the schools had reported back to the district committee. Recommended changes were discussed and implemented where the committee felt that it strengthened the document. The union members of the committee expressed their satisfaction with the plan now that all their questions were taken care of, and all their fellow members had had a chance to react to the plan.

Opposition still existed, but it was small and not on any organized basis. The most outspoken opponents sought an interview with the superintendent and threatened to resign if the superintendent did not put a halt to the progress of the plan. The superintendent stated that if the majority of teachers wanted this change, and it appeared to him that they did, then it would occur, and that any teacher who did not feel comfortable with such a program would be advised to seek a different teaching environment elsewhere.

The summer was spent in completing editorial changes in the staff description and selection document, which included the evaluation and review procedures. Together with the report from the curriculum study committee, the district had the next phase of its planning complete. Before the next school term began, the total report was submitted to the board and to a panel of advisors who had been instrumental in helping the district throughout the past two years. When the school year opened, the report had the approval of the board, the administration, and the advisors. It was now resubmitted to the teachers for their final vote of approval. The overwhelming majority approved of the whole plan.

The district was now in a position to implement the plan throughout the coming year. The continuing participation of the faculty was assumed, as they now had gained the skills in decision making to be effective in carrying out this task in cooperation with other school officials.

Questions for Analysis

1. In carefully planning this involvement in school changes, were there any other groups that should or could have been involved? If so, how and why?

2. What were the key elements in the strategy used by the superintendent to assure success of the plan?

3. If the school district is consistent in its strategy, what steps will it take during the implementation year to ensure continuing success of the program?

4. What problems lie ahead in the operation of the differentiated staffing in this school? Who is most likely to be involved?

Case 14 - Student Dress Code Conflict

In the middle-class suburban community served by Fulton High School, it was assumed that the school's administration was responsible for preserving the standards of conduct appropriate to the school environment. In the minds of the school administration, conduct was interpreted broadly to include behavior in the classroom, the school grounds, and the manner of dress which was consistent with scholarly, well-mannered behavior. The school board had delegated the responsibility for determining the details of behavior and dress codes to the principals of the local schools, and the principal of Fulton had actively accepted this responsibility.

Fulton High School had always prided itself on the courtesy of its students and the neat appearance of all its personnel, staff and students, as well as the grounds of the school. Courtesy and grooming slogans were evident on the bulletin boards throughout the school, along with constant reminders to keep the campus neat.

When shorter skirts for girls and longer hair for boys became an overnight trend for high school students, the girls' and boys' vice-principals prepared revised regulations governing appropriate campus dress, including the length of skirts and hair. Their rationale was that appearance of these latest fads on campus would detract from desirable student attitudes regarding the seriousness and value of learning. The newly developed rules were sent to each parent prior to the opening of school in the fall, with an accompanying letter explaining the action that would be taken if such standards were not met.

During the first week of school a large number of both girls and boys failed to meet the new standards and were ordered home by the two vice-principals who were responsible for enforcing the regulations. Most of the students returned to class appropriately dressed or with their hair shortened to meet the new standards.

Some, however, did not and would not conform. Their parents protested to the principal without success, then went on to the school board itself.

Finding no resolution of the conflict at either of these levels, the parents individually wrote letters to the editor of the city paper. As the letters to the editor increased, the complaining parents realized they were not alone in their fight. Quickly, they joined together, first to provide a substitute education for their suspended sons and daughters, and then to seek ways of fighting the school regulations.

The students who remained in school felt a strong sympathy for their suspended friends. They knew many of them as bright students and several among them were members and officers of the student body council. They felt that the new rules were unfair and senseless and not at all in keeping with the times. The student council expressed resentment to their faculty advisor that they had not been consulted before the rules were enforced. After all, they reasoned, why have a student council if it isn't going to be involved with policies directly related to students. The faculty advisor fully understood their arguments, suggested that they propose an alternate set of regulations for the dress code, and recommend the disciplinary action to be taken if such standards were not met.

With enthusiasm, the student council set to work devising a liberalized package governing dress standards for both boys and girls. With some pride, they presented their plan to the principal, who in turn sent it to the two vice-principals for their approval and recommendations. Both staff members saw the student proposal as being in opposition to the moral values of the community. They recommended that the principal not accept the student-proposed dress code, and he concurred with their judgment. He announced his decision by means of the daily bulletin on Wednesday. This rejection resulted in immediate reaction from the student body. A demonstration was quickly planned for the lunch hour on Friday. At the rally, student body leaders urged their fellow students to appear at school in unacceptable dress on the next Monday. Although alarmed at the seriousness of the students, the administration did not interfere with the rally, as it was for the most part peaceful and even had its moments of humor.

The students' noon rally coincided with the culmination of actions initiated by the parents' group. Frustrated by all available appeals within the school system, they had sought outside advice. The American Civil Liberties Union agreed to review their case. They felt that it was a case in which civil liberties had been violated and helped the parents prepare an injunction against the school district.

Monday was full of surprises for the school principal. Over 60 percent of the student body appeared in attire which did not meet school regulations. He was faced with the decision of virtually closing the school for the day or relenting on the dress code and accepting the protest as a one-day affair. Meeting with student leaders, he became aware that they meant to continue this form of protest until the regulations were changed. Consulting with his staff, the principal felt that giving in to the students would be setting a precedent he might regret in the future, and he therefore enforced the dress rules. All nonregulation attire was unacceptable, and the students were sent home with unexcused absences on their attendance records.

By noon the principal's life was more complicated by the action of the ACLU, which notified the school and the school board of its forthcoming filing of a court injunction prohibiting the enforcement of the dress code. The principal was now faced with obvious mounting opposition to the dress code, coming from two fronts. To continue backing the judgment of his staff seemed only to lead to further conflict. An alternative still open to him was to select an advisory panel consisting of parents, students, faculty, and the two vice-principals. He chose this course of action, and within two weeks had the first meeting arranged. At the meeting, the students seized the initiative and presented their previously rejected dress code. Over the objections of the vice-principals, the student council advisor, who was one of the faculty representatives, took the lead in finding compromises which were acceptable to the other parties involved.

Although the students had the advantage of having worked on the issue previously, their reasonableness and maturity in presenting their side of the argument won the respect of the other members of the committee. At the

urging of the faculty advisor, the newly proposed dress code was designated henceforth to be the responsibility of the student council, not only for revisions, but for regulation as well. An advisory panel of parents and faculty was designated to assist the students either on their own request or on the request of the administration.

The student council unanimously approved the new standards and the proposed way of work for the future. They urged students to return to school and abide by the more reasonable standards. All the students returned with longer hair and shorter skirts in evidence. Students not meeting the regulations responded to student pressure to adhere to the rules. Contrary to the fears of the vice-principals, the educational atmosphere did not noticeably deteriorate. In fact student morale was at a higher level than ever before and the students appeared to grow in their sense of responsibility for leadership in school affairs. The faculty also gained new respect for this leadership ability, and encouraged the students' increased involvement in not only administrative matters but curriculum as well.

The plan worked out by Fulton High School eventually became the model adopted by the entire district to deal not only with dress code but other forms of student conduct.

Questions for Analysis

1. Who were the key individuals in this case and what role did they play?
2. At what points could the principal have intervened to minimize the conflict in the situation? Did the conflict have any positive aspects?
3. What people could the principal have chosen for the advisory committee? How could a different membership on the committee affect the outcome?
4. What other strategy could the students have used to achieve their ends?
5. What formal organizations were involved in this problem? Which had the most power and why?

Case 15 - Student Strike Backed by the Community

Sullivan High School was located in the center of a large city's predominantly Spanish-speaking community. There had been community pressure for the past three years to hire Spanish-surnamed faculty who not only spoke the language of the students but understood the community's culture. The school administration agreed that such teachers would be helpful, as the Anglo staff was having increasing difficulty relating to the student body. There was a rising feeling of pride within the community regarding their language and heritage, which was reflected in the attitudes of the students. The present teachers were not equipped to handle this turn of events.

When Mr. Garcia was hired, the school felt it had a man who had the qualifications that would satisfy both the needs of the school and the community. He was a former resident of the neighborhood and had recently graduated from a local college. He was bilingual and knew many of the families in the neighborhood. He was a young and dynamic teacher.

Mr. Garcia's popularity with the student body was immediate. Both individually and in groups the students sought out Mr. Garcia to air the problems they were having in trying to get an education. Their grievances ranged from poor food in the cafeteria and run-down facilities to poor curriculum which was not geared to their skill level or their culture. Mr. Garcia listened patiently and urged the students to talk to the principal and other teachers and make their needs known. Meanwhile, he carefully checked out their charges by getting basic data on graduates, procedures and policies used in the counseling office and curriculum guides. He found that many of the students' complaints were legitimate, and showed that the administration, through lack of knowledge, was indeed discriminating against Spanish-speaking students. Some complaints could be traced to the students' own lack of knowledge of the school structure and procedures, but others could be ascribed to general poor communications between the students and the administration of the school.

As the school year progressed, Mr. Garcia consulted on many occasions with his department chairman and the school principal expressing his concern about the school's program and general environment. He tried his best to interpret

the reasons for the students' resentment of the school's practices, especially when problems could be traced to cultural factors. During the same period of time, the students were attempting to talk to the principal and other teachers so they could explain their needs as they saw them. Both Mr. Garcia and the students began to feel more and more frustrated as their communications with the school administration and teachers brought no action or understanding. The students turned to Mr. Garcia for help and leadership.

During the middle of the spring semester Mr. Garcia and a group of student leaders met off the school campus to draft a written statement of student grievances. He felt that perhaps the verbal communication which had taken place over the past months had been too general and emotional and this new strategy might produce at least action on some specific issues. This effort resulted in a list of twenty detailed items where students felt improvement was mandatory in order to provide the necessary conditions for education.

The principal listened politely when Mr. Garcia and five of the students made their presentation to the school's administrative staff and department heads. His response to the items was not forthcoming for two weeks. In a bulletin, read in all the homerooms, the principal stated that there could be no action taken on the list of grievances, as city-wide policy and local school policy prevented implementation of the requested changes. This was a blow to the hopes of the students and Mr. Garcia. The helplessness they felt in trying to initiate change soon turned to hostility and militance. The student leaders began to seek wider support from the whole student body. By the close of the school year, student activism was becoming inevitable. Mr. Garcia himself had become disillusioned with the school administration and shared the militance of the emerging student movement.

The summer did not bring an end to the activities of the students and their faculty advisor. Under his leadership community groups were enlisted to help the students. These groups were more than willing to bring their strength to this cause as they, too, had experienced the apathy of the city in responding to the broader needs of the community.

When school opened in September, the cause of the students was foremost in the minds of a highly mobilized community. Mr. Garcia, backed now by outspoken militant adults from the community, demanded a meeting with the school administration. The principal reluctantly agreed to a public meeting. A large crowd strained the capacity of the auditorium while Mr. Garcia, a student spokesman, and a well-known community priest presented an expanded list of demands. The school was given two weeks to initiate action or be faced with a student strike supported by the community.

At the end of two weeks, the principal, upon the advice of his supervisor, proposed that a committee be established to study the demands. His suggestion was taken by the students and community as another sign of the school's intention to do nothing. The strike was on.

On the first two days of the strike, Mr. Garcia tried to convince Sullivan's principal that meeting just a few simple demands would calm the situation and return the students to the classroom. This suggestion was seen as giving in to the students, and was quickly discarded by the principal. Mr. Garcia then tried to gain support from his fellow teachers. He got a polite reception, but no visible support. In frustration, Mr. Garcia on the third day appeared on the picket line with the students, both before school and during his lunch period.

Mr. Garcia's presence on the picket line quickly came to the attention of the press and hence to the city's board of education. The board, upon the recommendation of the principal, acted quickly to remove Mr. Garcia from his duties at Sullivan and reassigned him to a nonclassroom function in another part of the city. The transfer was accompanied by instruction not to be further involved with the affairs of Sullivan High School.

This move further angered the community. The press covered the local community meetings that ensued, and clearly indicated to its readers that hostility was rising now that the community had lost its teacher-leader. The next meeting of the board of education was disrupted by community groups not only demanding action on their original list of grievances but the immediate reinstatement of Mr. Garcia. The fiery rhetoric came to a

halt when it was necessary to clear the demonstrators from the board room so the business of the day could be conducted.

In the following morning's papers the school board president appealed to the community to return their children to school to prevent them from being expelled. In addition, formation of a study committee was announced, composed of Spanish-surnamed leaders from throughout the city with strong representation from the Sullivan High School area. With the community leaders involved on the committee, Mr. Garcia in another part of the city, and the student leaders threatened with expulsion, the student strike movement came to a halt and Sullivan appeared to return to normal operation.

Mr. Garcia, however, had not been forgotten. The students wanted him back and so did the community. Their ally in this matter was the local teachers' union. Feeling that the board had acted hastily and without due process, they brought legal action against the district. The judge's decision was in Mr. Garcia's favor and the district was ordered to return him to classroom duties. Faced with the possibility of Mr. Garcia returning to Sullivan, a small group of administrators and teachers banned together and pledged to quit if he was returned to the school. The board now found itself in the position of trying to find a compromise between the judge's decision and the threats of the local faculty. Mr. Garcia was returned to a classroom, but the board claimed there were no openings at Sullivan as his former position was no longer needed due to an enrollment drop.

For the time being, at least, all parties in this dispute had been dealt with, but an uneasy peace reigned at Sullivan High School.

Questions for Analysis

1. How and why did Mr. Garcia's strategy change? Could he have achieved the students'

2. How influential was Mr. García in comparison to the other forces aligned against the school?

3. At the time of crisis what strategy did the board use? What would have happened if they had left Mr. Garcia at Sullivan? Was his transfer justified?

4. At what points in time could the school principal have intervened to alter the outcome of this case? Could the board have intervened earlier in the chain of events and been more effective? When and how?

5. Does the solution arrived at by the board insure a long-range period of harmony at Sullivan High School? Why?

Case 16 - Racial Conflict Lessened by Community Effort

Washington High School was one of the newest in the city. It had been located and built specifically at the demand of civil rights leaders of the community, after a prolonged struggled for integrated schools. Geographically, it was on the outer edge of a predominantly black neighborhood and near to a very exclusive white residential area which had resisted the plan for the school. The high school attendance area had been redistricted to include three feeder junior high schools, one all white, one all black, and one predominantly white. When the school opened its doors for the first time in September, there was a discernible amount of tension among the students. Minor incidents kept the student body, staff, and community perilously close to open conflict.

During the first week in November, a white teacher scolded a young black student for being late to class. In anger, the young man struck out and hit the teacher. Immediately the boy was suspended from school. Rumors regarding the incident spread in an incendiary manner, polarizing black against white and students against teachers. Parents, too, were drawn into opposing camps of blacks and whites. However, one small interracial group of parents did organize hoping to try to find a solution to the growing problem. They met with the school principal to express their concerns and to offer their help to the school in whatever way they could be useful. Because leaders from both the black and white communities were included in this delegation, the principal urged them to serve as an advisory committee to the school.

As November passed, tensions continued to increase. Blacks and whites attacked each other individually and in groups. The teachers expressed their mounting fears for their own safety. The faculty met frequently to discuss the problem and by the third week in November had appointed a group of teachers to meet with the principal and his advisory council to seek a way of relieving the conflicts underlying the current outbreak of violence, and to devise ways of insuring the safety of both the students and teachers at the school.

While the teachers, advisory council, and administration of the school met and tried to seek ways of improving conditions at Washington High School, other black and white parents continued their verbal attacks at each other and at the school, and students got into increasing numbers of personal conflicts. During the last week in November, as incidents increased, the principal canceled all after-school activities, and with the cooperation of the teachers and parents from the advisory group, cleared the school grounds at the close of school. Student factions, frustrated in their attempts to have a "show down" after school hours, spread rumors that a major fight would occur during the school day. Alarmed, the principal, teachers' group, and parents' advisory group met in emergency session to plan how to head off such a confrontation. The advisory committee began phoning and meeting with other parents to enlist their aid in preventing a major incident.

Despite their efforts, the last day of November saw the eruption of a general black-white melee in the cafeteria. The school was immediately closed and students sent home. Parents, teachers, and administration, acting in cooperation with the local police, managed a fairly orderly control of the situation, and physical injuries and property damage were kept to a minimum. Again meeting in emergency session, the concerned groups decided to close the school the remaining three days of the week. When school reopened, rival parents' groups were enlisted to patrol the halls. The principal began holding regular "rap sessions" with the students in an effort to delineate some grievances which were specific enough to deal with. It became evident that, besides the hostility which was part of the black-white conflict, there was also a basic mistrust between the students and the staff of the school. Both black and white students felt a high level of frustration in not having their grievances dealt with by the school, and in their own inability to participate in decisions directly affecting them. Although the students were articulate about their demands, their understanding of why they were making these demands and how, if the demands were met, they would make the school operate better were not altogether clear. It was a shock to the staff that the students were so completely uninformed of how the school operated, how decisions were made, and what entry points the students already had in this system, despite the fact that this was all explained in the student handbook.

With these facts in hand, the advisory committee, expanded now by the inclusion of representatives of opposing parents' groups, the teachers' representatives, and the administrative staff, again met to review the facts that they had on hand regarding the causes of conflicts and some ways in which they could be resolved. It was the consensus of the group that not only immediate steps needed to be taken but that long-range plans were needed, too.

Task forces were assigned and the principal enlisted students and outside consultants to work with them. The Christmas recess provided a respite from the always present threat of more violence and plans moved ahead quickly. When school reopened in January, plans for implementation had been accepted by the total group and were well under way.

During the first week the principal and student body president presented a plan to the student council which would allow them more oppotunity to participate in school affairs. Accompanying this plan was a special project which would train the student leaders in problem-solving and decision-making skills. The student council made some further suggestions as to how they would like to work, and finally adopted the program, including their own suggestions. With the assistance of the head counselor, who had special training in group work, the student council made plans for implementing the recommendations. During February they organized a series of small assemblies to present their plan to the student body.

For their part, the parents' advisory group drew up recommendations that were presented to the school board of the district. They were able to gather significant support from the other parents, student leaders and administrators, which was made clear by their presence at the board meeting in February. They recommended the appointment of an ombudsmen, responsible to the board and with the power to investigate and resolve student and parent grievances. They further recommended that a plan for integrating the lower grades be devised at once, and that it be accompanied by a thorough in-service training for all personnel involved in the implementation of the integration plan. The board took positive action on the recommendations of the parents.

While waiting for the implementation of their requests the parents also concentrated some of their efforts at the building level. Although parents who were policing the halls of the public areas of the school were being effective in physical control of the facilities, their presence tended to increase tensions. There was even some evidence of hostility between the parents themselves. With the help of an outside consultant, meetings were set up to assist the parents to understand and acquire human relations skills in an interracial and intergenerational setting. These group sessions were so successful that the parents' advisory council, with the help of a civil rights group, sponsored similar meetings for other parents in the community throughout the spring and into the next year.

The teachers, with the help of parents and outside consultants, began to design a human relations class with an emphasis on problems of racism. A trial run using a small core of student leadership was initiated in the spring by an experienced and qualified staff member with the assistance of a staff member from a local civil rights group. Based on the experience of the initial class, plans were to be made to present an expanded course in the fall with specially trained teachers.

As the school year came to a close, tensions in the community and school began to show signs of lessening. Incidents became less frequent and the school returned to more nearly normal operations. With the lessening of the crisis did not come a lessening of the efforts of staff, parents, and students to implement their plans and work continued with high commitment from all concerned.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the three main groups that contributed to the solution of this school's problems? What were their contributions? What facilitated their functioning?

2. What key decisions was the principal responsible for that led to the ultimate solution of the problem? What was his style of leadership? Was it effective in the long run?

3. How could this conflict have been avoided? Who would have been participants in heading off this conflict?

4. What was the advantage or disadvantage of the cooling-off periods?

Case 17 - Students Riot Over Unmet Demands

Drew High School was located in a former upper-class neighborhood on the bluff overlooking the city. As the community had become older its residents had moved farther from the heart of the city, while Spanish-speaking families from a neighboring barrio had moved in to replace them. Drew High School in the last ten years had become almost 70% Spanish-surnamed students. During the last two years, older teachers from the Drew faculty had requested transfers and had been replaced by some Mexican-American teachers and other young teachers who had special training for work in inner city schools.

When Drew opened its fall semester the new faculty were full of ideas on how to involve the students and have them become more interested in their own education. Motivation was well known to be low at the school and the teachers were searching for ways to instill pride in the students, not only of themselves and their heritage, but of their school as well. It was too late to initiate any new courses for the year, but one of the staff felt she could try out new curriculum ideas through an extracurricular activity. She volunteerd to sponsor a Chicano Studies Club which met with immediate success.

As the students began to explore their own culture and heritage, they began asking questions about why the school did not put more emphasis on the positive aspects of their people and their way of life. Sensing an opportunity to involve the students in a positive program for self-improvement, the advisor guided the students in developing their own concept of an ideal school environment. In the process the students came up with many changes that could be made at Drew which would broaden the educational offering and improve the chances of more students achieving at a higher level.

At the beginning of the calendar year the students had fully thought out their suggestions and had put them into written form. They asked for an appointment with the principal to discuss them with him. He was most cordial, although quite surprised that this had taken place in the Chicano Studies Club. He accepted the students' recommendations and told them that

he would give them full consideration. After seeing the students the principal put out a call for the faculty advisor. He soundly reprimanded her for allowing the students too much freedom in a club which had for its purpose the testing of curriculum. He felt that the club was to have devoted itself to studying the Latin heritage of its members and not to be a radical activist group. The advisor was taken aback by the principal's remarks, as she had felt from the time she had been hired that her function was to help improve the program of the school. In her view she had accomplished just that.

After having the night to think it over, the advisor returned to the principal's office for further discussion of the matter. The principal opened the conversation by asserting that he would have to reject the suggestions of the students, as they were too costly and would take too much planning to implement. Without further study, the issue to him was closed. The advisor was in total disagreement and expressed herself accordingly. After a heated exchange of words, it was mutually agreed that the advisor would be reassigned to some other duty and the Chicano Studies Club would be disbanded.

However, the students were not that easily discouraged. They distributed their ideas to the other members of the student body despite efforts of the administration to confiscate their printed materials. Through their older brothers and sisters the students were able to get assistance from college students at a nearby city college, who willingly lent their leadership to the younger students. Plans for action were formulated and an organization was set up to coordinate the efforts of the students at Drew and their supporters from the college. An underground paper soon made its appearance to keep the student body informed of the situation.

As the next step in seeing that their demands were met, the students asked the principal for an assembly at which the students and the principal would be able to explain their positions to the entire student body. The principal denied the request. Prepared for this, the activists called the student body to a rally in the inner court of the school. Although the

speeches were inflammatory, the behavior of the students was fairly moderate and under control. The principal, however, sensing trouble, ordered all the exterior doors of the school barricaded and called for the police. The sounds of the sirens panicked the students attending the rally, and near riot conditions existed when they found they could not get out of the school. Police made many arrests, and the principal ordered the school closed for the remaining two days of the week.

During the recess, the principal tried to obtain the cooperation of the parents to help patrol the halls and prevent vandalism. Only a few responded. The students, with the help of the college students' organization, also tried to enlist the aid of parents and other community groups. The underground newspaper was appearing regularly now, and was full of alleged instances of police brutality at the school. I condemned the principal for calling for outside assistance when a peaceful rally was taking place. The statements in the paper were emotional and at times not quite accurate, and the end result was to involve the rest of the community in the cause of the students.

When Drew reopened the students were prepared to close it again. By noon of the first day chanting students were roaming the halls of the school despite the efforts of a handful of parents who had responded to the principal's call. The principal found it necessary to call the police again. At the sight of the police, the students, remembering the stories in the underground newspaper, again panicked, and a riot ensued. The day's activities ended in more arrests of students. The following day the students announced a boycott of the school. "Freedom schools" were set up in the neighborhood, staffed by teachers from Drew in their after hours, and by college students and parents from the community.

Illness beset the principal, and his vice-principal attempted to establish some negotiations on the students' demands. Progress was slow in the face of the high emotional level of all the participants. As the school year ended, a large number of students had still not returned to school. A tense peace settled on the school while the district was faced with the task of a community relations problem of great magnitude.

Questions for Analysis

1. What were the critical points in this case where the events could have been focused in a more positive manner? Who or what groups could have assumed the responsibility for the redirection of events?

2. What were the most important resources for the students? What was the role of each?

3. What groups could the principal have enlisted to assist him? What new groups could he have formed?

4. What can the district do during the summer to ease the problem which the school had developed in the spring?

5. What strategy can the district employ at the opening of school to lessen tension? What role can the principal have in any plan for the future?

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