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ABSTRACT

In order to study the process of school desegregation, it becomes necessary to pinpoint that administrative position most centrally involved in the alteration of the individual school: that of the principal. From the pilot study conducted with the principals and assistant principals in York County, Virginia, in the spring and summer of 1969, a picture of the principal adjusting to his situation was developed. The entire population of the principals of junior high, senior high, and combined schools in the State of Virginia was surveyed for the statewide study. This constituted a total of 481 principals in 134 school districts. Of the 481 mailed questionnaires, 326 were returned, or a 68 per cent return. (14 questionnaires were incomplete, and therefore not usable.) Respondents represent 123 of the 134 school districts in the state. The survey contains data from 113 principals from rural areas, 56 from suburban areas, 46 from small towns, 36 from cities of less than 50,000 population, and 61 from cities of over 50,000. Of the 302 principals who gave the level of racial mixture in their schools, 115 were principals of schools that were 96-100 per cent white, and 11 were principals of schools of less than five per cent white. When the survey was conducted, only 165 of the 312 principals were principals of schools with more than a five per cent racial mixture. Of the 312 respondents in the survey, 82 per cent were white. (Author/JM)

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THE PRINCIPAL: Change Agent In Desegregation

Martha Turnage

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PREFACE

Today's public high school principal is desegregation's "forgotten man" — untrained for the almost overwhelming new task thrust upon him, lacking the power to do the job properly, seldom consulted by the decision makers in the school district, lacking adequate support from the state level, unsure of community support over the next few years — but coping surprisingly well.

The critical difference between the success and failure of school desegregation in the individual school lies in the leadership provided by the principal. How the principal does his job determines whether a school, once desegregated, develops into an integrated school characterized by an atmosphere of racial mutuality, or becomes simply another resegregated school where blacks and whites shift uneasily in their seats.

Much research concerning school desegregation has concentrated on the student-teacher syndrome of motivation, aspiration and academic achievement. The influence of the principal in the desegregation/integration, or desegregation/resegregation process for the most part has been overlooked. Changes brought about by the transition from segregation to desegregation necessarily are funnelled through his office, hence, he is able to affect the courses these changes take. In so doing, he (the principal) becomes the primary change agent in the desegregation process.

How the principal as change agent is affected by the pressures brought about by school desegregation is the focus of this study. Further, it is a study of the administrative position of the principalship in the organizational structure of the school district.

Public schools in the United States have been the focal point of conflict and conflict-resolution in high highly dynamic society. Public education in Virginia was and continues to be the focal point for some of the most dynamic conflicts and decisions in the civil rights battle that has been raging since 1954. To sample the winds of social change in America today is to study the desegregated school. A study of public schools in Virginia has proven to be a microcosm of the nation.

In the years following the 1954 Supreme Court decision against the "separate but equal" doctrine the effects have been felt in the state political arenas, public facilities and constitution, as well as in the private lives of individuals and groups. The ramifications of the court edict have spread far beyond the schoolhouse.

In this study, the public school system is viewed as a complex organization, a subsystem of the total social system. It is a particular task of sociology to deal with the structural and functional features of an organization. The effectiveness of any organization

is closely tied to the administrative and leadership skills of the individuals directing the activities designed to achieve the purposes of the organization. The desegregation of schools constitutes a social change which is effectuated by administrative measures. The organizational and administrative structure of school segregation are altered to accomplish desegregation.

In order to study the process of school desegregation, it becomes necessary to pinpoint that administrative position most centrally involved in the alteration of the individual school. In the public school one position remains constant in the organizational structure. The principal, as he goes about his routine responsibilities, consistently works closer to the operational consequences of school desegregation than any other individual in the administrative hierarchy of the school system. He occupies the position in the administrative hierarchy adjudged to be the most appropriate focus of sociological inquiry into desegregation as a social change. The principal then is in a change agent position, and may use it to build racial mutuality or racial polarization.

From the pilot study, conducted with the principals and assistant principals in York County, Virginia, in the spring and summer of 1969, a picture of the principal adjusting to his situation developed. Most principals were adjusting to desegregation by developing an ability to handle ambiguity and frustration. As they were witnessing the crumbling of their cherished beliefs of "how to handle racial problems," they were experiencing a period of extreme personal frustration. During these frustrating periods many principals found resources within themselves which benefited all students. As one principal said, "I have observed that all principals think they know how to handle integration, and it seems to me they have to fail a few times before they are willing to look at other approaches."

The entire population of principals of junior high, senior high and combined schools in the State of Virginia was surveyed for the statewide study. This constituted a total of 481 principals in 134 school districts. Of the 481 mailed questionnaires, 326 were returned, or a 68 per cent return. Fourteen of these were rejected on basis of insufficient number of questions answered; 312 were accepted for survey data. Respondents represent 123 of the 134 school districts in the state. The map shows the geographic location of the respondents and the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare legal status of desegregation of that district as of November, 1969. The survey contains data from 113 principals from rural areas, 56 from suburban areas, 46 from small towns, 36 from cities of less than 50,000 population, and 61 from cities of over 50,000. Of the 302 principals who gave the level of racial mixture in their schools, 115 were principals of schools that were 96-100 per cent white, and 11 were principals

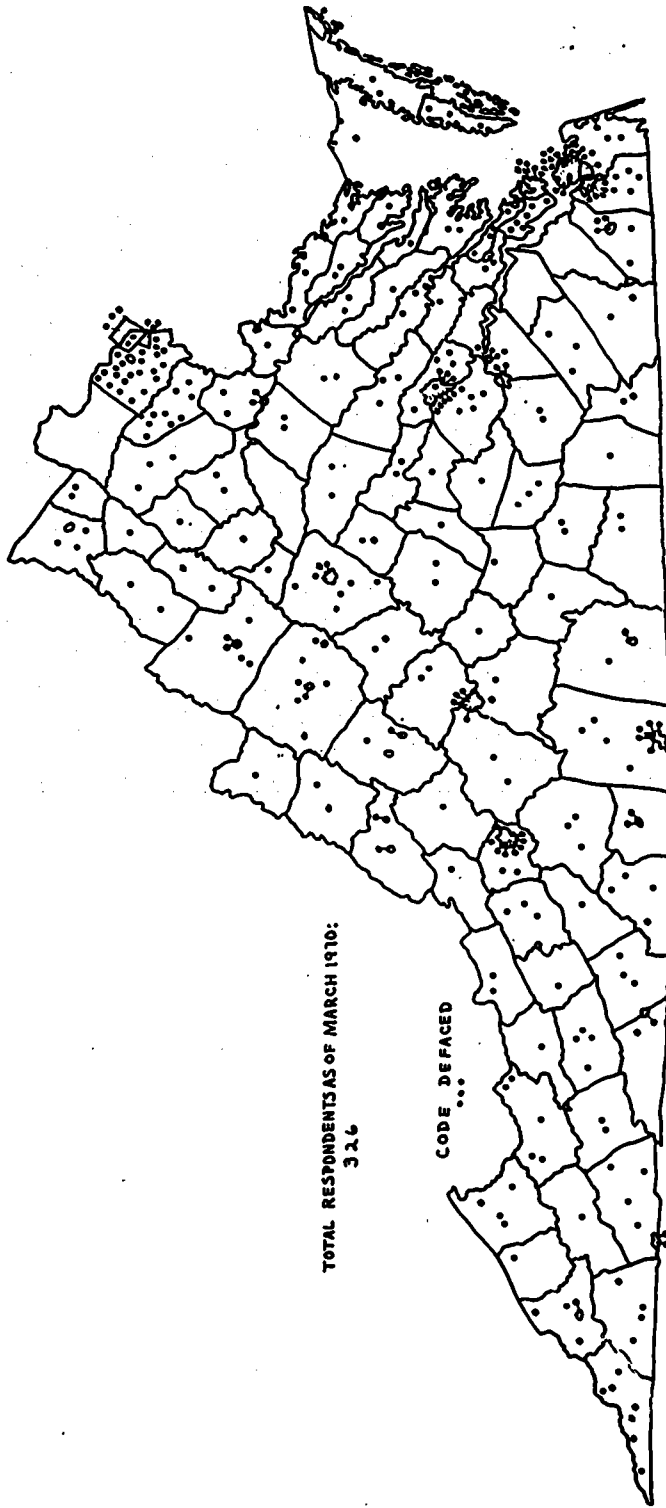


FIGURE 1

VIRGINIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS, SHOWING LOCATION BY DISTRICT OF SUNNEY RESPONDENTS.

of schools of less than five per cent white. When the survey was conducted, only 165 of the 312 principals were principals of schools with more than a five per cent racial mixture.

Concerning the legal stage of desegregation, of the 11 school districts not responding, four were in HEW compliance, three were under court order, and four were in some stage of non-compliance. These 11 districts contained 17 schools.

Of the 312 respondents in the survey, 82 per cent were white. Data in the study are grouped according to variables related to synergy in the school system.

MARTHA TURNAGE

CHAPTER I

DESEGREGATION AS A SOCIAL CHANGE

Today race and education are inextricably bound together. The principal of the desegregated school is responsible for both. Like a conductor of electricity, the currents of both pass through him. This chapter undertakes the task of determining the effects of school desegregation on the incumbent of the principalship in the school system's administrative hierarchy.

Introduction

Desegregation of schools, as defined by the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, is a social change. The ruling states that public schools which are "separate but equal" are "inherently unequal" [347 U.S. 483 (1954)]. Equality is a sociological concept, not an instructional or educational one. As public education has been drawn more intimately into the economic, political and social affairs of this era, schools have become the arena of the contest of ideas over the nature of society.

The president, the courts, and congress have followed a zig-zag course on school desegregation issues. They fluctuate between advance and retreat on funding requirements, busing and executive or judicial enforcement of the law. In political circles, from the local school board to the halls of Congress, rhetoric representing every shade of moral and political persuasion, is heard, printed, repeated.

Meanwhile, with most of the legal benchmarks of desegregation passed, the principal of the desegregated school is faced with almost insurmountable human issues in turning desegregation in the direction of integration.

The "Forgotten Man" in Desegregation

Why should this study take the position that the principal is the most critical individual in the integration process when the most authoritative studies of school desegregation have ignored him? Crain demonstrates in *The Politics of School Desegregation* (1968) that it is the school board and superintendent who make policy decisions regarding desegregation. The Coleman report *Equality of Educational Opportunity* points to family background and race ratio as critical factors in the child's achievement (1966). In addition, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Report, *Racial Isolation in the Public Schools*, emphasizes race ratio, and singles out the teacher as a key determinant in integration (1967). The U.S. Riot Commission Report (1968) discusses teachers, facilities, funds, and community characteristics in the goal of equipping the ghetto child for participation in the larger society.

As a rebuttal to these reports, which do not recognize the influence of the principal as crucial, this study found the pilot study as well as in the statewide survey that the principal makes the human relations difference in most of these situations. For example, Crain is intrigued by the effectiveness of neighborhood groups in eight major cities in gaining acceptance of their demands to the school boards, and the relative ineffectiveness of civil rights organizations. He explains the success of the neighborhood groups by the specificity of their demands, their commitment, and their representativeness of the community.¹ In the pilot study, as well as from subsequent interviews with selected principals, it was substantiated that principals frequently use these citizen groups as levers on the power structure in the community.

Jack Culbertson opines that the principal's role in change may be that of helping others innovate rather than of making changes himself. "Could it be," he asks, "that because educational changes take place in a human setting, social processes become more crucial than inventive process? . . . Could it be that in helping others make educational changes the principal is just as ingenious as those who make changes?"² This helping relationship the principal experiences in the desegregation/integration process furnishes a plausible explanation for the omission of recognition of the principal in most desegregation studies. His most effective work is behind the scenes. Melvin Tumin says, "There is no doubt whatsoever that the right kind of teacher and the right kind of principal make the right kind of difference; the wrong kind of teacher and principal make the wrong kind of difference."³ This study holds that in the long run, the telling difference in the success or failure of desegregation to move toward integration is made by the principal.

Situational Adjustment

The elimination of a dual segregated school structure within a school district adds to the principal's job of instructional leader that of change agent. If the principal of a segregated school desires to keep his job after desegregation, he will subordinate immediate dissonance to his goals that lie outside the present circumstances. These could be professional status, retirement benefits, or commitment to the ideal of public education. He learns the requirements of continuing in the new situation and of succeeding in it, and makes the necessary adjustments. This situational adjustment is a common observable phenomenon. Howard Becker says, "If he has a strong desire to continue, the ability to assess accurately what is required performance, the individual turns himself into the kind of person the situation demands."⁴

During the course of the pilot study, it was observed that those principals who made the greatest effort to admit and recognize their own prejudices are more able to function effectively and to deal with ambiguities of desegregation than the principals who firmly declared that they have no prejudices. A leader's skill in clarifying ambiguities has been found by Melvin Seeman to be a test of administrative effectiveness.⁵

The development of sensitivity to the effects of his own behavior on others, and of how his own personality shapes his particular style of administration are vital to the principal in a desegregated setting. This investigator talked with a number of principals who indicate that the lack of exact knowledge of how to function in a desegregated setting has caused them to be more open to suggestions and less authoritarian. (Table 2 illustrates how desegregation redefines the job of the principal.) Desegregation shifts the principal's function from that of primary concern with being an instructional leader to that of emphasizing interpersonal and organizational processes.

The pressures and problems facing the public school principal demand that less attention be given to managerial functions and more to his role as expediter. ". . . the organizational context that he must constantly focus upon is the social system of the school."⁶ He may be the key to society's capacity for internal transformation, which Eisenstadt refers to when he says:

The possibility of successful institutionalization of an innovating or revolutionary process is never inherent in the revolutionary act itself. It depends on other conditions, primarily on the society's capacity for internal transformation.⁷

Structural Pressures of Desegregation

The civil rights movement, institutionalized in school desegregation, places the public school principal in a distinctive situation

in which he encounters "structural" pressures (i.e., conflicting subgroups, stability vs. change, exterior pressure groups, local prejudice and compliance with HEW regulations) which cause him to function as a change agent. Inkeles in *What Is Sociology?* says that sociologists assume that behavioral characteristics of incumbents of position emerge as a response to the distinctive situation. They assume, he notes, that anybody in that situation would probably respond in the same way. However, Inkeles (p. 57) argues that while objective factors are crucially important regarding what the person does, the personal qualities of the individual are the key to how he functions.⁸

The principal no longer rules the neighborhood school as the "father figure." Now he must juggle external pressures from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people, the John Birch Society, the League of Women Voters, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Black Panthers, Americans for Democratic Action, and neighborhood groups. Within the school system, he must carry out policy-directives from the superintendent and school board. He struggles with the internal pressures from groups within the school itself. At the same time, he is charged with the responsibility of maintaining an ongoing educational process. To deal with the conflicting demands confronting him, the principal must provide as many counter-influences as possible. This forces him to depend upon those subgroups whose roles impinge upon his. His resources may be limited by a lag between the traditional definitions of the principal's job and the requirements of the situation in a desegregated school.

Contradictions in Data

While principals understand their key role in the mixing process, they suffer from contradictory thoughts and emotions about how to make it work, which are reflected in contradictory responses to survey questions. Data in this survey show considerable discrepancy between principals' self-images and the logical development of these images, as demonstrated in Table 1. All data presented in the table are as perceived by the respondents; however, some information was gained by direct questions and other by indirect questions. The survey instrument was approached from several different directions.

Statewide, 74 per cent of the principals think schools should lead the community in social change, but only 47 per cent of the principals see future community attitudes toward school desegregation improving. The remaining 54 per cent see conditions deteriorating or remaining about the same. Principals of 86 per cent of the schools consider themselves "very important in setting

TABLE 1
CONTRADICTIONS IN SURVEY DATA

Variable	Projected Image	Contradiction
Desegregation as a Social Change	Schools should lead the community in social change, according to 74 per cent of the principals.	Principals of 57 per cent of the schools report an unfavorable or passive response by the community to school desegregation.
Prestige	Principals of 86 per cent of the schools consider themselves "very important in setting the tone of acceptance of desegregation" in the community.	Principals are almost evenly divided in assessing future attitudes toward school desegregation in the community; 47 per cent see community attitudes improving—54 per cent see conditions deteriorating or remaining about the same.
Attitude Toward Desegregation	A majority of the principals—91 per cent feel there is a direct correlation between the success of integration and participation of black students, teachers, counselors and administrators in policy decisions.	Only 37 per cent think the involvement of the black administrator in formerly all-white community organizations affects his potential as a change agent in the integration process.
Autonomy in the School	Principals of 94 per cent of the schools say they have the autonomy to develop a climate in which diverse racial groups can work together.	When they want to make changes relevant to integration, only 42 per cent of the principals consult students or members of the faculty; 36 per cent of them consult administrative hierarchy, and 22 per cent consult parents.
Development of Group Synergy	Principals of 56 per cent of the schools report they do not "maneuver back and forth between subgroups," sampling reactions before making changes involving integration.	Yet 97 per cent say they can identify the subgroups that make up the school population, and 61 per cent use informants to keep themselves apprised of pending difficulty.
Power-Status in the School System	Of the principals, 56 per cent say the superintendent and/or one of his administrative assistants frequently discusses policies affecting the entire system with them.	Only 28 per cent were actually involved in systemwide policy decisions relating to desegregation.

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the tone of acceptance of desegregation in the community." However, an unfavorable or passive response to desegregation by the community is reported by 57 per cent of the principals.

A large majority of the principals, 91 per cent, feel there is a direct correlation between the success of integration and participation of black students, teachers, counselors, and administrators in policy decisions relating to desegregation. At the same time, only 37 per cent think the involvement of the black administrator in formerly all-white community-wide organizations, or the desegregation of the community, affects his potential as a change agent in the school.

Principals of 94 per cent of the schools say that they have the autonomy to develop a climate in the school center in which diverse racial groups can work together. However, when they want to make changes in the school involving integration, only 42 per cent consult students and/or faculty, while 36 per cent consult members of the administrative hierarchy, and 22 per cent consult parents.

An effort was made to discover techniques principals use for incorporation of subgroups into goal-setting for the school. They were asked if they maneuver back and forth between subgroups to sample reactions before making changes involving desegregation. Principals of 56 per cent of the schools report they do not use this technique, and many objected to the use of the words "subgroups" and "maneuver." At the same time, 91 per cent of the principals say they can identify the subgroups and leaders that make up the school population, and 61 per cent use informants to keep themselves apprised of pending difficulty. It is quite possible that some would not consider the term "informant" applicable to their situation.

Few principals consider that they hold high power-status in the school system. Only 56 per cent indicate that they are frequently consulted by the superintendent and/or one of his administrative assistants concerning systemwide problems or policy. Their power-status drops to an even lower percentage when they give examples of the highest level of decisions in which they have participated. Only 28 per cent had been involved in decisions relevant to desegregation policy. These were judged to be location of new schools, districting, form of desegregation adopted in the district, regrading of schools, instructional and curriculum decisions designed to offset anxieties of parents about desegregation. Decisions which were concerned with methods, and procedures, or that were limited to the school center only were not considered as systemwide policy decisions.

Desegregation Redefines Principalship Position

Desegregation redefines the principal's position from an operation point of view. Table 2 is an effort to develop a typol-

TABLE 2
DESEGREGATION REDEFINES THE PRINCIPAL POSITION

Locus of Change	Principal in a Segregated School System	Principal in a Desegregated School System
School & Society: Interaction	The neighborhood segregated school was isolated from political conflicts, and operated as a semi-closed system with a local orientation. Locally supported and controlled.	The desegregated public school is part of a larger social movement and reflects national trends and moods. Social change has moved the public school from a semi-closed system to a semi-open system vulnerable to a myriad of pressure groups. Increased Federal funding has moved local school to national orientation.
Self: The incumbent of the position.	His goal was to run a "tight ship" — meeting educational standards — keeping the faculty happy, the school clean, and staying within the budget. He viewed himself as "doing" an administrative job. Seldom, if ever, did he see himself as part of any problem. The stress was on the rational task aspect of his job.	Emphasis shifts from "doing" to "being." The rapid social changes in school desegregation leave him feeling isolated and insecure. Either he learns to tolerate, a high level of ambiguity, or he is unable to function as a change agent. Unless he sees his transactional value in change, he cannot respond to the needs of conflictual situations but reacts to them as attacks on him personally.
School: The position of the principal	The "art" of administration was crucial where the goals and backgrounds of faculty and students were similar. His charismatic qualities were the measure of his success. Frequently a school was known as "Mr. So and So's School."	As a change agent, the principal must become an executive, developing a team approach to goal setting and problem solving. He must acquire knowledge of social structure, political power and human interaction in order to link subgroups in the school population to the educational process.
Community: His influence and participation	Regarded as a professional educator by the community, but not generally taken into account or consulted about events of the "real world" by community power structure or businessmen. (In both the black and white communities, the black principal of the segregated school was regarded as a prestigious figure. He was frequently known as "Professor" by both races.)	As the administrative head of a contained unit of one of the most critical social issues of the day, the white principal's views have taken on a new authority in the white community. (At the same time, the black principal has experienced a loss of prestige; the blacks are suspicious of his "Uncle Tom" motives and the whites feel he no longer speaks for the black community as a whole.)
System: The power of the principal in administrative hierarchy	As principal of a comparatively homogeneous grouping, he was expected to function as a plant manager and instructional leader of the individual school. There was comparatively little feedback to the central office on policy decisions other than matters pertaining to instruction. A clearly defined chain of command in segregated system.	With national attention focused on desegregation as a social change, the principal is a primary "feedback" resource for the superintendent, who is more insulated from day to day operations of desegregated school. Many systems are not yet aware of the rich source of information that lies with the principal. Few use him as member of the decision-making team of system.

ogy between the structural pressures and requirements of the principal in the segregated school and a desegregated school. This typology is a compilation of information, personal observation, and analysis of data in this study. The areas in which desegregation has redefined the principal's position are in relation to society, self-image, school, community and school system.

In a segregated school, the principal functions in a semi-closed system in which he is partially isolated from the stresses and strains of social conflict. Emphasis in the neighborhood school is on the personalized characteristics of administration. The new rationality based on behavioral sciences is required in the racially mixed school. In the homogeneous school, the principal is more responsive to external sources of pressure, either parents, school board or superintendent. Desegregation forces him to become more responsive to subgroups within the school.

In the desegregated school, with a high percentage of racial mixture, the principal is a primary "feedback" resource for the superintendent. In segregated situations, there was a clearly defined chain of command in decision making.

Training Implications of Desegregation

A fundamental requirement for the principal to be the agent of change in the desegregated school is that he understand the social environment as a primary resource in decision making. In this way, he is able to develop a collaborative climate in the school wherein subgroups can learn mutual respect and interdependence. This is more akin to the American ideal of democracy than an atmosphere in which superiority-inferiority attitudes prevail, or unilateral decision making is practiced. A principal noted, "I have had no training that would equip me to develop a climate in the school in which both races can work together." The very recognition of his inadequacies may be demonstrative of his situation adjustment.

To what extent have schools of education redesigned their administrative training programs to meet the needs of principals who will work in cross-cultural situations? The beginning trend toward encouraging courses in social sciences for educational administration training indicates an awareness of the problem by schools of education. Textbooks reviewed by this investigator show much emphasis on teaching the disadvantaged child, but little help for the administrator in this sensitive area. Not only the principal, but all educational administrators of public education in the future will need cross-cultural training. This need extends from elementary through the secondary level with the trend toward the democratization of higher education: the need is reaching into the junior and community colleges, and the four-year state insti-

tutions. This study suggests the study of social sciences is of prime importance for the educator of the future. Cross-cultural training would teach principals to solve new problems in new settings, without depending on external authority. They would learn to use the resources available to them in the subgroups of the school population. The emotional encounter of this cross-cultural training would lead to increased interpersonal competency.

The power struggles within and between the black and white communities, rather than lessening the pressures on the school principal, will probably increase them. William G. Bullock found in his study of Virginia high school principals in 1965 that the principals expected superintendents to deal with outside social and personal pressures as part of their obligation to the organization.⁹ Principals of desegregated schools do not have the luxury of this buffer between themselves and pressures created by this social change.

The gap between the roles principals are expected to perform by different subgroups, and the resources at their disposal for carrying out these roles requires a careful analysis. Governmental and educational agencies on the local, state and national levels, and schools of educational administration need to agree on a definition of the position and power of the principal. This study has found this to be a position as variously defined as there are superintendents who define it. The principal is not a constitutionally-recognized officer in public education in Virginia as is the superintendent. His autonomy, authority and power vary widely within the State, as supported by data in this study. Stanley Jacobson supports this position by saying, "Few principals are prepared to cope equally with the intricacies of civil rights politics, the culture of the underprivileged, modern learning theory and technology. Yet, many principals must face real issues requiring appreciation and knowledge and skill in all these areas every day."¹⁰

Conclusion

The desegregation of schools required by the 1954 Supreme Court ruling brings public education into the mainstream of social change in America. Desegregation is effectuated by the administrative decision at the district level to eliminate a dual school structure and establish one unified school system. As he adjusts to the situation, structural pressures created by this reorganization have modified the principal's job from that of instructional leader, and added the additional role of change agent. As the chief executive officer of the school unit, the principal is in a pivotal position between internal and external pressures. The way he manipulates these pressures determines whether the desegre-

gated school moves toward racial integration or racial polarization.

During the course of this study of Virginia principals, it was found that most principals do learn to adjust to cross pressures. It is highly possible that consequences of desegregation compel a principal to become more objective. The following quotation from a principal of a school in its third year of desegregation illustrates this point:

Desegregation forces you to develop a philosophy of education in a way that segregated schools never did. The usual things just don't work. If I were perfectly honest, I would still prefer being principal of a segregated school. At the same time, I know that if I had never been forced to look at any culture but middle-class white children, I would never have changed.

The principal is the key individual in the local school setting in the institutionalization of social change. School superintendents, school boards and the State Board of Education along with State education leaders should reconsider the fairly low position they assign to the principal in the desegregation picture.

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPAL AND THE COMMUNITY

The locally supported and controlled segregated public school is isolated from national, social and political racial and cross-cultural conflicts. Frequently this school is not regarded as part of the "real world." Conversely, the desegregated public school is local evidence of the national civil rights movement. It is, for many individuals in the community, their most personal involvement in civil rights. This chapter is based on the proposition: If the principal perceives of himself as change agent, he recognizes that the school is part of the community, and is therefore aware of his influence in the community.

Introduction

In this discussion of the principal's influence in shaping community attitudes toward the social changes brought about by desegregation, it is essential to know the location of the racially-mixed schools. (Tables 3 and 4 give the community classification of schools represented in the study.) The effect of the size of the community on the principal's functioning as a change agent is explored in this chapter.

In the survey instrument, no explicit definitions of community were given. The community size is what the principal defines it to be, according to the following choices: 1) Rural, 2) Suburban, 3) Small Town, 4) City of 5,000-9,999, 5) City of 10,000-19,999, 6) City of 20,000-49,999, 7) City of 50,000 and over. There were only 36 principals responding from cities below 50,000; therefore, these were collapsed into one category. Those over 50,000 are designated metropolitan areas.

TABLE 3
LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE IN SCHOOLS IN SURVEY
ACCORDING TO COMMUNITY SIZE

Per Cent White Students in School	Rural	Suburb	Town	City	Metropolitan	Total Number
Less than 5% white	12	0	1	9	14	36
5-49% white	14	0	2	0	7	23
50-65% white	18	2	7	2	7	36
66-95% white	36	32	18	20	20	126
96-100% white	27	22	18	3	12	82
Total Number	107	56	46	34	60	303

TABLE 4
LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE IN SCHOOLS IN SURVEY
ACCORDING TO COMMUNITY SIZE
BY PERCENTAGES

Per Cent White Students in School	Rural	Suburb	Town	City	Metropolitan	All Schools
Less than 5% white	11	0	2	26	23	
5-49% white	13	0	5	0	12	
50-65% white	17	4	15	6	12	
66-95% white	34	57	39	59	33	
96-100%	25	39	39	9	20	
	100	100	100	100	100	
	(N=107)	(N=56)	(N=46)	(N=34)	(N=60)	(N=303)

There are 107 schools in rural communities in this survey. They are represented at every level of racial mixture, with the most even distribution among the categories of more than five per cent racial mixture of any community.

The suburban communities are not represented by any predominantly black schools, and only two suburban schools have an almost equal black/white ratio of students. The same

trend is seen in the small towns, with only three schools in the below 49 per cent white categories. Small cities have nine nearly all-black schools, the lowest number of nearly all-white schools, three; and 22 schools from 50-65 per cent white. Metropolitan areas tend to have fewer schools with a nearly equal black/white ratio, and more polarization of nearly all-black and nearly all-white schools.

School and Social Change

The principal of the desegregated school is charged with the responsibility of offering equality of educational opportunity to all students. At the same time that he is working under this national legal mandate, he is employed by the local school board whose members hold ultimate control over his job. Local customs of segregation, federal requirements of desegregation, and personal prejudices and hostilities of both races make school desegregation a predictably conflictual encounter. How the principal manipulates this conflict has enormous influence on the long-range community acceptance or rejection of integration. The extent to which the principal sees the school reflecting community attitudes varies widely, as illustrated in Figure 2. Eighty-six per cent of the principals represented in the data (Table 5) consider that they are very influential in setting the tone of acceptance of desegregation in the community, with no significant variation by community size. Seventy-four per cent of the principals in the survey feel that schools should lead the community in the social change of initiating an attitude of equality between races. The range of responses to schools and social change according to community size is found in the following table.

The power structure of the small town gives an insight into the hesitancy of the small town principal to initiate social change. One small town principal responding in the survey indicated he was the fifth principal of that school in five years, but "I know how to keep my job," he said. He acknowledged running a "bending the law" school to keep the patrons happy. "In a place like this," he said, "you expect community control. If parents get unhappy, they go downtown to the local school board member who is the banker and complain. They don't come to me."

The reluctance of the suburban principal to be aggressive in social change could be a latent consequence of the affluent society that has moved to the suburbs to escape racial problems. Most of the cities in the survey appear to be "large towns," with the likelihood of the same type of centralized mono power structure that is found in most small towns. Power structure in metropolitan areas takes on a much more complex nature.

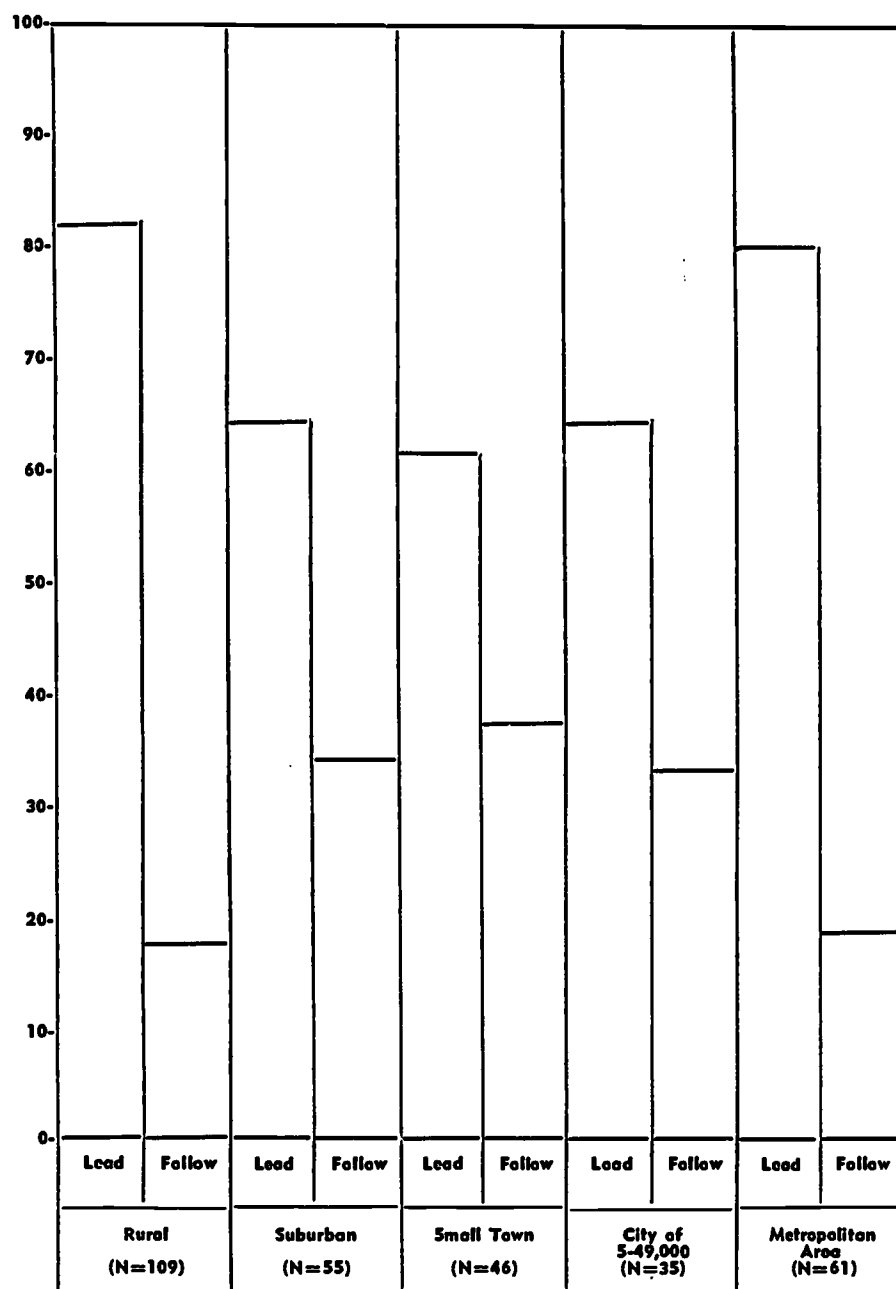


Figure 2
 RELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY IN SOCIAL CHANGE,
 ACCORDING TO COMMUNITY SIZE

TABLE 5

VARIABLES WHICH MEASURE PRINCIPAL'S CHANGE AGENT
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY IN SCHOOL
DESEGREGATION, BY GROSS PERCENTAGES

SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL CHANGE—relationship of school to community in social change.

Schools should lead	74.2
Schools should follow	25.8
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=306)

INTEGRATION IN THE SCHOOL—principal feels he has community support.

Yes	80.6
No	19.4
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=279)

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION—extent of principal's participation in community-wide activities.

Active	58.7
Not Active	41.3
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=305)

COMMUNITY INFLUENCE—principal's influence in setting tone of acceptance of desegregation in community.

Very influential	85.5
Not influential	14.5
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=310)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OF BLACK PRINCIPAL—effect on potential of black principal as change agent in the school.

Great deal of effect	40.3
Little if any effect	59.7
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=233)

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DESEGREGATION—how community as whole has responded to school desegregation.

Favorable	42.8
Unfavorable	57.2
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=290)

FUTURE ATTITUDES—how community attitudes will change in next five years.

More favorable	46.5
Less favorable	53.5
	<u>100.0</u>

(N=299)

The diversity of power in the metropolitan areas places the school administrator, and particularly the superintendent, in the strategic position to use pressure groups rather than to take orders. The superintendent clearly operates under legal mandate in the desegregation of schools. He has the flexibility to voice agreement with local conservative leaders but under pressure from court and federal guidelines allow principals of the individual schools the autonomy they need to bring about a positive integration of the school center.

The interesting finding in Figure 2 is the attitude of rural Virginia principals that schools should lead the community in social change. During the very period in which city and suburban schools have been becoming more segregated, not only by race, but by socio-economic factors created by housing patterns, rural communities are abandoning neighborhood schools. The educational value of the consolidated school, and the economic advantages of larger school districts are undoubtedly explanatory factors in this graph.

Community Reaction to Desegregation

In an effort to discover if the principal who favors integration and works to build synergy within the school is able to translate this attitude into community action, a number of questions were asked. In response to the question, "How do you think the community as a whole has responded to desegregation?" principals of nearly all white schools indicate favorable response. Principals of nearly all black schools report unfavorable response.

This same question, when controlling for community size, indicates the most positive response from the suburban principal where the lowest level of racial mixture exists. The most unfavorable response is reported by the metropolitan principal where the highest percentage of black students is found. (See Tables 6 and 7.)

This data becomes more meaningful when compared with the principals' predictions of future community attitudes. In the total survey, the evaluation of the future is more negative than positive, with 54 per cent of all principals seeing community attitudes becoming less favorable the next five years. Perhaps the most rational answer to the question was one principal's response, "There is enough integration to give desegregation a reasonable chance of success."

It is possible that this study furnishes an approach to the problem posed in the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights statement made on April 9, 1970. The Commission assigned to schools the task of accomplishing the social transformation as well as educat-

TABLE 6
COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DESEGREGATION
ACCORDING TO THE LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE IN THE SCHOOL
BY PERCENTAGES

	Less than 5% white	5-49% white	50-65% white	66-95% white	96-100% white	All Schools
Favorable	9	39	41	43	61	
Unfavorable	91	61	59	57	39	
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	
	(N=33)	(N=23)	(N=34)	(N=124)	(N=67)	(N=281)

TABLE 7
COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DESEGREGATION
ACCORDING TO COMMUNITY SIZE
BY PERCENTAGES

	Rural	Suburb	Town	City	Metropolitan	All Schools
Favorable	41	51	62	35	27	
Unfavorable	59	49	38	65	73	
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	
	(N=163)	(N=39)	(N=55)	(N=34)	(N=59)	(N=290)

TABLE 8
PRINCIPAL'S PREDICTION OF COMMUNITY'S FUTURE ATTITUDE
TOWARD DESEGREGATION ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF
RACIAL MIXTURE IN SCHOOL BY PERCENTAGES

	Less than 5% white	5-49% white	50-65% white	66-95% white	96-100% white	All Schools
More favorable	50	74	75	38	35	
Less favorable	50	26	25	62	65	
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	
	(N=34)	(N=23)	(N=36)	(N=125)	(N=72)	(N=290)

ing the report states: "There simply is no other institution in the country so equipped to do the job. If the public schools fail, the social, economic and racial divisions that now exist will grow even wider. It would be even worse, however, if the schools do not even try." Table 8 shows that those principals in the thick of the issue are the most hopeful. Principals of schools with a high level of racial mixture are the most optimistic, and the principals of predominantly white schools are the most pessimistic. This finding demonstrates with dramatic clarity how a principal is changed by the pressures generated by desegregation.

In Table 9, note that at the same time that the metropolitan area principal reports the most negative response to desegregation by the community, he predicts the most positive future community attitudes. The suburban principal is the most pessimistic. Could it be that the suburban principal foresees an end to de facto segregation?

TABLE 9
PRINCIPAL'S PREDICTION OF COMMUNITY'S FUTURE ATTITUDE
TOWARD DESEGREGATION ACCORDING TO
COMMUNITY SIZE BY PERCENTAGES

	Rural	Suburb	Town	City	Metropolitan	All Schools
More favorable	50	46	36	41	53	
Less favorable	50	54	64	59	47	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	(N=109)	(N=41)	(N=56)	(N=34)	(N=59)	(N=299)

Educators have been able to instigate many innovations under the smokescreen of desegregation that might have otherwise been impossible, or certainly resisted. This variable indicates some of the unexpected values of conflict. For example, principals told the investigator that many white parents resist having their children in the classroom with a black teacher, or sitting next to black students. As a result, many parents have readily accepted educational innovations they might otherwise have strongly resisted. Among these are nongraded schools, team teaching, individualized instruction and block programs. These have been seen by parents as a way to protect their children from constant exposure to one set of circumstances.

Principals report more feedback related to race from white parents than black. White principals generally express concern about their inability to communicate on a meaningful level with black parents. One principal said, "You can say what you please, we're trying to make all schools white schools." Another white principal, trying to improve the white faculty members' understanding of the black community, is searching for empty office or store-front space in the black community where teachers may hold conferences with parents of their students. Another principal is trying to persuade his superintendent to equip a "micro school" in a trailer, to be moved from ghetto to ghetto. He envisions this as an educational guidance center on the order of a lending library, art museum or mobile cannery. Parents could use this school on wheels as a resource center for anything from getting help in filling out college application forms for high school students to learning to read and write themselves.

Community Participation

Unlike the principal of the segregated school, the principal of the desegregated school does not begin with a "community" but must build a sense of community among the subgroups, whose roles impinge on the school. These heterogenous groups that compose the school environment will not automatically develop a sense of community. Unless the principal is an effective change agent, it may not happen at all. To function as a change agent in the community, the principal needs an understanding of the institutions of the community. He needs to know how the school organization interrelates with the community governmental structure, economic interests and professional groups. He needs an understanding of the boundary lines of the youth agencies in the community, the service facilities available, the volunteer groups he can tap, the areas of interests of the civic clubs, and of how the Parent Teacher Association membership correlates with these community power groups. A sociological analysis of community structure would be a valuable tool for him.

As the principal becomes aware of the larger community, his horizons concerning his role of change agent widen. He begins to see that he has a constructive role in the community as well as in the school, and that he is in a position to influence the community. Consult the change agent model in Chapter III to see his feedback position in relation to the community.

In this survey, principals were asked the extent of their participation in community-wide activities. Seventy-five per cent of the black principals indicated active community-wide participation as compared with 55 per cent of the white principals. The question must be asked, "Which community?" since only three of the 55 principals responding in the survey indicated membership in formerly all-white community-wide organizations. One black principal said, "I have not been invited to join the civic clubs, but I have been invited to visit several, and I must say that I am terribly impressed with the work these groups do. I never knew before how many community facilities might be available to the schools."

Louis Masotti et al. note that "We have become a people hypocritical in the distinctions we make between the Negro's theoretical or general right to full participation in our society and the practical or specific application of these theoretical rights."²

Thomas Pettigrew suggests that effective desegregation requires changes for both races. He cites many civil rights gains such as desegregation of restaurants which are not taken advantage of by the Negro because of his uneasiness and uncertainty about the new situations. He says that Negroes have learned to withdraw from painful situations. This avoidance learning can be

broken by intervention of a rewarding and ego-enhancing experience, which may take place either accidentally or by design. The unlearning of the role of inferiority and learning the role of equality can be achieved in contrived situations.³

Principals hold varying opinions concerning the value of their participation in community activities. Some principals feel as this one, "There is no point in trying to reach parents. Work through students." Another principal, in discussing his strong feeling about the importance of school-community relations said:

You cannot analyze a community until you expose yourself to it. I think it is essential for a school administrator to take part in different types of community activities on different levels. You have to know a lot about the inner workings of a community, and the socio-economic backgrounds of your students before you know how to function in a school (Pilot Study Interview, 1969).

Principal's Influence in Community

Social scientists, removed from personal community involvement, miss the impact of the principal's influence in the desegregation/integration process in their evaluation of sources of power in school desegregation. In this study, 86 per cent of the principals consider themselves very influential in setting the tone of acceptance of school desegregation in the community.

It must be remembered that the extent of the principal's influence and the areas in which this influence is exercised, cannot be ascertained by the position of the principalship. The willingness of the incumbent to utilize his resources to establish a positive community response to school desegregation must be taken into account.

Principals are aware that they are able to reach parents through students, and thus make an impact on community attitudes. The astute principal who understands subgroups and group leadership singles out "opinion leaders" of various subgroups as targets of persuasion. The "opinion leader" is not necessarily the most popular member of the group. The group member who believes in integration enough to risk a personal loss, whether of prestige, position or approval, is usually the "opinion leader" in desegregation. Commitment and risk are essential ingredients for this leader in the integration process. This has been observed in principals of both races who take unpopular stands; students, black or white, who are members of the "in" group but who risk this approval to work for interracial harmony are opinion leaders. They may not win popular elections, but they shape attitudes.

Table 10 records the principal's perception of his influence in the community according to the level of racial mixture in the student body. Observe that the principal of the school that is 50-65 per cent white is more aware of his community influence than at any other level of racial mixture.

TABLE 10
PRINCIPAL'S PERCEPTION OF HIS INFLUENCE IN THE
COMMUNITY, ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE
IN THE SCHOOL, BY PERCENTAGES

	Less than 5% white	5-49% white	50-65% white	66-95% white	96-100% white	All Schools
Influential	87	91	94	84	85	
Not influential	19	9	6	16	15	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	(N=36)	(N=23)	(N=36)	(N=126)	(N=78)	(N=299)

Conclusion

Judging by contradictions in the data, the principal's relationship to the community is a troubled one. He clearly sees the potential of the principalship as a source of influence and is forthright in taking the position that schools should lead the community in social change. However, his apprehension concerning the future attitudes of the community toward school desegregation indicates that he considers the physical desegregation of two segregated school systems only the beginning of the problem.

Findings indicate an ineptness on the part of most principals in school-community relations. Their potential for influence in the community may not be matched with willingness to risk public reaction or by their lack of sophistication in human relations skills.

Findings in this chapter indicate:

- 1) Principals generally believe that schools should lead communities in making social changes, and are aware of their influence in the community.
- 2) They frequently use techniques of group manipulation without being willing to admit this is what they are doing; 86 per cent of the principals see themselves as influential in setting the tone of acceptance for desegregation in the community.
- 3) The rural and metropolitan principals are more aggressive toward social change than the suburban, small town or small city principals.
- 4) The suburban principal mixes less in the life of the community than do either rural or city principals. At the same time he thinks himself very influential in the community. He finds a

favorable response to desegregation in the community, but probably because he sees blacks moving into suburbia, either by housing or busing, he is most pessimistic about the future.

- 5) Black principals are more optimistic about the future; 62 per cent think community response will become more favorable, but only 43 per cent of the white principals see it improving.

Many principals' inability to place themselves in an influence relationship to the community may be directly related to their training in educational methodology rather than as administrators. The State Department of Education's avoidance of anything related to desegregation or race in their official publications prior to 1971 is suggestive of little political support for the school desegregation movement to that point, in the governmental structure of the State. It appears that many state-level educators have been reluctant to grapple with training problems of the principals because of lingering opposition in some quarters to desegregation.⁴

CHAPTER III

THE PRINCIPAL AS CHANGE AGENT

Neither principals nor superintendents seem to use the most obvious sources of information in making policy decisions. The principal is largely an untapped source of information in policy decision-making at the system level, and school groups, both faculty and students, are not used to their fullest potential by the principal in problem-solving. This study shows that only 24 out of 312 principals were involved in policy decisions concerning the plan of desegregation adopted in their school districts. Only 131 of 312 principals use school groups (faculty and students) as their primary reference group for change in the school involving integration. The need for decision-making and problem-solving to take place as close to the primary sources of information as possible is clear when the operational consequences of desegregation policies are examined.

Introduction

The term change agent describes one who perceives the need for change and develops strategy to effect change. The principal who is used as a primary source of information by the superin-

tendent and school board, and who in turn depends upon school groups for developing solutions to problems within the school functions as a change agent. If neither condition is met, he does not. Until change is implemented at the local school level, it does not happen.

In his discussion of the role of the change agent, Kenneth Benne sees the emphasis of the change agent as that of intervention to influence direction, tempo and quality of change. He applies the name "change agent" to those parts of the individual's work that have to do with stimulation, guidance, and stabilization of changed behavior, "whether the social unit which serves as 'client system' to the change agent is a person, a small group, an organization, a local community, or some larger social system."¹ In Levittown, Herbert Gans found change agents severely limited in effectiveness by community attitudes. He found that:

... What happens in a community is almost always a reflection of the people who live in it, especially the numerical and cultural majority. That majority supports the organizations and institutions that define the community; it determines who will be enjoying life, and who will be socially isolated and it forms the constituencies to which decision-makers are responsive. In the last analysis, then, the community (and its origin, impact, and politics) are an outcome of the population mix, particularly of its dominant elements and their social structure and culture.²

This study shows that 72 per cent of the principals surveyed define themselves as change agents, while 28 per cent do not. Dependent variables used in the next three chapters show that many principals function as change agents regardless of how they define themselves. Blau observes that the introduction of social innovation in institutions depends upon bureaucratic methods of administration before they become operational.³

Principal's Centrality

"Children, black and white, yell and shout as usual as they ride buses to school; tourists stroll through town; businessmen are back in their offices."⁴ All too often after the school board has exhausted its legal efforts to thwart desegregation, the citizens of the board are ready to go back to their jobs. They instruct the superintendent to do the best he can to comply with the legal mandate. When the superintendent passes the word on to the principal, he then becomes the central figure in the change process from segregation to desegregation.

This is not to say that others are not involved in changes brought about when a dual school structure is combined into one unitary system — they are. However, the principal, by the way

he relates to the school population, the community and the school system, is central to the success or failure of integration. Morris Hamburg, in the *National Elementary Principal*, says, ". . . the principal is the key person in the school, and if he is a phony in this area, you can rest assured that the integration process as it has been defined, is doomed to failure."⁵ Table 2 shows how desegregation has redefined his job placing him in an interaction position in the midst of social change.

Not only do principals have many ideas about how the public school needs changing, but they also have first-hand access to what students and parents, black and white, want, think and feel about their school. Therefore, principals must have access to the decision making level of the system, just as they ought to consult subgroups in the school in their own decision making process.

Principal as Middle-Management in Change

The principal, as the chief administrative officer of the school unit, is the member of the school system's administrative hierarchy closest to the daily operational consequences of desegregation. Middle-management is always a position in conflict. Like the plant foreman, the principal is unable to identify with top management because of his exclusion from the policy level of the system; at the same time, he is not welcomed in teachers' organizations because of his executive position. Just as the plant foreman has been called the most important and the least important member of management,⁶ so the principal may be variously viewed as the most important and least important school administrator.

In his transactional role as middle-management, the principal has no inherent protection from intergroup interaction. He is where the action is, both in cooperation and conflict. From this position, he "attempts to reinforce organizational expectations on the one hand and empathize with organization members on the other."⁷ The principal needs to develop techniques to make creative use of the talents and resources of those whose roles impinge upon his. Only 44 per cent of the principals in this study seem to understand techniques of developing group goals from group involvement.

Change Agent in Institutionalization of Change

Social change, to be sustained, must be implemented in social institutions. Eisenstadt has developed a model of institutional

change that can be applied to school desegregation:

According to Eisenstadt, then, any institution:

- 1) Maintains its boundaries by mobilizing diverse resources.
- 2) At the same time attempts to maintain legitimacy of the the values, symbols and norms of the system.
- 3) Implementation of these policies may affect any position of different groups in society in their relation to the institution.
- 4) This causes a shift in the balance of power among them and in their orientation to the institution and its values.⁸

In his discussion of social change, Eisenstadt sees subgroups as exhibiting some autonomy in their attitudes toward norms, and a variation in their willingness or ability to mold themselves into the demands of a given institution. This stimulates a constant shifting of the balance of power among subgroups, which under agreeable conditions become the foci of change.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights policy statement, released April 9, 1970, conceded that schools are being asked to accomplish a social transformation as well as to educate. The Commission said that in their view, this is the only institution in American society equipped to do the job. The policy statement says: "If the public schools fail, the social, economic and racial divisions that now exist will grow even wider. It would be even worse, however, if the schools do not even try."⁹

For a principal to effect change, he must have access to resources which can be manipulated. For this reason, it is essential that he has the authority to make changes within the school. These variables which can be manipulated are environmental factors that must not violate the values nor rights of self-determination of subgroups. In order to bring about change, cooperative efforts, specialized roles and the mobilization of resources are necessary; consequently, social change is seldom carried out except through organizations. For example, school desegregation, as an immediate target for planned change is both the laboratory for testing the civil rights movement and the instrument for diffusing change more widely in society. The principal must be trained and equipped with human relations skills to expedite the often painful job of showing blacks and whites how to work profitably and peacefully together. Figure 3 is a model developed by Hollis Peter illustrating the change agent in planned change and the organizational client system. This diagram is used as a model in Chapter V to demonstrate how the principal brings about integration in the school through the development of synergy among the subgroups.

The change agent in this diagram effects change by stressing openness—collaboration—consensus and authentic relationships within and among subgroups. Rather than denying the existence of problems, the change agent applies valid knowledge and involves the subgroups in problem-solving. In this way, internal

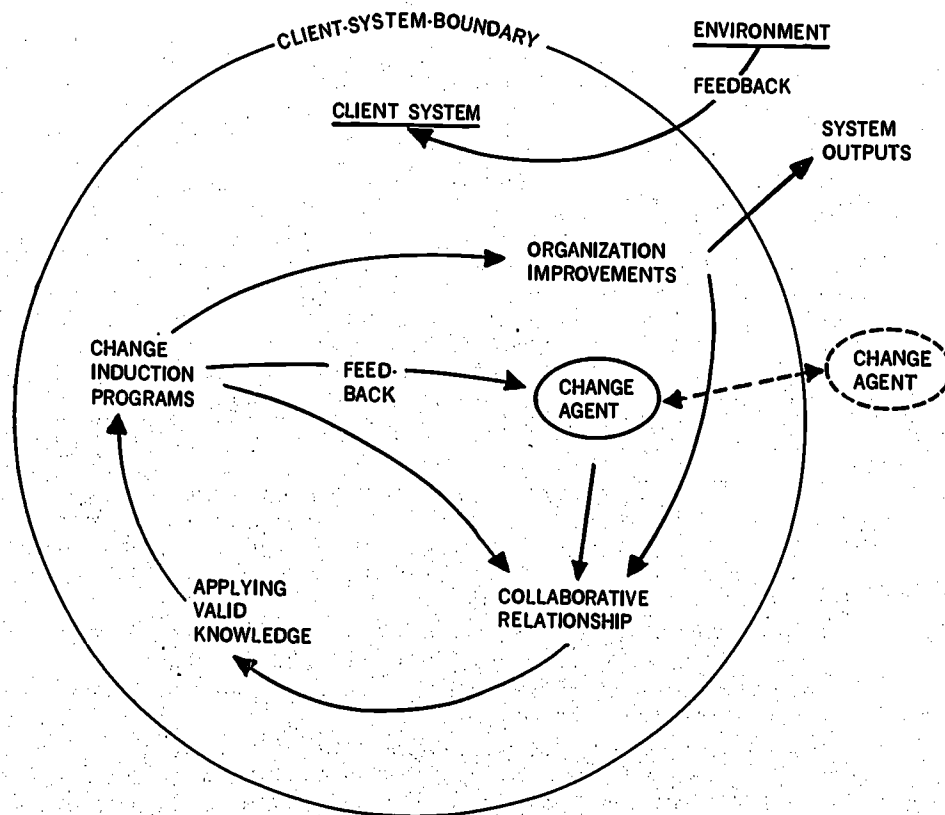


Figure 3¹⁰

Hollis Peter's Model of the Organizational Client System and the Change Agent, in Planned Changes

resources are developed. This model views the organization as an "organic system of relationships which tend to work best when marked by mutual trust, mutual support, open communications, interdependence and multi-group membership of individuals, and a high degree of personal commitment."¹⁰

Feedback

Choice among alternatives underlies all organization changes. "Through focused attention and through the collection and feedback of relevant data to relevant people, more choices become available and hence better decisions are made."¹¹

Feedback is communication which takes place across a boundary. A boundary is "the line forming a closed circle around selected variables, where there is less interchange of energy (or communication, etc.) across the line of the circle than within the circle."¹² There is a boundary between systems as well as within systems. For example, there is a definite boundary between the school board, the superintendent, the principal, the faculty, the students, the parents. Feedback has to do with who talks to whom, how often and about what across the group boundary. This is also where the informal organization and the informal communication system function, crossing formal organizational lines of authority.

Generally the principal is in a position to obtain constant internal feedback as well as feedback across the boundary between the school and its environment. He is more available to faculty, students, parents and citizens than those groups who make policy decisions concerning desegregation.

Crain found superintendents unwilling to engage in serious discussion of desegregation issues with lay persons. He found school boards more responsive to neighborhood groups than to civil rights organizations.¹³

The superintendent, the school board, the court and federal officials function at a greater distance from the results of desegregation than the principal. In this pivotal position occupied by the principal between the school, the community, and the school system, the principal occupies the most appropriate position in the school system's administrative hierarchy to be change agent for the individual school.

When a Principal Does Not Function As Change Agent

What happens after desegregation when a principal does not know how, or refuses to function as a change agent? What about the principal who says, "I do not want to promote integration?" Vidich and McReynolds, in a study of high school principals

in New York City conducted for the U.S. Office of Education, picture the principal who does not function as a change agent (according to the definition used in this study) as a colonial administrator defending his outpost. They show him as:

Badgered by the union and the board, bludgeoned by the critics, buffeted by the community, and its spokesmen, baffled by student militancy of a style and vehemence they never experienced, the principals' "occupational psychology" in the phraseology of the USOE report, is to defend the status quo and their own expertise.¹⁴

Borrowing from complex organization literature, the principal who defends the status quo and adheres strictly to organizational values can be compared to Chris Argyris' executive who develops nonauthentic relations within an organization as the result of lack of interpersonal competence. This executive operates according to traditional organizational values of rational, task-oriented aspects. He "influences" through directives, coercion and control.¹⁵

The executive who has no interpersonal skills can be related to the principal who has a negative appreciation of the potential power of his position. He sees himself as the organization's scapegoat. His advice to the new principal approaching desegregation is, "Lay low and protect the equipment."

Where there is no feedback across organizational boundaries, there is no openness to new attitudes, values, and feelings, nor incorporation of them into the organization. This decreases the possibility of Creative Synthesis within the organization. Where the principal in school desegregation does not function as change agent, the school center becomes a breeding ground for mistrust, intergroup conflict, conformity and rigidity.¹⁶ It is a place where, in the words of one principal, it appears to be more important to "put 'em in their place," than it is to listen to what they have to say.

Goals of the Change Agent

The effective change agent knows where he is, where he is going, and what he has to work with. In more formal language, he develops a rationale for change, clearly defines goals, and knows what resources he can draw from to effect change. His approach is positive, firm and objective. One principal put it in these words: "From the beginning, establish with both the faculty and students that integration will work, and you expect each of them to help make it work."

Bennis discusses the goals of the change agent, with the underlying assumption that people are more supportive of change if they have a part in its development. These goals appear on the left side of the following table, illustrated on the right side by quotations from Virginia principals in the survey.

TABLE 11
CHANGE AGENTS GOALS AND EMPIRICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

GOALS OF CHANGE AGENT
 (According to Bennis)¹⁷

To create an open, problem-solving climate throughout the organization.

Supplement authority associated with role and status with authority of knowledge and competence.

Locate decision-making and problem-solving as close to information sources as possible.

Build trust among persons and groups.

Make competition more relevant to work goals and to maximize collaborative efforts. (In this "curriculum" is substituted for "competition" to make goal more relevant to education.)

To develop reward system which recognizes organizational goals and individual needs.

To increase sense of "ownership" of organization.

GOALS IN OPERATION
 (According to Virginia principals)

"You don't bring into a new school a set of behavior from another. You develop human relations in the context of the particular situation in which you work. Involve the staff and students in planning."

"Become informed about racial attitudes. Read, attend seminars, talk with principals who have had experience with desegregation. Examine your own attitudes, and be honest with yourself about your own feelings."

"Enlist the help of all subgroups in the school, not just the one you used to listen to. You need the cooperation of all groups, not just the easy ones."

"You can talk all you want to, but until people from both races actually experience doing things together, their feelings don't change. Prejudice is not rational — it has to be changed by people learning to know and respect one another as persons."

"Our schools are outdated; they are not meeting the needs of modern society. The entire curriculum needs renovating; we need things we don't have, people qualified to teach. We are restricted by limitations of training, of state requirements, of peoples' image of the school. I firmly believe a school system can be devised which will teach every child to the extent of his ability to learn."

"Encourage your faculty; help them know there are no instant solutions, but that together you work out problems. Communicate to them that we establish a community here in the school, and that the tone of this community is set by the faculty attitudes."

"Challenge the faculty and students to the opportunity to demonstrate to the community that democracy can and will work."

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TABLE 11—Continued

To help managers manage according to relevant objectives rather than past practices.

"Ask students and faculty to help set up the framework for making desegregation work. Without this, a principal can do nothing by himself."

To increase self-control and self-direction for people within the organization.

"Treat students in junior and senior high school as adults, not children."

The principal who operates with this typology of goals in school desegregation sees the principal's job as essentially that of helping the school center to grow, to emerge, to draw upon its own resources for solutions to problems. The principal is with the group as a person, not as a position. He is in control of the situation in the sense that he looks at the school as a system, works with the teachers and students in the development of goals and procedures, and allows jointly determined targets and methods to govern. According to Jack Gibbs, "When the administrator looks at himself as someone who facilitates, opens up the system, permits, encourages and gets out of the way, many new vistas open to him."¹⁸

Conclusion

If we take note of Tumin's view that "schools are the single most important agents in the formation of our national character,"¹⁹ and if the principal is the designated individual responsible for the school center, and if desegregation is one of the most important social movements in recent American history, then it would appear that a definition of the role of the principal is too important to be left to local idiosyncracies, where he operates on a continuum from power to powerlessness.

The achievement of integration in a desegregated school is an uncharted sea in which no one can make accurate predictions. For this reason, those principals intimately involved in the desegregation-integration process must: 1) have access to the decision-making level of the school system, and 2) must involve their own school groups in problem-solving in the school center. If the principal is to function as a change agent, it is essential that he be a primary source of information for desegregation policy decisions, and that he receive and utilize constant feedback from those groups whose roles impinge upon his.

The principal is the most appropriate individual in the administrative hierarchy of the school system to function as change agent

for the school center because of: 1) his transactional role in the middle-management position, 2) his exposure to the daily operational consequences of desegregation, 3) his position on the line of fire across school-community boundaries, 4) his own adjustment to a changing situation.

Data collected in this study support the assumption that principals of schools with more than a 5 per cent racial mixture are aware of their responsibility in community race relations. From their own statements, recorded throughout this study, it will be seen that they approach school desegregation with the realization that they are involved in a highly emotional situation. They intuitively understand their centrality in change.

CHAPTER IV

CHANGE AGENT AND POWER-STATUS

The principal's power-status is a social phenomenon, not a political or economic one. Since social power resides in the principalship position in the formal and informal organization of the public school system, the composite term "power-status" is used in this study. This chapter is based on the following proposition: If the principal's effectiveness as a change agent is to be sustained, he must hold power-status in the school system.

Introduction

Because of the historical separation of the races in America and the assignation of superior and inferior position in society, power and power conflicts characterize school desegregation generally. The importance of the principal's power-status is basic to an understanding of the principalship as the locus of change in school desegregation, and of the role of the principal as the change agent. Decision-making is centrally involved in power; this may be of a formal or informal nature. In this chapter the effort is made to isolate that part of the decision-making process

in the local school system in which the principal is involved. As the basic index to his power-status, it is necessary to discover his relationship to the formal and informal organization of the school system. How does desegregation affect this relationship? Does it vary with the level of racial mixture in the school? Is it affected by the legal stage of desegregation of the school district? Does his power-status vary with the complexity of the school system's organizational structure?

National attention is directed through mass media to schools in trouble. As a source of primary information in intergroup conflict, the principal in the troubled school is in a stronger power position than he was in a segregated school. He may not, however, realize the power potential of his position, or know how to use it in the development of synergy in the school, or in community influence.

Informal Power-Status

Flexibility within formal organizational structure is brought about by the informal organization. This is the network of personal relationships existing in the school system. When a principal is referred to as "knowing the score" of a school system, this is a way of saying that he is a part of the informal organization.

Ideally, decisions are made at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid and the informative flow is downward. Facts and ideas are supposed to be fed upward through administrative layers. However, existing within the formal organization is an informal one which does not necessarily follow the organizational chart. Communications within this informal organization can be more effective than in the formal one. The procedures required in formalized communications sometimes cause the intent of the information to be lost. Blau and Scott found that:

Studies of experimental and work groups have shown that status differences restrict the participation of low-status members, channel a disproportionate amount of communication to high-status members, discourage criticism of the suggestions of the highs, encourage rejecting correct suggestions of the lows, and reduce the work satisfaction of the lows and their motivation to make contributions.¹

The now classical Hawthorne or Western Electric studies marked the beginning of a humanistic orientation in administration. They uncovered the importance of group relationships within organizations. These studies discovered that relationships within organizations are determinants of behavior and attitude toward

work. The norms shared by the group clearly determine the workers' response to organizational rules and regulations.²

The informal organization relates to the principal in the change agent flow-chart (Figure 3). It is often through this means of personal relationships that the principal becomes sensitized to the subgroups in the school. Formal organizational procedures and channels of communication do not furnish the same creative approaches to problem-solving closest to the primary source of information (the subgroups) as the informal organization does.

In the survey instrument, principals were asked how often they are consulted by the superintendent or one of the administrative assistants about problems or policies that affect the entire system. Those who said they are frequently consulted were defined as "included" in the informal organization. Those who said they were consulted occasionally, almost never or never were considered "excluded."

A survey conducted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals found that 14 per cent of the principals nationwide devote none of their time to planning with administrative supervisors, 68 per cent devote one-sixth of their time, and 3 per cent devote more than 12 per cent to the consultative role.³ The graph in Figure 4 shows that the legal stage of desegregation of the school district determines to a large degree the position of the principal in the informal communication system.

Principals of those schools in districts whose funds have been cut off for noncompliance, and those districts under court order are more likely to be included in the informal organizational structure of the school system than at any other stage. On the other hand, principals of schools in districts in compliance are least likely to be included in the informal organization. This substantiates the position that an increased level of racial mixture increases the principal's power-status. Data show that the majority of schools in compliance also have a low level of racial mixture.

The degree of organizational complexity was found to be directly related to the principal's inclusion in the informal organization. Principals of schools in simple systems are more likely to be included in the informal organization. The principal in the intermediate system is less likely, and the principals of schools in complex systems are the least likely to be part of the informal organization of the school system.

The increase in size of the school system makes the superintendent more dependent on processed data. The practical limitations to informal contact between the principal and the superintendent in a very large school system are understandable. Principals indicated to this investigator that the principal's meetings do not serve the same purpose as the more informal person-to-person discussion of school problems with the superintendent.

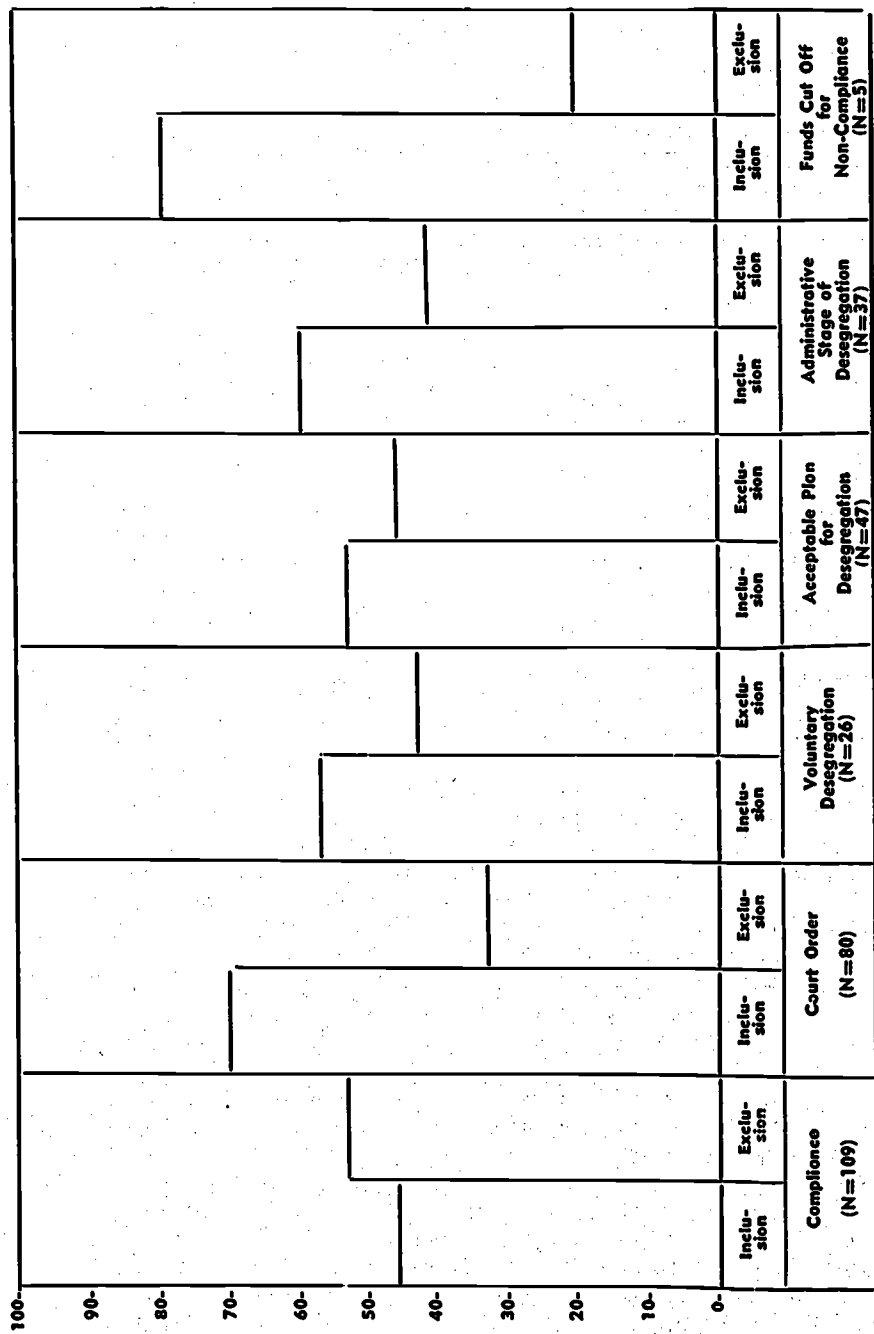


Figure 4
 PRINCIPAL'S ACCESS TO INFORMAL ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL SYSTEM
 ACCORDING TO LEGAL STAGE OF DESEGREGATION

Most often principals indicate little contact with the superintendent unless there is difficulty in the school. This kind of negative contact seldom gives the principal the opportunity to make the creative contributions to systemwide policy that he is capable of making, since he is nearer the operational consequence of desegregation.

The informal communication system follows the patterns of grapevines or personal friendships. It is a useful technique for executives in sounding out reactions before instituting policy changes. A black principal perceived the importance of the informal contacts as follows:

It is no one's fault probably, but the white principal is better known by the power structure than the black principal. He may play golf with the superintendent, belong to the same clubs or church. He may get his point of view over better in these informal settings than in an office.

The informal communication system is inherent in the concept of Creative Manipulation discussed in Chapter V. The grapevine can be detrimental if the principal does not know how to stifle destructive rumor; though even then it serves the positive function of spotting the sources of support and malcontent. Chinoy says, "Those who direct the flow of information within the structure are in a strategic position to affect policy and action."⁴

When a desegregated school has a nearly equal black/white ratio, as illustrated in Figure 5, the principal is more involved in this grapevine than at any other level of racial mixture. One principal of a nearly equal black/white student body said:

It is impossible to maintain a positive interracial climate where there are near equal number of two races in a school. There are certain problems which must be anticipated and handled when they appear because appear they will. If these problems are handled swiftly and properly, such problems will become less and less (Survey Questionnaire, 1970).

This principal, as might be anticipated by the reciprocal need for information, is included in his school district's informal communication system. The principal of the nearly all-black school (less than five per cent white) is less likely to be involved in the informal communication system than any other principal.

Power-Status in Decision Making

Schools have been desegregated, but the redefinition of the principalship in the administrative hierarchy has not been recognized in most school districts. Desegregation has forced him into the administrative position in which he must function as a change

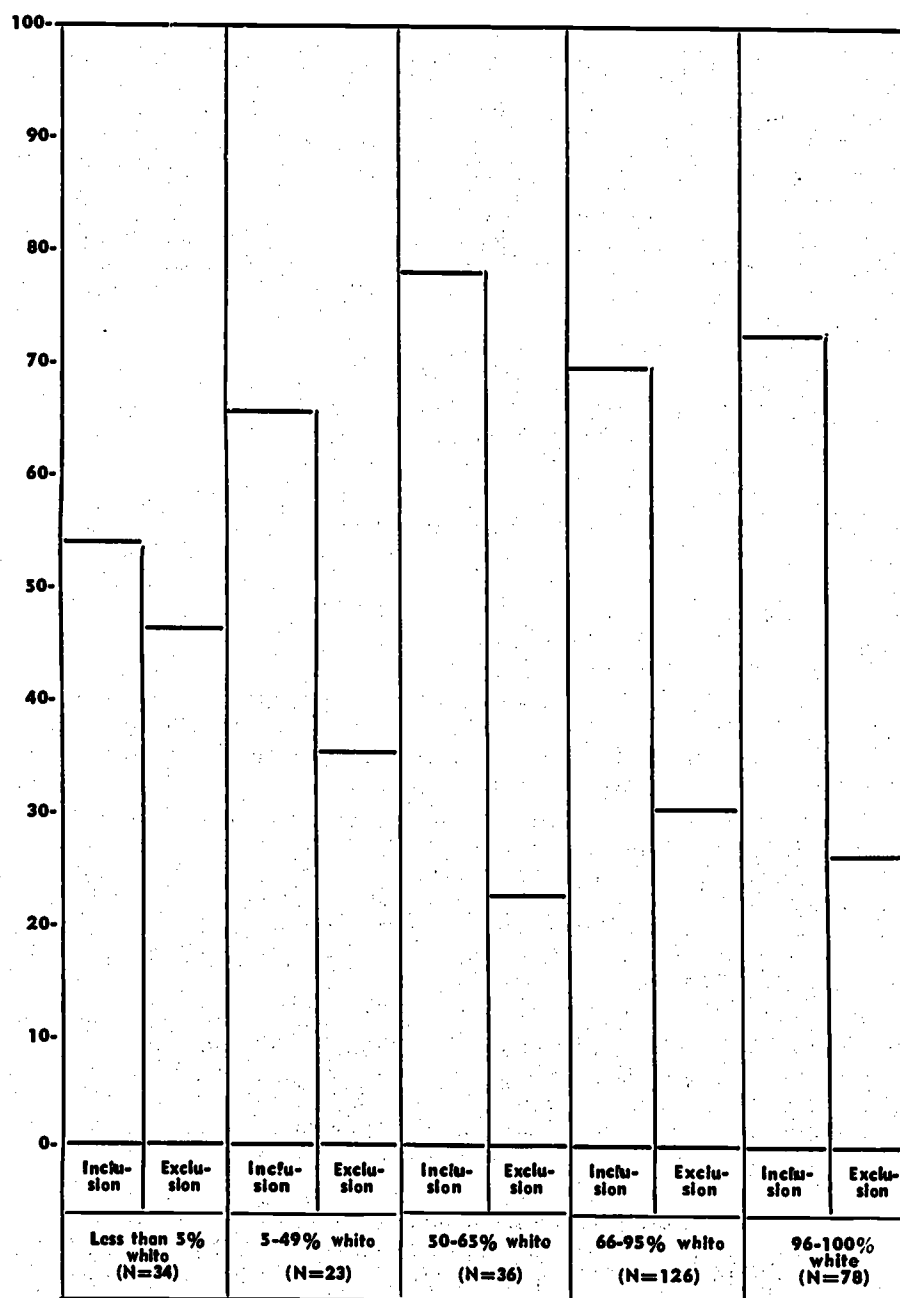


Figure 5
 PRINCIPAL'S ACCESS TO INFORMAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM,
 ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE

agent. There is little evidence that this added responsibility has been officially noticed by the superintendent and school board.

Practice suggests a lag between delegation of responsibility for integration and power to actuate it. The highest percentage of principals who consult school groups for changes involving integration are in schools that are 50 to 65 per cent white. Even at the highest percentage of use of school groups as Primary Reference Groups, only 54 per cent of these principals consult school groups in preference to groups external to the school. The highest percentage of use of Creative Manipulation was among principals of schools imposed of 5 to 49 per cent white students and 50 to 65 per cent white students. In neither case is the technique used by more than 61 per cent of the principals. Added to the data are many statements from questionnaires and interviews which voice concerns of principals about inflexibility of curriculum and need for more black teachers in their schools.

A constant reading of daily newspapers recounting the nature of incidents brought before school boards indicates the widespread disparity between authority and responsibility that exists in school systems. Morphet et al. suggests that in contrast with school systems with rigid authoritative structures, there are other school systems that delegate considerable freedom to the school center. This is characterized by broad, rather than specific, policy directives from school boards and superintendents. Primary responsibility for education programs rests with the school center. The principal appoints all his own staff. The superintendent never presents policy matters concerning the entire system to the board without consulting representatives of principals, teachers and staff. Each principal participates in budget preparation for the entire system.⁵

The survey instrument measured the level of involvement by the principal in decision-making from decisions affecting only the individual school to decisions affecting the entire system.

The data, presented in Figure 6 clearly show that the level of involvement of the principals in systemwide decision-making is greatest in those schools which have a high degree of racial mixture of students. Whereas more than 40 per cent of those principals with a 5-65 per cent white student population have a high level of involvement, this is true of only about one-fourth of the principals of segregated schools or with 66-95 per cent white student population.

When the relationship between organizational complexity and the principal's involvement in a high level of systemwide decision-making is considered, a definite pattern is seen. The largest percentage of principals participating in a high level of decision-making is found in the simple systems, the next largest in the intermediate, and the least involvement in the complex system. Almost three out of four principals report they are not involved in high-level decisions affecting their school system.

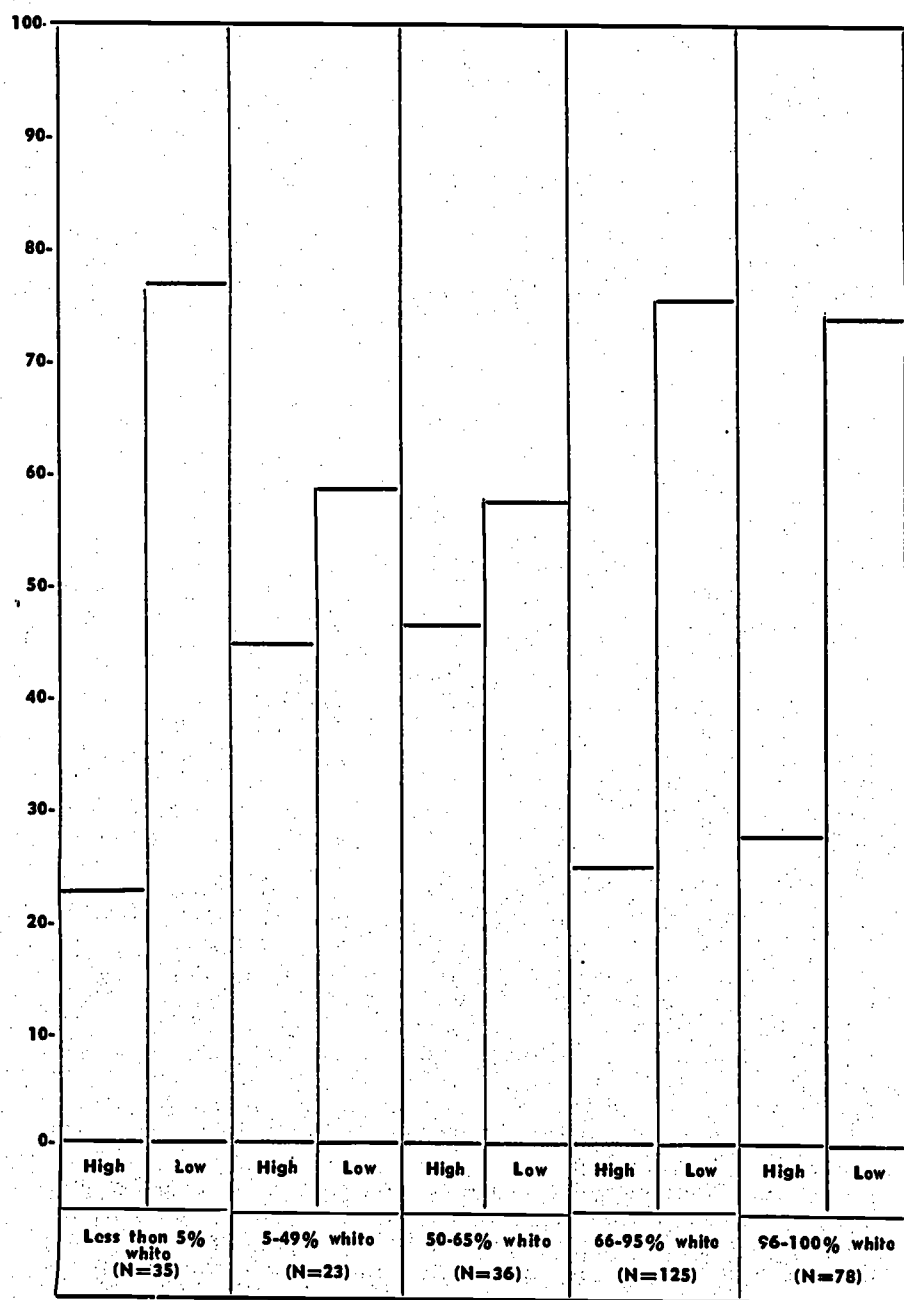


Figure 6
 LEVEL OF PRINCIPAL'S INVOLVEMENT IN SYSTEMWIDE DECISIONS,
 ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE IN SCHOOL.

Table 12 illustrates the impact of desegregation on the principal's power-status. The principal of the school with 5 to 65 per cent white students is more likely to be involved in policy decisions than at any other level of racial composition in the schools. This evidence may be considered the apex of the underlying assumptions made in Table 2, in which the redefinition of the principal's job from segregation to desegregation is developed.

TABLE 12
PRINCIPAL'S PARTICIPATION IN ACTUAL DECISIONS AT
THE POLICY LEVEL, ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF
RACIAL MIXTURE, BY PERCENTAGE

	Less than 5% white	5-49% white	50-65% white	66-95% white	96-100% white	Schools
Policy	31	48	39	23	26	
Not policy	69	52	61	77	74	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	(N=301)
	(N=36)	(N=23)	(N=36)	(N=125)	(N=81)	

TABLE 13
PRINCIPAL'S LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN SYSTEMWIDE
DECISION-MAKING, ACCORDING TO ORGANIZATIONAL
COMPLEXITY, BY PERCENTAGES

	Simple	Intermediate	Complex	All Schools
High	34	29	23	
Low	66	71	77	
	100%	100%	100%	(N=303)
	(N=105)	(N=124)	(N=74)	

A totally unanticipated finding is that the legal stage of desegregation for the school system makes no clearcut difference in the level of involvement of the principal in systemwide decision making. On the other hand, data show that the level of racial mixture makes a decided difference. This indicates that it is the racial composition of the individual school center that determines the level of involvement in decision making rather than external pressure. This is contradictory to the informal power status where the legal stage of desegregation was a significant factor.

Either there is little correlation between the principal's being consulted about problems, and his actual participation in policy making, or the administrative hierarchy is more sensitive to local temperament than to federal regulations.

Legitimacy for the critical analysis in the survey of the highest level of systemwide decisions in which the principals had

actually participated comes from Talcott Parsons, who defines policy decisions as "decisions which relatively directly commit the organization as a whole and which stand in relatively direct connection to its primary function."⁶ The second source of legitimacy are those designated by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare as relevant to school desegregation.

Policy decisions are those which commit the whole organization and are directly related to its primary function. To measure the principal's participation in these decisions relative to desegregation that have been made, the examples of the highest level of decision making in which they had taken part were categorized. These categories were plan of desegregation, desegregation policies of operation, combination of administrative, instructional and operational policies, methods and procedures, and no answers. These categories were then dichotomized as policy and not policy. Included in "policy" are plan of desegregation, combination of administrative and instructional policy, inclusion in all policy decisions. In "not policy" are grouped all examples of methods and procedures, irrelevant answers, and no answers. The logic in including no answers in this category was that if a principal had actually participated in a vital systemwide policy decision, he would be apt to say so.

Many principals gave as examples of the highest level of decision-making in the school system in which they had participated selection of cheer leaders, dress code, conduct code, selection of textbooks, and curriculum changes. There seems to be a general illiteracy concerning the strategic role of the administrator and the source of policy decisions in public education. The classroom teacher is considered the ultimate unit of authority by parents.

"It is as though, in warfare, the 'enemy' and the 'foot soldiers' were equated and the invisible target, a complex military establishment operating far behind the front line, ignored."⁷

In the same manner, the public fails to understand the relatively powerless position of the principal in policy decision-making.

The level at which these decisions are made is often obscured from public scrutiny and the principal tends to fall in the category of "foot soldier" who was not there when the policy was determined behind the front lines.

Conclusion

Data recorded in this chapter show that the act of school desegregation in and of itself increases the principal's power-status in the school system. The racial composition of the individual

school determines the principal's level of involvement in decision-making to a more marked degree than the legal stage of desegregation. This chapter clarifies the dilemma which desegregation presents to the principal. He finds himself in the organizational position in which he must function as a change agent, but there is practically no official recognition of the added dimensions this brings to his job. He is still essentially isolated from the decision-making level of the school system, and is not centrally involved in long-range planning.

Even though a principal may function most effectively on a short-term basis without power-status, his long-range effectiveness is limited unless he holds power-status in the school system. His power to effect change of lasting significance is directly related to his power-status.

This survey finds a relatively low power-status among all principals. Power-status was measured according to their inclusion in the informal communication system and the informal organization of the school system, and participation in systemwide decision-making.

Evidence of the increase of the principal's power-status in a desegregated school is demonstrated from the following findings from this chapter:

- 1) Principals of schools that are in systems completely desegregated on a voluntary basis and that are under Court Order are clearly a part of the informal communication system.
- 2) Principals of schools in districts in which Funds are cut off, or are under Court Order are generally used as consultants on policy decisions.
- 3) Principals of schools composed of 5 to 65 per cent white students are more likely to be involved in major system-wide decision-making.
- 4) Principals of schools composed of 5 to 65 per cent white students have participated in more actual policy decisions than any other principals.

The conclusion to be drawn here is that the superintendent who uses the principal as a primary source of information enables him to function more effectively as a change agent in the desegregation of public schools.

CHAPTER V

SYNERGY IN THE SCHOOL

Synergy is a term borrowed from the physical sciences and adapted to the social sciences. In its basic meaning, it describes the situation where the effect of the whole is greater than the sum of the effects of the parts. In this context, the combination of diverse subgroups into one student body in a desegregated school creates a greater total effect toward equipping students to live in today's world than do homogeneous groups attending segregated schools. The proposition on which this chapter is based is: If the principal functions as a change agent, he builds a collaborative climate within the school in which synergy rather than conflict develops. Synergy is not easily, nor painlessly achieved. It is, however, essential if desegregation is to result in integration.

Introduction

Conflict is inevitable in the transition from segregation to desegregation. The public school principal must accept the likelihood of conflict in desegregation at the same time that he develops strategies for conflict-resolution. The principal is in the most appropriate administrative position to synchronize the seemingly

contradictory social energies in the social process that follows school desegregation. This synchronization is a synergistic process. Resegregation (segregated groups in a desegregated school) from a sociological point of view is more damaging to the child than segregation.

Synergy has been characterized by Warren Bennis as follows:

- 1) a climate in which collaboration, not conflict, will flourish,
- 2) flexible and adaptive structure,
- 3) utilization of individual talents,
- 4) clear and agreed-upon goals,
- 5) standards of openness, trust, and cooperation,
- 6) interdependence,
- 7) high intrinsic rewards,
- 8) transactional controls — a lot of individual autonomy, and a lot of participation in making key decisions.

The Principal as Internal Change Agent

Hollis Peter's diagram of the change agent and the organizational client system in planned change was given in Figure 3, page 27. An adaptation of this model to the desegregated school is presented in Figure 7 showing how the principal functions as the change agent in the process from desegregation to integration in the development of synergy in the school. Decisions arrived at by group synthesis are more relevant to the environment of the desegregated school than hierarchical decision making. Problem solving, to be effective, should take place as close to the primary source of information concerning that decision area as possible.

Note the following flow of in-put and feed-back in decision making:

The superintendent is the external change agent—The stimulus for school desegregation within the individual school district originates with the 1954 Supreme Court decision, through the school board, to the superintendent. He, in turn, transmits this administrative decision to the principal.

Internal change agent—As the administrative head of the individual school, the principal is in the most appropriate position to function as change agent for that school. The need for autonomy within the school center is obvious from the chart.

The principal's primary reference groups in making decisions within the school are the faculty and students. He develops a collaborative relationship as he involves both races at every level of decision making in the school center. As the principal works with change in this environment of diverse subgroups, he gradually adjusts to the situation.

Creative Manipulation is changing the environment, whether it be moving time for basketball practice or curriculum changes, to develop group goals based on feed-back from primary reference groups. **New Group Goals** result from the principal's functioning as the internal change agent, redirecting potentially conflictual situations. Integration begins to develop in the school at this point, as racial mutuality increases through meaningful participation. **Sensitivity** to the human resources of the desegregated school by the change agent results in a continual reassessment and evaluation of the dynamic aspects of change, and group interaction as status quo traditions are called into question. **Creative Synthesis** takes place when the subgroups that make up a school population develop a problem-solving approach to conflict, and share in the responsibility of conflict-resolution. This creative synthesis is developed by the Change Agent Principal as he involves potentially conflictual subgroups in decision making at every level of operation. An atmosphere of acceptance and respect of one another is the outcome of this process. **Boundary** is the lines that separate the school from the community and the school district as a whole. In each school unit, the principal is in the primary feedback position for the school system. As such, he is a primary resource concerning the effects of desegregation for the superintendent and the school board.

Primary Reference Group

The major source of an individual's values and norms in making decisions in a particular situation is his primary reference group. This is a critical variable in the study of the principal in the desegregated school. The principal often finds himself faced with conflicting demands from groups to whom he is responsible as the chief administrator of the school. The reference groups whose roles impinge upon that of the principal are: 1) school groups including faculty and students; 2) administrative hierarchy, including the superintendent, supervisory personnel and the school board; and 3) parents.

In a stable school situation, the reference group concept is less important. The principal of a desegregated school is caught in the painful predicament created by the demands and goals originating in diverse groups. If the principal's primary reference group for integration changes in the school is a group external to the school unit, whether it be administrative hierarchy, parents, or pressure groups, the school is likely to become a breeding ground for mistrust, intergroup conflict, conformity and rigidity. Ninety-one per cent of the Virginia principals agreed that there is a direct correlation between the success of integration and the participation of black students, teachers, counselors, and administrators in policy decisions in a desegregated school system. (See Figure 8 for a graph illustrating the correlation of primary reference groups with level of racial mixture.)

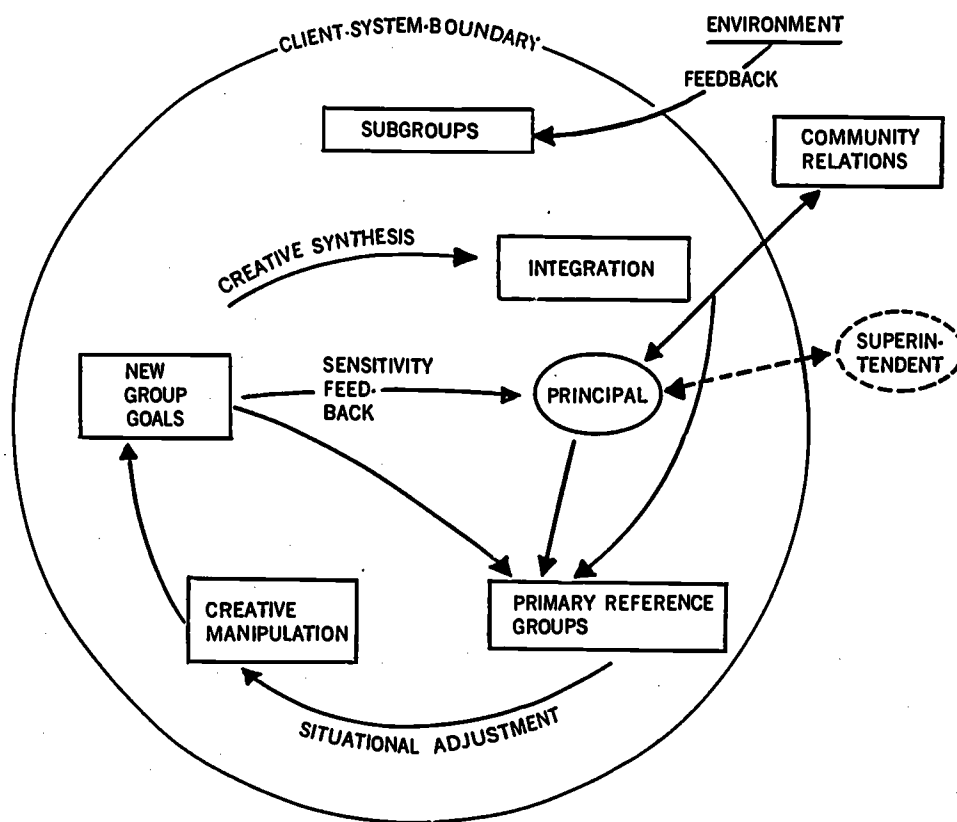


Figure 7
Adaptation of Peter's Model, Showing the Principal as
Change Agent in School Desegregation

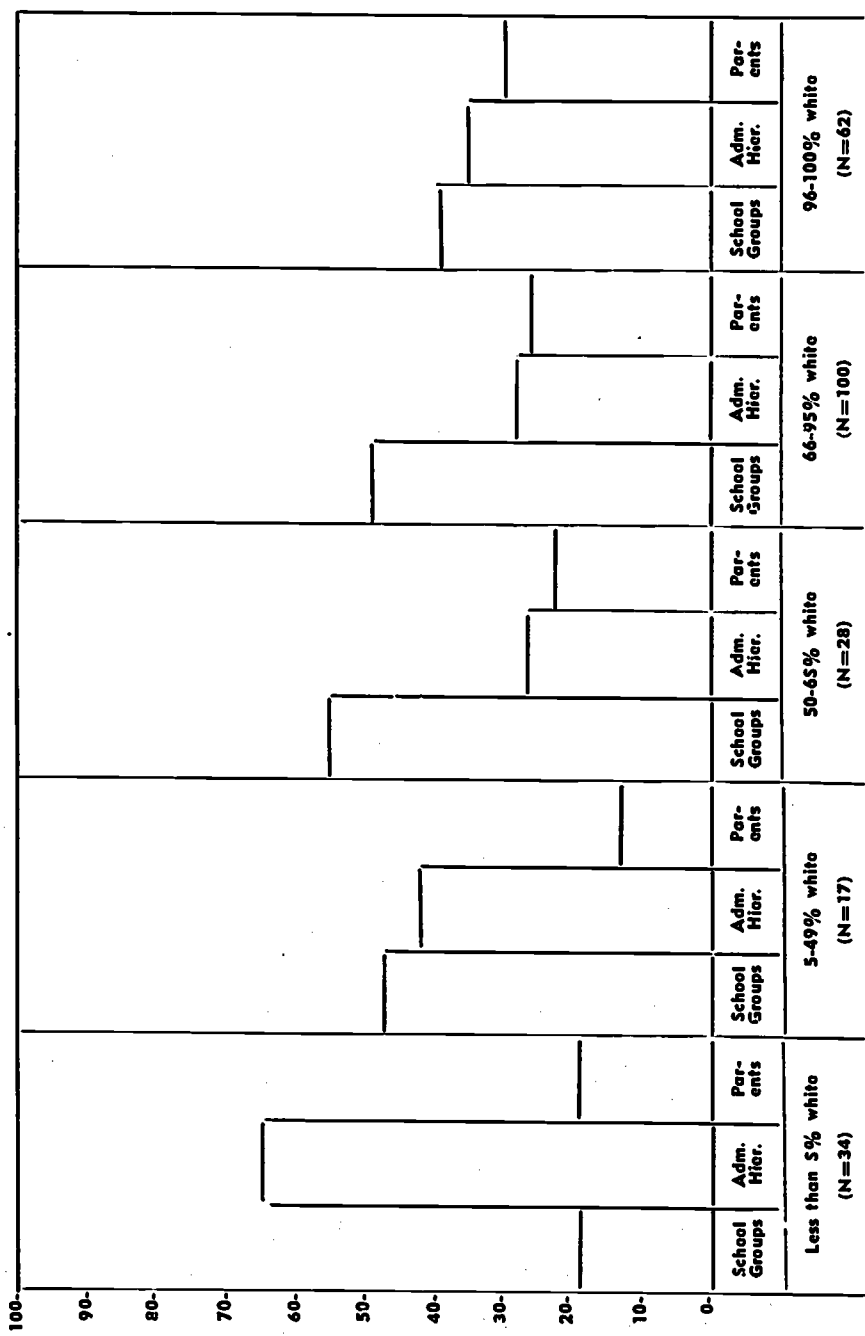


Figure 8
 PRINCIPAL'S PRIMARY REFERENCE GROUP FOR CHANGE
 ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE

The concept of creative manipulation in which the administrator is the dynamic force in developing group goals through group action was developed by Dr. William Bullock in Educational Administration Seminars at the College of William and Mary. He sees the principal as the individual in the school center who meshes organizational goals and individual needs in goal-directed action. The principal is so highly sensitized to the environment that he creatively manipulates the mechanisms available to him to develop congruences between goals and needs. He deals with what "is" rather than what "ought" to be, drawing power from subgroups that compose the school center to move the group toward mutually-formulated goals. His influence is felt in selection of the direction in which the organization moves. Subgroups in the school are also a means of communication between the school and subgroups and/or subcultures in the community.

The ideas inherent in creative manipulation are alluded to by a number of writers in the field of administration. For example, Mary Parker Follett talked about this underlying strategy of effective administration when she outlined the strategies of 1) direct contact of responsible people concerned with particular problems, 2) contact in all formative stage of policy making, 3) reciprocal relation of all factors, 4) coordination as a continuing process.²

Principals of schools with the level of racial mixture between 5 and 65 per cent white are more likely to use the technique of creative manipulation than at any other level. This indicates the pressure on the principal in schools with a high percentage of black students to involve primary reference groups of students and faculty in establishing new goals for the group. (See the Principal's Change Agent function on the flow chart Figure 7 on page 27, and relate to this finding.

Sensitivity

It is precisely at the point of feedback in school desegregation that the job of the principal becomes the most sensitive position in the administrative hierarchy of the school system. It is here that his potential value to a theory of school desegregation has been most overlooked by the policy makers of school desegregation, and is perhaps here that he can make his greatest contribution if used creatively. By the time information, which is part of the principal's daily experience, gets "sampled, screened, condensed, compiled, coded, expressed in statistical form, spun into generalizations and crystallized into recommendations"³ from which the superintendent compiles his recommendations to the board, it has become "processed data."

The information processing systems on which large school

systems rely produce reports that are dangerously mismatched with the real world because of the elements that have been filtered out of the report. "It filters out emotion, feeling, sentiment, mood and almost all of the irrational nuances of human situations. It filters out those intuitive judgements that are just below the level of consciousness." The data of this study indicate that the principal's sensitivity to the school population in a school of over 2,000 may be dysfunctional from a human relations standpoint. The principal is more likely to depend on his own observations in schools under 2,000, and more dependent on informants for schools over 2,000. There are indications that the trend in Virginia is toward larger schools.

Note that principal's awareness of the mood of the school peaks at about 1,000 and when a school becomes as large as 2,000, he seems unable to keep his finger on the pulse of the school without informants. In schools over 2,000, 80 per cent of the principals use informants rather than depending on their own observations for cues of pending difficulty.

The data included in the following table were substantiated in interviews with selected principals who shared some of these insights. To measure sensitivity, the open-ended question was asked: "How do you become aware of potential trouble areas in the school, that is, how do you pick up cues that alert you to brewing difficulty?" A multiplicity of answers included being alerted by the coaches from conversations overheard in the shower to being informed by key teachers and students. All types of informants were grouped in one category. Other cues principals recorded — such as change in noise level in the lunchroom, social distance of students who were usually friendly, tempo changes in the halls — were all grouped under observations.

TABLE 14
PRINCIPAL'S SENSITIVITY TO MOOD OF SCHOOL
ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF RACIAL MIXTURE
BY PERCENTAGES

	Less than 5% white	5-49% white	50-65% white	66-95% white	96-100% white	All Schools
Observation	32	55	55	41	24	
Informants	68	45	45	59	76	
	100% (N=25)	100% (N=22)	100% (N=29)	100% (N=102)	100% (N=54)	(N=232)

In this study of Virginia principals, it was found that the most important level of racial mixture to bring school groups into the decision making process is the student body composed of 50-65 per cent white students. The principal consults school groups when he wants to make changes 54 per cent of the time at this level of racial mixture as compared with 39 per cent in an all white school and 18 per cent in an all black school. The principal of schools with more than 5 per cent racial mixture is more likely to cite school groups as primary reference groups than principals of nearly all white or nearly all black schools.

Principals of the all black schools consult administrative groups 65 per cent of the time when they want to make changes in preference to parents, students and faculty. Principals of the all white school consult administrative groups 32 per cent of the time in the same situation.

Creative Manipulation

In a segregated neighborhood school, the values and characteristics of the student body and faculty are not dissimilar. With a bringing together of blacks and whites, the principal finds it more necessary to depend on his own evaluation of the situation rather than the interpretations of others. He learns that he must look beyond the immediate conflict for explanations. Is the child "impossible and disrespectful," or is the teacher provoking him by forcing conformity with her own definition of the situation? Was a student election "rigged" or just poorly planned? The principal's mind is filled with dilemmas of human relations in a desegregated setting. The data in Table 5 show that the principals of schools with higher levels of racial mixture are more likely to develop their own sensitivity to the situation than in predominantly white or black schools. His greatest awareness of the emotional tone of the school is with a nearly equal black/white ratio.

Creative Synthesis

Creative synthesis is to the operational level of school desegregation what integration is to the attitudinal level. Both bring together diverse elements to form a unified whole. Follett coined the term "creative synthesis" in 1925 to describe the bridging together of differing codes of conduct and seemingly inimical interests into a new approach that would not have been possible without the pooling of differences. This synthesis is a better solution than either group could have arrived at isolated from the other, and is the heart of the idea of synergy.⁵

Observing how negotiations at labor disputes became so bogged down between the walls of two possibilities, Follett developed the idea of creative synthesis. This is the integration of goals, rather than domination or compromise which are alternative methods of conflict-resolution. She envisioned the integrator (or change agent in this study) as the individual who must develop from the situation other alternatives than the obvious ones. The most creative part of synthesis in her opinion was neither to adapt to a situation nor mold it to suit one's own needs, but to enter into interactive behavior between the situation and self, which changed both. This is arrived at by bringing differences into the open, uncovering the real conflict and not the convenient one. Then the conflict is separated into conflict parts. This transactional role of the integrator in Follett's description of creative synthesis is that of the change agent in the desegregated school.⁶ (Refer to Flow-Chart, Figure 7.)

This technique is most useful to the principal of schools of more than 2,000 students. Principals of schools of less than 500 are least likely to use this problem-solving approach. This correlates with the principals in simple organizational systems who are more attuned to members of the administrative hierarchy than school groups.

Conclusion

Data in this chapter indicate that principals understand their centrality in the desegregation-integration process, but are ambivalent about techniques for handling this new dimension of their job. There is little evidence in the data of serious objections to school desegregation on their part; not more than five principals wrote comments that could be interpreted as direct opposition. Generally the informal comments on the questionnaires show a genuine desire on their part to "make it work." This supports the position taken in Chapter I that principals who want to keep their jobs subordinate immediate dissonance to goals that lie outside the situation. The widespread variation in their response to the desegregation-integration process is in the "how." These range from frequently repeated "pray" to "treat everybody alike" to "play it by ear."

The questionnaires evidence a widespread lack of sophistication in those variables which relate to human relations skills of group manipulation. In fact, when principals answered questions related to these skills many were bothered by the suggestion that they might maneuver, and questioned the ethics of such a practice. The idea of manipulation is both foreign and distasteful to them. This reaction is readily understandable when one realizes that

most principals were first trained as classroom teachers. Their training as administrators has usually been secondary, and on a part-time basis in evening school and summer sessions.

That they have no clearly-defined goals is demonstrated by the see-saw response to the Primary Reference Group variable, affected markedly by environmental changes. Most principals do not appear to have clearly defined goals in desegregation-integration beyond minimizing trouble.

Their inadequacy in expertise as change agents despite the potential of the principalship for this role is demonstrated by the diminished agreement in problem-solving by group participation, as discussed in Creative Synthesis. Variables which relate to manipulation of conflict bring a generalized negative response from the principals.

Data of this chapter furnish evidence of the need for principals to become aware of the creative potential of their social environment. A study of sociology may be more relevant to the current problems of public education than the study of instructional methodology. As the principal's ability to predict the consequences of desegregation policies improves, his skill as a change agent increases.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

The politics and economics of school desegregation may be changing on the national scene, stimulating the necessity of the development of a sociology of desegregation. Sociology is distinguished by its concern with groups in interaction, and the network of formal and informal relationships which characterizes them. School desegregation dramatizes the web of interdependency among societal subgroups, and the confusion which arises when they are thrown off-balance by the introduction of social change. Subgroups identify with larger social movements and respond to them by their personal involvement at the local level. For many Americans, school desegregation has been their most personal involvement in the civil rights movement. It has been observed repeatedly that schools are the single most important agents in creation of the tone and content of interpersonal and intergroup relations in this country. It is unlikely that these statements would have been made prior to the 1954 Supreme Court decision in which separate but equal schools were declared "inherently unequal."

Desegregation Pressures on the Principal

The era of school desegregation has moved the public school from a semi-closed system into the mainstream of one of the most critical social issues of our time. The principal finds himself

faced with political, social and economic problems for which he had no training in a teachers college, school of education, or experience as principal of a segregated neighborhood school. As principal of a desegregated school, he occupies one of the most important grass-roots positions in our society, for if racial integration does not take place in the public school, there is no other institution organized to cope with it.

The principal of the desegregated public school faces almost overwhelming problems of human relations, relevancy of education to needs of subgroups, conflicts and pressure from within and without. He has experienced a surge of additional responsibility without an increase in his power-status, and without a clear definition of his job. He knows that community support of desegregation is a tenuous situation, and he sees little evidence of official support through educational channels. This investigator has found that the disruption of schools, the questioning of traditional middle-class education, and the feelings of inadequacies which the principal experiences in desegregation have some very constructive and creative value. Desegregation may yet be the rejuvenation of a public institution that was becoming divorced from the reality demands of society upon its graduates. The findings of this study have clarified:

- 1) That the principal's goal in school desegregation is to comply with the legal requirements, but that generally he does not have clearly-defined goals of integration for the school center. He is primarily concerned with keeping conflict at a minimum.

- 2) The principal feels that he has the autonomy to establish a climate in the school in which subgroups can work together productively and cooperatively, but he is uncertain about the best way to bring this about. Frequently he relies on such tactics as "pray," "play it by ear," "treat everybody alike," rather than the development of human relations skills.

- 3) The principal likes to think he has community support, but feels that it is a fickle thing. His uncertainty about future support uncovers his malaise about sociological implications of school desegregation. The act of combining separate structures is an administrative act, but dealing with community fears of racial intermarriage and black power from the white community places him in a more threatening position.

- 4) The principal does not have the voice in policy decisions which his position warrants. The political overtones of desegregation have kept the power of policy decisions centralized, but with public attention turned to other social issues, it is predictable that desegregation pressures will force more decentralization of power and more autonomy for the school center.

This study makes the basic assumption that desegregation is a social change. Social change, to be lasting, must be bureaucratically implemented in local institutions. This implementation very quickly moves the student, teacher, patron, or taxpayer from the ideological, impersonal level of equality of educational opportunity to personal involvement when the local school is desegregated. In this alteration from a segregated school to a desegregated one, that individual most centrally involved in the change is the school's chief administrative officer, the principal. This brings the position of the principalship into focus as the locus of change in school desegregation.

The principal occupies the most appropriate position in the administrative hierarchy to be the change agent for the individual school in the desegregation/integration process. By his administrative actions, he may create a collaborative climate of conflict-resolution leading to integration. On the other hand, he may create a situation of resegregation leading to conflict or its sleeping counterpart, apathy.

Implications for the Future

This is an introductory study of the sociology of school desegregation, examined from the point of view of the principal as change agent in school desegregation. The next step is to develop a model of change agent principal and test it against those principals represented in this survey who more nearly responded to the questionnaire in accordance with the model. From this a sample could be drawn and a field study made of a selected number of these principals, with evaluation from students, faculty, superintendent and community of his administrative actions in desegregation. A testable model of a change agent principal in the process from desegregation to integration could then be developed.

This study can only point directions and furnish clues to his function as a change agent because of the subjective nature of the questionnaire. There is insufficient evidence of how a principal functions in reality as compared with how he says he functions.

The history of school desegregation in Virginia, with its landmarks of massive resistance, tuition grants, repealing or compulsory attendance laws, closing of some schools, busing issues exemplifies a microcosm of school desegregation in the nation. Of the 312 principals responding in this survey, only 165 are principals of schools of more than a 5 per cent level of racial mixture. Principals surveyed in this study do not represent the total United States, but they do represent a wide range of communities from rural areas to metropolitan areas.

Data in this study indicate that regardless of community size

or the legal stage of desegregation of the school district, the level of racial mixture in the individual school is the most critical factor in the way the principal functions. The way the principal fills his position creates an atmosphere in which racial mutuality is established, or racial polarization develops. As desegregated schools are observed, it becomes clear that even in the same school district, every school does not move toward the same goal. The principal determines how goals are set, and how they are achieved.

In some schools, desegregation ends with the physical placement of black and white children under one roof. Except for token numbers, they are still segregated physically and by status. In this situation of resegregation, black students feel they have lost their own school and gained nothing. White students resent the intrusion of outsiders. Testing for the level of racial mixture, data support the hypothesis that desegregation forces the principal to become the internal change agent. This is based on the following findings:

- 1) The more nearly a school approaches an equal black/white ratio of students, the more likely the principal is to consult school groups as his primary reference group for change.
- 2) Black subgroups are more likely to achieve equal status with white subgroups in the principal's cognizance of their needs and goals in the school that is composed of 65 per cent or less white students.
- 3) The principal of the school that has at least a 5 per cent racial mixture is more sensitive to the mood of the school than the principal of the nearly all black or nearly all white school; he is most sensitive at the nearly equal black/white ratio.
- 4) The principal of the nearly equal black/white ratio of students is more likely to believe he is influential in the community acceptance of desegregation than at any other level of racial mixture.
- 5) The principal of the nearly equal black/white ratio school is more optimistic about the future of desegregation than at any other level of racial mixture.
- 6) Principals of the nearly equal black/white ratio schools are more likely to be included in the informal communication system of the school district.
- 7) Principals of schools of 5-65 per cent white students are more likely to be involved in major systemwide decisions than other principals.
- 8) Principals of 5-65 per cent white students are more likely to have participated in actual policy decisions of the system than other principals.

The conclusion to be drawn from these findings is that a school composed of more heterogeneous subgroups eventually forces

problem-solving to take place closest to the primary sources of information where the operational consequences of policy enactment is experienced. Whether the principal of the desegregated school with a high level of racial mixture is granted more power, or demands it can only be speculated on at this point: This investigator sees the principal who must constantly juggle the consequences of desegregation demanding more autonomy. The human relations decisions with which he is constantly confronted do not allow time for committee meetings and standard operational procedures. Principals of desegregated schools who have passed the initial stage of physically uniting two separate school structures into one are aware they face problems to which they have no solutions. These include their awareness of the cost to society of such phenomena as low motivation on the part of the low socioeconomic subgroups, barriers to communication between groups, and mass dissatisfaction with the status quo in education. These elements slowly move principals toward the role of change agent.

As the consolidation of school districts continues and the organizations become more complex, and as state and federal funding further remove schools from local control, the importance of the principal becomes more crucial. Public schools of the future require principals who are trained as administrators, not primarily as educators.

Desegregation has redefined the role of the school principal from that of instructional leader to administrator-change agent. The limitations which this study identifies are only indicators of future problem areas, not necessarily of present crises.

At this point in time, the principal has evolved from the principal teacher to his present ambiguous position. The position of principalship in public education institutions is too critical to be left to chance or evolution, but must be clearly defined. Only in this way will public school administrators be given the training and organizational authority to function as change agents. This definition will require a joint effort by the State Department of Education and schools of education of colleges and universities in the State. His training must of necessity be oriented toward the social sciences and business administration, since his job has been redefined by desegregation to add to that of instructional leader and administrator, that of change agent.

Desegregation places the principal and the school groups, including students and faculty, in new positions of power in the public school system. Because the individual school is "where the action is," desegregation will eventually result in a lessening of the power of the superintendent and the school board, and increase the change-agent position of the principal.

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