ABSTRACT
                Traditionally, studies of educational innovations
have based evaluations on accomplishment of officially-stated ends.
This study, however, explores alternative theoretical frameworks for
evaluation. Project Redesign took place in an upper-middle-class
suburb with the pseudonym "Meadow City." The project was funded by
the National Institute of Education as an attempt to redesign the
educational system to meet changing societal needs. It was a
large-scale participatory planning project involving scores of
parents, teachers, and administrators. Evaluating the project using a
"rational evaluation model" calls for judging the quality of the
decisions and outcomes of the project. Judged in this light, the
project was not a success. However, another evaluation model, the
"organized anarchy model," is based on the assumption that planning
is desirable in itself as an opportunity for organizational members
to learn things, feel important, come together, and highlight
important issues. Judged from this viewpoint, the project was
valuable to the school district. Yet another evaluation model, the
"symbolic interaction model," views planning as a renegotiation of
the unwritten contract between the school system and its community.
Viewed in this way, the project, merely by bringing together so many
people to present their views on the meaning of education, was of
significant value. (Author/JH)

PARTICIPATORY PLANNING IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT:

A STUDY USING THREE THEORETICAL APPROACHES

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INTRODUCTION

Attempts to bring about "educational change", whether broadly or narrowly defined, are not uncommon in this country. The last fifteen years have seen a great deal of federal government and foundation activity designed to revitalize educational systems by bringing in more and new participants, changing the organization of schools, and trying new teaching methods and instructional programs.

With few exceptions, two features have characterized the studies that sought to describe and analyze these numerous educational innovations. The first one is of a substantive nature; the second has been a methodological one.

Substantively, studies of educational innovations have examined educational change by assuming that the officially-stated ends were the only ones that deserved to be analyzed and evaluated. Attention was focused on these official ends because it was unquestioned that educational organizations were very purposive bodies. In addition, studies of educational innovations have generally assumed the existence of a technology to achieve educational innovations. Thus, analyses of educational change have often focused on the degree to which appropriate technological measures were taken, and failure of these innovations has usually been defined in terms of the organization's inability to follow existing technological procedures. Reviews of educational innovations have, thus, underscored as reasons for failure to achieve officially-stated objectives the lack of feedback mechanisms (Gross, et al., 1971); the failure to create structural changes within the organization (Gross et al., 1971; Weiler, 1974; Berman et al., 1975); the lack of training for the new roles to be assumed by the participants (Gross et al., 1971; Smith and Keith, 1971; Weiler, 1975; CASEA, 1973); the inability to foresee time pressures (CASEA, 1973; Smith and Keith, 1971); and the lack of sufficient material and human resources (CASEA, 1973; Gross et al., 1971; Weiler et al., 1974). Substantively, then, studies of educational change have been based on the premise that educational organizations are purposive and that behavior, in accordance with technological knowledge is necessary to achieve organizational ends. In short, studies of educational change have been dominated by a single explanatory framework.

From the methodological viewpoint, the majority of studies of educational change efforts have occurred post-facto and generally via one or two questionnaires and a limited number of interviews. Examinations of change attempts in which the researcher has been at the site of the innovation since its inception and throughout its existence are rare; these cases include the

analysis of an attempt to introduce student-centered teaching in an element-
ary school (Gross et al., 1971), the study of multiple structural and in-
structional innovations in an elementary school (Keith and Smith, 1971); ef-
forts to develop and implement new patterns of staff deployment in public
schools (CASEA, 1973); and an experiment in consumer choice in the selec-
tion of educational environments (Weiler, 1974).

The present study attempts to depart from the usual pattern of
educational innovations. It will do so by exploring alternative and contending
theoretical frameworks for what was being attempted through an educational
project. Methodologically, it is different, in that it is the product of four years
of constant observations and a variety of data-gathering methods by three indi-
viduals who played different roles in the change effort.

The focus of this study is a district-wide attempt to "redesign the
educational system to meet changing societal needs" by means of long-range
planning . It was spearheaded by the superintendent of the district. Symbolic-
ally, it was named Project Redesign.

During the time the project lived, wheels were set in motion which
resulted in the establishment of a large-scale participatory planning project.
Scores, even hundreds, of parents, students, teachers, and administrators
worked together within the project, on task forces, committees, and planning
teams. They developed a "plan for planning", conducted studies, collected data,
and, finally, developed proposals which were combined into a long-range plan
for the school district. In addition to those directly involved, additional hun-
dreds participated through attendance at meetings or by completing question-
naires at some time during the life of the project.

In examining the origins, life, and fate of an ambitious project to
involve community and staff members in long-range planning, we utilize three
different analytical frameworks. Since the change process envisaged by the
long-range planning process entailed essentially a series of decision-making
activities, we adopted as the prototype for analysis the work by Graham Allison,
The Essence of Decision (1971). Allison's examination of the Cuban missile
crisis showed that a given phenomenon creates a multitude of perceptions, not
only for the actors critically involved in it, but also for those who seek to under-
stand the occurrence of the phenomenon and its consequences.

Allison's work showed that there is much to be learned from adopt-
ing different paradigms in the understanding of events and outcomes. In his
book, he utilized three decision-making frameworks:

> The rational model - which assumes that the behavior of
> the main organizational actors is purposive and extremely
> calculative;

The organizational model - which emphasizes the organization's tendency to act in established ways via standard operating procedures;

The political model - which focuses on the idiosyncratic behavior of individuals in major institutional roles.

By focusing on alternative explanatory frameworks, Allison demonstrates that the often-utilized model of rational, purposive human behavior represents only one way of understanding events. Further, he demonstrates that the rational paradigm receives only moderate corroboration in the empirical world and that its explanatory value is at times more limited than that of non-rational (not to be equated with irrational) models.

The translation of a decision-making study to an educational setting necessitates some modifications. And these we made. In attempting to comprehend what happened in Project Redesign, we also utilize three decision-making paradigms, as follows:

The rational model - which starts from the premise that the organization - the leadership of the school district in this case - was motivated by clear objectives and made a number of conscious decisions to achieve its goals;

The organized anarchy model - which combines some of the features of Allison's organizational model while introducing an element of exogenous variation, namely, the unpredictable flow of participants and time demands on certain issues;

The symbolic interaction model - which looks at the change effort from the perspective of a diffuse social understanding between community and school staff members regarding what constitutes valid educational issues.

The Locus of Project Redesign

Project Redesign took place in an upper-middle-class suburb which we will call Meadow City.

Meadow City is a community that has long been proud of its school system. It is one of those systems that has considered itself a "lighthouse" district, where the professionals stay on the cutting edge of advances in teaching techniques. Numerous successful educational improvement projects have

taken place within this system. Although no comparative figures are available, probably a higher proportion of teachers and administrators are hired as consultants by other districts from this system than from the average school district.

The community has consistently voted funds for education when such elections were failing everywhere else. Per-pupil expenditures are much higher than for most districts. The school system serves a major private university and educational levels are high for the community as a whole. The system serves children from kindergarten through grade twelve, in 20 elementary schools and 6 secondary schools. Students number approximately 13,000. This number has been declining at about four percent per year in recent years. Several thousand adults are served by the adult education department of the system.

Apart from the school system, the community has a strong sense of community identity. The community and the school system are not coterminous. The school system includes areas which are outside the city limits, the largest being its neighboring university.

While some contextual features may be characteristic only of Meadow City and similarly wealthy suburbs, its educational system is quite comparable to those in most American public schools. An elementary school in Meadow City will be nearly indistinguishable from an elementary school in another state. Administrators and teachers from anywhere in the United States will find that they face the same expectations and problems here. Organizational forces and community forces affecting schools are very similar everywhere. Life may be somewhat easier in some places, or the issues may be different, but a teacher, a principal, a parent, a classroom, a PTA, a superintendent of schools - all these are common to every American community. If participatory planning is attempted and studied anywhere, it could be studied, using the same conceptual apparatus we are using here. The insights we have gained should be useful to anyone attempting participatory planning, and particularly, anyone attempting to understand organizational history.

The Chronology of Events in Project Redesign

A bare outline of the major events in Project Redesign, listed in chronological order, with only a line or two of explanation, is provided below. We will plunge into this bare-bones outline in the text following.

February-August, 1971

The superintendent of the Meadow City School District (MCSD) made the decision to press for Project Redesign and took preliminary steps to bring it about:

    a. The idea was outlined in a speech at an educational issues program sponsored by the PTA Communications Committee.

    b. A consultant was hired to conceptualize the project.

c. An "Educational Master Planning Group" was
appointed to study the possibilities.

September, 1971

Project Redesign was given its first approval by the Board
of Education. Specifically, approval was given for a 12-
month project aimed at producing a master plan, with a
paid director, operating with a $70,000 budget, only part
of which was from regular district sources.

October 1971 - March 1972

An extensive national search was conducted for a director
for Project Redesign.

April, 1972

The Project Director was hired. The first year's budget
was set at $60,000.

May-August, 1972

The newly-hired director spent time becoming familiar
with the community. No planning activities were con-
ducted during this period.

September, 1972

The project director made his first official report to the
Board of Education in which he recommended that a "Con-
vening Committee" be appointed to develop Project Rede-
sign further, this Committee to consist of teachers, ad-
ministrators, parents, and students.

October, 1972

Thirty-one persons were appointed as members of the
Convening Committee by the Board of Education. Their
assigned task was to develop a "plan for planning".

November 1972 - January 1973

The Convening Committee worked on the "plan for planning".

February, 1973

The Convening Committee submitted its proposed plan to
the Board. This plan called for appointment of a Design
Management Team to oversee a broad-ranging participa-
tory planning project. Within the project, task forces
would be organized to conduct studies, and "school-
community input teams" would develop proposals for
school change. The plan as presented by the Committee
was adopted by the Board.

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March, 1973

> The Board of Education appointed the members of the Design Management Team.

April - August, 1973

> The Design Management Team organized itself and formed 6 task forces for the purpose of conducting studies.

September - December, 1973

> Studies were conducted by task forces on various topics. One hundred eleven participants served on 6 task forces. These included:
>
> a. Retrospective Data Task Force. This group compiled information from previous studies conducted in the district.
>
> b. Curriculum Task Force. An over-all curriculum survey was conducted and some theoretical issues were studied.
>
> c. Task Force on Emerging Educational and Societal Futures. This group compiled futures studies, wrote possible scenarios for the future, and developed a multimedia version of its findings.
>
> d. Organization and Decision-Making Study Task Force. Both the formal structure of decisions and the actual path of decisions on various topics were studied.
>
> e. Needs Assessment Task Force. A large-scale community/staff/student survey was conducted to examine perceived needs.
>
> f. School/Community Profile Task Force. The demographic and sociological profile of the community was studied by this group.

January, 1974

> The first School/Community Input Teams were organized and charged with developing plans for improving education in the district. Each SCIT included parents, students, and teachers. Five SCIT's were organized initially to work in the following areas:
>
> a. Alternatives in Elementary Education
> b. Early Adolescent Education
> c. Secondary Education
> d. Personal and Professional Growth of Staff.
> e. School/Community Relationships
>
> The work of the task forces was completed and many reports were published by these groups.

<u>February - August, 1974</u>

Work continued in the School/Community Input Teams

<u>September - December, 1974</u>

Six additional SCIT's - later called Planning Teams - were organized, as follows:

a. Long-Range Finance
b. Teacher-Learner Relationships
c. Administrative Needs
d. Primary Education
e. Curriculum
f. Special Educational and Support Services

Approximately 120 persons served on planning teams. During this period, the district superintendent announced his intention to retire by April, 1975.

<u>January - August, 1975</u>

During this period, the output of the planning teams was completed and the draft of the long-range plan was written. A new superintendent was hired and began work in April, 1975.

<u>September, 1975</u>

The draft of the long-range plan was presented to the Board of Education. The project director was appointed Director of Research, Evaluation, and Organizational Development, effective January 1, 1976.

<u>October - November, 1975</u>

The Board delayed taking formal action on any of the goals set forth in the long-range plan until the issue of school reorganization was settled, which was expected to be in February, 1976.

<u>December 1975 - February 1976</u>

No further action was taken on the long-range plan.

<u>March - November, 1976</u>

The project director - now the director of Research, Evaluation, and Organizational Development, left the district in June, 1976.

The Board of Education acted on the recommendations in the long-range plan in a series of Board meetings. The project was formally concluded November 2, 1976.

Having stated these events in outline form, the three authors of this report will now move in divergent directions to explain what "actually" happened.

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The first of the approaches is the rational model. Starting with the assumption that a planning project is a calculative process that follows a step-by-step sequence to achieve intended results, the author of this section seeks to explain all events as rational decisions made by key actors. Events are thought to follow decisions in an orderly, expected way. Behavior by key actors is examined from the perspective of whether or not it conforms with certain expected outcomes.

The second approach - the organized anarchy model - emphasizes organizational forces that are somewhat independent of the actions of the key decision-makers. The structure of educational organizations and the workings of the decision-making process within the structure produce outcomes like flour from the organizational and decision-making mill, and the results are not necessarily those intended by anyone, including the key decision-makers.

Finally, the whole project is looked at with a third set of lenses - this time emphasizing the control over schools exerted not by decision-makers nor by organizational forces internal to the organization but by concepts in the minds of parents, students, and other members of the community. In this conceptual framework, school change will depend not upon the decisions made by principals and superintendents, nor upon the tangle of forces and energy within the system, but upon what the community thinks about the schools and what it expects of them. The planners, if they are to effect change, have an educational task on their hands, maybe even a value-changing task, which is quite different from analyzing data on student achievement or trying to find a means to fill a position with someone sympathetic to the particular approach.

The next three sections of this report, then, were written independently, by separate authors, each describing the project from a different point of view. The last chapter of the report brings together some conclusions and policy recommendations drawn from all three chapters.

Methods and People Used in Developing the Case Study

Project Redesign in Meadow City received a grant from the National Institute of Education to study participatory planning. The grant made possible the careful study of the project, using a variety of research methodologies. Active project participants were observed and completed questionnaires. Interviews were conducted with planning team leaders, Board members, and top administrators. Formal Board meetings were attended. Minutes and other printed documents were examined. The views of uninvolved citizens and staff members were solicited.

The three authors of this report, all then doctoral students in the School of Education in Meadow City's neighboring university, played different roles within the project. Rudolph Johnson was instrumental in obtaining the NIE grant and served as the project's research coordinator from the award in

1973 until the project's termination in 1976. In this official capacity, he was responsible for the organization and support of the task forces and planning teams, which did the information-gathering and planning. He also worked in the preparation of the long-range plan.

Nelly Stromquist was involved in the project first as a research assistant (1973-75) and later as a research associate (1975-76). She gathered and analyzed most of the data upon which a study on participation was made.

Carla Edlefson joined the research staff during the last year of the project.

This work is based, then, on contributions from authors who occupied different roles. Johnson served both as a participant and an observer. Stromquist and Edlefson, on the other hand, functioned as non-participant observers.

TIME LINE OF PROJECT REDESIGN

1971

SUPERINTENDENT'S SPEECH

BOARD APPROVES PROJECT

1972

DIRECTOR ARRIVES

CONVENING COMMITTEE

1973

FIRST DMT MEETING

NIE GRANT

TASK FORCES

1974

PLANNING TEAMS

DESIGN MANAGEMENT TEAM

N.I.E. PROJECT

DIRECTOR

OFFICIAL LIFE OF PROJECT REDESIGN

1975

NEW SUPERINTENDENT

LONG-RANGE PLAN DONE

1976 OFFICIAL END OF
PROJECT REDESIGN

DIRECTOR LEAVES

BOARD CONSIDERS GOALS

1977

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SECTION I: THE RATIONAL MODEL

By Nelly Peñaloza Stromquist

Organizations, and educational organizations as well, are generally considered to be purposive. It is taken as axiomatic that the purpose of an organization is the achievement of certain objectives and that the behavior of the organization's members is goal-oriented.

When organizations are considered purposive, attempts to explain organizational history focus on their decision-making process. Mouzelis (1967) expresses this well:

"When people coordinate their activities for the attainment of a certain goal, they have continuously to make decisions, to choose among alternatives of action. Consequently, in administrative studies, the emphasis is on rational aspects of human behavior. A member of an organization, more than an instrument or an autonomous agent of drives and emotions, is a decision-maker and a problem-solver." (p. 123)

Having defined an organization as purposive, organizational behavior is then perceived and explained in terms of key decisions made by the organization. The dominant inference pattern is that organizational action is a product of conscious choice made to attain organizational goals and that this choice is made or shaped by those who occupy leading positions within the organization.

In organizations, as in other arenas of human interaction, there are many activities that take place without personal directives and supervision. Perrow (1972) maintains that these unattended activities involve perhaps 80 percent of the total behaviors. Studies that center on the formal decision-making of the organization are not oblivious to this phenomenon. They argue that since organizations tend to have stable goals and a visible hierarchy, it is only sensible to consider that the leadership of the organization plays a crucial role in organizational outcomes. As March and Simon (1958) note, those in authority have the power or the tools to structure the environment and the perception of members in the organization by setting priorities and altering the flow of inputs and stimuli.

The Looking-Glass of the Rational Model

Due to its simplicity and manageability, the rational model is an unrivaled paradigm in analyses of decision-making. By asserting that man's behavior is rational most of the time, the analyst can have a hold over otherwise confusing, diffuse, and intractable events.

A model of rational decision-making makes five clear-cut assumptions about individual and group behavior:

- individuals develop consistent criteria to establish and evaluate their objectives

- when there is a plurality of objectives, these can be arranged by the individual, according to some order of priority

- information about the various means of obtaining desired objectives is obtained and utilized

- individuals develop discrete alternatives about the means and make conscious choices among them

- choices among alternatives utilize a trade-off calculation: the selected means is that which will offer the greatest benefit for the least cost

Key concepts utilized in rational paradigms are few and, again, simple:

1) A rational actor: this entity is generally assumed to possess an identifiable set of goals, a set of perceived and preferred options, and single - if not accurate - estimates of the outcomes attached to each option.

2) The problem: a situation or event with discernible boundaries which becomes the focus of the actor's action.

3) The alternatives: the various means or ways to solve a given problem.

4) The decision: the deliberate selection of one alternative among several.

The rational model connects these four elements through actions. An action is an activity that has four sequential components:

- establishing goals or objectives (what problems must be solved?)

- determining options (what means can be used?)

- assessing consequences (what costs are attached to each means?)

- making a choice (which is the best means, given its cost?)

Given these organizing concepts, the rational paradigm explains events by what Allison (1971) has called "vicarious problem-solving". This is a process by which the researcher - or person trying to understand an event - goes about explaining it by asserting what the most logical thing to do would have been in such a situation. This strategy leads the analyst not only to attribute a clear motivation to the actors' actions, but to assume that these motivations remain relatively constant.

The extension of individual rational decision-making to organizational behavior posits the notion of "collective action". By this, it is assumed that decisions made by organizations are essentially "a process characterized by consensus, in which the various decision-makers in the organization attempt to evolve by debate and mutual effort a set of calculations which meet the criteria of analytic logic" (Steinbruner, 1974: 38).

In the application of the rational model to organizational decision-making, the notion of "collective action" leads to the treatment of the organization as a single entity. As Allison illustrates in his analysis of the decisions made during the Cuban missile crisis, in the examination of national behavior, the major unit of analysis becomes "the government". The analyst lumps together actions by the president, his cabinet, and key advisors and congressional leaders, and treats major outcomes as consensual and logical.

When the rational model of decision-making is applied to the analysis of organizational behavior in educational settings, the formal leadership of a school or a school district becomes the main actor to be examined. Thus, in cases where changes have been attempted at the school level, the decisions by the principal and the administrator in charge of the project constitute the focus of analysis (see, for instance, the works of Gross et al., 1971, and Smith and Keith, 1971). In the case we will examine herein, a change effort at the school district level, the main actor becomes the superintendent. He is the person with the greatest formal authority and responsibility in his "organization".

In choosing the superintendent as the main actor in a rational decision-making situation, it may be necessary to refer to some facts that will

help us to separate rhetoric from reality. Although American society has a strong tradition of community participation in educational policy, and the local Board of Education is generally described as the representative of the will of the community in educational issues, research findings testify that boards usually play a weak role in educational governance. A disproportionate amount of board actions simply endorse recommendations or proposals brought forth by school administrators (Goldhammer, 1964; Kerr, 1964; Pois, 1964; Wirt and Kirst, 1972; Zeigler and Jennings, 1974). Policies that have impact at the school district level are generally those proposed by administrators and, although not all decisions originate with them, hardly any major organizational decision is made without the consent of the chief officer, the superintendent.

The instance of educational planning we will examine in this report will allow us to test the model of rational decision-making. By following the behavior of the superintendent and, to a lesser extent, that of the Board of Education in creating, sponsoring, and dealing with a planning project, we will assess whether the evidence supports the "rationality" of the outcomes that took place. It is our contention that defining rationality without reference to observable behavior would be to engage in hopeless solipsism.

The present analysis of Project Redesign using the rational model departs from previous analyses using the same paradigm, in that it does not limit itself to exploring the rationality of the ostensible "official" objectives announced for the existence of the change project. The possible objectives of the project are, then, not one but three. These were not determined a priori, but emerged from our constant observation of the project and informal conversations with major participants and witnesses. It also departs from usual rational models of decision-making in that it emphasizes the role of a single major actor, namely, the superintendent. We do so in an effort to test as fully as possible the implications derived from the rational model.

Participatory Planning as a Rational Activity

"Planning" is a term perceived as synonymous with rationality, logic, foresight. A planning activity evokes images of actors seeking and utilizing data, weighing alternative means to achieve desired objectives, and selecting the most efficient ways of attaining these objectives.

Participatory planning is a new mode of planning. It has become a subject of interest in recent years, as various organizations - from private industry to government agencies - have implemented planning activites of a "participatory" nature.

Definitions of what is or should be "participatory" abound, but they are not always similar. Herein we will define educational participatory planning as a mode of participation based upon the premise that all community members (defined as parents, students, citizens, teaching and non-teaching staff) should have an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them, either as recipients or as executors of such decisions. Their involvement in this is seen as

desirable because it is anticipated to produce (a) better understanding of the school system by the participants and by the rest of the community; (b) a more receptive attitude toward educational programs by all those affected; and (c) a greater rate of innovations in the school function and structure. It is also anticipated that the heterogeneity of the membership (i.e., the mix of students, parents, teachers, and administrators) will contribute to a more holistic view of the school system as the various decisions – in the form of planning proposals – will be examined from several perspectives.

While not seeking the active involvement of all community members, a key objective of participatory planning is that of expanding the process of participation. This paradox is possible in the sense that the participants in a participatory planning activity, despite the fact that they were not elected, but simply chose to participate, can develop a strong norm to find legitimacy by acting on the basis of what most community members want and need. To be sure, this norm is not intrinsic to participatory planning, but is one that can be transmitted by those supervising the activity. The internalization of this norm leads planning members to design proposals by making constant use of community opinion and reaction by means of public meetings, school-staff meetings, and particularly needs assessment, opinion-finding, and priority surveys.

Participatory planning is expected to help reduce the layman/professional conflict that often occurs when community members enter the policy-formation arena. Under a participatory planning mode, all proposals are to be based on data and research, as well as to be acceptable to community members and school staff. Hence, given the attributes of these planning proposals, it is anticipated that administrators – and other established decision-makers – will be cautious in their attacks against such proposals or in criticizing them. To the degree that participatory planning increases the rational level of decisions, administrators and other school decision-makers are expected to accept or reject proposals also on a rational basis.

Through the process of planning and by means of a participatory mode, it is anticipated that changes will be brought to the educational system. The purpose of a participatory planning activity is not to replace an organization that is characterized by a hierarchical organization and institutional leadership, but to provide this organization, (i.e., the school system) with a means for making decisions on the basis of knowledge and need, rather than authority.

Some other assumptions made by the participatory mode are: (1) a number of problems, previously diffuse or unshared, will come to be identified; (2) it will allow the solution of problems best described as "ill-structured", since the participants will be freer (than school personnel) from institutional rigidities, such as authority roles, hierarchical chains of command, and deadlines for problem solution; (3) it is anticipated that the new mix of people will facilitate "new ways of seeing old ideas" and bring forth new perspectives in the analysis of educational objectives and means to them.

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As seen above, participatory planning makes some rational, logical assumptions. In comparison to close, technical models of educational planning, participatory planning is assumed, and expected, to be better. Participatory planning, therefore, appears to be a very propitious ground for a model of rational decision-making. And to it, we turn:

I. THE DECISION TO HAVE PROJECT REDESIGN

There is a strongly-shared consensus that the idea of having Project Redesign in the MCSD was started and sponsored by the then superintendent of the school district. The origin of the project itself is traced by most observers to a speech by the superintendent to a PTA-organized meeting, at which he spoke vehemently of the need for education to change so as to meet the society's needs in the decades ahead. In his speech, he said:

> "It is highly important to our system of government and to
> us as individuals that the institution of public education be
> reformed and thus preserved.. The task is a difficult one,
> especially in the emotional, highly-charged climate in
> which we find ourselves. We have made efforts and vary-
> ing degrees of success have been achieved. But not nearly
> enough. We have really been putting patches on the old de-
> sign, sometimes putting patches on patches.

> The community must now, together, review its entire edu-
> cational system. And this community has the necessary
> components to take this first necessary step toward educa-
> tional reformation. A new design, based upon all we know
> about learning, all we have available from technology, and
> all we can learn from experts in all fields useful to us must
> be developed." [1] (original emphasis)

The year of 1971, when it all started, found the MCSD calm, quite wealthy, and with many of its students performing as usual on the 90th per- centile, or above, in standardized achievement tests. The district was in such comfortable financial circumstances that it had 20 cents per dollar from an approved override tax still unutilized. [2] There was an active and influ- ential PTA, at both the district and the school building level. Over 4000 persons volunteered their services in the local schools and of these, approx- imately 5 percent were involved in PTA leadership positions, advisory com- mittees appointed by school district authorities, or were independent "boardwatchers".

Given these characteristics and conditions of the MCSD, what moti- vated the superintendent to embark on what would subsequently be known as "Project Redesign"? The various participants in and witnesses to the Project

attributed several different reasons to the superintendent's decision. We will concentrate on the three most frequently reported. These reasons will be treated as hypotheses, and although the term is not being used in a rigorous sense, it is chosen because, in examining these "hypotheses", we will present evidence and then conclude whether it supports or fails to support the attributed reason. The hypotheses most frequently stated for the creation of Project Redesign could be stated as follows:

> Hypothesis One: Project Redesign was initiated because the superintendent liked to have large-scale, grandiose plans.

> Hypothesis Two: Project Redesign was initiated because of the superintendent's desire to place participants within a single channel.

> Hypothesis Three: Project Redesign was initiated because of the superintendent's concern with educational change and renewal.

These hypotheses are not necessarily mutually exclusive but, as will be seen later, they can lead to different expectations.

Hypothesis One: The Superintendent's Penchant for Large-Scale and Grandiose Projects

During his nine years in the district up to the time of his speech, the superintendent had won a reputation among his close associates and other persons in the district as a man who liked to "go big". The superintendent himself was very proud of his reputation as a man with "bold ideas". In asking the Board of Education to approve his project, he said, "A superintendent today, if he is anything, has to be a risk-taker. He has to make a judgment about what he thinks ought to be done, and then he has to be willing to put his name on the line that he is willing to go this route." (3)

Also, the superintendent was deeply aware and concerned with maintaining the MCSD's image as a "lighthouse district". In a retreat held with selected community and staff members shortly before his idea was accepted by the Board, he stated:

> "I believe that we have made significant and important improvements in the quality of education in Meadow City, and I am certain that we do have one of the best educational systems of any school district in the United States. Let us recognize this and give credit to all who have had a part in the building of the system. But we want the Gold Medal, and before us lies Montreal." (4)

If the superintendent's main motivation for having Project Redesign was to have a bold, innovative pet project, he may have embarked on the

project with only a vague idea of what he wanted to accomplish. The main use-
fulness of the Project, then, would have been to increase his personal prestige
and that of the district. According to this hypothesis, the main concern with
the Project would have been in using it as a display of "innovativeness". The
emphasis would have been on public relations, rather than on the actual pro-
ducts of the Project.

Hypothesis Two: The Superintendent's Desire to Place Participants
                  Within a Single Channel

As noted above, the district was characterized by a high level of
citizen and parent participation in educational issues. Given the high educa-
tional and occupational level of the community's residents, there was not only
strong interest in monitoring decisions made by the Board of Education and the
administration, but many of these concerned citizens felt free quite often to
come up with suggestions, reviews, and criticisms about decisions made by
school authorities.

In the previous five years, the district had gone through two major
controversies: (1) the decision by the superintendent to create a multicultural
educational department had led to the hiring (perhaps unwittingly) of a "radical"
director, who later invited Black Panther members to talk to the students.
Community groups became upset with this and a movement which collected over
3000 signatures had called unsuccessfully for the superintendent's resignation.
(2) The decision by the administration to offer a course in modern government
institutions, instead of a course in European history, was contested by citizen
groups. Although this controversy mobilized a relatively small group (approx-
imately 50 parents and citizens), it produced angry confrontations at various
Board meetings, and strong criticism of and challenge to Board and adminis-
trative behavior.

After nine years in the district, the superintendent had come to per-
ceive the community as filled with educational participants. He may have wanted,
therefore, to create Project Redesign to bring some order into this mass of par-
ticipation. He may have needed a central place where he could put all the activ-
ists, particularly those accustomed to expressing unsolicited views and criti-
cisms. If this was indeed the chief motivation, the superintendent may have ad-
vocated a mechanism for participation that, while soliciting everyone's con-
tribution, shifted concerns with present problems to remote educational changes
that would focus on "decades ahead". In this way, the participants would have
had something to do without disturbing on-going operations of the district.

According to this hypothesis, the superintendent may have been more
concerned with the process than with the products to be created by Project Re-
design. His emphasis would have been on making sure that many participants,
and particularly school "constructive critics", came under the umbrella of the

Project, and that topics usually taken up by these "critics" were now included in the scope of the new Project.

Hypothesis Three: The Superintendent's Concern with Educational Renewal

This was the official motivation and was stated by the superintendent in his presentations to both the community and Board members, as well as in various interviews we held with him. According to his statements, he had always wanted to revitalize the educational system, but had not perceived the necessary community and staff support until he presented his speech about educational change.

In his original speech, the superintendent had noted that ".....most societies are now visibly and seriously dissatisfied with many of their institutions, including their schools. Educational systems are simply not designed to meet the needs of students growing up in the uncertain, fast-changing, complex world of the 1970's and early 1980's." (5) It seems that he received a rather unexpectedly enthusiastic response to his presentation. In his own words, the reaction ".....from members of the community and from individuals outside the community, both educators and others, was heartening and quite surprising to me." (6)

It is possible that the superintendent started Project Redesign because he perceived a very supportive climate all of a sudden. The timing was ripe and he had to seize it. According to this hypothesis, Project Redesign was initiated because the superintendent was deeply concerned with the need for the educational system to update itself. To accomplish this, comprehensive change was needed. Thus, a long-range plan seemed a very appropriate mechanism, and since a new educational system was to be responsive to changing societal needs, the involvement of the community in designing the new system was imperative. Therefore, the Project was also to be participatory, open to all constituencies served by the schools.

We have thus far stated three plausible rival hypotheses. Under each of these three different motivations, it is possible to argue that the superintendent's behavior was intentionally rational. Each of these motivations can be considered as leading to a goal toward which the superintendent directed his actions. His behavior, according to the rational model, would have been that of choosing means most likely to result in the attainment of his goal. Let us examine the behaviors that followed from the presentation of the superintendent's speech.

Immediately after the speech, the superintendent called upon various of his top-level associates (i.e., the Cabinet) and two well-known citizens (a former Board of Education member and the most constant "boardwatcher") to participate in an "Educational Master Planning" group, which would be the team

...

to "explore ways in which we could most expeditiously plan the educational system for the seventies and early eighties". [7] His decision to ask his closest colleagues and prominent citizens (whom he described as "individuals in whom I had some confidence and people who had, I thought, some concerns and some good judgment") [8] is consistent with Hypothesis Three. If drastic change was to take place, the involvement of top-level administrators was necessary to insure their support. His action was not very consistent with the idea of a "participatory process", but it might be argued that before presenting his idea to the Board of Education, the superintendent may have wanted to gain the support of his associates and of some influential community members.

Records of the work done by the "Educational Master Planning" group, however, indicate that this group met only twice. When the superintendent presented his proposal to the Board on October 19, 1971, he stated that the project represented the work of the "Master Planning" team, yet most of the conceptual work was in fact done by the "boardwatcher" in the group, who was commissioned by the superintendent in private to develop a paper on how to proceed to redesign the system. This the "boardwatcher" did, and charged the superintendent $1600 for a five-page document.* In the conceptual plan, its author introduced some ideas as to the structure and character of the project. It was to have various sets of teams: design teams, planning teams, study groups. It was to be long-range-oriented and was to center on production of a Master Plan.

Analysis

The fact that the superintendent hired someone to develop a paper on redesigning the educational system suggests that he was not very clear about the changes he wanted to make, nor how one should proceed to achieve the changes. The superintendent's lack of clarity appears to be more congruent with Hypotheses One and Two than with Hypothesis Three. In other words, if he intended to have a large project for the prestige such a project would bring, or if he simply wanted to create a mechanism by which those who wished to participate could be channeled, such a limited sense of direction regarding the objectives and the structure of the project would have been expected. Hypothesis Three, the superintendent's desire to achieve educational change, would have led us to expect a more precise idea on his part regarding the features Project Redesign

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* The superintendent had authorized the Business Manager to pay the "boardwatcher" up to $3500 for his services. It is unclear whether the "boardwatcher" received that much.

should have, or at least a greater role to be played by him in determining the objectives and structures of the project.

In addition to establishing the "Educational Master Planning Team", the superintendent sent requests for a development grant to various government and private agencies, including the Ford, Rockefeller, and Rosenberg Foundations. Although he later noted that he had done this to obtain "outside funding", the MCSD had enough financial resources to cover the anticipated local expenditures for the project (initially quite modest: $25,000 for the first year). It would appear that his contacting these educational agencies was more congruent with Hypothesis One, namely, the desire to bring attention to the district's innovative behavior. Further supporting this hypothesis is the superintendent's description of what made the project so special. Among its "remarkable aspects", he said, were ".....the effort to test a redesign process which, if successful, could be exported to other school districts;" and ".....the effort to produce a more effective educational system which itself could be exported" (emphasis added). [9] In these two statements, it can be noted that a great premium was being placed on having the MCSD once more play its role as a "lighthouse" district.

In his original speech, the superintendent had mentioned five priorities for educational change: curriculum, the role of the educator, teacher tenure, new organizational patterns for management, and community involvement. In referring to community involvement, he said: "More and better ways must be found to involve the total community as a real part of the educational institution so that this support will flourish. My question is, 'Will the community respond? Will it drop the adversary role to close ranks in order that we may utilize our great resources in the most effective way?'" And in a local newspaper article announcing the Board's decision to begin "planning for a comprehensive redesign of the entire educational system", the superintendent noted that another unusual feature of Project Redesign would be "the large-scale involvement of students, citizens, and staff members throughout the planning stages of the Project." [11]

It appears, however, that what the superintendent initially meant by "community" was not the "entire community". In requesting that the Board of Education embark on a project that would look at future needs of the educational system, the superintendent also said the participants should be "competent and interested students, citizens, educators, and professional consultants." [12] The emphasis seemed to be on expertise, rather than on open participation. Furthermore, in replying to the superintendent's recommendation, the Board went along with the idea of a select group of participants. This seemed exactly what the superintendent wanted. All this suggests that one element implicit in Hypothesis Three - the notion that the change process should be participatory - did not seem an overriding concern on the superintendent's part.

The other element in Hypothesis Three - the idea that changes had to be comprehensive and drastic - is also not supported by the superintendent's presentation to the Board of Education. When he asked the Board to endorse the concept of a Master Plan, he expressed the belief (quite unrealistic, given the large scope of the planning task) that such a plan could be drafted within a year's time.

The superintendent had repeatedly asserted that comprehensive reforms were needed because we should avoid "putting patches on patches". It could also be that although he wanted to embark on long-range planning and sought to accomplish educational change, he was not clear about how to accomplish this, since his knowledge was imperfect and he did not have a handle on a change technology. This possibility - that the superintendent wanted to achieve educational change but that the technology was unknown - becomes apparent as we examine various pieces of evidence from the various stages of the process. As will be seen in our analysis of the rational decision-making model, instances of unclear technology were present throughout the life of the Project and may account for events which are not satisfactorily explained by any one of the three selected hypotheses.

The document in which the superintendent presented his idea to the Board of Education was a brief three-page paper, its substantive portion consisting of three small paragraphs (i.e., the section describing the elements of the Master Plan). According to the document, the Plan would include the "needs, mission, philosophy of education, and goals of the MCSD for the seventies and early eighties"; the "anticipated constraints, opportunities, interests, requirements, and conditions that will prevail in the district during the seventies and early eighties"; and "the redesign of the MCSD educational system ... including the design of a system for moving the change as we move from where we are to where we want to be." (13)

Examination of the Board minutes for the meeting of October 19th - when the superintendent made the formal presentation of his project - reveals that most Board members did not know what the superintendent had been doing about his "educational reformation" idea. At that time, most Board members saw his project as a long-range planning activity that would involve community members. Their concern at the meeting seemed more with the citizen involvement the project would entail than with the concept of "planning for the future". One Board member stated that the planning task "cannot be done by the community at large, but we must seek a few really qualified people who represent a broad base to function in the committee". Another member wanted to know "how many different task forces, study groups, and design teams" there would be. A third thought that there was no need to involve the community and that a staff committee would be equally effective.

What the superintendent requested at that meeting was simple and quite different from what the project would become. He asked for three items:

a year's time "to produce a master plan"; a budget of $25,000 for the 1971-72 year (presumably, the year in which the plan would be developed); and authorization to hire a full-time director.

After some lengthy discussion, the Board of Education approved the superintendent's idea by a 3 to 1 vote (the fifth Board member was absent that night but was supportive of the project). In approving the superintendent's idea, it is evident that the Board did so not because they had a full understanding of what the project would entail (something which was unclear even to the superintendent) but because they realized that the superintendent was strongly interested in having the project. Some Board members noted that in talking to "community residents", the "need for long-range planning came up constantly". Those Board members may have endorsed the project because they saw it as responsive to a desire in some segments of the community to have some planning. Yet, the collective Board of Education decision seemed essentially to reflect a standardized behavior on the part of boards toward administrators. Boards usually defer to "educational leadership", particularly in cases where no harm is readily apparent, and when financial costs are not very high.

From examining the actors, problems, and choices related to the decision to have Project Redesign, we have seen that the most important actor was the superintendent. It was through his initiative and follow-through that the district moved into having a long-range planning project. Secondly, once the superintendent decided on a long-range plan approach that would "drastically change the educational system", neither he nor Board members discussed alternative ways of accomplishing educational change. Some Board members questioned the need to involve community members in the process but, even so, their objections were mild. Thirdly, although the superintendent had been the originator of the project, he was not very clear about how to proceed. He sought to involve the community, yet he asked for selected participants. His expressed goal was to accomplish educational changes to meet societal needs of the 70's and 80's, yet he thought that a year was enough time in which to develop such a plan.

II. THE CHOICE OF THE PROJECT'S DIRECTOR.

If the intention was to have a "participatory" project, the initial phase of Project Redesign was very closed. Shortly after receiving permission from the Board, the superintendent initiated a search for the project's director.

Although there is no documentation, we know from various central office administrators' statements that the superintendent intended to hire the "boardwatcher" who had drafted the conceptual plan, as director of the project. However, the Board members had rejected this proposal because they felt that the "boardwatcher" was perceived by others (and, in fact, described himself) as a "gadfly". Also, they thought there was a need for someone who was "uncontaminated"; essentially, someone new.

A notice announcing the director's position circulated within the district in November but, as one administrator confided later, such announcement was made because it was "mandated by law" - no one really expected to find the person to lead the superintendent's project among district teachers. * When the internal search failed to produce a director from among six in-house candidates, a Board member wrote to the dean of a school of education of a midwestern university, asking him for the names of potential candidates. The dean's reply listed six possibilities, all of them recent graduates of an "educational leadership training program" at his university. The person chosen as director would be a graduate of this program, a man who had been an advertising and marketing executive in a large firm for twenty years. He had switched careers and had just finished his 20-month "educational leadership" program.

According to those who were members of the interview teams, the man chosen had been selected for various reasons. He had "experience in dealing with people"; was "open to new ideas"; and had "just come from an educational program and was up on recent developments". An interesting aspect in the selection of the director was that his qualifications actually did not match those given in the flier advertising the position. The "General Description of the Administrator for the Educational System Redesign Project", written by the superintendent himself, listed as important qualifications: (a) "suitable education in such areas as sociology, psychology, education, and/or related fields; and (b) successful school and/or administrative background; understanding of the institution of public education, including curriculum, finance, and organizational management; experience in developing a system to manage change in a school district desirable". [14] The man chosen had a B.A. in zoology, a two-year involvement in an educational program, and (except for a ten-week period during which he served as a teacher's aide in an inner-city school as part of the educational leadership program) no experience as a teacher or, an administrator in a school. On the other hand, he had led a community-initiated group in a large midwestern city that had requested and attained a few, but significant, changes in its school district; he was very articulate and had a great ability to interact with other people and develop social networks. The director was appointed in an executive session, and his position and salary did not appear in the customary "personnel action" sheet that is distributed at the district's Board meetings.

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* The superintendent appointed three teams to interview and select a director. The teams were: (a) representatives from the two teacher organizations, a member from a citizen-initiated group, "Forum for Education", and the Personnel Director (6 persons in all); (b) Board members and school principals (5 members); and (c) members of the superintendent's cabinet and the district research director (5 members).

The choice of the actual director is in agreement with Hypothesis One. If the superintendent wanted to be in the limelight, by choosing someone recommended by the dean of a midwestern university he was insuring that Project Redesign would be talked about through informal educational networks. In addition, the selection of someone with strong public relations skills guaranteed that the image of the district would be properly presented and diffused.

The fact that the superintendent had initially proposed the "board-watcher" as project director is congruent with Hypothesis Two, i.e., he wanted to place all activists in a single central location. The "boardwatcher" was a very active individual in district affairs and by far its best-known "constructive critic". In wanting him as project director, the superintendent may have wished to underscore the fact that Project Redesign was to be the place where critics could go.

Yet, the choice of the actual director also fits Hypothesis Two. If the superintendent wanted to develop a participation vehicle in which all critics and activists could be placed, it made sense to put in charge of the project a person with very strong abilities in the area of human and social relations.

The choice of the director is less consistent with Hypothesis Three. While it is true that the director had just completed a two-year program in educational leadership, he had never before written a plan, was not knowledgeable about the technology of planning, and had no deep familiarity with school district management.

The director, who assumed his position in July of 1972, spent two months becoming acquainted with the district and the community. Actions by the project director contributed to change substantially the nature and size of the project. He presented a report to the Board of Education in a special study session on four alternative emphases the project could take. (These were: a needs focus; a problem-solving focus; a community-of-learners focus; and a goal-setting focus.) Most importantly, he made the recommendation that a three-month ad hoc Project Redesign Convening Committee of 20 or 30 members be appointed. This group was to deal with eight project elements:

- goals
- conceptual framework
- clarification of roles
- structure and organization
- time frame
- evaluation procedures
- anticipated budget and sources of funding
- archives and documentation (15)

Here we see that the introduction of a new actor, i.e., the director, brought in a "new set of motives". Why did the director suggest the creation of a Convening Committee? According to his own statements, there were

three reasons: his conversations with community residents during the previous two months had convinced him that these people wanted to be involved and would not let major educational change occur without their participation; he had led a community-initiated group active in educational affairs and was, therefore, an advocate of citizen participation; and he had "sensed" that the superintendent wanted broad participation in the project. Another reason might be that he had wished to increase the scope and size of the project because, in so doing, he would increase his own status in the school district.

On September 18, four days later, the superintendent sent a memorandum to the Board of Education, asking the Board to take action on formation of the Convening Committee. In his memorandum, he stated that if such a body were to be formed, it "should have a charge", that is, a clear specification of the task to be performed. He also listed a number of suggested attributes for membership on the committee. These were:

"Willingness to work on the task of designing Project Redesign, rather than dwelling on specific areas of need.

Willingness to invest a significant amount of time, perhaps eight or ten evenings and as many as two weekends during the approximately 90-day period allocated to this phase of the project.

Being the kind of person who is generally perceived to be open and valued by the subgroups from which they come. Being future-oriented and generally optimistic." [16]

At the Board meeting to decide on the Convening Committee, the superintendent maintained it was necessary for the Board to "have a strong hand in the appointment of members to the committee. This committee is not intended to be an instrument of the administration." He said this was necessary to "give the Project credibility". [17] Much of the discussion by the Board members revolved around the issue of whether the committee should be the "Board's committee" or the "superintendent's committee". It was finally decided that both the superintendent and the Board would appoint members to the committee and that two Board members would work with the superintendent in "developing a charge to be given to the committee". The two Board members appointed were (1) a very strong supporter of the project; and (2) its only (but harsh) critic.

A very involved process ensued as the superintendent, Board members, and the project director proceeded to select names of potential Convening Committee members. A list of 85 nominees was compiled, including 19 (22 percent) critics, i.e., people who were either "constructive critics" or "dissatisfied with the school district". [18]   Of these 85, 34 were chosen; 7 (20 percent) were critics. *

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* The data on "critics" in the MCSD were obtained by asking the two central office administrators with the greatest community contact for their opinion. These two provided almost identical judgments in separately-held interviews.

The charge was developed and presented to the Board as a whole at a meeting on October 3. The charge of the committee was stated as follows: "To recommend a procedure for the redesign of the educational system to meet community and individual needs in the 1970's and 1980's" (emphasis added). In addition, the committee was to consider the following areas:

- a conceptual framework embracing the goals for Project Redesign

- organization and structure, with emphasis on dialogue among all people

- time line for development

- evaluation procedures [20]

By clear design, the Convening Committee was not to deal with topics and areas of educational reform, only with the way the project would be organized.

A letter of invitation signed by the superintendent and the Board of Education had gone to the 34 chosen individuals on September 27 (i.e., before receiving Board approval). Thirty-one of the nominees accepted the invitation. The membership, in terms of the various school constituencies, was as follows: parents and citizens, 16; principals and teachers, 9; students, 6.

Although the membership selection was representative, in the sense that an effort was made to appoint individuals holding different roles in the district (teachers, students, parents, citizens, administrators), there was a distinct emphasis on not having these persons act as spokesmen for their respective groups. The message conveyed to them by project staff was that they were to participate as "individuals".

Analysis

As the process moved from selection of the director to the appointment of a Convening Committee, we notice three features in it: (1) the maintenance of a closed process as to who should participate; (2) a persistent lack of clarity in the decisions made; and (3) a simplification in the kind of activities the project was to encompass. The process of participation continued to be closed, not only because the director had been chosen mainly by school staff, but also because the selection of the Convening Committee, which was to set the procedural blueprint for the project, had been a very exclusive activity. There was never a call for volunteers to the Convening Committee. Those appointed were a combination of active persons in the school district (whether parents, teachers, or students); some "critics"; and a fair number of "notables" who, in the Meadow City community, were professionals associated with the neighboring university or with the city's major electronic firms.

The maintenance of the project as a closed one fits the first two hypotheses stated above. To have a "grandiose" project (Hypothesis One), it could be argued, membership of the Convening Committee had to be exclusive so as to choose the "best among the best". If the superintendent wanted to create a vehicle to centralize participation, including participation by critics (Hypothesis Two), he had to have control over the selection of the Convening Committee. In this manner, for instance, the Committee would have "critics" but in such a proportion that they would not have control over decisions emerging from the group. Thus, the Committee came to have 7 "critics" among its 31 members.

The closed selection of the Convening Committee does not support Hypothesis Three, but does not reject it, either. If the superintendent was indeed interested in achieving drastic educational change, it made sense to select individuals so as to make sure they would be "knowledgeable" and "competent". In this way, the project would have a good start, since a very capable team of individuals would have served as "founding fathers".

The two other features of the process so far - the vagueness of the decision made regarding the need for a Convening Committee, and the tendency to simplify project activities - indicate a possible lack of change technology on the part of the major actors behind the project. In consequence, these led to the limited rational action by the superintendent and the Board of Education.

The willingness of the superintendent and the Board to go ahead with the director's suggestion to have a Convening Committee indicates that he and the Board were not clear as to how to proceed with the project. When the suggestion was made to form the Committee, no alternatives were explored. When the membership was recommended to be between 20 and 30 persons, no one questioned these figures. The ultimate number - 31 - was not determined according to any discernible criterion. It appears, rather, to have been selected on the basis of the number of suitable critics and notables available.

Originally, when the director proposed creation of the Convening Committee, he had listed eight areas of activity. As the actual "charge" to the Committee was drafted and transmitted to its eventual members, the areas of activity had been reduced to four. Missing were activities to clarify roles within the district, to draw up a budget and list anticipated sources of funding, and to set up archives and documentation. Without arguing whether this was a "good" or a "bad" decision, let us note that the reduction seemed to be, above all, a matter of convenience. The "charge" was simplified, probably to make it shorter, rather than because it had been re-examined and certain elements were to have priority.

The behavior of the superintendent and the Board of Education in endorsing the proposal to have a Convening Committe and in simplifying the charges of this ad hoc group cannot be explained under any of the three hypotheses listed. Rather, the behavior seems to have been dictated more by reasons of organizational dynamics. Once the issue of forming the Convening Committee was brought

as an "action item" on the Board meeting agenda, action had to take place. This action was bound to result in approval because nobody had alternatives to present, and the proposal seemed to be satisfactory. There did not appear to be any major disagreement between the superintendent and the Board. Furthermore, a search for alternatives would have involved additional time. As to the simplification of the charge, it occurred in part because the two Board members who worked on it spent only a few hours in its preparation.

III. THE REPORT OF THE CONVENING COMMITTEE

The district's newsletter to parents and staff (What's Happening) of October 1972 announced the formation of the project's Convening Committee and said that its findings and recommendations were to be submitted to the Board of Education by January 15, 1973. The article, which apparently was based on an interview with the director, stated: "At this time (i.e., January 15, 1973), everyone should have a somewhat better idea of what Project Redesign may entail, how much it will cost, how long it may take, and what it may produce." (21) The article also stated that "...the Committee is authorized only to plan how the project will operate, not what it will accomplish" (emphasis in original). The director was quoted as saying that "...the project probably won't solve everyone's problems and it won't solve anyone's immediate problem. It just isn't that kind of approach. The whole idea behind Project Redesign is to take some time for long-range, global planning." (23)

The Convening Committee started work on October 15 and met as a whole ten times, although its Steering Committee met several more times. (The Steering Committee consisted of six persons.) It presented its report on January 23, 1973, at a regular Board meeting, in a "participatory" format, not atypical of the work of advisory committees operating in the district. This meant that the verbal presentation of the report was done by several members, each of whom elaborated on a section or aspect of it.

Beyond the "participatory" aspect of the Convening Committee's presentation and the rhetoric contained in the introduction to its report, the document reiterated some of the key points contained in the boardwatcher's original plan – although, according to the project staff, neither they nor members of the Convening Committee had ever seen a copy of such a plan. Points in common with the original plan were the idea of four phases for the project, the notion of having task forces and design teams, and the maintenance of a selected body of citizens and staff members to manage the project.

However, the same document contained major, though subtle, changes. In the presentation by the superintendent back in 1972, the project was to have four

phases: (1) one year to produce a Master Plan; two years to have (2) redesign; (3) preparation phases; and three years for the (4) implementation phase. In the Convening Committee report, the four phases had different names and their duration was left unspecified. The phases were now:

"(1) A Preparation Phase, in which the participants organize, develop participation and leadership skills, become familiar with possible alternative futures, gather resources, specify the tasks, begin to interact.

(2) An Input Phase, in which informed input from clients/users and other sources is systematically collected, analyzed, and fed back for review.

(3) A Design and Decision-Making Phase, in which inputs are organized, alternatives developed, recommendations formulated, reactions, refinement and support generated by those affected, and decision-makers endorse the changes.

(4) An Implementation Phase, in which approved changes are installed. This phase also includes evaluation and recycling the process by looking again at school/ community needs and goals for the future." (23)

A timetable totaled four and one-half years for these phases. But, while the superintendent's proposal had asked for one year for the Master Plan's preparation, the Plan – which seemed to come under the third phase – was now to take two and one-half years.

The Convening Committee report recommended that a Design Management Team, to be composed of 9 to 13 members, be created to "...have general responsibility for the direction, coordination, and integration of Project Redesign activities." The DMT would report "directly to the Board of Education". On the other hand, the director was to "report directly to the superintendent" and was to have "Cabinet status"; i.e., by one of the top-level administrators.

The report also recommended the creation of "school/community input teams". These were to be the "principal vehicle for linkage between and participation by individuals in our schools and communities", and "the focal point for the development and review of many Redesign proposals" (emphasis in original). Most significantly, membership in these input teams was to be "open to all, and will include people of diverse and broadly-based educational interests, m from more than one elementary school boundary area, and citizens, parents, staff, and students.". Whereas the superintendent and the Board of Education had originally focused on a selected group of participants, the project was now to have open, unrestricted membership in its considerably important planning teams.

The fourth significant change is that while originally the project's budget was to be " $70,000 per year.....but we do not expect to exceed the $25,000 item budgeted by the district for this purpose", the new budget was to be $65-75,000 per year, with no reference made to what costs would be directly paid by the school district.

From the minutes of the Board meeting of January 23, it seems that the Convening Committee report included some surprises both for the superintendent and Board members. The superintendent noted that ".....: contained in the report is a reference to future committees reporting directly to the Board (but) that in his view, this particular committee is different from the usual kind of advisory committee and (he) agrees with the recommendation." (26) Some Board members were surprised by the tremendous deployment of community involvement it would take to form the various task forces and school/community input teams mentioned in the report. One of the strongest Project supporters on the Board declared himself "staggered by the enormity of the task that has been set", but could see no reason not to embark upon it. (27)

Convening Committee members completed their presentation to the Board of Education by asking it to ".....receive and review the report, and if the Board considers the report satisfactory, then (1) reindorse Project Redesign, (2) make a public announcement of that reindorsement, and (3) allow a response period and encourage feedback." (28)

At the next meeting of the Board of Education (February 6, 1973), and in the absence of any feedback to the Convening Committee report - even though some Board members had expressed a desire to have the report before making a decision - the superintendent asked the Board to take action on the report. The Board readily complied and the project was unanimously "reindorsed". The significant aspect of this decision is that not one Board member seemed to connect it with the approval they had given more than a year ago to the superintendent's proposal to embark on a planning project. In October of 1971, when approval was given to the superintendent's request, the motion had been to give him permission to (1) hire a director, (2) allocate $25,000 of district funds to the Project, and (3) produce, within 12 months, a Master Plan. Further, it was stated that ".....the Board will decide at that time whether or not to proceed with the redesign, preparation, and implementation phases." (29) Fourteen months later, the Convening Committee presented, not a Master Plan, but, instead, a structure and procedure for the project. And yet, not a single Board member attempted to evaluate the project's first year activities as a criterion for continuing or stopping the project. No one seemed to remember.

It has been noted already that it was very unrealistic to have expected a Master Plan to overhaul the entire educational system in no more than a year's

time. The point to be underscored is not the failure of the project staff and the Convening Committee to produce such a plan, but the almost non-existent organizational memory on the part of the Board of Education. It did not see a connection between the decision of February 6, 1973 and the one previously made in October, 1971. An indication of this is that, while the 1971 decision, which approved the Project for one year only, had taken about 66 percent of the Board's meeting time, the February 1973 decision, which committed the district to a four-year Project, took only 20 percent of the Board's meeting time.

How is it that the Convening Committee designed the recommendations which it finally presented? Although the Committee made a "collective presentation" before the Board, the work was done by its six-member Steering Committee. Most Committee members were satisfied with their performance and product, but those who were not noted that the Steering Committee had written drafts of the report and presented them to the other members for approval, instead of incorporating the various members' ideas and helping the group explore alternatives. In a self-evaluation report which summarized comments of Committee members on completion of their task, one member said, "When the Steering Committee was agreed on, its task was to work out agendas for the Convening Committee. After it decided that we weren't moving along and made a first attempt at a draft, we fell into the pattern of responding to the writings of the Steering Committee. As a total group, we did not discuss whether this was the best pattern to follow.....The Convening Committee members, in spite of all the reading matter, felt out of touch with the process. We did not know where the areas of difference and agreement lay, or how the Steering Committee arrived at particular conclusions." (30)

There is reason to believe that much of what was decided occurred outside the Convening Committee meetings. Reading of their minutes does not indicate many outcomes from their deliberations. In contrast, it seems that the role of the Project staff was significant in shaping many of the Steering Committee recommendations. As one member stated, "It was there (in the Steering Committee) that the staff undoubtedly played its most prominent role; in the total committee, the staff remained fairly unobtrusive." (31) On the other hand, not every action proposed by the Steering Committee seems to have been a calculated decision on the part of the project director. For instance, the recommendation that he have cabinet status was not made by the director himself, but by a graduate student volunteering his services in the Convening Committee. According to the student, the suggestion was made in an attempt to assure a much-needed liaison with ongoing district operations for the project. The presence of the project director in cabinet meetings would develop two-way communications; in addition, it would give the project more legitimacy in the district.

Analysis
To summarize the work of the Convening Committee, we note that 14 months after the superintendent obtained approval for his project, he was surprised by some of the new features it was assuming. The Board did not

remember that it was supposed to decide, on the basis of a produced Master Plan, whether the project should be continued. Although the Convening Committee had been formed to create a participatory process, it (1) had been chosen through a very closed process, and (2) only a handful of its members contributed to what was eventually presented as the group's report.

Hypothesis One had posited that the project was started because of the superintendent's inclination toward large projects as a status symbol. Would he, therefore, have been expected to publicize his project? This he did. While the Convening Committee was working on the report, the superintendent wrote a letter to several well-known educators, telling them about his project and inviting them to come to the district to discuss it. Among the educators invited was the state Superintendent of Schools, but he declined. Six of those contacted, including two from a neighboring state, came for one day (all expenses paid). During the meeting, the superintendent asked them essentially two questions: "How do you feel about Project Redesign and what can you contribute?" and "How can we proceed from here?" The advice he got was modest: "Know what you are doing"; "Know how you are going to spend the money"; "Don't ask for a big grant." (33) This meeting had no follow-up. While a reason might have been that the experts' contributions were quite meager, the fact that these people were asked to meet with the superintendent, rather than with the working Convening Committee, might suggest that the purpose of this gathering was mostly of a public relations nature.

According to Hypothesis Two, the superintendent was seeking to put all participants into a single channel, as well as to deflect participants from involvement in ongoing concerns and problems of the district administrators. His behavior matches several expectations attached to Hypothesis Two. He would have liked the recommendation that the project's coordinating body, the Design Management Team, would be filled only by a selection process, in which he would participate as an active judge. He would also have liked the vagueness in the Convening Committee report regarding implementation and evaluation steps. The report contained a number of ground rules, a description of the structure of the project (the DMT, the various task forces, the planning teams, relations between the roject and superintendent and the Board of Education); yet, it said nothing about the process of acceptance/rejection of the proposals and their implementation. The report stated that "validated proposals" would be accepted by the school district, but it left unclear how this "validation process" was to be effected.

The behavior of the superintendent and the Board of Education in reacting to the Convening Committee's recommendations does not contribute evidence to validate Hypothesis Three. If there was indeed genuine concern with educational renewal and if the change process was indeed to be participatory, the superintendent and the Board should have wanted to discuss recommendations in detail and ask community members (parents, teachers, students, taxpayers in general) for their opinions about the report. The process should have been

much more deliberate. There is no written evidence that anyone reacted to the Convening Committee's recommendations. The Board approved the report, following a superficial discussion. Further, statements made by the project director, stressing that the project would not "solve anyone's problem", weakened the proposition that educational change was desired; at the same time, the constant characterization of the project as dealing with "global, long-range planning" contributed to giving the project a "futuristic" rather than a "change agent" image.

IV.   THE WORK OF THE DESIGN MANAGEMENT TEAM

Immediately thereafter, the city's newspaper carried "an invitation from the President of the Board of Education". This announcement asked for the community's "written response" to the Convening Committee report and for "nominations for persons to serve on a Design Management Team which will coordinate Project Redesign." [34] The announcement described the project as "a comprehensive study of the Meadow City school system to determine what changes need to be made to meet the needs of the children in the Seventies and Eighties".

The Board President's invitation, public as it was, was addressed to a very select group of individuals, since DMT membership was deemed to require "collectively", several uncommon attributes:

"a. functioning of our present school system
b. techniques and principles of planning and organizational theory
c. student, staff, and parent perspectives
d. the diverse needs and interests of the community
e. alternative and emerging educational systems
f. techniques of decision-making, conflict resolution, communication, and participation and group interaction
g. legal knowledge (i.e., the Education Code)
h. educational theory and practice" [35]

Additional and "off-the-record" characteristics – mentioned in a memo from the project director to the Board of Education – were to be "minority consideration", "high conceptual skills, to deal with many complex and subtle managerial problems", and "nurturing skills". [36] Reflecting the great emphasis on the proper selection of individuals, the director's memorandum stressed that the composition of the DMT "will have an enormous influence on the conduct of the redesign process and in developing and managing detailed operational plans."

Some 133 persons responded to the call for membership in the DMT. Of these, 11 were finally selected: five parents and citizens without school children, three principals and teachers, and three students. No "critics" were

among these members. According to competent informants in the district, they were individuals well known for the usually "supportive" and "construct- ive" involvement in educational issues. To be selected for the DMT was per- ceived by the various candidates as quite an honor. One member was to con- fide later that she had been proud to have been selected. "Wow, they chose me; they want my opinion." (37)

The proud DMT held its first meeting on April 23, 1973. As it be- gan to function, the report by the Convening Committee became its guide. Thus, much of the initial DMT work revolved around setting in motion the task forces, which were to obtain the data base for the planning process, and, later, organizing the planning teams, which were to develop proposals for long-range educational change.

An organizational procedure devised by the Convening Committee re- port was that the DMT would submit quarterly reports to the Board of Educa- tion to keep it aware of the project's progress and development. The DMT dedicated considerable time to preparing these reports, but after three of them had been submitted, they were discontinued. Reasons for this, according to the DMT chairman, were that the Board and others who received the reports "were not reading them", and that the DMT "didn't sense great enthusiasm on the part of the Board of Education at the presentation of the quarterly reports." (38) According to the Board minutes for the meetings at which DMT reports were sub- mitted, the attention given to discussion of the project represented only approx- imately 20 percent of the meeting time. However, comments by Board members were rather superficial. A great deal of "pleasure" and "enthusiasm" with DMT work was expressed, yet hardly any questions were asked about substantive issues regarding the ongoing work of the task forces, nor about forthcoming planning teams. When the DMT reports were discontinued, neither the Board of Education nor the superintendent seemed to be aware of this. In any case, no official questions were raised.

While attention to the activities of the DMT "decreased monotonically", in the view of some DMT members, both the Board and the superintendent showed great interest in utilizing resources available in the DMT, particularly some of the technical expertise of several participants. During the life of the project, the district organized two campaigns to increase school tax revenues, carried out a budget priority survey in the community, and dealt with the problem of closing three elementary schools because of declining enrollment. In all of these instances, the superintendent and the Board drew on the project's person- nel and its voluntary participants to lend technical help.

After the task forces completed the compilation of data assigned to them, the DMT proceeded to recruit participants for planning teams. It spent a great deal of time debating the possible topics to be covered, and whether it should allow planning teams to choose what they wanted to examine, or assign them a topic. Although the DMT never made these decisions, it produced a docu- ment, "Description, Functions, and Ground Rules for the School/Community Input Teams", stating that the basic charge of each planning team was to develop

"validated proposals for long-range educational improvement in the MCSD". It defined as a "validated proposal" one which presented evidence that (1) it is educationally sound; (it is legally and financially feasible; (3) it is acceptable to the professional st... who will be directly affected by the proposal; (4) it is acceptable to and desired by those members of the community who will be directly affected; (5) it is a response not merely to present needs but to future needs and opportunities." (39)

The DMT's behavior regarding the formation of the planning teams is best described as fortuitous. A small-group consultant who helped in the training sessions of the teams early in January 1974 had argued that the teams should feel free to gather around common concerns. In consequence, planning teams formed in January were given complete freedom to select their problem areas. When additional teams were formed in July and August, the DMT felt that there were some aspects of the school system which were not receiving attention. Hence, planning teams formed at that time were given a topic for examination, that is, they were given "charges" to deal with, and participants now chose teams with clear assignments, rather than with self-defined problem areas.

Interviews held with Board of Education members and central office administrators in July 1974 revealed that they had little awareness of the project's task forces and planning teams. The knowledge of these individuals ranged from little to moderate, with the exception of one Board member, who had volunteered to serve as liaison between the Board and the DMT. Most Board members and administrators had read some of the task force reports, knew there were some planning teams now formed, but didn't know what areas they were dealing with. More crucially, there was a disparity regarding the objectives and expectations of the project. Some Board members and administrators wanted the project to focus on the future and come up with "creative" proposals; others wanted the project to help in current problems; still others wanted the project to emphasize its process (i.e., involving community members as participants), rather than any particular outcome. The superintendent himself said that the project's main usefulness would be in producing "a greater understanding of the school system and the problems it has, such as the case of tenure of poor teachers". (40)

It is of interest to note that there was a low level of concern and awareness of Project Redesign on the part of Board members and top-level school district officials, despite the fact that the project's structure was designed specifically to avoid this. As indicated earlier, the DMT was to report quarterly to the Board and the director met weekly with the superintendent and his principal assistants in cabinet meetings. In the case of the DMT, it appears to have failed to receive Board attention because the Board's concern tended to focus on the immediate issues it faced in its meetings. As f ar the project director, he became so involved in helping the district in several immediate issues that he gave less importance to his role as long-range planner. Although his personal estimate was that he was devoting (during the years 1974-75) approximately

25 percent of his time to district issues, as opposed to project activities, estimates by other competent observers put that figure between 60 and 70 percent. In addition, it appears that some idiosyncratic factors operated in the director's failure to use cabinet meetings to keep others informed of Project Redesign activities. According to one cabinet member:

> " (The director) didn't come into cabinet and walk us
> through what was happening. He didn't get us excited
> or involved; just gave us reams and reams of stuff.
> We asked him for reports, but we didn't get them. He
> didn't seem secure in what he was doing, and didn't
> seem to want to talk about it." (41)

Analysis

Were the developments described above at odds with the hypotheses we have posited? Under Hypothesis One, the superintendent's intention was to have the district talked about and to get visibility. To do so, he would have emphasized external rather than internal issues of the project. There were, in fact, project-related developments that bolstered the image of the district as an "innovative school system". The superintendent's speech on an "educational system for the future" was printed by the State Department of Education in a publication, Education for the People, sent to all school districts in the state. A grant proposal to the National Institute of Education to study the planning teams as a "social invention" was successful. The NIE grant gave the MCSD $122,500 for a three-year period; more importantly, in the words of the superintendent, that "demonstrated that what we are doing is important nationally. NIE grants are among the most prestigious in the nation." (42)

Additionally, the project director wrote an article for the state school administrators' journal, describing Project Redesign as "making our District planning-conscious, future-conscious, and participation-conscious in fresh and innovative ways." Within the school/community, five articles were written about Project Redesign, both in the local paper and in the district newsletter. The superintendent sent a letter to six neighboring school district superintendents, inviting them to "monitor" the process, discuss its progress, and audit sessions of the groups. He personally arranged for the state association of school administrators to pay for their travel and dinner expenditures. For his part, the project director invited the dean of the school of education of an important western university to speak to DMT and planning team members. All these events tend to support Hypothesis One. The image of the MCSD as a lighthouse was considerably reinforced by these activities.

According to Hypothesis Two, the superintendent would have wanted to make sure that as many critics as non-critics became involved in the project.

Yet, while there was a conscious decision to include critics in the Convening Committee, the composition of the DMT included only individuals known for their supportive involvement in school activities. Furthermore, while the DMT was very careful in the selection of task force members, involvement in the planning teams was left quite open. While it is possible that by the time the planning teams were formed, the project might have developed an image as "the superintendent's project", participation in the planning teams was, nonetheless, unrestricted.

The evidence gathered for this period does not support Hypothesis Two. If one of the purposes of Project Redesign was to provide a central channel for participation, several of the superintendent's actions contributed strongly to weaken rather than strengthen the status of the project as a central vehicle for participation. When interviewed in June, 1974, the superintendent had said he hoped Project Redesign would help to "synchronize" the "multiplicity of efforts" going on in the district. Yet, he did little to help the legitimacy or status of the DMT and the various planning teams. Reports sent to him by these groups went largely unanswered and unused. It is noted, however, that when asked whether he had used the materials produced by the participants, the superintendent maintained that he had "used them in cabinet meetings" * and that such input had been "valuable and useful". He also said that he had not reacted to them because they were "interim reports and didn't ask for decisions". [43] In contrast to his perception, various persons in the district - particularly parents - had commented informally that "there have been a number of decisions made in the district with long-range implications, with no involvement by Project Redesign".

The most clear-cut action taken by the superintendent and construed by others as deleterious to the project's status occurred when he formed middle-school task forces in the three junior high schools in the district to deal with the problem of movi ng from a "junior high school" to a "middle school" format. Since one of the project planning teams had been working for some months on early adolescent education and had developed a set of criteria for an "ideal middle school", the superintendent's decision disturbed this planning team and convinced some DMT members that the project was not "the project to end all projects", but simply "one more advisory committee". When two DMT members wrote to the superintendent protesting this decision, he corrected his action by having a member of the Project Redesign planning team serve on each of the

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* Note that this assertion by the superintendent contradicts the statement made by some of his cabinet members. As quoted on page 37 , one of his closest associates claimed limited knowledge about Project Redesign developments.

three appointed middle-school task forces. Yet some psychological damage had already been done.

According to Hypothesis Three, if the superintendent really saw Project Redesign as a vehicle for drastic educational change, he would have monitored more closely the products derived from the DMT and the planning teams, and given them more attention and salience. The superintendent indicated in an interview midway through the project that, according to his leadership style, "If you are going to tell people you're going to do long-range planning, then you have to let them go; you can't direct them"; and that, "in my model, the superintendent is willing to let loose. You get more from people if you let them operate in a comfortable manner." [44] While it is possible that he may have wanted to give project participants as much room for action as feasible, his behavior verged on indifference toward the project. There was no comment or response on the part of the superintendent or the Board to material presented by the various task forces or planning teams. As noted above, the DMT quarterly reports were discontinued because of lack of attention by these individuals. Another indication of the low level of attention paid to Project Redesign is that in preparing a list of educational priorities for 1973-74 to be discussed by the Board of Education, the superintendent listed Project Redesign as eighth in priority among eleven items. Moreover, as the Board discussed this list, it narrowed it down to six priorities; Project Redesign was not one of the six.

The issue of an unclear planning technology surfaces in the work of the DMT. It was never entirely able to define its role in the project. On the one hand, it felt its main responsibility was to "monitor the progress of the planning teams" and to "see that they were in some form carrying their charge out". On the other hand, it "wanted the planning teams to feel free". [45] In the absence of a means by which to determine which role was better, the DMT lived with this ambiguity and its performance was often obscure. Various planning team leaders never saw a need for the DMT; they were not sure of what it was supposed to do. Despite the fact that the DMT itself had called for a "validation" process for the proposals originating in the planning teams, it never attempted to enforce its own definition. Had it decided to do so, a mechanism for the "validation" of proposals would have had to be established. A more mundane reason for the DMT's failure to monitor the work of the planning teams was that the DMT members - being volunteer participants - could not find time to attend both DMT meetings and those of the planning team they were supposed to monitor. As a result, a DMT leader was to say of the DMT's knowledge of the planning teams, "We didn't know about their health, their pulse..." [46]

VI. THE LIFE OF THE TASK FORCES AND THE PLANNING TEAMS

The DMT utilized the Convening Committee report as its main guideline. Thus, it formed task forces to "conduct special studies" and to "develop

input for 'use by the DMT and the planning teams' ". Subsequently, the DMT formed planning teams to "provide a liaison between Project Redesign and the people" and to serve as the "focal point for the development and review of many Redesign proposals", as stated in the Convening Committee report.

The task forces were formed with selected members and considerable time was spent on their selection. From a total of 168 persons who volunteered to serve, the DMT chose 111. In contrast, the planning teams were characterized by their open membership. Whoever wanted to participate could do so. Recruitment letters were sent to all teachers and other district staff; to "parents and students", and to numerous "community leaders". Approximately 200 persons expressed a desire to serve on the planning teams and about 120 became stable participants; that is, they were involved with their planning team for at least six months. A number of persons joined the Project but withdrew shortly afterwards.

In spite of the differences in membership and function, the work of the task forces and planning teams exhibited many similarities. In both cases, the group's work tended to be done by a small three-to-six person core. In the development of their work, the search for alternative ways of presenting data and/or proposals was minimal and more implicit than explicit. The productivity of these teams in terms of written reports was high. A total of forty-one reports were written, not including the final long-range plan, an eighty-page document. Both the task forces and the planning teams considered their mission accomplished with the presentation of their reports, rather than with seeing them used or acted upon. Data from interviews with and questionnaires from the participants showed that the interpersonal and learning experience afforded by the small-group setting of the task forces and planning teams was considered very important by the participants - so important that it seemed to be more valued than the desire to achieve specific outcomes.*

Project staff made available all the work of these task forces and the planning teams by sending it to school personnel in the top and mid-management positions in the district and by providing copies to anyone, on request. Several of the reports met heavy demand, particularly a needs assessment survey of the district, and some reports from the teams on alternative elementary learning environments, the education of early adolescents, and high school graduation requirements.

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*. See Nelly P. Stromquist, "Antecedent and Concurrent Conditions of Participation: The Case of Participatory Educational Planning." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1975.

The purpose of setting up the task forces had been to develop a data base for use by the planning teams in designing the various long-range proposals. However, while the work of the task forces was found "useful" and "interesting" by different segments of the school and community, the planning teams did not use the data as anticipated. Generally, the data utilized in the preparation of planning team recommendations were gathered by the teams on the basis of their definition of the particular problem. They frequently carried out extensive literature searches, visited schools, and interviewed personnel in the school district. Five of the ten planning teams gathered data from the school/community by means of surveys; in this way, approximately. 2500 community and staff members participated indirectly in shaping the planning proposals.

Why did the planning teams fail to use, to any significant extent, the work of the task forces? A major reason seems to be the limited usefulness of the task force reports to the definition of problems and the generation of solutions chosen by the planning teams. Besides, there is evidence that the work of the planning teams did not fit a rational model of planning.

From the team coordinators' description of their planning activity, alternative solutions were seldom explored formally. In some cases, the proposed solutions "emerged" from the data-gathering process itself. This was particularly true when surveys of parents, students, and teachers were utilized. For instance, a planning team which explored alternative teaching environments at the elementary level offered as its "solution" the fact that the results of its survey had indicated that while some people liked "structured schools", others liked "open classrooms"; others liked "individualized and prescriptive schools"; and so on. Another team charged with reviewing existing administrative practices and procedures and recommending alternative structures and processes of administration reduced its charge to the carrying out of a survey of administrative needs and its main recommendation was that, since about 50 percent of the respondents perceived central administrators as "very ineffective" or "ineffective", there was a need to understand the reason for this perception.

In other cases, the eventual redefinition of the problem led to the formulation of its solution; that is, the planning proposal. An example of this was the case of the curriculum planning team. Unable to follow its charge, which included among other tasks the design of a procedure to integrate K-12 curriculum offerings, the team redefined its charge to argue for the creation of a curriculum commission, to be composed of citizens, parents, and school staff. Once the "problem" was so defined, its "solution" dealt with the possible membership and functions of such a commission.

Although the main role of the planning teams was that of contributing proposals to a long-range educational plan, the teams carried out their work

in isolation from one another. Over the life of the planning teams, only two general meetings took place, and little information was exchanged on their specific activities. On the other hand, planning team members were generally pleased with their involvement in the project and did not show an interest in learning what other teams were doing or in seeing that the DMT would incorporate all of their proposals in the long-range plan and that the Board of Education would accept or implement their recommendations. It appears that an important reason for the involvement of many participants was not the outcomes that would be generated by Project Redesign (i.e., "educational change") but the pleasure of participating in planning deliberation, in and of itself. *

While the work of the planning teams was hardly the regular rational process in which alternative solutions were evaluated and the various proposals advanced in terms of their general fit in a comprehensive long-range plan, the DMT - and particularly the project staff - gave a great deal of attention to the level of specificity the proposals would have. After intensive consideration, they decided that all proposals to be included in the long-range plan would be formulated as "operational goals". The term "operational goal" was defined as "a description of the desired future possible for the organization within a time span of from two to five years." [47] Team coordinators attended a meeting in which the term was further clarified by means of examples, and they were also given individual help in phrasing the recommendations. The decision to have "operational goals" was justified by project staff by the need to have "the right level of abstraction" and not to have the proposals "either too abstract or too specific". It was thought that the forthcoming public debate on the proposals would be fostered by this level of specificity.

Analysis

The work of the task forces and the planning teams reflects the limited rationality that characterized the planning process of Project Redesign. The performance by the task force and planning team members bears on the three hypotheses of the Rational Model only indirectly. However, the behavior of the superintendent toward these groups would have been expected to be different under each of the three hypotheses. The superintendent's behavior toward the planning teams must be considered as critical, because their products were to be the proposals by which "educational change" would be accomplished.

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* Stromquist, ibid. For an expanded description of the process of planning carried out at the planning team level, see Rudolph Johnson and Nelly Stromquist, "Participatory Educational Planning: Report of a Field Experiment", paper presented at the AERA annual meeting, San Francisco, April 1976.

According to Hypothesis One, the superintendent should have given as much publicity as possible to the reports of the task forces and the pro- posals of the planning teams. In this way, observers in other districts would have seen the "products" coming from an innovative project. This the super- intendent did not do. On the other hand, he did not have to do it, because the project staff took care of that. A great deal of emphasis was in fact placed on printing all the reports and making them available at no cost. In addition, the project director joined the consultantship circuit and attended numerous meetings and presentations where he spoke of the "uniqueness" and "achieve- ments" of Project Redesign. Indirectly, then, Hypothesis One is supported.

Under Hypothesis Two, the superintendent's intention would have been to place all participants and critics in a central place. As time went by, he became less and less interested in the project. In an interview on February 5, 1975, he expressed concern that the project was not attracting more teachers and staff, but seemed to believe that it had done quite well in reducing the num- ber of critics.

> "By and large, people who worked in Project Redesign came
> to be very supportive of the schools and were equally sup-
> portive of change where it was necessary..... It was a vehicle
> for people of divergent views to soften one another; now (there)
> was tolerance for other views. People who came in were
> active in the community and with fairly strong views. When
> they went back, they had a different story to tell."

The superintendent expressed the belief that the participants in Pro- ject Redesign had become "missionaries" as they had "understood the problems of the district". Yet, when he was asked to name some of these individuals, he could mention only one, and even so, he mispronounced the name. There were only 18 critics (or 8 percent) among the task force and planning team members. In terms of attracting actual critics, Project Redesign, then, did not seem to be very successful. However, the superintendent felt it had done quite well in recruiting and transforming critics. We believe that this supports Hypothesis Two.

According to Hypothesis Three, the superintendent should have been quite concerned in reading the output of the task forces and finding out what products were coming from the planning teams. Data from interviews with him reveal that he had read the task force reports, some in more detail than others, but that he was only moderately familiar with the activities of the planning teams. In conversations with him in June, after six months of planning team activities, it appeared that the superintendent did not know how many teams there were nor what subjects were being treated.

When we interviewed the superintendent again in December, 1975, he maintained that he had "..... kept aware of a good deal of Project Redesign

through casual remarks. You learn to listen." However, as noted by his behavior in appointing additional citizen committees, he was either unaware of some planning teams or chose to ignore their products. There was no discussion of the planning teams' recommendations, either by the superintendent or the Board. In sum, there was little evidence in the superintendent's behavior toward the task forces and the planning teams to suggest that his main motivation toward the project was to create major and drastic educational reforms. It is possible that he might have considered the products of the task forces and the planning teams to be of poor quality and thus useless to him. If such was the case, he kept this opinion to himself.

VII. THE LONG-RANGE PLAN

In July, 1974, barely six months after the planning teams had started to function, the superintendent announced his decision to retire. Because the MCSD was a "lighthouse district", the Board initiated a nation-wide search to hire a new superintendent. The brochure printed for his recruitment described Project Redesign as "an extensive long-range planning program". It stated that the project would submit to the Board of Education a Master Plan "for consideration in the spring of 1976".

When the new superintendent came to the district in April 1975, he spoke to the project director and apparently stated his expectation to see such a plan because, after the meeting, the director exclaimed, "My God! We have nothing to show him." The planning teams had been requested, in November of 1974, to formulate their proposals for the long-range plan in the form of operational goals. By April, 1975, most planning teams had presented their respective operational goals to the DMT, but there was no sense of urgency in preparing the plan. The arrival of the new superintendent precipitated a frantic activity to draft it.

The writing of the long-range plan paralleled the process by which the Convening Committee prepared its report. It was noted in an earlier section of this paper that most of the Convening Committee recommendations had been written by its Steering Committee, which had presented several drafts for approval to the rest of the Committee. In the case of the long-range plan, the full-time members of the project staff served as the de facto steering committee of the DMT. They presented eight drafts for approval to the DMT members but, essentially, they wrote the long-range plan. In doing so, the staff incorporated in toto the operational goals advocated by some planning teams; in other instances, they chose from among the operational goals presented by some of the other planning teams; and in still other cases, they developed operational goals which seemed necessary to include, in the light of what they had perceived as a need or preference in some of the task force reports, or in conversations

between the project staff and Board members. In all, the staff devoted approximately two months of intensive work to writing the plan. Later, the director was to say that he could "...claim authorship of two-thirds of the yellow sections", which contained the proposals of the long-range plan.

The long-range plan, which was officially called the "Working Draft of the Long-Range Plan", contained in its final version 36 operational goals. Table 1 presents these goals as listed in the plan and gives information about the implementation details accompanying each goal. As can be seen, the goals were somewhat vague: 18 of them did not mention the body or persons in charge of their implementation, and in only 3 cases was an actual cost figure cited. Although it attempted to be a long-range plan, many of its proposals seemed addressed to the immediate present, with no elaboration of how they would tie in with some other proposals or desired situations. Nineteen of the goals did not specify a date for implementation and, thus, were presumably long-term proposals; 10 of them were to be implemented within one year; 6, within two years; and 1 within 5 years.

Reflecting that several proposals underwent substantial modification in the process of being "fitted" into the long-range plan, data from interviews with the coordinators of the 10 planning teams and the DMT chairman showed that the planning teams could claim "direct" authorship of 20 of the proposals and "indirect" (i.e., perception of some similarity or recognition of some of their own influence) of 11 of the operational goals. The DMT asserted direct authorship of 7 of the proposals. Five could not be recognized as their own by any of these respondents.

Despite the fact that the DMT incorporated into the long-range plan some of its own operational goals, its leader said, "The DMT has always been an editing, or reviewing, body. They always felt that the master plan was not really theirs. They never felt emotionally committed." This person said that the master plan was "like jumping on a train the last 50 miles from a 2,000-mile trip. We never had a chance to put it together. It is a collection of 36 operational goals; it's not a coherent, integrated long-range plan. It would have taken an impossible amount of time." (48)

The planning teams were given ample freedom to define their charges and propose solutions, yet the eventual operational goals which represented their many months of work were not, in general, controversial. Eight of the 11 groups at work (i.e., the 10 planning teams and the DMT) thought their proposals "addressed the needs and concerns of teachers"; were "extensions of what we have been doing"; "echoed a need this community has been expressing for the last twenty years"; or "represent an improvement over the present situation". Two team leaders described their proposals as innovative because these were "trying to make the educational system more responsive to changing needs";

TABLE 1 - OPERATIONAL GOALS IN THE LONG-RANGE PLAN, BY SPECIFICITY LEVELS

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
1.1 New pupil assessment procedures shall be made available to primary teachers on a voluntary basis.	Unstated	"Minimal out-of-pocket expenses."	Unstated
1.2 Two elementary classroom teachers on special assignment shall be appointed to assist classroom teachers in Language Arts and Mathematics.	Unstated	"Resources should be reallocated."	Unstated. * "To begin January, 1977."
1.3 The Language Arts faculty at the secondary level shall establish specific long-range objectives and indicators for meeting those objectives related to improvement in writing and oral skills. These objectives and proposed indicators should be reported to the Board through the Administration within one year of adoption of this goal.	"Language Arts Faculty at the secondary level." * Responsibility of implementation under Asst. Supt. for Instructional Services.	"Unknown at this time."	Unstated. * "Not later than September, 1976."
1.4 Each secondary school shall develop a plan and take initial steps toward significantly increasing personalization of the educational experience, based on an appraisal in which students are included.	Staff in each secondary school.	Unstated	Unstated

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GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
1.5 The Guidance and Counseling Departments shall assess and report on the usefulness of self-concept inventories affecting learning.	Guidance and Counseling Department	"Minimal"	Unstated
1.6 Staff development programs for teachers of early adolescents shall be offered that emphasize practical methods of working with students having difficulties.	Unstated	"Minimal"	Unstated
2.1 Within one year the Board will approve the installation of a sensing system to provide data as needed on perceived needs, operating goals and budget priorities.	"A rotating standing committee of teachers, administrators, citizens, students, supported by a staff person."	"$5,000/year"	"Within one year"
2.2 An Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the Superintendent shall present comprehensive recommendations to the Board for making the local school the basic unit of educational management.	An "ad hoc committee" composed of teachers and administrators	Unstated	Unstated

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GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
2.3 As a means of supporting the Board of Education in its curriculum responsibility, we propose the formation of a District Curriculum Commission composed of professional staff members, parents, and students.	A "commission" composed of professional staff members, parents, and students assisted by professional staff support.	"$5,000/year"	Unstated
2.4 Those responsible for budget construction shall be instructed to make proposals over the next five years that reduce the ratio of ADA revenue base expenditures per student to 1.5 times the average state quality education support level.	"Those responsible for budget construction".	Unstated	Unstated
2.5 The number of total staff members (F.T.E.) per student shall be linked to enrollment. A change exceeding ± 1% shall be regarded as a change in policy and shall require Board action.	Unstated. * To be the responsibility of the Asst. Supt. for Bus. Services/ Operations	Unstated	Unstated. * "Current"
2.6 Within two years the management of all Human Services in the District shall be coordinated by one department.	Unstated. * To be the responsibility of the Director of Guidance	Unstated	"Within two years"

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GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation

2.7

By fall, 1976, the District shall implement the California State Master Plan as detailed in the North Santa Clara County Comprehensive Plan for Special Education.

	Unstated	Unstated	"By fall of 1976"

2.8

The recent development of staff-student-parent advisory groups in schools and departments, and especially in Special Education, shall be officially encouraged as District policy.

	Unstated	Unstated	Unstated

2.9

Within one year, a new organizational arrangement shall be created to coordinate our many programs related to Exploratory Experience, Work/Study, Career Awareness, Vocational and Technical Training.

	Unstated, "To be the responsibility of the Department of Instructional Services."	Unstated	"Within one year."

2.10

Within one year, factors responsible for teacher perception of District administration shall be identified and reported. Proposals shall be made to improve the relationship.

	Unstated	Unstated	"Within one year."

GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
2.11 Using the Administrative Needs Study as a starting place, the District, under the leadership of the Superintendent, shall initiate a program aimed at clarification of role and time management for principals.	"Under the leadership of the Superintendent". * "Asso. Supt. has begun development of a management program."	Unstated	Unstated. * "Being implemented now."
3.1 During 1975-76, PAUSD shall initiate a comprehensive, open-ended system of staff development.	Unstated	"Significant investment of resources"	"During 1975-76". * "During 1976-77"
3.2 On-going operations of the District shall be used as opportunities for staff development.	Unstated	Unstated	Unstated
3.3 Principals shall enable teachers to spend at least one teaching day per year observing in the classrooms of other teachers, either within this District or nearby.	"Principals"	Unstated	Unstated
3.4 During 1975-76, a conference for all primary teachers shall be held to identify, examine, and interpret changes in the role of primary teachers.	Unstated	"Some staff in-service funds should be used."	"During 1975-76"

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GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
3.5 By September, 1976, a Teachers' Center for elementary classroom teachers shall be established.	Unstated	"Costs incurred would be in building operation and maintenance...other expenses should be derived from reallocation of existing program budgets."	"By September, 1976,"
3.6 Within two years, the District shall have organized a Parent Education program in each local school.	"Supervision, funding, and administration can be through Adult Education."	Unstated	"Within two years."
3.7 The school district shall give renewed emphasis to developing student decision-making skills and civic responsibility by providing opportunities to participate in all significant decision-making situations and organizational structures.	Unstated	Unstated	Unstated
3.8 During 1975-76, the District shall study and make proposals for further expansion and coordination of volunteer programs.	Unstated. * PTA Council to present a report.	Unstated. "Not needed"	"During 1975-76"
4.1 A systematic plan to provide alternative elementary learning environments shall be developed and implemented during the next two to three years.	Unstated. * "To be the responsibility of the Research Specialist."	Unstated	"Within the next two years," * "Data collection to begin in the 1976-77 school year."

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GOAL	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
4.2 By fall, 1976, Middle Schools shall be established to meet more closely the educational, social, and psychological needs of the early adolescents in our District.	Unstated	Unstated	"By fall, 1976
4.3 Within five years, a system of competency-based education shall be developed, piloted, and a decision made to expand or drop the approach for Palo Alto.	Unstated. * "Cabinet to present report."	Unstated. * "No investment needed."	"Within five years."
4.4 Within three years, the opportunity for at least one-half of our high school students to participate in planned, on-or-off-campus work or career-related experience shall be developed.	Unstated.	Unstated.	"Within three years."
4.5 Within two years, the PAUSD shall establish District-wide standards and procedures for accrediting off-campus academic achievement.	Unstated.	Unstated	"Within two years."
4.6 The Adult Education program shall be expanded at maximum levels permitted by law to serve both internal and external needs that have been identified.	"By training volunteers (Operational Goal 3.6), providing staff development (Operational Goal 3.1), serving senior citizens..."	Unstated	Unstated

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GOAL	IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS		
	Main Implementor	Cost	Date of Implementation
4.7 The usefulness and acceptability of community schools within the PAUSD shall be tested by the establishment of a pilot community school during 1975-76.	Unstated	Unstated. * "A $26,400 budget per year."	"During 1975-76"
5.1 A Director of Program Evaluation shall be appointed for the District.	"The District.."	"A budget should be developed."	Unstated
5.2 The Board of Education, through the Administration, shall receive reports on selected major programs prepared by the Director of Evaluation and administrative personnel responsible for programs, on a schedule agreed on by the Superintendent and President of the Board.	"The Director of Evaluation, and Administrative personnel."	Covered by 5.1	Unstated
5.3 Training programs in program evaluation skills for staff shall be conducted beginning 1976-77.	"The Director of Evaluation should have a major responsibility."	Covered by 5.1	Beginning 1975-76
5.4 Each elementary school, each department in secondary schools, and each separately-funded department at the District level shall maintain a program evaluation model at both program improvement and decision-making levels.	"The Director of Program Evaluation."	Covered by 5.1	Unstated

* Indicates the modification to the Operational Goal made when it was presented to the Board for its official action.

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or "gave parents more insight into the schools and asked individualized pro-
grams for special children". Only one team coordinator categorized his team
proposals as controversial. In his opinion, the proposals were "causing the
district to respond to state action" by forcing the district to react to possible
court directives regarding educational finance.

The opinions of members of the Board of Education and the central
office administrators regarding the proposals were not unlike those of the team
coordinators. Both groups thought the plan dealt with the most important is-
sues of the district. An administrator expressed disappointment at not seeing
more "controversial" and "innovative" proposals. Most of the proposals were
seen by most administrators as addressed to "changes already under way in the
district". The new superintendent seemed to share these opinions:

> " I was pleased (with the long-range plan) but, in some ways,
> it fell short of initial expectations, with the futuring and
> think tanks. I expected it to be more penetrating, to pro-
> pose more fundamental changes, rather than the patchwork
> that it is..... It is a series of recommendations. They did
> not intend to pull them all together and show the relations
> between the goals; that's a task for someone else." (49)

The long-range plan was presented to the Board of Education in two
full sessions, one in September and the second in October. Members of the
planning teams - which had ceased to function after writing their operational
goals - took part in these presentations, thus giving the project its usual
"participatory" aura. After presentation of the operational goals, the DMT
asked the Board of Education to adopt a proposed procedure for "orderly con-
sideration of the operational goals". According to this procedure, the Board
would deal with the goals in the following order:

> " (1) Those which can be agreed upon and adopted quickly.
>
> (2) Those for which there is relatively high agreement
> but still (have) a need for staff/community com-
> ment, with the likelihood of some revision and
> further development before adoption.
>
> (3) Those which are more complex and call for the
> most thorough review by staff and community and
> then more developmental work in response to that
> input (50) "

This procedure was unanimously accepted by the Board of Education.

Though no formal decision was made, the Board requested the superintendent and his cabinet to comment on the long-range plan. Five dates were selected for cabinet discussion of the plan. It had been superintendent's intention to give "top priority" to the plan, but after some intensive discussion, the cabinet felt the task was very complex. In a meeting with the district staff on October 8, the superintendent had already remarked that the proposals were "well thought out" and that he had been "struck by the amount of human energy that would be required to implement them".

The cabinet began an in-depth discussion of the plan, goal by gc but after the fourth operational goal, the superintendent suggested another pro- cedure. Arguing that "a tremendous amount of process work is going to be required to close the gap between what the Board and cabinet know how to deal with and what they want!", he suggested presenting the Board with a list of "safe operational goals", which he defined as "goals we have arrived at as not presenting complications as we attempt to shape major changes." (51)

In preparation for the study session to be held on November 4, when the Board would have its first formal discussion with the superintendent and top-level administrators about the plan, the project director sent to the Board a memorandum stating that while "the cabinet has not completed an in-depth analysis of each goal", it believed that:

"....there are some operating goals that might be dealt with early because the goal is either:

1. consistent with present or anticipated activities·
2. not likely to cost enough to present a problem;
3. not likely to divert much time from current or normal work assignments." (52)

The memorandum said that the cabinet had thus selected 10 operational goals. It noted that at the meeting in which the Board had received the long-range plan, they had indicated willingness to deal immediately with 17 of the goals. Four of these goals, the director noted, happened also to be among the 10 chosen by the cabinet.

During the lengthy discussion that took place in the study session, the Board and the cabinet, as well as the project representatives, expressed two major concerns: the need to be responsive to the people who had participated in Project Redesign, and the need to deal with a current and important problem the district was facing due to declining enrollment - namely, the closure of three elementary schools. It was decided, in consequence, to adopt tentatively the four goals that were present on both the Board and cabinet lists. The Board president recommended adding a fifth goal, which concerned her very much, and a sixth was added because "it already had been done". Additionally,

it was decided to postpone discussion on the plan until February. The super-
intendent had stated convincingly that:

> "Right now, we are in a kind of log jam. It (the plan) hap-
> pens to be dumped in our lap at an unpropitious time. The
> Cabinet will be fairly limited unless you tell us to change
> our priorities. I feel very good with the Project Redesign
> product. I say it once, twice, three times. I'm trying to
> find time to deal with it. For now, let's show acceptance
> and commitment." (53)

Analysis

In terms of the application of the Rational Model, it must be noted
that the key actor (i.e., the superintendent) changed during a crucial phase
of the project, namely, when the long-range plan was prepared. Since the new
superintendent found Project Redesign when he took the job in the MCSD, it is
no longer appropriate to attribute to him any of the motivations the former
superintendent might have had. Nonetheless, it is still possible to examine
the "rationality" of the actions that took place.

The new superintendent's main stance toward the project was one
of closure. He did not have reason to identify with the project nor to feel
responsible for its success. He pressed for production of the long-range plan
and this he obtained. In conversations with the project staff and DMT members,
he expressed his desire to act on the recommendations, but at an October meet-
ing with the district mid-level management, he announced that Project Redesign
would end as of January 1, 1976. In other words, while he had maintained that
he was very supportive of the project, he declared it disbanded at a very crucial
time: the products were just beginning to be discussed when it was decreed that
the body that had originated them no longer existed.

Publicly, the superintendent allowed the presentation of the plan to
the Board in two long regular sessions. Also, he let the Board endorse a pro-
cedure to deal with the long-range plan, but later he subtly introduced reasons
to forego this procedure. While before, the Board was to deal immediately
with the goals by order of agreement on them, the superintendent now recom-
mended postponing consideration of the plan for four months. As mentioned
earlier, he argued that district priorities made it necessary to face the prob-
lems of school closures first.

While the school closure issue was important, transcripts of the vari-
ous cabinet meetings at which the long-range plan was discussed suggest that
there was reluctance on the part of both the superintendent and the cabinet to
embark upon a thorough examination and subsequent implementation of the pro-
posals contained in the long-range plan. Earlier cabinet concerns made

reference to "budget priorities" the plan would bring about, and the "debilitating effect this would have on the staff", as well as the "time problem", since there was no "staff to do this". (54) At a later meeting, cabinet reluctance to deal with the plan centered on the issue of whether the community should tell the administrators what to do. Cabinet members made such remarks as:

"I am uncomfortable with the fact that the Board and the DMT will lay a plan on us - the administration."

"I thought it would be a dream type of thing."

" (We) can't let people influence only when the mood hits them. If you want accountability you must have authority granted. If the community wants an account- ability trip, then we must try to understand what we're buying and what it costs." (Emphasis added) (55)

It was also at this meeting that the decision was made to give the Board a list of 10 goals which the cabinet would present as "goals we have ar- rived at as i presenting major complications as we attempt to shape major changes". (56) Cabinet transcripts, however, give evidence that the procedure by which these 10 operational goals were selected was brief, and based on ex- pediency. The superintendent simply asked cabinet members to raise their hands to show whether they saw any major objections to each operational goal. The 10 goals selected were those which received a majority, i.e., obtained at least six affirmative votes from the 11-person cabinet. The entire process took about half an hour.

The behavior of the Board in dealing with the plan also shows limited rationality. In accepting the superintendent's motion to delay action on the plan, it did not evaluate his assertion that he needed four months to deal with the problem of school closures. Second, the Board's decision to act on the 4 goals that appeared on the lists of the cabinet and the Board itself seem to have been an easy compromise. Rather than to argue whether the cabinet's criteria or dealing with the goals were or were not appropriate, they chose the path of least resistance: those goals agreeable to both parties. Third, the Board did not ask why the superintendent had decided to disband Project Redesign as of January 1, 1976. After all, was the Board which was supposed to give offi- cial approval for major decisions.

Why did the Board behave in this fashion? In retrospect, it seems that the Board was quite concerned with the prospect of closing three element- ary schools. It was going to be a difficult decision because most parents in the community wanted their neighborhood school to remain open. Besides, Project Redesign had operated outside the mainstream of district activities and was not seen as proposing measures vitally linked to the MCSD's survival or even maintenance. In following the superintendent's recommendation, the Board took

a sensible posture, one satisfactory to most parties and one that seemed relatively free of search time and costs.

VIII. THE FATE OF THE PLANNING PROPOSALS

By the time the plan came up for Board action again, it was March, 1976. The planning teams had been disbanded for at least 10 months and the DMT had not met since December 1975. The volunteer participants were no longer there. Under the process that was used for dealing with the plan - a process recommended by the director at the prompting of the superintendent - the Board reviewed the operational goals by dealing with a group of them at a time. Table 2 shows the goals by timeline and action (i.e., acceptance or rejection) by the Board.

TABLE 2

OPERATIONAL GOALS BY TIMELINE AND DECISION

Presenter	Time	No. Goals Presented	Accepted	Rejected	(a) Declined	(b) No Action
Project Director	March 2	6	6	—		—
Project Director	May 4	6	3	2	—	1
Proj. Res. Coord.	July 8	8	5	1	2	—
Superintendent	Sept. 21	7	1	1	2	3 *
Superintendent	Nov. 21	9	3	—	6	—
		36	18	4	10	4

(a) Refers to goal about which the Board stated it would "decline to take action".

(b) Refers to goal on which no formal decision took place.

(*) One goal was "tabled" indefinitely.

Table 2 also reflects the fading importance of the long-range plan. The project director presented the first set of goals on March 2, 1976. Six days later, he was told by the superintendent that he was to be replaced by a former colleague of the superintendent. When the second set of goals was presented, the director was a lame duck and news of his replacement had been announced in the local newspaper. By the time the third set of goals was presented (July 8), the director had moved out of town and the project's research coordinator presented the goals. Although the proposals were stated to belong to a _draft_ _plan_, no revisions were made of the document. On the contrary, each subsequent discussion of the operational goals was more superficial and brief than the preceding one. By the time the last set was dealt with by the Board, deliberation on each goal averaged slightly more than one and one-half minutes of Board time. Table 3 lists the operational goals as presented and as finally acted upon.

It is unclear what acceptance or rejection of an operational goal meant. As noted earlier, few of them had implementation detail attached. Even acceptance by the Board of some of the goals was devoid of any criterion by which to judge whether the goals were being implemented or were attaining their intended outcomes. Only two of the adopted goals specified that a report on their progress would be presented to the Board at a later time. In 10 cases, the Board "declined to take action" on the goal. This wording was, in several instances, a euphemism employed to reject an operational goal, without any previous discussion.

Analysis

How can the behavior of the superintendent and Board members toward the long-range plan be explained? The superintendent expressed determination to receive a plan and act upon it. Both things he did. There was little done by the Board that contradicted the superintendent's preferences. The new superintendent brought with him his own set of educational priorities and his own style of management. He saw some of the recommendations of Project Redesign in agreement with his preferences, and others leading him into what he did not care to examine or change, at least for the time being. When the superintendent liked one of the operational goals, he quickly adopted it. In one case, his adoption of a proposal even preceded official action by the Board. Ironically, this goal – the creation of the position of Director of Research, Evaluation, and Organizational Development – was one of the most expensive, since it necessitated a budget allocation of approximately $50,000 a year. And the fact that the project director was appointed to this job made this operational goal look like a set-up.

On the other hand, it would be erroneous to characterize the superintendent's behavior toward the draft long-range plan as a position taken independently of and in opposition to other points of view existing in the community. There were a

TABLE 3

OPERATIONAL GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN BY BOARD DECISION

GOAL	BOARD DECISION
FIRST ROUND: Action Take 3/2/76	
1. The Language Arts faculty at the secondary level shall establish specific long-range objectives and indicators for meeting objectives related to improvement in writing and oral skills. (# 1.3)	Accepted unanimously. The Superintendent said this activity was "initiated by the Board last year and is nearing completion."
2. Within two years, the management of all human services in the district shall be coordinated by one department. (#2.6)	Accepted unanimously.
3. Within one year, a new organizational arrangement shall be created to coordinate programs related to exploratory experience, work-study, career awareness, vocational and technical training. (#2.9)	Accepted unanimously.
4. During this school year, the district shall study and make proposals for the further expansion and coordination of volunteer programs. (# 3.8).	Accepted; amended: "The Board continues to give its support for the creative use of volunteers in our school district."
5. Within five years, a system of competency-based education shall be developed, given a trial run and a decision made to expand or drop the approach. (#4.3)	Accepted unanimously. If RISE grant is given, this will "cover part of the goal", said the Project Director.
6. A director of program evaluation shall be appointed for the district. (# 5.1)	Accepted unanimously. The Superintendent said, "This department has been created but the scope of responsibilities has not been defined."

OPERATIONAL GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN BY BOARD DECISION

GOAL	BOARD DECISION

SECOND ROUND: Action taken 5/4/76

1. Two elementary classroom teachers on special assignment shall be appointed to assist classroom teachers in Language Arts and Mathematics. (#1.2)

Not accepted. Administration should look for other means to satisfy teachers' need for help.

2. The number of total staff members (F.T.E.) per student shall be linked to enrollment. A change exceeding $\pm 1\%$ shall be regarded as a change in policy and shall required Board action. (#2.5)

Accepted; amended: "The Board of Education shall consider the ratio of staff members/ADA as part of its annual budgetary process."

3. Using the administrative needs study as a starting place the District, under the leadership of the Superintendent, shall initiate a program aimed at clarification of the role and time management for principals. (#2.11)

Accepted; amended: The program is under way, so "..shall initiate.." is not applicable. "The Board supports the Superintendent and his staff in the management training program aimed at clarification of role and time management for principals."

4. A systematic plan to provide alternative elementary learning environments shall be developed and implemented within the next two or three years. (#4.1)

Accepted; amended: "The Board of Education endorses the concept of providing alternative elementary environments, and shall respond to requests for the formation of new District-wide learning environments which have met the criteria set forth in Board policy." (Not voted upon.)

5. By fall, 1976 middle schools shall be established to meet more closely the educational, social, and psychological needs of the early adolescents in our District. (#4.2)

"Board members acknowledged accomplishment of this goal."

6. The usefulness and acceptability of community schools within the PAUSD shall be tested by the establishment of a pilot community school during 1975-76. (#4.3)

Not approved.

OPERATIONAL GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN BY BOARD DECISION

GOAL	BOARD DECISION

THIRD ROUND: Action taken 7/8/76

1. New pupil assessment procedures shall be made available to primary teachers on a voluntary basis. (#1.1)

Adopted.

2. The Guidance and Counseling Department shall assess and report on the usefulness of self-concept inventories affecting learning. (#1.5)

Not accepted. Goal implied teacher knowing child through observation to be replaced by "some sort of standardized instrument".

3. During 1976-77, a conference for all primary teachers shall be held to identify, examine, and interpret changes in the role of primary teachers. (#3.4)

Adopted. $500 for in-service budget.

4. The school district shall give renewed emphasis to developing student decision-making skills and civic responsibility by providing opportunities to participate in all significant decision-making situations and organizational structures. (#3.7)

Accepted; with modification by Superintendent from "all significant decision-making situations" to "appropriate decision-making situations". (Emphasis in original Board minutes)

5. Within three years, the opportunity for at least one-half of our high school students to participate in planned on- or off-campus work or career-related experience shall be developed. (#4.4)

Declined to take action. Superintendent said the Regional Occupation Program offers a wide spectrum of courses to every high school student and should be a vehicle for attaining this goal.

6. The Board of Education, through the administration, shall receive reports on selected major programs prepared by the Director of Evaluation and Administrative Personnel responsible for programs on a schedule agreed to by the Superintendent and President of the Board. (#5.2)

Accepted, with modification "...shall receive reports of major programs on a schedule parallel to the curriculum cycle."

7. Training programs in program evaluation skills for staff shall be conducted, beginning in 1976-77. (#5.3)

Accepted, with modification: "...shall be conducted at the discretion of the Superintendent, beginning at such time as fits his over-all program for the District."

OPERATIONAL GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN BY BOARD ACTION

GOAL	BOARD DECISION

THIRD ROUND (Cont.) (7/8/76)

8. Each elementary school, each depart-
ment in secondary schools, and each
separately-funded department at the Dis-
trict level shall maintain a program
evaluation model at both program im-
provement and decision-making levels.
(# 5.4)

Declined to take action. No
discussion.

FOURTH ROUND: (presented 8/3/76,
action 9/21/76)

1. Each secondary school shall develop
a plan and take initial action toward
significantly increasing personalization
of the educational experience, based on
an appraisal in which students are in-
cluded. (# 1.4)

Action declined. Superintendent said,
"This will be under study as part of the
RISE Project at Wilbur and Cubberley."

2. Within one year, the Board will ap-
prove the installation of a sensing
system to provide data as needed on
perceived needs, operating goals, and
budget priorities. (# 2.1)

Goal was tabled. Superintendent argued
for a "better conceptualization of the
Board's idea of a sensing system."

3. An ad hoc committee appointed by
the Superintendent shall present compre-
hensive recommendations to the Board
for making the local school the basic
unit of educational management. (# 2.2)

Action declined. Superintendent said it
was necessary to have "further analysis
of RISE and ECE local advisory com-
mittee procedures."

4. As a means of supporting the Board
of Education in its curriculum responsi-
bility, we propose the formation of a
District Curriculum Commission, com-
posed of professional staff members,
parents, and students. (# 2.3)

Not put to a vote. "Administration re-
commended testing and evaluating the
recently adopted curriculum cycle pro-
gram prior to initiating any new struc-
tural policy-recommending body."
Motion passed, asking administration
to "develop a policy statement that will
deal with the consulting process under
SB160 as it relates to curriculum."

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OPERATIONAL GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN BY BOARD ACTION

GOAL	BOARD DECISION
FOURTH ROUND (Cont.) (9/21/76)	
5. The recent development of staff-student-parent advisory groups in schools and departments, and especially in Special Education, shall be officially encouraged as District policy. (#2.8)	Accepted unanimously.
6. Within two years, the District shall have organized a parent education program in each local school. (#3.6)	Not accepted. Three Board members felt "satisfied with the present provision for meeting these requirements within Adult Education at various schools."
7. Within two years, the PAUSD shall establish District-wide standards and procedures for accrediting off-campus academic achievement. (#4.5)	Not acted upon. Instead, within the RISE project at Wilbur and Cubberley, include an investigation of ways to establish District-wide standards and procedures for accrediting off-campus academic achievement, and report back to the Board next spring.
FIFTH ROUND: (presented 10/5/76, action 11/2/76)	
1. Staff development programs for teachers of early adolescents shall be offered that emphasize practical methods of working with students having difficulties. (#1.6)	Accepted.
2. Those responsible for budget construction shall be instructed to make proposals over the next five years that reduce the ratio of ADA revenue base expenditure per student to 1.5 times the average state quality education support level. (#2.4)	Declined to take action. Pending State legislation had rendered the phrase "quality education support level" meaningless.

OPERATIONAL GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN BY BOARD ACTION

GOAL	BOARD DECISION

FIFTH ROUND (Cont. - 11)

3. By fall, 1976, the District shall implement the California State Master Plan, as detailed in the North Santa Clara County Comprehensive Plan for Special Education (# 2.7)

Declined to take action. "It is not possible to predict what the full implementation schedule for the state Master Plan would be."

4. Within one year, factors responsible for teacher perception of District Administration shall be identified and reported. Proposals shall be made to improve the relationship. (# 2.10)

Declined to take action. An evaluation of this nature was necessary but (it) "is not sure that measuring would be helpful, insofar as building morale and support..."

5. During 1975-76, the MCSD shall initiate a comprehensive, open-ended system of staff development. (# 3.1)

Adopted. Board changed "1975-76" to "1976-77".

6. On-going operations of the District shall be used as opportunities for staff development. (# 3.2)

Adopted.

7. Principals shall enable teachers to spend at least one teaching day per year observing in the classrooms of other teachers, either within this District or nearby. (# 3.3)

Declined to take action. Two District programs were said to be expected to "utilize interventions __ to the activity called for __ Goal."

8. By September, 1976, a teachers' center for elementary classroom teachers shall be established. (# 3.4)

Declined to take action. Some logistical problems adduced.

9. The Adult Education program shall be expanded at maximum levels permitted by law to serve both internal and external needs that have been identified. (# 4.6)

Declined to take action. "The Adult Education program is no longer restricted by the limitation on expansion which was in effect when this goal was written."

number of instances that might have indicated to him that there was little community interest in Project Redesign or in the plan. With the exception of two or three Project Redesign participants, the superintendent was not confronted by an angry group of individuals demanding action on their planning proposals. In addition, although over 2000 copies of the plan were printed and "public hearings" were announced in the newspaper, the community turnout was low. There were 20 community persons (excluding Project Redesign participants) at the first hearing; five showed up at the second hearing of the plan. Solicited reactions to the plan were also limited. Thirty-five written comments were received. These included formal responses (generally supportive) from the local League of Women Voters branch and from two educational groups in the community. The two teacher organizations responded only to some sections of the plan, and in a very brief manner.

In contrast to its ambitious and widely-advertised beginning, the end of the project went almost unnoticed. There were no words of sorrow, no demonstrations of joy, no attempts to reflect on the past experience. Six years after the superintendent's speech on the need to redesign the educational system, life in the MCSD seemed to continue as usual. Three elementary schools had been closed, the junior high schools now contained students in grades 7 and 8, and were called "middle schools", and some changes had occurred in the administrative structure of the district. Yet the relationship between these changes and the existence of Project Redesign was difficult to judge, and there was little agreement on attribution of these changes in the opinions expressed by participants in the project and by staff members in the school district.

Interviews held with Board and cabinet members revealed that while some respondents believed Project Redesign had played a role in the district's decisions on alternative elementary schools, middle schools, a career coordinator, and a reorganization of the human services department, these individuals also thought that the recommendations from Project Redesign had essentially "lent support" to changes that would have been made anyway. Several other respondents affirmed that most of Project Redesign's recommendations addressed themselves to changes and programs that "were going on already". (58)

In all, Project Redesign had cost $402,000, and $208,000 of this sum had been borne by the district. But in a district that had an annual budget of $28 million, Project Redesign represented a small proportion, or .21 percent of its yearly operating funds.

IX. SUMMARIZING CONCLUSIONS

In applying the rational model of decision-making to Project Redesign, we posited three rival hypotheses in accounting for the decision of the major

actor - the superintendent - in creating and establishing Project Redesign. As we followed the behavior of the former superintendent through five significant points in the life of the project, we found evidence that both supported and failed to support the attributed hypotheses.

Table 4 summarizes the evidence discussed in the Analysis sections of this paper. In this table, strong evidence is defined as that providing at least two instances of support. Weak evidence is defined as that which is based on only one supporting instance. No evidence is that which has one or more expected behaviors or outcomes missing.

TABLE 4

THE THREE HYPOTHESES OF THE RATIONAL MODEL BY DEGREE OF SUPPORT

Project Life Point	Hypothesis One	Hypothesis Two	Hypothesis Three
Decision to have P.R.	Strong support	Weak support	No evidence
Choice of the Director	Strong support	Strong support	No evidence
Report of the Conv. Comm.	Weak support	Strong support	No evidence
The Work of the DMT	Strong support	No evidence	No evidence
The life of the Task Forces of Planning Teams	Weak support	Weak support	No evidence

Hypotheses One and Two receive corroboration, while Hypothesis Three fails to be supported in all five instances. It can be noted that Hypothesis One is strongly supported in three of five events and weakly supported in the other two. Hypothesis Two is strongly supported in two events, weakly supported in the other two, and fails to receive corroboration in one instance.

A conclusion of the foregoing analysis would be that in creating Project Redesign, the superintendent sought to have only an attractive project that would give the MCSD some additional prestige. Despite his public assertions that he wanted a renewed educational system, the evidence indicates that his behavior matched more closely what would have been expected from someone who wanted to have an educational showcase. It suggests that the superintendent may have wanted to cap his educational career with one more "innovative and bold" project.

The rational model of decision-making led us to examine the various events in the change project from the perspective that these events and their outcomes were intimately tied to the behavior and formal decisions of the superintendent. But, as we showed in the analyses of the various project life points, it is far from clear that the events that took place were indeed part of a controlled, predictable situation.

In applying the rational paradigm, we found that under none of the three stated hypotheses was there a set of criteria for action that was stated, evaluated, or fully followed. The pieces of evidence that came closest to meeting specifications of "criteria for action" were the "ground rules" passed on to the volunteer participants; the Convening Committee recommendations that the operational goals be "validated", and the DMT request that the planning teams produce "operational goals" for incorporation in the long-range plan. It is worth noting that these exhibits of "criteria for action" were not dictated by the superintendent. The first two were products of the Convening Committee, the third one emerged from the project's staff. Furthermore, though these instances did reflect some rationality on the part of some of the actors, they were not implemented. Everybody gave lip service to these guidelines, but no one implemented them. On the other hand, it would have been extremely difficult to implement them. They were stated at such a general level that their operationaliz   n could have been construed in numerous and different ways.

Another element of the rational model missing in Project Redesign was that alternative means and solutions were not considered. This applied not only to the decision to have long-range planning as the vehicle for drastic educational change, but also to the decisions to have planning teams, to have a coordinating DMT, to give the project director cabinet status, to produce a long-range plan by the spring of 1975, to have the Board deal with the operational goals in small sets, and to accept or reject the operational goals.

In consequence of the lack f alternatives, events in Project Redesign cannot be considered as choices from among various options. This was reflected in the behavior of the Convening Committee, the DMT, the planning teams, and the superintendent. The decisions that took place among the volunteer planners were not the result of examining options. Generally, the decisions made derived from the consensus of the group, not from a consensus that came toward the end of some discussion, but rather from a consensus that emerged early - shortly after the predominant preference in a given group of participants became visible. While the data analyzed in this study show that the superintendent did consider options in deciding to have Project Redesign and in choosing its director, the evidence becomes slim when we try to account for his behavior toward the Convening Committee, the DMT, and the products of the planning teams.

A third feature of the events in Project Redesign which also departs from the rational paradigm of decision-making is that the project was characterized by a constant lack of technology vis-a-vis what "planning" should be and

what it would take to move from intention to implementation to outcome. Not knowing how to plan, the superintendent and the Board delegated the planning task to the coordination and supervision of the DMT. The DMT, now knowing what plans were to be judged adequate, reminded the planning teams that the recommendations were up to them but that these recommendations should be "validated". The planning teams, not knowing what a "validated" plan meant exactly, thought the project staff would take care of this by integrating the various recommendations into a cohesive plan.

The project staff could not integrate the proposals, beyond putting them in some categories. Essentially, the staff placed the recommendations under five groups: those which would improve academic excellence; improve the management process; provide better procedures for human resource development; make the district more responsive to the needs of students, staff, and parents; and help the district to assess and evaluate programs. (57)

In addition, the project staff and the DMT did not want to be very specific in their recommendations because they feared that the administrators would not react very warmly to guidelines that told them "exactly what to do". DMT leaders were later to express the opinion that "administrators were always a negative force to forming goals". The administrators, for their part, expected - at least publicly - to be given specific proposals with costs, manpower, and outcomes clearly stipulated. When none of these obtained, there was disappointment expressed by the Board, the superintendent, and the administrators. It is notable that there was no criticism. This is not hard to understand. To be in the position of a critic, one has to assume knowledge of how things should be. And such knowledge was scarce.

Operating side by side with the lack of clear technology was a time factor. Although some time constraints were manufactured (especially in the last stages of the project), a variety of short-term problems in the district attracted the superintendent's attention. In the rational model, time constraints are not given much importance, since it is assumed that the rational actor can design his schedule around the priorities he chooses. In the case of Project Redesign, the superintendent, the Board, and especially the volunteer planners, suffered time limitations that restricted their search for alternatives, either in the definition of problems or in the solution of them.

Complicating the application of the rational model is the fact that the key actor was replaced during a critical stage of the project. The new superintendent brought with him his own definition of the situation. It appears that Project Redesign did not offer him many solutions. On the contrary, it is likely that he perceived it as a problem; it confronted him with a long-range plan containing many recommendations he did not fully understand. The decisions he made regarding the project and the planning proposals made sense, if we assume that he wanted to bring the project to a quick ending.

From the evidence we have herein examined, several critical departures from the rational model have been noted. The literature on organizational decision-making is aware of the shortcomings of the "classic rational model", and modifications of it have been proposed. Simon (1961) maintains that the main limitations to rationality derive from unclear and unconscious technology, conflicting organizational goals, and the scant amount of information and knowledge. For Project Redesign, the technology of planning was clearly missing, but there was no explicit manifestation of conflicting goals among the participants. If different values existed, these never became a subject of debate. The project was characterized by the great amount of information its task forces and planning teams were able to generate. Although information by no means guarantees full knowledge, the interesting element in Project Redesign was not that the information was considered useless, but that the various units in the school district made only sporadic use of the data. In this respect, it is helpful to discuss some further limitations to the rational model, as elaborated by March and Cyert (1963).

Using as their main focus the semi-independent behavior of the various units and actors in an organization, March and Cyert underscore the limitations to rational decision-making brought about by the quasi-resolution of conflict in an organization (which leads to decisions being based on "minimum common grounds"), the avoidance of uncertain events, and the problemistic search for solutions.

The first of the limitations listed by March and Cyert - the quasi-resolution of conflict - did not arise in Project Redesign; but it should be brought to the reader's attention that Project Redesign was not a permanent or totally legitimate unit of the organization, i.e., the school district. The project came into being through the superintendent's initiative. It derived some authority from the fact that "participatory planning" reflected community involvement, something which is supposed to be praiseworthy. Yet, Project Redesign had no formal powers. The participants were asked to produce recommendations but they received no guidelines as to how much money these could cost. In fact, Project Redesign did not have a budget to provide financial resources for the various recommendations it would produce. Not being an official structure of the school district, there was no need for the administrators and the new superintendent to have an open conflict with it. The tactic of ignoring or modifying its products could be equally if not more effective.

There were many instances in the life of the project that suggest that the superintendent and the Board behaved along the lines of uncertainty avoidance. Nowhere is this more evident than in their treatment of the operational goals contained in the long-range plan. The new superintendent's first reaction toward the recommendations was to act on those which were "consistent with present or anticipated activities, not likely to cost enough to present a

problem and not likely to divert much time from current or normal work as-
signments." (59)

This behavior fits extremely well that of following standard operat-
ing procedures. Additional evidence as to the superintendent's and the Board's
uncertainty avoidance can be gathered from reviewing the fate of the operational
goals. A proposal to have a community school was rejected because Board mem-
bers were not sure that schools should go beyond the offering of "educational
services". A recommendation to have a system to provide data on perceived
needs, operating goals, and budget priorities was declined because there needed
to be a "better conceptualization of the Board's idea of a sensing system." The
proposal to identify why district administrators were perceived as inefficient was
not acted upon because of its possible negative effects in "building morale and sup-
port." The recommendation that the district implement the Master Plan for
Special Education was not acted upon because the extent of the implementation by
the state was not yet known.

The third limitation proposed by March and Cyert, that of problem-
istic search, appears to have more explanatory power than the limitation brought
about by insufficient information and knowledge. In Project Redesign, the informa-
tion that could be collected in some cases was collected. What happened was that
it did not answer the questions of those who eventually used the reports, because
these individuals were looking for specific kinds of information, that which would
deal with the problem as they had defined it. In consequence, much information
was not used and much information was generated anew by those who were to be
the consumers of the original information.

Within the school district and even within the cabinet, there was lim-
ited knowledge about the work and progress of the planning teams. But this
limited knowledge did not come about because it was impossible for the Board and
administrators to learn about the teams – in fact, it has been noted that the pro-
ject director attended weekly cabinet meetings and even talked frequently with
Board members. The limited knowledge came about because attention was being
devoted to more urgent matters, notably the closing of elementary schools and
the various critical budget reductions.

In sum, there was some rationality in the participatory planning pro-
ject, but it was a limited rationality. Some of the very crucial elements posited
in the rational model could not be documented in the case of Project Redesign be-
cause they were noticeably missing. Further, the major imputed motivation for
action in the rational model, namely, the desire for specific outcomes or pro-
ducts, did not receive confirmation. Many project participants saw it as an ex-
pressive, rather than instrumental vehicle. The process clearly dominated the
product. This was true in the case of the volunteer participants, the case of the
Board members and the administrators, and the case of the two superintendents.

In the end, if there was any consensus about the success of Project
Redesign, it was with the involvement of community and staff members which
had brought about.

NOTES

1. "Education in the Seventies: A Superintendent's Perspective," speech delivered by the Superintendent to the Educational Issues Program sponsored by the PTA Communications Committee, February 8, 1971.

2. What's Happening - MCSD's monthly publication.

3. Board of Education meeting, October 19, 1971.

4. "Education in the Seventies: A Superintendent's Perspective - Continued" - speech delivered by the Superintendent at Pajaro Dunes retreat, September 22, 1972.

5. "Education in the Seventies....", op. cit.

6. Board of Education meeting, October 19, 1971.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Superintendent's memorandum to the Board of Education, "Project 1970's-1980's: An Educational System Redesign," October 15, 1971.

10. "Education in the Seventies.....", op. cit.

11. Meadow City Times, October 1971.

12. "Project 1970's-1970ls.....", op. cit.

13. Ibid.

14. "Administr Vacancy Project Director", MCSD, November 1971.

15. "Impleme ject Redesign", Director's memorandum to the Board of Education, eptember 11, 1972.

16. "Consideration of Project Redesign", Superintendent's memorandum to the Board of Education, September 18, 1972.

17. Board of Education meeting September 19, 1972.

18. These "critics" were persons identified as such by two Central Office admin-istrators whose main responsibility it was to deal with individuals and groups in the community.

19. "Charge to the ad hoc Committee for Project Redesign", submitted to the Board of Education, October 3, 1972.

20. Ibid.

21. What's Happening, October, 1972.

22. Ibid.

23. "An Invitation to Plan the Future of Education in Meadow City", ad hoc Con-vening Committee report to the Board of Education, January 23, 1973.

24. Ibid.

25. "Project 1970's-1980's.....", op. cit.

26. Board of Education meeting, January 23, 1973.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Project 1970's-1980's.....", op. cit.

30. Project Redesign ad hoc Convening Committee, "Self-Evaluation", presented to the Board of Education, February 7, 1973.

31. Ibid.

32. Meeting on Project Redesign, Superintendent's Notes, November 2, 1972.

33. Ibid.

34. Meadow City Times, February 16, 1973.

35. Director's memorandum to the Board of Education, March 13, 1973.

36. "An Invitation to Submit Nominations for Project Redesign Task Groups", Meadow City Times, May 1973.

37. Interview with DMT member, February 14, 1975.

38. Interview with DMT member, October 20, 1975.

39. Ground Rules, Project Redesign, MCSD, 1973

40. Interview with the Superintendent, June 11, 1974.

41. Interview with Cabinet member, December 9, 1975.

42. Superintendent's letter to the Board of Education announcing award of N.I.E. grant, May 29, 1973.

43. Interview with the Superintendent, December 4, 1975.

44. Interview with the Superintendent, February 11, 1975.

45. Interview with DMT leader, October 20, 1975.

46. Ibid.

47. The Project Redesign Long-Range Plan for the MCSD, Project staff communication sent to all planning teams, November 27, 1974.

48. Interview with DMT leader, December 1, 1975.

49. Interview with the Superintendent, Dec. 18, 1975.

50. Board of Education meeting, September 16, 1975.

51. Cabinet meeting, October 27, 1975.

52. Project director's memorandum to the Board of Education (undated). "Data on Operating Goals, Project Redesign". Although the memorandum listed the criteria as having been determined by the Cabinet, transcripts of the conversations of Cabinet meetings showed that the superintendent set these criteria.

53. Cabinet/Board of Education study session, November 4, 1975.

54. Cabinet meeting, October 22, 1975.

55. Cabinet meeting, October 27, 1975.

56. Ibid.

57. 1976-1981 Long-Range Plan, Working Draft, MCSD, September 1975.

58. Interviews with Board and Cabinet members, December 1975.

59. Project Director's memorandum to the Board, op. cit.

SECTION II: THE ORGANIZED ANARCHY

By Carla Edlefson

<u>Introduction</u>

One of the reasons the rational model, presented in the first section of this report, is so useful for describing organizational behavior is that we usually think of organizations as being rational. An organization is something that is organized; people usually start organizations in order to have some mechanism for logically and efficiently carrying out some purpose. We expect that organizational means will be appropriate for the desired ends, and we expect that the outcomes (or accomplishments) of organizations will logically follow from the intentions of the organizers. The analysis in Section I depends on that very expectation - that, by examining outcomes and proceeding backwards in a logical fashion, we can ascertain what intentions were.

But, as most of us have learned from our experiences with organizations, rationality is sometimes more of an ideal than a reality. Outcomes of organizational behavior are not always what was intended. For example, decisions, even if they should happen to be implemented, often do not solve problems.

The collection of ideas that we shall refer to in this section as the "Organized Anarchy" model has been invented by some students of organizations because of dissatisfaction with the Rational Model for explaining inconsistencies between intention and outcome (Cohen and March, 1974; Cohen, March, and Olsen, 1972; and March and Olsen, 1976). The Organized Anarchy model attempts to identify those organizational forces which separate intention from outcome, prevent problems from being solved, and prevent experience from being the best teacher.

The Organized Anarchy is perhaps best understood when contrasted with the Rational Model:

1. <u>Goals.</u> While the Rational Model of decision-making assumes that the organization acts as one individual actor who has a set of consistent preferences or goals, the Organized Anarchy model assumes that the organization is many people with very unclear and conflicting goals and preferences.

2. <u>Problem-Solving.</u> The Rational Model would say that, when confronted by a problem, the organization considers what available options it has for solving the problem, and what the consequences of each option are, in terms of the organization's goals. The Organized Anarchy model says that the organization doesn't know and cannot find out what the consequences of a given option might be, and, furthermore, the organization's many actors face a "stream" of problems, the flow of which they can only partially regulate. Thus, they cannot very easily choose to deal with any one problem at any given time.

3. **Decisions.** The Rational Model says that the organization makes a deci-
sion by choosing the best option for solving the problem, given its goals. The
Organized Anarchy model says that the organization may be able to make a
decision only if the problem goes away or is relegated to another decision situ-
ation, and that sometimes solutions precede problems, or actually seek prob-
lems that they might solve.

4. **Leadership.** An analysis using the Rational Model typically looks to the
behavior of the top leadership for data, as did our analysis in Section I. The
Organized Anarchy model, on the other hand, says that the top leaders are
only part of the cause of organizational behavior; that, in fact, people's par-
ticipation in decision-making is fluid and subject to the constraints on their
time - which is, of course, affected by other demands on their time. The ac-
tivities of many of the members of the organization are important for the
Organized Anarchy analysis, especially in a "democratic" organization like a
school district. The leader of an Organized Anarchy ...

> "... is a bit like the driver of a skidding automobile. The
> marginal judgments he makes, his skill, and his luck, may
> possibly make some difference to the survival prospects
> for his riders. As a result, his responsibilities are heavy.
> But whether he is convicted of manslaughter or receives a
> medal for heroism is largely outside his control."
> (Cohen and March, p. 203)

The Organized Anarchy model, therefore, is a non-rational or
perhaps "semi-rational" view of how decisions are made in organizations.
The characteristics of an organization that behaves in this way are:

(1) goals and preferences are unclear - because an
organization is not one person, but many;

(2) technology is uncertain - decision-makers have
a very imperfect knowledge of what the outcomes
of particular alternative actions might be. Be-
cause goals are unclear and technology uncertain,
we say that Organized Anarchies don't know what
they're doing;

(3) participation is fluid - different people, activated
at different times, affect the outcomes of decisions.
(Cohen, March, and Olsen, p. 1)

In other words, Organized Anarchies operate in a cloud of ambiguity.
We think that the Organized Anarchy describes Project Redesign very well. The
purposes of the project were very vague and, at times, it appeared that people

were happy to keep it that way. The project's purpose was never stated in any, but the most grandiose and non-specific terms:

- "to improve education in the Meadow City School
  District and to involve the School/Community in
  that task." (Report of the Ad Hoc Convening
  Committee", 1973)

- "A new design based upon all we know about learn-
  ing, all we have available from technology and all
  we can learn from experts in all fields useful to us
  must be developed." (Superintendent's speech, 1971)

There is also evidence that different people had different ideas of what Project Redesign was supposed to do. The technology for planning a new educational system for the 1980's was unknown. The director who was hired had no experience in educational planning. Participation was voluntary and open to any and all in the community. People joined Project Redesign for many reasons; then they dropped out again. They worked hard for a while, then trickled away.

While Project Redesign probably exemplified an "Organized Anarchy" ideal type, the Meadow City School District as a whole also has many of the earmarks of an Organized Anarchy. The goals of a school district are unclear, changing, and conflicting: is the purpose of schooling to teach the basic 3-R's or to produce graduates who are prepared to enter the job market? Should we have neighborhood schools or alternative schools? Should we prepare children for life or should we teach them that education is life? The technology of education is also unclear. Nobody really knows all the details of how a person learns to read; nobody really knows the advantages of individualized versus whole-class instruction. Participation is fluid. Parent groups flow into the decision arena when an issue is raised that they care about; they flow out at routine times. Teachers organize and demand participation sometimes; sometimes they don't want to be involved outside the classroom.

The most interesting feature of an Organized Anarchy is that its decision situations turn into "Garbage Cans", into which all manner of problems, solutions, and participants flow.

Participatory Planning in an Organized Anarchy

Attempts to plan major organizational changes seem doomed to failure in Organized Anarchies. The attempt will probably produce some good outcomes, but they may not resemble outcomes of good planning in the rational sense (i.e., "seeking and utilizing data, weighing alternative means to achieve desired ob- jectives, and selecting the most efficient ways to attain these objectives.") (p. 14) One reason that rational planning goes awry in Organized Anarchies is that goals and preferences are unclear; another is that technology is uncertain — even if we knew what it was we wanted to do, chances are that we wouldn't know how to do it.

When we consider that outcomes don't always follow from intention, we can appreciate the importance of looking back and reinterpreting what has happened in the light of what the organization ought to be about. The planning process does involve evaluating the past and talking about what ought to be.

"Planning can often be more effective as an interpreta-
tion of past decisions than as a program for future ones.
It can be used as a part of the efforts of the organization
to develop a new consistent theory of itself that incorpor-
ates the most recent actions into a moderately compre-
hensive structure of goals." (Cohen and March, p. 228)

People try to clarify what their goals are during planning; they become educated; their values improve. This is why the process of planning might be more import-
ant than the plan it produces

"An organization is not only an instrument, with decision
processes related to instrumental, task-directed activi-
ties. It is also a set of procedures by which participants
arrive at an interpretation of what they (and others) are
doing, and who they are." (March and Olsen, 1976)

A long-range plan is an important symbol. People interpret it as meaning that the organization is trying to anticipate the future - that it is taking an aggressive posture toward its environment and toward its purpose, rather than passively accepting what happens. In our culture, people believe that these things are good.

The analysis in Section II will examine the events of Project Redesign to try to find the non-rational or unexpected in the behavior of the Meadow City schools organization. These will be explained in terms of the Organized Anarchy ideas. Some of these ideas are:

1. Participants are motivated to spend time in organiza-
tional decision-making for some or all of the following
reasons: the outcomes for the decisions are important,
and they believe they can affect the outcomes; they enjoy
participating; they like the other people; they learn things;
they feel it is their duty.

2. Problems and solutions need places where they can
be discussed; we call these places "Garbage Cans"
because we are apt to find all manner of problems,
solutions, participants, and decisions in these places.

3. In the Garbage Can, solutions often precede problems or even look for problems. Decisions often don't solve problems.

4. The structure of an organization reflects the values of the members, and affects the way that problems, solutions, participants, and decisions come together.

PROJECT REDESIGN DESCRIBED, USING THE ORGANIZED ANARCHY MODEL

I. THE DECISION TO HAVE PROJECT REDESIGN IN THE MEADOW CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The decision to have a Project Redesign will be considered as a series of events taking place in a particular context, with unpredictable results. We will first consider the flow of problems and solutions in Meadow City in 1971; next we will examine the demand for participation in school policy-making; finally, we will imagine that the superintendent's speech, "Education in the Seventies - a Superintendent's Perspective", resulted in the creation of "garbage cans" to which many people would be attracted as participants.

The Flows of Problems and Solutions

Meadow City in the school year 1970-71 was a placid pool compared to the communities around it. Surrounding school districts were having problems with teachers' organizations, desegregation issues, juvenile delinquency and student protest. (See Table 5). Meanwhile, students at local colleges were rioting, and President Nixon was taking a "hard line" against young people in general, while ordering the invasion of Laos. And Apollo XIV landed on the moon.

The biggest controversy in Meadow City was over whether or not ninth-graders should be required to take European History, and who should have the right to make such a decision. This issue looks pale in comparison to the controversy in a neighboring district which involved desegregation and busing. At least two other neighboring districts were quarreling about which school buildings should be closed in response to declining enrollments; the Meadow City superintendent acknowledged that this might be a problem only at some future time in Meadow City. One nearby district had a long dispute with its teachers over salaries, but Meadow City teachers seemed content.

The Meadow City School District had few problems in 1970-71, but it had lots of solutions. Its reputation as a "lighthouse district" was at least partly due to the many new methods and materials it was constantly trying.

TABLE 5

MEADOW CITY TIMES ARTICLES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
RELATED TO EDUCATION: JAN. 1 - FEB. 15, 1971 - BY SUBJECT

Other Districts, Local and National			Meadow City School District		
	N	%	%	N	
Racial Problems and Desegregation	(43)	18		(0)	--------
Juvenile Delinquency, incl. Drugs, Runaways	(28)	12	1.2	(1)	Break-in at elem. school
Personnel, incl. Labor Disputes	(25)	10	8.1	(7)	Student and Employee Organizations
Student Rights and Protests	(20)	8			
Funding Education	(20)	8	3.5	(3)	The Budget
School. Bd. Elections	(18)	7	5.8	(5)	School Board Election
Innovations	(16)	7	8.1	(7)	Athletic Program, pass/ fail grades; 9th grade social studies
Reorganization*	(13)	5	7.0	(6)	Reorganization
Planning, Community Involvement, Accountability	(11)	5	3.5	(3)	Supt. 's speech on changing schools; open Board meetings
Handicapped Children	(5)	2		(0)	--------
Lower Voting Age to Eighteen	(5)	2		(0)	--------
Unemployment	(3)	1		(0)	--------
Other	(36)	15	59.3	(51)	High School activities**
			1.2	(1)	Supt. 's trip to Soviet Union representing Amer. Asso. School Admin.
TOTALS	(243)	100%	100%	(84)	

* Includes District mergers, school building closures, and attendance area
  boundary changes.

** Excludes news of athletic contests in sports section

The Demand for Participation

Meadow City has a lot of very well-educated residents, and many who are very knowledgeable about schools. Almost half of its residents are college graduates. A study done in about 1970 found that 16.2 percent of residents over 60 years of age had attended graduate school. [1] The university which is located within the school district has a prominent school of education and a federally-funded Center for Research and Development in Teaching. Their presence means that a large number of people in Meadow City are very much interested in education, and that many make their living from it.

With so many people interested in education, it is not surprising that the community keeps a close watch on its school system, and that sometimes this results in conflict. In 1969, 3152 signatures were collected on a petition to censure the superintendent because of his handling of a multicultural education program. [2] In 1970-71, the superintendent and the director of instruction were criticized severely for their handling of the ninth grade European History issue. [3]

Thus, in the 1970-71 school year, Meadow City had many potential participants who were highly educated and highly interested in schools, and had demonstrated that they could organize opposition to unpopular issues.

The comments of two cabinet administrators indicate that they perceived the demand for participation that existed when the project began:

"We couldn't manage all the input from the community..... A Master Plan would chart our course....." [4]

"I would rank (Project Redesign) as important because in this time period there was a need of people to be involved." [5]

Creating Garbage Cans

The idea to have Project Redesign is generally credited to the superintendent. Eleven of 17 Board members and top administrators interviewed in 1975 said that Project Redesign was started at his instigation. On February 8, 1971, the superintendent addressed an educational issues program sponsored by the PTA Communications Committee. This was the speech that gave birth to Project Redesign. [6]

Three questions come to mind: (1) where did the superintendent get the idea of a participatory redesigning of the system? (2) what were his "real" motives? and (3) why did the idea catch on?

Rumor had it that the superintendent's wife wrote the speech. However, a look at what was happening at the time suggests that the idea of long-range planning for schools involving the community was not unique to Meadow City nor to the superintendent's family.

In 1969-70, the legislature had decided to recommend "..... goals, objectives, and priorities of education for the state".(7). A Joint Committee on Educational Goals and Evaluation was set up and an Advisory Committee was appointed to help it "..-... create a program in which school districts throughout the State would join the Legislature and the State Board in determining State goals, program objectives, and priorities."(8) Thus, the ideas of reassessment, evaluation, establishing priorities, and community involvement were ideas that were being discussed by state educators.

An article in the Meadow City Times of January 13, 1971 was headed, "Educator Wants 'Involvement' - Parents' Aid in Schools Asked." The article reported a speech by the superintendent of a neighboring elementary school district about involving community members in the operation of the schools. He was quoted as saying, "We should let the citizenry set the priority of what should be done at each school". He called for the trustees to set "...... broader goals for the district". Neighboring districts, then, were also talking about planning and involvement.

What were the superintendent's "real" motives in proposing Project Redesign? He said, four years later, that he had been trying to plan for change, "..... develop a school district responsive to the needs of the community, not to the needs of the English teachers", and to involve community, staff, and students! "I thought we had rich resources to tap."(9).

Several months later, the superintendent noted, "By and large, people who worked in Project Redesign came to be supportive of the schools..... it was a vehicle for people with divergent views to soften each other."(10) Did he have in mind from the beginning that Project Redesign would be an opportunity to co-opt those who were critical of the district and its administration? It is difficult to answer that question.

One of the assistant superintendents, a close associate of the superintendent, said in an interview that the superintendent was looking for a way to use community input and that he probably thought a Master Plan would be a way of saying yes or no to demands of special interests. (11)

Perhaps the creation of Project Redesign was an accident. Perhaps the superintendent's speech was only one of many philosophical or inspirational speeches he was accustomed to giving, except that, by some chance, this one happened to catch the imagination of his audience. He indicated on a couple of occasions that he was surprised at the response to his speech. The

newspaper coverage of the speech suggests, however, that the superintendent was pushing for the implementation of something like Project Redesign. It was a large article, with a photograph of the superintendent, and appeared on the front page of Section Four of the Meadow City Times of February 9, 1971. The lack of a byline suggests that the superintendent may have had the article prepared by the school staff. The closeness of the wording to the text of the speech indicates that the superintendent or his staff wrote the release.

The second piece of evidence that tends to discount the accident theory is the specificity of the proposal the superintendent made for the structuring of a Project Redesign. His speech called for a "design team" which would break up into subcommittees, according to various topics. These subcommittees would make recommendations through the "design team" to the Board of Education. This structure was reported in the newspaper article. At least some of the ideas for implementing such a project had been thought out in advance.

The fact that the ideas in the speech became Project Redesign is probably both planned and accidental. The district administrators sometimes send up trial balloons. If suggestions aren't popular, or if they are strenuously opposed, they are dropped. Two such trial balloons come immediately to mind. One went up in 1971, when a plan was proposed to realign attendance area boundaries and thus relieve crowding at two secondary schools. The Meadow City Times for February 2nd reported that two dozen speakers and 150 of their supporters came to the Board meeting to oppose the changes, forcing the superintendent to "reconsider". Another trial balloon was sent up in 1976, when an Assistant Superintendent proposed cutting costs for middle schools by lengthening periods and making fewer of them, thus requiring less staff. This idea was also rejected by the community (12). The superintendent was probably testing the ideas in his speech, and when they were received enthusiastically, he was encouraged to develop them further.

Why did the idea of Project Redesign "catch on"? Two hypotheses come to mind: (1) people saw the need for long-range planning; and (2) people saw a chance to participate.

In 1970-71, it seemed that the world was changing rapidly. The neighboring university sponsored a symposium on "Future Shock" (13). A new decade was beginning. People in the community felt the need to anticipate the turbulent future. They didn't want to be pulled along by change; they wanted to be ahead of it.

The Meadow City school district did not have a very exciting array of decision situations in which people could participate, especially when compared with neighboring districts. However, organized groups were pushing for their own programs. For example, some high school student leaders were pressing

for a seat on the Board.

The Board and the administrators felt they were hearing the opinions of only the most vocal and organized of their constituents. As one member explained:

> "..... my vote for Project Redesign was because Meadow City was suffering from a central core of pressure groups. We didn't know what the entire community really wanted." (14)

At any rate, the idea of Project Redesign was very warmly received. A local consultant and "boardwatcher" was engaged by the superintendent in March, 1971 to do "Research and Development" work for the district. In a letter to the superintendent dated March 18, 1971, this consultant indicated that he "..... would like to commit myself fully to the Project". He estimated at that time that the cost for his services would be $3200. A memorandum from the superintendent to the business office dated March 24, 1971 authorizes up to $3500 to be paid for this consultant's services.

The superintendent's next step was to call together a group of appointed staff members, which he called the 'Educational Master Planning Group", which met during the spring of 1971. The group included four central office administrators, a senior high school principal, a Board member, and the consultant. This group decided that a full-time director was needed(15) A memorandum from an assistant superintendent to this group, dated May 13, 1971, suggests that some of the issues discussed related to perennial philosophical debates in education: specified content vs. child-centered approach; content vs. process in learning; district-wide curriculum vs. local school or department autonomy; and individualized instruction vs. the same experiences for all.

The assistant superintendent suggested in his memorandum that "selected staff..... great teachers and great administrators with recent experience in the Meadow City Schools...." should discuss these issues. Also, he wrote, the Meadow City district should study what other districts were doing in this area of long-range planning. He suggested that conflict due to the individual biases with respect to these issues could prevent changes from occurring in the district. He was later to criticize the project because it had not involved top-level staff, and because its Master Plan had contradictory sections which advocated both sides of some of the above issues. (16)

The consultant, meanwhile, was working on a plan for organizing the "Educational Reformation Project". He felt very sure that the project should have a full-time director; indeed, he thought he should be hired for that position. (17) He envisioned the project as made up of two groups of teams: one to write the philosophy of the district, and the other to design the programs that would carry out that philosophy. The teams would report to the director, who would put together a comprehensive plan for reforming the system. The director would report to the superintendent.

The following fall, the superintendent reported to the Board of Education on progress in the matter of long-range planning. He explained that the Educational Master Planning Group had met and that the consultant had written a memorandum on "Recommended Organization of Design Team(s) for an Educational Reformation Project". He called for a one-year project that would produce a Master Plan, to include (1) needs, mission, philosophy, and goals; (2) anticipated opportunities and constraints; (3) a plan for the redesign of the Meadow City system. He conceived of a one-year planning phase, a two-year design and preparation phase, and five years for implementation. By the 1979-1980 school year, the system would be ready to begin planning again. He mentioned that several governmental agencies and private foundations might be interested in funding such a project. Although he projected a $70,000 budget for the planning year, he felt that no more than $25,000 would have to come from district operating funds.

At this Board meeting, the Board gave the go-ahead to the Project. The superintendent had asked for: (1) authorization to produce the Master Plan in 12 months; (2) a project director; and (3) a $70,000 budget, of which $25,000 would be district money. The Board vote was 3 in favor and 1 against, with one Board member absent.(18)

Summary

When we consider the decision to have Project Redesign, using the organized anarchy model, the following elements seem important:

(1) The demand for participation. It may be helpful to think of demand for participation as pressure on the system. Another way of thinking of it might be as a kind of psychological need of the participants, or of the organization itself. What the organized anarchy model makes clear is that this need for participation is not necessarily connected to a specific issue or problem. People who want to participate are not always those who want to change something. Issues can come after participation, rather than before.

It may be that this need is created by the importance of the democratic ideology associated with the schools. Local school districts in this country have a strong tradition of local control, which has been jealously guarded. There is also a strong tradition of parent interest in education, especially among the middle classes, because giving children a good education has been considered one of the most important things parents could do for them. So parents may feel a need, or a duty, or guilt about participating in school governance.

Schools, on the other hand, need the support of the community. In the sense that participation is likely to make people more supportive, the school, too, has a need for participation.

(2) The lack of important __problems.__ A friend once noted that at a meeting of school superintendents, those who had the most difficult problems were the most respected. Certainly, a leader is more of a hero if he or she copes with bigger problems. Superintendents, therefore, almost boast about the tough problems they have. Who ever heard of a district being commended for being peaceful and content? Among school districts, prestige and fame come from dealing with big problems.

So what does a school district do if it has no problems? It looks into the future to try to anticipate some problems. Meadow City, in 1971, found itself with very few major problems, especially in comparison with surrounding districts. Therefore, a way was found to look for problems and bring them into the system where talented problem-solvers were waiting to be called on to participate in solving them.

(3) The creation of a large number of __Garbage Cans.__ Participants need something in which to participate, and a long-range planning project provides almost unlimited opportunities for participation. Issues need a place to be discussed and any issue is relevant in long-range planning. Almost all community members are experts in some aspect of the schools' operation, and they all have the right to bring up their particular area of expertise in an all-encompassing planning process. Indeed, since the emphasis was on __comprehensive__ and __long-range,__ the discussion of the plan was not at all limited in scope or time.

(4) The __motives__ of the superintendent. The organized anarchy model does not ascribe a great deal of power or control to the head of the organization. Usually, the leader cannot do much more than try to set a program in motion by bringing together some issues, people, and facilities, and hoping that something good comes of it.(19)

It may be that the superintendent did have in mind a device for co-opting some of his critics by giving them official input into decision-making. It doesn't seem likely that he created Project Redesign in order to divert attention from more important issues, because there weren't any. For the purposes of the organized anarchy analysis, his motivation is not particularly important. We will be interested in what the __results__ of certain actions seemed to be, although we will be cautious about attributing causation just because events occurred in a certain time sequence.

(5) The Plan as a __symbol.__ School districts are full of symbols of virtue. People do many of the things they do because they feel it is somehow right to do that in a school, not because they have __thought out__ the consequences. The idea of a Plan for the Future is in keeping with the symbol of the school as preparing youth for the society of the future. Meadow City had a reputation

for leadership among school districts, and long-range planning sounds like something a leading district would do. In a sense, that alone would explain the decision to set up Project Redesign.

II. THE HIRING OF THE DIRECTOR

The facts surrounding the hiring of the director for Project Redesign have been laid out in Section I. They will be highlighted here:

(1) The procedure by which the director was chosen was important. There were two rounds of interviews; there was a national search. These procedures indicate the importance of the position to be filled.

(2) The superintendent was overruled. The Board members asserted themselves in order to insure that the new director would be someone whom the community would like.

(3) The director had three outstanding characteristics:

- He was better with group process than with ideas. Both the "boardwatcher/consultant" and the "runner-up" in interviewing process, according to one of the assistant superintendents, had more ideas about how to go about the planning. The man chosen as director, however, was "open to new ideas".

- He had experience organizing citizen groups, but no experience running schools.

- He had connections with prestigious people in the field of educational administration, by virtue of the fact that he had just been through a special training program.

What consequences did the hiring of the director have for the demand for participation, the lack of problems, and the creation of Garbage Cans ? The director's experience was on the lay side of educational governance. He had had experience in organizing community members, identifying problems, and mobilizing coalitions. He was a layperson's leader, not an administrator who had come up through the ranks of teaching and principalship. Thus, he was likely to be able to gain the trust of the community, and thereby, to facilitate participation. He had many contacts (or knew how to make them) with other school districts and with educational experts. He had recently been in a training program and, according to the assistant superintendent, ".....was up on recent developments". He would be able to help identify problems because he was familiar with current important educational issues and leaders.

Finally, the director did not come in with a lot of reform ideas. He was clearly a "process" person, rather than a "program" person, especially as compared with the local consultant considered earlier, or with the other finalist for the directorship. He cared more about the "how" of the project than the "what". This made him a good creator of Garbage Cans, in which numerous problems, solutions, and participants are welcome. He had no preconceptions of what would be ruled within the scope of the Project and what would be ruled outside.

III. THE CHOOSING OF THE CONVENING COMMITTEE

The new director spent several months after his arrival in Meadow City getting to know the community. (20) Early in the 1972-73 school year, the Board met in a study session (21) to hear a progress report. For that meeting, the director had prepared a 21-page memorandum to guide the discussion. In it, he outlined a few of his perceptions of the community, the task at hand, and some of the educational issues with which Project Redesign might deal. Most significantly, he called for the appointment of an ad hoc convening committee, which would assess Project Redesign's progress to date and develop it further. The director proposed that the ad hoc committee establish the project's goals and conceptual framework; clarify the roles, structure, and organization; provide a time frame, evaluation procedure, and budget estimate; anticipate sources of funding; and set procedures for archives and documentation. His suggestion was that the committee report within 60-90 days with recommendations for a permanent structure for the project. (22)

After some general comments about the purpose of Project Redesign and several statements of hopes for its accomplishments, two issues were discussed at the September 14th Study Session: (1) reporting relationships and (2) nomination of Convening Committee members. It was decided that the director would report to the superintendent and that the Board would come up with Convening Committee nominations to be submitted to the director and the superintendent. (23)

Five days later, on September 19th, the Board adopted a motion that:

".....Board appoint members to a convening committee in Executive Session and that the Board President appoint two Board members to work with the Superintendent in developing a charge to be given to the committee and that the Board take official action at its next meeting." (24)

An amendment was made to require that a time limit be included in the Convening Committee's charge. Two Board members were designated to help the superintendent prepare the charge.

The superintendent's statements indicate that he felt strongly that the Board should play the major role in appointing Convening Committee members. At the September 19th meeting, he said this would give the project credibility in the community and avoid giving it identity as an "instrument of the administration". (25).

In a memorandum prepared for that meeting, the superintendent listed criteria for Convening Committee membership. These included: willingness to work on designing Project Redesign, rather than working directly on educational problems; willingness to work with a group of citizens, educators, and students; knowledge of Meadow City and the Meadow City school district; willingness to invest time; willingness to study extensively; openness; future orientation and optimism. (26)

By September 19th, the director had a list of 65 individuals; and "several PTA's" who had volunteered to help with Project Redesign. (27) The superintendent had also prepared a list of suggested people, most of whom were both qualified and prominent. From these lists, the superintendent prepared a list of 50 "Suggested Names for Membership on the Project Redesign Convening Committee". (28) An analysis of this list suggests that he had criteria in mind in addition to those listed above. Of the 50 whom he recommended, twelve were known as critics of the district and its management (some of whom had also volunteered to help with Project Redesign); five were prominent figures at the university or in local industry; and two were former Board members. (The critics were identified from a list of about 350 project participants. Two administrators independently identified 25 of these individuals as known critics of the system.)

We might conjecture that the superintendent was interested in (1) facilitating participation of critics of the administration, perhaps hoping that they would become more sympathetic to the way he was running the district; and (2) giving the project legitimacy by naming some important people to its Convening Committee.

At the October 3rd Board meeting, the Convening Committee was appointed. Table 6 gives information about the members. This table shows that one-third (6 out of 18) of the members who had been recommended by the superintendent were critics of the district management. One of the eight added by the Board and none of those who had been recommended by the teachers' organizations were critics. Only eight of the 65 who volunteered to help with the project were selected for the Convening Committee, whereas 23 Convening Committee members had to be recruited by either the superintendent, the Board, or the teachers' organizations.

TABLE 6

MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC CONVENING COMMITTEE

A. By Origin of Nomination	Listed in Superintendent's memo, 9/20/72	Added in Board's Discussion	Nominated by Teacher Orgs.	Total Conv. Committee
On volunteer list	7	1	0	8
Critics	6	1	0	7
Other	7	6	5	18
Total Conv. Comm.	18*	8	5	31

* Sum of column does not equal total, as 2 critics were also volunteers.

* * * * *

B. By Sex, Ethnicity and Role Category

	Female	Male	Black	Other Ethnic	Total
Professional Community	1	8	0	9	9
Staff	3	6	1	8	9
Homemakers	7	0	1	6	7
Students	2	4	0	6	6
Total:	13	18	2	29	31

Those who were recruited were, by and large, those who added the most prestige to the committee, either because they were critics with a following or because they were well-respected in business or in academe.

While critics were appointed to the Convening Committee, it is clear that they were in the minority (7 of 31), as were students (6 of 31), blacks (2 of 31), and women (13 of 31). There was nearly equal representation of professional community members, staff, home-makers, and students, however.

Analysis

The Convening Committee members were important for the following reasons:

1. They were respected people in the community.
2. Some of them were people who had been critical and who wanted to make changes.
3. They were people who represented various elements of the community (e.g., minorities, students, home-makers, professionals)

The mix of members of the committee had the effect of making the project an attractive garbage can for participation by many community members. The presence of respected people on the Convening Committee indicated that the project would be important enough to have important people working on it. The presence of critical people indicated that all opinions would be welcome in the project, and the presence of people representing different community groups indicated that the project would be a garbage can for all who wanted to participate.

So, while the members of the Convening Committee were appointed only after a highly selective process, they conveyed to the community that the project itself would be open for participation by everyone. The composition of the Convening Committee had the effect of motivating others to participate in the larger project.

IV. THE REPORT OF THE AD HOC CONVENING COMMITTEE - PLANNING A PLANNING PROJECT

The first meeting of the Convening Committee was held on Sunday, October 15, 1972. The Board president addressed the group, noting the importance of the work they were about to undertake. He said he was impressed by the tremendous range of talent within the membership of the committee. He cautioned that he could not guarantee that the Board or the community would accept all of the committee's recommendations, but promised that the Board would do its very best to implement as many as possible. Finally, he urged the committee to

recommend procedures that would seek the broadest possible community input. The superintendent also spoke to the committee and commented upon, the lack of understanding between community and school, faculty and administrators, etc. He stressed the importance of a comprehensive planning endeavor on a "system-wide basis: administration, curriculum, finance, personnel, board operations, etc." (29)

Topics of Discussion. Table 7 lists the topics discussed by the Convening Committee during meetings and in memoranda. The table indicates that the "how" of Project Redesign was much more important than the "what" in their discussions. Their charge, of course, was to recommend a procedure for planning. The question of what educational issues should be studied by Project Redesign came up only twice: once at the first meeting, and again in the "minority report" submitted with the final Convening Committee report to the Board. The Committee seemed to find it very difficult to define the pressing issues in the Meadow City School District. (The exception was one member, who was the primary author of the "minority report". He was quite convinced that the most important problem in the district was that of financing the schools.)

Fifty-nine percent of the topics discussed in the Convening Committee dealt with how the project should proceed. Quite a few of those topics involved debating what the Committee itself should be doing. Twenty-eight percent of the topics dealt with what the project should accomplish, and almost half of those dealt with whether the project should be more concerned with the "near" future and present problems, or with the more far-off future. There seems to have been very little discussion of the purpose of the project (which was never very clear) or of the educational issues it should study. Now and then, someone would remind the group that, after all, it is learners and teachers we're most concerned with, and then a kind of homage would be paid to this symbolic raison d'etre, "learners and teachers". In short, discussions of educational problems seemed rarely to get down to specifics.

An analysis of the various drafts of the Convening Committee report also reveals the kinds of topics about which the group was most concerned. One concern was that the planning be done with a great deal of competence. There was much discussion of the importance of collecting data before recommendations were made; whether or not students were sufficiently competent to do planning; and how planners should be trained. In the final draft, there is a list of qualifications for the membership on the Design Management Team. It gives an indication of the concern that Project Redesign be well done:

"Knowledge of the following categories are necessary assets
for the membership to have, collectively:

TABLE 7

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION IN THE CONVENING COMMITTEE

(In Order of Their Frequency, by Category)

Topic *	Frequency of Mention/ Minutes and Memos.	%
I. HOW THE PROJECT WOULD PROCEED:		59
Management of the Project	14	
Organization of Planning Teams	12	
What the Conv. Comm. Should Do	8	
Communication with the Community	6	
Reporting Relationships	5	
Implementing the Plan	4	
Time schedule	4	
Comprehensive Models of Planning	4	
Resources (Grants)	3	
Need for Training in Educational Planning	3	
Using the Resources of the Community	2	
Self-Criticism of Project	2	
Compensation for Workers in Project	2	
Total:	69	
II. WHAT THE PROJECT WOULD ACCOMPLISH		28
Immediate vs. Long-Range ("Near" vs. "Far" Future)	14	
Data Collection	8	
Purpose of Project	3	
Educational Philosophy	3	
Areas of Study	2	
Focus on Teacher and Learner	2	
Total:	32	
III. WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE	15	13
Grand Total:	116	100%

* Includes only those topics that were discussed
at least twice in meetings or memoranda.

    a.   Functioning of our present school system

    b.   Techniques and principles of planning and organizational theory

    c.   Student, staff, and parent perspective

    d.   The diverse needs and interests of the community

    e.   Alternative and emerging educational systems

    f.   Techniques of decision-making, conflict resolution, communication, participation, group interaction

    g.   Legal knowledge (e.g., the Education Code)

    h.   Educational theory and practice " (30)

At the same time, the Convening Committee was concerned about egalitarianism; every citizen, staff member, and student had a right to take part in the process of planning for the future of the schools. The competence vs. egalitarian dilemma provoked much discussion. There never really was a resolution - both competence and broad participation were desired.

Another topic of debate was whether the project's emphasis should be on planning for the near future or for the more distant future. The Committee saw the advantages of dreaming big, "pulling out all the stops", being creative, imaginative, and unrestrained by mundane considerations of practicability. But they also saw some reasons for being more earth-bound. They felt that there should be some consideration of present capabilities and problems. The dilemma the Committee felt about "near" vs. "far" future is reflected in the "Ground Rules" section of its report:

" 3. Redesign should be future-oriented, going from where we are to where we want to be, emphasizing what is possible and desirable, rather than what is wrong now.

4. Redesign should take note of current problems, referring them into existing structures or suggesting new ways of dealing with them. " (31)

The "near vs. far" future problem is one that recurred throughout the existence of Project Redesign.

A third topic of great controversy was the Design Management Team, which was to be the governing committee of the project. The designing of the "DMT" embodied the problem of competence vs. egalitarianism. The problem was the focus of most of the discussion on how the project was to proceed (see Table 3). The duties assigned to the DMT indicate the concern for process or procedure, as compared to product. The DMT was not to be concerned with specific issues, but with coordinating the project:

"The Design Management Team should not generate their
own ideas for redesign, but develop plans and proposals
which combine and interpret ideas, data, and other input
from numerous sources within the Project and school/
community." (32)

Many of the same questions raised in the discussion of the DMT
were raised with respect to the SCITs (School/Community Input Teams,
later referred to as "Planning Teams"). For example, there seems to
have been a great deal of time spent discussing how many teams there should
be, and very little in discussing what kinds of issues the teams should deal
with. Most of the discussion seemed to be based on the assumption that the
teams would be organized by issues, such as "long-range financing" or
"early adolescent education", rather than by geographic region, as was pre-
scribed by the Convening Committee.

Person/Hours of Work by the Convening Committee

In the eleven weeks of the Convening Committee's existence, each
member put in approximately 35 hours (average) toward preparation of the re-
port. Those six members who served on the Steering Committee gave nearly
8 hours per week, including a sizable amount of time over the Christmas holi-
days. The time-contribution of Convening Committee members is shown in
Table 8.

Results of the Convening Committee Deliberations

Table 9 traces the development of the ideas for organizing Project
Redesign from the superintendent's speech of February 1971 through the con-
sultant's memorandum of June of that year, the superintendent's report to the
Board in September and, finally, the Convening Committee's report of Febru-
ary 1973. For all of the time elapsed and the work put in by Convening Com-
mittee members, the 1973 report does not depart very far from the ideas pro-
posed two years earlier.

a. The Director. It appears to have been the consultant early in
the project who first proposed that there should be a full-time director. The
Convening Committee did not change the director's role very much. They as-
signed to the DMT the responsibility for seeking funding. (33) The Convening
Committee also gave to the DMT responsibility for assembling the final Plan.

b. The Teams. What changed was the size of the project. Earlier,
a one-year project involving "selected" citizens, educators, and students had
been suggested. The Convening Committee wanted to involve as many people
as possible and to extend the project at least 2-1/2 years beyond the time of

TABLE 8

ESTIMATED* HOURS CONTRIBUTED BY CONVENING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NON-STEERING COMMITTEE		Total Hours	Average Hours per Person
Home-Makers	(N=6)	187	31.1
Staff	(N=7)	181	25.9
Students	(N=5)	92	18.4
Professional Community	(N=7)	110	15.4
Total:	(25)	570	22.8
STEERING COMMITTEE	(6)	507.5	84.6

* * * * *

TOTAL CONVENING COMMITTEE, BY SEX

Women	(13)	488.5	37.6
Men	(18)	658	36.6
Grand Total:	(31)	1077.5	34.8

* Hours were estimated by counting the number of meetings attended and multiplying by 3 hours; multiplying the number of pages of memoranda written by 1/2 hour; and adding them together for each person. It was estimated that the Steering Committee spent 50 hours each, beyond the number of hours in regular meetings and memorandum writing. The over-all estimation of time is believed to be conservative, because (1) subcommittee meetings, other than Steering Committee meetings, are not included (there may have been only one or two such meetings); and (2) preparation time for the regular Convening Committee meetings was not counted unless a memorandum exists; (3) several members made trips to Sacramento or Portland, or spoke at various community meetings - this time was not counted. The time of the project director and the research director also was not included.

	Superintendent's Speech - 2/8/71	Consultant Memo - 6/3/71	Superintendent to Board 10/15/71	Convening Committee Report - 2/6/73
DIRECTOR		Full-time; organize teams; hold hearings; design and edit reports; write proposals for funding; report to superintendent.	Report to Superintendent	Role: executive director; manage Project and its finances; prepare quarterly reports; do annual evaluation of Project. Report to superintendent; appointment confirmed by Board annually; on Cabine Member of DMT/without vote. Other staff (small) may be added.
TEAMS	DESIGN TEAM - Study all aspects of education; establish priorities SUBCOMMITTEES: Pursue high priorities in depth.	TWO TEAMS - (a) develop goals, objectives, philosophies; (b) develop means SUBCOMMITTEES as needed		DESIGN MGMT. TEAM: Relate to community; appoint and coordinate teams assemble data and proposa and make recommendation seek funds; develop an evaluation plan; do proces not content. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY INPUT TEAMS: Liaison with community; convey information; needs assessment; develop proposals. Report to DMT. TASK GROUPS: Do specia studies; report to DMT. AD HOC GROUPS: self-appointed or special-interest groups - follow general ground rules

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	Superintendent - 2/71	Consultant - 6/71	Superintendent - 10/71	Conv. Committee - 2/73
PRODUCT	RECOMMENDATIONS: Through the Design Team to the Board for action	FINAL REPORT: Coherent and consistent; with a budget and schedule	THREE-PART PLAN: (a) needs, goals (b) constraints, opportunities (c) design of system to manage change	(a) A management plan for Project (b) Futures materials (c) Curriculum evaluation (d) Organization and decision-making study (e) School/community profile (f) Assessment of retroactive data (g) Review staff development (h) Create a resource pool
TIME		A one-year project	CYCLE: 1 year for planning 2 years redesign and preparation 3 years implementation - Then begin again	FOUR PHASES: (a) Preparation (b) Exploration and assessment (c) Design and decision-making (d) Implementation a, b, c, to last 2-1/2 years. (d) to last 2 years or more.
PARTI-CIPANTS	Involve educators, citizens and students	Selected citizens, educators and students	Competent and interested students, citizens, educators, professional consultants.	Concern that all community be involved, but also concern that participants be competent and that there be a mix of students, staff, citizens and parents.
BUDGET		For Director's salary; salary of research secretary; travel; supplies	$70,000; $25,000 from MCSD funds, remainder from outside.	" Prior to implementation", $65-70,000 per year, of which $40,000 is for Director and office. Possibility of outside funding.

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the presentation of their report. Part of the task of managing this very large project would belong to the Design Management Team.

The DMT, as described in the Convening Committee report, was closer to the ideas the superintendent had put forth in his February 1971 speech than to the consultant's conceptualization. The superintendent's idea of a Design Team that would study all aspects of education and establish priorities is close to what the DMT actually became.

A great deal of time was spent in the Convening Committee in an attempt to determine what other committees should be established besides the DMT. This is the part of the report that shows more detail than the earlier proposals. But the Convening Committee did not have to work out all of the details themselves, for in October, a new staff person came to Project Redesign - the research coordinator. Much of the detail of the School/Community Input Teams was worked out by him, in a proposal for funding which he submitted to the National Institute of Education.

c. The Product. It is interesting to note the differences between the superintendent's product -- "A Three-Part Plan", and the many products mandated by the report of the Convening Committee. Several sections of the report mention that Project Redesign will be formulating proposals for change, e.g., "The DMT will have responsibility for supervising the development of a coherent presentation of Redesign proposals." However, there is little emphasis on a comprehensive planning document, which seemed central to the superintendent's conceptualization.

The superintendent's "needs" and "goals" became the "proposals" in the Convening Committee report. The Committee chose to emphasize information-gathering (products b, c, d, e, f), rather than "constraints and opportunities". The Committee thought more about human resources than about dollar resources (products g and h).

Although there was some discussion in the Convening Committee about how to implement the redesign changes (see Table 7), this topic received less attention in the Committee's report than in the superintendent's October 1971 description of a three-part plan.

We might infer, from the Convening Committee's description of the purposes of Project Redesign (p. 3) that there was common subscription to a couple of assumptions: (1) if everyone in the school and community is allowed to participate; and (2) if proposals are based on "valid and reliable" data, proposals will result that will be welcome and implemented in an "orderly way". While there was some recognition of the political need for consulting all who would be affected by proposed changes, it seems the Committee assumed that

everyone would agree to adopt a Good Idea, once they had had a chance to understand the reasoning and the data that led to the proposal of the Good Idea. No one seemed to think that sound investigative work and proper consultation could result in a bad idea, nor was it conceivable that anyone consulted would oppose a Good Idea. The Good Idea assumption is stated most explicitly on page 8 of the Committee Report:

> "The basic assumption of Redesign is made that if the data
> is reliable and proposals are based on that data, decision-
> makers will take action on the recommendations."
> (Emphasis added)

This belief in the primacy of Good Ideas probably resulted in little concern about strategies for implementing changes.

     d. _Time, Participants, and Budget._ The proposed time schedule for the roject grew by degrees from one year, suggested by the consultant, to 4-1/2 years, proposed in the Committee's report. The concern for open participation, but also for competence, has already been noted. The budget section of the report seems to have been prepared by the project director and the superintendent; there is little discussion of it in the Convening Committee minutes. Again, the Committee showed a relative lack of concern for money.

Conclusions

     An attention structure is that set of rules which says who may attend to what; that is, who in the organization has the right to make, or help make (or veto) which decisions. The organized anarchy model predicts that under conditions of ambiguity there will be less instrumental justification of attention structures and more symbolic, educational, and traditional justification. There will be more concern with discovering and communicating meaning, and less concern with the best way to make rational decisions.

     In an ambiguous situation, symbols of the organization's values are very apparent. It seems that when we don't know what we are doing, we use symbolic means of showing that what we are doing is good, even if it is unknown. Few things are more ambiguous than a comprehensive planning effort. This was certainly true for Project Redesign. The first year and a half after the superintendent's speech (February 1971 to September 1972), saw no planning. Most talk about the project had been in terms of generalities; the only specific action was the hiring of the director.

     The purpose of the Convening Committee was to set up and justify the attention structure of Project Redesign; or, we might say, to legitimize

it as a Garbage Can. True to organized anarchy predictions, symbolic, educational, and traditional factors were more apparent than hard-headed, efficient standards for getting the job done. The primary task of the Committee could be seen as one of educating the rest of the community to an appreciation of the importance of Project Redesign. It was difficult to convince people in advance that the project was important because of _what_ it was going to accomplish; it was easier to show that the project was important because of _how_ it was going to be done.

Perhaps this helps to explain why it was necessary for the Convening Committee to spend so much time preparing a report that contained essentially the same ideas as those expressed in the memorandum written a year earlier by the consultant. The prestigious members of the Convening Committee had to put their stamp of legitimacy on the project. Their function was to certify that the project was worthy of respect and that it would be run in a manner that would be in accordance with the highest values of the community; they made it an attractive Garbage Can.

The organized anarchy theory predicts that the attention structure will be specialized in an organization that values expertise; that is, only the specially-trained expert will be able to make a decision in his particular area. In an organization in which there is a belief in differentiated status, a hierarchical structure will predominate; the higher one's position in the organization, the more decisions that individual will be involved in. And in an organization in which value is placed on egalitarianism, open attention structures will prevail. Everyone will have the right to affect any decision. The attention structure symbolizes the value system of the organization.

The Meadow City community places a high value on both competence (or expertise) and egalitarianism. Thus, the proposed attention structure for Project Redesign provided for open participation, but also specified that the participants would be competent before they came, or trained after they came to the project. For example, the report calls for four phases of the project, the first of which was to be a _Preparation Phase_ .....

> " in which the participants organize, develop participation
> and leadership skills, become familiar with possible alter-
> native futures, gather resources, specify the tasks, begin
> to interact." (34)

The proposed attention structure was a combination of competence and egalitarianism, a kind of "democracy of the informed".

The belief in the Good Idea follows from this. Good procedures and trained people in the "democracy of the informed" will naturally produce Good Ideas. A community in which scientific researchers have high status,

as they do in Meadow City, values training in good scientific methodology. Training participants to collect data would make them at least good research assistants. Careful use of good procedures leads to the best scientific knowledge. The belief in the Good Idea depends on having good scientific procedures.

But the school district also has a hierarchy. It was never clear how the hierarchy would relate to Project Redesign. The attention structure of the project was a combination of specialized and open - the "democracy of the informed". The attention structure of the on-going, everyday activities of the district was a hierarchical structure, with a superintendent at the top, his deputies, principals and specialists and, finally, teachers in classrooms. For Project Redesign, this presented serious problems. Its structure was not that of the hierarchy. It had no authority to make decisions in the hierarchical structure and had few links with it. Therefore, the Good Idea assumption became crucial. If those in authority in the hierarchy recognized a Good Idea when it was proposed, they would see that it was implemented. The Good Idea would be the link.

PROJECT REDESIGN

"Democracy of the Informed" ----> produces ----> GOOD IDEAS

School
District
Hierarchy

produces

Implementation of Good Ideas
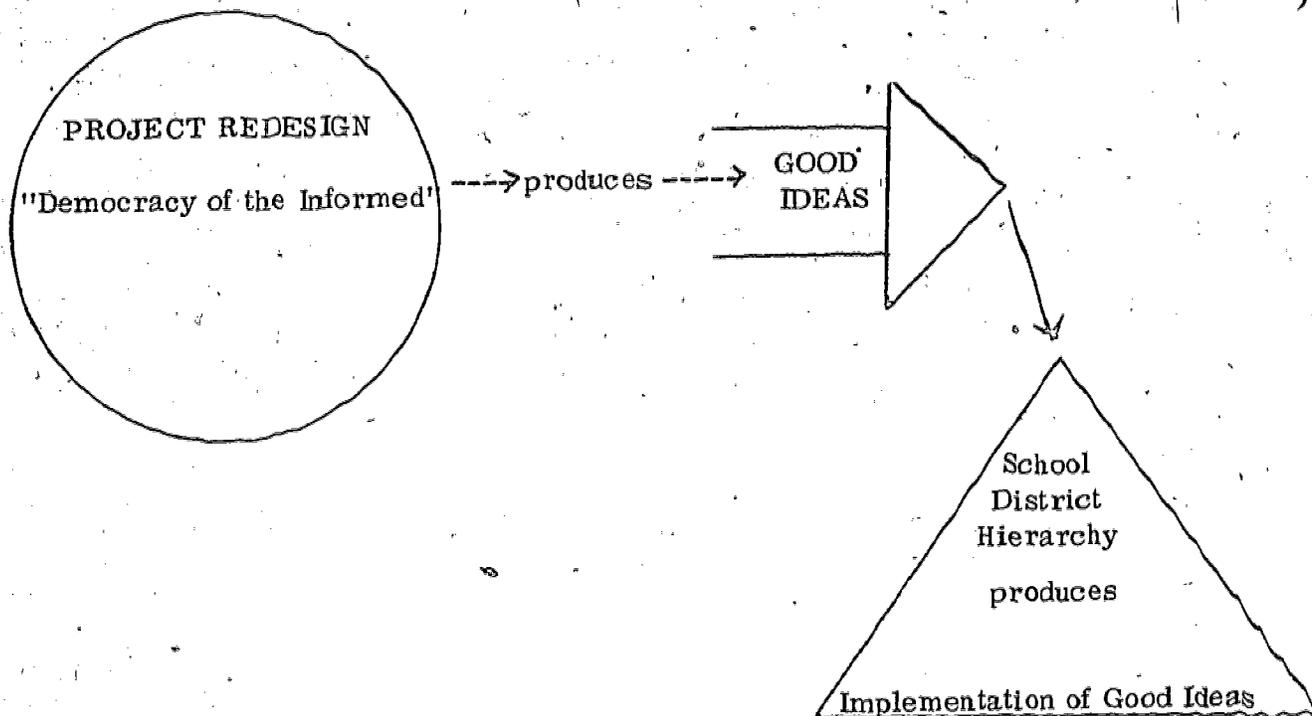
The "democracy of the informed" may be seen not only as a symbol of the values of the Meadow City community, but also as another aspect of the Project Redesign Garbage Can that made participation attractive. The project would be democratic – and so automatically good; it would have informed participants – so it would be good to associate oneself with them. And it would provide an educational experience for those who participated – they would become informed experts.

The primacy of the Good Idea was a way to provide an agenda in a time when there were no salient problems to work on. Borrowing from the values of the research community, the Convening Committee report emphasizes that good procedures are the key to acceptable ideas. Good procedures produce the "reliable data" on which proposals would be based. Those proposals would be worthy of consideration by decision-makers. Working toward Good Ideas meant reading, surveying, learning communication skills – there was plenty of work to be done by Project Redesign participants.

The much-discussed issue of "near" versus "far" future may be seen as an attempt to define which issues are the province of the hierarchical structure and which are the province of the "democracy of the informed". "Near" future, that is, immediate problems and concerns, are within the realm of the hierarchy's decisions. "Far" future became the special expertise of Project Redesign; it was not something the hierarchy was supposed to know how to deal with. Project-Redesign, on the other hand, hired futurologists and established "Dream Teams". Establishing an area of expertise was one way of carving out an important sphere of activity for the project, and of avoiding conflict with the hierarchical structure.

The "democracy of the informed", the primacy of the Good Idea, and the realm of the "far" future are the important messages of the Convening Committee report. All had important consequences for the future of Project Redesign.

V. THE DESIGN MANAGEMENT TEAM: CHOOSING THE TEAM

The Convening Committee's report was presented to the Board of Education and was discussed by them at a study session on January 23, 1973. Formal action came at the February 6th regular Board meeting, when the following motion was passed:

> " ------moved that the Board re-endorse Project Redesign,
> that the Board make a public announcement of that re-
> endorsement of Project Redesign, that the Board allow a
> response period to encourage feedback and that, following
> these actions, the Board begin implementation of Phase One

by appointing a Design Management Team and empower-
ing the Design Management Team to begin its work as
suggested in the report of the Convening Committee." (35)

This was the action recommended to the Board by the Convening Com-
mittee. (36) After some discussion about the amount of flexibility that
should be given to the DMT and the amount of time that should be allowed for
community feedback, the Board passed this motion unanimously. The super-
intendent said he would prepare the announcement of the Board's re-
endorsement and ask for community input.

In mid-March, the Board met in executive session to consider DMT
appointments. They had about 90 names from which to choose. (37) At
least a dozen people had submitted resumes. Some had nominated themselves;
many had letters of endorsement from community members or organizations
like the League of Women Voters. A memorandum dated March 1, 1973 lists
fourteen self-nominations; twenty-one nominations by the Convening Committee;
seven by the project director of the superintendent; eight by various community
people; and five by various organizations. It is obvious that many community
members felt that it was important and desirable to be a member of the Design
Management Team. One woman who nominated herself wrote:

> "I have always had a keen interest in education and welcome,
> Project Redesign as a unique opportunity to guarantee the
> best of education for our children in these years of rapid
> change. The attached resume indicates that I am well in-
> formed in the required categories."

The resume showed a Master's Degree, a counseling credential, and extensive
experience in personnel work. (She was not appointed.) The credentials and
recommendations of most of the nominees were quite impressive. The Board
must have had a difficult time choosing whom to appoint.

Appointments included three students, three teachers, and five par-
ents. Four had submitted their resumes; three had been nominated by indi-
viduals in the community; two by the Convening Committee; two by community
or teacher groups; one by the Convening Committee and a teacher organiza-
tion; and one was a self-nominee.

The DMT Goes to Work

April to August, 1973. As the DMT began its work, three things
were of great concern to the group: (a) establishing the legitimacy and image
of Project Redesign; (b) establishing good procedures for the operation of the
project; and (c) maintaining a high quality group process within the DMT.

The first meeting of the DMT was held on April 23, 1973. The Board President came to address the group, as did the superintendent. Their remarks emphasized the significance of the project and the important role that would be played by the DMT. Photographers from the local newspaper were present to record the event, and DMT members were told that they would be as important as the Board of Education in determining the future of the school district. (38)

Much meeting time during that first spring and summer was occupied in struggling with the procedures to be followed by the DMT themselves. They decided that the chairpersonship should rotate. Consequently, every few months, considerable time was spent deciding who should be chairperson. A great deal of discussion occurred about the minutes and who should receive copies of them. Judging from the amount of space in the minutes devoted to discussions of the minutes, this was an important issue. At length it was decided to distribute the minutes widely, placing copies in schools and public libraries all over the city. The minutes were almost never approved as they were first written, but rather, were approved "as corrected". The DMT, impressed with the importance of the tasks before them, were quite self-conscious about how they carried out their functions.

The first duty of the DMT, as mandated by the Convening Committee's report, was the launching of the task forces. The Convening Committee had listed the following tasks: ".....which will be necessary to get the project under way" -

1. Complete a detailed plan for planning
2. Generate material on emerging educational and societal futures
3. Conduct a comprehensive curriculum evaluation
4. Conduct an organization and decision-making study
5. Develop a school/community profile and forecasts
6. Assess retrospective data
7. Review in-service education and staff development
8. Create a resource pool (39)

Most of the meeting time between April and August was taken up in discussing who should be appointed to the various task forces. Much of the discussion occurred in "executive session", open to members only, the minutes of which were distributed only to members. These minutes show careful attention to the personal characteristics of persons who might be appointed to task forces. For example, this statement from executive session minutes of May 14, 1973 is not atypical:

"(DMT member) voiced a negative opinion to the appointment of _____. (Second DMT member) agreed. Their statement was that he was not well-liked by either students or staff.....The majority felt that _____'s name should be deleted from the list."

The DMT had a pool of volunteers from which to choose, as a result of advertisements placed in the Meadow City Times early in May of 1973. The decision to advertise publicly for volunteers to serve on the task forces was carefully deliberated, especially at the May 7th meeting. The DMT wanted to be very certain that they were appointing high-quality people to these task forces.

Concurrent with the discussions about who should be on the task forces, various DMT members were drafting descriptions of the procedures to be followed by each task force. The DMT chairman was working on a draft of general "Guidelines for Convening a Project Redesign Task Force". All of these drafts were discussed at length in the meetings. By the time the chairman finished writing (and getting DMT approval for) the guidelines on how to start a task force, most of the task forces were already appointed and some had already begun meeting.(40) The "Guidelines" written by the DMT chairman became more of an explanation of what had been done than a blueprint for future action.

Another important function taken on the DMT was the creation of the public image for Project Redesign. At the first meeting, a sub-committee was appointed to start work on public relations. Eventually, a tape/slide show was put together and was shown at several meetings in the community. A volunteer was recruited to prepare a brochure describing the project, and a great deal of time was spent at the July 16th meeting criticizing her work. In addition, many DMT members went out to community meetings and high school assemblies to give talks about Project Redesign. (41) Finally, the director spent a great deal of his time contacting well-known writers and scholars in the fields of education and futurology.

The concern of the DMT with the quality of its own personal interaction is illustrated by the minutes of the May 30th executive session. During the regular meeting, a graduate student (non-DMT member) had been invited to come in and give a paper she had written, in which she suggested some ways of organizing a task force. The DMT discussed her ideas and made comments to her at the regular meeting. When she had gone, these comments were made in executive session:

> " (Chairman) said that there was some concern about
> (the student's) coming to present the DMT with a pro-
> posal and having the DMT discuss her proposal while
> she was present. What protocol should be followed...
>
> (A) felt uncomfortable having (the student) there. She didn't
> know what the student's role was.
>
> (C) thought the discussion was helpful to (the student).

(D) also said that the DMT did not know (the student's) role or what commitment had been made to her..

(Chairman) explained that there was no commitment to her. He said that this should have been clear to the entire group.

(A) doesn't want to have to confront a person who wants a definite answer regarding a proposal.

(E) felt the DMT should have some time to get reactions before having the person come in.

(A) wants to have more than one way of looking at a particular task before making a decision.

(F) didn't feel that (the student) was offended. "

This great concern for people's feelings within the DMT became very significant in the life of the group and was to have important consequences for the group's effectiveness.

In September, the DMT produced a quarterly report to the Board of Education in which they summarized their accomplishments to date and discussed objectives for the future. The report clearly shows the DMT's concern for the legitimacy of Project Redesign in the eyes of the community and of the school district decision-makers. This illustrative paragraph is from the introductory "Summary":

"We are presently occupied with coordinating Task Force activity and designing the SCIT as a planning group. The latter is scheduled for completion within the next quarter and its implications are viewed with considerable gravity. Can the SCIT be organized and motivated to prepare competent and responsive proposals for change ? We think it can. But Redesign, as currently conceived, will live or die in direct measure to the acceptance of the SCIT as a legitimate educational planning body. To enable such acceptance, a significant portion of the constituents and professionals in the District must first believe that their educational system can be responsive to their needs. We view the role of the Board of Education as pre-eminent in developing that notion and thereby providing the opportunity for Redesign to prove itself. Thereafter, there will be little substitute for competent, thorough work if the impact of Redesign is ever to be felt in the MCSD. " (42) (emphasis added)

Task Forces

The task forces, sometimes referred to as "technical task forces", were envisioned as part of Project Redesign which would provide the hard data on which the actual planning would be based. They began meeting in June and July of 1973 and completed most of their work by December of that year. The emphasis was on gathering data for use by the School/Community Input Teams (SCITs), which were to do the actual planning.

An evaluation of the task forces was written up by the first-quarter DMT chairman. He interviewed or gave questionnaires to the coordinators and to at least two other members of each task force. The results appeared in a memorandum, "Redesign Task Force Evaluation", dated April 30, 1974. The chairman identified three problems common to nearly all task forces: lack of clear mandate; lack of strong leadership; high rate of attrition among members, especially student members.

Most of the respondents said that their willingness to keep on working came from the commitments they had made to each other, rather than from much of a sense of obligation to Project Redesign. Almost all of them felt that they should have had more direction from and contact with the DMT. One said, "Redesign may have impact on the District only through its effect on participants and the better insight they acquire."

The DMT chairman summarized his recommendations as follows:

"In the convening of future groups, I would recommend more succinct, well-stated, and time-limited tasks, strong leadership, and smaller groups of not more than ten persons who are prepared to meet consistently until task definition and assignments are clear. Students should begin specific tasks early and see where their contribution fits from perhaps their first meeting. Finally, a closer relationship between the Task Forces and the day-to-day activity of Redesign is needed and everyone needs to believe Project Redesign is for real."

The DMT: August to December, 1973

As the task forces began to meet, the Design Management Team members eased into a pattern of serving as liaison to the task forces and bringing back reports to the DMT meetings. The next big decision the DMT had to make was how to organize the School/Community Input Teams (SCITs).

In June, the research coordinator had received word that a proposal to study citizen participation in school planning would be funded by the National Institute of Education. School/Community Input Teams were to be the focus of

that three-year, $122,000 study of participation. They were also the heart of
the entire project. The SCIT's would do the actual planning; they would develop
the proposals that would change the system. They were exceedingly important.

At the August 6th meeting of the DMT, the research coordinator and
the DMT chairman presented a draft of a paper they had written, "Planning for
the School/Community Input Teams". The DMT discussed this paper at some
length at that meeting and for several meetings thereafter. The most difficult
decision about the SCIT's, it seemed, was the topics to which they would address
themselves. Several times different members of the DMT or staff drew up a list
of topics,[43] but the committee could never agree as to which lists should guide
the formation of the SCIT's. The decision was never really made, even though
there was much discussion during at least fourteen DMT meetings. For example,
on August 27, a motion was made that:

"The DMT should define 6-9 general subject areas
which attempt to cover the total educational system
which might form a basis for organizing SCIT's....."

The motion was seconded, but was defeated.

It was generally agreed that there should be some kind of orientation,
including group process training, for people who wanted to participate in the
SCIT's, and that there should be a few pilot SCIT's before the rest started up.[44]
On October 24, 1973, one DMT member made a motion that ".....the DMT re-
consider the question of whether or not to have pilot SCIT's". The motion was
seconded; the vote was 3 to 3, with one abstention. Motion failed. And so it went.

Finally, in a memorandum dated November 29, the staff wrote:

"We should let the participants themselves define and choose
the area of interest in which they will work. Further discus-
sion of SCIT topics by the DMT which are meant to be direct-
ive is probably inappropriate....." (Emphasis in original)

Whether or not the discussion was inappropriate, the staff undoubtedly
felt that all the wheel-spinning was definitely inappropriate! At the next DMT
meeting, action was taken on the two recommendations made in the staff memor-
andum of November 29th. First, it was decided that there should be a Saturday
workshop for all SCIT volunteers, with an outside group process consultant,
during which the volunteers would learn about group process and set up the in-
dividual SCIT's. Secondly, a subcommittee was formed to work with the re-
search coordinator on the SCIT's. No longer would the entire DMT spend time
discussing the details of setting up the SCIT's. In addition, it was decided that
the project director would lead a group process retreat for the DMT in January.

In the meantime, some preparations for inaugurating the SCITs had already begun. One DMT member suggested at the October 1st meeting that there be four community meetings for the purposes of (1) telling people about the work of the task forces; (2) getting people to think about the future; (3) recruiting SCIT members. These meetings took place between October 30 and November 14 at four locations. Part of the program was the slide/tape show on futuring, prepared by the Futures task force. In addition, similar programs were presented to students at each of the high schools. Seventy-four SCIT volunteers signed up at these meetings. (45) The DMT goal of selecting topics for the first one or two pilot SCITs before these orientation meetings (46) was, of course, not met.

During this period, the DMT's self-consciousness about their own group process continued. On September 17, they adjourned to executive session, ".....to discuss current process needs and available personnel within and without the district".

> "As a result of the executive session, it was agreed we
> will invite an individual from the District staff to sit
> with the DMT as a process consultant to evaluate and
> make suggestions for improving our proceedings.
> Secondly, the research coordinator will develop a list
> of available process consultants within and without the
> District..... to provide material for group process to
> be presented to the SCITs....." (47)

By this time, one DMT member, now chairwoman, had already missed a lot of the meetings, and the director announced at the September 24 meeting that she had resigned. Although the subject of replacing her was discussed several times (48), her place was not filled until the members whose terms expired after one year left the DMT in April 1974 and were replaced by a "freshman class". The DMT seemed to follow a suggestion of the director that:

> ".....since the one-year members of the DMT complete
> their stint in April, we might do well to improve our group
> process in the intervening time and not press for an im-
> mediate replacement for (this member)." (49)

They had worked so hard to attain a cohesive group that they didn't seem to want to expend the energy that would be required to absorb a new person.

A self-evaluation questionnaire, designed by the student members of the DMT and distributed in October, revealed some strong negative feelings about the group process, particularly the difficulty of reaching decisions.

It is clear, however, that the DMT cared greatly about maintaining good group feelings, even at a high cost in terms of time and frustration. The new DMT chairman's report for the second quarter to the Board of Education (Jan. 16, 1974) also discussed the difficulties that the DMT had had with group process:

> "The second quarter has been a period of transition for the DMT. The initial tasks of organization and formation of task forces were straightforward and accomplished with relative ease. The ensuing task of defining SCITs, their functions and process, was much more complex and emphasized the importance of group process training.
>
> During the period, the DMT undertook several actions to improve its capabilities in this area..... We have recognized the value of this type of training and have included it as part of the SCIT training program." (50)

As 1973 came to a close, the DMT had quite a few accomplishments to its credit, despite its many frustrations. It had guided the formation and the work of six task forces, and now the data were rolling in. It had established procedures and guidelines for participation in Project Redesign. It had drawn up its own management plan to guide its work for the next year. It had arranged itself into subcommittees in an effort to work more efficiently. Most importantly, it had set up a schedule, beginning in January, for orienting and training SCIT volunteers. Nearly three years after the superintendent's "famous" speech, the planning was about to begin.

Analysis

The Organized Anarchy model suggests three elements that affect people's decisions to participate in organizational decision-making:

(a) the outcomes of the decision are important, and the people believe they can have an effect on the outcome;

(b) the participation is pleasurable – people learn things, they have pleasant social interactions, and they demonstrate support of things that are right and good during the process of participation;

(c) people have a sense of duty or obligation to participate

The model does not suggest that all participants experience all three kinds of motivation to an equal degree. But anyone who had any of these reasons for participating would likely have been attracted to Project Redesign because of the way the project had been conducted up to this point. The emphasis on establishing the legitimacy of the project, for example, had the effect of

confirming people's beliefs that the project would produce some important outcomes. The project had been very carefully planned by the Convening Committee and its leaders (the DMT) were selected in a closed session by the Board of Education. Some very competent experts were to be involved, yet anyone in the community would be welcome to make a contribution. Official announcements tried to make it clear that the project would have important consequences and that it would be open to all views. The evidence that people believed this is the fact that so many had a strong desire to be appointed to the DMT. Attractive Garbage Cans had been created.

The emphasis on competence was undoubtedly a factor in attracting participants. The experience of being on a committee with smart and important people would be both fun and educational – that is, pleasurable.

The emphasis on group process probably also had an effect on the pleasure that participants felt, as well as on their sense of obligation. The DMT self-evaluation indicated a high level of satisfaction with "our interpersonal exchange and feelings toward one another", even though there was frustration with the inability to make decisions. Good interpersonal relations also have the effect of building up people's sense of obligation, as indicated by the respondents to the task force evaluation.

The technology of how to do participatory planning was not well known, nor was the technology of how to improve education. So the participants in Project Redesign didn't know what they were doing. They had no procedures to follow. Had it been apparent to the DMT that there were some important and pressing problems in the school district that they should immediately begin to solve, they probably would have done that. But there were no pressing problems. There was no obvious agenda.

The organized anarchy model predicts that when we don't know what we are doing, the way we do it becomes more important. Thus, in the work of the DMT, as in that of the Convening Committee, we see a preoccupation with procedures. The minutes and the rotation of the chairperson are very important because they symbolize the beliefs in equality and openness that were the essence of this project.

The emphasis on group process is another way of attending to the "how" rather than the "what" of the tasks at hand. The DMT evidently felt that the importance of each individual and his or her feelings overshadowed the importance of reaching decisions quickly and smoothly. Chairpersons had trouble taking charge, according to the self-evaluation, and the decision about SCIT topics was never made. The pleasures and duties of the process provided enough energy to keep the Garbage Cans attractive, even though at times it was hard to see progress on decision outcomes.

VI. THE SCHOOL/COMMUNITY INPUT TEAM AS A GARBAGE CAN
FORMATION OF THE SCIT'S AND THEIR GROUND RULES

All persons who were interested in working on SCIT's came to a general meeting on Saturday, January 26, 1974. With the help of a group process consultant, the SCIT's were at last formed during the day-long session. The participants themselves chose the topics they would study. Team 1 - Alternatives in Elementary Education - had seven members, and planned to study both curriculum and organizational issues. Team 2, with 15 members, planned to work in the area of Secondary Education. Team 3 would investigate Education for Early Adolescents, and was made up of 7 members. Team 4 also had 7 members and would study the Personal and Professional Growth of Staff. Team 5, with 7 members, would be the SCIT for School/Community Relationships.

The DMT and the project staff had a great deal of concern for the formal procedures used by volunteer participants, as we have seen. A five-page memorandum was prepared, "Description, Functions, and Ground Rules for the School/Community Input Teams", dated Fall, 1973. In it, the definition of the SCIT is made to include the procedures by which they were to operate:

> "The School/Community Input Teams are defined as planning bodies operating within the context of Project Redesign following the ground rules outlined below."

(Emphasis added)

The ground rules specified that the SCIT membership must include "......in all cases - staff, administrators, students, and citizens", and that SCIT's would be further defined by their basic charge:

> "The basic charge of each SCIT is to develop validated proposals for long-range educational improvement in the Meadow City School District. These proposals are to be within a general subject area assigned to each SCIT by the Design Management Team and known to prospective members before accepting appointment."

The idea of validated proposals was an important one because, as we have seen, there was such great concern for establishing legitimacy. These were the criteria for "validated" proposals, according to the ground rule statement:

> " (1) It is educationally sound; (2) it is legally and financially feasible; (3) it is acceptable to the professional staff who will be directly affected by the proposal; (4) it is acceptable to and desired by those members of the community who will be directly affected by the proposal; (5) it is a response

not merely to the present needs but to future needs
and opportunities."

Other points made in the ground rules memorandum were:

    (1) Members will be appointed by the DMT and should rep-
        resent the "strongest possible combination of back-
        ground, skills, and representation of differing points
        of view and differing parts of the community".

    (2) Basis for the formation of a SCIT: (a) a topic well
        enough defined to be workable; (b) ability of the
        DMT to provide support; (c) availability of poten-
        tial members; (d) topic complementary to existing
        topics of study; (e) topic of high priority in dis-
        trict and community.

    (3) A DMT member would serve as liaison member
        to each SCIT.

    (4) Each SCIT would report to the DMT on (a) its
        method of operation; (b) the problems it had chosen
        to define; (c) a "working plan for proposal develop-
        ment, including budgetary needs, if applicable";
        (d) specific proposals for implementation by the
        district.

The memorandum also had a lengthy section on the question of "near
vs. far future" or, as the authors stated it, ".....how far away is the future?"
These guidelines were offered:

    " (1) Correction of problems in the operation of pro-
        grams or structures presently under way is not the
        role of SCIT's; rather, their task is the develop-
        ment of new programs or structures not presently
        in existence, if such new programs are advisable
        .....ideas may develop which are of immediate
        value as a modification or an adjustment of pres-
        ent practice......They would be by-products,
        rather than the major concern of the SCIT's, how-
        ever.

    (2) All proposals should show evidence that plan-
        ners have considered carefully the future needs
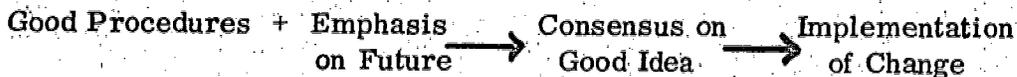   and opportunities of the district.

(3) Daily operational problems and issues within the school system are not within the purview of Project Redesign, except as indicators of needs for long-range planning. "

Finally, there was a warning about the possible difficulties of legitimation the teams might face:

"It is the responsibility of the SCITs to work at a high level of competence in order to earn the respect and cooperation of the District staff."

Analysis:

In the SCIT ground rule statement, there is further evidence that the beliefs on which the Project operated were "the democracy of the informed", the primacy of the Good Idea, and the "far future". Once again, there is concern about the competence of the work done within the project. There is also concern about validation of ideas - when a SCIT produced a Good Idea, it would check it out with a broad audience. A truly Good Idea would achieve consensus among all those involved. The formula was:

Good Procedures + Emphasis on Future $\longrightarrow$ Consensus on Good Idea $\longrightarrow$ Implementation of Change

If competent work were done so that the "respect and cooperation of the District staff were earned, the Good Ideas produced would form the link between Project Redesign's "democracy of the informed" and the rest of the District's hierarchical structure to produce changes.

Second Wave of SCITs

After a few meetings, one SCIT, the Staff Growth group, was disbanded at the suggestion of the staff. During the summer and fall of 1974, six new SCITs were formed. Their topics came either from the DMT or from the groups themselves. The Long-Range Finance group centered around one community member who had long been interested in the problems of school finance. On his own time, he made studies of the district's enrollment and financial situation. He had worked to help pass the March 1974 revenue base referendum. Several people joined him to form a SCIT. Included among them were a doctoral student in educational administration, a representative of the League of Women Voters, two university planners, and a representative of the non-teaching employees' union.

The Teacher/Learner group's topic came from the DMT . Its leadership came primarily from a junior high school teacher who was also enrolled in a doctoral program. The Teacher/Learner team and the Administrative Needs team both did surveys that eventually were rather widely used for discussion around the district. The surveys gathered data on students' perceptions of teachers, teachers' perceptions of students, and everyone's perception of administrators.

A group of Primary Teachers asked to be an "ad hoc" planning group and were given permission by the DMT. Later they were considered a "planning team" like the other SCITs. This group was the only one to be made up entirely of teachers, with no students, community members, or other staff.

Finally, a group was formed to study Special Educational and Support Services. Its coordinator was an education professor. More than any other, this team's membership probably represented special interests. They may have been motivated by all the talk about budget cuts. The group had parent members, but no students.

Although there were ten SCITs, or Planning Teams, as they later came to be called, just one team will be considered here in depth: the team on Early Adolescent Education. It was not selected as the most typical of the teams, but rather because it kept excellent records of proceedings and illustrates nicely the "garbage can" decision process of the Organized Anarchy model. However, the EAPT is not atypical, and other teams also experienced "garbage can" effects to varying degrees.

The Early Adolescent Education Team as a "Garbage Can"

The Early Adolescent (or Middle School) SCIT began with a membership that included three parents, two students, an administrator, and a teacher. After the training sessions were over they, like the other SCITs, were asked to develop a problem statement. In their statement, dated February 25, 1974, the team announced that:

> "The Early Adolescent SCIT will be focusing its attention
> on determining the educational needs of children in the
> early adolescent period and considering ways the needs
> may be met by the school system."

The concern that led to the formation of this planning team was probably widespread community criticism of the junior high schools. The Needs Assessment of 1973 had uncovered this dissatisfaction in an open-ended question about what the respondent liked and disliked about the schools. While elementary schools were seldom mentioned in responses to the question, high

schools were the subject of thirty positive comments and two negative ones.
By contrast, the junior high schools received 36 negative comments and two
positive ones. (51)   The dissatisfaction was ill-defined; it was hard to
find the root cause. The DMT liaison to this team noted that the junior high
age has always been known as a difficult one and that, historically, junior
high schools had had problems in Meadow City. (52)

The first action of the Early Adolescent Education team was to con-
duct a literature search on early adolescent education. In addition, resource
people were called in - a counselor at one of the junior high schools and a pro-
fessor of psychiatry. The team members also called upon their own experi-
ence to examine how well the needs of adolescents were being met by the Meadow
City schools.

One already existing district problem was adopted by this team:
"What grades should be in which schools?" This was referred to as the "reor-
ganization problem". A committee had been formed to determine whether some
schools should be closed because of declining enrollment and financial cutbacks.
The high schools were not filled to capacity, so it was determined that there
were two alternatives: (a) one of the three high schools should be closed; or
(b) the ninth grades (at that time housed in the junior high schools) should be
moved to the high schools. The latter alternative would involve closing either
a junior high or some elementary schools.

In a memorandum to all SCITs dated May 13, 1974, Project Rede-
sign's research coordinator said:

> ".....the Early Adolescent SCIT may wish to provide in-
> tensive input to the reorganization process this summer,
> if and when junior high decisions are under consideration.
> Then, the SCIT may continue to work in the fall, perhaps
> in collaboration with the Cabinet and Board, or perhaps
> working more closely with school faculties and principals..."

The team did want to work on this important problem, but they seemed to see
their role as one of defining the criteria upon which the decision could be made.
They were never able to make a recommendation about whether or not to move
the ninth grade to the high schools, although one of their members wrote a
"minority report" which did advocate leaving the ninth grade in junior high.

The Early Adolescent team became a "garbage can" for a wide
range of issues. Some of them are outlined in Table 10. By the end of June,
the team had arranged these concerns into a set of criteria for the education
of early adolescents. (53) In an early draft, they introduced their criteria
with the following statement:

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TABLE 10

SOME ISSUES DISCUSSED BY THE EARLY ADOLESCENT PLANNING TEAM

Meeting the Needs of Individual Students	Physical Development and Training
Remedial and accelerated instruction in the basic skills	Recognize special problems of puberty
Make school more interesting and challenging	Give students help in physical development
Offer students more options	Emphasize human biology
Teach students how to make choices	Work on healthy self-image
Consider differences in aptitude and development	Make students happy rather than anxious about growing up
Provide facilities for independent study	Help with weight, skin problems
Teachers make contracts for work to be done by individual students	Be careful not to favor physically attractive students
Provide field trips, special projects	Help each student to find physical activity at which he/she can excel
Free up the dress code	Use community facilities
Provide wide-range extra-curriculum	Promote vigorous exercise
Provide different discipline structures	Develop recreational skills for future enjoyment
Provide honors classes	Experience joys of team play
Train teachers in the biological development of this age group	De-emphasize competitive aspects of interschool sports
Provide human relations programs	
Explore areas of personal interest	
Control academic competition	
Let students progress at their own rate	
Restructure progress reports	
Develop more flexible approaches to instruction	
Students make continuous progress, rather than passing from grade to grade	
Test competency as basis for promotion	

(Table 10 continues)

TABLE 10 (Cont.)

Social Relations/Emotional Development	Curriculum
Encourage interpersonal abilities	Provide variety of experiences and explorations
Promote friendships with peers and adults	Teach basic skills and enjoyment of learning
Give sense of being needed in world - e.g., students as tutors	Give freedom in choice of courses
Develop initiative and independence	Develop higher cognitive levels
Learn to make choices	Form sequential goals in reading, writing, and mathematics
Make discipline more humane	Emphasize communication skills
Promote feeling of trust and community	Understand and appreciate history and literature
Identify with adults	Enrich and explore fine and practical arts; develop aesthetic taste
Give more personal attention	Move into levels of abstraction and hypothesizing
Provide structural arrangements, like "house" and "team" teaching	
Define role of early adolescent	Encourage independent study
Discourage so much competitiveness	Provide special classes for able and slow
Attend to affective needs	Vary extra-curriculum
Have informal home room; "home base"	Student chooses more or less structured classroom styles
Give courses about social interaction and sex education	Promotion based on competency
Emphasize androgynous sex roles	
Students participate in decision-making	
Have smaller groupings and smaller campus	
Provide medical counseling	
Teach clarification of values	

"Rather than attempt to describe a school that might meet
such varied needs at this time, we believe it most profit-
able to prepare a set of criteria that would be available
to examine any school established for the purpose of edu-
cating pre-adolescents.

By design, the criteria are simple and rather general.
What the user must bring to the process of applying the
criteria is to decide if a failure to measure up in one or
more categories can successfully be remedied by some
minor alteration or whether a whole new format for the
institution should be shaped. For example, if it appears
that it is impossible to educate ninth graders in the same
setting and with the same general arrangements as the
seventh and eighth graders, it may be best to send them
to the high school." (54)

There was reluctance to make specific program recommendations. The very
general criteria are presented in Table 11. Under each of these criteria, these
were subgoals.

The coordinator of the Early Adolescent Planning Team wanted to
link each of these criteria to a problem then existing in the junior high schools.
He says the team deleted his list of problems during a meeting from which he
was absent. (55)

The criteria statement constituted Phase One of the Planning Teams'
work. The next two tasks were to be:

"The validation of the criteria that have been developed. Val-
idation means testing and refining the criteria by means of
input from teachers and others, both informally and through
careful strategies."
                              and
".....using the above criteria for developing and/or evalu-
ating proposed changes in educational programs.....The
charge to this team is to develop insights, add information,
and develop proposals which will help make these decisions
better decisions. The focus should be on proposed changes
which have long-range consequences." (56)

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TABLE 11

CRITERIA FOR EARLY ADOLESCENT EDUCATION

1. An academic c   iculum that builds both basic skills and assures development at the highest cognitive level possible for the individual student. The curriculum must arouse the student's interest so that positive attitudes toward learning will be fostered.

2. Attention to the affective needs of students, including a healthy self-image.

3. Adequate provision for individual differences, both from an aptitude and a developmental standpoint.

4. Promotion of healthy human relationships with peers and adults.

5. Provision for physical development and training.

6. Schools for the early adolescent must provide staff members trained to understand the early adolescent and his needs, and a desire to work with this age group. (Source: "Education for Early Adolescents in Meadow City: Criteria for Evaluating our Programs and Schools." Project Redesign, August 1974)

At this point, the team underwent a reorganization, gaining some new members and losing some old ones. There were now four administrators, three students, four parents, and five teachers on the team. (57)

Part of the reorganized team worked on validating the criteria; others worked on gathering data to assist district decision-makers with reorganization. During this time, the concept of "middle school" became very important. In October, the team prepared an interim report in which they made some recommendations for reorganization, reiterated the criteria for early adolescent education, and developed the concept of "middle school". The reorganization recommendations still did not suggest an answer to the problem of which grades to put into which schools. Instead, they asserted that (a) program is more important than structure; (b) the three junior high buildings should remain open; (c) a middle school should have three grades (but no recommendation as to whether they should be 6-7-8 or 7-8-9); (d) four-year high schools are "academically sound"; and (e) there could be several options available to district students, as long as the criteria for early adolescent education were met. The middle school was defined as having these components:

1. A span of at least three grades to allow for the gradual transition from elementary to high school instructional practices.

2. Gradual transition from self-contained to departmentalized high school.

3. Flexible approaches to instruction - team teaching, core programs, interdisciplinary teams, flexible scheduling, individualized instruction, independent study, tutorial programs.

4. Systems of non-graded, continuous progress.

5. Non-punitive evaluation processes, with personal rather than group standards for performance, to allow each student to experience a sense of accomplishment.

6. A variety of curriculum options and exploratory activities for socializing, interest-developing, and leisure-enriching purposes.

7. A home base and teacher for every student.

8. Guidance programs

9. Specially-trained teachers - possibly with both elementary and secondary certification.

10. Limited attention to interschool sports and "sophisticated" social activities.

11. Skill development for continued learning and effective use of appropriate organized knowledge.

12. School-within-a-school or similar arrangement, where school population "must" exceed 500-600.

When this interim report had been submitted to the superintendent (Oct. 11, 1974), the planning team went through yet another reorganization of its membership and task orientation. An invitation went out on November 1st to all sixth-grade and all junior high teachers to join the team. This time, the charge was to develop some program recommendations that met the criteria that had been set for early adolescent education.

A list of people considered as members of the planning team in December included 21 teachers, 10 parents, 3 students, and 4 administrators. However, when the team met again in January (after the decision had been made by the Board to move the ninth grade), the membership was back down to about the same few who had been active since the previous spring. The extra members came to the EAPT, because they "thought it would have major impact on the ninth grade decision." After that decision was made, they were no longer interested in the planning team.

Several team members made lists of "operational goals" that would be candidates for the over-all "long-range plan" to be produced by Project Redesign. In a memorandum to the DMT dated February 17, 1975, the EAPT

listed eleven needs "for installation and reinforcement in schools for early
adolescents", and eight objectives for meeting those needs. The need for:

- personalized education
- a good self-image for each child
- a sequential curriculum
- good communication skills
- a transition (bridging between school levels)
- competency-based promotion
- mastery of basic skills
- learning orderly thinking
- specific training and qualification for teachers
   of this level
- flexible learning style availability
- non-punitive student evaluation

A. By 1977-78, all students in the middle grades will have interdisciplinary
experiences in their classes as a result of curricular integration in the
school, the teaming of teachers, or by the use of block or core teachers.

B. Promotion by grade levels at the end of each school year will be replaced
by individual progression on a sequential continuum, with special empha-
sis on the basic skills. Individual accomplishment will be carefully re-
corded for each student.

C. Within four years, a set of competency tests will be developed that will
reflect performance in oral and written communication and computing
skills that each student must pass successfully for transfer from middle
school to high school. In cases where a student does not appear to be
able to demonstrate these competencies, a joint decision of parents and
staff will determine what should be done.

D. By 1977-78, students will have many learning options available so that
they can choose the type of instruction which best suits their capabilities.
Ranging from a carefully-structured situation to almost complete learner
independence, such options will be catalogued in each school for the bene-
fit of students and parents.

E. By 1976-77, all early adolescent students will be assigned to a staff mem-
ber whose responsibility will be to oversee the entire school program of
a group of 15 or fewer students who are assigned to him or her as advisees.

F. By 1977-78, the school district will attempt to develop means of appraising
the self-image of students as it affects their ability to learn, and will at-
tempt to improve the self-image when it is found to be deficient to a seri-
ous extent.

G. Both the school district and individual schools will provide adequate
planning time for all teachers and will reserve substantial budgeted
amounts for staff training needs in increasing increments through
1979.

H. By 1978-79, all new curricular materials will provide for student
training in thinking and problem-solving, from rote learning through
the higher levels of abstraction, with the ultimate potential of inde-
pendent inquiry.

The last meeting of the Early Adolescent Education planning team was on Janu-
ary 22, 1975.

Analysis

The Organized Anarchy model maintains that: "To understand
processes within organizations, one can view a choice opportunity as a garbage
can into which various kinds of problems and solutions are dumped by parti-
cipants as they are generated." (58)

Table 12 presents the "streams" of problems, solutions, participants, and
choice situations associated with the Early Adolescent Education planning team,
if it were to be considered as a Garbage Can. The "phases" of the team's life
are delineated by the choice opportunities.

Phase One: In the first phase of the team's life, they had to define which prob-
lems they would work on, the solutions they would propose, and what kind of
choice situations (agenda) they would have. The idea of unmet needs as a prob-
lem definition is not surprising; asking what we need seems to be a logical first
question in planning. The solutions that would be easily found in the popular
literature are those that found their way into this team's "garbage can". The
availability of psychologists to come and speak to the group probably accounts
for the fact that problems and solutions were often defined in psychological terms.

The team did not go into the junior high schools to systematically study
what was wrong with them. Instead, they performed a rather limited search for
something to work on, using information and expertise that were readily avail-
able. This, too, is not surprising. There were only about a half-dozen active
team members at this point, and doing a systematic study probably would have
consumed too much time and energy. They consulted experts, did some reading,
and consulted their own experien

Generalization No. 1 – Time and energy of participants is scarce; therefore,
the search for problems and solutions is limited.

TABLE 12

STREAMS OF PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS, PARTICIPANTS, AND CHOICE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE EARLY ADOLESCENT PLANNING TEAM

Time Period (1974-75)	Participants	Definition of Problem	Definition of Solutions	Choice Opportunities
Feb.-Aug. PHASE ONE	All interested persons (Usually 10 or 15 members)	Early adolescents have needs that are not being met.	More personalization. Less competition. Integrated curriculum. Biology and sex education, etc.	Preparation of criteria for Early Adolescent Education
Aug.-Dec. PHASE TWO	About 1/3 were those whose children would be affected; 2/3 were those whose jobs would be affected. (N = 37)	Reorganization	"Middle School"	Decision about which grades in which bldgs. and which to close. EAPT interim report
January PHASE THREE	Those who had most commitment to DMT and to EAPT (About 15)	Goals for the Long-Range Plan	"Middle School" "Personalization" "Self-Concept", etc.	DMT deadlines meant goals had to be formulated. EAPT operational goals

Organization scheme borrowed from Rommetveit in March & Olsen, p. 8-22

Like most of the Project Redesign planning teams, this one was cautious about designing any grand plans. For a start, the team decided to draw up a list of criteria for educating early adolescents. The D MT was somewhat disappointed at this decision, but decided to allow the EAPT to use the criteria statement as their first choice opportunity:

> "Early Adolescent Education has decided it would like to create criteria for Early Adolescence curriculum against which all proposed plans could be bounced. Some discussion took place as to whether this was the idea behind SCITs or whether they were supposed to create educational plans. The consensus was to encourage SCIT to refine its ideas (putting greater emphasis on actual planning), before the DMT comments on them formally." (59)

As we have seen, the resulting criteria were vague. They did not call for specific changes, nor did the team use them to measure the excellence of existing programs in the district. They called for no immediate decisions or actions and elicited little discussion, even though they were distributed for comments. (60) Conflict or controversy was almost non-existent in this phase of the team's life. We have, in fact, seen that in their report the team avoided mentioning any problems.

<u>Generalization No. 2</u> – Vague goals and symbolic solutions are easy to agree on.

Phase Two

The team's second phase occurred because the district was faced with the very controversial problem of reorganization. The Early Adolescent team's involvement came about because the junior high schools became an important issue in the reorganization problem. If cost had been the sole consideration, the optimal solution seemed to be to close one of the high schools. Initially, that solution was proposed, but public outcry was so great that people began to think that filling up the high schools by moving the ninth grades into the senior high schools from the junior high schools was a better answer, at least from a political standpoint. Since the EAPT had been studying the educational needs of early adolescents, they thought they should have some input into the decision that was the talk of the town. EAPT membership nearly tripled during the time they were discussing the reorganization issue.

<u>Generalization No. 3</u> – An important choice opportunity attracts many participants.

Many persons felt strongly one way or another about the issue of reorganization and evidently believed that they would have an impact on the decision by attending the planning team meetings. The meetings now saw a lot of argument over issues. Many people were fearful of change; the EAPT was one place to which some came to defend the status quo.

Unlike the criteria statement, the reorganization question called for selecting among well-defined alternatives: move the ninth grade into high school or not; move the sixth grade into junior high school or not; close one of the junior high schools or not; close a senior high school or not. The nature of these alternatives was such that people were on either one side of the question or the other. By contrast, people do not tend to line up definitely for or against something like, "Attention to the affective needs of students" (Criterion No. 2, Table 11). It's easier to visualize the effects of closing a senior high school than think about the results of attending to the affective needs of students.

Generalization No. 4 - A set of well-defined decision alternatives causes conflict. (Converse of Generalization No.2)

The team's interim report was issued only after every sentence had been voted upon by the team members. [61] One member, a teacher who had polled students and other teachers, wrote a minority report. Disagreement existed within the team. They had not been able to use the available literature and expertise to come up with a solution that all could agree was best. They had not achieved consensus - there was no Good Idea. But they did have some good ideas that they submitted in a report at the reorganization hearings. The report was received with no more interest than was the other output. The EAPT was not given any more credibility than any neighborhood parent who wanted to speak on the subject of reorganization. The group was disappointed, according to the liaison member.

On the other hand, the EAPT had come up with no solution to the reorganization problem. They had chosen to focus on "educational" issues which, in the hearings, were practically ignored.

Generalization No. 5 - Possession of good solutions does not guarantee the ability to solve problems.

The EAPT could not agree on a recommendation about whether the ninth grade should move to senior high school and the sixth grade to junior high. Instead, they advocated adoption of the "middle school". This catch-all term came to represent several ideas advocated by various participants. It implied something new, and therefore called for a change. It connoted a school with its own purposes, not an inferior version of a senior high school. It was also a term widely used in current educational literature. Middle school came to

be a symbol of a solution, more than a real solution, because its meaning was never very well pinned down. It was hard to be against the adoption of the middle school. Once again, we see that vague goals and symbolic solutions were easily agreed upon.

There are several interesting properties of the Phase Two activities of the Early Adolescent Planning Team. Initially, people believed that it would have a lot of influence on the decision about reorganization, so they joined the team. Then, even though the team had done a lot of studying, their wealth of information and their ability to speak for many people who were, in some sense, experts still did not give them the right to make the decision. Finally, the team found it difficult to accept the fact that they would still disagree, even after all the evidence was in. When they could not make a recommendation about moving the ninth grade, they recommended the middle school, something vague enough so that everyone could agree to it.

In both the first and second phases, the EAPT had shown a preference for avoiding conflict or disagreement - first, in not presenting the problems associated with the criteria for good early adolescent education, and then, in not making a recommendation about moving the ninth grade.

In December, the board of Education finally made a decision: the ninth grade would move to the senior high schools and the sixth grades would move to the junior high schools.* "Middle School Committees" were appointed at each of the three junior high schools to plan the transition. The committees were to include sixth grade teachers and parents. Once again, the expertise of the EAPT went unrecognized. They were not formally asked to be on the middle school committees. Only after the DMT chairman had a confrontation with the superintendent were the Early Adolescent Planning Team members officially designated to sit on each of the middle school committees.

In the meantime, many of the participants who had joined the EAPT specifically because of the reorganization issue left the team and went to the

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* The Board "unmade" this decision when the new superintendent arrived in the spring of 1975, as will be noted in the next section.

middle school committee. The stream of participants flowed out of the planning team into a new garbage can, the middle school committee. After the first of the year, the EAPT was back to its original size. [62]

Generalization No. 6 - Choice opportunities compete for participants.

Phase Three:

The choice opportunity for the third phase of the team's life was imposed on them from the outside, by the DMT. The team had to decide what goals to submit to the DMT for its long-range plan. Participation was back down to the six or seven who had taken upon themselves the responsibility to finish the work of the planning team. There was now little disagreement or conflict. The focus had returned to the "far future". Even the teacher who had turned in the minority report during the reorganization phase dropped out after the ninth grade decision was made by the Board. The one person who had the most input into the team's operational goals and did the actual writing was the team's coordinator. He was an assistant principal at one of the senior high schools and a former junior high school principal. He decided what should go into the team's recommended operational goals.

Generalization No. 7 - Those who persevere until the decision is made are likely to influence the outcome.

Near versus Far Future in the EAPT

What sets off the three phases of the EAPT's life is not only their three different reports (one on criteria for early adolescent education; one on the middle school and reorganization; and one on operational goals for the long-range plan), but also the scope of planning - near future or more long-range. We have referred to the scope of the planning as "near vs. far" future. When the task at hand involved making recommendations for the long-range future, the behavior in the planning team was quite different from what it was when the task involved making a recommendation about a specific, immediate problem. Table 13 summarizes the effects of "near vs. far future" on the EAPT.

TABLE 13

"NEAR VS. FAR FUTURE" IN THE EARLY ADOLESCENT PLANNING TEAM

	Phase 1 – Criteria-Setting (Far Future)	Phase 2 – Reorganization (Near Future)	Phase 3 – Operational Goals (Far Future)
Problem Articulation	LOW	HIGH	LOW
	Team deleted list of problems from criteria report	People had vested interest in outcomes – e.g., minority report of opinion survey	
Conflict	LOW	HIGH	LOW
Participation	LOW	HIGH	LOW

It would appear that the scope of the planning has a definite effect on the flow of problems, solutions, and participants in the "garbage can". The level of conflict is also affected. The immediacy of the reorganization problem seems to have contributed to its importance, and therefore, to have drawn in more participants. The immediacy of the reorganization problem also increased the intensity of people's articulation of problems and of their commitments to particular solutions; thus conflict is associated with "near" future more than with "far" future.

This planning teams garbage can changed when a "near future" problem was dumped into it. It gained participants, it experienced conflict, and it found that its procedures didn't produce Good Ideas that were accepted by all.

VII. THE COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE PLAN

Writing the Long-Range Plan.

In the spring of 1974, the concern of the DMT turned from worrying about the operation of the planning teams to producing the long-range planning document that was part of their obligation to the Board. In April, the director of the project reminded the DMT that they had to produce a plan sometime within the next year. (The first Management Plan of fall, 1973 had promised a first draft of the comprehensive plan by early 1975.) Through May, June, and July, the director and two DMT members looked through the literature and talked to people about what

a comprehensive plan for a school district should include.

It is evident from the DMT minutes of this period that neither the DMT nor the Project Redesign staff had in mind the procedure by which output of the planning teams would be used by the district. For example:

"Some concern was expressed on where the planning team proposals should go. After some discussion on various aspects of the proposals, it was agreed that planning team proposals go to the Board as the primary channel, but that in each separate case care will be taken to get the proposals into the most appropriate channels." (63)

Everyone knew that the planning teams would make some kind of recommendations, that the project would report to the Board of Education, and that a comprehensive plan was to be written. But no one knew how these would fit together.

By September, thinking had clarified somewhat, and it became apparent that planning team proposals would feed into the long-range plan which was to be written by the DMT and presented to the Board. The DMT began to ask itself questions: what were the planning teams going to be able to contribute to the plan? How long-range were their proposals going to be? What proposals were nearing completion? How should the presentation be timed? Should proposals be tried out on a pilot basis? They worried about how to select target dates and about what areas of the district's operation they had neglected to study. (64)

In October, they began to think about themes around which the proposals could be organized in the final document.

In November, the research coordinator sent a memorandum to all of the planning teams, asking them to produce some "operational goals" by February 15th. Operational goals were described as a ".....description of the desired future possible for the organization within a time span of from two to five years." The example given was:

"Within three years, a system for granting credit toward high school graduation for demonstrated competence not developed in regular coursework will have been developed and implemented." (65)

The research coordinator also discussed the five themes around which the DMT was thinking of writing the long-range plan:

1) Educational Priorities
2) Procedures
3) Organizational Structures
4) Human Resources
5) Financing District Operations

The planning teams were asked to think how proposals that they might formulate would relate to these five areas. They were given a timetable for the production of the long-range plan which ended with the submission of the plan to the Board of Education on May 15, 1976. Finally, they were assured that

"....the utilization of your work in forming this long-
range plan may not be the only objective of your planning
team."

On December 2, the coordinators of the planning teams met with the DMT to discuss putting together the plan. The minutes note that

"The operational goals will be few in number, crucial,
rememberable, on topics that cut across Redesign ef-
forts and impact on many aspects of the District. They
should help teams focus on what they are doing. The
goals should be simply and briefly stated, challenging
yet feasible....It is hoped that work on the formation
of these goals will not detract from the teams' tasks."

The DMT minutes for meetings in December show a consensus that the DMT would evaluate and modify any proposals submitted by the planning teams. There was concern about "validation"; how would the DMT get feedback from various groups and individuals in the schools and in the community about these goals?

The Second Annual Project Redesign Management Plan, presented to the Board in mid-January, 1975, contained a long section about the long-range plan. It said that the plan would be a "major product" but "by no means the only product of Redesign." It promised that the plan would contain specific proposals for action and explained that the time frame of the Project's recommendations had changed somewhat; now the emphasis was on goals that were realizable in from two to five years.

"In the long-range plan of Project Redesign, we will do our
best to deal with both the compelling present and the longer
range future. We will not ignore the larger, longer educa-
tional and societal issues. We will focus, however, on activi-
ties to be implemented and goals to be achieved in the near
future."

The two main purposes of the plan would be: "....to identify the district's most pressing future needs; and to outline reasonable methods for their resolution."

The management plan expressed the DMT's determination that the long-range plan not be a complicated, ponderous document that would be easily relegated to a dusty shelf, but rather that it would "shape district programs and determine priorities for the use of time and resources".

In February, the proposed operational goals formulated by the planning teams began coming into the DMT. Members of the team carefully read and discussed all of them and returned comments to the planning teams. In March, the DMT and staff put together an "Issues Document" in which they discussed 12 issues raised by the planning teams. This was sent to 400 people [66] for their consideration and feedback. About 30 persons and groups responded with comments.

Throughout the early spring and summer of 1975 the two staff members worked on putting together the long-range plan. Pressure was on because of the new superintendent (who arrived in April 1975), who would need to have an idea of what Project Redesign was doing. The DMT discussed all of the many drafts at great length, although they criticized style more often than substance. But most of the writing was done by the staff. In the meantime, the planning teams had ceased to meet.

Finally, in August, the final draft was finished and sent to the printers. It was given the title of "Working Draft" and was distributed to the public. To the staff and the DMT, it seemed as if an important milestone had been passed. Project Redesign had made its recommendations for redesigning the system.

Planning Team Input to the Long-Range Plan

After the plan had been written and distributed, planning team coordinators were asked to identify those operating goals within the plan which came from the recommendations of their particular team. Table 14 displays the results of those interviews.

TABLE 14

ORIGINS OF THE OPERATING GOALS

Direct contribution of a planning team	19*
Direct contribution of the DMT	6
DMT and Planning Team claimed to contribute	1
Indirectly contributed by planning teams	4
Not recognized by a team coordinator	6
Total:	36

* Four of these were also claimed by planning teams as their indirect contribution; that is, one goal might have been a direct contribution of one team and an indirect one by one or two others. "Direct contribution" means that the team wrote the goal almost exactly as it appeared in the plan. "Indirect contribution" means that the goal expresses a concern of the team, although not in the form they had expressed it.

Only about half of the operating goals that ended up in the final draft of the long-range plan came directly from the planning teams. One-sixth of the goals came from the DMT, who had originally intended only to evaluate goals, not propose them (see p. 95, this section). Another one-sixth of the goals must have been put in by the authors (i.e., the Project Re-design staff) since no team coordinator (including the DMT chairperson) recognized them.

The Early Adolescent Planning Team coordinator recognized three goals as having been directly contributed by his team. They had to do with developing instruments to measure self-concept, offering staff development programs for teachers of early adolescents, and establishing middle schools. (Nos. 1.5, 1.6, and 4.2) The coordinator did not claim indirect contribution by his team to any of the goals, but several goals that did get into the plan seem to pertain to the topics of discussion at Early Adolescent Planning Team meetings. (See Table 10) For example:

1.4 - Personalization of instruction

2.2 - More local school autonomy

2.3 - Curriculum commission

3.1)
3.2) - Staff development

3.8 - More student involvement in decision-making

4.3 - Competency-based promotion

4.4 - Off-campus experiences (more options)

Goal 1.4 was claimed as a direct contribution by the Teacher/Learner coordinator and as an indirect contribution by the Elementary Education Coordinator. Goal 2.2 was a DMT contribution, and Goal 4.3 was proposed by the Secondary Team. Goal 4.4 was indirectly contributed by the Secondary Team, and Goal 2.3 was a contribution of the curriculum Planning Team. Goals 3.1, 3.2, and 3.8 were written into the plan by the authors, who evidently perceived them as concerns expressed in some form during the project. (67) It is evident that there was a great deal of overlap of concerns of the planning teams.

Analysis

There seem to be two reasons why the long-range plan became the central focus of Project Redesign from the spring of 1974 to the fall of 1975. One was that the plan had been promised in the management plans, and some pressure

to make good that promise must have been present. The second reason was that the new superintendent wanted a document to work with which would tell him what the project was all about. The staff felt that the superintendent's support for the plan was essential, and they had always been a little disappointed that the former superintendent was not more visible in the activities of the project. The arrival of the new superintendent must have appeared as an opportunity to gain more co-operation from the top administration. It was probably also seen as a time when changes would be made, and therefore, an opportunity to use the work of the project. At any rate, they worked very hard to produce a document as quickly as possible, once they knew that the new superintendent wanted to see it.

As a result of the fact that the long-range plan became the central focus of the project, the stream of choice opportunities stopped flowing into the project's various Garbage Cans. In the last section, the Early Adolescent Planning Team was described as an illustration of the Garbage Can process. It will be recalled that when the team first began, it had almost complete freedom to choose its agenda. It had no clear grounds for excluding almost any activity that anyone who came in would suggest. In its first phase, this particular team de-cided to produce a list of criteria for the education of early adolescents. This was a choice situation which they chose to work on, not one that was demanded of them. By contrast, once the focus of Project Redesign became the production of the long-range plan, all choices other than selecting operating goals for submis-sion to the DMT became irrelevant and were tossed out of the garbage cans. As we have seen, the staff apologized for having to constrict so severely the work of the teams, after having given them so much freedom for so long.

Since there was urgency to the task of producing the long-range plan, it acted much like a deadline(68). In the case of the planning teams, a deadline for the production of operating goals was imposed. In the case of the DMT, there were no specific deadlines for the production of the plan, but there was a great deal of urgency. According to Weiner, one of the consequences of placing a deadline on the garbage can decision process is that the garbage can empties. We have seen that the stream of choice opportunities stopped when the long-range plan deadline was imposed. It was also a fact that the flow of parti-cipants stopped.

In the Early Adolescent Planning Team, it was the coordinator (a full-time administrator in the district) and a few other dedicated members who did the work of writing the proposals for reforming adolescent education. In the case of the DMT, the work of putting together all the proposals from the planning teams was done primarily by the full-time project staff. At first consideration, it seems odd that this most important work - writing the long-range plan - should be left to such a few people.

But if we were to think of Project Redesign as some kind of system --
like an engine, for example -- we would look for the source of energy that runs
the system. In the case of Project Redesign, the participants provide the
energy. What gets done gets done by people power. People put in time and ef-
fort or energy by researching, attending meetings, dealing with their col-
leagues, writing, thinking. Producing a plan took a lot of energy, especially
if it was to be produced the way the DMT had envisioned it. They wanted
carefully-researched proposals which had been checked out with all the people
whose organizational lives would be affected by the proposals. Then the pro-
posals would be tested on a pilot basis before the school district would consider
adopting them.

An individual's energy is divided up among all the activities in which
he is involved. As we have seen, activities compete for the individual's atten-
tion. As long as the work of Project Redesign had no particular time schedule,
people could fit its activities into their own schedules, using their excess en-
ergy, so to speak. Once a deadline was imposed, as was the case with the writ-
ing of the long-range plan, most participants found that they did not have the
available energy to work full-time on the writing so that it would be completed
on time. Those who did have the energy were those who were being paid to work
for the district full-time. So that staff wrote the plan.

Not only did most of the participants and most of the choice situations
leave the garbage cans of Project Redesign, but many of the previously important
problems and solutions were tossed out, too. The concern for producing a plan-
ning document superseded other concerns like, for example, "validation". It
will be recalled that the DMT wanted to "validate" all proposals by both trying
them out and consulting with people who would be affected by them. This valida-
tion process never took place before the long-range plan incorporated the pro-
posals, because there wasn't time for it.

Indeed, the concern for producing a long-range plan forced the plan-
ning teams to come up with operational goals, whether or not they had found
anything they wanted to change. The pressure was on the teams to be able to
show something that represented the results of their research and deliberations.
It would have been very difficult for a team to say that the area they had studied
was not in need of change. In addition, the concern for producing a long-range
plan caused the old emphasis on proposals for the long-range or "far" future
to become an emphasis on proposals that were "operational" and that could be
accomplished in a few years.

The urgency of the need to come up with a planning document meant
that there was no time to continue the leisurely pace of researching the issues

that the teams had formerly enjoyed. Proposals had to be formed from whatever
was at hand. In other words, there was a limited, or "simple-minded" search[69]
The first idea that fitted the criteria for an operational goal was written into a
team's proposals, rather than (necessarily) the best idea. For example, the
Special Services Planning Team proposed the adoption of the State Master Plan
for Special Education, which they knew about and had read, but about which they
had done little research. It was a package of proposals from the State Depart-
ment of Education, which was merely appropriated into the long-range plan. All
the teams did this kind of limited search, and evidently there were a limited num-
ber of readily available proposals, since the teams overlapped in the suggestions
they made.

Evidently, the staff and the DMT felt that not enough proposals were
submitted, for they increased the number by 50 percent with proposals of their
own. They also took the suggestions of the planning teams and, in many cases,
made them less specific. Since there was not time to refine and test the propos-
als, it appears that the staff and the DMT decided to present them as under-
developed ideas, thus inviting further discussion after the plan was made public.
As it turned out, the small response to the issues document was an indication of
the lack of discussion to follow. The plan was called a "working draft" but people
must have felt that it was final, for they did not participate in discussions of
the proposals.

The concern for having a long-range plan that would be accepted by
the school district's hierarchy, as well as by the community, at times seemed
to pre-empt the supposed purpose of the project: to propose really new ideas.
For example, some goals proposed programs or ideas that had already been
tried or were in progress at the time the plan was presented. Others were writ-
ten in such a way that their newness or their controversial aspects are not im-
mediately apparent. An example is Goal #3.2: "On-going operations of the dis-
trict shall be used as opportunities for staff development." No one ever seemed
to know exactly what that goal meant.

This concern about acceptance of the plan by the school district hier-
archy and by the community is interesting from another standpoint. The DMT
and the staff by this time must have realized that they did not have the set of
Good Ideas that would automatically be approved and implemented. In addi-
tion, they had left the safety of their area of expertise - the "far future", and
now had to specify times in which their goals could be accomplished.

The significance of the document called the "Working Draft of the
Long-Range Plan", then, was in many ways symbolic. It was not so much a
set of proposals for the future of the school district as a symbol that this school
district had been thinking about and planning for the future. The goals were

symbols that the planning teams had been doing something worthwhile more than recommendations for future action.

VIII. RESPONSE TO THE LONG-RANGE PLAN

Presenting the Plan to the Board and Community

At the Board meeting on September 16, 1975, the long-range plan was "unveiled". Five DMT members were present to make comments and answer questions. The operational goals were read and a time table was presented for adopting and implementing them. The Board's action at this time was to (1) acknowledge receipt of the report; (2) authorize its dissemination through the community; (3) adopt the DMT-recommended procedure for considering the goals. October 7 was set as the date for the Board's "study session" on the plan, at which time the goals and their rationale would be presented in more detail.

Nineteen persons were involved in the long presentation on October 7th. For each operating goal they discussed the current situation, the expected change if the proposal were adopted, and the resources which would be required. Nineteen of the 36 presentations were made by planning team members that originated the goal; nine were made by the DMT members; and eight, by the two Project staff members. During the presentations, Board members jotted down their reactions. At the end of the evening, there were 17 goals on which they felt they had enough information to make a decision.

Community response to the long-range plan was less than overwhelming. On October 21, Project Redesign ran an advertisement in the Meadow City Times which contained the goals of the plan in fine print and invited the public to hearings on the goals on October 22 and 23. The DMT had anticipated that this period following publication of the plan would see much discussion of the virtues and drawbacks of the various operational goals. At the afternoon hearing on October 22, about 20 Project Redesign participants came to answer questions about the operational goals; only 25 others came to learn about the plan. The next evening, 20 came to answer questions and only eight came to ask them. *

About two dozen individuals and several groups did give formal written feedback on the long-range plan. The Parents' English Committee had comments on several goals, particularly the ones about "basic skills", including

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* On that same evening, October 23, another meeting was being held in another location – about reorganization. In attendance at that session were the 39 members of the newly-appointed superintendent's advisory committee and about 80 others in the audience.

language arts. The parents and staff connected with the state-funded Mentally Gifted Minors program protested that their favorite program was nowhere mentioned in the plan. The Meadow City Learners Association submitted favorable comments on program evaluation goals and on the proposed "curriculum commission", to be made up of students, parents, and staff. The PTA Council Committee on Educating Gifted Children commented on about half the goals, and the League of Women Voters reacted to eight. One teacher wrote several pages of comments in general reaction to the plan from a teacher's viewpoint. She was active in the teachers' association, and the Project Redesign staff thought that her views had probably been discussed at their meetings.

Meanwhile, in their weekly meetings, the superintendent's cabinet had been discussing the operational goals, one by one, without much closure on what should be done with them. Some administrators expressed discomfort at being asked to implement proposals they had not helped to develop.(70) Finally, the cabinet decided to vote, without any further discussion, on those goals that they could live with, should they be adopted. The ten goals that had received the most votes would then be their recommendation for the first group of goals to be considered by the Board for adoption.

On November 3, the superintendent, two Board members, the DMT chairman, and the two Project Redesign staff members had lunch to discuss how to proceed with the long-range plan. The superintendent emphasized the need for proceeding slowly because: (a) the administration was tied up with the reorganization problem; (b) Project Redesign had operated "outside the system" up to that point and it would take time for the system to "get inside the plan"; i.e., all the staff had not had time to deal with the plan; (c) the project had not been sufficiently attuned to the problems of implementation. (For example, the plan contained many inconsistencies); (d) the public's attention was focused on the reorganization problem.

The Board members and at least one staff member disagreed that the public's attention had been diverted to the reopened reorganization question. They felt that people would be very unhappy if the Board postponed all action on the long-range plan. However, one Board member stressed the need for more time for "validation" of proposals by the community.(71)

The next evening (November 4) was the Board's regular meeting night. The Board and the cabinet met for dinner at 5:30 for a discussion of Project Redesign.*

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* Any meeting of more than two Board members must, by law, be open to the public, but the early hour of these pre-Board meetings and the fact that spectators have to watch the Board and cabinet eat keeps the audience to a handful.

The decisions that had to be made were (a) whether to act upon some goals immediately; (b) if so, how to determine which ones; (c) the procedure from now on.

The biggest concern was that people who had worked in Project Redesign might be expecting immediate action on their plan. Yet the superintendent clearly was reluctant to put a lot of effort into dealing with the plan at this time. Finally it was decided that since the Board and cabinet had both made a list of goals that they could live with, these lists would be compared and any goals on both lists would be on the Board's agenda for first consideration. Five goals appeared on both lists:

1. The language arts faculty at the secondary level shall establish specific long-range objectives and indicators for meeting objectives related to improvement in writing and oral skills.

2. Within two years, the management of all human services in the district shall be coordinated by one department.

3. Within one year, a new organizational arrangement shall be created to coordinate programs related to exploratory experience, work-study, career awareness; vocational and technical training.

4. During this school year, the district shall study and make proposals for the further expansion and coordination of volunteer programs.

5. Within five years, a system of competency-based education shall be developed, given a trial run, and a decision made to expand or drop the approach.

Since by this time, the project director had already been designated by the superintendent to take over the job of program evaluation after January 1[*], the Board president suggested an additional operating goal for the first-round list:

6. A director of program evaluation shall be appointed for the district.

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[*] The superintendent also had told the staff that Project Redesign would be terminated January 1, 1976, and the Board was aware of this.

The criteria which the superintendent said were the cabinet's reason for selecting the first-round goals were: (a) they did not call for a large expenditure; (b) they did not require a large diversion of staff time; (c) they did not contradict other plans for the district's future. These were also the reasons he gave to the Meadow City Times. (72)

On November 12, the Board formally indicated its "intent to take favorable action" on the six goals. They would postpone official adoption until February, so that the superintendent, staff, and DMT could work out details. The reason given for the delay was that the decision on reorganization was taking so much of everyone's time. Only one person in the audience asked to speak to the Board about the six Project Redesign goals, and she was a former DMT member. She pointed out the possibility of far-reaching ramifications of the goal on competency-based education. Other than that, the list of goals was received without comment. The project staff members were not even in the Board Room when the list was presented; they were in their office, consulting with a staff member from another district on how to do long-range planning.

The reorganization decisions were finally made, after many meetings, hearings, and simulation games. (73) In December, the decision was made to keep the seventh and eighth grades in junior high and the ninth grade in senior high – the arrangement that had existed since September. It was also decided that all three junior highs would remain in operation and that they would be known as "middle schools". In January, three elementary schools were designated to be closed after the current school year was over.

The Board's final action on the first six Project Redesign goals did not come until March 2nd. All six were adopted, but one was modified. (See Table 3 in Section 1.) Again there was very little discussion. This time no one from the audience asked to speak. Board action on the rest of the goals was not complete until November 1976. Table 3 summarizes the Board's action on the goals.

The Fate of the Goals

Only a few of the goals and the Board's action on them will be discussed here. One - the proposal for the "community school" pilot project - was the only goal that had an advocate, as well as some organized opposition present at the Board meeting at which it was considered. The other goals to be considered in this section are those whose origin was the Early Adolescent Planning Team.

The only goal that elicited much discussion at the Board meetings was the sixth one in the second round (#4.7 in the long-range plan). This was the proposal for a "community school". The principal of one of the elementary schools

made a presentation at the time of the Board's consideration of this goal. She had been doing a lot of social service referral with the people in her school's neighborhood and (with the help of the School Community Relations Planning Team) she had prepared a written document proposing expansion of the social service function at her school and requesting the hiring of a community services director to be based there. She described the needs of the neighborhood and outlined her proposal at the Board meeting on May 4th.

A neighborhood resident then asked to speak. He claimed that his letter to the Board in opposition to the proposal had 95 signatures of neighborhood residents. A second resident also spoke against the proposal. Board members presented several arguments in opposition, including:

- other community agencies already provide the services in question;

- even though money for the pilot project would be available, the district could not afford to establish such programs in all the elementary schools;

- schools probably should be limiting the kinds of services they provide, instead of expanding them, since the budget must be cut;

- a neighborhood survey that had been done by the planning team that showed evidence of need for this program was two years old and methodologically suspect;

- the city was no longer interested in supporting the project, as it had been two years earlier.

Four of the five Board members voted against the proposal, thus defeating it. Project Redesign's director said later that the principal who made the presentation was really rather relieved at the defeat. Two other planning team members who had been very enthusiastic about the proposal when they wrote it, had recently told the director that they, too, had changed their minds and no longer supported the idea.

The Board's discussion of the "community school" proposal was much more interesting than any of the discussions of the Early Adolescent Team's recommendations. The EAPT goals were: (74)

1.5 - The Guidance and Counseling Department shall assess and report on the usefulness of self-concept inventories affecting learning.

1.6 - Staff development programs for teachers of early adolescents shall be offered that emphasize practical methods of working with students having difficulties.

#4.2 — By fall 1976, middle schools shall be estab-
lished to meet more closely the educational,
social, and psychological needs of the early
adolescents in our district.

Goal #1.6 was adopted at the Board meeting of November 2, 1976. In a
memorandum prepared for the meeting, the superintendent wrote:

"This goal is particularly relevant now that the transi-
tion is occurring in the district from the junior high
school to the middle school. Professional development
activities responsive to this goal have already been pro-
vided for middle school staff members and others are
in the planning stage." (75)

The middle school proposal (Goal #4.2) was acknowledged by the Board as
having been already accomplished. The minutes contain no other comment
about this goal. *   (76)

When Goal #1.5 was considered for action by the Board on July 8,
1976, the Board members had several questions. The Guidance Director was
asked if the goal would make an extra time requirement on the staff; he replied
that it would not. The Board president complained that there were already too
many reports at Board meetings and the agenda was becoming too crowded.
The superintendent said that the Guidance and Counseling Department should
be doing this already, and he saw no reason why they should have to report to
the Board on it. Another Board member thought the use of the self-concept
inventory might excuse a teacher from getting to know a student well and mak-
ing personal judgments about the student's progress. The proposal was de-
feated by a vote of three to two.

Terminating the Project

On January 1, the director of Project Redesign became the new
director of Research, Evaluation, and Organizational Development, and Pro-
ject Redesign ceased as an official district program. But in mid-April the new

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* In a memo to the Board for their December 12, 1975 meeting, the superintend-
ent had asked for a change of official policy from a "6-3-3 organizational plan"
to a "6-2-4 organizational plan"; that is, Kindergarten through 6th grade in ele-
mentary school, 7th and 8th grades in junior high, and 9th-12th grades in senior
high. "Implicit in this change in graded reorganization", he wrote, "is my intent
to work closely with the 7th and 8th grades to formulate 'middle schools', rather
than junior high schools." The Board did adopt the new policy and after that time
the name "junior high school" was no longer used.

superintendent asked the new director to resign from the district. The super-
intendent wanted to bring in a colleague from his last superintendency to a posi-
tion in the cabinet, so he asked the director to go. The director had known that
some community members had criticized him and had opposed his being kept in
a cabinet position as Director of Evaluation, but apparently he had no warning
of impending dismissal. He immediately began a job search and was gone from
the district entirely by mid-June.

The last meeting of the Design Management Team was on April 27,
1976. Only four of the thirteen members were present. They discussed the
memorandum that the director had prepared for the Board about the second round
of goals for consideration, but not for long. Mostly they exchanged pleasantries
and news about what they had been doing. The director announced his resignation,
which would be official when the next afternoon's paper came off the press. Af-
ter a little reminiscing, the group adjourned.

Around the 20th of June, the research director had a meeting with the
Board president and the superintendent. This time, the Board president wanted
to postpone further consideration of Project Redesign goals, because of over-
loaded agendas, but the superintendent wanted to continue acting on them at about
the same pace. The superintendent's wishes were followed and the research
director prepared a list of the next set of goals for consideration.

During the summer of 1976, the office of Project Redesign was dis-
mantled and the research director began a new participatory planning project
(this time at the building level) in two secondary schools. On July 9, the re-
search director sent a memorandum to the DMT, telling them where the former
director had gone and asking them to "keep in touch". On November 2, the
Board took action on the last set of goals; there were no acknowledgements
that this was the last Board action on Project Redesign, nor were there any
words of thanks to those who had participated. The project ended quietly.

Analysis

The Long Life of Project Redesign

Project Redesign was a major program in the school district if for
no other reason than that it went on for more than five years. The idea for the
project was proposed in a speech in February 1971; the consultant to the super-
intendent then suggested a one-year project. The project was not adopted by
the Board until October, 1971. At that time, it was to be one year of planning,
followed by several years of implementing changes.

The director arrived in July, 1972. In September, he asked for the
appointment of a Convening Committee that would plan the planning procedure.

So the first year went by (October 1971 to September 1972) without anything happening except the hiring of the director. The Board seemed to have forgotten that they had approved the project only for one year - 1971-72 - and they never reapproved it in 1972-73.

Early drafts of the Convening Committee's report called for two-year appointments of all Project Redesign participants and stipulated that the Board of Education would have to make new provisions for the project after two years. Later drafts of the Committee's report lengthened the life of the project, and the final draft specified two and one-half years for preparation, exploration, assessment, design, and decision-making; and two years for implementation. The Convening Committee presented its report on how Project Redesign should be set up in February 1973, two years after the superintendent first proposed the Project.

In November 1973, the Design Management Team submitted a Project Redesign "Management Plan" to the Board of Education. It called for a first draft of a comprehensive plan in mid-1975, a second draft in the spring of 1976, the acceptance of the comprehensive planning model in mid-1977; and it proposed further implementation and new needs assessment for beyond 1977. The second annual Management Plan, submitted to the Board in January, 1975, looked into the future only as far as the 1975-76 school year, and concentrated on a schedule for producing the long-range plan by spring of 1975.

But the "draft" of the long-range plan was not presented to the Board until September 1975, and the first of its proposals weren't adopted by the Board until March 1976, more than five years after the project had been proposed in the superintendent's speech. And the new superintendent said at that time that the district should not move too quickly in considering the proposals that all these people put so much time and effort into writing.

It is interesting to speculate as to why this continual lengthening occurred. Perhaps the participants in the project were so impressed with the importance of what they were doing that they wanted to be sure to take enough time to do it well. Perhaps they liked what they were doing so well that they didn't want to quit. Perhaps the director pushed for a longer project so that he could keep his job. Perhaps people who really wanted to change the system wanted to lengthen the project so as to involve more and more people, and thus build up support for the change effort. Probably all of these are true to some extent.

The Organized Anarchy Model would explain the phenomenon as a kind of "inertia". Anything that requires great coordination of organizational effort to start is hard to get going; anything that requires great coordination of organizational effort to stop is hard to stop. (77) We have seen that there

was a very slow and gradual termination of the project after the new superin-
tendent officially ended it on December 31, 1975.

What were the apparent consequences of the project's long duration?
One was that people felt they didn't know what the project was doing. There
were long periods when nothing much was happening, and little communication
went out. The newspaper didn't report very much on the project, because it
was no longer news. People who weren't involved in going to project meetings
weren't aware of its existence.

Another consequence was that by the time the plan was written, the
only people who cared much about its contents were the Project Redesign staff
and some of the DMT members. Outcome-concerned participants had grown
impatient with the long wait for something to change because of Project Rede-
sign's efforts, so they quit and joined other garbage cans, (e.g., EAPT mem-
bers who left and went to the Middle School Planning Committees). People who
had participated in the project primarily out of educational, pleasurable, or
obligational motivation were not very interested in the content of the plan.

In other words, enthusiasm for making changes through Project Re-
design really died down over the five years. People either gave up on its abil-
ity to make changes, or they satisfied themselves with other benefits of parti-
cipation. In addition, any controversial issues that might have come up had a
chance to cool down; people forgot why they had felt the proposal was important
or else their priorities changed. (A good example is the Community School
proposal - one-time supporters of the goal changed their minds and became
opponents.)

A third important consequence of the long duration was that the or-
ganization had time to make changes, incrementally, as they were being talked
about at project meetings. People were educating themselves about new and
better ways of doing things as they were participating in the project. It is not
hard to imagine that they altered their own behavior in their own corners of the
organization. It is also true that community thinking evolved as the Project Re-
design discussions were going on. Thus, the middle school was a reality, at
least in the minds of the community, before the Board considered formal action
on adopting "middle schools" as policy. When the middle school goal came up
on their agenda, they merely acknowledged that it had already been accomplished.
It is very hard to say whether community thinking affected Project Redesign dis-
cussions, or whether Project Redesign discussions and reports changed com-
munity thinking. We cannot establish whether or not there would have been mid-
dle schools in the community or not, had there been no Project Redesign. The
point is that the long period of time between formulation of proposals in the Plan-
ning Teams and their consideration by the Board often meant that the Board's
action was irrelevant as to whether the proposals made changes either in be-
havior in the schools or in people's thinking about what should be done there.

IX. WHAT PEOPLE THOUGHT ABOUT PROJECT REDESIGN

Probably the most interesting question to be asked about Project Redesign is "was it worth it?" In an effort to monitor what people thought about that and to evaluate the impact of the project, the research staff conducted several interviews and sent out some questionnaires. In this section, we will first consider the responses to some of the questions in the interviews and questionnaires. Second, we will present a set of Organized Anarchy ideas for interpreting the responses. Third, we will consider the pre-project attitudes of administrators, teachers, students, and parents from data that were collected at the beginning of the project. Finally, we will interpret people's opinions about the project after it was over, in the light of their opinions before the project began, and in the light of our model.

Board and Cabinet Evaluation of Project Redesign

All Board and Cabinet members were interviewed in the summer of 1974 and again in December and January of 1975-76. Both times they were asked their expectations for the project, and in the case of the later interviews, whether or not their expectations had been met.

Almost every Board member interviewed in December 1975 said that the long-range plan had been a disappointment. The new superintendent said:

"....in some ways (the long-range plan) fell short of
initial expectations, with the futuring and think tanks.
I expected it to be more penetrating, to propose more
fundamental changes, rather than the patchwork that it
is." (78)

One of the cabinet members, who said he was very disappointed in the long-range plan, commented:

"I thought the product would be a Master Plan which would
say: In 5 years, we will be here. These are the re-
sources needed; here's an estimate of the budgets, and
measures to determine our progress. This document
represents point zero in planning. The preamble is good.
They should have tried to say: Here's what the graduate
of 1980 will be like; this is what we want. It may mean
changing the whole organization and figuring costs....." (79)

It seemed to the interviewer that most Board and cabinet members had expectations similar to these, or at least thought that they had similar expectations, in retrospect. But one cabinet member seemed to disagree:

"But I would say, 'Well, what did you expect?' You
couldn't expect to revolutionize the system." (80)

When asked if they thought there were any discernable changes in
the district due to Project Redesign, four Board members and six cabinet
members said yes. The interviews took place just after the Board and the
cabinet had decided on six goals that would be the first to be presented to
the Board for formal action. Four cabinet members and two Board mem-
bers mentioned one or more of the proposed actions in those six goals as
changes that had been made. Two cabinet members and one Board member
said that the discernible changes were in the areas of more open decision-
making and more participation in discussion of educational issues.

One cabinet member and one Board member were not sure that the
project was the cause of any changes, but they thought perhaps some decisions
had been made easier because of the work of the project. The superintendent
agreed with this position. One cabinet member was not sure whether the pro-
ject had made any changes, and two cabinet members felt that it definitely had
not.

The best thing about the project, according to most Board members
and cabinet administrators, was the attempt to get people involved in planning
and decision-making, and the good will that that generated. Two administrat-
ors said the project educated people to the way the district is run and that it
created understanding, interest, and enthusiasm for schools among community
members. Two Board members and two cabinet members said the best thing
about the project was the participation by a large number of people. One ad-
ministrator said that the "process" was the best thing, while another said that
"mobilization of talent" was best. "We showed the community that we were
open to their participation and ideas", said one cabinet administrator, who con-
sidered that the best thing; and one Board member emphasized that there had
been "broad input".

Three of the respondents emphasized the planning aspects of the pro-
ject as being better than the participation. One Board member felt that the
most important accomplish.ent was the development of assessment instruments
and information-gathering procedures. Two administrators said that the best
thing about the project was merely the recognition that planning is a good thing
for a school district to do.

Finally, one administrator said that the project certainly involved a
lot of people, but that he didn't know whether that was good or bad.

Middle Management Evaluation of Project Redesign

About the first of April 1976, the Project Redesign research staff
sent out a questionnaire to 121 "middle managers" in the district, asking them
to evaluate the impact of Project Redesign. This was just after the first round
of six goals had been approved by the Board of Education. The response rate
was not high — only 41.3 percent. Eight of the fifteen Program Directors or
Coordinators (53.3 percent), 17 of the 42 principals and assistant principals
(40.5 percent), and 25 of the 64 department heads (39.1 percent) returned
the questionnaire. The Program Directors/Coordinators include such varied
people as Coordinator of Music, Director of Adult Education, and Prog
Specialist for the Hard of Hearing, but of the three groups, this one has the
most contact with central office administrators. Principals and their assist-
ants are located in each school building, but have occasional meetings with the
central administration. Department heads are teachers in the secondary
schools who have been designated as leaders in their curriculum areas.

Principals and assistant principals tended to give the project a more
positive evaluation than either of the other two groups. The department heads
gave by far the most negative comments. Whether or not the respondents had
participated in the project did not seem to affect how they felt about it.

Some of the comments indicated that the respondents had some ex-
pectations for the project that were unfulfilled. These are listed in Table 15.

TABLE 15

RESPONSES SUGGESTING UNMET EXPECTATIONS

Department Heads:

"My area was not dealt with." (4 respondents said this)
" Final result was very disappointing."

Principals:

"Could lead to unrealistic expectations."
"It might have been capable of reshaping the district,
but the purpose was never clear."
"Some expectations cannot be met."
" Maybe my expectations were too high."

Specialists:

"The participants were led to believe.....could actually
redesign the specific operations of the district."

In all, ten of the fifty respondents expressed the idea of unmet expectations. Another important source of negative evaluations appears to be a generalized negative feeling toward central office administration. Thirteen of the fifty respondents expressed anti-central office feelings. Responses of this type are found in Table 16.

TABLE 16

RESPONSES SUGGESTING ANTI-CENTRAL OFFICE FEELINGS

Department Heads:

"It seems to me one of the responsibilities of the superintendent and his staff is PLANNING."

".....the lack of trust people have in decision-making.

".....always seemed more a prestige-building public relations thing than anything else."

"Somebody got a fat job.....the inefficient ordering procedures.....teachers are underpaid."

"Cynicism....hausfrau input.....the teachers don't get credit; also criticism of the Director.

"Ego satisfaction is main benefit."

"Project is a boondoggle; brass have ignored good recommendations.....dreamers who have never met classes for years."

Principals:

"Leadership should have been different."

"Many seem to add PR personnel to the list of central office administrators they feel are overburdening the district."

"Involved a lot of people, but recent decisions indicate this is not wanted and not valuable."

Specialists:

"School board action on things that don't cost money and don't make many changes."

"Should have had a different director."

"Recognize PR as PR (public relations?) and don't try to pass it off as rational planning for the future."

When asked, "What were the main benefits to the district from having Project Redesign?", respondents gave answers that fit roughly into three categories: Sixteen said the doing of long-range planning was the main benefit; sixteen said the involvement of so many people; and twenty-one said they felt there were no benefits, or that they didn't know. Principals and assistants were most likely to think long-range planning was the main benefit. Department heads were most likely to say there were no benefits or they didn't know of any, and were least likely to say that long-range planning was the main benefit of the project.

Most of the department heads felt that Project Redesign had not made discernible changes in the district, particularly in their part of the district. About half the principals and assistant principals and about one-third of the directors and coordinators thought there had been no changes. A few of the respondents felt that there had been a significant change in the way decisions were being made: that is, that the decision-making processes had become more open to the input of staff, students, and community members as a result of Project Redesign.

Participants' Evaluations of Project Redesign

A detailed report on participation in Project Redesign has been presented in _Who Participates? A Field Study of Participation in Planning in a School District_ by Nelly Stromquist in collaboration with Rudolph Johnson (1975). This section will highlight some of those findings. The data were collected in 1974 and 1975 from those participants who had been involved for more than six months in a planning team. Ninety-one of the 114 participants responded to the questionnaire.

Participants were asked, "What was the main reason you joined the planning team?" The reason most often given was that the participant had "a special interest in educational issues". Only 10 percent said that they joined because they were dissatisfied with the school district. (Many of those were students.) "Special interest in educational issues" was the reason most often named by both parents and non-teaching staff. Teachers most often said that wanting "to participate in decisions that will affect the school system" was the main reason they chose to participate. Students most often gave the reason that they were "asked personally to participate". (81)

Participants were asked what they liked best about participating in the planning task. Most often mentioned was "interaction between community and staff people". Second most often mentioned were "learning from discussions with others, exchanging viewpoints", and "learning about education". Only 15 percent said that "accomplishing planning objectives" was the best-liked aspect, and 13 percent liked "doing work with others". Least often mentioned were "general sense of civic duty" and "learning how small groups function". Table 17 aggregates these responses into four categories - Interaction, Learning, Planning, and Duty.

TABLE 17

BEST-LIKED FEATURES OF PARTICIPATING IN THE PLANNING TASK

	% of Responses
INTERACTION	69
- Interaction between community and staff people	
- Doing work with others	
- Learning from discussions with others; exchanging viewpoints	
LEARNING	23
- Learning about education	
- Learning about the functioning of small groups	
PLANNING	15
- Accomplishing planning objectives	
DUTY	3
- General sense of civic duty	
(N = 143)	Source: Stromquist, p. 75

Parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, and students differed in what they liked best about participating, just as they differed in their reasons for joining. Parents and non-teaching staff were most enthusiastic about what they learned, while students were more likely than other groups to enjoy accomplishing planning objectives. None of the non-teaching staff mentioned liking accomplishing planning objectives. Of all groups, students were least likely to mention enjoyment of interaction.

Virtually all participants listed as their "least-liked" feature of the planning experience some description of the inability of teams to function well in planning. The most common complaint was "failure of other members to work as a team; ineffectual members.." Twenty-four percent of the responses fell into this category. Ten percent of the responses referred to the dislike of the "slow pace of the participatory process". Nine percent said they liked least the lack of clarity of the task; eight percent said they least liked the failure to accomplish planning goals; and seven percent said they had a feeling of futility, that the proposals would come to nothing.(82)

Most of the complaints that were not directly related to frustration with the planning task were concerned with the time that participants had to spend on the project. Fifteen percent of the responses showed that the participants liked least the "demands participating made on personal time". Other problems were "inconvenient meeting times" and "short deadlines". (83) Even these complaints about the time involved could indicate the participants were disappointed in their ability to accomplish the planning task they had set out to do. The way we determine how well our time has been used depends, by and large, on what we feel we obtained as a result of the time spent. "Time wasted" is a function of both the number of minutes or hours spent and of the value of the activity. Thus, an hour of waiting in line might be considered a much greater waste of time than an entire afternoon spent sleeping in the sun at the beach. The participants in the planning teams may have been saying that the demands of participation on the participants' time were too great for what was accomplished by it.

Finally, participants were asked to assess the impact of the project on the school district. (These data were collected before the long-range plan was written and, therefore, before the Board had acted on any proposals.) More than half the responses expressed the certainty that the quality of decision-making would decrease if the project were to stop at that point. Participants felt that decisions would be made with less foresight, with fewer good ideas, and that there would be more disorganization. But one-quarter of the responses said the project was having no impact or that the respondent didn't know what its impact would be. Furthermore, half the non-teaching staff's responses fitted into the "don't know, or no effect" category. (84)

Analysis

Although the evaluations reported in this section were done at different times and different groups of people were polled,* there seem to be some common themes:

1. Project Redesign was an important and good thing for the district to do.

2. Long-range planning and attempting to anticipate the future is good.

3. We didn't do a very good job of proposing changes, especially considering the time we invested.

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* There was some overlap, in that some of the middle managers were also in the participant group.

4. A large number of people came to meetings and "got involved" in school district decision-making.

5. We enjoyed getting to know each other, and we learned a lot.

We have seen that Project Redesign was a somewhat amorphous program that lasted over a period of several years. It was amorphous because all kinds of issues and groups were included in it without any particular justification. People who were associated with the project - for instance, the director - were also involved in other things not necessarily within Project Redesign; for example, a budget priorities survey of the community. In other words, the boundaries between what was Project Redesign and what was normal, on-going activity of the district were vague. A person who was evaluating the project would have to decide what things he considered to be inside and what things he considered to be outside the project.

We have seen that there were conflicting, uncertain, and changing goals and expectations for the project. The superintendent talked about the "sweeping changes" it would make. But participants tended to choose to become involved because they had an interest in education, rather than because they were dissatisfied with the way things were. Sometimes the goal seemed to be to get people involved; sometimes it was getting public recognition for the project outside the district. At the end of the project, the main purpose was to produce a long-range plan - which was not an important goal at the beginning. The goals of Project Redesign were ambiguous.

As a set of events, Project Redesign could be somewhat confusing to an observer. Besides the fact that issues and people were sometimes within and sometimes outside the project, the parts of the project itself were rather disconnected. The Convening Committee had some meetings, then stopped; the task forces had some meetings; then stopped; the planning teams had some meetings, then stopped; the long-range plan was written, then the authors gave it over to the Board of Education. Sometimes the papers produced by one segment flowed into the next segment (e.g., the planning teams contributed proposals to the long-range plan). But the connections were often loose, as we have seen. People who participated in one segment might not have participated in any other. A person who was evaluating the project might have had experience with only a part of it - and that part might have been only loosely connected with the others.

We might say, then, that the project was an ambiguous set of events. There was not agreement on what it was supposed to accomplish. It was not clear what events should be considered part of the project. Most people had experience with only parts of the project; relatively few people saw enough of the whole to have a complete picture. Even its tangible product - the long-range plan - is ambiguous.

Yet the organization and its members made evaluations of the project, and these separate evaluations had quite a bit in common. We will be interested in three questions: How is it that members of the organization come to make sense of this project; that is, how do they determine whether it was good or bad? How does it happen that there is some agreement on what was good and what was bad, even though diverse people with diverse expectations and diverse experiences made the evaluations? Finally, when there are differences in the evaluations given by different people, to what may we attribute those differences?

The Model

March and Olsen (85) have delineated some propositions about how organization members come to believe an interpretation of events in the organization's life. We will use these propositions to aid in understanding how Project Redesign was evaluated by the Meadow City School District. The propositions involve these variables, which are attributes of individual members:

- whom the individuals trust
- their values
- extent to which they feel integrated into the organization
- what they saw; amount of participation and how they perceived it
- to whom they attribute credit for the occurrence of events

The propositions are:

1. An organizational participant will - to the extent to which he is integrated into the organization - see what he likes. To the extent to which he is alienated from the organization, he will see what he dislikes.

2. An organizational participant will - to the degree he is integrated into the organization - like what he sees. To the extent to which he is alienated from the organization, he will dislike what he sees.

3. An organizational participant will - to the extent to which he trusts others with whom he has contact - like what they like. To the extent to which he distrusts others with whom he has contact, he will dislike what they like.

4. An organizational participant will - to the extent he trusts others with whom he has contact, see what they see. To the extent to which he distrusts others with whom he has contact, he does not see what they see.

5. An organizational participant will come to trust others whom he sees as producing relevant events that he likes and preventing relevant events that he dislikes.

6. An organizational participant will come to believe that people he trusts cause events he likes and that people he distrusts cause events he dislikes.

7. An organizational participant will come to believe that events are relevant if he agrees about them with people he trusts and disagrees about them with people he distrusts.

8. An organizational participant will be active to the extent to which his seeing, liking, and trusting are unambiguous.

9. An organizational participant will - to the extent to which the organizational structure and his activity permit - seek contact with people he trusts and avoid contact with people he distrusts.

10. An organizational participant will feel integrated into an organization to the extent to which he likes the relevant events that he sees.

Therefore, according to our set of propositions, the answer to the question: "How do people make sense of the project?" (decide whether it's good or bad) is:

Participants in the organization think about their experience with the project and then (a) relate it to people they know and interact with; (b) relate it to how they feel about the rest of the organization and their place in it; (c) relate it to values they had before; (d) try to determine who caused what.

The first thing that is obviously true, if we believe these propositions, is that an ambiguous event is not going to convert many people to being more favorable toward the organization, nor will it alienate those who were previously not. A person who is happy with the organization will interpret ambiguous events as good; a person who's unhappy will interpret ambiguous events as bad. (Propositions 1 and 2).

A person will like an event he attributes to a trusted person, but if he likes an event, he will attribute it to someone he trusts. The same association holds for distrusted persons and unliked events (Propositions 3 - 6).

The events that a person considers relevant for an evaluation of the project depend on the extent to which his evaluation of them agrees with those of people he trusts and differs from those of people he distrusts. Therefore, if the person has a different experience than someone trusted (or the same experience as someone distrusted), that experience will be disregarded. (Proposition 7)

Proposition 8 says that active participants in the organization will be those who are very positive and those who are very negative about it. Thus, people in the middle who might be swayed to more positive or more negative feelings about the organization as a result of experiences of interacting within it, are the least likely to participate in those experiences.

Because the individual seeks contact with trusted persons and avoids contact with distrusted persons, he presumably spends as much time as possible interacting with those with whom he agrees. And since "seeing" and "liking" depend on shared perceptions with trusted persons, mutually-held expectations will be fulfilled. The person who did feel integrated will have that feeling reinforced. The person who was alienated will become more so. (Propositions 9 and 10)

Let us determine the extent to which these propositions are borne out in our data about Project Redesign.

Trust

First, let us consider what our respondents' predispositions might have been before the project began. A helpful source for this is the report of the Needs Assessment Task Force, who surveyed school and community members in the fall of 1973 – relatively early in the project.

Teachers

The Needs Assessment report has some evidence for the fact that teachers* felt some distrust of administration. One of the questions was: How much are district administrators available to talk with concerned persons? Forty-eight percent of the teachers thought that district administrators were available "often" or "very often". This compares with 91 percent of the principals and 86 percent of the cabinet administrators who gave those answers. All of the cabinet members and 91 percent of the principals thought that principals are responsive to the concerns of teachers "often" or "very often". But only 78 percent of the teachers agreed with them. Only 60 percent of the teachers thought that "administrators are responsible for their own performance"; 71 percent of the cabinet and 77 percent of the principals agreed. [86]

Two open-ended questions were included about what respondents liked and disliked most about the district. The answers were quite varied, but the one most often mentioned by teachers was the lack of communication between faculty and administration. One out of five teacher dislikes fell into this category. In addition, "ineffectual administrators" was the category with the next highest number of teacher complaints. Sixteen percent of teacher dislikes were in that category. The authors of the report had this comment about dislikes of communication:

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* Teachers in the Needs Assessment were sampled: 50 percent were elementary teachers and 50 percent were secondary teachers. The department heads in our evaluation study are teachers; they would correspond to the secondary teachers in the Needs Assessment.

"There were more negative than positive comments from
the staff concerning faculty-administration communica-
tion." (p. 59)

In spite of the fact that most respondents (including community members and
students) felt that communication between the community and the district and
between parents and teachers was good, faculty-administration communication
was not.

Principals

The Needs Assessment information seems to indicate that principals
are people in the middle. Sometimes their answers agree more with those of
teachers, sometimes with those of central office administrators, and some-
times with those of parents.

Twenty-nine percent of the dislikes of principals were in the area of
the district's over-responsiveness to community pressure. Twenty-four per-
cent were in the arbitrary ways decisions are made. The first dislike indi-
cates disagreement with the community; the second indicates disagreement
with the central office. In evaluating teachers' and administrators' taking
responsibility for their performance in their jobs, principals were more char-
itable toward teachers than cabinet administrators were, and principals were
also more charitable toward cabinet administrators than teachers were.

Principals were more likely than any other group to say that parents
feel welcome to talk to administrators and that district administrators are
available to talk with concerned people. This may indicate that they think this
is important. In addition, 32 percent of the things that principals like fell into
the category of school/community relationship.

Cabinet

Less than half of the cabinet administrators thought that teachers take
responsibility for their own performance "often" or "very often". They were
less inclined than principals to think administrators were available to talk or
that concerned persons felt welcome to talk to administrators, but they were
more likely than any other group to think that the Board keeps in touch with
citizens. Their dislikes did not fall into any reportable categories.

Students

The Needs Assessment survey showed that less than half the junior
high students and about one-quarter of senior high students thought that "prin-
cipals are willing to respond to concerns of students".(87) Fifty-one percent

of junior high students and 41 percent of senior high students said that "teachers
are willing to respond to concerns of students "often" or "very often". (88)
Forty-five percent of junior high students and 44 percent of senior high students
said that "students [illegible] to talk with teachers" - "often" or "very often".(89)
However, students [illegible] trust counselors more. Seventy-five percent of
senior high [illegible] said "Counselors are willing to respond to concerns of
students", and 79 percent of the junior high students agreed with them. (90)

"Teachers are responsible for their own performance" - "often" or
"very often" was agreed to by 31 percent of junior high and 43 percent of senior
high students. Thirty-seven percent of junior high students and 29 percent of
senior high students thought that "Administrators are responsible for their own
performance". (91)

Who trusted whom ? <u>Teachers</u> seemed to distrust administrators in
general, but they trusted principals more than other administrators. Forty-
eight percent of them thought that administrators were available to talk, but
78 percent said that principals were responsive to the concerns of teachers
"often" or "very often".

<u>Cabinet administrators</u> tended not to think that teachers were responsible for
their own performance, but they listed the "professional staff in general" as
the thing they liked best about the district. We might infer that they like ad-
ministrators better than teachers. They also seemed to be saying that they
trust Board members more than they trust the public at large.

<u>The community in general</u> (total sample of the Needs Assessment) tended to
trust teachers more than administrators. The authors of the Needs Assessment
report noted:

> "Favorable comments by community [students], and staff con-
> cerning the quality of teachers far outweighed unfavorable com-
> ments..... there was more unfavorable than favorable criticism
> of the administration,.....mainly in the following areas: num-
> bers of administrators, effectiveness, and money spent on ad-
> ministration. " (92)

Secondary <u>students</u>, it would appear, trusted their counselors more
than their teachers and their teachers more than their principals.

It is difficult to determine, from the Needs Assessment Survey data,
whom the <u>principals</u> trusted. Some of their answers seem to indicate that they
trust other administrators, but one of their big complaints about the district is
the "arbitrary way in which decisions are made". A large part of their work

involves working with the community ar⁴ they value good public relations, but they complained about the district's giving in to community pressure. Perhaps being people in the middle - between teachers and top administration, and between the schools and the public - they cannot afford to trust anyone. It is interesting to note, however, that 100 percent of the principals think that "In general, Meadow City teachers do their job well. " (93)

Values

The Task Force on School/Community Profile produced a report that describes the community and the school district. A section entitled "Psychographic Meadow City: One 4-year resident's personal observations" describes well some of the values that the "typical" Meadow City resident has:

"It's a family going through school seriatim. Dad's got
his Ph. D., Mom's after hers, and the kids are in the
primary grades....

He works at living, and likes what he's doing. He may
also be inclined to want to keep things the way they are.
Good.....

.....If there's anything Meadow City people do in larger
measure than most communities, it's meet.
Meet to plan meetings.
Meet to plot strategy to get their side heard at The Meeting.
Meet to figure out how to avoid Meetings.
Meet about school. About the hospital or the high-rise. Or
Scouts, YM or YWCA, hippies, dope, or traffic (speed)
law enforcement.
And if we can't Meet, we write the Editor. Thoughtful, im-
passioned letters. The Times prints them..." (94)

The people in the community believe in education, they believe in participatory democracy, and they like to be "involved".

It is interesting to note that parents tend to be more conservative about education than do the staff of the school district. There was a Needs Assessment survey question on the importance of the development of new methods of teaching. Since almost everyone believes that innovation in teaching is important, the differences between respondent groups is only in degree of importance. However, 19 percent of parents versus 41 percent of the principals and 34 percent of the teachers believe that development of new methods of teaching is extremely important. Percentages of persons believing that development of new methods is either extremely important or very important

are: Senior high students, 61 percent; cabinet, 58 percent; teachers, 57 percent; junior high students, 57 percent; principals, 50 percent; and parents, 40 percent.(95)

The authors of the Needs Assessment report summarized the responses to the question of the most important programs and concerns in the district as follows:

> "The areas that the six adult groups considered to be the most important were basic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic) and ability to communicate orally and in writing." (96)

The values held by the members of the Meadow City school district tended to be on the conservative side, as they began their experiment in Redesign. The Needs Assessment report contains information on another interesting set of values - who should participate in school decision-making. Administrators were most likely to think that decision-making should be open to such groups as students, parents, and staff; parents were least likely. (97)

In this section, first we saw how various groups evaluated Project Redesign after it was over. Second, we presented some theoretical ideas about how people come to evaluate their experience in organizations. Finally, we tried to piece together the predispositions of the groups before the project actually started: their values, whom they trusted, their feelings of alienation and integration. Next, we will put these all together to try to explain how the different groups - teachers, cabinet, parents, directors/coordinators, principals, and students - came to their evaluations of the project.

How teachers came to evaluate the project.

Teachers tended to think of Project Redesign as the creation of top administration. They had some evidence for this; for example, the project's offices were in the central office building and the director was a member of the superintendent's cabinet. Some of the comments on Department Heads' questionnaires show that they identified the project with central office administration:

> "Professional staff's competence ignored by Board and Administration - Director was resented and was monstrously expensive..."

> (Answers as to what should have been done differently) -

> "Start at grass roots teachers and reward them generously for their efforts with release time, praise, credit, recognition, endorsement, even money where appropriate. Give much less attention to hausfrau input and a great deal more to professional staff contributions. Don't hire an expensive coordinator...."

"Oh, my - I doubt you want my answer.....the brass has ig-
nored good recommendations of mine time and time, again...."

(answers to what changes have been made as a result of project)

"If there are any, I urge you to publicize them soon. Nothing
has gravitated to our classrooms that I know of."

"Possibly the administration realizes the lack of trust people
have of decision-making in the district and have modified
their procedure slightly."

In the Needs Assessment data, we saw that teachers did not trust
administrators, especially central office administrators. Since they attributed
Project Redesign to the administration, they weren't very likely to think it was
a good project.

Teachers valued innovation very much. But if they saw any new things
happening, they were not about to attribute credit to Project Redesign (an admin-
istration project) for them. Therefore, 76 percent of department heads said
Project Redesign made no changes in the district.

Some teachers participated in planning teams, most often because they
wanted to "participate in decisions that will affect the school syste   This
finding is not inconsistent with their valuing innovations and participation. But
the interaction in the planning teams, not the accomplishment of planning objec-
ives, was the thing they liked best about participating. And only 4 out of 25
department heads thought that planning was a benefit from the project. Whether
or not they had experience on planning teams, teachers did not perceive the
project as making changes.

Teachers feel some alienation from the organization, especially from
the planning and decision-makin   spects, and especially as compared to cab-
inet administrators. The class,   )m teacher is to some extent isolated in the
classroom. One department head wrote that he/she had read a report on:

"Organizational recommendations - which turned me off
completely because they showed extreme lack of know-
ledge in my area."

Teachers are not, therefore, necessarily inclined to see something good in
organizational events. More than half (56 percent) of the department heads
saw no benefits from the project.

How the Cabinet and the Board Came to Evaluate the Project

While teachers thought that Project Redesign was a child of the central administration, cabinet and Board members[*] thought themselves not very much involved in it. They felt it was the community's project. Some of their comments from the interviews:

Board Members:

"If (the new superintendent) were to do it, it would not be the same format; it would not occur outside of the staff. Now, we have to spend a great deal of time getting the staff to 'own' the goals." (98)

"I viewed Project Redesign as a mechanism of arriving at goals that are acceptable to the community.....The most efficient way to make decisions is to get a good administrator you trust and let him do it. But if you have a distrusting constituency, you have to give visibility to decision-making. Then you have the choice of giving them the illusion of involvement or giving them real involvement." (99)

Cabinet Members:

"Some of the significant people in the school district were not involved.....Some of the people in the mainstream of the operation of the school district weren't involved. For example, the Director   rriculum and Instruction." (100)

"The best was getting   r   w people in here to understand what's going on.   ve a tremendous number of critics in this district; this community is full of bright, energetic nosey people. You can't tell them to stay out - you can't say, "We're the professionals, we'll do the job. . You have to be open." (101)

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* The Board and cabinet are consi   red to be of like mind for purposes of this section. Their evaluations tended to be very/similar and their close working relationship has usually resulted in Board members' being socialized into the role of   administrators.

"(The Plan) was presented in public prior to input from within the system. (The Cabinet) didn't go out of our way to participate. We were waiting for the traditional procedure of being invited to participate in matters which affect our areas of responsibility." (102)

"There were people who had special interests, not broad community-based representatives. It kept those people occupied for a while. Now they should be willing to get the hell out." (103)

"The new superintendent said: "As an organization outside the mainstream, it was taking a risk. By not involving key policy-makers, it can be threatening. There was some naiveness there on the part of the DMT; people in the organization have to come to own it. Then the process of implementation can begin." (104)

The Board and cabinet members also _attributed_ what happened in the project to the director of the project. For example, they said:

"I was disappointed in (the director). I thought there would be stronger leadership; it just didn't happen. (The director) didn't come into cabinet and walk us through what was happening. He didn't get us excited or involved; just gave us reams and reams of stuff. We asked him for reports, but we didn't get them. He didn't seem secure in what he was doing and he didn't seem to want to talk about it. We got fed up." (105)

"(The director) will always be identified with it and may therefore have enemies, because some people don't buy it." (106)

"I think the lack of cabinet involvement was partly due to the personality of the director of Project Redesign and partly due to the withdrawal by the cabinet. The behavior of the director is reflective of what the community wanted; they could have asked for more cabinet input." (107)

We suspected, from our examination of the Needs Assessment data, that the cabinet did not _trust_ the public, and when it came to school personnel,

they tended to like other administrators better than the rest of the staff. If these hunches are true, we can reinterpret their statements about disappointed expectations in the light of the comments quoted above. Remember that the director of Project Redesign was an outsider - someone who had not been an administrator before. He probably did not have the trust of the other top administrators.

The cabinet and Board believed in planning. They knew that that was something administrators were supposed to do. They knew that they were supposed to be experts in things like planning. They also knew that they had to keep the community happy. They did not trust the community; they did not trust the director of Project Redesign. There was no way that they could like this project that was being carried out by the community and the director, even though it was supposed to be doing something they considered important. They said they all had very high expectations for the long-range planning that the project was supposed to accomplish. This is probably true, but if they did, they also had very low expectations for the ability of amateurs to be able to do that kind of planning. They set themselves up, although they probably weren't aware of it, for their expectations to be disappointed.

The cabinet valued both long-range planning and good public relations. They trusted neither the public nor the director of Project Redesign, but they felt that Project Redesign was out of their hands and in the hands of the public and the director. They did not participate very much in the activities of the project, and they say that they were not very well informed about it. Most of their experience with the project occurred at the time when they had to decide what to do with the long-range plan. This experience must have been fairly uniform because it occurred in cabinet meetings where they were all present, and where no one else was.

If any of our groups should have felt integrated into the organization, the cabinet should have, for they were the ones who ran it. Therefore, they were most likely to be able to find something positive to say about a major organizational event (Proposition 2). They were willing to attribute credit to the director and the citizens for a good public relations event, but they didn't trust them to do something like long-range planning. As one cabinet member said:

"Any vehicle that allows active community involvement is desirable. If you want to use it to really reshape the district, it would be dangerous.... People don't expect the operational level of Project Redesign to happen..... in this time period, there was a need of people to be involved." (109)

Thus, the cabinet almost unanimously praised the project for getting so many people involved, but expressed their "disappointment" with the quality of long-range planning that was achieved.

How Parents Came to Evaluate the Project

The Needs Assessment Survey found that 83 percent of the parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "In general, Meadow City teachers do their job well". (110) Sixty-two percent of the parents agreed with the statement, "The Meadow City School District gives its citizens their money's worth." Only 27 percent disagreed with that statement and 11 percent had no opinion. (111) We might infer from this that parents trusted that the school personnel were doing a good job at the time the project was getting started (1973).

It is clear that the Meadow City community places a high value on the education of their children. Ninety-three percent of the parents in the Needs Assessment survey agreed that, "The citizens of Meadow City care about the quality of education." (112)

They also valued participation in their community activities; they liked going to meetings. They were not, however, especially convinced of the importance of educational innovation.

Those who participated were either most integrated or most alienated, according to Proposition 8. The most common answer of our participant-respondents was that they joined Project Redesign because of a "special interest in educational issues". It is possible that the sample of respondents was biased toward integration, rather than alienation, so we would expect their evaluations to be positive. (Propositions 1 and 2)

Their evaluations, then, had to do with learning and personal interaction: the pleasures of participating. The best thing about the project was the things participants learned and the enjoyment of interacting with others who were interested in education. Only six percent of the parents thought the best thing was planning. The least-liked feature was the inability of participants to work as a team - but this inability seems to be attributed to fellow team members who did not participate fully or work hard enough.

Parents could ignore the fact that long-range plans specifying big changes were not done very competently by the project because (a) for the most part, they liked   ools as they were; (b) participating in the project was for them an end in   .

How Directors and Coordinators Came to Evaluate Project Redesign

The Needs Assessment survey does not give us information about the directors and coordinators as a separate group, so we don't know anything about what their attitudes were before the project got under way. It seems more likely that they would trust the administration than parents since only a small part of what they do involves dealing with the public. Most of what they do involves a

particular educational program, such as music. In addition, most of them work closely with cabinet members.

Some comments on their evaluation questionnaires suggested that they identified the project with the Board of Education:

"......School Board action on things that don't cost money and also don't make many changes."

"......the project helped me to see where the Board's thinking is in specific areas of change."

They, too, had unmet expectations about the project (Table 16), but perhaps because they were oriented toward special programs, they blamed the Board for not wanting to spend money and, therefore, for not making any changes. Half of the director/coordinator group saw no benefits to the district from the project.

How Principals Came to Evaluate the Project

Data collected at the beginning of the project (1973) in the Needs Assessment indicate that principals valued innovation in teaching, open decision-making, and good public relations.

They probably thought planning was a good idea because they had training as administrators. We might also interpret their dislike of "arbitrary decisions" and "overresponsiveness to community pressure" as expressions of a desire for more planning.

In the data on participants, collected as the planning teams were finishing their work, principals are included in the "non-teaching staff" group. Half of that group said that they didn't know of anything that might happen would the project end at that point. It would appear that they perceived that the project was having little effect on the district at that time. None of the non-teaching staff participants felt that there would be a decrease in citizen and student input, if the project should be terminated then. This is interesting in the light of the principals' interest in more open decision-making. They seem to be saying that they did not see a great effect attributable to Project Redesign upon the amount of citizen and student input to decision-making. They probably were not saying that citizen and student input were not important.

None of the non-teaching staff thought that planning had been the best part of participating; thus, at that point, none of the principals who participated in planning teams thought that planning was the best thing about participating. If it is true, as we assumed, that planning was important to principals, they did not seem to enjoy the doing of planning in planning teams.

Data were collected almost two years later for the survey of middle management. When asked to evaluate the reports produced by the project, principals for the most part considered them valuable and were glad for the information they provided. When asked about the benefits of the project, only three of seventeen principals thought there were no benefits. Ten responses indicated planning was the main benefit, and eight responses indicated that involving a lot of people was the main benefit. This pattern of responses is interesting in the light of the responses to the participant study questions, mentioned above. In that study, non-teaching staff (including principals) who had been planning team participants did not list accomplishment of planning objectives as their best-liked aspect of participating. In the middle management survey, two principals who had been participants in planning teams mentioned both planning and the involvement of many people as the main benefit to the district from the project. Of course, the questions in the two surveys were differently worded, and there was quite a lot of time between the two.

The principals' answers on the middle management questionnaire were, as we said, the most positive of the three groups. There was very little criticism of the project, except that there were some unmet expectations. About half of the principals could think of nothing that should have been done differently. About half thought the project had made no changes. One principal said he was "sorry to be so negative".

We have seen that it is difficult to determine whom principals trusted. They are people in the middle. They tended to see good in the project, probably because they had a lot of practice and placed much value on being diplomatic. As a group, they did not seem to attribute either credit or blame. One principal (a planning team participant) wrote:

> "The project was confusing, as status and function
> seemed to change in power struggle....."

He seemed to be saying that the fate of the project was not in the hands of the participants – or at least, that he didn't feel able to help direct it. But neither did he try to analyze the forces in the "power struggle".

It is difficult to analyze the evaluation statements of the principals, as a group, in terms of the "seeing, liking, and trusting" model. Perhaps if we were to analyze each as an individual, we would be better able to apply the model. What is apparent about the principals is that they are inclined to interpret organizational events favorably, and that they are diplomatic.

How Students Came to Evaluate the Project

Students who participated in Project Redesign were not representative of the student population. They tended to be more verbal, more active in extra-

curriculum, and more experienced in committee work than other students. They were probably in that small percentage of students who trusted administration. They were asked to participate - 44 percent of the students in the participation study said that was the main reason they joined the project, although there were a few who said they joined primarily because they were "dissatisfied with the school district". So a few of the student participants were probably more alienated than the average, but most were more integrated.

More students than any other participants liked the accomplishment of planning objectives, but they were almost evenly distributed over "learning", "interaction", and "planning" as things they liked best about participating. More students than any other participants thought the quality of decisions in the district would decrease if the project were to end.

We have seen that students value "development of innovations in teaching". They also tend to value their own participation in educational decision-making. The student participants probably trusted the administrators and teachers who asked them to participate, and therefore trusted that the project was good and important. Students tended to interact less in planning team meetings, and were less likely than other groups to value the interaction. They were the most likely group to think that the quality of decision-making would decrease, were the project to end at the planning team stage. They were probably idealistic and prone to believe that what they were doing was important, since being in Project Redesign probably elevated their status in the eyes of at least some of their peers.

Summary

Although the "seeing, liking, and trusting" model was designed to explain how individuals within organizations make evaluations of events in the life of the organizations, we have attempted to use it to explain how groups make evaluations. We have taken this liberty because we believe that persons within groups that are defined by organizational role are likely to have similar outlooks. They are also likely to interact with each other more than they interact across roles and, thus, the seeing, liking, and trusting of individuals within roles mutually reinforce each other.

We said at the beginning of this analysis that we would explain how groups of diverse individuals agree in their evaluations and, in the cases where they disagree, why they disagree.

(a) We saw that most of our groups agreed that long-range planning and attempting to anticipate the future was a good thing for the district to do. Teachers probably agreed to this because they valued innovation; the Board and the cabinet because they valued rational planning; parents because they care very

much about the quality of their children's education; principals because they did not like arbitrary decisions and yielding to community pressure; and students because they trusted the teachers and administrators who asked them to participate.

(b) Most of the groups agreed that the project did not do a very good job of proposing changes. Board and cabinet probably agreed to this because they never thought the public and the director capable of proposing good changes; teachers agreed, but blamed the central administration; parents thought maybe it was because they didn't work hard enough, but overlooked that because they liked the schools they way they were and, anyway, the project was enjoyable; the program directors blamed the Board for not intending to fund any changes; and the principals de-emphasized the shortcomings of the project because they were diplomatic.

(c) It was clear to everyone that a large number of people came to meetings and "got involved" in school district decision-making. Almost everyone thought that this was good but again they had different reasons for thinking so. Teachers and students valued their right to participate in decision-making, and principals tended to agree that they had that right; parents also valued their right to be in on the decisions, and besides, they liked going to meetings; Board and cabinet members valued good public relations and felt that involvement promoted understanding. Participants enjoyed getting to know each other, and learned a lot.

(d) Most of the participants enjoyed the interaction with other participants in the project. The data show that the students were somewhat less likely than other groups to enjoy the interaction. To some extent, they were conscious of their lesser status and of being "token students" on the committees. (113) Most people who were in the participant study were much more enthusiastic about the "pleasures of the process" of participating than about the accomplishing of planning objectives. However, there were drop-outs from the ranks of participants who were not in the participant study. It is possible that they did not enjoy the pleasures of the process as much, but we have no data on their attitudes nor on their reasons for dropping out.

The "Seeing, Liking, and Trusting" model of organizational learning has shown us that the organization does not, as one actor, take stock of its experience and decide what is good or bad. The organization is many actors who see what they see and like what they like because of where they work within the organization. Who can say what the organization will "learn" from its experience with Project Redesign?

X. SUMMARIZING CONCLUSIONS

The Meadow City School District in 1971 was calm and peaceful. It had a dearth of important problems and a wealth of competent decision-makers with nothing to do. It had a demand for participation by the community that was

not connected to any particular issue they wanted to participate in.

The creation of Project Redesign to do comprehensive long-range planning could be seen as a creation of Garbage Cans, or opportunities for decision-making. Planning is an ambiguous term and allows any topic, problem, or solution to be relevant. Planning prescribes no set times when a particular kind of decision must be made; time is to some degree suspended, since the time-frame is "long-range" and immediate problems are avoided as much as possible. The leadership is to some extent opening up a boundary-less space for partici-pants to work on. Anything can be discussed and all potential participants are eligible to participate. And since trying to anticipate the future is a commendable enterprise, an aura of virtue prevails.

The person who can facilitate the operation of a Garbage Can situation is one who has few ideas about what ought to be done, but has a good sense of how to make people enjoy participating. The Project Redesign facilitator knew how to contact people on the outside who had big names and made people feel important. The facilitator did not rule anything outside the scope of the project. The project was set for "anything goes".

The composition of the Convening Committee represented some values: (a) the right of dissenters to be heard; (b) the importance of the project (indicated by the importance of the people on the Convening Committee); (c) the right of members of all segments of the community to participate. They made the Project Redesign Garbage Can look attractive to potential participants.

The Convening Committee report outlined the structure of the project, which reflected the values of the school district and would determine the flow of problems, solutions, choices, and participants in the project. The Convening Committee established:

> The Democracy of the Informed
> The Primacy of Good Ideas
> The Far Future as the Area of Expertise

The "Democracy of the Informed" had the effect of making participa-tion in the project attractive, for three reasons. First, it bestowed on the pro-ject the virtue of being democratic. Second, it enhanced the legitimacy of the project, because it meant that some degree of expertise would be involved in the project's activities. This made the project something with which one would want to be associated. Third, it meant that by participating, people would get some training.

The "Primacy of Good Ideas" was a remedy for the lack of problems to work on. Because it stressed good procedures for obtaining Good Ideas, it

gave people something to do, once they had come to participate - they could refuse to become informed; they could do surveys; they could work on communication skills.

The emphasis on the "Far Future" was also a way to create problems to work on. Problems in the far-off future had the additional advantages of having a high probability of solubility (in a sense, you can invent a future problem to fit a solution) and a low probability of generating much conflict. In addition, it is fun to dream about the future - another feature that made Project Redesign an attractive Garbage Can.

Our data about the Design Management team illustrate two generalizations: (1) People can enjoy the pleasures of participation in Garbage Can decision-making, even though they are not motivated by the possibility of effecting outcomes; (2) when there are no problems to work on, procedures become all-important.

The particular case of the Early Adolescent Planning Team allows us some insight as to what happens when an immediate, "near future" problem, about whose outcome people have strong preferences, wanders into a Garbage Can. First, there is conflict; second, there are new participants - for, in addition to those participants who are motivated by the pleasures and duties of the process, there are new participants who are motivated because they want to effect outcomes.

The Early Adolescent Team were disappointed to find that their good procedures did not produce a Good Idea for Reorganization that even they, among themselves, could agree upon. They were also disappointed to find that the Board did not call upon them as experts in the reorganization decision, even though they had been given the authority (which came from the Board) to study issues that related to the reorganization question. Finally, they were disappointed to find that possession of the best information about early adolescent education did not mean that they could solve problems that faced the district in that area.

The reorganization question was not decided by the long-range planners, and when it became apparent that the decision would not be made in the context of Project Redesign, the outcome-oriented participants flowed into new Garbage Cans, where the decisions would be made. Only the loyal participants who, by this time, were probably motivated largely by a sense of duty and commitment to each other, were left.

The Early Adolescent Planning Team Garbage Can, then, was changed enormously when an immediate problem was dumped into it. It gained participants; it experienced conflict; it discovered that the procedures it had developed didn't work very well. When the reorganization problem left the EAPT Garbage Can, many of the participants left, too. The remaining ones were then free to use their procedures to produce recommendations for the long-range plan.

The need to produce a document - the long-range plan - was brought about because of decisions made in the DMT and promises made to the Board. But the real urgency in writing the plan came because the new superintendent wanted to have something that would represent what Project Redesign had been doing. The plan writing process meant that the Garbage Cans of Project Redesign were turned over, emptied, and left upside-down. Participation was limited to those few who could work on writing the plan. Issues were limited to those that could be written into operational goals. There were no Good Ideas that had been "validated" by all who would be affected. The "far future" was represented in the plan by three "alternative scenarios", but it was too vague to be in any of the "operational goals".

In contrast to the urgency in writing the long-range plan, no one felt a great urgency about adopting the proposals it contained. The Board and the cabinet felt pressure to take some action to acknowledge the work done by Project Redesign participants, but those who had actually formulated the proposals were not lobbying for their adoption. It is true that by this time the reorganization question was once again a burning issue, giving participants and issues other Garbage Cans to go to. Project Redesign Garbage Cans had lost their appeal.

Without important problems, without Good Ideas, and without energy from participants, almost the only significance left to Project Redesign was symbolic. The long-range plan was a symbol that the Meadow City School District had thought about the future, grappled with it, and formulated some proposals for anticipating it. The project itself, and also the Board's willingness to act upon all 36 of its proposals, was a sign to all that the authorities meant to listen to and consider carefully input to decision-making from all constituents.

There is quite a bit of evidence to show that nothing changed as a result of the project. New policies and programs, budget cuts and school closures would have happened anyway. Even the attitudes of participants and other constituents didn't change. Nevertheless, most people in Meadow City think that the project was probably a good thing. It got people interested in and thinking about educational issues. It introduced people to each other, got them to interact, and educated them. It made people feel good that they were participating in something important. And it was an important response by the bureaucracy of the district to the people's demand for participation.

NOTES

(1)   "A School- Community Profile", November 1973, p. 4

(2)   Hampson, 1971, p. 30

(3)   Ibid., pp. 102-105

(4)   Interview with Administrator A, December 1975

(5)   Interview with Administrator K, December, 1975

(6)   Meadow City Times, Feb. 4, 1971, p. 22 and Feb. 9, 1971, p. 27

(7)   Education for the People, Vol. I, p. 30

(8)   Ibid.

(9)   Interview, Feb. 11, 1975

(10)   Interview, Dec. 4, 1975

(11)   Interview with Administrator A, December 1975

(12)   Meadow City Times, Jan. 13, 1971

(13)   Meadow City Times, Feb. 12, 1976

(14)   Interview with Board Member A, January 1976

(15)   Interview with Administrator A, June 2, 1976

(16)   Interview with Administrator C, December 1975

(17)   Interviews with Administrators D and E

(18)   Minutes of the Board of Education meeting, Oct. 19, 1971

(19)   Cohen and March, pp. 114-115 and 212-213

(20)   Memo to Board, "Implementing Project Redesign", Sept. 11, 1972, p. 1

(21)   September 14, 1972

(22)   Memorandum, Sept. 11, 1972

(23)   Board of Education minutes, Sept. 14, 1972

(24)   Board of Education minutes, Sept. 19, 1972, p. 5

(25)   Ibid.

(26)   Memorandum to Board, Sept. 18, 1972, included in Board minutes

(27)   Memorandum, "Volunteers", Sept. 19, 1972, superintendent's file

(28)   Memorandum to Board, Sept. 20, 1972, superintendent's file

(29)   Minutes of the first Ad Hoc Convening Committee, PRD file

(30)   Convening Committee Report, p. 17 (emphasis in original)

(31)   Ibid., p. 4

(32)   Convening Committee Report, p. 18

(33)   Ibid., p. 19

(34)   Ibid. p. 8

(35)   Board of Education minutes, Feb. 6, 1973, p. 2

(36)   See Board Study Session minutes, Jan. 23, 1973, p. 3

(37)   From letter of April 5, 1973 to those not appointed

(38)   Interview with DMT Liaison A., Aug. 3, 1976

(39)   Convening Committee report, pp. 10-13

(40)   See DMT minutes, June 4, 1973

(41)   See, for example, DMT minutes of May 21

(42)   September 1973 Quarterly Report, p. 2

(43)   For example, memoranda of research coordinator, Aug. 13, 1973
         and Oct. 17, 1973; by the director and the research coordinator,
         Nov. 29, 1973; and by various DMT members, Oct. 19, 1973,
         Oct. 15, 1973, and Oct. 16, 1973.

(44)   See memorandum for meeting of Aug. 13, 1973

(45)   Second quarter report, Jan. 16, 1974, p. 4

(46)   See minutes for October 1, 1973

(47)   Minutes, Sept. 17, 1973

(48)   Minutes, October 1; Nov. 26; Dec. 3

(49)   Minutes, Nov. 26, p. 3

(50)   Second quarter report, Jan. 16, 1974, p. 5

(51)   Needs Assessment Survey, April 1974, p. 60

(52)   Interview with DMT Liaison A, Aug. 3, 1976

(53)   Memorandum, "Charge for Planning Team in Early Adolescent Education",
           June 28, 1974, from research coordinator.

(54)   School/Community Planning Team on the Early Adolescent:
           Report, Summer 1974

(55)   Interview with Administrator D, Oct. 22, 1975

(56)   Charge for Planning Team in Early Adolescent Education,
           June 28, 1974 (draft)

(57)   Memorandum, July 18, 1974

(58)   Cohen, March and Olsen, p. 2

(59)   DMT minutes, March 25, 1974

(60)   Interview with DMT Liaison A, Aug. 3, 1976

(61)   Interview with DMT Liaison A

(62)   DMT minutes, Feb. 3, 1975

(63)   DMT minutes, July 16, 1974

(64)   DMT minutes, Sept. 8, 1974

(65)   Research coordinator's memo to Planning Teams, Nov. 27, 1974

(66)   DMT minutes, April 25, 1975

(67)   Interview with Team Coordinators, fall 1975

(68)   Weiner, 1973

(69)   Cyert and March, p. 120-122

(70)   Notes from Oct. 20 and Oct. 27, 1975 Cabinet meetings

(71)   Notes from Nov. 3, 1975 luncheon meeting

(72)   Meadow City Times, Wednesday, Nov. 3, 1975

(73)   Meadow City Times, Friday, Dec. 12, 1975, p. 8

(74)   Interview with Administrator F, Oct. 22, 1975

(75)   Board packet for Nov. 2, 1976, enclosure 8

(76)   Minutes of Board of Education, May 4, 1976

(77)   Cohen and March, p. 206

(78)   Interview with new superintendent, Dec. 18, 1975

(79)   Interview with Administrator A, Dec. 10, 1975

(80)   Interview with Administrator G, Dec. 11, 1975

(81)   Stromquist, p. 33

(82)   Ibid., 1. 76

(83)   Ibid.

(84)   Ibid., p. 77

(85)   Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations, 1976, Chapter 4

(86)   Needs Assessment Task Force Report, Project Redesign, 1973, p. 43

(87)   Ibid., p. 40

(88)   Ibid., p. 39

(89)   Ibid.

(90)   Ibid.

(91)   Ibid., p. 43

(92)   Ibid., p. 57

(93)   Ibid., p. 30

(94)   "A School/Community Profile of the Meadow City School District", Nov. 1973, pp. 13-14

(95)   Needs Assessment Report, p. 20

(96)   Ibid., p. 13

(97)   Ibid., p. 37

(98)   Interview with Board member C, Dec. 15, 1975

(99)   Interview with Board member A, Jan. 29, 1976

(100)   Interview with administrator I, Feb. 4, 1976

(101)   Interview with administrator A, Dec. 9, 1975

(102)   Interview with administrator G, Dec. 11, 1975

(103)   Interview with Administrator H, Dec. 10, 1975

(104)   Interview with new superintendent, Dec. 18, 1975

(105)   Interview with Administrator A, Dec. 9, 1975

(106)   Interview with Administrator J, Dec. 17, 1975

(107)   Interview with Administrator I, Feb. 4, 1976

(108)   Interview with Administrator G, Dec. 11, 1975

(109)   Interview with Administrator K, Dec. 10, 1975

(110)   Needs Asssessment Report, p. 30

(111)   Ibid.

(112)   Ibid., p. 32

(113)   Stromquist, p. 76

SECTION III: THE SYMBOLIC INTERACTION MODEL

By Rudolph Johnson

Project Redesign from a Third Point of View

The two viewpoints on Project Redesign just presented concentrate on the internal workings of the organization.

In the first section, Stromquist assumes that the dominant factor in the situation is the rational, intended actions of the organizational leadership, particularly those of the superintendent. Decision-making by the superintendent dominates the outcome(s) of the project and his intentions are crucial to understanding the chain of events known as Project Redesign. Stromquist makes some assumptions about the intentions of the superintendent, and investigates events to see if those assumptions can be sustained.

Edlefson assumes that the dominant factor is the operation of a decision-making process resulting from the organizational structure, and from the individual actions of numerous persons pursuing their own interests within that structure. This structure and this decision-making process were not deliberately designed to operate in this manner. Both evolved gradually, as American educational history unfolded. In the structure resulting from this evolution, central administrators and principals have considerable influence, but the outcomes of any process such as Project Redesign depend only partially upon their intentions or desires. Instead, outcomes are largely dependent on the interaction of certain factors over which they have but limited control. Project Redesign is interpreted by Edlefson as a case in which to demonstrate the interaction of some of these organizational forces and resulting outcomes.

In this section, we will explore a third approach. The thrust will be to examine some factors about the relationship between the school system and the community it serves. Project Redesign is seen as an organizational response to the community.* More importantly, it is seen as an activity of a cultural institution which depends for its health upon the continual renewal of ideas, concepts, and attitudes concerning the schools which exist in the minds of large numbers of community members. The school system within this point of view is not a permanent feature of the landscape, like the creeks and hills surrounding Meadow City. The system is held in place not by political decisions made in the heat of elections and meetings of the Board of Education, but by the willingness of

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* The term "community" is ill-defined, of course. It must be defined with each usage if any precision in terms is to be achieved. In Project Redesign, the term "school/community" was widely used and was defined to mean "...all those persons who live within the Meadow City School District and are affected by the schools." (See comments to the Board of Education by the project director in the minutes of the Board, January 23, 1973.)

thousands of parents to daily entrust their children to a group of relative strangers called "teachers" (Meyer and Rowan, 1974), in a place called a "school". The system is built on trust and the trust is focused not on specific individuals but on the commonly-held and enforced meanings of certain key terms, which together constitute the community's definition of an acceptable school system.

Schools operate by using resources. The basic resources, however, are not taxable property and state and federal funding. More than two hundred years ago, Adam Smith argued that the wealth of nations does not consist of gold and tangible property; the wealth of nations consists instead of the skills of intelligent citizens, able and willing to produce goods and services.

Analogously, the real wealth of schools does not consist of taxable real property nor of federal grants. The real wealth, or lack of it, is found in the meanings that the schools have for the citizens, parents, and students who live in that community, and in the country at large.*

If that is so, it is wise for school managers to be concerned about what the schools mean to the community. If it is possible to assist the community to redefine "schools" and "schooling" in such a way that the educational system has richer and more positive meanings for the community at large, the schools will surely benefit.

Thinking of this kind was behind Project Redesign. In this section, we will explore the validity of this approach, both theoretically and as a basis for such a project. We will explore the effects of the community, not upon the school system in its entirety, but upon this particular project.

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* In an economic analysis, education would be one choice among many for the expenditure of scarce resources on the part of citizens. This is not an economic analysis. No scarcity is assumed. So far as we know, there is no shortage within the universe of knowledge, love (hate?), or meanings attached to education. We are concerned not with tax bases and fiscal problems, but with the meaning that "school" and "education" have for a group of people who live in an artificial entity called a "school district". A billion dollars spent under greatly differing sets of meanings for education will have greatly different effects. Educational studies have concentrated on the psychology of individuals and economic analyses of paying for schools, while giving little attention to the development of meaning for schools on a community-wide basis.

A Short Digression: Planning in Organizations

It is important at the start to sort out some of the meanings attached to the word "planning". In particular, it is important not to impose meanings on Project Redesign in regard to that term which were not put there by those who developed the project.

According to a well-developed scholarly tradition, certain types of planning do not work, particularly in government. This is not the place to review the very extensive literature on planning and decision-making in governmental institutions. The reader is referred to Michael (1973) for a summary, and a bibliography. The constraints against success in broad, deliberate, highly rational planning processes for the improvement of major institutions or agencies are staggering. These include the unpredictability of the future – along with the future actions of legislative bodies, voters, and courts; short funding cycles; the limited supply and high cost of information; limited energies and multiple distractions; and hosts of constraints arising from existing structures of laws and organizations. A basic conclusion reached by those who follow this line of thought is that change in major agencies and institutions comes about only through incremental shifts in actions and strategies which may result in nudging the system in desired long-term directions. Comprehensive long-term planning which claims to be able to produce major improvements using available decision-making channels in a highly rational manner is largely unworkable.

Project Redesign was billed from the start as a process of deliberate, directed, self-transformation of the school system. If that is interpreted to mean that the project was to develop plans very much like plans for a new dam or for an apartment building, the evidence from previous planning projects of this nature is overwhelming that such a project could not be very successful.

From this perspective, a Project Redesign must indicate a lack of sophistication on the part of school district management, assuming the intention actually was such a planning project. Hidden agendas might provide other reasons for setting up such a project, even knowing the difficulties. Improvement of public relations, or de-fusing dissident citizen groups might be among such reasons.

On the other hand, not everyone who has examined the evidence is willing to abandon the idea of broad-scale planned change in social institutions and governmental organizations. Prominent among those unwilling to do so is Michael (1973), who argues that abandoning the idea of thoughtful, intentional long-term change in our institutions is a form of fatalism. According to such views, once a major social institution exists, it can be changed only by revolutionary forces from without. As a human race, we are stuck with such institutions as the postal system or the school system, until such time as radical

political change or other outside developments force these systems to collapse or to undergo radical self-transformation.

Michael opposes such views, arguing that because we have not learned how to conduct humanistic, participatory long-term planning for the improvement of our institutions does not mean that it cannot be done. It means only that we have not learned how to do it. We have no effective applied sociology. Furthermore, active belief in the impossibility of such planned change probably helps to create that very reality, just as solid acceptance of a world view provided by, say, Freudian psychology, tends to produce behavior which confirms Freudian psychology (Becker, 1974).

Project Redesign neither proved nor disproved the case for intelligent long-term planning of social institutions. It did provide some insights useful for further exploration of that possibility.

The Shaping of Schools by Communities

Project Redesign was launched with the statement that ".....the Meadow City community must now, together, review its entire educational system." (Superintendent, 1972) The role of the community was thus stressed from the beginning. In all the statements surrounding the project, it was never billed as a process of internal organizational change. Somehow, through this project; the community was to give new shape to its schools. It was felt to be more important to consult the community than to consult experts and to analyze data.

A number of writers have recently described the means by which communities, at least in suburban and small town settings, actively shape school systems. This shaping happens not only, or even chiefly, through formal channels of decision-making, but through alternative channels of influence operating in subtle but pervasive ways on the teachers and administrators. O'Shea describes the suburban case (O'Shea, 1975), while Peshkin describes the process in a small rural community:

> "The community basically likes its way of life, and sees
> its school system as critical to its survival. The result
> is a school system that has been shaped to respond to
> the particularities of a small rural community."
> (Peshkin, 1976)

It is one thing to believe that communities shape their school systems. It is quite another matter to believe that it is possible to intervene in the process in a manner useful to the school system and the community. Nevertheless, Project

Redesign was intended to do just that. In this section, we interpret the project as an attempt, however tentative, to intervene in the on-going exchange between the school system and the community which results in the shaping of the system. This was not public relations; it was an attempt to actively shape and renew a social institution through non-traditional means.

Much of the literature on planned organizational change in schools pays scant attention to the deliberate involvement of the community in change processes. When such involvement is dealt with, the conceptual framework is often quite restricted. For example, Havelock and Havelock (1973) present several models of change agentry in schools. Only one of these takes the community into serious account: a model called the "political linkage" model. A change agent operating according to this model would have as his primary task "..... to assist the school system in building mechanisms for sharing power between the political role incumbents and the user groups".

One assumption in such a model is that people want to share "power" in a narrow political sense: permanent new positions with defined authority to further or to block actions. Some do want that, of course. Others - probably the majority - are little concerned with such matters. They want something called "education" for their children. The process by which specifics get decided or the amount of power attributed to whom, or the creation of new official positions in a "power-sharing" structure is of little interest to them. They are the "apathetic public" described by Ziegler (1975). They want to trust their schools to do what they expect schools to do. They want to participate in an emotional consensus about education and schooling as carried on in the local system. "Power-sharing" becomes important only as a device for demanding some changes when trust has broken down.

This is not to say that people do not want to participate in shaping policy or to join in general debate and discussion about education. Many people do. Participants in Project Redesign were among them. The major motivation for most participants was not the attainment of power within the system, however. Other factors were more significant, such as general interest in education, and willingness to be of service to the school system when asked. (Stromquist and Johnson, 1976)

Many models of change agentry are available besides political models. For example, the study of change through dissemination of better ideas, products, or procedures has a long history. Belief in the potency of "better ideas" is discussed by Edlefson as a possible factor in Project Redesign.

The Symbolic Interaction Approach

The approach to Project Redesign in this section begins with the assumption that one key to change or lack of change in schools lies within the

community but outside standard political processes. By "standard political pro-
cesses" is meant the formation of groups and alliances working to influence ac-
tions of officials or elected representatives. Such political demands on the sys-
tem presumably bear some relationship to the needs and desires of the community.
The political processes, however, follow from other prior processes by which the
community, or portions of it, develops symbols which determine the acceptability
of an educational system. What the educational system is and how it operates is
determined less by "what works" or "what is educationally sound" than by what is
considered to be "right" or "acceptable" in the minds of community members.

For several years, scholars of educational organizations have com-
mented on the lack of organizational controls over the activities of teachers in
classrooms. Recent legislation in the state in which Project Redesign took place
attempted to increase the degree of such control by requiring stricter evaluation
of all personnel.

Parents often find it frustrating to discover that there are limits to
the ability of administrators to determine how teachers will teach or what they
will emphasize. In a recent paper, Meyer and Rowan (1975) argue that the con-
trol system in education is only deceptively loose. These authors believe that a
powerful set of controls is in operation, but not visible in the same way that a
supervisor's direct order to an employee would be visible. Such controls include
rigid and exacting guidelines about who may teach and who may be a student. Sub-
jects to be taught are also closely controlled, as is the distribution of space,
funds, materials, and equipment.

Basically, these controls are exerted by the enforcement of certain
agreed-upon meanings for certain terms. "Special education teacher", for ex-
ample, or "physical education", or "high school sophomore" are all terms with
precise meanings, well understood by everyone within the school system and the
community. If you are a high school sophomore, you may do certain things, but
not others. It is not the definition of these terms in state law that is most crucial,
but the definition in the minds of the community.*

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* We will not enter the debate on whether laws change behavior or whether court
orders can be enacted which result in redefinition of meaning within communities.
There may be various avenues by which meanings become fixed within communi-
ties.

If something is introduced into the picture which lacks such well-established meaning, difficulties will appear. Examples can readily be provided from the Meadow City school system. One year, a group of teachers and administrators proposed to replace the standard ninth grade course, "European History", with a new course, "American Political Behavior". (Hampson, 1971)

Of course, no effective controls existed over the content or teaching methods of the old course, nor were the outcomes measured in any methodical way. Any ninth grader could take the course without learning much European history. It was, nevertheless, considered "right" that a class called "European History" should be taught to all ninth graders. The attempt to eliminate the course and to replace it with something else met with extreme community opposition. After extensive hearings, a compromise was reached so that students could take either "European History" or "American Political Behavior". In this case, the standard political channels were employed to influence a decision. Many residents attended meetings and spoke to the Board of Education. Nonetheless, the important element was the meaning of the terms "European History" and "American Political Behavior" in the minds of the community. Initially, "European History" had meaning; "American Political Behavior" did not. The process of debate that ensued produced meaning for the new concept, whereupon change took place.

If the process of debate had gone on within the community prior to the time the matter was taken to the Board, the explicitly political process at the Board level might not have come into play, at least at the level of intensity that occurred in that instance.*

This line of discussion is leading to the following point: changes and improvements in schools have to do with internal organizational processes, to be sure; they may also be related to the dissemination of better ideas from outside sources. Another factor in the picture, however, is most certainly the concepts and meanings within the minds of parents and community residents (and among educational professionals) concerning schooling and what is "right" in the schools. "The meaning of schooling in modern society seems to be captured in many ways

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*In the case of "American Political Behavior", it was relatively easy to generate legitimacy by finally labeling the new course as an acceptable ninth grade alternative to meet an established requirement. It could be fitted into an existing "category". On the other hand, Project Redesign itself never achieved acceptance among many persons and probably could never do so because such a department "simply did not belong" in a school system. The "rightness" of a Project Redesign as part of the system was suspect.

by these definitions and categories." (Meyer and Rowan, 1975) If meanings change, then schooling itself will change.

If this is accepted, and if efforts are to be made to change schools, then change agents should work directly with these definitions and categories which exist in the minds of community members. If and when significant changes occur, they will be accompanied by shifts which have taken place in the meanings or terms, or in the adoption of new terms which have widely-accepted meanings.

One of the basic difficulties in all this, of course, is that the controlling "categories" in schooling are largely defined statewide, or even nationally. Local communities have little control over who may be admitted to the system as a teacher, for example, regardless of how the term might be redefined by that local community. Nevertheless, there are substantial differences in the meaning of the term "teacher" between and within communities. "Teacher" may mean active instructor, or servant, or master, or order-keeper, or expert, or protector of community values, or stimulator and challenger. These and many other functions are possible, depending up on the meaning of the term within the minds' of parents and students. Peshkin found in a rural Illinois community that intellectual challenge was not desired from teachers there. The community was happy with its way of life and had no desire for teachers to inspire students to want to leave or to advance intellectually (Peshkin, 1976).

Moreover, schools are not as bound by laws and regulations as is sometimes supposed. Sarason found that school principals could innovate far more than they usually cared to do (Sarason, 1971). Under current state law operating in Meadow City, schools may do whatever is not forbidden by statute; they are not, as previously, limited to what they are explicitly permitted to do. Schools and school systems can introduce wholly new concepts and develop new meanings for schooling if the local community understands and accepts them.

By a dimly-understood process, agreement is reached on the meaning of schools and on many subcomponents of schooling between any educational system and the community it serves. These meanings constitute an unwritten contract. In this respect, schools are unlike many other organizations and government agencies, and more like religious institutions. The Department of Commerce, for example, does not have continuing daily interaction, all day long, over a period of years, with the children of the communities it serves, with all the emotions, fears, hopes, and projections attached to children and all of the accompanying opportunities for the exchange of opinions and feelings, and for the development of meaning. Schools, remark Meyer and Rowan, are organizations for negotiating the meaning of certain activities with the environment.

As times change, the unwritten contract between the school system and its community needs some renegotiation. Conceivably, this may be

accomplished by deliberately examining some of the meanings held by the
community concerning the schools and perhaps working toward a new under-
standing about some of them. As an example, according to the understanding
between most schools and the communities they serve, high schools maintain
something called "varsity sports". Not every student is expected to partici-
pate in this. In fact, it is not expected that every student will receive much,
attention in the development of physical skills useful in sports. Some students
who have special talents in this area will receive intensive personal instruc-
tion, called "coaching", at extra public expense.

We can imagine a different "contract" in which all students would
be assisted in improving sports skills through games in which all participate,
while the term "varsity team" would lose meaning. A formal decision to do
this would have importance but it would not be possible without first reaching
a new understanding on the matter within the community. That might be accom-
plished by the Board of Education itself, through the use of public hearings and
other devices. It could also be achieved in other ways. Sometimes, ad hoc
citizens' groups or groups of citizens and staff bring about such new agreements.
In Meadow City, an ad hoc group pressed for changes in the unwritten contract
about the teaching of English in one of the secondary schools. The persons in-
volved believe some changes did take place as a result of their work.

Elementary principals in Meadow City find that if the classroom work
of any teacher does not meet the expectations of parents, extreme pressure will
be applied to change the teacher's procedures or change the teacher. The expecta-
tions of parents are not obscure. Neither are they spelled out in written laws or
contracts.

Sometimes changes which result in new meanings arise from court
actions or legislation completely outside the control of the local community.
Nevertheless, local school districts have it in their power to make many changes
in local schooling, if they can achieve agreement with the local community. More
importantly, all local schools are continually shaped by the meanings, and by the
changing meanings, that schooling has in the minds of the communities served.
The Meadow City community is often chosen as a place to live by parents who are
in agreement with the meanings which schooling has in this community. Students
transfer from nearby districts in significant numbers, when the laws allow, in
order to attend schools here. While the budget per-pupil is high in Meadow City,
that may be relatively unimportant, compared to attitudes and expectations which
shape the schools.

At the same time the community is shaping the school system, it will
also shape a project such as Project Redesign. The outcomes of such a project

depend to some extent on the explicit decisions and desires of the superintendent and to some extent on the operation of organizational forces over which the managers of the system have only limited control. These outcomes also depend heavily upon the meanings about schooling and the Meadow City school system that are in the minds of the community, which are challenged, reaffirmed, or modified by such a project.

It is increasingly recognized by thoughtful parents that activities undertaken by schools are deliberately chosen, not given. Knowledge is boundless. Beyond some basics on which there is nearly unanimous agreement, the content of schooling is determined by factors which may no longer be appropriate, such as parents' memories from their own school days. Who is to say that poetry or music, or astronomy or geology, or Asian history, or principles of accounting should not be required of all students, instead of being offered as electives to a few in only some schools? The forms of schooling, too, are arbitrary constructions agreed upon by the community. Alternative schools are becoming standard, along with some provision for open classrooms and "Three-R" schools, because they are demanded by some parents and students.

Recognition of the arbitrary nature of schools is congenial to social thinkers who emphasize the arbitrary nature of all social institutions (Berger and Luckman, Pearce, Garfinkel). Constant effort is necessary to maintain meanings of institutions, lest both the meanings and the institutions vanish. Without the constant work of great numbers of people to perfect and maintain the rituals, practices, and tenets of religions, family life, or football, these institutions would quickly disappear.

Without incessant daily effort to preserve the reality of schools, they would cease to exist as we know them. Principals must enforce daily what Meyer and Rowan call "categories" - making sure those pupils and teachers who are supposed to be there, are there, in the proper places at the proper times, studying something labeled "history" or "algebra". There may, of course, be no checking to make sure it really is history or algebra, unless members of the community are offended by what they hear is going on within these classrooms. Nevertheless, the reality of the school has to be recreated afresh each morning by constant work, to keep it all as it should be in the minds of the community. This is hard work, as any principal knows. No one, however, can create and maintain a structure which is not "right" according to the meaning of schooling in the minds of the community, in spite of all ideals of educators to the contrary. If changes are sought in schools, then, attention should be focused on what schooling means to the community. This is the strategy adopted by organizations such as PUSH, organized by the Rev. Jesse Jackson to improve urban schooling in Chicago and other cities (Phi Delta Kappan, January 1977). The PUSH leaders insist that when the students and parents demand excellence of themselves and their schools,

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the schools will quickly change from centers of dismally low achievement to excellent educational institutions. When this happens, the meanings attached to the schools by the community will have changed.

In other words, the adequacy or appropriateness of education is defined by individuals and communities themselves. Objective data compiled by outsiders will be of little help in changing it. There must be agreement on what is acceptable and adequate as an educational process or educational outcomes; not imposed by others, but self-imposed or self-defined. A scientific pursuit of what "works" for improving schools is not as important, from this point of view, as development of agreement about what is "right". If we have agreement between the system and the community and students on what is "right", it will work.

Meanings (or symbols) are crucial to schooling, in this perspective. If a school administrator believes that the meanings held by the community regarding the schools are crucial, and if he believes that changes are going to be needed in these meanings, what should he do?

The most obvious answer is to institute some process of deliberate interaction between the school system and the community around educational issues which will help focus on what the school system means to the community and what the community expects of the system.

This is a gamble. As Goffman says, "Life may not be much of a gamble, but interaction is" (Goffman, 1959). It is a gamble, for several reasons. One is that some kind of two-way learning is suggested by interaction around such issues. The community and the system may both have things to learn. This kind of learning is not always on the agenda of administrators of large institutions. Another risk is that unacceptable ideas may be proposed. The interaction may produce propositions to which the organization cannot give assent.

Interaction produces large amounts of data, not necessarily in the statistical form beloved of social scientists, but data on feelings and behavior of persons who would otherwise not have the opportunity to present them.

These are only some of the problems. It is a tremendous jump between believing that communities shape schools through the development of a set of meanings which then affect all activities conducted within the educational system, and believing that it is possible to intervene actively in this process with useful results. It is one thing to believe that schools draw upon the meaning of education within the community as a necessary resource, and another to believe that schools can actively develop meaning, and in so doing, develop their own resources. Schools may be passive, meaning-using institutions, not meaning-creating ones.

Summary

In this exploratory essay, the following points have been made:

1. A basic resource on which schools depend is the meanings
that schooling and education have in the minds of parents, students, and other
members of the community. (The term "symbols" could be used instead of
"meanings".) Legally, schools operate as an arm of state-government, with
relative independence from the citizens of any one community. This can be
deceptive. The ability of local teachers and administrators to conduct strong
programs and to teach successful classes depends heavily on what those
schools mean in the lives of those parents, students, and other citizens.

2. Meanings are not God-given. They are developed by social pro-
cesses. They are arbitrary, in the sense that other meanings are quite possible.
Meanings are not permanently established - they have to be maintained and up-
held at all times by daily activities.

3. An unwritten contract exists between school systems and the com-
munities they serve, based on general consensus on the meaning of schooling.
This general consensus may be broken down into components consisting of what
Meyer and Rowan call "categories"; for example, "history", "high school Eng-
lish", "teacher", "alternative school", and the like. Schools use or do not use
certain educational techniques, or teach or refrain from teaching certain sub-
jects, largely because schooling does or does not carry meanings in the local
community which support such activities. For instance, schools do not use such
educational techniques as "laboratory education" with devices such as T-groups
and guided fantasy, except in limited instances; nor do schools in this country
teach the principles of Zen, or oceanography. All this is perfectly arbitrary,
and a progressive society may demand a faster rate of change in methods and
content than we have traditionally had.

4. School systems may be able to intervene in the process by which
the meanings of schooling are developed in communities, and to assist communi-
ties on a broad scale to move to new or revised meanings for schooling which will
have certain benefits for parents, students, and the school system. This is not
passively seeking the existing meanings through some survey process. Nor is it
planning in the sense of developing exact steps to be followed by administrators
or teachers toward some end. It is the negotiation of meaning. It may be defined
as one form of educational planning. Educational planning which does not deal
with meanings will deal only with surface issues. To accomplish this requires
some kind of interaction. We will use the term "symbolic interaction" to identify
this process in which meanings are examined and negotiated. School systems in
recent years have been attempting this in various ways, including goal-setting

exercises, advisory committees, needs assessments, and other devices. Dealing with "symbols" rather than with "substance" is not a waste of time, nor is it a symptom of not knowing what we are doing. Symbols and meanings are substance and power in schooling.

5. The on-going decision-making structure of school districts and of most other organizations causes interaction leading to the development and creation of meaning to be difficult. Most of the time within organizations is spent in activities which may be interpreted as reinforcing present meanings, or ensuring the maintenance of the present, arbitrary reality of the system.

Project Redesign will be examined in the framework of this general perspective. It will be argued that while this kind of thinking was not made explicit in the statements of the superintendent or anyone else, it lay behind the words spoken and the actions taken. As the project went along, the factors in the community which shape the schools also shaped the project itself.

I. IN THE BEGINNING - THE DECISION TO HAVE PROJECT REDESIGN

Project Redesign did not begin with a specific set of problems for which the administration of the district sought solutions.

From one point of view, the lack of clear and compelling problems would make a planning project unnecessary.

Participatory planning, focused around very specific issues, is easier to conceive. If new schools are to be built, or old ones closed; or better racial balance to be achieved; or steps taken to deal with vandalism and violence on campuses, a superintendent would be expected to develop some sort of planning operation to find solutions to identified problems.

But a planning project in which it is proposed that "..... the community must now, together, review its entire educational system" ? What sense does it make, other than to provide the solutions to some unstated problems, such as better control of public input into the schools, or better maintenance of the superintendent's reputation as an innovator?

From the symbolic interaction perspective, such a project does make potential good sense. A particular project might not be successful, but the concept of such a project, in the context, was applauded by many members of the community.

The times were a-changing, and the superintendent knew it. An era was over - the era of continual expansion of the school system and its budget, continual additions of departments, schools, and personnel. Now enrollment had begun to decline. The implications of that were but dimly foreseen, at first. The building of new schools still proceeded. The major financial crises of the late seventies were not yet visible. Nevertheless, it did not take a genius to foresee serious stress on the system. Other systems across the country were experiencing great difficulties.

If it were possible to reassess the school system and the psychological contract between the community and its schools in a manner which would strengthen the good will of the community under changing circumstances, everyone would benefit.

The president of the Board of Education described the purpose of Project Redesign as follows, at a Board meeting on September 14, 1972:

> "In the main, Redesign is aimed at change to better meet the community's educational objectives and to enhance the community's confidence in its schools (emphasis added). [1]

By comparison with other school systems, the Meadow City system looked like an island of serenity in 1971. Nevertheless, to many it looked stormy. At a Board meeting on October 19, 1971, the Board president is quoted as follows:

> "Mr. .... stated that last spring, in talking to many groups, the need for long-range planning came up consistently. There was a feeling that we move from crisis to crisis. He felt confident that the community would give a strong mandate for long-range planning." (2)

At the time the decision was made to have Project Redesign, the district was relatively peaceful. Setting up such a project was somewhat like manufacturing problems in order to solve them. The superintendent had followed such a strategy before, notably in his establishment of a district-wide multicultural program. In this instance, the superintendent and the Board were doing more than that. They were responding to what they perceived as a significant community value: planning for the future. Attention to "planning" which went beyond the planning-facilities-for-expansion of the 1950's and 1960's was becoming more popular in school systems elsewhere.

Planning projects in public agencies may serve several purposes. For example, the Early Childhood Education program in California establishes planning in elementary schools throughout the state which is aimed at the accomplishing of various ends: school staffs are brought together as a team to develop programs; parents and community members are engaged in school problems; community needs and attitudes are assessed more accurately; and administrators are provided with means to deal more effectively with the management of certain kinds of problems. These are among the intended outcomes, at least. Such benefits could conceivably result from planning activities involving the community, conducted on a system-wide basis.

Although participatory planning was an increasingly popular idea in 1971, Project Redesign was still a most unusual project for a school district. Educators do not often find rewards in promoting unusual ideas. During the project, the district management was assessed by a special state team set up to consult with local districts on improved management practices. This team described Project Redesign as the largest comprehensive planning activity known in the field of local education.(3)

Rigorous theoretical analysis did not enter into the original formulation of the project. Nevertheless, the intuitive judgments made by the superintendent in setting it up were in accord with what one might choose to do from the

perspective described in the introduction to this section. The 1971 speech provides more details:

> "The prospects for education in the 1970's are not bright
> at this moment. It is a fact, not a prediction, that a
> credibility gap exists between educators and their publics.
> There is a lack of confidence in the schools, and criticism,
> both warranted and unwarranted, is a common phenomenon.
> Educators become defensive and protective of the status quo
> when the hostility of a community manifests itself. Morale
> deteriorates, frequently adversary roles are assumed, and
> always, young people are the losers."

In 1975, the superintendent remarked in an interview conducted just before he left his position, that he had meant what he said in his 1971 speech:

> "There are two elements in Project Redesign as I conceived
> it: planning for change; develop a school district responsive
> to the needs of the community, not to the needs of the English
> teachers; and broad involvement of students and teachers and
> parents in the planning.
>
> You have to assess your community and see what it is that the
> community wants to see innovated. You have to orient the
> change. The sense of timing is with the superintendent. We
> had community involvement, but we had no coordination, no
> cohesive force in Meadow City."

Elsewhere in this interview, the superintendent referred to the process of interaction in a group setting which produces new ideas, concepts, and agreements between the school system and the community:

> "If you really believe you can depend on people to be prop-
> erly motivated and if there is a lot of interaction among
> them.....then you still get a good thing from that group.
> We need to be able to give both structure and opportunity.
> Increased community participation is a societal trend and
> that's why we need Project Redesign." (4)

In other words, we need symbolic interaction on a broad scale, in a concerted, organized effort to update the "contract" between the system and the community it serves. By means of a new setting (the term is Sarason's) the superintendent hoped to accomplish a more orderly interaction between the community and the schools, leading to some form of long-range changes in the system.

At this point, the emphasis was on agreement between the community and the system on some basic goals, not on blueprints for specific changes. At the Board meeting on October 19, 1971, the superintendent stated:

> "The first year would be devoted to planning, including
> especially the philosophy and goals of the MCSD. Fol-
> lowing this, the constraints placed upon the system and
> the opportunities that prevail would be anticipated. A
> system to manage whatever change is to be made would
> then be developed." (5)

The method to be used was extensive interaction between the system and the community in some structure provided by the district. Efforts of a superficial kind would not do, however. Goals for the district had just been developed by an ad hoc citizens' committee. This committee, organized without district sanction, had spent more than a year in developing a set of basic educational goals for the Meadow City schools. Public hearings had been held; it was a creditable job. The Board received the report of the group with thanks. In his memorandum to the Board, the superintendent included the following comments:

> "I am most appreciative of the work of this committee..
> It is important for me to say that the proposal authorized
> by the Board of Education called Project 1970's/1980's -
> An Educational System Redesign - will, I believe, find
> this statement most helpful, It is my intention to involve
> the community deeply in the development of goal state-
> ments, and the work of this group will reduce the time
> necessary for this particular phase of the endeavor." (6)

The chairperson of this ad hoc goals committee was subsequently elected to the Board of Education.

A tradition of extensive participation had long existed in the district. District advisory committees operated in several areas of concern in 1971. The district enlisted hundreds of citizens as volunteers in schools. The superintendent had listened to innumerable speeches at Board meetings. Many of these were made by the same individuals who frequent these meetings year after year. Nevertheless, Board meetings typically drew several dozen people and, on occasion, even hundreds. Issues which attracted large crowds included (at certain times) multicultural programs and the construction of certain new school buildings. On all occasions, heavy pressure on the schools continued, resulting from high expectations and low tolerance of inadequacies on the part of the community.

. The desire for a better, more systematic structuring of participation, particularly around major directions for the school district, was a reasonable one. Participation had expanded and was still expanding throughout the country. Interest groups did come and go in this district in an unpredictable fashion. The appeal of a more thoughtful approach to planning and problem-solving was high, too, as an alternative to the heated adversarial mode so often experienced.

The superintendent knew that with major changes in store for the system, the community would have to be involved in giving shape to these changes.

In the discussions during the decision-making period to go ahead with Project Redesign, there was little talk of issues of internal organizational change. There was also little discussion of the "technology" or procedures which might work in conducting such an ambitious planning project. No serious doubts were raised about the manageability of such a project. The focal point of the discussion was regaining or developing the community's confidence in its schools. The superintendent was not sophisticated in organizational change techniques. Evidence of this can be seen in his handling of other projects. For example, in the multicultural education project mentioned above, a director was hired who was charged to develop a program to be imposed on the district from the top down, with little participation by staff in the formulation or implementation of activities. Sound advice in organizational development and change techniques would likely have dictated quite a different approach.

Attitudes of school-level personnel toward the central administration were probably not good. Evidence of this was produced later in Project Redesign. In a survey conducted by a project planning group early in 1975, teachers were asked to rate the general effectiveness of central office administrators. Fifty percent of the teaching staff rated them ineffective; only thirty percent gave them an "effective" rating. (7)

The superintendent was aware of these feelings, but the attitudes of the community were of greater concern than those of staff. The new project was to be aimed primarily at working with the community on the future of the school system, not at working with the professional staff.

Many arguments could have been put forth against Project Redesign, but were not. Perhaps the superintendent was willing to go ahead in the face of known difficulties because he felt all might learn something from the effort. In the new, uncharted area of expanded community participation, nothing could be learned without venturing out.

When the decision was made to begin Project Redesign, the superintendent and at least some members of the Board of Education were concerned about the relationship between the school system and the community. The superintendent referred to a lack of confidence in the schools. The Board president discussed the desire within the community for long-range planning by the schools and for changes in the system so that the educational objectives of the community would be better met and the confidence of the community in its schools enhanced.

This concern for school/community relationships may be interpreted as concern for the basic resource of meanings which enabled this system to operate successfully. Project Redesign was seen as a possible means toward renewing or increasing this resource of meanings, and in so doing, updating or revising the unwritten contract between the school system and the community. The project was to be much more than a goal-setting process, but was to start with a new statement of philosophy and goals for the Meadow City schools. This was to come about through systematic, structured interaction. We have given this the name of "symbolic interaction", not in the pejorative sense that it is "merely" interaction around symbols and therefore not very real or important, but because interaction which renews or creates symbols is highly important to schools.

It might be said that the community brought about Project Redesign. The project was a response on the part of the system to the community. The response could have taken other forms. This particular form reflected the style of this superintendent.

II. THE HIRING OF THE DIRECTOR

From the point of view of symbolic interaction, the primary qualifications for the new Project Redesign director would be the ability to create new structured settings for interaction - in this case, interaction between the community and the school system. Such interaction will be the basic location for the development of new meanings or for the recommitment to old meanings.

Persons with these skills are in short supply. Presumably, some background in education would be important. No position like this had ever been offered by this district; no job description existed.

Standards exist for most school jobs, in the form of unwritten expectations in the minds of parents, students, and district administrators. In the hiring of a high school principal, for instance, detailed specifications aimed toward a specific job in a specific high school are seldom spelled out. General expectations are

stated in the form of exacting personal requirements: has this individual attained an administrative credential? Has he/she taught for X years? Does he/she have favorable reviews on file from previous positions? These personal requirements are filtering devices.

In the case of Project Redesign, no such convenient filtering devices were in existence. No credentials were established, as they are for other school positions. No comparable positions existed by which successful performance could be accurately judged, except general successful experience in management. The position of Project Director for Redesign, in other words, was ill-defined. Diverse expectations could exist among those doing the hiring. Conventional school credentials were not the most important consideration.

Announced qualifications for the position did not include the ability to conduct a conventional planning project. The published job description did not include familiarity with enrollment projection techniques, physical plant usage, budgeting, and the like. Further, this was not described as a "management consultant" position. No expectations were stated that the director would assist school district management, except to conduct Project Redesign.

Later, as the work unfolded, the director spent a substantial portion of his time in activities unrelated to the project, at the direct request of the superintendent. But that's getting ahead of the story.

The more desired qualifications for the director's post, as stated by the superintendent, included an educational background in sociology, psychology, or education; successful school and/or administrative background; understanding of the institution of education; experience in developing a system to manage change in a school system; ability to generate confidence, to be accepted; open-mindedness; understanding of himself and the world; ability to organize, expedite, listen, and be articulate; ability to walk on water.

Many of these qualifications including, no doubt, the last-named, did not apply to the person hired. His qualifications were those of a competent business executive with extensive experience in educational affairs as a citizen. He had just spent two years at a major university in a program designed to enable mid-career persons to enter educational management. He had been a successful manager in marketing and advertising. He possessed high interpersonal skills in meeting people, making contacts, organizing meetings, and making group presentations.

These qualifications may or may not be relevant to conventional school planning and management, but they are certainly relevant to the task of managing interaction between the school system and its constituent community.

The new director was hired with a broad mandate to organize and manage an educational change project for the school system. Explicit directives were not given; no blueprint was provided. This is true, of course, for all school district jobs. Teachers and principals are not given detailed instructions upon employment. It is assumed that, as competent professionals, they will know what to do.

The new director did not begin by organizing a technical planning project. There was no talk of needs assessments, analysis of data, the study of internal management problems, or other such matters, in the beginning. The director instead "spent several weeks immersing himself in the community and the school system." (8)

In other words, the director allowed himself to be shaped by the community. He imposed no ideas and no structure. His style was to interact, to listen, to bring individuals together to talk, but not to propose direction. His behavior was that of a mediator, asked to work toward modifying or updating the contract between the schools and the community.

In a memorandum to the superintendent dated September 11, 1972, after several weeks on the job, the director stated that ".....intellectually and intuitively, one senses that we are at the edge of new and more precise definitions of what education should be and how it should be delivered." The term "definitions" is significant; he did not say "plans" or "proposals", but "definitions"... what this community means by schools and schooling.

The approach taken by the new director met with the favor of the superintendent and the Board of Education. They were not disturbed by the lack of planning activity. In the September 11th memorandum, the director proposed that the time had come to set up a more elaborate structure for the project. He discussed several possibilities, but recommended a general approach consisting of four parts:

1. Examine the significant factors in the external environment which are pressing on the system.

2. Examine the transactions among the actors in the total educational social system.

3. Examine our total educational delivery system to see if it is:

    a. Adapting to the changing demands of the society at large;

    b. Providing satisfactions (filling needs) for its chief actors;

    c. Utilizing all of its resources.

4. Redesign those parts of the educational delivery
   system which are not meeting these three criteria.

These broad statements or suggestions from the director to the super-intendent were accepted by the superintendent and the Board. They did not have any better ideas. It is certain that they desired some process by which to hear from the community in a systematic fashion, and by which to translate community desires into school programs. They did not want a technical, internal planning job. They wanted to know what the community "really" wanted from the schools. The "transactions among the actors in the total educational system" in the memorandum from the director do not refer to internal organizational matters, but to interactions among parents, students, and educators.

The director proposed that he ought not to design the structure for Project Redesign himself, but that a committee be appointed to assume this responsibility. Once again, the basic decision on the part of the director was to let the project be shaped by the community. This posture was maintained throughout the project. The director rarely intervened in the course of events that was set in motion by the participants from the community and the school system.

Summary

Strong conceptualization of Project Redesign was lacking as the project got under way. Moreover, no technology* existed for such a project. No clearly applicable expertise was available to call on, no trained experts, no experienced leaders, and no accepted methods for approaching the work.

The newly-hired director did not have qualifications as a technical planner. His skills were in human interaction, public relations, and community organization. The stance which he adopted allowed the shape of the project to emerge from community and school system participants. He did not impose a planning or interaction system, but facilitated the invention of such a system. As subsequent events will show, once the process was set in motion, the director did not often intervene.

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* The term "technology" refers to systematic, tested methods for accomplishing an objective. If previous planning projects had produced a set of procedures which worked and if these were applied in the new case, that would be a "technology".

By hiring this particular director and by their actions during his first weeks on the job, the superintendent and the Board of Education demonstrated that their interest was not in a technical planning process. Instead, they were interested in engaging the community and the school system in restatement or further development of the meanings the school system has for Meadow City. This would be followed by translation of these newly-interpreted or developed meanings into new programs or reaffirmation of old programs.

The approach adopted by the director was applauded by the superintendent and the Board - they apparently got what they were looking for.

The choice of the director was symbolic. He had participated in school affairs as a citizen leading opposition to school policies in another city. His appointment here might be seen as a gesture to the community. The question now was: would it work? Could Project Redesign function successfully? The answers were left to the Convening Committee, a group now charged to invent a structure and a process.

III. THE CONVENING COMMITTEE

Following the suggestion of the director of Project Redesign, the Board of Education appointed a blue-ribbon committee of thirty-one persons, including teachers, administrators, students, parents, and other citizens, and charged them to invent the structure and process for Project Redesign. The formal charge from the Board to the Committee reads as follows:

Preamble:

Project Redesign exists because the Meadow City School District community is ready and eager to reappraise and redirect its educational system. It recognizes that technological change has eroded the public school's position as primary educator. People are seeking renewal, fresh directions and clarity of purpose. At the same time, the MCSD community recognizes the importance of a balance between conservation of the best knowledge man has attained thus far to define himself, his nature and his universe, and emerging concepts based on contemporary research. We need to examine what we believe and what we do, preserving what is of value, discarding what is not.

The Charge:

The Superintendent and Board of MCSD hereby convene the
Project Redesign Ad Hoc Committee representing MCSD
community, educational staff, and students. It is charged
to: recommend a procedure for the redesign of the educa-
tional system to meet community and individual needs in
the 1970's and 1980's.

Provision should be made for consideration of such areas as:

- a conceptual framework embracing the GOALS FOR
  PROJECT REDESIGN;

- organization and structure with emphasis on dia-
  logue among all people;

- time line for development;

- evaluation procedures

The Committee is to submit its findings and recommenda-
tions to the Superintendent and Board by January 15, 1973.

Date of action: October 3, 1972, by the MCSD Board of
Education.

The Charge states the intent to stage a negotation process between
the school system and the entire community on the basic concepts of public educa-
tion. "Technological change has eroded the public school's position as primary
educator." It declares the possibility and the sensibility of a major intervention
into the process by which the community shapes the schools. "The community is
ready to reappraise and redirect its educational system."

This was not to be a light undertaking. The Convening Committee was
surrounded with the special halo of constitution-builders. The report which
emerged three months later included the following passage in a statement from
the director:

"In spite of it all, the Convening Committee, in my judg-
ment, has done magnificently. In 1787, Ben Franklin
made the following remarks to the Constitutional Convention:

'.....for when you assemble a number of men to have the
advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble
with those men all their prejudices, their passion, their
errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish
views. From such an assembly, can a perfect production
be expected? It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this
system approaching so near to perfection as it does; and I

think it will astonish our enemies. Thus I consent, Sir,
to this Constitution because I expect no better, and be-
cause I am not sure that it is not the best." [9]

Process experts might fear that casting Project Redesign in such
grandiose terms would affect the work in damaging ways. What heavy responsi-
bilities! Similar grand responsibilities and objectives were given later to the
Design Management Team, the group which would serve as the central coordin-
ating committee for the project.

The gravity and scale of these expectations also underscore the fact
that genuine social invention was thought possible. Public schools were not to
be regarded as sacred and unchangeable. The meanings of this school system for
this community were to be put up for grabs - or, at least, for reexamination.

What happens when a committee of school professionals, students,
and citizens is handed such an impressive and formidable charge? Some felt that
the task was overwhelming. One prominent member moved at the second meeting
that the Committee be disbanded. [10] Some called for more structure for the
Convening Committee, presumably to make the task more manageable. However,
no structure was to be provided; the committee would have to structure itself.

Objections were raised to the idea of a Convening Committee instead
of a Project Management Committee. In other words, why not jump right into
Project Redesign itself, without the intervening step of a committee to plan com-
mittees. To this question, the director replied that expectations for this Project
were high. He hoped that the Convening Committee would help the project get
started on the right foot. [11]

The work of the Convening Committee may be considered a process
for negotiating the negotiating process which was to be undertaken with the com-
munity. It is not unusual in situations calling for negotiation to first face the need
to negotiate the negotiating structure and process. If this step were to be skipped,
objections could conceivably be raised about the legitimacy of any outcomes. Two
years later, in fact, such objections were raised about the outcomes of a process
for choosing schools to be targeted for closure. In that instance, the decisions
were rescinded and the decision process itself renegotiated. It was important for
the redesign process itself to be the subject of negotiation. The Convening Com-
mittee finally accepted this and went to work.

It should be emphasized that the very fact of having this intermediate
step - this Convening Committee - is evidence that Project Redesign was basically
intended to be a mechanism for school/community negotiations. This was not an
efficient way to design Project Redesign. A consultant could have done it faster
and more cheaply.

Certain facts about the Convening Committee deserve mention as illustrative of this point. First of all, the committee was too large to serve as a working body. It was necessary to appoint a small Steering Committee to do most of the work. The large committee had been appointed for reasons not related directly to the task, one of which was to ensure adequate representation of divergent sections of the community.

Secondly, almost no outside expertise was utilized by the committee. One consultant was invited to make a presentation. This person, an educational planner from a federally-funded educational research facility, discussed interesting ideas with the committee, including the distinction between "education" and "schooling", and the possibility of conceptualizing and creating the future. Subsequent discussions within the committee indicated a desire to take account of the ideas of this consultant, but in the end, his suggestions were not built into the final plan and no interest was expressed in further use of this or any other outside assistance. A majority of the members stated, in a survey at the conclusion of the Convening Committee's work, that there was no need for outside consultation. (12)

Organizations often hire experts to conduct negotiations. In this instance, the school system had apparently hired a project director to handle negotiations with the community. No one from top-level administration took part in the deliberations of the Convening Committee. None attended any meetings subsequent to the first. The same is true of members of the Board of Education. During this period and throughout the project, the day-to-day administration and governance of the school system was separated from Project Redesign. The top administrative staff was not involved in designing the project's structure, not were they "designed" into the process which would subsequently take place.

A few years later, with the advent of collective bargaining, the school system would hire a professional to conduct negotiations with the teachers' association. The two might be considered to have something in common.

All of these characteristics of the Convening Committee suggest that the major objective of Project Redesign was a form of negotiation with the community on the meaning of schools. It was not a process set up to bring about direct internal organizational or program changes. Those were expected to follow. The first priority was elsewhere.

After preliminary jockeying, the Convening Committee divided into four small groups. Each was asked to make a first attempt to design Project

Redesign. That was followed by several weeks of discussions by the whole Com-
mittee about possible structure. Each week, specific issues were taken up for
further development or refinement. Between the weekly meetings of the entire
group, the Steering Committee wrote trial documents and delivered them to the
larger group for study.

The content of some of the issues discussed during this period merits
some study. Many of the issues are revealed in a set of memoranda collected by
the Convening Committee from its members on December 19, 1972. These were
commentaries on the proposals for structuring Project Redesign then under
consideration.

Values surfaced early as discussions got under way. It was decided to
make explicit mention of some of them. These were first called "core values".
Later, the term was changed to "ground rules". A set of such ground rules or
value statements was included in the final report to the Board of Education. Some
of the most significant of these statements are the following:

> All citizens of the community, young and old, have the
> right and obligation to be involved in shaping the public
> institutions created to serve them.

This statement gives conscious voice to the belief that communities can and
should create and control their own destiny, including their own institutions. A
second statement is similar:

> Decisions should not be imposed on those who must
> implement them or are affected by them, without
> prior involvement.

The third ground rule deals with orienting the project to the future:

> Redesign should be future-oriented, going from where
> we are to where we want to be, emphasizing what is
> possible and desirable, rather than what is wrong now.

This ground rule might be interpreted as an effort to avoid entangle-
ment in present school district affairs. It might also be interpreted as an effort
to face the difficult problem of inventing new categories of meaning for education.
The difficulties in this area were becoming evident. In the discussions of the
Committee, the point was frequently made that it is very hard to escape from the
clutches of existing practices and concepts:

> (We should) delete those words and phrases, such as class-
> room teachers, etc., which describe too literally and thereby

constrain education of the future. It is conceivable that
at some future time and for some learners, the class-
room and teachers as currently defined may become
obsolete." (13)

This same member was opposed to listing too many "ground rules"
because ".....those ground rules which really are ground rules inhibit...
redesign". (14)

Another committee member also struggled with the problem of how
the meaning of education for the community might change, and whether it is pos-
sible to deliberately work toward the creation of new meaning:

One of our tendencies in Redesign is to begin solving to-
day's problems with structures which somehow have to
be tied to today's structures. The results may be good
or bad, but probably will be limited - because the prob-
lems, the structures, and maybe both, have been around
for such a long time that they narrow our range of vision.

The initial task for the Redesign committee would be to
conduct a futures-view project of community forums and
workshops on various concepts of educational futures.
For example, there would be:

     - education without schools
     - education in a society with restricted natural resources
     - education in a crisis (earthquake, natural disaster, war)
     - education in a declining population
     - education in a biologically- or genetically-
          controlled environment
     - education in a welfare or leisure state
     - education in Consciousness II (15)

The difficulty of imagining anything different from that which already
exists is shown in this very statement about the difficulties. Except for the ref-
erence to "education without schools", all the references are to schooling carried
on with a different set of external circumstances, not with differences in schooling
itself or in the meaning of schooling.

Another "ground rule" or value statement stresses the alternative to
the development of new meaning for schools, namely, the reaffirmation of old
meanings:

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> Changes should not be made unless they fulfill a view
> of what education should be.

Reaffirmation of customary meanings, but with renewed clarity and dedication, is illustrated by the views of another member of the Committee, a former member of the Board of Education and a prominent executive:

> Project Redesign should focus on the educational point of
> sale: what goes on in the classroom, what we present,
> and how we present it. All other aspects of school life
> are ancillary.

> Among its goals, Redesign should include making the
> acquisition of basic skills more rapid, more complete,
> and more universal, and making educational effort by
> students more self-rewarding. [16]

Notice the explicit reference to conventional categories in education: classrooms, students, basic skills. The purpose of Redesign from this point of view would be renew and clarify the old and familiar. "Let us help improve classroom presentations, increase the rate of acquisition of skills, and make the existing process more palatable to students."

Parrying went on between those thinking of possible new meanings and those thinking of reaffirming the conventional. One school principal wrote to the committee:

> Somehow, the present flavor coming through to me is one
> of cautious admission that concessions must be made to
> the creative, the futures approach, but that caution is the
> byword. [17]

Another member wrote:

> Redesign will seek the cooperation of all affected groups
> to life existing constraints of every kind wherever pos-
> sible; will expect from groups, established routines,
> vested interests, and decision-makers the freedom to
> think through and test new ideas and arrangements.

> However -

> We need to say something to the effect that after study-
> ing, Redesign will provide that chance for some people
> to have changes, for some people to keep existing prac-
> tices, and even for some people to return to earlier
> educational practices. [18]

This memorandum, along with comments from others, led to a value statement or "ground rule" which stated:

Redesign should be committed to alternative educa-
tional solutions to meet the needs of a diverse com-
munity and individual differences, realizing that our
established pattern of consensus-seeking may lead
to solutions which satisfy no one.

These quotations illustrate some of the difficulties experienced by the Convening Committee as it attempted to create a process by which the community might usefully influence education in Meadow City. Some members proposed committee structures and procedures which would clearly tend to reaffirm and reinforce presently-existing meaning. For example, proposals for "needs assessments" as an initial activity provide one means for reaffirming existing procedures. One memorandum calling for needs assessments stated that we must first "determine from students, parents, and staff their perceived deficiencies in present programs. Project Redesign should not make changes merely for the sake of change. All change should be based on perceived needs or deficiencies." [19]

This approach ensures that a conservative stance will be taken by focusing attention on "deficiencies in present programs". Others called for structures in the project which would facilitate the generating of new concepts.

School/Community Input Groups during Phase I of the pro-
ject are logical, available units for discussion, interaction
among parents-teachers-students, for deliberation, defini-
tion, conceptualization. [20]

Another member put it this way:

The need for coordination is not the most compelling need
of the project. An overriding concern for control can
kill. [21]

One would open up the process very broadly: I suggest a three-step
procedure:
1. The central staff does necessary data work
2. A set of guidelines is available for those
   who wish to do detailed work
3. The game is open to those who wish to
   do detailed work. [22]

In other words, anyone can play; let the conceptualization of education be open to everyone.

Centralization versus decentralization surfaced as an important issue in designing the structure for the project:

> " I oppose the proposal that Redesign should be undertaken
> in committees at the local school level, so far as pos-
> sible, with district-wide issues there to be transmitted
> to a central committee, which has meanwhile been at
> work on conceptualization of educational futures.....
> I would prefer that a district futures committee work
> on the conceptualization and that local school repre-
> sentatives either serve on that committee or form a con-
> gress to react to the conceptualization." (23)

The value conflict between expertise and democracy surfaced in vari-
ous ways. One extremist argued that the democracy should be so wide-open that
the central management committee of the project should be appointed by lottery. (24)
This would presumably prevent control by the hierarchy of the district.

The arguments for and against various "democratic" forms reappeared
in differing ways:

> "Broad community involvement should be consultative,
> not participatory. The later stages of the process
> should involve the expertise of a small group or groups,
> under right coordination and direction. It is these
> analytic and creative phases that comprise the heart
> of the Redesign process." (25)

In the end, a centralized process was selected, with all activities
centering at the district level. Lip service to expertise was retained, but the
value most strongly emphasized would be open participation. In certain ways,
the structure of the project, as it was invented by the Convening Committee,
mirrors the school district itself. Perhaps this indicates the strength of con-
cepts about the rightness or wrongness of existing structures within the minds
of staff and community members.

In the newly-invented structure, a central committee, to be called
the "Design Management Team", would be appointed by the Board of Education,
and would consist of three students, five parents, and three teachers. The pro-
ject director would not be a member of the Design Management Team, but would
serve as staff to the committee.

The work of the project would be carried out at first by data-gathering task forces. These would turn over the results of their studies to "School/ Community Input Teams" (SCIT's), which would develop the actual plans and proposals. Membership on these teams would be open to anyone, without discrimination. The process would be a very rational, linear process of data-gathering, needs-assessing, planning, official approval, and finally, implementation.

The final Convening Committee report described a proposed process by which meanings and definitions of education could be negotiated between the community and the system. It stressed neither planning by experts nor internal organizational planning and change. Listen to the language of this report:

> The Meadow City school system changes its shape as those with responsibility for its shape respond to needs expressed by staff, students, parents, or other citizens, or by outside influences.....

> Project Redesign is a planned intervention in this ongoing exchange..... Effective planning for the future of education in Meadow City depends upon school/community participation.....

> At the time of decision-making, the Board, Superintendent, and others may wish to hold hearings, a convention of the school/community, or possibly submit alternative proposals to citizens in referenda.....

The report refers to school decision-making processes and implementation processes in a cursory manner. The focus is on broad participation.

> Evaluation of progress may reveal the need to invent new forms of participation and drop those which are not working.

Little concern was expressed for the manner in which the staff of the district might react to Project Redesign. A great deal of concern was manifested for the feelings of the community about the project. The superintendent had previously entered into projects which were not popular with the staff. Surveys conducted within Project Redesign and later, as the project was studied, indicated a high level of mistrust and antipathy toward the central district administration on the part of the teaching staff, and toward Project Redesign as

it unfolded. At no time were these feelings explored or considered a problem, either by the superintendent or by anyone else. In fact, the structure for the new project was to be a "top-down" structure, paralleling the top-down nature of the school system.

In the work of the Convening Committee, consistent references are made to the need for stressing the long-range future, rather than immediate problems. Although never expressed in that way, this can also be interpreted as desiring the project to focus on basic "constitutional" issues, rather than on less basic operational issues. The matter was put into the time dimension, rather than into the dimension of the depth of the issue.

One proposed but rejected structure for Project Redesign called for a very different interaction process. A minority of Convening Committee members wanted a large "congress" of community and staff members for debating Redesign proposals. As the setting for developing and negotiating concepts for shaping education in Meadow City, this idea may have had considerable merit. It was rejected, however, in favor of a small "management team" working with a number of "school/community input teams".

On January 23, 1973, the report of the Convening Committee was presented to the Board of Education. In the ensuing discussion, the greatest concern was expressed about the influence of community channels upon the school system. Some quotations from the meeting illustrate this:

> Mr. _____ stated that this report is a reaffirmation
> of the quality of citizen participation in educational
> planning.

> Mr. _____ addressed the Board concerning that
> segment of the community which is generally silent.
> He said he was worried about sustained community
> interest and a process of getting a lot of people work-
> ing on committees.

> Mrs. _____ referred to the Citizens' Advisory
> Committee on Multicultural Education, which had
> been a group of 75 or 80 people. She noted that this
> committee had come up with an extraordinarily ef-
> fective report.....

> Mr. _____ questioned how the committee saw
> this project fitting in with the statewide project for
> goals assessment.....

Mr. _____commented that the first motion passed
by this committee was to have a needs assessment of
the community. (26)

At the Board of Education meeting on February 6, 1973, the Project
Redesign was "reindorsed". A month was set aside for public input on the pro-
posed design for the project, as submitted by the Convening Committee. No men-
tion was made of the need for comment from district staff nor from the superin-
tendent or his staff, the teachers' organization, or any other internal source.
The concern was for reaction from the public. No public reaction was forth-
coming. Project Redesign had been designed.

Summary

The Convening Committee was appointed as a means by which the
community and the school system would negotiate a negotiation procedure for
possible re-examination of the unwritten contract about schools between the
community and the system.

Value statements in the form of "ground rules" were developed early,
followed by the gradual invention of a centralized but highly participatory open
structure. Difficulties of the task ahead were apparent in the work of this com-
mittee, as opposing points of view developed and as the difficulties of escaping
from established meanings concerning education became apparent.

The Board of Education readily accepted the report of this committee,
with concern expressed only for the adequacy of community influence upon the
school system.

IV. THE PROCESS

One month following the report of the Convening Committee, the Board of Education proceeded to appoint the Design Management Team. This group was to serve as the executive committee for Project Redesign. This was no mere governing board to receive reports and give directives. It was intended that the "DMT" shape and manage the project, with general responsibility for the direction and coordination of all project activities.

Great care was taken by the Board in making appointments to the new governing group. Numerous candidates surfaced. Nearly ninety names were eventually considered for the eleven positions. After an initial screening process, the finalists were interviewed by Board members personally. Discussions about prospective appointees were conducted in private executive sessions of the Board, where the decisions were eventually made. Finally, on April 23, 1973, all appointments had been made and accepted, and the Design Management Team was ready to hold its first meeting.

The Board of Education had never adopted the report of the Convening Committee as an official pattern for Project Redesign. It had simply "reindorsed" Project Redesign, then begun to implement the structure as proposed by that committee. The Design Management Team was charged to provide leadership but not bound precisely to the structure and process handed to it by the Convening Committee.

Nearly a full school year had passed since the appointment of the director. That seems unreasonably long, if the primary objective of the project was development of a written plan for the school system. On the other hand, if the objective was to invent a new method for negotiating meaning between the community and the school system, how long is long? The struggle to find or to invent a workable system for improved or systematic interaction between the community and the schools might be compared to negotiations about how to negotiate, which occur in diplomacy or in labor relations. The situation between schools and communities may be even more complex, since clarity of opposing interests is missing. Board of Education, of course, are supposed to play this negotiating role. Perhaps Boards should not be expected to enter directly into activities that have the characteristics of negotiation. On certain issues, Boards of Education may better play a mediating role between teachers, administrators, and the public.

Within Project Redesign, by early 1973, several steps had been taken to place the community at large in a new situation for interaction with the school system:

1. The director had begun by interviewing many community members, as well as staff members, about possible outcomes of Project Redesign.

2. A "Convening Committee" had been appointed and had worked out a "basic structure" for the project. Great care had been taken when appointing this group to accommodate the various sectors of the community. Sixteen of the thirty-one members were representatives of the community.

3. The Board had waited for reactions from the community before proceeding to act on the basis of the report of the Convening Committee.

4. The new executive committee for the project, to be called the "Design Management Team", had been appointed with great concern for acceptability to the community. Five of the eleven members of the DMT were community representatives, a proportion settled upon by the Board of Education. Of the remaining six, three were students and three were teachers.

After the dust of the organizational period settled, some features of this new structure for the negotiation of meaning became clearer. Some of these deserve mention at this point, to help illuminate succeeding events. In describing this structure, I will make repeated references to symbolic interaction and how Project Redesign may or may not be interpreted from this point of view. At the close of this section, I will summarize the relationship between symbolic interaction and the actual chain of events which constituted Project Redesign.

Some important features of the situation are as follows:

1. The DMT was to report directly to the Board of Education. Proposed changes in administrative matters were to be taken to the administration. The direct line of responsibility, however, was to the Board. Proposed policy changes and proposals for redesigning the schools were to be taken directly to the Board.

2. Very little attention was given to the shape and form of any final product or plan in the charge given to the DMT. Very brief mention was made of a "validated conceptual plan for education in Meadow City " which was to be presented "to the school/community" (emphasis added). The stress was on the presentation of a plan to the community after the development of such a plan with substantial participation by the community. Nothing further was said about the plan itself. Should it consist of a statement of

general goals for the system, or should it provide de-
tailed steps for changing specific programs, or should
it be somewhere in between? Should it focus heavily on
such matters as enrollment projections, buildings and
finances, or keep these matters in the background? All
such questions were left entirely to the new Design Man-
agement Team.

3. The DMT was to begin its work by appointing task
forces. These initial groups would gather data for use
in planning. Such information studies would clarify (it
was hoped) the problems and issues that lay ahead. Ex-
perienced group process specialists might have pointed
out that linear processes in which one group is expected
to take over the work of a preceding group are usually not
very successful. (Schmuck and Runkel, 1972) If this were
to be a standard problem-solving or planning process,
such data-gathering might be better accomplished simul-
taneously with the actual problem-solving or planning.

However, Project Redesign was never billed as an ordin-
ary problem-solving or planning process. The DMT was
faced with the extremely difficult task of unearthing some
of the basics of the relationship between this school system
and its clientele, and subjecting them to re-examination.
For such purposes, an initial thrust toward gathering all
types of information on the community and the school sys-
tem could provide a workable beginning. Not much system-
atic reasoning entered into the decision to start with data-
gathering task forces; it just seemed sensible.

4. Proposals for change were to come about through the
work of the School/Community Input Teams, which were to
be organized by the DMT was the second major wave of
activity within the project, following the task forces. The
School/Community Input Teams (SCIT's) would be a new in-
vention. They would constitute the major setting in which
interaction between the community and its schools would
take place. The interaction was expected to result in the
development of new thinking about schools which would
eventually take the form of concrete proposals for restruc-
turing the system.

"In the early phase of Redesign, the SCIT will be a starting
place where people can learn about our system, ask ques-
tions, express opinions, and begin to think about the future.

After a period of study and preparation, the SCITs will col-
lect data by survey, receive back analyzed data, and dis-
tribute and discuss local as well as district-wide results.
Finally, the SCIT will be a focal point for the development
and review of many Redesign proposals." (27)

The SCITs were to be open to anyone from the school system
or from the community. Six to nine of them were to be or-
ganized, and were to include parents, school personnel, and
students, as well as non-parent community members. The
SCITs were to be the primary working parties for the devel-
opment of proposals which, from the point of view of sym-
bolic interaction, would result from the renegotiation of the
meaning of schools. The SCITs were charged to provide
some system of on-going interaction with the broader com-
munity around the specific topic under discussion. If there
was to be a SCIT on elementary education, for example, it
would have the responsibility to involve the community and
the school system in the development of any new ideas about
elementary education. Only after a lengthy period of inter-
action and testing of ideas would finished proposals be
presented.

5. Provision was made for other activities to be undertaken
by the Design Management Team, such as development of a
pool of resource people, sanctioning of special self-appointed
ad hoc groups, and hiring of consultants as needed.

6. Project Redesign was set apart from the operational ad-
ministration of the school district. No administrator was
appointed to the DMT, and the Team itself reported directly
to the Board of Education. A comment or two about this ad-
ministrative separation are in order.

Day-to-day administrative decision-making and problem-solving may
not mix well with interaction around basic educational issues. If it is possible
for intervention to occur in the process by which the meaning of the school sys-
tem for the community is shaped and changed, it may be necessary for that
intervention to be conducted separately from on-going budget and personnel
decisions, problems with programs, and daily concerns with students.

In the case at hand, Project Redesign was not on the work agenda of
the top district administrators. The project director was a member of this

group (the superintendent's cabinet). No Redesign activities or proposals were taken up for ser' us analysis by this group in its weekly meetings until after the completion of tl first draft of the long-range plan in the spring of 1975, more than a year after these proposals had begun to take shape.

Various explanations are possible for the sharp separation that existed between daily administration nd Project Redesign. One would be that the superintendent was simply not concerned with the actual work of the project because his own goals for it had little to do with actual proposals and plans which might be produced.

On the other hand, Project Redesign operated much like any other department or office within the school system, with little examination of its day-to-day activities because the superintendent trusted it to do the work assigned to it and did not wish to interfere. It has been pointed out by some scholars that school systems may be described as "loosely-coupled" organizations in which the connections between operational departments do not call for continuing interaction and are largely based on trust. ('see Meyer and Rowan, 1975). Principals, for example, have much less daily control over the work of teachers than do supervisors in certain other types of organization. The principal must trust teachers to accomplish the work for which they are hired, and does not oversee their work on a daily basis. If such supervision were necessary, more management personnel would be required. Supervisors are primarily concerned that established standards and procedures are followed in regard to attendance and other para-educational matters. The actual methods used to teach, and the quality of the learning process, are not under daily supervision. At best, the principal can hope to change faulty teaching by shifting teaching assignments between school years, not by daily work supervision. Similarly, the superintendent does not supervise the work of his subordinate departments on a daily basis. Applying this to Project Redesign, we would expect the superintendent not to be concerned on a daily basis with Project Redesign's work. He does not concern himself with other operational departments in this manner.

The project director chose not to bring the project to the continuing attention of top administrators, either for reasons of personal administrative style or for reasons of strategy. He did have a weekly appointment with the superintendent, during which time continuing discussions about the project took place between the two men.

From the viewpoint of symbolic interaction, separation from on-going administrative affairs while keeping in touch with administrative developments would be reasonable during the first stages of an effort to renegotiate meanings about education with the community. There would be time enough later to deal with administrative consequences. An alternative point of view, however, is that in any process involving basic organizational issues, the top management must be personally and directly involved right from the start (Hardy, 1972).

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In any case, Project Redesign was thoroughly separated from the administrative structure and life of the district, except for the frequent interaction that took place when members of task forces and school/community input teams sought information or advice from members of the administrative staff on an individual basis. The project was separated, moreover, from the daily life of local schools and classrooms. Project officers were located at the central district headquarters.

The above factors described the situation when the Design Management Team came into existence. It could have challenged any of these, and indeed, some of them were challenged as the project moved along. For the most part, the D MT did not attempt to change the structure of the situation as it found it.

The new Design Management Team found itself faced with a novel role, without guidelines and previous experience to fall back upon. It was given a staff, albeit a very small one, consisting of a director, who had other duties as well as Project Redesign, a research coordinator, who had other duties relating to a federal grant, and a secretary.

The Design Management Team was a symbol of joint effort between students, community, and staff to renegotiate the meaning of schooling for Meadow City. Its work was substantial: it was to manage and direct Project Redesign. The project director adopted a very non-directive stance from the beginning, for the express purpose of avoiding the charge of manipulation or "social engineering". No structures, procedures, or topics for planning were proposed by the director.

The members of the DMT were being asked to deal with values and normative thinking, with creative plan formulation, and with deterministic projection of current trends, all in one operation. They were to think about the "oughts", as well as the "can" and "will" sides of things. The task seemed clear on paper, yet was filled with enormous complexities. The DMT members were not planners, nor organizational or social analysts, but ordinary citizens, students, and teachers. Their make-up as a group was less functional than symbolic: three students, three teachers, five parents. Could any degree of success be expected?

The First Phase: The Task Forces

Soon after it was officially organized, the DMT began to organize the Project Redesign task forces. The formation of these task forces had been recommended by the Convening Committee in its report to the Board of Education, and the DMT accepted the recommendation without debate. A recruitment process was set in motion. Within a month after the appointment of the DMT, advertisements appeared in the Meadow City daily newspaper and notices went

out to the staff and students of the school system, all seeking volunteers for the task forces. More volunteers appeared than were needed. The DMT could be selective. Great care was taken to appoint a promising group of students, community members, teachers, and administrators to serve on each new task force. There were six in all:

> Task Force on Organization and Decision-Making
> Task Force on Needs Assessment
> Task Force on Curriculum
> School/Community Profile Task Force
> Task Force on Retrospective Data
> Task Force on Emerging Educational and Societal Futures

The appointment of the task forces was the third occasion when the call had gone out for volunteer participants for Project Redesign. First had been the appointment of the Convening Committee; next, the appointment of the Design Management Team; and now, the Project Redesign Task Forces. In all these instances, many more persons volunteered than were needed.

Once these groups were set in motion, the outpouring of human energy was substantial. One hundred eleven persons were appointed to membership on the task forces. In every case, these groups met weekly over a period of many weeks or months and in every case published extensive reports. In some cases, several reports were issued by one task force. Copies were distributed throughout the district and many requests for copies were received from other school districts and agencies. Requests for copies continue to be received in 1977.

These groups were charged only to collect information, not to develop proposals. The really exciting work was to come later – the work of developing proposals for change.

From the viewpoint of symbolic interaction, issues were raised or facts presented by several task forces which led to the reconsideration of important issues.

The Task Forces and Their Output

One of the task forces set about to write a "profile" of the Meadow City community, with sociological and economic data. Income figures, sources of employment, levels of education, racial characteristics, and other information were presented in summary form. A history of the school system was provided in brief form, with information on the growth of the schools since World War II as well as projections into the future. These future projections indicated that great changes were just around the corner. Enrollment was declining and financial pressures were beginning to appear on the horizon which could become very serious.

The chairperson of this task force was the owner of a local advertising agency. Not surprisingly, a portion of the report described Meadow City in serious although whimsical terms: 235

"In Meadow City, everything works.

The garbage men come on the days you expect them. And the noise level is carefully orchestrated. Stays within tolerances.

City government works so smoothly it's almost invisible between elections.

We like to get our kids involved. We sign them up for lots of courses during the summer and school year alike. They can learn to swim, play football (Pop Warner) and baseball (Little League) or study dance or be in a play at the Children's Theater.

So here's what I see in Meadow City: an intelligent, wealthy group of family-oriented individuals who want a happy, productive life for themselves and their children. They're active in seeking change for all of society, but they are not driven to effect it. And they resist change that will ruffle their lives. Things are great as they are." (28)

- This task force suggested that Project Redesign concern itself with the use of surplus buildings, soon to become available because of declining enrollment. It also suggested that attention be paid to the school district's role in serving senior citizens, of whom the community has a high concentration. It also made suggestions about conducting needs assessment activities within schools.

Significantly, a theme of community self-satisfaction and satisfaction with schools permeated the task force report. No renegotiations were called for about the meaning of schools and schooling. "Everything works in Meadow City", and works well, with citizen energy behind it, and this includes the schools.

The Task Force on Needs Assessment produced more evidence for this community satisfaction. They took an extremely ambitious survey. After they rejected professional assistance in questionnaire development, the group wrangled through to produce a survey instrument to seek opinions on the value of numerous school programs and concerns, and on the success of the Meadow City schools in conducting these programs. Questions were included on the adequacy of information about schools, and the survey concluded with general open-ended questions about the responsibilities of the school system.

Random samples of respondents were drawn from among the entire community (not only parents), hers, other school employees, junior high school and senior high school students. The school principals and members of the top administrative staff were asked to complete the questionnaire as well. Volunteers delivered and collected all these questionnaires personally. The hundreds of open-ended question responses were studied and categorized by

volunteers, while the short answer questions were tallied by computer. The results give evidence of several facts significant for our purposes:

First, a high level of satisfaction existed within the community with the school system, its programs, and its personnel. Clearly, this school system had a valuable resource in the attitudes of its clients. They were positive and supportive of the system as it existed.

Secondly, a general consensus was evident among the parents, students, and school personnel about the responsibilities of the schools and the importance of various programs and activities. If there were to be a reexamination of the meaning of schools or the negotiation of new meanings, that process would start from a position of general agreement, not disagreement, between the school system and the community.

Not surprisingly, the teaching of basic skills, communication skills, and concern for the emotional well-being of children ranked as top priorities. Preparation for college was also rated as of primary importance. Job training, on the other hand, was seen as very important by a large majority of students and teachers, but by a minority of the parents.

These priorities reflected existing district programs. Substantial resources were being devoted by the district to special programs for teaching basic skills, and a great deal of emphasis was given to advanced college preparatory programs. The district also invested heavily in psychological services, reflecting the community's concern about the emotional well-being of students. On the other hand, investment in vocational skills training was minimal, reflecting the community's attitude but not the staff's attitude toward this endeavor.

Large numbers of persons did find fault with the system in this survey. The teaching of oral and written communication skills was seen as less than adequate by a substantial minority of respondents. The same was true for counseling, job training, and success in meeting individual needs and interests of students.

Substantial differences between the responses of different groups appeared in a limited number of issues. Only a minority of parents rated the district as successful in "disciplining students". Students agreed with parents' assessment, but administrators rated the district as generally successful in discipline. Most parents and staff members rated the system as successful in meeting the emotional needs of students, but only a small minority of high school students agreed.

The survey mildly supported the innovative, experimental stance often taken by the district. Development of new educational methods was rated as

important by only a minority of parents, but in the open-ended questions, a sub-
stantial number of citizens mentioned the willingness of educators to try new
programs as one of the things they liked about Meadow City schools.

The survey generally indicated satisfaction with the system, with
some strong dissent, but also revealed a conservative stance toward education.
"Major responsibilities of the schools" were stated as "the teaching of basic
skills" and "preparation of students for college or for a career". Humanistic
considerations, such as "teaching understanding and concern for other persons
and groups" and "developing special individidual interests and abilities" also
showed up as important, but in low second place. There was nearly unanimous
agreement that the schools should play a strong role in the developments of
morals and values.

The survey gave much evidence that this school system understood
and responded to the unwritten contract between this community and its schools.
The results were published in several versions and were widely distributed. The
survey was repeated one year later, with nearly identical results.

Other Task Forces

A Task Force on Retrospective Data busily collected previous studies
conducted in the Meadow City schools, to make them available to Project Rede-
sign participants.

The Task Force on Curriculum compiled an overview of the curriculum
of the entire system and attached an extended set of curriculum issues for study
by Project Redesign planning groups. Some of these constituted issues for the
negotiation of some basic meanings between the system and the community. One
of these was the issue of graduation requirements.

How can graduation requirements reflect the district's
general educational philosophies and goals?

Should graduation requirements be increased?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of early
graduation?

Another was the issue of course content and decisions regarding course content:

Does content serve the needs of the minority, as well as
the majority?

How can conflicting pressures be resolved?

The difficulties of change were noted:

> Change at best is difficult in a district such as Meadow City,
> with declining enrollment and largely tenured personnel;
> we may have difficulty in matching district personnel to
> desired changes in curriculum.

Evaluation was noted as an issue:

> A key issue in curriculum change is the need to evaluate
> the potential curriculum before it is implemented, to
> test how much students already know, and to develop
> means for evaluating the success of the program.

Other issues included the extent to which curriculum diversity is desirable as
contrasted with a common core taught to all students; the degree to which values
should be explicitly identified and included in curriculum planning; the degree to
which curriculum decision-making should be decentralized; the grouping of stu-
dents for instruction; and the means by which students are informed and make
decisions about courses. Any one of these topics could have become the basis
for a major planning effort.

One of the members of the Task Force on Curriculum, a high school
English teacher, illustrated the trust accorded the school system in comments ap-
pended to the task force report:

> "As far as I know, there has been a general tendency both
> at elementary and secondary levels, but particularly at
> secondary levels, to allow schools and teachers to adapt
> and change as they will, with little or nothing in the way
> of written syllabi." (29)

In other words, curriculum decision-making is elusive in this school system.
The community trusts the system and the administration trusts the teachers.

Similar conclusions were reached by another task force, the Task
Force on Organization and Decision-Making. This group set out to describe
the organizational structure of the school system and to analyze the process by
which decisions are made.

A typical Project Redesign task force, it included twenty members:
Six parents, three students, four teachers, a teacher aide, a school counselor,
three administrators, and two citizens who were not parents of school age children.

The task force met weekly for an extended period and worked in two
subgroups. One developed a description of the organizational structure of the

system, something which had not recently been done. This report was used extensively by a management consultant team from the state department of education in making recommendations to the superintendent for structural changes in the system. The second subgroup set out to examine decision-making by asking persons in interviews how they believed decisions in the system were made. Lengthy interviews were conducted with 57 persons. Questions were asked about decision-making in curriculum, new programs, personnel matters, and budgets. This enormous effort produced the following conclusions:

> The decision-making process, in practice, is very un-
> structured and difficult to describe, as it applies to
> curriculum and new programs. The formal procedures
> which exist on paper do not help describe it very well.

> Decisions on curriculum and new programs usually be-
> gin within a local school and are often heavily influenced
> by pressure groups from the community.

> In general, it's an arduous process.

> Personnel matters, on the other hand, can be traced
> more easily through the formal authority structure of
> the district. Budget decision-making takes place cen-
> trally, with few persons involved or knowledgeable about
> the decisions or the process. (30)

The persons interviewed, who represented a selected set of teachers, administrators, parents, and students, generally responded that in the curriculum decision process, students, parents, and teachers should all have more direct participation and influence. Most of the persons suggested that in order to accomplish a decision in the area of curriculum or new programs it is necessary to "sell" the idea carefully to various groups within the school system and to be able to demonstrate some benefits to students.

The work of this task force describes a system only partially equipped to negotiate the meaning of education with its community. Students and parents were seen by this influential set of respondents as possessing valuable insights and information on educational matters which, however, is not received or utilized very well by the system. According to the respondents, it takes pressure groups to accomplish much. No process of mutual education and planning between the community and the system existed. A possible topic for Project Redesign would be some restructuring of decision processes to help facilitate negotiations between the system and its community.

One task force remains - the Task Force on Emerging Educational and Societal Futures. This group took advantage of the presence of several persons who were parents in the district and also scientists engaged in futures studies in

economics, psychology, or technological fields. Vigorous task force work resulted in several publications, including bibliographies and suggestions of how to engage in "futuring". The writing of scenarios of the future was one suggested technique. Three scenarios were written by members of the task force, depicting society and its impact on schools within the next several years.

By means of a special small grant from a federal research project, the county office of education serving Meadow City picked up the work of this task force and published it for distribution to a wider audience. "Futuring" became a major activity of the director of Project Redesign, and he became a popular speaker throughout the state at educational meetings. A professional "sound and light" company offered its services to help produce a multi-media slide show on possible futures in education. The contribution of the futuring enterprise to Project Redesign is difficult to assess. It did provide a great deal of publicity for the project.

A project activity related to the work of the futures task force, yet separate from it, was the Dream Team operation. In this operation, developed by a special committee, groups and individuals were asked to dream about the future of education in the community. These persons included teachers, parents, students at various ages, service clubs, women's organizations, and various other groups. "Dreams" were written at meetings, given orally to interviewers, or called in to a special telephone recording system set up for the purpose. A mass of material was received and reported. Within it can be found developing ideas about education and schools, some of which began to appear in the proposals which were eventually developed for change in the system. Some excerpts illustrate the point:

> (On the telephone recorder)- I am a Meadow City High School junior and I would just like to express my opinion that I think the highschool in the future should be tailored more on vocational training.....Thank you.

> (on the recorder) - The other day I became aware of an organizational change that a school district near Los Angeles has tried and turned out to be a very happy, satisfactory type of thing and I thought I would pass the word along.....In their efforts to reorganize, they felt that the needs of the junior high age children seemed to pose problems for a great many districts around them and decided to begin there to discover the psychological and educational needs of the children of this age group and then see what really seemed to be important to be done for them and see how the reorganization for the others fell into place. What they did was to include the ninth grade with the high school.....

(At a women's club meeting) - We need more basic education
and fewer "frills".

An ingredient I find missing in the 9th grade is super counsel-
ing. Surely a counselor should be aware of "required" sub-
jects in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.....

We need greater integration of school and community life,
more opportunity for students to observe and experience
job opportunities and relate their school time to it. (31)

In the "Dream Team" operation and in all the efforts of the task forces, substantial
interaction took place between the community and the school system. Many doors
were opened to the reinforcement or modification of the meaning of education and
schools to this community. Nearly a thousand pages of reports and studies were
completed and published by the six task forces and related groups.

Back to the Design Management Team and the Project Director

By the end of the summer of 1973, the Design Management Team had
fielded and supported all the activities of the task forces as well as the "dream
team" work. These were busy times. A calendar of events for July 1973 shows
that 28 separate Project Redesign meetings were held during that month, including
meetings of task forces and the DMT. Some of the DMT members were attending
three and four meetings a week, many in the evening. A management plan for the
project was also being written.

Once the task forces had become operational groups, the DMT turned
its attention to designing the School/Community Input Teams. These were to be
the groups which would formulate and test actual plans and proposals.

The DMT was faced with a difficult design task. If it was not intrinsic-
ally difficult, the group certainly struggled very hard with it. The problem was
not conceptualizing how the School/Community Input Teams would be organized,
what norms would be established for them, or how they would go about their task.
The difficulty was settling on the charge to be made to each team. In other words,
how should the over-all work of redesign be divided up? How does one parcel out
the work when setting out to "redesign" an entire school system?

For many weeks, the Design Management Team struggled with this
issue. The struggle is significant. It is extraordinarily hard for the participants
in an institution to have enough insight about that institution to reshape it. This is
just as true on the individual level. Which of us has enough self-knowledge to
effectively reshape our actions and our personalities? The members of the DMT
were trapped in the thought categories about schools and schooling that currently

controlled the shape and activities of the institution. To explore other possibilities in a serious and sustained manner is extraordinarily difficult. The gathering of information, through the work of the task forces, was trivial by comparison. When it came to doing it, "redesigning" was tough. Whenever a proposal was made to organize a School/Community Input Team around a certain topic, objections were raised that the particular topic was too narrow, or too broad, or unimportant, or unmanageable. At one weekly meeting of the DMT on October 3, 1973, twenty-nine possible topics for SCITs were listed. Since only six to nine SCITs were thought to be administratively possible, such a list merely complicated the problem. The deceptive complexity of education and educational institutions was becoming apparent to the beleaguered DMT members . At a meeting on October 15th, the group considered a proposal for organizing only two initial SCITs, around the topics -

(1) What are the expectations of and for the learner ?

(2) The sequences of experiences of the learner in the schools.

This proposal, along with many others, was defeated.

Meanwhile, invitations went out inviting people to participate in Project Redesign as members of School/Community Input Teams. Four informational meetings were scheduled, at various sites within the city and at differing times. Advertisements in newspapers and through staff and student channels were also used to inform and recruit potential participants. Several dozen potential participants materialized.

On December 5, 1973, the first meeting for volunteer SCIT members was held, followed by another in early January. Full-scale training sessions for SCIT participants from among the staff, student body, and parent community were begun on January 9, 1974 and continued weekly until January 26 of that year, when a full-day training session was scheduled. The topics around which the new School/Community Input Teams would work had still not been chosen.

The eventual solution to the problem of topic selection was simple: let the topics emerge from among the volunteer participants. A facilitator was engaged to take the participants through a topic selection process on the last day of the training sessions.

The Community Continues to Shape Its Schools

Time does not stop when a project of this nature is undertaken. The first five School/Community Input Teams began their work on January 26, 1974. Meanwhile, many other events were shaping the school district, some of which

must be noted here; first, because they fit within the general theoretical struc-
ture of this essay, and secondly, because they took much of the time and energy
of the director of Project Redesign and introduced considerable uncertainty into
the project. The director was assigned varying duties outside the project, as
time went along, most of them connected with the events to be listed below.

It was mentioned earlier that the maintenance of social institutions
requires unceasing effort. Principals must daily ensure that students are be-
having like students, not like teachers, or principals, or outsiders; the estab-
lished beliefs of all must be constantly reinforced.

Along with this incessant work within schools and classrooms, similar
activities must go on system-wide. We noted that surveys and interviews had
indicated broad approval of the school system within Meadow City. The superin-
tendent interacted regularly with PTA leaders and with many other persons
throughout the community to reinforce acceptance of the present "contract" ex-
isting between the system and its public. All that is routine and common to any
school system. In 1973-74, however, events began which were not routine for
Meadow City. Enrollment decline had begun in earnest, which meant some
schools would have to be closed. This had been foreseen but not acted upon.
At the same time, the basis for financing education had changed in the state in
a manner unfavorable to Meadow City. The community had a rich tax base, and
had been able to support its school system comfortably with a moderate rate.
Now the state required that expenditures for schools be based on a prescribed
amount per pupil. The Board of Education no longer controlled the tax rate.
The district would have to seek permission from the voters to continue to spend
as it had in the past.

The district was forced to seek reaffirmation of support for the sys-
tem from the voters in the form of a tax election, while making substantial or-
ganizational changes to accommodate declining enrollment.

The events of this period are described in the Second Annual Manage-
ment Plan for Project Redesign presented to the Board in December, 1974:

> The period covered by the First Annual Management Plan
> (October 1973 to October 1974) had been a turbulent one
> for the school district. In March 1974, the voters ap-
> proved a one-year revenue base election by a margin of
> 7-3, enabling the district to enter a year of intensive opera-
> tional planning. Continuing declining enrollment and finan-
> cial constraints have caused a flurry of planning activities
> preparing the district to face the 1975-76 school year, such
> as Reorganization for Instruction, and Budget Priority Setting.

Dr. _____ (the superintendent) has subsequently an-
nounced his resignation and the search for a new superin-
tendent is now completed. The Board's choice, Dr. _____,
promises to affect the immediate and future long-range
course of the district. During such a hectic period, the de-
sirability and feasibility of long-range planning is continually
challenged.

It may help to clarify the situation if we list some events and activities which
directly affected the director of Project Redesign and indirectly affected the
project itself.

1. An election to permit the district to continue increasing
its rate of expenditures per pupil was held in March 1974
and was successful. The director was heavily involved in
activities surrounding this election.

2. In conjunction with the tax election, the Board promised
the community that a survey would be conducted to deter-
mine community priorities on existing school programs.
The director of Project Redesign was asked to take the major
responsibility for this very elaborate survey. One of the DMT
members also served on the Board-appointed Committee.
This committee was appointed on February 25, 1974.

3. For a year or more, the superintendent had desired a
wholly new program for the professional renewal and re-
training of teachers and other staff members. A committee
was appointed by the superintendent to design such a system.
The director of Project Redesign was designated to serve as
staff support for this committee.

4. In March 1974, the superintendent began to develop a plan
for rearranging the system to accommodate declining enroll-
ment. On May 7, 1974, the Board adopted a process suggested
by the superintendent for making these decisions. All this re-
quired considerable staff work by all central office adminis-
trators, including the director of Project Redesign.

5. The decision-making process for closing elementary
schools and altering the secondary schools was chaotic.
Intensive opposition developed to the superintendent's pro-
posals. The outcome was the superintendent's resignation
and the postponement of most decisions. This affected the
director of Project Redesign because he became an active
candidate for the superintendency.

All of these events could be studied as possible examples of the very process in which we are interested: the modification or reinforcement of meaning concerning the educational system within the community. We will not do that, since the focus here is upon Project Redesign.

Similar unpredictable and energy-draining developments are not unusual in school systems. When a project of several years duration is begun, it may be expected that such things will occur. This fits one of the major statements in the introduction: the on-going decision-making structure of school districts causes interaction leading to the development and creation of new meaning to be difficult. Most of the available time and energy is spent in activities which may be interpreted as reinforcing present meanings, insuring the continuance of the current arbitrary reality of the system.

As the events mentioned unfolded, the superintendent decided that Project Redesign should follow its prescribed course, and should not be restructured to serve as a planning unit to meet the needs of all the new activities. His stated reason was that the original purpose of Project Redesign would be lost if the project became embroiled in these issues. His original purpose was to develop a means for systematically involving the community in shaping the system, looking toward fundamental changes in education, rather than rearrangement of present programs. Looking, in our terms, toward the creation of new meaning, rather than toward reinforcement of the old.

Project Redesign continued its course, but in an environment of increasing uncertainty. We will continue to examine the processes and outcomes of the project, knowing that the background noise was becoming quite intense. Several project participants became involved in these other proceedings, and many task force reports were utilized by administrators and citizen groups. No one had looked to Project Redesign for answers to on-going administrative problems when the project was conceived, nor did they now. Many individuals, including the superintendent, did regard the project as a convenient source of information and personnel to work on these now pressing problems. The superintendent had decided to separate the operational decisions from the general process of probing the meaning of schooling in Meadow City. That may not have been a good decision, but it was significant in the life of Project Redesign.

The School/Community Input Teams, or Planning Teams

Fifty-five persons appeared at initial meetings to organize the first School/Community Input Teams. After several initial training sessions, the volunteer planners themselves selected the topic areas in which to begin work. These were:

Alternatives in Elementary Education
Early Adolescent Education
Issues in Secondary Education
Personal and Professional Growth of Staff,
School/Community Relationships

Following the 26th of January, 1974, these new groups met weekly, on Wednesday evenings.

The Design Management Team proceeded slowly with plans for fielding additional planning groups. Finally, invitations went out on May 17, 1974 for volunteers to serve on five additional teams. This time, the topics had been chosen by the DMT, as follows:

Long-Range District Finances
Teacher/Learner Relationships
Administrative Needs
Special Educational and Support Services
Curriculum

These teams were organized at different times, without benefit of the orientation and training sessions provided for the first groups.

One of the original teams, studying "the personal and professional growth of staff", was disbanded within a few weeks.

In the early spring of 1974, a group of primary teachers approached Project Redesign with the request that a new team be formed on the topic of Primary Education. This was done. Therefore, ten teams comprised the full group. All ten worked through to completion, most of them meeting weekly. Between weekly meetings, individuals studied reports, conducted interviews, designed survey instruments, and wrote draft proposals. By the end of the project, they had conducted a dozen surveys, some of them major undertakings, and had published twenty-six reports aggregating more than 500 pages.

The appearance of sufficient volunteers from among students, teachers, administrators, and parents to staff all these committees and do all this work is an indicator of the resources the school system possessed within the staff and the community. Weekly meetings in most cases continued through the summer, and for as long as fourteen months.

Extensive analysis of the coming and going of participants is provided by Edlefson elsewhere in this study. A highly detailed study of all phases of participation in Project Redesign has been completed separately and is available For

interested persons. For those wishing to know more about group process is-
sues in planning, a Handbook on Participatory Planning, which draws upon the
experiences in Project Redesign, is also available, through the National Insti-
tute of Education or the ERIC system. Our concern in this report is the sig-
nificance of all this activity, if any, for the process by which education changes.

V. THE TEN TEAMS - THEIR WORK AND OUTCOMES

Edlefson and Stromquist have provided details on the formal decision-
making process surrounding the work of the Project Redesign planning teams.
All of the teams were asked to develop operational goals for the school system,
most of which were written into the draft of the Meadow City School District
Long-Range Plan, published by Project Redesign in September of 1975.

The long-range plan itself was only conceptualized and written late
in the project. The resignation of the superintendent and the turmoil around
the issues of school closure and reorganization made it unclear for months how
the work of the planning teams could most effectively be utilized.

Meanwhile, each planning team continued to work with one or several
basic problems of meaning and changes in meaning. In this section, we will re-
view these ten groups and their work, not from the perspective of their role in
the political decision-making process, but their role (or lack of it) in the rein-
forcement or change in definitions and meanings surrounding education in
Meadow City.

Elementary Education

In an editorial on March 5, 1977, the Meadow City newspaper car-
ried an editorial on elementary education which included the following statement:

> "An interesting conflict of educational values surfaced this
> week while the Meadow City Board of Education was con-
> sidering the expansion of the "more structured _____
> School. _____ is one of the school district's two
> alternative schools, the other being _____, which
> is less structured than the neighborhood elementary schools
> situated between these two poles.
>
> The Board voted to expand the 'basics' school by opening
> several classrooms of a closed elementary school. It also
> voted a goal statement that neighborhood elementary
> schools should be the norm, not district-wide 'alternative'
> schools which specialize in one educational approach or
> philosophy. "

This was the latest chapter in a debate which has raged within the
Meadow City schools for several years. At issue is the meaning of the term,
"elementary school". Is such a school a meeting ground for all the children,
and all the adults as well, within a neighborhood? Does it exist to provide a
common experience for all children? Should "school" mean a specialized place?
Some meanings attached to the categories of "parent", "teacher", and "admin-
istrator" are also involved. Are "parents" persons who simply turn their chil-
dren over to the school, trusting the judgment of educators? Or are "parents"
people who choose an educational method or philosophy? Are "teachers" simply
teachers, or are they "open classroom" teachers or "diagnostic and prescrip-
tive" teachers?

One Project Redesign team entered the fray during battles over
choosing schools for permanent closure:

> "Through all the changes (of the past decade) one organiza-
> tion, the school, has been physically present and available
> at the micro-community level of neighborhood. Frequently,
> disaffection with the broader community has been felt by the
> school and its staff as individuals have struck at the only
> known and visible organization present. In responding to the
> needs and concerns, the school has provided a safety valve
> for the pressures of a changing society. Individuals were
> given an opportunity to feel effective in influencing the suc-
> cess or failure of the activities, limited as these activities
> may have been. The school has been the only common denom-
> inator within a geographic area and the meeting ground for all
> the diverse elements of the population. The known boundaries
> provide a sense of security and a sense of place. (32)

The author of the report just quoted also assisted one of the neighborhood groups
attempting to block local school closure. This group was successful. The spe-
cific school serves a neighborhood which has sharply-defined geographical
boundaries. It remains open.

The two alternative elementary schools in Meadow City in 1977 ex-
isted during Project Redesign. One, an open classroom school, was developed
when the teachers and principal of a neighborhood school became excited about
open classroom methods and convinced neighborhood parents to go along. The
other, a "more structured" school, was developed in response to the organized
demand of a group of parents during the 1973-74 school year.

One of the superintendent's hopes in establishing Project Redesign was to provide a "better" method for examining issues than by the heat of ad hoc pressure groups. Why not study the whole issue of elementary education, including the desirability of "alternative schools" and specialized schools? The Project Redesign Planning Team in Alternatives in Elementary Education set about accomplishing this. A survey was constructed which described seven different kinds of elementary schools. A random sample of parents, and all elementary school staff members, were asked to state their preferences.

The results indicated strong support among parents for alternative elementary schools, particularly three types as described by the planning team: "traditionally-structured schools"; "open classroom schools"; and "individualized and prescriptive schools". Very little support appeared for four other possible types: departmentalized elementary schools with subject matter specialists; mixed philosophy schools; "theme schools", such as schools specializing in the arts or sciences; and "free" or "very open" schools.

Results from staff were not strikingly different from the responses of parents, once again indicating the high congruence in thinking about education between Meadow City parents and staff members.

Detailed analysis of the extensive survey work conducted by this planning team is not appropriate here. The team recommended expansion of alternative elementary schools, including geographical expansion to more areas of the city, and inclusion of "individualized and prescriptive schools" in addition to highly-structured schools and open classroom schools. It also recommended assessment of the desires of the community at each school site, to be followed by decisions on educational methods to be offered at that school. This process would be accompanied by parent education on educational options, and school evaluation on a more systematic basis.

What of all this? Did the work of the Project Redesign team matter?

If the assessment is based purely on changes in the number and variety of alternative elementary schools in the district before and after Project Redesign, the answer is no. The number and types of schools has not changed. However, the Project Redesign planning teams raised the issue of alternatives in a far more systematic and far-reaching way than had been done before. Hundreds of persons were involved in completing questionnaires, reading reports, and thinking about their own teaching or administrative position or the school attended by their own children.

In 1977, a very large number of people in Meadow City accept the idea of alternative elementary schools. "School" can mean a specialized place in

this community. It does not mean only "our neighborhood school". In a community having six thousand elementary school children, roughly one thousand attend or are on the waiting list of alternative schools.

The legitimacy of such alternatives is supported by parental knowledge of similar schools in other school systems. The media carry accounts of such schools.

The meaning of "parent" for many now includes "one who may or must choose an educational methodology or philosophy".

Parents as a group, in neighborhoods, have the right to shape each school. This was stressed in the work of the Project Redesign team. This same stance was stated by an official Board of Education resolution of March 2, 1977.

On March 7, 1977, the Project Redesign studies on this subject were once again reproduced in large numbers by one of the superintendent's cabinet members for use by the superintendent and the Board of Education. The effects of the Project Redesign team, by itself, are not separable from all of the other events around the same issue. Numbers of teachers and administrators reflected on their own methods and philosophy as a result of the Redesign reports, and perhaps made some important personal decisions. The debate is far from over.

Education for Early Adolescents

Controversy had erupted around the junior high schools within the system in the years just preceding Project Redesign. The project's community needs assessment survey had turned up a large number of complaints about junior high education - far more than for education at any other level.

The Planning Team in Education for Early Adolescents developed a set of criteria by which to evaluate education at this age level. These criteria were widely distributed for comments and became the basis for a pre-school workshop for junior high school teachers, set up by the associate superintendent.

The concept of the "middle school" as a departure from "junior high school" began to surface early in the work of this planning team. Membership on this team fluctuated widely as controversy broke out around the issue of school closure, movement of ninth graders to the senior high schools, and possible movement of sixth graders to the junior high schools. When, at length, the decision was made by the Board of Education to change the older three-year junior high schools by moving the ninth graders to the senior high schools,

the two-year schools that remained were to be restructured into "middle schools". Special committees were set up within each of the three schools to plan the changeover. Meanwhile, the Project Redesign planning team recommended the following changes in middle school education:

    a. Interdisciplinary experience in classes as a result of better integration of curriculum, teacher teaming, or by the use of core or block teachers;

    b. Promotion by grade levels replaced by individual progression on a sequential continuum;

    c. Development of competency tests in oral and written communication and computing skills, to be met before transferring to senior high school;

    d. Development of several different types of instruction within each middle school;

    e. Development of an advisor system, with fifteen or so students assigned to an advisor, to meet on a regular basis.

    f. Development of work in helping students improve their self-image;

    g. Better provision of planning time for teachers, and more attention to staff development;

    h. New curriculum materials in the area of creative thinking, problem-solving, and independent inquiry. (33)

       By late 1975, the concept of the "middle school" as a replacement for the older "junior high school" had taken root and began to carry increasingly clear meanings within the parent community and among the staff. A number of sub-concepts had also been introduced and began to acquire meaning: competency-based education, teacher teaming, block or core teachers, alternative styles of instruction, staff development, and others.

       By the middle of the 1976-77 school year, schools for early adolescents in Meadow City are very dissimilar to those in existence when Project Redesign began. Continuing development is moving these schools closer to the ideal middle school outlined early in the project. Who influenced which decisions is far from clear. A linear progression from proposal to decision to change in schools is certainly not what happened. Throughout a three- to four-year period, a continuing discussion of education for this age group was carried on by various

groups, including Project Redesign, and the schools have changed. One service that Project Redesign provided was a steady flow of literature on middle schools to junior high school principals and other staff members. Other project activities also helped. For example, one group of junior high teachers worked through a Project Redesign planning team to visit several schools outside the district. They developed a special report - A Survey of Alternative Schools - (December, 1974) and became active participants in local school planning for the changeover from junior high schools to middle schools.

One of the present middle schools will serve as an example of some specific changes that have occurred. This school's program now includes:

1. A self-contained classroom program for students diagnosed as needing another year with one teacher before moving into specialized secondary-level classes.

2. Two teaching teams with differing teaching styles, for teaching the "core" subjects.

3. An advisory system, now undergoing extensive development, in which each student has an advisor who works to assist students in making the transition to and from middle school, assists students to participate in school activities, and helps meet other identified student needs.

4. A reading program, planned for 1977-78 which will assess the reading skills of each student and prescribe further instruction accordingly.

These and other new developments represent modified thinking about early adolescent education. Middle schools are to be institutions which are not high schools, yet provide some specialization; which are not elementary schools, yet provide much nurturing and personal attention for students.

The term "middle school" is a category new to this system, but with meanings which are increasingly clear to numbers of people. For many staff members, a growing difference exists between "high school teacher" and "middle school teacher". Each has its special requirements. There is a growing unwillingness to continue the very old status distinctions which rated primary teachers lowest, junior high school teachers slightly higher, and senior high school teachers as high-status personnel.

The Project Redesign planning team in Early Adolescent Education stressed concepts and meanings throughout its work. It presented specific

proposals for change, but concentrated on the development and refinement of the meaning of "early adolescent education". One of the team members throughout the project was a former junior high school principal who is widely respected in the district.

Since Project Redesign operated, intentionally, outside the administrative structure, the development of meaning through broad-ranging activities and discussions was often more productive than efforts to put forth specific change proposals.

Secondary Education

The Project Redesign planning team in secondary education worked during a period when many groups around the nation were developing proposals for major changes in the meaning of "high school". The U.S. Office of Education sponsored a comprehensive study of high schools; private foundations supported similar studies under the leadership of authorities such as James Coleman. State departments of education initiated change programs. For example, in the west, Oregon moved into competency-based education on a statewide basis, and California had its Commission on the Reform of Intermediate and Secondary Education.

All of these studies were read by members of the Project Redesign planning team. Collectively, they carried on an amazing variety of activities. Letters were sent to all state departments of education, seeking information on graduation requirements. A subcommittee completed a study of several alternative schools in secondary settings. Another subcommittee contacted the admissions officers of almost all the colleges attended by graduates of Meadow City schools to discuss "the present picture in college admissions". One member of the group developed a list of 31 "highly influential" persons in Meadow City and asked their opinions about the future of secondary education. Twenty-four of these people were interviewed personally; the others provided written statements. These interviews were published.*

What is a high school? Should these institutions continue to have a strong custodial function, keeping track of students at all times? Should they

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* One of the people interviewed was appointed to the Meadow City Board of Education within weeks after the interview.

be sites for vocational training? Ethical and moral training? What should a diploma mean? Should it guarantee "certain competencies"?

The goal provided by the planning team for inclusion in the long-range plan for the school district was very brief. It called for the establishment of a system for granting high school diplomas on the basis of demonstrated competencies. The team specified some of the competencies in the following areas:

a. Communications skills
b. Computation skills
c. Occupational skills and awareness
d. Consumer skills
e. Basic health concepts
f. Basic ecological concepts
g. Civic participation
h. Interpersonal communication

Along with stress on explicit competencies was stress on student self-responsibility. Students would develop "learning agendas" upon entering high school, as a method for matching each student's interests, strengths, and needs with the offerings of the school. The record of completion of courses should no longer be the sole measure of education.

As the reader will note, many of the ideas put forth by this group call for very extensive changes in the meaning of "high school", "high school teachers", and "high school students".

In 1977, the Meadow City district is participating in the statewide experimental program for improving secondary schools. Many of the proposals of the Project Redesign team are under study or implementation in two of the district's schools. Competency-based education is under study. The advising and counseling system is being restructured to provide the type of four-year study plan proposed by the Project Redesign team for many students. Work is being done on a system for allowing students alternatives to coursework for meeting graduation requirements. More opportunities for off-campus learning experiences - another proposal by the team - are under development. Linkages between the work of Project Redesign and these changes are indirect; nevertheless, they are there.

School/Community Relations

What is an elementary school? Is it a community center, as well as a place for the teaching of children? The Planning Team in School/Community Relations developed a number of position papers, but eventually centered its efforts on a proposal to adopt the "community school" program for Meadow City,

beginning with one specific elementary school.

The concept of the "community school" was a specific, well-developed package proposal worked out by the Mott Foundation and widely used in many states. Experts in community school management came to the district, upon the invitation of this team, and members of the team attended out-of-town conferences. Eventually, the concept was rejected by the Board of Education. The chief reason given was finances. "School" in Meadow City was not to mean "multi-use community center". This community had a more restricted set of meanings it wished to maintain for its local educational sites.

The work of this team provides a clear example of serious consideration of revised meanings for the concept of "school" which were rejected by the community, and formally by the Board of Education.

Primary Education

The Project Redesign Planning Team in Primary Education was initiated by six teachers. Eventually, 70 of the 125 primary teachers (grades kindergarten through third) in the district participated in the work of the team by attending at least one meeting.

The team remained an all-teacher group. Those who started the work were responding to a perceived need to talk about problems of primary education with other teachers outside their own schools. Primary teachers have often regarded themselves with ambivalence. Their work is crucial early in the learning process, yet the teachers of the early grades have often avoided playing a strong role in school affairs outside their own classrooms. They are largely women. Principals, who are typically male, have seldom had teaching experience in the early grades, and the primary staff tend to feel that even principals do not understand the primary teachers' work.

The Project Redesign team worked for many weeks to develop specific proposals. Starting with their own conviction that primary teaching has changed because of changes in society, their proposals were clear, practical steps toward changes which would assist them in improving their teaching. These proposals included the development of pupil assessment profiles to help teachers diagnose students; the holding of special conferences to clarify needed changes in primary education; the development of a teacher center within the district as a central location for obtaining teaching materials; a better system for training classroom volunteers; a method for teachers to observe the work of other teachers; and opportunities for primary teachers to present their concerns directly to the Board of Education.

Their work did not involve parents, but stayed wholly within the organizational ranks. Moreover, it was not very conceptual, but practical in nature. This was in sharp contrast to the work of the planning team in early adolescent education. That team's work, discussed above, remained largely on the conceptual level, pressing for changes in the meaning of junior high schools by proposing new criteria for judging education for grades seven through nine. In the long run, when working outside the framework of the regular administrative channels, concepts and ideas are more powerful than practical suggestions which may too easily be rejected by management. The long-range effects of the planning team in primary education perhaps may be felt more in a renewed sense of identity and clarity of purpose among the participants than in outward changes within the system. We have no data to prove or disprove whether or not this interaction among so many primary teachers, outside the usual framework of organizational activities, was beneficial. The teachers themselves expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work together across the district, and to have a channel for direct access to the top administration and to the Board of Education.

Curriculum

The Project Redesign task force on decision-making had shown the decision-making process in curriculum to be highly elusive. That report recommended that new ways be found to involve parents and students in the process.

The task force on curriculum, a different group, had raised numerous issues for consideration by a planning team. The Planning Team in Curriculum first conducted seminars on curriculum and curriculum change, bringing some interesting national figures to the district for meetings. The work of the team eventually centered around curriculum decision-making, particularly the problem of finding a better mechanism for community and parent participation. Questions of meaning are very close to the surface in this issue. Teachers, according to many, are the experts in curriculum. A teacher no more asks the advice of parents or students on curriculum than a doctor or a lawyer seeks advice from his patients/clients on professional matters. To argue otherwise, for some, is to take issue with the very definition of "teacher".

The Meadow City school district had experienced many ad hoc community groups organized around curriculum issues. One of them took strong issue with the curriculum in English in one of the senior high schools, and pressed for changes. Another had urged the establishment of the "more structured" elementary school. Others had been involved in multicultural education and sex education. In still another instance, parents who supported the teaching of certain foreign languages had convinced the Board of Education to authorize the teaching of additional languages.

The Project Redesign team adopted the assumption that this ad hoc system of special interest groups left something to be desired. No official on-going forum or study group in curriculum issues existed which included parents or students. Curriculum matters were normally handled by administrators, department heads, and staff.

Eventually, this team proposed the development of a District Curriculum Commission, which would report to the Board of Education and provide an orderly channel for interaction between the school system and the community. The proposal was tested by asking for comments from numerous parents, teachers, and administrators. When it finally reached the Board, one Board member called it the most important idea to come from Project Redesign.

In its original form, the Curriculum Commission was not authorized by the Board. Top administrators expressed considerable uneasiness with the idea. The matter did not go away, however - events came to a head with the advent of the state's collective bargaining law, which required local boards to consult with teachers on curriculum matters.

In the fall of 1976, all the Project Redesign materials on curriculum decision-making were utilized by a new ad hoc group pressing for some form of citizen participation in curriculum decision-making, to counterbalance the rights of the teaching staff to consult on these issues.

Finally, in February 1977, an advisory committee was established, to be called the "Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Curriculum". The formation of this committee had been agreed on at special meetings of all interested parties. Fifteen persons will serve on the committee, including four parents, four teachers, two principals, two coordinators, one special education person, and two senior high school students, plus the assistant superintendent for educational services.

The form and functions of this committee are very similar to those proposed by the original Project Redesign planning team. Since all the participants in setting up this new committee had access to or were participants in the original Project Redesign work, that is not surprising.

Administrative Needs

The planning team in administrative needs, like the other teams, took its responsibilities very seriously. Two sections were formed. One section studied the existing organization and management structure of the district; the other set out to study the meaning of "administrator" in Meadow City.

This second group consisted of an elementary school principal, a junior high school teacher and department head, two students, and one parent (who was also a school administrator in another district). Over a period of many weeks, this group developed a survey aimed at exploring what the ideal administrator would be like, and how present administrators measured up to the ideal.

The survey was administered to random samples of parents, students, and teachers, and to all administrators. According to the results, three characteristics described the "ideal" administrator in the minds of parents: ability to solve problems; expertise as an educator; and clear, well-developed value system. Teachers and administrators also stressed the importance of effective problem-solving but placed less importance on educational expertise and "well-developed values" and more on such traits as decisiveness, honesty, and ability to communicate.

The community expressed trust in its school administrators at all levels. The vast majority rated administrators as effective in Meadow City. The picture of the ideal administrator that emerged is that of a competent professional who evaluates effectively, follows through on commitments, and communicates clearly to staff, students, and parents. Knowledge of the community was also regarded as very important.

On the other hand, the survey revealed a very high level of mistrust among the teaching staff for the central administration. Fifty percent of the teachers rated central administrators as "ineffective" or "very ineffective". The survey also revealed strikingly different administrative styles, both between and among the elementary principals.

Two recommendations from the planning team in Administrative Needs were built into the Project Redesign long-range plan. One was a proposal for a systematic staff development program for administration; the other was a proposal for investigation of the distrust between teachers and central administrators. The new superintendent has since instituted a staff development program for management. He has hired an organizational development specialists and has reconstituted all administrators into a "management team" which meets several days each school year for training and some participation in decision-making.

The results of the survey of administrative needs have been utilized by several individuals and groups. One member of the Board of Education stated in a public meeting that the report had been enormously helpful to him. In March 1977, further reprints of the report were made by the director of Human Services for use with elementary principals.

This survey was undoubtedly the most detailed study of administration ever conducted in the district. For those who made use of it, it clarified the expectations of staff and community for administration. Detailed plans for the restructuring of the district's administration were not an outcome of the work.

Special and Support Services

The Project Redesign Planning Team in Special and Support Services studied two types of school activities. The first included all professional services provided for students which are neither classroom teaching nor administration, such as counseling, psychological services, and special consultation in subject fields, i. e., art and "family life" education (sex education). The second included all "special education" programs, such as those for the physically handicapped, the hospitalized, or the mentally retarded.

This team was unusual in that most of its members had reason to be intensely interested in the subject under study, by reason of being an administrator, teacher, or other professional in one of these special fields, or by reason of being a parent whose child had special educational needs.

The team struggled for many weeks with problems relating to special services and services to children with special needs. Little interaction took place with members of the community outside the group. A detailed study of many of the services provided by the school district, and their cost, was developed by some of the team members. An over-all statement of educational philosophy was developed:

> The central philosophy of the MCSD should be a sensitivity
> and responsiveness to the uniqueness of each child. All
> children deserve educational programs appropriate to their
> individuality. Required services should be available to all
> students without excessive segregation or undue labeling.
> Each student should benefit from the educational resources
> of the district according to a plan designed to meet his in-
> dividual needs. [34]

Within this statement are contained many important features of an unwritten contract between the schools and the community. These include highly individual programs and a minimum of "labeling" and segregation of students into identifiable categories.

Surveys indicated that both special services and services to children with special needs enjoyed strong support in Meadow City.

The final recommendations of the team stressed greater parent participation through advisory committees, particularly in special education, and

program evaluation of all special services and programs. During the period of
this group's work, a major reorganization of special education programs was
being proposed by the state. The planning team threw its support behind this
proposed reorganization. The Project Redesign long-range plan included a
statement of support for the measure.

The planning team also advised more needs assessments and better
information services for students and parents about options and programs avail-
able. In a variety of ways, this planning team served as one vehicle, among
others, for helping to change certain concepts in special education.

A reorganization of the administrative structure for special services
was another recommendation of this team. Within a year after the development
of their report, the administrative structure of both services for specialized
needs (special education) and special services for all students were significantly
changed. A director of special education and a director of human services were
appointed, both new positions.

Teacher/Learner Relationships

This planning team took direct aim at one of the key words in educa-
tion: teacher. What is a teacher? Does being a teacher also entail being an
advisor? A friend?

The team developed an interesting study of teacher/student relation-
ships, in which a random sample of teachers was asked to answer a series of
questions about "favorite students", while a sample of students answered similar
questions about "favorite teachers".

Numerous interesting conclusions were derived from this exercise.
For example, age sex, amount of work assigned, the subject, and the classroom
structure were all unrelated to "being a favorite teacher". That distinction was
instead significantly related to knowing something about the students' lives outside
the classroom, having a sense of humor, and giving personal attention to students.

The results of the study were used in workshops for teachers in two
junior high schools. The team went on to develop several proposals. One was
for a teacher/advisor system in the secondary schools, in which every teacher
would relate to a group of students in a non-subject-matter situation, for advis-
ing on courses, activities, and other matters, and to provide some teacher/
student interaction outside the usual classroom situation.

Beginning in 1976-77, the job descriptions for all Meadow City
teachers in the new middle schools included advisory duties as part of the job.

This was in spite of the fact that advisory programs had earlier failed within the district. The move to using "advisories" was part of a general movement toward "personalizing" education, which continues in the Meadow City school system. While the connection between the work of this planning team and the development of advisories and other personalizing efforts is indirect, the team's work was a factor in the changing situation. This team also proposed support of alternative programs within secondary schools which offer differing ways for teachers to relate to students. New alternatives have appeared in 1976-77, and others are planned for 1977-78.

Within the Meadow City system, many staff and students attach much broader meanings to the term "teacher", particularly "high school teacher" or "middle school teacher", than simply "subject matter specialist". Undoubtedly, this has always been true to some extent, but a concerted effort exists to bring teachers and students into different personal relationships, stressing that the teacher's responsibilities go beyond competency in subject matter presentation.

Long-Range Finances

The last planning team dealt with the financial condition of the whole school system. This team, particularly one zealous parent who chaired the group, worked diligently to convince the public and the district management that steps should be taken to prepare for stormy financial times ahead. Court decisions, new educational finance laws, and declining enrollment were drastically changing the financial scene.

A series of highly competent enrollment projections and projected future financial situations were written by this group. It included a member of the non-professional school employees' union, an active member of the teachers' professional association, and parents with high skills in financial analysis, including members of the financial planning staff of the nearby university.

The documents developed by the group continue to be used by administrators and advisory committees many months after their completion. The team recommended that the district begin to systematically reduce its expenditures toward a level less at variance with the state average expenditures per pupil, and that certain management checks be installed, particularly the ratio of administrative staff to teaching staff.

One of the issues in the financial studies is the meaning of high levels of spending within the community for schools. The building of showpiece schools and the provision of elaborate programs may have greater importance than indicated by achievement scores or college admissions rates. High spending and

expensive buildings may in themselves constitute assets and be indicators of the meaning of schools for Meadow City. This may help explain why the warnings of this team were heard, but steps were not taken to reduce expenditures until the financial facts made it imperative. Some of the ground work of educating the Board of Education, members of the staff, and some members of the community to the new financial situation was quite surely achieved by this planning group and its energetic chairman. The chairman remarked to the Project Redesign staff that without Project Redesign he would have no place to go to invest himself in working for the best interests of the school system. Never interested in running for a Board position, he wanted to apply his considerable analytical skills to the problem of education, as a concerned citizen and a parent. Such an activity is not often welcomed or understood by school personnel. We may interpret this as a desire to help change the meaning of schooling in Meadow City.

Summary

An impressive outpouring of energy took place within the Meadow City school district and community within the framework of Project Redesign.

From one point of view, this was simply part of a decision-making process. Information was collected, some proposals were developed, and some decisions were made about those proposals. Since Project Redesign was effectively separated from the normal administrative decisions of the district, the project was somewhat like an outside study commission engaged to generate proposals for the improvement of an organization. The difference lay in the fact that the participants in the project were members of the community, student body, or staff from the school district with a high personal investment in the work and a stake in the outcomes.

From the point of view of symbolic interaction, the explicit, public, formal decision-making processes are only one part of what goes on, perhaps not the most important part. At all times, ferment exists around the meaning of schools in all communities. Parents discuss schools, criticize teachers, and affect the life of the classroom, quite apart from what goes on at the Board of Education level. Teachers form attitudes and work habits, and accept meanings for the entire enterprise and for their own role in it. They must - we all must - agree upon the rightness of things around us; otherwise, we would stop doing them except from necessity.

Meanings are developed or reaffirmed at all times. Whenever a citizen goes to church, he reaffirms the rightness of that particular religious faith, and continues to create the reality of it. In the schools, the daily interaction of principals, teachers, students, and parents in recognized, ordered ways recreates the rightness and the meaningfulness of the entire enterprise.

From time to time, meanings change. In some instances, the reason is clear: technology, for example, has introduced a new element into the structure of meaning. The term "computer" meant nothing in 1935. Neither did "alternative school", "open classroom", "block scheduling", or "exploratory experience". If we examined the matter closely, we would probably discover that the term "teacher" has undergone some significant changes in meaning. In 1935, it meant "low-paid subordinate", among other things. In Meadow City in 1977, "teacher" does not mean quite the same - the average teacher is paid about $20,000 and has organizational strength through the teachers' union.

Such changes did come about through a decision-making process. However, first or concurrently came a re-examination of meaning, the results of which led to willingness to engage in a political process to bring about changes. We see this happening in many places: in minority movements and women's movements we surely have good examples. The political arm of these movements is vital, but could not be effective without changes in meaning taking place in the minds of many persons.

Changes and developments in meaning lead to activities within formal decision-making and political channels. Project Redesign set in motion an array of groups and committees which discussed, studied, and examined countless issues in education. Many of these were questions of basic meaning: what is an elementary school in this community? What is a teacher? What is "early adolescent education"? What is a parent? A high school?

The effect of all this study, ferment, and activity is extremely hard to measure. Much of what happens may affect the behavior of persons in the future. It is almost impossible to measure future behavior in the present. Too many variables intervene. The symbolic interaction view of Project Redesign was not conceived before the project began. It emerged after watching what was happening. The explicit outcomes of the project were disappointing to many. Grand plans for the reform of the Meadow City school system were not written or adopted. Instead, thousands of hours were spent in meetings and hundreds of pages of studies and proposals were written and circulated throughout the district. Some believe that all this was to no effect. That takes no account of many results arising from this intensive and complex web of activity. For example:

1. Shifts in meaning on specific topics in the minds of teachers, parents, administrators lead to changes in personal teaching styles, or to support of major changes, such as the shift to middle schools.

2. The education of a considerable cadre of persons about educational issues and this school district may affect the

/ internal processes of the District for years to come. The
reports developed by Project Redesign are in consistent
demand in 1977, two years or more after they were written.

3. Valuable personal experiences, including interaction on
planning teams, resulted for a great many people - teach-
ers, parents, students, administrators, and researchers.

Events within the district but outside the project were disruptive to
the project and make attribution of any effects to Project Redesign difficult.
Such historical events are quite common in any institution, over a period of
years.

Project Redesign was billed as a "redesigning" job which would bring
about specific changes growing out of the work of the project. Many features of
the process are open to criticism: the separation of the workaday life of the pro-
ject from central administration; the split between information-gathering and
information-using; the glut of information gathered by teams and task forces;
and the over-use of written reports - to name a few. Process issues growing
out of Project Redesign have been analyzed elsewhere. A great deal was learned
which will benefit anyone attempting participatory planning.

What "really" happened cannot be confined to the fate of specific propos-
als at a specific time. What "really" happened also has to do with the subtle and
the elusive, as well as the grand and visible, changes in meanings, and also with
changes in program.

VI. THE FORMALITIES

If the real work of Project Redesign was the development or reaffirmation
of the meaning of schooling for Meadow City, decision-making about project pro-
posals becomes somewhat puzzling. If change in meanings or reaffirmation of old
meanings were to occur, this would happen before time for decision-making at the
Board level. If these changes in meaning should call for changes in programs,
not all of these might need to be taken to the Board. Some might be handled by
individuals, others by schools or departments.

Some participants and observers had conceived the project from the be-
ginning as a centralized, tightly-controlled planning effort which would produce a
blueprint for improving teaching and learning, a blueprint which would be approved
as a whole by the Board of Education and would be implemented by directives from
central management.

This vision of Project Redesign was never followed. No highly integrated blueprint for educational change was ever developed. The focus throughout was on broad participation, as described in preceding chapters. For many months it was uncertain whether a single reporting document or "plan" should be prepared at all. Several reasons for this were discussed by the project staff. Uncertainty prevailed about the new superintendent, for one thing. More importantly, some of those who worked within the project were aware that fancy centralized "plans" often do not affect practice very much. The superintendent and his top administrative staff remain uninvolved in the project, a fact which guaranteed that detailed blueprints for change would not be accepted in the end anyway. Rather than preparing an elaborate long-range plan, it was felt by some that it would be more useful to submit various proposals to the Board from time to time, and to support the work of planning teams in other ways, all without attempting to write the diverse activities of the project into one document.

The original report of the Convening Committee did not say much about a single comprehensive long-range plan. The Board of Education and the administration said nothing to indicate their expectations. When the plan was finally produced and presented to the Board, one of its members remarked that the task of Project Redesign was not easy, ".....in identifying exactly what the Board wanted them to do". (35)

Nevertheless, in late 1974, pressure began to develop for the writing of a plan. The project director felt that the new superintendent expected and would need a single document summarizing proposals stemming from planning teams. Moreover, deadlines and procedures were needed to help focus the work of the teams.

Each team was asked to produce "operational goals", defined as specific changes to be accomplished somewhere in the school system within a specified period of time. The set of such operational goals collected from all the teams became the raw material for developing a master plan.

Not all of the goals presented by planning teams were actually used. Moreover, with the agreement of the Design Management Tea, additional goals were added from sources outside the teams. In all, 36 operational goals were proposed, grouped into five categories under general goal statements. Each operational goal was accompanied by a brief rationale. The full set of goals was enclosed within other materials: a short history of Project Redesign; some discussion of possible futures for society and for Meadow City schools; a statement on "dilemmas and inconsistencies" within the goals; and a bibliography. The plan went through several drafts, each very carefully scrutinized by the DMT. Finally, the plan stood as a summary of much of the project's work, and was ready for the new superintendent and the Board of Education.

The events which followed have been described in earlier sections. In this section, we will point out facts which indicate the symbolic nature of certain meetings and documents. Our argument is that what occurred could better be described as ceremony than as decision-making. To characterize an event as a formality or a ceremony is not to render it unimportant; on the contrary, ceremonies are essential parts of life, including organizational life. Religious services, family customs, graduation exercises, and marriages all serve needed ceremonial purposes. The ceremonial purposes of official agencies, such as board of education, are also important. Boards do not merely make decisions; they symbolize community control, orderly procedures, and the seriousness and importance of the educational task. Most importantly from our viewpoint in this section, they give voice in a ceremonial manner to the meanings that the schools have for the community and, by so doing, shape the actions of administrators and teachers.

To illustrate, the Meadow City Board sometimes hears very formal reports from groups, departments, or special interests from within the school system. These serve to inform the Board, but they also provide occasions for the Board to give voice to what its members believe to be the meaning of schools here. These are not decision-making occasions, but occasions for the articulation of meaning. If what is presented by the professional staff is out of line with the concepts about schools within the minds of Board members, questions will be raised and suggestions made to bring educational activities into harmony with what is felt to be "right". The outcome of these ceremonial reports is less likely to be specific decisions and directives than general statements of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, which will have an effect on the work of the professional staff possibly as great as the effects of specific decisions or directives.

Let us examine some of the ceremonial elements in the relationship between Project Redesign and the Meadow City Board of Education.

The role of the Board, as well as that of central administration, was largely ceremonial throughout Project Redesign. Board members appeared whenever requested at the first meetings of new groups, such as the Convening Committee or the Design Management Team. These appearances were brief. Statements were made about the importance of the project and how appreciative the Board was to those who had volunteered their services.

Formal progress reports to the Board were also largely ceremonial in nature. These reports were initially presented every three months. On these occasions, no directives were given, few suggestions were made, and only fragmentary discussions of substantive issues took place. Comments were made favorable to "continuing the good work". One Board member used these occasions to express skepticism about the value of the project.

One Board member, at his own request, did become involved in substantive discussions within the Design Management Team over a period of several months. He was designated official Board liaison to Project Redesign. In addition, the project director occasionally met one or more Board members for lunch and briefed them on current activities. Over-all, however, the term "ceremonial" describes fairly the relationship between the project and the Board. The same is true of the relationship between the superintendent and the project. The superintendent also appeared whenever requested on special occasions, to speak briefly about the value of the project and to express his appreciation to participants. At no time did he give directives or engage in serious discussion about any of the procedures or activities within the project.

It is hardly surprising that the ceremonial relationship which existed throughout the project should continue as the long-range plan came officially to the Board's attention. A relationship which has been largely ceremonial for an extended period of time can only with great difficulty become something else.

The plan was officially titled, "Working Draft: 1976-1981 Long-Range Plan". This document itself was intended for ceremonial use and public consumption. It was printed in an attractive format and contained extra materials of general interest which would not have been appropriate in a document intended for internal management purposes. It first appeared as an "information item" on the Board's meeting agenda for September 16, 1975, and remained on the agenda for the next 14 months. It had been transmitted directly to the Board from the Design Management Team, without passing through the superintendent's staff.

Following the advice of the Board President some weeks before, the Project Redesign staff and the DMT not only formally presented the plan to the Board but proposed a process for the Board to use in studying and voting on the document. Orchestration of the ceremonies to come was not left to chance.

As part of the proposed process, it was agreed that the Board would study the plan in detail at a "study session" scheduled for October 7, 1975. This second meeting was very highly structured and contained many ceremonial elements:

Following introductory remarks by the project director, each operational goal within the plan was presented separately by a representative from one of the planning teams or by one of the two members of the project staff. The Board is seated at a raised semicircular table. Each presentor came forward, dressed much more formally than usual, and made the case for his or her goals in a ritual pattern worked out so that all goals were presented in a similar manner. An outline of what each presentor would say was flashed on the wall behind the Board by means of an overhead projector. A very large poster had been prepared to depict the relationship of each of the goals to all the others, and as each was discussed,

a member of the DMT affixed to the poster a large, brightly-colored tag with an abbreviated title for the goal.

As each goal was presented, the Board members were asked to respond, in writing, to three questions: what he/she "liked about the goal", what "concerns" he/she had about the goal, and what further information he/she would like to have. Each Board member was also asked to state whether he/she was prepared to take action on the goal in the near future.

This process made it possible to summarize a mass of information in public in a relatively short period of time. It also precluded much discussion, although many questions were asked by Board members. The meeting was not stated to be for the purpose of decision-making, but for the purpose of introducing the plan to the Board. We might say, for the purpose of presenting symbolic statements to the Board.

The goals, reviewed elsewhere in this report, ranged over much of the school system and touched upon many meanings for schools in Meadow City. They proposed action in matters as diverse as alternatives in elementary education; development of middle schools; competency-based education; career education; program evaluation; personalization of education; community schools; decentralization; primary teachers; special education; a curriculum commission; human services; staff development; teachers' centers; parent education; and advisory groups within schools. Many terms contained in these proposals were quite new to the community, especially "competency-based education" and "middle schools". Did they symbolize meanings within the community which should be translated into school programs? Had Project Redesign brought about sufficient understanding of these concepts so that they represented newly reaffirmed, or newly developed meanings for education to which the Board and the administration should respond? That was the real issue for the Board. The operational goals were symbols, ritually presented in a highly ceremonial fashion. This ritual presentation served to emphasize the central role and importance of the Board of Education itself, and provided a ceremonial opportunity for new and old meanings to be tested and restated, as symbols are always presented and reaffirmed or tested on ceremonial occasions.

Adequate opportunities were provided for others to share in the ceremonial activities. One thousand copies of the plan were printed for general distribution. Two public meetings were held in addition to the Board meetings, to permit members of the public to comment on the plan. Comments were received from thirty individuals and organizations. The operational goals were also published in the local newspaper, as a paid advertisement.

Ceremonies are one thing. Specific decisions are quite another. Following the presentation of the plan to the Board, the superintendent scheduled a

series of meetings of the administrative cabinet to discuss the Project Redesign goals. Five such meetings were scheduled; only one was actually devoted to the task. Frustration was expressed by the superintendent and others at the lack of involvement of top district leadership in the development of the plan. To this group, the plan represented a problem which had to be solved: it contained meanings and symbols which appeared to represent much of the mind of the community. It also contained specific proposals, many of which the central administration was not prepared to carry out, at least not without much deeper involvement.

The solution to the problem presented by the plan was to buy time. A valid excuse was available: During this period, a process was also in motion for closing some elementary schools. This required scores of meetings and did indeed demand a very great deal of the superintendent's time.

At a special meeting on November 3, 1975, the superintendent met with two members of the Board, the chairman of the Design Management Team, and the staff of Project Redesign. He expressed concern that the administration could not deal with the plan adequately until later in the year, because of the pressure of the school reorganization question. He also expressed the need for the administrative cabinet and other staff members to "get inside" the plan. One of the Board members present restated the basic intent of Project Redesign:

> " (Board member) said she was unhappy with the fact that
> there is little integration of the plan into a Grand Plan.
> (Second Board member) said he didn't think it was import-
> ant for such integration to be achieved, because we actually
> accomplish things by 'muddling through' anyway, that is, by
> incremental change. The hope is that we make incremental
> changes, then sit back to see what's happening....this is
> the way we achieve institutional change and renewal. Pro-
> ject Redesign was set in motion because we wanted to
> achieve a better system for community input into the school
> system.....we wanted people to be able to get past the feel-
> ing that decisions were made without their knowing what
> they were or without being able to influence them." (36)

The superintendent requested that the Board delay further action on the plan. The chairperson of the Design Management Team stated that that group would not be unhappy with such delay, as long as a process was under way for dealing with it. It was agreed that the Board would take action on each of the operational goals stated in the plan, but would do so in stages. In each of the stages, a group of goals would be brought to the Board, after consideration by the superintendent and his staff. This procedure started in November of 1975.

The Board took tentative action on six Project Redesign goals on November 18th and announced its intention to take final action on this set of six in February, 1976. This process actually [illegible] March 2, 1976.

For [illegible] months, the goals and the underlying issues and meanings were held before the Board of Education. The superintendent had, in effect, made the decision to keep the issues and underlying meanings raised by the plan in front of the school system while, at the same time, not permitting specific proposals to become problems for the administrative staff.

The process that played out over succeeding months continued to be largely ceremonial. The plan held up symbols before the school system. Board actions favorable to goals authorized broader acceptance of those symbols. It certified them as "right", carrying meanings for schooling which were genuinely present in the community or which should be pursued for possible development. Actions were taken toward further development in a number of directions authorized by these symbols: competency-based education; staff development; middle schools; and others. This further work continues in new projects within the district.

The development, the influence, and the effectiveness of symbols is very difficult to measure. The district in 1977 contains new terms and new practices not present when Project Redesign began. Attributing these changes to the project reflects only another opinion, not "truth". Hundreds of persons became involved in educational issues, learned something, and some of them took some actions which resulted in some changes. At the top level, the necessary ceremonies went on.

Times have changed so much since 1972 that by 1977 the issues of that year look quaint. Long-range planning in the [illegible] rational sense could not have helped much to solve 1977's problems [illegible] production of new ideas, concepts, and meanings through the project did not solve 1977's problems either, but it may well have contributed to the quality and richness of Meadow City education.

NOTES

(1)   Minutes of the Board of Education, Sept. 14, 1972

(2)   Minutes of the Board of Education, Oct. 19, 1971

(3)   School District Management Review, Meadow City
        School District, January 2, 1975

(4)   Interview with superintendent, February 10, 1975

(5)   Minutes of the Board of Education, Oct. 19, 1971

(6)   Memorandum to the Board of Education, Dec. 17, 1971

(7)   Administrative Needs Survey, Project Redesign, 1975

(8)   Memorandum from the director to the superintendent,
        "Implementing Project Redesign", Sept. 11, 1972

(9)   Project Redesign: An Invitation to Plan the Future of Education
        in Meadow City. Jan. 23, 1973, p. 10

(10)   Minutes of the Convening Committee, Oct. 25, 1972

(11)   Minutes of the Convening Committee, Oct. 25, 1972

(12)   Convening Committee Self-Evaluation, Feb. 7, 1973, p. 7

(13)   Memorandum to the Convening Committee from a member,
        Dec. 18, 1972

(14)   Ibid.

(15)   Ibid.

(16)   Ibid.

(17)   Ibid.

(18)   Ibid.

(19)   Ibid.

(20)   Ibid.

(21)   Ibid.

(22)   Memorandum from a member of Convening Committee, Nov. 10, 1972

(23)   Memorandum from a member of Convening Committee, Dec. 18, 1972
        (This member happened to be a school principal)

(24)   Memorandum from a member of the Convening Committee,
        Dec. 18, 1972

(25)   Memorandum from a member of the Convening Committee, Dec. 18, 1972

(26)   Minutes of the Board of Education, Meadow City School District,
        January 23, 1973

(27)   Convening Committee Report to the Board of Education,
        January 23, 1973

(28)   Report of Project Redesign Task Force on the Community Profile,
        November 1973

(29)   Report of Project Redesign Curriculum Survey Task Force,
        November 1973

(30)   Report of Project Redesign Task Force on Organization and
        Decision-Making, May 1974.

(31)   Dream Team material, Report No. 1, Nov. 1, 1973 - Feb. 21, 1974

(32)   Report of the Subcommittee on the School Role in the Community,
        Project Redesign Planning Team in School/Community Relations,
        January 1976

(33)   Report of the Project Redesign Planning Team in Early Adolescent
        Education, to the Design Management Team, Feb. 17, 1975

(34)   Report of the Planning Team on Special Educational and Support
        Services, Apr. 8, 1975

(35)   Meadow City School District Board of Education minutes,
        Sept. 16, 1975

(36)   Notes from meeting recorded by the research coordinator

SUMMARY AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This study had at least two purposes: to describe Project Redesign in detail and to explore the usefulness of a multi-model approach to evaluation of an experiment in participatory planning. The three descriptions of Project Redesign we have presented were based on three models: the Rational Model, the Organized Anarchy Model, and the Symbolic Interaction Model. We believe that taken together the three models provide a richer understanding of what happened in the project than would any one of them alone.

The Rational Model is probably most like the way most people would think of evaluating Project Redesign. In the Rational Model, planning is seen as "seeking and utilizing data, weighing alternative means to achieve desired objectives, and selecting the most efficient ways of attaining these objectives." (p. 14). Departures from these procedures are taken as evidence of failure to carry out planning. But the other two models utilized in this report have allowed us to "see" planning in new ways.

The Organized Anarchy model allows us to see that planning is an opportunity for all the members of the organization to come forth with anything that, for them, is an issue, and demand that it receive attention. Planning is also an opportunity to learn things, to feel important, and to exercise one's duty, according to this view. Planning educates people, brings them together, and provides them an opportunity to talk about good things.

The Symbolic Interaction model views planning as an intervention in the on-going exchange between the school system and the community and as a renegotiation of the unwritten contract between the school system and its community. According to this view, it is this contract of agreed-upon meanings that is the sustenance of the school system. An evaluation of Project Redesign based only upon an appraisal of how efficiently its rational objectives were met would, we feel, miss much of the project's significance.

As a way of summarizing the material we have presented, let us consider how each of the three models helps us to think about the decisions, issues, participants, and leaders in Project Redesign.

Decisions

In the Rational model, decisions are central. For our study, the existence of participatory planning is seen as a vehicle for educational decisions.

The purpose of participatory planning, if initiated with the objective of achieving concrete products or changes, is seen as a means to ensure that better decisions are made or, at least, that when choices are made, they are acted upon. For this model, increased information and examination of decision alternatives presumably lead to "better" decisions. Our Rational Model analysis shows:

(1) that "alternative means and solutions were not considered" (p. 68);

(2) ..."the superintendent, the Board and especially the volunteer planners suffered time limitations that restricted their search for alternatives, either in the definition of problems or in the solution of them." (p. 69);

(3) "Project Redesign did not offer (the new superintendent) many solutions. On the contrary, it is likely that he perceived it as a problem." (p. 69)

In short, the Rational Model analysis of Project Redesign does not make it apparent that better decisions resulted from the project. Furthermore, the Rational Model evaluates organizational behavior in terms of the decisions it makes. In examining Project Redesign, it seeks to account for major turning points in the project's history. Outcomes are judged in the light of the expressed objectives; when outcomes do not occur, the expressed objectives are questioned.

The Organized Anarchy model's Garbage Can decision process is also a decision-making model, but it is a model for decision-making under conditions of ambiguity. Instead of being the product of careful consideration of alternative solutions to problems, deci 'on outcomes in Garbage Cans are the result of the availability of problems, u: ns, and participants at the p cular time that a decision is called for. F le , solutions, and participa e independent and partially controllable i into choice situations. Thu ions (choices of solutions) may or may not solve problems, and they take on a symbolic character. Many of the proposed solutions that were chosen to go into Proje Redesign's Long-Range Plan were, as we have seen, not good solutions to problems and not very significant, except symbolically. Most of the proposals were for ideas that were already being tried in the district by the time the long-range plan came up for action by the Board. (p. 54, 137)

The Organized Anarchy model emphasizes that the success or failure of the planning experiment may not be dependent upon better decisions. It points up the fact that intention gets separated from outcome in organizational decision-making. In the Organized / narchy, choice situations are opportunities for people to participate and for impor nt issues to be aired. They provide opportunities for the organization to show what it values.

Decisions in the Symbolic Interaction model are only a small part of what goes on in the continuing formation and maintenance of meanir that the

schools have for the community. Decisions are often symbols of shifts in meanings in the unwritten contract between the school and the community. The importance of decisions in the Symbolic Interaction model is not that they signal the beginning of new actions that reform the system, but that they represent the renegotiation of underlying meanings from which the system draws its life.

The Organized Anarchy and the Symbolic Interaction models help us to understand why the outcomes of decisions made by the Meadow City School District as a result of Project Redesign fade in importance next to the processes of participation and interaction during the project itself.

Issues

According to the Rational model, the purpose of decision-making is to settle issues. Issues or problems that occur in the life of the organization are examined as if they were discrete and relatively stable. Issues are interpreted as perceived needs or problems looking for a solution. The Rational model seeks to see how issues are finally resolved and whether the solution chosen is best among a set of alternative solutions. In this case, "best" means alternatives which maximize the attainment of an operational goal.

Decisions, issues, problems, and solutions are all closely connected in the Rational model. The Rational model does not, however, consider the process by which issues are raised as being important. The Organized Anarchy and the Symbolic Interaction models do.

The Organized Anarchy model sees issues arising as grievances of individuals or interest groups. The issue of reorganization (p. 117) could be seen in this way. Some people in the district had a personal interest in keeping the junior high schools as they were; others wished to change them. The resulting process of decision-making created Garbage Cans in which many interpretations of the issue were discussed. The interpretation of those who had participated in the Early Adolescent Planning Team, for example, was that the "real" issue was the psychological needs of children in their early teen years. The eventual decision about reorganization – to move the ninth grade to the high school – was only loosely related to the issue as it was defined by that group. And moving the ninth grade to the high schools didn't begin to solve the problem of responding to declining enrollment, which was one of the early interpretations of what the "real" issue was. The Organized Anarchy analysis makes it clear that issues and decisions might be only loosely connected and that problems very often are not solved by choices of alternatives (decisions). Issues may not be settled. Solutions are not just a matter of the best technology, but are carried and promoted by those who have an interest in their adoption. In this view, the way an issue is defined is the result of the availability of problems, solutions, and participants in the Garbage Can.

In the Symbolic Interaction model, issues become salient when there is dissonance between what the community believes about the meaning of education

and their perception of what is taking place in the schools. As an example, consider the European history issue discussed earlier (p. 185) The symbolic category, "European history", was part of the unwritten contract between the community and the school system. By proposing a replacement for that category, the staff created a dissonance that brought an issue into the spotlight and that opened up a renegotiation of meaning. In this sense, issues are what Symbolic Interaction is about: the negotiation of meaning. Issues are not problems to be solved - they are the points around which interaction takes place in order to create or uphold meanings. The process of interaction and negotiation is more important than a decision which may emerge from it. The negotiation affects the meaning given to the category; there may or may not be a change in the history classroom.

The Organized Anarchy and Symbolic Interaction models, by calling attention to the way in which issues arise, help make it clear that the process of participation is at least as important as the issues themselves, or as the decisions that are made. They also help us to understand some of the reasons why sometimes decisions do not solve problems. Definitions of problems and solutions change as the process continues. Sometimes decisions are not made until after the process has produced changes in meanings. (See, for example, the decision to have middle schools, pp. 143, 236)

Participants

The three models seem to arrange themselves on a continuum with regard to the importance of the people involved in planning. The Rational model is the most objective; the Symbolic Interaction Model is the most subjective; and the Organized Anarchy model probably lies somewhere in between. In the Rational model, who the participants are, with the exception of the leadership, is unimportant (see pp. 13-14). In the purest form of the Rational model, the entire organization is viewed as a single actor who has a consistent set of goals or preferences. Participants in participatory planning are important in that they help to improve decision-making (because "two heads are better than one", and presumably, more than two are even better). But in the Rational model, which members of the organization choose to participate is relatively unimportant, since all are presumably committed to the same organizational goals.

By contrast, the Organized Anarchy model helps us to see why the streams of participants in the decision Garbage Cans are so very important. First of all, participants bring their concerns with them into decision Garbage Cans. Those Garbage Cans that are thought to contain important choices become crowded with participants. For example, there were many participants in the Early Adolescent Planning Team when people thought the reorganization decision would be made there (pp. 126, ff). An important choice situation attracts many participants, who bring with them their many interpretations of the issues. That choice becomes very complicated, with many problems and solutions vying for

attention and with many participant performances. The choice outcome becomes less and less predictable or controllable, and conflict may increase. Importantly, the participants do not necessarily agree on organizational goals or on issues, or even on what the problem might be.

Secondly, the participants are limited by the amount of time they have for participation. Demands on their time affect how much time they can devote to any one activity. People who have more authority have more demands on their time than those with less authority. (However, people with more authority have other advantages, such as more decision-making rights and better access to information.) Who is participating at the time the decision is made makes a difference in the Organized Anarchy model, since different participants may have different views and since people who are present are obviously more influential than people who are absent.

The Symbolic Interaction model highlights the importance of the interaction among participants perhaps even more than the Organized Anarchy model does. In the Symbolic Interaction model, the whole system is built on the community's trust that the school district will do "education". This trust is reinforced through ritual interaction. "Without great numbers of people to perfect and maintain the rituals ... institutions would quickly disappear." (p. 188)

In this view, people "want to participate in an emotional consensus about education and schooling as carried on in the local system." (p. 183) Thus, the very existence of the school system depends o n the support generated when people participate in the negotiation of its meaning. In this view, the participants come to agree on the meanings that "school" and "teacher" and all the other categories will have in their community. In that sense, participation is very important for the life and health of the school district; and the fact that Project Redesign was able to bring out so many participants is, in itself, a very important outcome of the project.

With respect to participants, the Organized Anarchy and Symbolic Interaction models add two things to our evaluation. First, they do not consider the members of an organization as only one actor when it comes to making policy for the school district. In the Organized Anarchy model, the different participants are very distinct from one another. They disagree with one another; conflict may develop. In the Symbolic Interaction model, the participants may start with an agreement al   wh   education is, but through the course of interaction, the meaning of educat   he participants' agreement about it is renegotiated. Then change occurs.

The second contribution is that participation is important in its own right, whether or not measurable change is evident. The Organized Anarchy model has emphasized the demand for participation and the need for the organization to respond to that demand. The Symbolic Interaction analysis has emphasized the importance of ritualistic participation in the life of the institution.

Leaders

The Rational Model gives by far the most weight to the leaders of the organization in determining the outcomes of organizational action. The Organized Anarchy and the Symbolic Interaction analyses go a little lighter in attributing success or failure to leaders. By assuming that organizational outcomes reflect the intentions of leaders, our Rational Model analyst had to conclude that the primary motive of the superintendent in creating Project Redesign was to have a large-scale, grandiose project that would bring credit to the district and to his own reputation.

The Organized Anarchy analysis shows that there are certain things administrators can do to change slightly the course of events, but that organizational outcomes are to a considerable degree disconnected from leaders' intentions. For example, the superintendent was overruled by the Board in his choice for director of the project. By setting agendas, establishing deadlines, controlling access to information, and creating new Garbage Cans, an administrator can, to some extent, channel the flows of participants, problem solutions, and choice situations. But given that communities have such clear democratic rights of participation in school decision-making, administrative leaders can never be in complete control.

Leaders in the Symbolic Interaction model are responsible for creating settings for interaction. They spend most of their time reinforcing existing meanings and cultivating the trust and confidence of the community. Participatory planning has to be shaped as much by the community as by the educational leaders. Changes in the schools come from changes in negotiated meanings and can seldom be imposed by leaders.

The Symbolic Interaction model also helps us to develop an appreciation for the symbolic elements of the leader's job. A leader must officiate at ceremonial occasions. The values of democracy and the worth of education are upheld on these occasions.

> "Boards do not merely make decisions; they symbolize community control, orderly procedures and the seriousness and importance of the educational task..." (p. 251)

Symbolic occasions, including Board meetings, are signs of continuing trust between school and community.

The Organized Anarchy and Symbolic Interaction models, then, take some of the responsibility for success or failure off the shoulders of the leaders. The community shares the praise or blame.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, we would like to offer some advice as a result of our experience in and study of Project Redesign.

1. Better Decisions

This study must be filed along with many others that have failed to discover how broader participation in decision-making results in better organizational decisions. Ostensibly, one of the purposes of Project Redesign was to help the district have a more consistent, philosophically-unified policy, based on good information and protected from the pressures of political interest groups. The project did not accomplish this purpose. A consistent philosophy was not developed. (For example, the long-range plan contained some expensive proposals, but also one for severely curtailing expenditures.) It did not prevent decisions from being made according to the pressures of interest groups - the school closure and reorganization decisions were made that way. Good information was collected. In some cases - such as the report of the Organization and Decision-Making Task Force and the survey done by the Administrative Needs Planning Team - the information had never before been collected. Many of the 41 reports were read, discussed, and studied extensively, but it is hard to see how the information affected district decision-making in any direct way.

To those who would choose to do participatory planning in order to upgrade decision-making in the Rational Model sense, we would say, "Try something else".

2. Agreement

Community consensus on schools is not a given. Goals of a school district are elusive and changing. Neither we nor anyone else has a fail-safe way of determining "what the community wants". One of the frustrating things about the Meadow City experiment was that, in spite of all the surveying of the community and all the attempts to be representative, many of the administrators and Board members said that they still did not have a feel for what the community consensus was. One of the goals in the long-range plan would have established a permanent community "sensing system" that would survey the community on a regular basis. This goal has been tabled indefinitely.

Statistical information from surveys and other sources does not eliminate the need for the process of negotiating policy issues. Especially where the community values democratic participation, as it does in Meadow City, the way to achieve consensus about and support for the schools is by keeping open the process by which policies are set. Even then, consensus may not mean complete agreement.

3. What Leaders Can Do

The Rational model departs from the Organized Anarchy and the Symbolic Interaction models in ascertaining what leaders can do. While decisions are not "better" nor consensus a prevailing feature, leaders are seen as decisive in what ultimately happens. The recommendation from the Rational model is that leaders should be directly involved in the process that they initiate and that their commitment to a project should be reflected not only in terms of rhetorical support to proposals, but by the relatively clear response to proposals and their subsequent implementation. Processes that are not protected or attended to by leaders who initiate them soon fizzle out in their effectiveness.

Another lesson from the Rational model is that since vagueness appears to be an endemic feature surrounding most professed objectives, leaders should practice "trial balloons" as a leadership style. The formation of an arena for planning can indeed by an opportunity to discover interesting and feasible changes. Leaders can find out whether there are community-based, viable reforms. But we would advise leaders to be modest in their promises and willing to stand by the expectations they foster.

The Organized Anarchy and the Symbolic Interaction models find it clear that administrators do not have complete control of the school system. The community and the students and staff of the school together shape the system. Their analyses do suggest a couple of roles administrators play. One is symbolic. The presence of a leader is inspirational; he or she can do a lot to make people want to participate. The presence of a leader signifies importance. When both the superintendent and the Board President came to the first meeting of the Convening Committee, people knew that it was an important occasion.

Another role that administrators play is that of broker. They bring people together, get them talking, and facilitate negotiations. Leaders must cultivate the trust and confidence of the community. They must be able to accept everyone's input.

In their roles as broker and as symbol, leaders can do some things to facilitate change. They can design and orchestrate settings in which people interact to negotiate meanings. They can supply information and set agendas so that groups are more likely to define problems and solutions in certain ways. They can use participants in ways that will channel their energies: for example, by assigning them to perform elaborate rituals, such as surveys. Leaders can use both the trust people have in them and their symbolic authority to inspire people to work for particular educational policies. That is, leaders may have in mind "meanings" or changes that they think should happen, based on either their professional opinion or their moral commitment. In those cases, they can and should steer participant interaction toward acceptance of those things, even though, as leaders, they cannot control the outcome of the process.

4. Process versus Product

Participants in Project Redesign overwhelmingly extolled the pleasures of participation. They enjoyed getting together to talk about things they considered important. They reported that they met interesting people and that they learned a lot – about educational issues, about group process, and about themselves. The fact that many of them were disappointed in their ability to affect policy did not appear to dampen their enthusiasm about their personal experiences with the process. This is an interesting finding, if for no other reason than that it shows that it is possible to achieve a high level of participation and satisfaction. It is not a surprising finding, however, if we consider that education, particularly in Meadow City, is much like religion or patriotism. People attend religious rituals and obtain pleasure from attendance, even though they may not get the things they pray for. People vote and salute the flag, even if their party is not in power. These rituals symbolize faith in these institutions. Participation in school district decision-making, at least in Meadow City, is a ritual that symbolizes the faith people have in the institution of education. This is not to say that the project was empty ritual. It had some beneficial results, which we examine below.

5. Outcomes

Our three analyses identified several outcomes of Project Redesign:

a) It brought prestige to the district and to the superintendent.
b) It got many people involved in policy-making in the school district who might not otherwise have participated.
c) It was an important response by the district to the community's need for participation; it affirmed their symbolic right to be involved in policy-setting.
d) It brought about "shifts in meanings on specific topics in the minds of teachers, parents, administrators..." (p. 248)
e) It educated people.
f) People valued the personal experiences they had in the project.

The project cost over $400,000 and it lasted more than four years. People volunteered hundreds and hundreds of hours. Viewed in this way, the project seems rather extravagant for what it accomplished.

Goal-setting and planning are commendable activities. It is undeniable that citizen support for schools is crucial to their survival. It is also true that citizens are demanding more accountability from their school leaders. We recommend participatory planning, but on a smaller scale and with more modest expectations for what can be accomplished than was the case with Project Redesign.

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