ABSTRACT
            This report explores the use of policy analysis as a
tool for setting computer use policy in a school district by
discussing the steps in the policy formation and implementation
processes and outlining how policy analysis methods can contribute to
the creation of effective policy. Factors related to the adoption and
implementation of innovations are categorized and used as a framework
for discussion. The first category, the climate of change, includes
external factors such as social pressure and funding, and district or
internal factors. The policy context is the second category; it
includes the art of policy setting, a definition of a policy, and how
to set policy. Discussion of the final category, the change process,
covers procedures for clarifying problems, issues, and needs (PINS);
question development; data collection, analysis, and synthesis; and
identification of alternative policy options and their implications
for implementation. Fifteen references are listed. (LMM)

No. 97   POLICY ANALYSIS: A TOOL
          FOR SETTING DISTRICT
          COMPUTER USE POLICY

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          May 1984

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PREFACE

The Research on Evaluation Program is a Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory project of research, development, testing,
and training designed to create new evaluation methodologies for
use in education. This document is one of a series of papers and
reports produced by program staff, visiting scholars, adjunct
scholars, and project collaborators--all members of a cooperative
network of colleagues working on the development of new
methodologies.

How can policy analysis procedures be used to help school
districts set policy on computer use? This report addresses that
question by discussing the steps in the policy formation and
implementation processes, outlining how policy analysis methods
can contribute to the creation of effective policy.

Nick L. Smith, Editor
Paper and Report Series

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POLICY ANALYSIS: A TOOL FOR SETTING DISTRICT COMPUTER USE POLICY

The purpose of this paper is to explore the use of policy analysis as a tool for setting computer use policy in a school district. There are many circumstances that can facilitate or inhibit the success of a change as extensive as the introduction, or widespread coordinated use of computers. Having sound information to guide decisions in particular situations can be of great benefit. Policy analysis is a powerful tool for providing information to decision-makers involved in such a change as computer use.

Policy analysis fits into a larger change process. Fullan in The Meaning of Educational Change (1982) has, for example, identified a variety of factors related to the adoption and implementation of innovations. The list in Figure 1 is a synthesis of the factors identified by Fullan and other authors. These factors fall under four categories, namely, the climate for change, the policy context, the change process, and other critical elements. These factors constitute a comprehensive set of descriptors regarding change in school districts. At the core of this process is policy setting.

The Climate for Change

Factors influencing the climate for change are found both external and internal to a school district as an organization.

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Figure 1

Factors Influencing the Adoption and
Implementation of Change Such as the Wide-Spread
Coordinated Use of Computers in School Districts

I.   The Climate for Change

     A. External factors
     B. District factors

II. The Policy Context

     A. The art of policy setting
     B. What is policy
     C. How to set policy

III. Policy Analysis and the Change Process

     A. Clarifying problems - issues - needs (PINs)
     B. Generating adoption alternatives
     C. Planning implementation
     D. Critical elements

         1. Administrative support and involvement
         2. Staff participation
         3. Timelines and evaluation systems
         4. Board and community involvement
         5. Outside assistance

External Factors Include Social Pressure
and Funding

   Social pressure may be in the form of local parent requests

or federal or state legislation. The reason for considering

external factors is that they represent a gauge of the importance

of a change, and indirectly suggest the general likelihood of its

adoption. Microcomputer use is a striking example of a change

that has both wide-spread and deeply felt importance. Together

with the subject areas of science and mathematics, computer

technology is part of student and teacher related mandates in

virtually every state in the nation. Such mandates focus on

teacher preparation and inservice, and student competency and

graduation requirements (Education Commission of the States,

1983, Southeastern Regional Council for Educational Improvement, 1983, Christen, K. and Gladstone, P., 1983). Some of these mandates take the form of legislation. Others are rules and regulations. In either case, they provide evidence of considerable social pressure external to school districts. Individual parents and parent groups also exert considerable pressure on school districts. Such a strong set of pressures suggests that the use of microcomputers in schools will occur in one form or another. The question is, how will it be managed?

Funding is also a form of pressure. So is the availability of free or very low cost machines. These can lead districts in certain directions. Considering such sources as the California "Kids Can't Wait" program sponsored by Apple Computer, the IBM sponsored teacher resource centers, the availability of Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and other federal and state funds for purchasing computers and the special educational discounts offered to schools, it is clear that there are considerable opportunities to get microcomputers. Parents' groups are also willing to purchase machines. Such a situation is both a benefit to the rapid computerization of a district and a threat to the control over the spread and use of microcomputers. Again, we see that, in the case of computers, there is "funding" available from such diverse sources that their appearance in schools is assured.

By being aware of external pressure accumulating from several sources, district administrators can sense topics that have the potential for becoming policy issues. District computer use is clearly one such topic.

Internal Factors Can Help to Direct and Control
an Innovation Like Computer Use

Fullan (1982) notes two contrasting district orientations which have different effects on the adoption and implementation of change. One is a problem-solving orientation and the other is a bureaucratic or opportunistic orientation (Fullan, p. 50).

Bureaucratically-oriented districts tend to adopt innovations based on such criteria as the extent to which they provide

- bureaucratic safety (i.e., add resources without requiring behavioral change)

- response to external pressure (in which "adoption" may ease the pressure)

- approval of peer elites (in the absence of clearly defined output criteria whatever is popular among leading professional peers is sometimes the determining criterion).

(Fullan, p. 50)

School districts that are problem-oriented are characterized as

- having identified local needs
- are dissatisfied with existing performance
- seek out resources
- respond enthusiastically to opportunities.

(Fullan, p. 50)

Some research has shown that there is high correlation between problem-orientation and the total number of adoptions made by a district (Daft and Becker, 1978, cited in Fullan, p. 50).

Another aspect of the internal climate for change concerns the past history of change in the district. For example, whether the district is known among its staff and constituency for a problem-solving or bureaucratic approach to past change will have an effect on their reaction to future efforts.

In summary, there is considerable positive pressure for computer use from within and outside of most districts. Social pressure exists nationally, within the state and locally. Funds are typically available from sources both inside and outside of the district.

By looking at factors involved in the adoption/implementation process, we can see how a district can build a positive image regarding change by pursuing a problem-solving approach to the use of microcomputers. An important focus of the problem-solving process, when one is addressing as extensive a change as computer use, is the establishment of guiding policy.

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Typically districts have policies on many topics such as
energy conservation, student discipline, and field trips, but
none on computer use. Because of the widespread internal and
external pressure for computer use and its potential wide-spread
impact on a district, clearly it should be considered in the
context of policy setting.

The Art of Policy Setting

The formulation of policy is clearly an art (House, 1982) and
for many boards of education, policy setting is more a matter of
muddling through than a controlled and planned process (Lindblom,
1959). This is not to say that habit, intuition and incomplete
analysis are invaluable in policy setting. They are, since
policy setting is to a great extent a political process and one
in which it is not possible to specify all decision alternatives
nor to predict all possible consequences of each alternative
(Vaupel, 1977).

The research on effective schools and the implementation of
innovations show, however, that having clear policy that has been
arrived at through a systematic process enhances the chances that
the innovation will be successful. The point of view implicit in
this paper is that any policy setting process should provide many
opportunities for the intuition and experience of board members,
the superintendent, and others to come to bear on a given issue.

It is clear that no process can be exhaustive in terms of the
issues analyzed or the implications identified. An important
ingredient in policy setting is the detection, assessment and
clarification of issues in order to ensure that, to the extent
possible, time is spent on the most important issues. This is
where experience, intuition, and limited analysis come in. That
is, coupled with experience and intuition limited analysis can
help to detect, assess, and clarify issues and their reasonably
forseeable implications. "The art of choosing problems that are

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theoretically significant and feasible to investigate is a matter
of experience and talent rather than of formal procedures"
(MacRae, 1979, p. 17).

The need to set policy typically results from "a new problem
or a deviation from the presently institutionalized way of doing
things," (House, 1982, p. 44). For some school districts where
little or no computer facilities currently exist microcomputer
technology represents an entirely new problem. Other districts
which have a long history of using internal or external data
processing facilities are currently faced with the proliferation
of microcomputers for both instruction and administration. In
these cases the district-wide use of microcomputers represents a
strikingly new factor for administrators to consider. In either
case, there are important issues that should be addressed at the
policy level.

What is a Policy?

Studies of planned change, the implementation of innovation,
and organizational development, as well as those concerning
effective schooling, document the importance of setting guiding
principles, overarching goals, or policy. Hall and Hord (n.d.)
in describing the levels and sublevels of successful
interventions define policy as follows:

> A policy is a rule or guideline that reflects or directs
> the procedures, decisions and actions of an organization
> and the individuals within it.
> (Figure 1, p. 1)

In other words, since policies address new problems or
deviations from existing policies, they are the basis for
directing changes in organizational and individual habits. In
fact, a policy has also been defined as "an attempt to clarify
and control the future of human events" (Wolfe, 1982, p. 48).

How to Set Policy

As noted by Wolfe, "[p]olicy making is not a logical,
intellectual, problem-solving or decision-making process. Policy
making is a social process" (p. 44). Others have called it a
political process. But, "[t]he process, fortunately, can be
managed" (The Educational Policies Service, 1975, p. 9). The
following are the steps which can be used to manage the policy
making process (based on Wolfe, 1982, and The Educational
Policies Services, 1975):

1. A PIN (problem-issue-need) emerges, e.g., a group of parents
    claim that students are not being given adequate computer
    education

2. A policy analysis is conducted, e.g., a study is commissioned
    to assess the current situation and to project the costs,
    staffing, and necessary rules and regulations for a range of
    options for providing improved computer education

3. The board discusses the elements of each option, e.g., the
    implications of a K-12 computer literacy program vs an
    elementary level computer assisted instructional program vs a
    high school computer based job preparation program are
    considered

4. A draft policy covering the option(s) chosen is presented to
    the board for approval or revision, e.g., the combination of
    a special education computer assisted instruction program
    with a upper elementary and junior high computer literacy
    program will be the main stay of the computer education
    offering, however, each high school department will
    incorporate microcomputer technology as is appropriate

5. Public review of the policy is scheduled, e.g., students,
    parents, teachers, and the community at large are given an
    opportunity to present their views of the extent to which the
    policy represents their idea of computer education

6. A decision is made to adopt or revise the draft policy, e.g.,
    in response to input the board decides to begin computer
    literacy earlier and to specify a strong link with local
    businesses and industry as part of the high school component

7. The administration is charged with (1) policy implementation
    and (2) the evaluation of policy impact, e.g., the
    administration through its curriculum and evaluation units
    carries out the implementation and evaluation of the computer
    education program.

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These steps represent more of a cycle than a linear, one time process since as a result of the evaluation of policy impact a new PIN may emerge or at any rate the need for revisions will become evident over time.

The Change Process

Change is a process and not an event (Hall and Hord, n.d.). In order for it to be a managed process, a systemic framework must be used for planning change. Since change in the case of such an extensive innovation as computer use has district-wide implications, it should be seen in the context of policy setting. Policy analysis is the process by which information is provided to decision makers, step two of the policy setting process described earlier. The policy analysis process begins with the clarification of the problem-issue-need (PIN) that is stimulating the change. It then moves through various steps to the generation of adoption alternatives and to implementation planning.

The clarification of the underlying PIN will help to bring into focus its complexity. With very complex changes like computer use, a number of facits emerge, each warranting separate consideration.

The adoption phase sets the direction or content of change (Fullan, 1983, p. 53). The adoption phase "can generate meaning or confusion, commitment or alienation, or simply ignorance on the part of participants and others to be affected by the change" (Fullan, p. 53).

Implementation is really a process of further clarification, and the discovery of the meaning of the change on the part of those who are to put it into practice. Therefore, it is important to remember that adoption, whether it is by one person or a representative committee, will result only in a solution meaningful to those involved in creating it. Steps must be included in implementation planning to give practitioners

(including students) a chance to develop their own meaning. The important questions here are, "What is the relationship between the adoption process and subsequent implementation?" and, "What other factors emerge during implementation which determine whether change in practice occurs?" (Fullan, p. 53).

In this section the major topic is the role of policy analysis in clarifying the PINs related to computer use and generating adoption alternatives and implementation plans. In discussing these topics, their relationships, and the influence of such factors as administrator support and involvement, staff participation, and the other critical elements (shown as part of the list of factors in Figure 1) will be explained as is appropriate.

The Role of Policy Analysis

The above sequence of events is like that suggested by any structured planning process. It is called policy analysis here because it is intended to facilitate "the choice of the best policy among a set of alternatives with the aid of reason and evidence" (McRae, 1979, p. 17). This, in essence, is the role of policy analysis as intended in this paper.

> Policy analysis is defined as a generic research activity within a practical context intended to guide the systematic identification of reasonable alternative policy options and their implications relative to particular problems, issues, needs.

The stages of policy analysis are similar to those one would go through in any research project. They include:

1. PIN clarification
2. Question development
3. Data collection, analysis and synthesis
4. Identification of alternative policy options and their implications

What makes them special here is the focus on problems, issues, and needs (PINs) for the purpose of formulating policy options. As with other research, policy analysis should be designed and conducted in a way that results, to the greatest

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extent possible, in valid and reliable findings. Given the
typical time and resource constraints imposed on policy analyses,
and the near impossibility of identifying all of the options and
their implications, the success of a given policy analysis has to
be judged in pragmatic terms, that is, the extent to which it was
included in the "stream of information" used to make a decision.
As Quade notes, "Policy analysis seeks to improve decision making
in a particular situation" (Quade, 1977, p. 22). It does so by
combining "practical experience and common sense" with "formal,
analytical techniques" (House, 1982, p. 44).

Clarifying Problem-Issue-Needs (PINs)

Many times groups faced with a problem-issue-need (PIN) which
seems to demand change fail to clarify the PIN before generating
possible solutions (GDN Newsletter, October 1983). As a result,
solutions are accepted or rejected on their own intrinsic merit
and not necessarily on their relevance to the problem at hand.
By taking the time to clarify the PINs underlying change, one
takes the first step in adoption (i.e., the setting of the
direction or content of change). This in turn forms the basis
for matching the PINs with relevant alternative innovations to be
considered for implementation.

PIN clarification is especially important when there are many
problems-issues-needs related to a general topic as is the case
with "computer use," since there are also many differing
perspectives in regard to their definition and relative
priority. Hence, there are likely to be different perspectives
on the direction or content of change and, subsequently, there
are many different possible solutions. To know which one(s) to
pursue is not an easy task. The first step in this process is to
clarify the PIN under consideration (i.e., computer use).

The right balance of central administration and staff
participation is critical in PIN clarification. As Fullan (1982)
notes, "[e]ducational adoption never occurs without an advocate,
and one of the most powerful is the chief district administrator,
with his or her staff, especially in combination with school

board support or mandate" (p. 45). Numerous studies cited by Fullan, "show that the chief district administrator and central office staff are an extremely important source of advocacy, support, and adoption of new programs" (p. 45). In order to be effective advocates, this group has to have a clear understanding of the PIN, i.e., computer use.

There are two reasons for such a suggestion. First, "[d]istrict administrators and other central office personnel such as coordinators and consultants spend large amounts of time at conferences and workshops within ongoing professional networks of communication among their peers" (Fullan, 1982, p. 44). Therefore, they are most likely to have access to the information needed for accomplishing the task of clarification.

Second, external consultants can be most effective in providing specific assistance in PIN clarification by working with a small group; one which is already somewhat knowledgeable about a PIN and which has decision making responsiblity for the general direction or content of change.

Therefore, direct involvement in the first step in policy analysis for the purpose of adoption (i.e., PIN clarification) should be limited to the chief administrator and key central personnel. Other staff with particular expertise (e.g., data processing, instructional uses, administrative applications) should be used as resources for this group.

What to consider. At the beginning of the policy analysis process, clarification should focus on the areas of computer use and the PIN clusters shown in Figure 2. Instructional use and personal/professional administrative and support service use are the computer uses that define the areas that typically occur in a district. The PINs that may exist relative to these uses fall into people, organizational, and technological clusters.

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Figure 2

Computer Use/PIN Cluster Matrix

Pin Clusters / Computer Uses	People	Organizational	Technological
Instructional CAI Problem solving Computer literacy/ Computer science			
Personal, professional, administrative, and support services Local District-wide management information			

In Figure 3 is a sample of the topics that might fall under each PIN cluster. Under the people cluster, topics concern affective or personal feelings, cognitive knowledge, skills, and social, interpersonal relationships. The organizational cluster includes topics which impinge on district management and coordination, such as, centralization versus decentralization of control, funding/resource allocation, planning/timelines and equitable access, use, and outcomes.

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Figure 3

PIN Cluster Topics

People (individual and informal group-PINs)

    affective; personal feelings of adequacy/inadequacy, fear of
        personal obsolescence,
    knowledge and skills regarding the operation of computers for
        specific purposes
    social, interpersonal relationships related to computer use

Organizational (management and coordination PINs)

    centralization vs. decentralization of control
    equity in access, use, and outcomes regarding computer use
    planning/timelines
    funding and resource allocation

Technological (computer use specific PINs)

    selection, maintenance, service, support
    equipment: central processing units, peripherals
    software: locally programmed, generic, task specific
    facilities: furniture, lighting, power, security of
          equipment and data

Technology with a capital T is such an obvious part of
microcomputer use that sometimes people and organizational topics
are not considered. In fact, there are also some other, more
mundane, technological topics that should be considered in
addition to hardware and software acquisition and quality, the
typical technological topics of uppermost interest. These other
technological topics include facilities (rooms, power, lighting,
air conditioning, furniture), security of equipment, software,
and data, related maintenance, and service and support (product
support and personnel support such as staff development and
inservice).

There are also a variety of sub-topics under the computer use
areas. Figure 4 shows some of the topics that fall under
instructional use, and personal, professional, administrative and
support service use. Computer use depends on software. There

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Figure 4

Computer Use Areas and Topics

Instructional Use

 Computer assisted instruction using software for drill and
 practice, tutorial, and simulation
 Problem solving in content areas using software for word
 processing, data base management, spreadsheet
 applications, graphics, and programming
 Computer literacy/computer science.

Administrative and Support Service Use

 Local use (confined to individual buildings or departments) and
 District-wide management information use (which assumes the
 sharing of data across site and potentially with external
 agencies); specific local and district-wide uses may fall
 under topics like:

 Student records: enrollment, daily/period
 attendance, immunization, scheduling, grades and
 process reporting, test scoring

 Office applications: report writing and other
 word processing, calendar scheduling, student
 activity accounting, inventory

 Special support uses: print shop ordering,
 curriculum materials center booking, personnel
 grievance data, teacher/substitute information,
 financial forecasting, maintenance, work order
 record keeping, transportation routing, on-line
 cash registers, enrollment projections

are essentially three kinds of programs. One kind covers

programming languages that can be used to create other programs

to do specific tasks (e.g., BASIC, Pascal, COBOL, LOGO, Fortran,

GraphForth). Another kind of program is the generic program that

addresses a particular application but does so in a general way

(e.g., word processing, data base management, spreadsheet

calculation). A third kind of program is very specific to a

particular task (e.g., accounting, scheduling, drill and

practice).

Under instructional uses are included (1) the use of special
software for computer-assisted instruction (CAI), i.e., drill and
practice, tutorials and simulations; (2) the use of generic
software like word processing, data base management, spreadsheets
and programming languages for problem solving in many different
content areas; and (3) teaching about computers, which is often
called computer literacy or, if it is career preparation,
computer science.

Under administrative and support services use comes many
generic and specific software packages useful for local
applications or district-wide management information use. The
two major differences between local and district-wide uses are
that district-wide uses typically require more sophisticated
programs and such use infers the need for compatibaility in
hardware and software or at least in the file structure of data.

Personal, professional administrative and support service use
includes student records (e.g., enrollment, daily/period
attendance, immunization, scheduling, grades and progress
reporting, test scoring), office applications (e.g., word
processing, calendar scheduling, student activity accounting,
inventory), and support services (e.g., print shop ordering,
curriculum materials center booking, personnel grievance data,
teacher/substitute information, financial forecasting,
maintenance work order record keeping, automated transportation
routing, food service inventory, enrollment projections).

Of course, how these topics are manifested as PINs will vary
from district to district. In order to describe a PIN as it
exists, some "flesh" has to be added to the "bones" represented
by the topics as they appear in Figures 3 and 4. The purpose of
the initial clarification of PINs is to provide an impression-
istic picture of PIN clusters related to the areas of computer
use. Additional clarity will be attained when policy analysis
techniques are used to generate alternatives and to plan
implementation.

In defining computer use, the clarification step can help
district administrators get an impressionistic picture of the
PINs. For example, several kinds of people, including students,
teachers, and parents, may have PINs related to instructional
uses. That is, individually and in groups they potentially have
problems-issues-needs that are related to personal feelings,
knowledge, skills, and interpersonal relationships. A situation
may exist when parents raise the issue of student computer
literacy. Their assumption is that students have a need to learn
about computers. The problem is that teachers do not have the
knowledge and skills to teach this topic. Therefore, they feel
inadequate and can easily get defensive when confronted with such
demands. From an organizational perspective, it may be the case
that decentralization is occuring as individual schools find the
funds and resources to offer computer literacy. A problem of
inequity is therefore arising in the district. In addition, the
maintenance and support of the equipment being purchased is
becoming an issue. The point of this example is to show that
PINS in one cluster can be linked to those in other clusters.

One way to gain information about potential PINs is to have
knowledgeable people in the district develop position papers
addressing each cell in the computer use/PIN cluster matrix in
Figure 2. From these papers a three-point summary can be drawn
focusing on (1) things that are not now PINs, (2) those things
that are PINs, and (3) those things that are unknown.

Question Development

By closely examining those items that are PINs, or that are
unknown, a set of questions can be formulated to focus the policy
analysis. For example, typically of high concern to districts
are policy issues regarding curriculum impact, courseware
development and evaluation, teacher training, and equity (Rampy,
White and Rockman, 1983; Rockman, 1984; Rockman, White and Rampy,
1983). These are represented in the example given in the last

section regarding intertwined PINs. They might be reformulated into the following series of questions:

- How should we define computer literacy in our school district?

- What knowledge and skills should our teachers have in order to teach computer literacy?

- How can we insure that all students receive their fair share of computer literacy training?

- What hardware and software do we need to provide a computer literacy program?

- How can an image of a district commitment to computer literacy be presented while maintaining local building flexibility in the actual provision of instruction?

There are, of course, many other questions subsumed by these four. And, different districts will generate different sets of questions. Embodied in the questions should be the constraints that the superintendent and key staff feel that the district is working under. For example, in many districts it is essential to balance a district-wide curriculum which demonstrates a district commitment to computer use with local building flexibility in implementing the curriculum. Such a constraint is reflected in the last question in the above list.

The important point is that the supervisor and key staff should be the ones who generate this initial set of general questions because in so doing they provide direction to other staff regarding the important PINs. And, they thus help to insure that they will receive information from subsequent steps of the policy analysis process that is meaningful to them in setting the direction and content of change.

Data Collection, Analysis and Synthesis

The actual task of designing and implementing data collection, analysis, and synthesis procedures will most likely be delegated to school district personnel (e.g., a district evaluation unit) or to an outside consultant. The specific procedures used will depend on the nature of the question(s)

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addressed and the resources available. For example, a curriculum division person may be given responsibility for pulling together a task force to address the questions listed earlier. The task force may do its own content analysis of computer literacy curricula from other districts.

Based on this content analysis, the task force may generate a variety of patterns. These may be shared with other teachers and administrators in the district to gain input on (1) preferences for a particular pattern, and (2) knowledge and skill training needed to implement a given pattern. Once this input is collected and analyzed, a technical expert might be called in to identify hardware and software requirements related to each pattern. This information would then be synthesized into adoption alternatives.

Identification of Alternative Policy Options and Their Implications

Because policy setting is a social process, it is important to maintain open communication all during the policy analysis process, so that people know what is happening and why. This will assure them that their points of view are being considered, and they will know what to expect from the adoption process. It might be worthwhile to circulate alternatives and/or hold an open meeting to discuss them before decisions are made as is suggested in the policy setting steps on pages 5 and 6. This will set the stage for planning the implementation of those adoption alternatives which are selected.

In discussing the essential characteristics of the adoption phase of planning change, Fullan (1982) states

> it is the quality of the planning process which is essential: the degree to which a problem-solving approach at the adoption stage is combined with planning ahead for implementation (Miles, 1980). The quality of the adoption process already sets the stage for subsequent success or failure (p. 64).

Fullan goes on to discuss the role of participation:

> Indeed, at the adoption phase sheer quantity in
> participatory planning can be harmful if it involves
> wasted time, disagreement, unclear needs assessment,
> frustrating meetings, and so on, without those involved
> having any program involvements to show for their
> efforts. If the planning process (regardless of whether
> it is participatory) results in a specific, high-quality,
> needed innovation, or in a broad-based flexible program
> whose general direction is compatible with the needs of
> the district, it will have been a sufficient start. More
> important for change in practice, however, is
> <u>implementation-level participation</u> in which decisions are
> made about what does work and what does not (p. 65).

Adoption is most successful when the chief district officer and
key administrators are directly involved. As a result of the
policy analysis procedures just illustrated, adoption
alternatives can be brought to this group for decisions. The
options presented might include policy statements and
implementation implications.

<u>Policy statements</u>. The Education Policies Service of the
National School Boards Association has a series of illustrative
policy statements covering many different topics. A policy
statement patterned after them may be as follows:

Computer Literacy

The Board recognizes the importance of developing
computer literacy among the students of the district and
the instructional staff. In order to provide a
comprehensive, equitable, and appropriate computer
literacy program in the district, the Board authorizes
the administration to:

1. establish a district-wide computer literacy
   curriculum that allows for local building flexibility

2. provide the necessary staff development so that
   teachers and others are able to implement the
   curriculum

3. coordinate the selection and purchase of hardware and
   software in a cost-effective way, consistent with
   district procedures of fiscal accounting and reporting

4. monitor the implementation of the curriculum to
   insure the equitable distribution of learning
   opportunities and outcomes.

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Alternative statements could be developed to reflect the options generated as a result of the data collection step.

Implementation implications. Detailed implementation planning is not the role of policy analysis. However, understanding the major elements of interventions "should help planners and policy makers in developing and maintaining an overview perspective of the total process" (Hall and Hord, n.d., p. 27). One major element which follows policy setting is the general description of a "game plan." A game plan should contain sufficient detail to guide subsequent elaboration of the components listed in Figure 5. However, the detailed rules, guidelines, strategies, actions, and tactics embodied in the components should be left to those who, for example, will be directly involved in implementating the four sub-parts of the above policy statement on computer literacy.

However, superintendent and key staff support remains critical. As Fullan (1983) states, "[i]ndividual teachers and single schools can bring about change without support of centr[al] administrators, but district-wide change will not happen" (p. 65). The history of innovation in a district provides the backdrop for current change. Staff soon come to realize that "unless central administrators demonstrate through action that they should change" (Fullan, 1983, p. 65), they need not take change seriously. Fullan summarizes this situation as follows:

> The basic point, however, is that the chief executive
> officer and other key central administrators set the
> conditions for implementation to the extent that they
> show specific forms of support and active knowledge and
> understanding of the realities of attempting to put a
> change into practice. To state it most forcefully, the
> administrator affects the quality of implementation to
> the extent that he or she understands and helps to manage
> the set of factors and the processes described in this
> chapter (p. 65).

Those factors and processes include the adoption process, staff development, board and community involvement, timeline, information systems and so on.

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