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ABSTRACT
                An ethnographic study was conducted of the first year
of implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project in a pilot
middle school. The interaction between intervention and the existing
school culture is studied through multiple interviews with teachers,
support staff, administrators, students, and parents as well as
observation and review of relevant documents. The goals of the
Accelerated Schools Project are to raise expectations for students in
high-risk situations and to move decision making about curriculum,
instruction, and organization of schools to the school level. Calhoun
Middle School is an inner-city school in California with a largely
Hispanic population. The Accelerated Schools philosophy and process
were implemented in the school. The inquiry process of implementation
and the five cadres established to study instruction, culture,
student interaction, family involvement, and curriculum are reviewed.
Primary changes observed in the first year were related to staff,
administration, and school organization. Problems in the process,
including the state fiscal crisis, are described; and factors that
kept the effort alive are detailed. An epilogue sketches the second
project year. (SLD)

Becoming an Accelerated Middle School:

Initiating School Culture Change

December 1992

by:

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Executive Summary

Are all efforts to change schools doomed to fail because they come up against a school's existing school culture? This question guides an ethnographic study of the first year of implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project in a pilot middle school. The study examines the interaction that occurs when the intervention and the existing school culture come together. It is guided by two beliefs about interventions. First, interventions such as Accelerated Schools are essentially attempts to change existing school culture, and second, most interventions fail to make lasting change in schools because they do not work with a school's community to change the culture from the inside.

I chose to use ethnographic methods because I wanted to capture the interactive, complex nature of change. Ethnographic research requires intensive and extensive involvement by the ethnographer in all of the activities of the school community. Through multiple interviews with teachers, support staff, administrators, students, and parents, through hours of observation in classrooms, meetings, assemblies, and informal gatherings of staff and students, and through review of relevant documents, I was able to capture the dynamics of school culture change. Actual on-site data collection occurred during the 1990 - 1991 school year, but because of my interest in historical as well as internal and external influences on implementation, data about the school prior to its involvement in Accelerated Schools are highlighted. Data analysis occurred throughout the data collection period which led to the characterization of Accelerated Schools as a vehicle for school culture change.

This study concludes that the Accelerated Schools Project differs from other school reform interventions because it provides a process for the members of the school community to become more aware of their existing school culture and to make the changes they desires in the school culture. Unlike most interventions, the Accelerated Schools Project does not impose school culture changes on the participating school; it provides a vehicle for the school community to make their own changes.

The Accelerated Schools Project

The Accelerated Schools Project is both a philosophy and a process for changing schools serving children caught in at-risk situations. Its goals are to raise our expectations for children caught in at-risk situations and to move decision-making about curriculum, instruction, and organization of schools to the school level. The Accelerated Schools Project philosophy holds that all children can learn at high levels and that the enriched instruction and curriculum usually reserved for gifted and talented students benefits all children. Three principles - unity of purpose, building on strengths, and empowerment coupled with responsibility - form the foundation for all Accelerated Schools Project activities. I describe the process used by accelerating schools in the discussion of how the project was implemented at Calhoun Middle School.

The Middle School Before Accelerated Schools Implementation

Calhoun Middle School is located in the downtown of a major California city. It serves a largely Hispanic population despite efforts to integrate the schools. In response to a 1985 court order to desegregate the schools, Calhoun was transformed into a Learning/Technology magnet school. Many of the teachers who were brought to the school at that time look back on the early days of the magnet as a golden time. A new principal was given the opportunity to select a new staff and the resources to buy state-of-the-art equipment. The school, however, continued to have trouble attracting white students, and standardized test scores were poor. A year before the Accelerated Schools Project began, a new administration was brought in and many of the staff members were very discouraged. A sense of powerlessness pervaded the school. Some teachers complained that the change in administration "destroyed what we had built," and many admitted that the administrative changes "make me want to withdraw into my room and not get involved with anybody else."

The First Phase of Project Implementation

During the first phase of the project, the staff received training in the Accelerated Schools philosophy and process, and began the processes of taking stock and creating a vision. During this time, the Calhoun school community formed seven committees to examine community. attitudes, achievement, discipline, family

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involvement, school organization, and curriculum and instruction. The investigation focussed on the school as it was at that time; the primary data collection methods were surveys sent to parents, staff, and students, interviews and document and data bank reviews. The entire school also created a vision of what they want the school to become. All members of the school community were given the opportunity to contribute to the vision. Once the vision was complete, Calhoun celebrated it with an assembly and a parade to the downtown. The celebration was the first time all 617 students were together for an assembly, and it was the first time the entire school left the building together. It was a memorable event for all. The first phase of the Accelerated Schools process was completed when they set priorities or determined areas of focus for the Inquiry process. These activities set the foundation for a more democratic governance structure, involving cadres for each priority area, a steering committee, and a school-as-a-whole.

The Inquiry Process

At Calhoun, five cadres were established to examine instruction, culture, student interaction, family involvement, and curriculum. Each progressed through the first stages of the Inquiry process (defining the problem and developing and testing hypotheses) at different rates. The cadre members not only learned to work with the steps of the Inquiry process, they also learned to work together in small groups. Issues that arose were: frustrations over the amount of time the process requires and the slow nature of change; developing a sense of group ownership; accommodating diversity within the groups; and distributing the work and developing a sense of ownership. During the Inquiry process, the governance structure began to change. The cadres began to make decisions which were checked through the steering committee. During the first year, few decisions went to the school-as-a-whole for final approval because the cadres were not at ta point in the Inquiry process to present ideas to the entire school.

Changes Observed During the First Year

The primary changes observed at the pilot school during the first year of project implementation were related to the staff, administration, and school organization. While students and family and community experienced changes as well, they were

less dramatic.

<u>Changes related to teachers and support staff</u>

o *increased commitment to the school and excitement about working there.*
Several teachers who had planned to leave Calhoun (either through transfers
or retirement) decided to stay because they were excited about the
opportunities to make changes they wanted. Many teachers were beginning to
see the students in a new light and realized that the students had strengths they
had previously not recognized.

o *internalization of the Accelerated Schools principles*
The Accelerated Schools principles gave many of the staff members a second
wind. The principles were consistent with the philosophy of education held by
these staff members. As one teacher said, "This is the thing that attracted me to
the program - was that it was so consistent with my philosophy."

o *higher expectations for students and staff*
Teachers began examining their practices and realized that their expectations
for many students were too low. As they gave students more challenging work,
the students were able to do it. The examination into expectations for students
also led them to look at their expectations of themselves and each other.

o *improved communication among the entire staff, especially across
departments with increased talk of interdisciplinary teaching*
The emphasis on school-wide change and work on the taking stock committees
and the Inquiry cadres gave staff members a chance to work with people they
did not know well. One teacher wrote, "I have spent time talking with teachers I
probably wouldn't have found time or situations to talk with." The creation of a
humanities core (combining language arts and social studies) is an example of
increasing interdisciplinary work.

o *increased interaction between certified and classified staff*
For the first time, certified and classified staff members worked together on
committees. These groups became better acquainted and learned of strengths
that previously had not been recognized. The classified staff members were
happy to have a voice in planning school change.

o *greatly improved communication and trust with the administration*
The administrators worked with teachers and support staff in all taking stock
committee and Inquiry cadre work, on the steering committee, and in school-as-
a-whole meetings - as members, not as leaders. Teachers were able to talk to
them as colleagues, and the confrontational relationships many teachers had
with the administration softened. The principal credited the Accelerated

Schools Project with helping him change his style to be more democratic.

o *increased awareness that teachers can make a difference, that they have power and influence*
One teacher summarized the feelings of many when she said, "We are starting to feel that what we decide will be put to use and practice. Before the cadres, there was a sense that input would be put to us - that decisions were made without us. We are seeing our work put in place for next year.

o *blossoming of creativity and initiative*
One teacher commented at the end of the year, "Accelerated Schools rejuvenated us. It made lots of us more creative." There were many examples of teachers taking chances within their classes that they may not have taken before. Several teachers initiated large projects that had never been attempted before. One organized a school-wide Egg Drop contest that was a tremendous success.

o *awareness of the importance of working slowly and thoroughly*
Most members of the staff were frustrated at some point during the first year of implementation that progress was so slow. By the end of the year, though, most of them realized the importance of working carefully; they realized that lasting change does not happen quickly.

o *increased interest in learning among the staff*
Calhoun had a small group of teachers who were always interested in learning new skills and ideas. By interacting with each other though the cadre meetings, some of their ideas were transferred to others, and there was a sense that more teachers would actively seek to learn new skills.

Changes related to the administration

o *increased communication with the staff*
Through working jointly on Inquiry cadres and becoming more accessible to staff, the communication between the administration and staff improved greatly. By the end of the year, teachers were frequently seen talking informally with members of the administrative team; this happened less frequently at the beginning of the year.

o *improved trust of the staff*
The administrators turned to staff members for help in decision-making. For example, when the principal heard about potential budget cuts for the next year, he turned immediately to the curriculum cadre and eventually to the school-as-a-whole for ideas on how the cuts would effect the school and for ideas on

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strategies for working with the district. Previously, he and the vice principal would have made these decisions alone.

o more democratic working relations with the staff
The principal admitted that "...democracy is not easy, and cooperation is an unnatural act in education," but his style changed through the year, and he helped build a governance structure that supports democratic decision-making. Through the cadres and steering committee (and in the following year the school-as-a-whole) decisions that previously would have been made by the principal or the administrative team were made by staff. An example was the decision to merge the language arts and social studies departments into a humanities department.

o internalization of the principles and process of Accelerated Schools
The administrative team tried to use the Accelerated Schools process whenever appropriate. The vice principal for curriculum used it so widely at school that teachers wondered if he used the Inquiry process at home with his family. The principal said that the concept of Accelerated Schools "set the tone for me as a manager and as an educational leader."

o better distribution of administrative duties both within the administrative team and to the cadres
Prior to the first year of Accelerated Schools, the principal and vice principal for curriculum made most of the decisions together. During this year, they formed an administrative team of five and distributed duties to all members. This facilitated the distribution of duties to the cadres.

<u>Changes in school structure - governance and curriculum</u>

o adoption of a democratic decision-making structure through cadres and a steering committee, and school-as-a-whole
The Accelerated Schools process helped Calhoun move, in one year, from a centralized authority to democratic decision-making through cadres and the steering committee. As the vice principal for curriculum said, "I've been in education for so many years, and I've never seen a structure for team building. Usually we make some decisions and others complain."

o integration of the whole school community (administrators, teachers, support staff, parents) into the decision-making structure
The changes in the governance structure allowed teachers and support staff to have more involvement in decision-making. The structure was there to include parents and students as well, and, although the number of parents and students involved in the first year was small, there was tremendous desire for more involvement from them because the few active parents and students made

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significant contributions.

o *elimination of ability grouping*
With almost no debate, the school decided that, as an accelerated school, they could not divide students between classes based on their academic ability. They felt this was antithetical to the philosophy of holding high expectations for all students.

o *elimination of the "opportunity class"*
The "opportunity class" was established to serve students identified as potential drop outs. As the school internalized the Accelerated Schools philosophy, they realized that their expectations for these students was very low and that they would be better served in regular classrooms.

o *creation of a humanities core and reinstatement of electives*
Prior to implementing Accelerated Schools, Calhoun eliminated electives in order to offer a two hour language arts block. By integrating language arts and social studies into a humanities core, they were not only integrating these subjects, they were also able to reinstate electives.

Changes related to students

o *most students realized that the teachers were working hard for them*
Through their involvement in the vision celebration and their awareness that teachers were meeting during early release days and before and after school, students understood that teachers were working beyond their normal school day to improve the school for students.

o *a few students gained confidence by working on cadres*
Several students became actively involved in cadre work and felt more connected to the school because of this work. These were not students that were otherwise active in school organizations; in fact, one boy had a been a discipline problem until he became involved on one of the cadres.

o *more ethnic diversity in the students who represented the school*
The vision celebration set the tone for student participation in public events. Prior to the celebration, all student speakers were drawn from the white, high achieving students at Calhoun (only about 40% of the student population). At the vision celebration, a hearing before the school board, and eighth grade graduation, students of different ethnic heritage and achievement levels spoke.

o *teachers noticed improved student attitudes toward school*
Teachers noticed improved student behavior, which they credited both to the creation of an administrative guidance/discipline team and to the growing sense

of pride students had for the school. The teachers began to trust the students more, as evidenced by the frequency of whole school assemblies.

Changes related to family members

o family members felt more welcome at the school.
Family members (even those who do not speak little or no English) were given the opportunity to provide input into the vision and taking stock process. Parent participation on cadres was actively sought and one entire cadre was devoted to creating ways to increase family involvement.

o family involvement increased
Calhoun experienced significant increases in attendance at back to school night, awards assemblies, open house, and graduation.

Challenges to Accelerating Schools

As the above describes, the implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project was well underway by the end of the year. The preceding description does not include the contextual factors that hindered and helped this implementation. A number of factors could have derailed the project had other factors not kept it going. Two of the factors that could have potentially stopped the project were the lack of trust that existed between the teachers and the administration at the beginning of the implementation process and the California budget crisis that decimated the budget for the entire school district. There were several factors that overrode those problems and contributed to a productive first year. They were: strong support from the administrators at the pilot school; support of the project by key faculty members, regular on-site assistance from the Stanford Accelerated Schools team; and support from the central office (in the form of seven early release days and some financial assistance).

The design of the Accelerated Schools Project was also a key facilitating factor. The following contributed to successful implementation of the project in the first year and should support continued internalization of the philosophy and process of Accelerated Schools into the Calhoun school culture:

o Accelerated Schools does not impose a "look" on all schools. It builds on the unique set of strengths that lie within each school.

o Each school is expected to change in ways appropriate to the existing school culture; Accelerated Schools merely gives it a vehicle with which to work. Because of the influence of school culture, no two accelerated schools will look the same.

o Accelerated Schools provides a process for accomplishing true school-based management.

o It facilitates participants developing shared goals - a unity of purpose.

o Accelerated Schools recognizes the need for schools to be responsible for their own decisions.

o Accelerated Schools does not require a major injection of money into the school. Schools ar, encouraged to work with existing resources (materials, personnel, and time).

An epilogue is included in the full report of this study to provide a sketch of the activities and changes that took place in the second year of project implementation.

Acknowledgements

Becoming an Accelerated Middle School: Initiating School Culture Change

Introduction to the Report

This study of the implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project is guided by a belief that interventions such as Accelerated Schools are essentially attempts to change existing school culture. All schools have a unique school culture (i.e. a web of beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and behaviors which are predictable and meaningful to all members of the school community). Many interventions fail because they do not take into account the resilience of the school culture and its ability to envelop and neutralize attempts to change it. Interventions are usually designed for a generic school, with little more than passing reference to respecting the school as it was before the intervention. It is understandable that interventions generally ignore school culture because the concept of school culture is not easily understood. The school culture is not written in a document, nor is it easy to observe on a quick visit to the school. It is usually only after an intervention fails that school culture is discussed, and by that time, it is viewed as a road block, as an intransigent force that prevents change from occurring (see Sarason 1990).

This study illustrates that interventions can take root if they work with school culture rather than against it. This is possible if the intervention is designed to help the members of the culture make the changes they want in their school. The school community must want to make the intervention a part of their culture and shape it to fit the culture. Anthropologists studying culture change find that people readily accept attractive influences from outside, but they block those that are inconsistent with deeply-held beliefs and practices or are poorly introduced. This report describes both how the existing school culture at the middle school studied shaped the process of project implementation and how the Accelerated Schools Project is beginning to change the culture of the school.

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The Accelerated Schools Project has received considerable attention since it started in 1986. When this study was commissioned in January 1991, there were over 50 elementary schools and one pilot middle school engaged in the Accelerated Schools process. Since then, over 300 elementary schools and middle schools have chosen to become accelerated schools. More schools and districts are eager to become accelerated schools as evidenced by a long waiting list of applicants. Rather than just continue to develop a system to serve the interested schools, the Accelerated Schools Project recognizes the importance of creating a research base, and of developing innovative ways to document the implementation process and assess the design of the project. For that reason, the Accelerated Schools Project commissioned this examination of project implementation at one accelerating school - the pilot middle school.[1]

This report is designed for several audiences. The first audience is composed of educators interested in the Accelerated Schools Project as a possible reform strategy for their schools. The report provides a detailed account of the first phase of project implementation - capacity building. Educators can determine if the process described in this report is appropriate for their schools, and they can learn some lessons from the experiences of another group of educators as they engaged in the process of internalizing the Accelerated Schools principles and process. This report is especially interesting to two groups of educators - middle school educators in general, and the school community at the pilot middle school in particular. Interest in middle school reform has increased recently (e.g. Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989), and this report provides a concrete example of how reform is taking shape in one middle school. Where most middle school educators have to extract generic lessons from this report, the school community at the pilot middle school can use this report to reflect on the process in which they engaged.

The second audience is comprised of policymakers engaged in school restructuring efforts. Policy makers from the national to the local level are designing

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school restructuring plans, and the Accelerated Schools Project is one project that is receiving considerable attention. The Accelerated Schools Project is cited by President Bush and Secretary of Education Alexander as a project that is "pointing the way" toward improved schools (see America 2000: An Education Strategy). The interest is high because the Accelerated Schools Project is designed to avoid many of the problems of past school reforms. From this report, policymakers can determine if the Accelerated Schools model is capable of laying the groundwork for lasting school reform.

This report is divided into six sections and an epilogue. Section One provides a description of the philosophy guiding the Accelerated Schools Project. It offers a brief description of the principles, values and focus of the project. Section Two describes the methodology used in this study. It presents the guiding research questions and the methods of data collection and analysis. Section Three provides background information on the pilot middle school. This section outlines the school culture at the onset of project implementation. As Schlechty notes, it is important to understand the history of a school (or any organization) because "history shapes culture and structure, and culture and structure shape schools..." (1990, xxiii) This section emphasizes key factors in the history of the school, its structure and the composition of the school community. Sections Four and Five describe the Accelerated Schools process. Section Four focusses on the first phase of the project - Getting Started (Project Introduction, Taking Stock, Vision Development, Setting Priorities). It describes the activities associated with this phase of the project and describes changes evident at this time. This section and Section Five are arranged to provide a general description of the Accelerated Schools process, and a particular description of the actual implementation at the middle school. The general description is set off in italics from the particular description. Section Five describes the Inquiry process, or the phase in which issues identified in the first phase are explored in depth, and action plans developed. This section also describes the activities of the middle school participants and the changes evident at the end of the school year. Section Six focusses on challenges to both the Accelerated Schools Project and to future implementation at the middle school. The discussion relates the findings of this report to the growing interest

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in school restructuring. An Epilogue is included to provide a brief description of the continued change occuring at the pilot school. It illustrates that this report documents only a short segment of an ongoing change process.

The description of the Accelerated Schools Project (Section One) and the general descriptions of the Accelerated Schools process draw largely from two Accelerated Schools documents. Both *Toward an Accelerated Middle School* (Hopfenberg, Levin, Meister and Rogers. 1990) and the *Accelerated Schools Resource Guide*[2] were excerpted in these sections. In this report, the name of the school has been changed, and the names of all participants have been omitted. People are referred to by their role in the school or the project to protect their identity.

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[2] *Toward an Accelerated Middle School* is available from the Accelerated Schools Project office, CERAS building, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305. The *Accelerated Schools Resouce Guide* will be published soon.

Section One
The Accelerated Schools Project[3]

The Accelerated Schools Project is a comprehensive approach to school change targeted to children caught in at-risk situations. The Accelerated Schools Project is both a way of thinking about academic acceleration and a concrete process for achieving it. Each accelerated school sets its own unique goals, and the Accelerated Schools Project helps provide the capacity-building and guidance to reach those goals. At its heart is the notion of doing for low achieving students what we presently attempt to do for gifted and talented students - accelerate their progress rather than slow it down. The goal of the Accelerated Schools Project at the middle school level is to enable all students to take advantage of high school and college instruction by effectively closing the achievement gap in middle school.

To accomplish this, schools change dramatically. Accelerated schools display the following characteristics: high expectations on the part of teachers, parents and students; deadlines by which students are expected to meet particular educational requirements; stimulating and relevant instructional programs; and involvement of the teachers, parents, and the community in the design and implementation of programs. No one single feature makes an accelerated program. Rather, a comprehensive integration of curricular, instructional, and organizational practices, consistent with a school's unique vision, creates the accelerated school.

The Accelerated Schools Project is basically a philosophy, or a way of thinking, and a process for implementing that philosophy. Sections Four and Five describe the process, which is essentially a systematic set of practices for "getting from here to there -" from conventional schools to accelerated ones. The following provides a brief overview of the Accelerated Schools philosophy.

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[3] Large portions of the following description are taken from a 1990 Accelerated Schools document, *Toward Accelerated Middle Schools* (Hopfenberg, Levin, Meister and Rogers) and from *Accelerated Schools Resource Guide.*

The Accelerated Schools philosophy draws heavily on the work of educator and philosopher John Dewey. Dewey was concerned that society treated schools in poor neighborhoods unfairly and that schools were stiffling the creativity and inquisitiveness of children by not allowing them to be actively involved in their own learning. He chided educators who felt that schools for the poor and underprivileged were adequate because he knew that they would be considered inadequate for more privileged children (Dewey 1984). This principle of doing for all students what we would want to do for our own children is at the heart of the Accelerated Schools Project. The Accelerated Schools Project carries this principle one step further - do for all students what we do for our brightest students - accelerate their learning. The Accelerated Schools Project also builds on Dewey's belief that a democratic education implies faith in the potential of both children and adults to understand, and shape the world around them (Dewey 1988). He also states that individuals begin to realize this potential when they take active roles in exploring and understanding shared problems (Dewey 1984). This belief is evident in the Accelerated Schools principles and in the collaborative governance structure established at each school.

The Three Accelerated Schools Principles

The Accelerated Schools Project is built upon three principles, a set of values, and a commitment to powerful learning through integration of curriculum, instruction and organization that reflect Dewey's philosophy of education.The three principles - unity of purpose, school-site empowerment through decision-making and responsibility for results at the school site, and an instructional approach that builds on the strengths of the school community (students, teachers, administrators, other staff, and parents) rather than on their weaknesses - are the foundation of the project. The Accelerated Schools Project holds that lasting change cannot occur in schools without a change in thinking similar to that reflected in these principles.

Unity of Purpose

This principle refers to the striving among parents, teachers, students, and administrators toward a common set of goals for the school that will be the focal point

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of everyone's efforts. A central element of the unity agreement must be to transform the school into an accelerated one that will make students academically able at an early date so that they can fully benefit from their further schooling experiences and adult opportunities. The Accelerated Schools Project is built on the belief that the all inclusive process of defining a common purpose is extremely important in and of itself. The project holds that by including all of the parties, from the start, who are involved in either the planning and design of educational programs, the implementation of those programs, and/or the evaluation of those programs, one can ensure more cohesive educational efforts and a greater commitment to those efforts. Unity of purpose stands in contrast to disjointed planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs.

According to the Accelerated Schools Project, the traditional school structure offers us little opportunity or incentive to work together on a schoolwide level to construct and fulfill a vision of success for the entire school. Rather, teachers work largely in isolation from each other. Teacher's roles are defined by their success within their self-contained classroom. Teachers providing highly specialized roles in the school, such as Chapter I, bilingual education, or special education have little opportunity to coordinate their efforts with classroom teachers. There is very little room in the present structure for substantial parent and student contributions to a schoolwide vision.

Once a unity of purpose is achieved, the Accelerated Schools Project finds that active goals that provide opportunities for daily practice can be set. These differ from the standard passive goals that schools create to fulfill external requirements and that rarely amount to more than words on paper. The unity of purpose serves as an organizing framework for all curricular, instructional, and organizational endeavors.

Empowerment Coupled with Responsibility

This refers to the ability of key participants of a school community to (1) make important educational decisions, (2) take responsibility for implementing those decisions, and (3) take responsibility for the outcomes for those decisions. The Accelerated Schools Project views it necessary to break the present stalemate among

administrators, teachers, parents, and students in which the participants tend to blame each other as well as other factors "beyond their control" for the poor educational outcomes of students. Unless all of the major actors can be empowered to seek a common set of goals and influence the educational and social processes to realize those goals, it is unlikely that the desired improvements will take place or be sustained.

The Accelerated Schools Project builds an expanded role in which all groups can participate and take responsibility for the educational process and educational results. According to the Accelerated Schools Project, such an approach requires a shift to a school-based decision approach with heavy involvement of teachers, support staff, parents and students, and new roles for administrative leadership. The district office provides needed support services such as information, technical assistance, staff development and evaluation, as well as an appropriate system of student and school assessment that can be used as a basis for accountability.

The Accelerated Schools Project holds that among the areas that are critical for site-based participation in decision-making are the choice of curriculum, instructional strategies, instructional mateᵣals and personnel, and the ability to allocate resources. While federal, state and local regulations and guidelines may place some legitimate limits (e.g. for the purposes of accountability and uniformity among schools) on school-based decision-making, it is important that a major share of decision-making responsibilities be placed at the school site.

Building on Strengths

This principle refers to using all of the learning resources that students, parents, school staff, and communities bring to the educational endeavor. According to the Accelerated Schools Project, in the quest to place blame for the lack of efficacy of schools in improving the education for students at-risk, it is easy to exaggerate weaknesses of the various participants and ignore strengths. Parents, students, teachers and administrators all have strengths no matter what their educational, economic, cultural, or linguistic background. The Accelerated Schools Project maintains that parents can be powerful allies in the educational process because they

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have a deep love for their children and a desire for them to succeed. The key is making them feel comfortable and important to the school, and guiding them in activities that will assist their children educationally.

According to the project, the strengths of at-risk students are often overlooked because these students are perceived as lacking the learning behaviors associated with middle-class students. Many at-risk students have an eagerness and curiosity that, if channeled productively, can overcome obstacles to learning. Schools overlook the strengths of these students in a variety of ways. For example, teachers often find themselves unprepared to understand the culture and values of poor, minority, immigrant, and non-English speaking students. Schools rarely tap the many styles of learning all students bring with them to school. All students could benefit from a wider variety of teaching strategies (e.g. tapping oral, kinesthetic, artistic talents), but these strategies may be particularly effective with students in at-risk situations because they may be especially alienated by a heavy emphasis on the traditional "book learning" strategies used in most classrooms. Their strengths might be better developed through oral and artistic expression, manipulation of appropriate materials (as stressed by Montessori), and through alternative teaching techniques such as peer tutoring and cooperative learning (Slavin 1983)

Teachers are capable of insights, intuition, teaching, and organizational acumen that are lost when schools exclude teachers from participating in the decisions they must implement. School-based administrators are also underutilized. They are often placed in "command" roles and asked to meet the directives and standard-operating-procedures of districts rather than to work creatively with parents, staff, and students. A school's support staff is also largely underutilized even though anyone familiar with schools recognizes that often school secretaries, janitors, instructional aides, and cafeteria workers have an important relationship to the children, and often have a powerful influence on the school. Finally, communities have considerable resources including youth organizations, religious groups, senior citizens, and businesses that should be viewed as major assets for the schools and children of the community. The strengths of all of these participants are viewed as a major resource by the Accelerated Schools Project.

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The Accelerated Schools Values

Underlying the principles of Accelerated Schools are a set of values, beliefs, and attitudes which are necessary to create the culture for accelerated school change. The following values, attitudes, and beliefs are interrelated:

o   *equity:* All students can learn and have an equal right to a high quality education.

o   *participation:* Students participate in learning; all school staff participate in school decision-making; parents participate in school and have decision-making responsibilities and opportunities.

o   *communication/community:* Students engage in active and group learning. School staff and community work toward a shared purpose by meeting, talking, and learning from each others' experiences.

o   *reflection:* Students engage in problem-solving exercises and interpretive approaches to curricula. Teachers and other adults constantly scrutinize the world of the school and address challenges to school improvement.

o   *experimentation:* Students are involved in discovery exercises. All school staff and parents launch, implement and evaluate experimental programs as a result of communicating about and reflecting upon the school's problems.

o   *trust:* Teachers, parents, administrators and students must believe in each other and focus on each other's strengths.

o   *risk-taking:* All parties must be more entrepreneurial in their efforts. While some new programs fail, the ones that succeed are the keys to lasting school improvement.

o   *professionalization.* The entire school community has the ability to understand and respond to school challenges, and because of the wealth of talent and experience within the school can acquire additional expertise.

Powerful Learning Through Integration of Curriculum, Instruction and Organization

The Accelerated Schools Project does not set forth a recipe for creating powerful learning experiences. There is no "checklist" of features that make up an accelerated school. Rather, the model builds the capacity of each school to assess its needs and develop integrated plans that will lead to the school's unique vision. While each accelerated school will choose different paths according to its unique needs, every accelerated school shou. ' aim to bring all children into the educational mainstream by a set deadline and should adhere to a common core of powerful learning tenets.

According to the Accelerated Schools Project, one of the most important pieces of their powerful learning philosophy is the fact that the education we use with "gifted" children works well for ALL children. The Accelerated Schools model encourages school communities to create situations where every school day encompasses the best things we know about curriculum, instruction, and organization. The Accelerated Schools philosophy creates learning situations where each student has an interest in learning, sees a meaning in the lesson, perceives connections between this school activity and his or her real life, is able to learn actively, and learn in ways that build on his/her own strengths. Accelerated school communities should work together to create powerful learning experiences where each child is treated as gifted, where higher order and complex activities are stressed, where content is relevant, and where children actively discover the curriculum objectives in a safe environment, rather than passively going through textbooks and filling out worksheets. The safe environment for learning extends far beyond the classroom into every aspect of the school, home and community. The Accelerated Schools Project encourages participants to think about their own powerful learning experiences and what made those experiences so powerful.

The second part of the Accelerated Schools' learning philosophy is that they see every powerful learning experience as having three dimensions. The first dimension is "what" is taught – the content or curriculum. The second dimension is "how" the content is taught – instruction. The third dimension is the context or

organization in which one galvanizes all available resources to achieve the "what" and "how." Context or organization includes the use of time, flexibility of the schedule, deployment of staffing, funding, etc.).

The Accelerated Schools Project sees these three dimensions as totally and necessarily integrated. A change in curriculum necessitates a change in instruction and organization and vice versa. For example, if a teacher wanted to make his or her curriculum more interdisciplinary, it would be difficult to teach it using rigidly defined subject area textbooks, within 45 minute blocks of time, using a predominantly teacher-directed instructional strategy. Interdisciplinary content lends itself to more active instructional strategies and more flexible uses of time.

Figure 1 illustrates how the principles, values and powerful learning situation work together to form an accelerated school. The circle represents the guiding principles; the square represents the values, and the triangle, the powerful learning situation.

According to the Accelerated Schools Project, most educational reforms represent piecemeal changes that only focus on a specific side of the triangle. Some reforms focus on restructuring strategies (base of the triangle); others offer a new math series (left side), or a new instructional strategy for teaching reading (right side). But, usually these are done separately and independently with relatively little impact on the overall school program or student learning. The Accelerated Schools Project explicitly rejects this piecemeal approach. It favors a comprehensive approach in which all three parts work dynamically together on behalf of students, school staff, and parents. Accelerated schools' staff are encouraged to create a cohesive school community where students want to be — schools with powerful learning experiences for all students — both inside and outside of the classroom. The Accelerated Schools Project has found that when student needs are met, that the needs of parents, staff and administration are met as well. An accelerated school should not be just a conventional school with compensatory or remedial classes grafted onto it. Rather, it should be a vital environment in which the entire school and its operations are transformed. The stress is on the school as a whole rather than on a particular grade, curriculum, approach to teacher training, or other more limited strategy.

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Figure 1

The Accelerated Schools Project
Philosophy

The figure shows a circle containing a triangle. The triangle vertices/sides are labeled:
- **Unity of Purpose** (top)
- **Curriculum** (left side)
- **Instruction** (right side)
- **Empowerment/Responsibility** (lower left)
- **Building on Strengths** (lower right)
- **Organization** (bottom)

Inside the triangle is a box containing:

Equity
Reflection
Communication
Experimentation
Trust
Risk-taking
Professionalization

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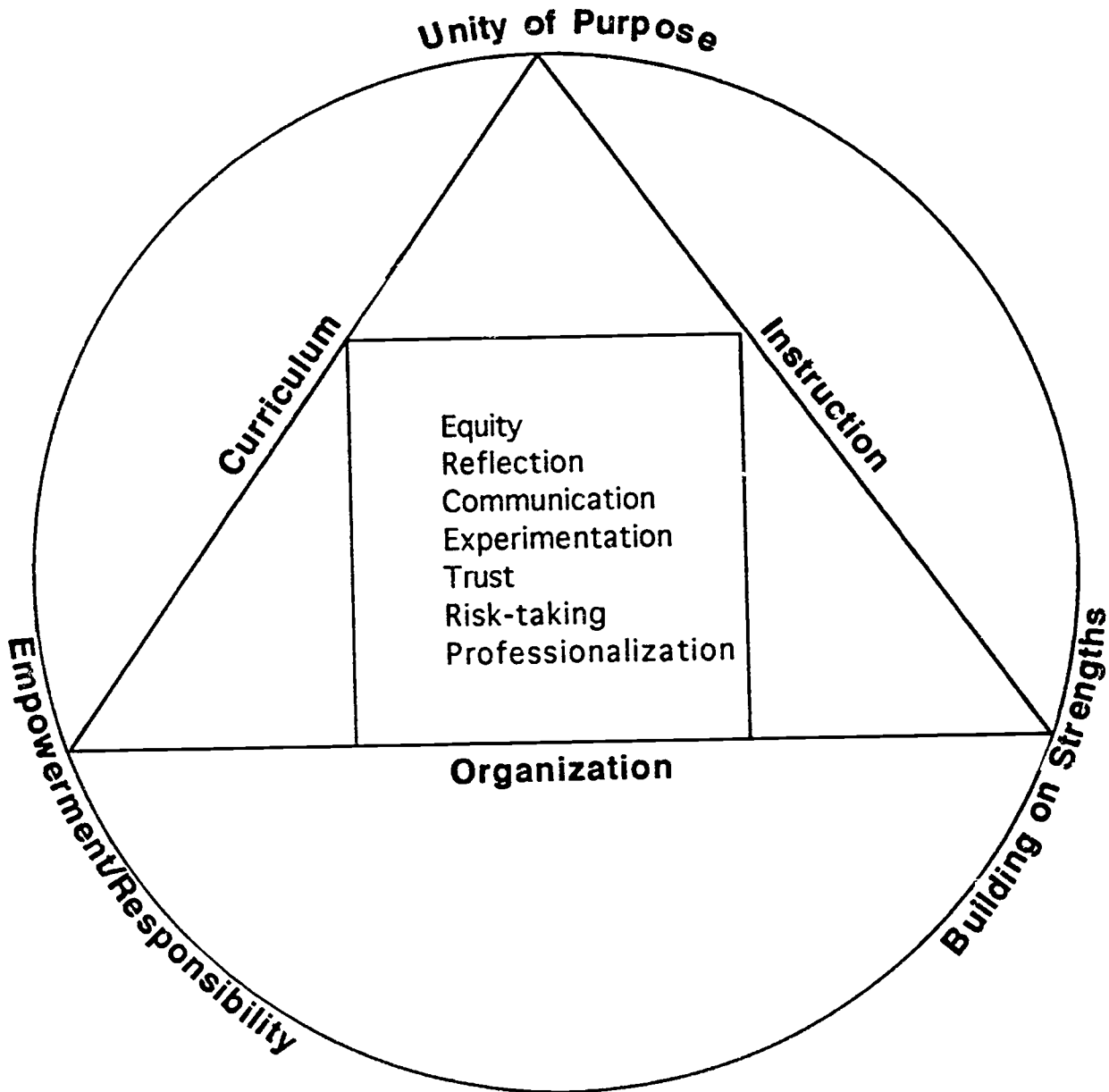
Section Two
Methodology

When this study was commissioned, our focus was on how a school implements the Accelerated Schools process. Three broad questions shaped the initial data collection:

o *What changes are occurring at the school?*

o *Are they attributable to the Accelerated Schools Project?*

o *What are the influences on these changes?*

These questions were intentionally open-ended and inclusive. We wanted more specific research questions to emerge from the data collection process so that they would reflect the specific implementation process. The research was guided by an understanding that project implementation occurs within a context in which historical, internal and external factors influence the development of the project. We anticipated that influential historical factors might include: prior reform efforts; prior district policies toward curriculum and instruction; influential former staff members; prior staff relations; and changes in student population. Internal influences could have included: the characteristics of all members of the school community; the current curriculum, instruction, and school organization; and interactions among the staff and between the staff, students and families. External influences could have included: projects introduced from outside of the school (including the Accelerated Schools Project), resources, policies, and federal, state, and district mandates; resources available in the community; occupational and educational possibilities; and deviant alternatives to schooling (crime, gangs, and drugs). See Figure 2 for an illustration of the conceptual framework.

These influences shape both the project implementation process and the school culture. As changes occurred at the school, I tried to distinguish between changes attributable to the Accelerated Schools Project and those attributable to other factors. This was a difficult task because, as Accelerated Schools became more

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Figure 2
Conceptual Framework

Historical Influences

Characteristics of the
school before ASP
- old curriculum
- old instructional style
- old vision for school (or
  lack there of)
- old organization

Internal Influences

Characteristics of
teachers, adminis-
trators, staff, students,
parents:
-attitudes
-flexibility
-creativity
-commitment
-ability
-cooperation

**School
Implementing
Intervention**

External Influences

- Projects introduced from
  outside (e.g. ASP)
- State resources, cur-
  ricular & instructional
  mandates
- District resources, cur-
  ricular & instructional
  mandates, relation to
  other schools, staff
  resources
- Community expectations
  for students, resources
  available, jobs & educat-
  ional possibilities, crime,
  gangs, drugs

**REALIZED

VISION**

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ingrained in the school culture, factors intertwined and influences built upon each other. It is for that reason that we choose to use ethnographic methods for this study. One of the strengths of ethnography is that it is able to capture the interactive, complex nature of change.

Ethnographic methods are often used in or adapted to implementation studies and project evaluations because they are the most sensitive to the complex interaction between the intervention and the existing school culture (see Cook & Reinhardt , 1979; Fetterman 1986). They are sensitive to multiple influences on change, to capturing and analyzing unanticipated events, and to understanding how change occurs over time. They are flexible, inductive, and holistic. Ethnographic methods were especially appropriate to this project given Accelerated Schools' ambitious mandate to change the expectations of all participants, to examine the organization, instruction, and curriculum of the school, and to involve the entire school community in the process.

Data collection began in January, 1991 although the project began in late August 1990. Initial efforts were directed toward developing an understanding of what the school was like before Accelerated Schools began (to capture the historical influences) and catching up with the activities of the project[4]. I interviewed teachers, administrators, parents, and students to determine what the school was like, and how they had been involved in the early phases of the project. I focussed primarily on the views of teachers and administrators since they were the most heavily involved in the project at this time. Most interviews were tape recorded with consent. I also reviewed available documents about the school, the district, and the project. I observed teachers and students in their classes to better understand the nature of classroom interaction and instruction.

During this time I also tracked the process of implementing the Accelerated Schools Project. Data collection began before the school engaged in the Setting Priorities activity. I attended most meetings when the entire staff gathered, and many

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[4] By this time both the taking stock and vision process had occurred and the vision celebration was held.

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of the steering committee, department and cadre meetings held before and after school. Once cadres were formed, I primarily tracked the progress of the curriculum cadre and the family involvement cadre. I also attended at least one meeting of the other cadres. I regularly attended meetings of the steering committee. Over time, my role as pure observer was modified to that of participant observer. Since I was considered a member of the cadres by the participants, I took on roles that were appropriate to my job as ethnographer (e.g. writing up minutes after meetings, helping with a family night, designing questions for a student writing assignment).

The Stanford team members working at the pilot school wrote field notes on the activities of the cadres they joined and on their general involvement in the school and the project. I relied heavily on these notes, on debriefing sessions held with the team members, and on interviews with teachers for information about the activities of the cadres I was unable to track. I talked frequently with the Stanford team members about their activities and perceptions about the progress of the project. I also attended some Stanford staff meetings to be a part of their planning and to seek their ideas on productive directions for the study.

Most of the data collection was completed by the end of the school year, although I attended a group debriefing meeting among the school administrative team and the Stanford team that was held in July, 1991. By this time, I had begun to analyze the data. In ethnographic studies, data analysis occurs throughout the data collection process (Miles & Huberman, 1884; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Since ethnography is inductive rather than deductive, the direction of the study can change radically during data collection. Changes often result from on-going data analysis. In this study, the focus on school culture and the Accelerated Schools Project as an intervention designed to change school culture emerged during data collection and analysis.

Once data collection was completed, I reviewed all of the interviews, field notes, student essays, and documents for themes, patterns, issues and descriptions of the process. When themes began to appear, I looked to the data to confirm, disconfirm or refine them. This is a process, referred to as triangulation, that involves use of all data to support, refine or disconfirm patterns and themes as they develop. As a

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second stage of the data review, I developed some topical codes and continued the triangulation process described above (e.g. hypothesis generation and attempts to disconfirm hypotheses). While the data were reviewed and coded, especially articulate but representative passages in field notes and interviews were marked for possible quotation. Once the data were reviewed the second time, I wrote an outline for the report. Throughout the process of writing the outline and the report, I reviewed the data many times. This process of living with the data is at the heart of the analysis of ethnographic data.

One concern about ethnographic research is the applicability of its findings beyond the study site. It is recognized as a powerful research tool in understanding the dynamics of the particular focus of study, but some critics doubt its external validity, or its applicability to other situations. I was careful during the data analysis and report writing to present data in a manner that demonstrates both the typicality and atypicality of the data (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). I attempted to make clear issues that were unique to the pilot middle school and those that could apply more broadly.

Section Three
Calhoun Middle School Before Accelerated Schools

Calhoun Middle School as a Desegregation Magnet School

Calhoun Middle School has served the downtown area of a major California city since the 1920's. The school is located on a tree-lined street only one block from the city and county government center. Houses in the immediate neighborhood are older bungalows. Although many of the homes are well kept, it is an inner city neighborhood with drug activity occuring in some of the vacant homes. The government center houses the courthouse, jail and police station. Bail bond announcements are prominent in windows of small shops. Many of the students at Calhoun know people (in some cases family members) who have spent time in the jail. These buildings are a visible reminder of what happens in the inner city.

Although the school has been on this site for many years, most of the present school buildings have been erected in the last thirty years. There are few physical reminders of the original school, aside from some old trees and wisteria plants, a brick wall and one or two buildings. Most of the school mirrors other California schools built in the 1960's and 1970's. It has a sprawling main campus consisting of a set of single story nearly windowless blocks connected by covered but open hall ways. Each block houses six classrooms each. There are also outlying buildings representing other eras of school expansion. The school has a well equipped media center, a cafetorium, and sports facilities that include a gymnasium, pool, playing fields, and basketball and tennis courts. Calhoun has served a primarily Hispanic population for many years. By the 1970's it was almost completely Hispanic and had developed a reputation in the city for gang activity and low achievement. Teachers who have been at Calhoun for years say that this description is overblown, but they admit that the school had problems.

The school district is large, both demographically and geographically, serving nearly 30,000 students. Its students come from affluent, predominantly White and

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Asian areas, as well as poorer areas, where large Hispanic and Southeast Asian enclaves have developed. Neighborhood schools would reflect this ethnic separation if the district were not under court ordered desegregation. On December 31, 1985, the school district signed a desegregation plan in accord with a federal court order. The plan called for the development of magnet schools to encourage a better mix of students throughout the district. At this time, Calhoun was closed and was transformed into a Learning/Technology magnet. A new principal took charge of the school and made some major changes, including hiring a new staff. Teachers wishing to remain at Calhoun had to reapply for their jobs. A large amount of money was available through desegregation funds to buy equipment and to support special programs. Computers could be found everywhere, and a special computer/robotics lab was established. One teacher described the time:

> They knew they had to do something with the downtown schools. ...So their idea was to do the whole thing over. They hired a new principal. She was [from] within the district, but she was a real dynamic personality. They told all of the teachers they would have to reapply if they wanted to stay at Calhoun. So this principal got to hire whoever she wanted, and she got people who really wanted to be here. And she got a rea, dynamic crew together.

The principal had a hand picked staff, most of whom developed a fierce loyalty to her. She was described as very involved with her staff and very supportive. As one teacher said:

> she's [the former principal] a real 'people person', and very - just a beaming personality. And she demanded loyalty, she really did, but she rewarded it. And I really enjoyed working with her. I really did. ...And so she was a much more visible principal. She was in and out of the classrooms, she was around. And people felt appreciated by her.

The 1986-87 school year began with a new principal, a hand picked faculty who were quickly becoming very loyal to the principal, lots of money and resources, and a desire to make the school a better place. People seemed to genuinely want to make changes in the school. Some of the teachers described this as a golden time of staff rapport and collaborative work:

> ...one of the things that [she] was able to do because they closed it down and returned it to a magnet, she was able to hire a whole new staff... She picked people who wanted to make a difference, people that wanted to make a change

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> and to build a program. So she got a really high caliber group. ...We put together a fabulous program. I was so excited about our magnet program, and the three years that we had it, it was wonderful. The level of academics here - the whole atmosphere of the place changed. It really was positive. We had parents who were excited about sending their kids here, and it was really successful. We went - we desegregated ourselves within like two years. ... they thought it was going to take longer.

There was a sense that they were making history, that they were creating something exciting and innovative. Even three or four years later, teachers liked to talk about what they did, their plans for students, and how they worked as a team.

These beliefs were held firmly by many members of the staff and describe a key phase in the history of the school. However, the reports mask some very serious problems. The rosy glow of memory seems to have blocked the fact that student achievement at the time was poor, and internal segregation was the norm. The student body was polarized both ethnically and academically. Twenty percent of the students were in gifted or accelerated classes and 60 - 70% were eligible for EDY[5] or Chapter 1 assistance. Very few students were in the middle. Internal segregation was quite visible. The top 20% of the school was composed primarily of White and Asian students, while Hispanics were disproportionately in the compensatory programs.

Despite teachers' reports of planning innovative programs, many teachers continued to teach in a very traditional teacher centered style. People outside the school began to question the principal's instructional leadership. For example, an observer said:

> She's got great charisma, but she doesn't make the hard decisions with the staff. And so this was a staff that basically had some really fine teachers in it, but teachers that didn't want to change, and it was okay to stand up in front of the class and lecture away, and nobody was going to make them do anything differently.

It appeared that there was an appearance of improvement, but in fact little was happening to improve the education of many of the Calhoun students.

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[5]Educationally Disadvantaged Youth

Enter a New Administration

In June 1989 teachers were informed that the principal was being transferred to a high school in another part of the city. As one teacher said:

> It all happened, just sort of - you know - whee. June 1st I believe the former principal knew that she was going to [another high school] ... and there we all sat going 'oh fine,' we had this vision draft we'd worked on it. The reputation was much better, the students were getting along much better, the CTBS and CAP scores were beginning to inch upwardly instead of downwardly.

The teachers felt betrayed and abandoned, and they let the new principal know it. The new principal was an experienced administrator, but new to the district. He had served as a middle school principal in an affluent community north of Calhoun. He possessed a very different leadership style than his predecessor. Only one administrator (a resource teacher working in an administrative capacity) remained from the previous administration. Two new assistant principals were brought in. The new assistant principal for curriculum was new to both middle schools and administration. The reception of the new administrators at Calhoun was far from warm. The principal said:

> The job here was difficult; it was a good test, you know, in retrospect, I thought I was going goofy, and people explained to me it wasn't me - that the district is unusual. Well, to give you an idea of what it was like - it was the theme of everything for awhile. I came in - this room was empty. The phone was on the floor. There wasn't any furniture, there were a couple of binders on the shelf. I phoned up my predecessor, and she indicated that that was my problem. Clear.

This kind of reception did not make him amenable to learning and revering the lore and traditions of the past. He wanted to make a clean break with the past administration, which alienated many of the teachers who felt intense loyalty to the former principal, and felt that they would lose all that they had worked for under the transition to a magnet school.

Not only were the new administrators left physically uncomfortable, they quickly came to some disturbing conclusions about the school. The changes that were supposed to have happened really had not yet occurred. For example, the magnet program was not really working. As the principal said:

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> The magnet program, that 'technology and advanced placement for mathematics' and so on was really a fluff program. And I think the whole thing of deseg trapped people in that, and I don't think that was people's plan to make it just a program for 30% of the children.

He continued to describe how Calhoun was not serving the remaining 60 - 70% of the students. He described their skills distribution as a cup rather than a bell curve. They had 30% of the students scoring above average on standardized tests, and 60 - 70% scoring well below average. There were very few students in the middle. Students came to the school with poor skills, and their skills declined while they were at Calhoun. Although teachers said that their test scores were rising, they either were not, or they were not rising fast enough. Soon after school started, the principal received a message from the state of California that the number of students scoring below the 46th percentile was too high and that they needed to show improved rather than declining test scores, or the state would develop a plan for them. At the same time, the district announced that their budget would be reduced. As an administrator described:

> ...The district had not given [the principal] all the cards when they interviewed him, and didn't tell him that this was a school that was in - had a red alert with the state because their test scores were so rotten. And their students were failing, and they weren't attracting students ...they didn't tell him half this stuff. Then some other principals tried to dump some teachers on him...

Teachers were very upset by the change in administration. Teacher morale went down, relations between staff and the administration were very low, and teachers felt powerless in face of central office policies. Teachers were especially upset that the change in administration "destroyed what we had built." A teacher said:

> ...it was horrible. For those of us that had worked so hard, it was like getting slapped in the face because our new administrator came in and, I guess maybe he heard too much about, well this is the way we do things. We didn't want to see our program destroyed, and he got very defensive, and it was like we learned right away we couldn't talk about that.

The loyalty and sense of unity described by many of the teachers diminished. Teachers felt very angry and directed a great deal of their anger to the district. As one teacher said:

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It's almost like at the district level they are unaware of what a situation like that does for the morale. They can't see past the moves. They can't focus on them - well, what's that going to do to the personnel there at that school who have been working with each other. I think I got some sense at least of what works for me in a school and that's to have those relationships and that stability and to build on that familiarity.

An overwhelming sense of powerlessness permeated the comments of many of the teachers, especially those who were considered the most influential on the staff. Their initial reaction was to request a transfer to follow the former principal, but they were told they could not transfer. Some transferred anyway, to other districts. Many of those who remained withdrew into their classrooms.

When people are coming and going constantly, and you never know if this person is going to be here next year or if you're going to have a new principal to get used to -- I think what it does to me is it has a tendency to make me want to withdraw into my room and not get involved with anybody else.

... last year was such an awful year with the administration, they made so many enemies last year. I wanted to leave; a whole bunch of people did leave. And they were very autocratic; I mean, it was really bad news.

Low test scores and poor rapport between the teachers and administration were only part of the problem at Calhoun. Student behavior was also bad. Students were described as rude, unruly, and undisciplined. One of the new administrators said:

I wondered if I'd left the frying pan and then jumped in the fire. ... the whole school, you could feel a tension. The kids were just - the kids were running the school. That's what my feeling was. There was a lot of profanity, there was a lot of litter and graffiti. It was really unbelievable. It was just, they were out of control. [The principal] and I really felt bad because here we were just coming into a situation, and we knew changes had to be made really quickly, and yet when you go into a position as an administrator you can't make changes right away because that's going to alienate people. We didn't want to do that.

Good news was in short supply that Fall and bad news was everywhere. In summary, the message to teachers was:

o The district could transfer administrators at will and replace them without any input from the staff.

o Too many students were scoring below the 46th percentile on standardized tests, and the curriculum had to be altered to help bring up these scores.

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o Discipline was ineffective. Students were rude, disorderly and defiant.

o Curriculum planning from previous years could be shelved indefinitely.

o The budget was reduced, in part because their attendance was down (due to an inability to attract white students).

Efforts to Change Prior to Introduction of the Accelerated Schools Project

The new administrators felt they had a mandate to introduce changes in the school even though the relations between the administration and the staff were not conducive to change. The principal approached the problems in three ways. First, in Spring of 1990 he established weekly meetings open to all staff to discuss changes for the coming school year. Attendance at the meetings was voluntary, and a core group of about twelve people attended regularly. Second, he initiated a schoolwide campaign to improve both CTBS and CAP scores. The entire school worked intensively to prepare students for the tests. They took old CTBS tests and used them for classroom practice. They also used a program called Scoring High that is designed to improve both CAP and CTBS scores. The whole school had a countdown to the tests. All students who improved their scores, by 1 point or 100 points were invited to a celebration. Third, the principal actively sought any innovative program or source of money that might benefit the school. He became very active in district and community activities, and volunteered to serve on committees that might result in good publicity for Calhoun, increased funding, or programs that would help children. When asked about why he volunteered for so many programs he said, "...any request by the district to volunteer for new programs, I said us, me, me, me because we had to do something different here. We had to infuse here."

All three of these efforts were successful to a point. The voluntary planning team identified reading as a major hinderance to student success at Calhoun, and they explored different ways to improve both reading and writing. They recommended establishing a two hour language arts/reading block to focus heavily on reading and writing skills. To accomplish this, electives were limited to one semester a year. They

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assumed that they would offer a wide range of electives in morning A periods[6]. The two hour language block received a mixed reception from the entire staff. Although few would argue with the need for better reading and writing skills, they felt that they were not offered sufficient input into the decision. Many teachers felt that this was an example of the language arts department's "empire building" tendencies. The committee also started planning for a Pre-International Baccalaureate Program[7] that was scheduled to start in the 1990-91 school year if a federal grant was awarded.

The efforts to prepare students for the CTBS and CAP tests resulted in somewhat higher scores[8] for most of the subject area/grade level blocks. Despite test score gains, the administration and faculty knew that they did not address the real problems symbolized by low test scores. These efforts to raise the scores accomplished the goal set by the state, but few staff members felt that the students' education was really improved because of these efforts.

The principal was quite successful in bringing in resources to the school. During the 1989-90 school year, Calhoun decided to participate in the following programs:

> o Project Access - a program to expose more students to the possibility of attending college and to prepare them to take the PSAT

> o Project Equity - a program designed to remove two barriers to minority participation in college: low aspirations related to college attendance and poor math preparation.

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[6] A period was offered on a voluntary basis to students interested in taking additional classes. Classes were offered from 8:20 - 9:10 am.

[7] The Pre-I.B. Program was introduced the year before in a grant proposal written by the district, and would link Calhoun with one of the district high schools to prepare students for any major university in the world. The emphasis of the program was on foreign language, history, literature, and math.

[8] The scores were higher in comparison to students from "similar backgrounds" but not higher when compared to all students.

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o Success Team Schools - developed by the district as an effort to experiment with different approaches to instruction and with innovative ways to bring community resources, such as health care to the schools.

o Accelerated Schools Project - the activities leading up to the decision to work with the Accelerated Schools Project are described in Section 4.

One change that was not made successfully by the end of the first year was to remove the distrust between the administration and the teachers. Many of the teachers resented the fact that a beloved principal was replaced, especially by one with a completely different style and focus. Where the former principal was very accessible to teachers and ever present in the classroom, the new principal spent most of his time in his office or away from the school at meetings. The new administration did not encourage the teachers to talk about their recent past, which made it something private rather than public, legend, rather than merely the past. This may account for why some teachers nearly venerated the former principal. Teachers felt that the principal and vice principal did not care about them since they rarely visited their classes, and the teachers felt the administrators were often defensive when they approached with questions or problems.

Efforts of the administrators to gain trust were often misinterpreted. One event at the end of the year really set back any efforts to improve relations. The principal had asked teachers to vote on whether they wanted to keep a rotating schedule in which each week the class that was first period would be second, bumping each class back until sixth period became first period. The teachers liked this schedule because they did not always see the same students late in the day. The rotating schedule, however, was difficult to maintain with two hour language arts blocks, and it made it difficult to coordinate classes with the high school (a goal of the Pre-International Baccalaureate program). The teachers voted overwhelmingly for the rotating schedule, but when school started in September they found that the administration had set a fixed schedule. They felt powerless and betrayed. They were even more upset when they saw that no Pre-International Baccalaureate classes were scheduled for the 1990-91 school year.

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School Profile - At the Onset of Accelerated Schools

The School Organization

When the Accelerated Schools Project started in September 1990, Calhoun was structured very much like a junior high school with a sixth grade. The curriculum, schedule, instruction, and organization were all based on a junior high school model, rather than a middle school model. The school day was divided into six periods, 50 minutes long. Students changed classrooms at the sound of a bell. The two hour language arts/reading core was the only variation from the usual secondary school schedule. During this two hour block, students remained in their language arts class, rather than changing classes with the other students. The language arts teacher was free to divide the two hours between reading, writing, and other language arts activities.

The two hour language arts block only left time for other basic subjects. All students were required to take language arts, math, social studies, physical education, and one semester of science. During the other semester they chose between a limited offering of electives (e.g. art, home economics, and computers) Electives often offered in middle schools, such as foreign language, wood or metal shop, keyboarding, debate, and drama were not available. Many students took advantage of music through a pull-out music program. Once a week approzimately one third of the students were pulled out of one class to learn a musical instrument or to practice with a jazz band or choir. The jazz band was the pride of the school, and the high point of school for many of the students. Its popularity reflected the skill of the teacher and the appeal of electives to the Calhoun students.

Students were grouped in classes according to their ability. Language arts and social studies were labelled "accelerated," "regular," or "sheltered[9]." Math classes were tracked according to students' readiness to take algebra. By the eighth grade, the range of math experience went from students who were still in general math to a

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[9]Sheltered classes were designed for students who were still not fully proficient in English. They were no longer in LEP or NEP classes, but their English language comprehension and vocabulary were not strong.

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few advanced students who were taking geometry. Science, electives and physical education classes were open to all students.

A number of special classes were also available to students with special needs. Compensatory education classes were offered to students who were at least two years behind grade level. Students spent from one to four periods a day in the SCE class (a compensatory education class). These classes were designed to provide one on one or small group attention to students, but in fact very little learning took place in them. Students often spent hours playing board games, talking or day dreaming. Discipline was poor and expectations low. Special education classes were offered through three self-contained "special day classes" and through two (each half time) special education resource teachers. One teacher provided English as a Second Language classes, and another teacher was responsible for the "Opportunity Class" - a class for students who, through disruptive behavior, were unable to remain in regular classes. Students remained in this class for all subjects except for physical education. Although the teacher assigned to this class made every effort to work with this group of students that the other teachers did not want in their classes, he was not prepared to teach all subjects and to work solely with students who had little interest in school (as it was currently structured).

Extra curricular activities included a few classes offered during "A" period and after school sports and leadership activities. "A" period classes included jazz band, computer training, German language, and leadership activities. After school, students were able to participate in sports, basketball being the most popular, and leadership or student government. Funds for extracurricular activities were very limited.

The governance of the school was primarily from the top down. The principal and vice principal made most of the decisions, and informed the staff of them through monthly faculty meetings and through the monthly meetings of the steering committee (comprised of the department heads and the administrative team). The administrative structure changed in the 1990 - 1991 school year due to more administrative shuffling. Calhoun lost two ineffective vice principals and gained one experienced vice principal from another middle school. Because of this shuffling, the positions of guidance, discipline and student services were collapsed into one. These changes offered a

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good opportunity to rethink the entire guidance and discipline system for the school. Everyone agreed that discipline was a major problem the year before and that a new system had to be developed. The administrators developed a three person discipline/guidance team. The team consisted of the new vice principal, who supervised the team and was in charge of guidance and discipline for the seventh grade. The sixth grade was covered by a resource teacher who was previously in charge of monitoring attendance. The eighth grade team member was a member of the classified staff who had worked part time at Calhoun as a community liaison to the district. He had a good understanding of the Hispanic community and of how to motivate students to stay in school. Each member of the discipline/guidance team was assigned all of the students in a grade level, and students came to them for guidance, discipline and attendance problems. They planned to follow their students each year.

The guidance/discipline team left the principal and vice principal[10] to deal with scheduling, supervising curriculum and instruction, special programs, communication with the district and state, and the multitude of miscellaneous tasks that make up an administrator's day. The vice principal was responsible for scheduling and was designated the director of the Calhoun Accelerated Schools Project. A large part of the principal's day involved working with the district, overseeing the school, and working with relevant community organizations. The principal described his roles as:

> ...that's part of the cheerleader side of it, and the other side is the motivator - the marketing guy. I think my final thing, and many of my colleagues disagree, I am not the best educator in this school. My job is to provide opportunities, and experiences, and motivation, and encouragement, for all those people to be the best they can be.

Although there was overlap between all of the duties of the administrative team, this arrangement tended to bifurcate the administrative team. Instead of a triangular organizational structure of a principal at the top with two vice principals below, it was almost like two boxes, with the principal and vice principal in one box and the

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[10] The vice principal for curriculum will be referred to as the vice principal, and the vice principal for guidance, discipline and student services will be referred to as the vice principal for guidance/discipline.

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guidance/discipline team in another. To create more of a sense of a team, the vice principal for guidance/discipline suggested holding weekly "linear administrative meetings" so that the five members of the administrative team could discuss the week's schedule and events.

Teacher input was gleaned primarily through the department heads. Calhoun had seven departments, and a steering committee consisting of department heads and administrators met once a month. Each department was supposed to meet monthly, and the department head would report on the meeting to the administration and other department heads. The 42 teachers at Calhoun could make some decisions that affected their department, but they had little input into school-wide decision-making under this structure. The seven departments differed in size, cohesiveness, and influence.

Of Calhoun's seven departments, the language arts department was the largest and most influential. Twelve teachers were primarily language arts teachers, and a core of them were among the most highly respected teachers on the staff. The introduction of the two hour language arts core increased the number of language arts teachers and reduced the electives department to only three members. Most of the interactions between language arts teachers were informal, occurring between classes, at lunch, and before and after school. Although influential, the language arts department was not cohesive. A core of teachers worked together frequently, leaving a few other teachers on their own. The department held regular monthly department meetings that were well attended. The department chair was in charge of the writing lab, so she had regular interaction with all of the classroom language arts teachers as they used the writing lab.

The math department was smaller. Four teachers taught the majority of the classes. Twenty percent of the math classes were taught by teachers who only taught one math class a day[11]. Three of the teachers (who taught seventh and eighth graders

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[11] Because of the two hour language arts core, language arts teachers could only teach two sections of language arts. For their other two periods, they had a preparation period and one section of another subject, usually social studies, but two taught a section of math.

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and had rooms near each other) often meet informally to share ideas. They were trying to develop a unified curriculum that took the best ideas from each staff member. The department chair was one of the resource teachers, and he only taught one class a day. The other teachers used him as a resource, but they relied heavily on each other for support and advice.

The science department was very cohesive, consisting of only three teachers. One teacher left after Christmas break and was quickly replaced. The science classrooms were all near each other, at the far end of the campus, so the teachers usually stayed together for lunch rather than walking all the way across campus to the faculty dining room. The teachers enjoyed each other's company, but they all expressed a desire to have more interaction with other teachers.

The social studies department was one of the least cohesive departments because few teachers taught only social studies. Of the 24 social studies classes taught, ten, or 42% were taught by people who only taught one social studies class a day. Three teachers taught three classes, and only one person taught only social studies. Because of these split affiliations, physical distance between classrooms, and personality differences, the interactions among social studies teachers were limited.

The special education department included three special day class teachers and two resource specialists. The special day class teachers interacted primarily with each other and with their aides, while the resource specialists had more frequent interaction with other faculty. Some of the special day class teachers felt that their students (and themselves by extension) were an embarrassment to the school because their students always test poorly. They commented that their classes were never on school tours, and their students rarely did anything that was recognized by the school as a whole.

There was a great deal of tension within the physical education department between the male teachers and the only female teacher (who happened to be the department chair). The male members of the department appeared to form a very cohesive circle that most regular teachers disdained. They were criticized because they did not actively participate in meetings, and several of them did not share in after school duties. At faculty meetings and other school gatherings, several of them

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frequently did not come, and if they did, they sat in the back and joked together, or they played pranks on others.

There was a department for teachers of electives, but there were only a few electives teachers, and they were not united by common curricular concerns. The electives teachers included the music teacher, art and home economics teacher, and the computer instructor. These teachers felt like they were in a "department of one." These teachers had to rely on friendships made outside of their departments for social and professional interactions. This department was larger before woodshop and foreign languages were eliminated. Several other teachers were also without departments. They included the Opportunity Class teacher and the teacher for the SCE lab classes.

There were also four resource teachers; one of whom was already described under administration (a member of the discipline/guidance team). The other three resource teachers had quite varied positions. One was the head of the math department and served as a technology resource. He was also coordinating Project Equity as the Accelerated Schools Project began. Another was in charge of the media center (library and specialized media and computer equipment). The third coordinated all enrichment activities. She was in charge of student leadership and spirit activities. She was also the link with the district for compensatory education and bilingual education, and she helped prepare reports for the district and state. There was resentment of the resource teachers by some of the classroom teachers because of their freedom and flexibility, and because of the status granted to resource teachers.

The backgrounds, personalities, skill, and expectations of the teachers varied greatly. The faculty included a mix of veterans and novices, of those who were demanding and those who were not. It had creative, as well as traditional teachers. Divisions between the faculty concerning expectations of students, classroom control and consistency, and homework ran rather deep. Teachers became frustrated with each other over these differences, but they rarely talked productively through the issues. The following quotes exemplify the division between teachers on the issue of high expectations:

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My social studies class represents the kids in probably the bottom third or the bottom quarter of the eighth grade population. The best kids have been skimmed off....Now you are going to segregate those two kinds of kids so that my bottom third doesn't get to rub elbows with the upper third. They're not going to get the modelling. Where are they going to get the modelling of what a term paper looks like?

It's how you manage it and how you approach it - the expectations that you have. If they are high, then magic happens. If you believe that it can't be done, then it isn't done, and somehow the kids know the difference. They know when they are doing something just to -- remediation kinds of things -- and they know when they are doing something that everybody is doing, and is worthwhile.

The problem of teaching low achieving students was exacerbated by the ability tracking that existed at Calhoun and by the lack of communication among teachers. Few teachers talked about instruction and curriculum outside a circle of a few trusted colleagues. Most of these colleagues were within their department. The departmental structure and lack of opportunities to communicate stifled interest in interdisciplinary teaching. Many teachers were still interested in interdisciplinary work, but found it hard to arrange under the current structure. One teacher explained:

But at times, the science department is kind of like all to itself, and I like the interdisciplinary. I would love to take advantage of social studies and bring in ethical topics with them and kind of share. I think it would be great if the whole school had a space week. And then social studies would take a historical approach to it and language arts would do literary topics on space, and kids would write stories, you know, scenarios about space or whatever. And math could do the calculations and astronomy. It would take planning, and I would be more than willing to do something like that.

Under the governance structure that existed when Accelerated Schools was introduced the classified staff had little input into school-wide decision-making. The classified staff included the office staff, instructional aides[12], campus supervisors[13], cafeteria workers, and janitors. The classified staff members did not attend faculty

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12 Instructional aides worked in the sheltered English classes, special education classes, the Opportunity class, the writing lab, the SCE lab and the media center.

13 Campus supervisors patrolled the campus to be sure students were in class, and all visitors found the office. They also oversaw students who were required to participate in campus clean up activities as part of a discipline pact.

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meetings and rarely met with the administration about their role in the school. They had few vehicles to express their concerns. Most of the classified staff had few interactions with the teachers. Instructional aides worked closely with a few teachers, but at lunch, the classified staff usually ate at one table, and the teachers at others.

The School Population

Calhoun lost its identity as a community or neighborhood school after the desegregation order transformed it into a magnet school. Students were drawn from across the district, so large cohorts of students did not come from any one neighborhood school. For example, the 83 eighth grade students who wrote an essay about their experiences at Calhoun went to 24 different elementary schools. No more than 12 went to any one school. Most students came to school by bus, and the bus schedule shaped the school schedule and, to some extent, community involvement. The desegregation order also prevented Calhoun from serving many neighborhood students. In the Fall of 1990, Calhoun served 617 students - well below its capacity, but additional Hispanic students were on a waiting list until more White students enrolled.

Family involvement at Calhoun was low. Only a few parents were involved in the Home School Club, and even fewer volunteered to help with school activities. Parents came to school if their children were performing in the band, or playing basketball, but they rarely came for other reasons. Teachers speculated that family involvement in school activities was low for a number of reasons -- distance from the school, work, being a single parent, estrangement from all schools, pooi communication between the school and parents, language differences, and problems with their children. Improving family involvement became a major focus of the Accelerated Schools Project.

The student population at Calhoun was still largely minority despite the desegregation efforts. 55% of the students were Hispanic, 39% were European American, of which 64% were of Portuguese descent, 5% were Asian/Filipino/Pacific Islander, and 2% Black. The Portuguese community came largely from rural areas in the Azores. Many of them arrived in the United States in the 1960s and had a limited

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education. Although the Portuguese students are European-American, many of the Calhoun teachers did not consider them so, in part because many of them look Hispanic and also because many of them were limited English speakers. A teacher new to Calhoun pointed out that the district may have technically met desegregation goals, but in reality merely grouped two minority groups within one school. She said:

> I kept thinking,'They tell me that this whole District has met its integration goals,' and I would look around, and I'd think, 'How?' Boy, there's like one little blonde head here and there, and that's it. It doesn't look integrated. I was here some time before I kind of found out why - that the large Portuguese community is a minority of themselves, but they, on technicality, don't count as a minority. They count as Caucasian; they count as White. And, so technically the school is integrated. In reality, in my opinion, it isn't....it's like it is a minority; it's a cultural and linguistic minority. So the school has like a minority within a minority.

The Calhoun teachers were concerned about the attitudes and expectations of the students. They characterized most of the student population as unprepared for middle school, and they feared many students were leaving Calhoun unprepared for high school. As described above, test scores were low, and although their efforts to raise scores were relatively successful (in comparision to students from similar backgrounds), everyone in the school had a sense that they had a problem with student achievement.

Although there was a general consensus that the student population was low achieving, teachers who had taught at Calhoun for many years did not realize how much lower their students were than students in other middle schools. This was most evident to experienced teachers new to the school. As one new special education teacher said:

> When I compare this to other schools I've taught in, there is almost a uniform low population. Teachers who have stayed here a long time -- it's just like what happens to you in special ed. If you stay and you never go out of it, and you lose touch with what reality is. You know that the regular classes are higher, but you kind of forget how much higher...Why are so many of our kids [special education students] able to make it in classes -- I mean, even be maintained? Why the teachers aren't just screaming? This blows my mind that they can maintain in, and even get a C or a D and sometimes a B with their level of functioning. So gradually I have gotten the picture that we are talking about an academically very low functioning school. The special ed. kids don't stand out much. What stands out more are behavior problems.

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Students do not push themselves because they have learned how to progress through school with little effort. For example, many of the students have been labelled as "special" (e.g. Limited English Proficient, Chapter 1, or Special Education) since they entered elementary school, and they know the easy way to slide through. An instructional aide described how she feels many language minority students pass through elementary school and then Calhoun without having to work:

> These kids can read and write English. They can speak English too. The thing about it is that they have been labelled since they were in kindergarten, and they just don't want to try. They think they're going to pass anyway. It's easy for them. They can come to that other class and just do whatever they want to, and they have to pass them anyway.

A veil of low expectations for themselves and a disdain for education permeated the student body. By the middle of sixth grade, many students had learned from their peers that it was not "cool" to care about school and that to be accused of being a "school boy" or "school girl" was grounds for a fight. A teacher explained:

> We see the incoming sixth graders come in ready, ready to be in middle school with their little binders and their papers. And, by this time - midyear - the little sixth graders are now like seventh graders. They don't have their pencils. They don't have their binders. They are no longer prepared; they no longer care about homework because that's the attitude.

With these attitudes, it was difficult for teachers to maintain high standards in their classes and to maintain order. Some teachers seemed to give up and let chaos reign, while others maintained strict order and considered themselves demanding teachers. Those in the latter camp felt that the students appreciated their efforts to maintain order and demand high quality work. One teacher explained:

> I've been teaching downtown for nineteen years, so I've worked with kids that have been low achieving. They come to school, and usually their only stability in their life is the teacher. So when you're a structured person, and they come in they know exactly what you expect of them, they know that you're going to be the same way, that you are not going to tell them one thing one day and then do something else the next day. I get comments like 'She's a strict teacher, but you learn a lot in her class' ... I work hard to be mean. I said, 'I want you to learn.' But they want that.

Some teachers explained that they felt that the lack of motivation was cultural. These teachers shared a belief that the Hispanic culture does not emphasize

education as a route to success. They felt that they were fighting deeply held attitudes and values when they encouraged Hispanic students to work hard in school. A teacher explained:

> This sounds really biased, prejudiced. I think it's a lot of cultural type of expectations...A lot of students appear to come to school without any expectations for achievement. They're just here. They're just putting in the time, and I don't know if that's coming from - I mean, it appears that it's coming from the home environment and the culture, but I don't know that as a fact. And I would really like to get to the heart of that and find out why it appears that the students are coming that way and that attitude is prevalent throughout the students.

A few teachers bristled at the implication that cultural values led to poor achievement, and they hoped to tap into the strengths of all cultures at Calhoun.

Summary

As the preceding illustrates, Calhoun was ripe for change. Relations between the staff and administration needed improvement, and teacher morale was low. The school organization was not conducive to creativity and innovation, and there were few avenues for communication across the school community. Students were unmotivated and were not achieving as well as hoped. The situation called for change because many members of the school community would not tolerate the existing situation much longer. Many people hoped that the Accelerated Schools Project would provide the vehicle for positive change. On first glance it seems like this situation would stifle an efforts at positive change. The negativity and antagonism that existed when Accelerated Schools was introduced could have easily overwhelmed the project. However, the veteran teachers at Calhoun had already demonstrated an interest in change and a willingness to work hard to achieve it. Many of the newer teachers were also committed to change. The administration and central office saw the wisdom in the Accelerated Schools model and were committed to making it work. In one sense, given the negativity of the preceding year, they had nothing to lose.

Section Four
Phase I - Getting Started

As already stated, the purpose of this study was to describe the process of project implementation at Calhoun and to examine the changes taking place at Calhoun as the Accelerated Schools Project was implemented. As the study developed, the focus shifted to an emphasis on the interaction between the existing school culture and the intervention. The preceding section presented a detailed description of Calhoun's school culture before the Accelerated Schools Project (the intervention) was introduced. This section (Section Four - Getting Started) and the following one (Section Five - Inquiry) provide a description of the implementation of the intervention and a discussion of the changes observed in the school culture during each phase of project implementation. A discussion of the factors influencing the implementation and school culture change follows each of the descriptions.

Introduction to the Project

As described above, the early encouraging outcomes of Accelerated Schools in elementary schools led the Stanford Accelerated Schools team to consider expansion of the project into middle schools. They developed an Accelerated Middle Schools concept, outlined in the report, "Toward Accelerated Middle Schools" (Hopfenberg, Levin, Meister and Rogers, 1990). Before finalizing this report, they tested their concepts by conducting three focus groups with teachers, principals, and central office administrators across the country. These educators were seen as the real agents of change and their opinions were a critical test of the salience of the Accelerated Middle Schools concept.

Once the input from the focus groups was compiled into the report, Stanford searched the Bay Area for a pilot middle school. Several school districts were contacted, and appropriate schools identified. Stanford talked with many principals to determine initial interest in participating in the project.

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Participation in Focus Group

One of the focus groups described above was held in Calhoun's school district. When the district office contacted Calhoun about participating, the principal and vice principal expressed interest, and they, along with three teachers attended the meeting. One teacher described her reaction to the material and the discussion:

It was sort of exciting. I remember thinking that. This sounds really good. This sounds really right. But I wonder if it will work at our school. This sounds like something that might work at a school in [the more affluent section of town] with a higher level of student. Our students are so low. We have so many educationally disadvantaged kids, bilingual kids. We didn't have any high end in my opinion. So I thought they shouldn't be looking at our school. I thought of it after and thought, 'Boy, it would be really neat to get that though to see if we can do something with it. Later in the year I remember talking to [the principal] and asking if he had heard anything and saying wouldn't it be really neat to be one of the schools picked because I think we really need some help in that direction. He agreed and said that he is doing everything he can. When it really came about, I was really happy personally, but I worried about getting the teachers behind it."

Calhoun was one of the schools contacted by Stanford in their search for a pilot middle school. Given the interest expressed by those attending the focus group, and the principal's desire to make some positive changes in the school, the principal agreed to present the project to the entire staff for their approval. On the day before the last day of school, the Stanford project director made a brief presentation to the staff. Despite everything else on the teachers' minds during the last week of school, they listened intently, asked hard questions, and eventually met the morning of the last day of school and voted unanimously to become the first Accelerated Middle School. The initial reaction of the teachers was positive, even among some of the more influential (and often skeptical) teachers. As one veteran teacher said:

And she [Stanford project director] started talking about this, and I just sat there and thought, 'Interesting." I think [the vice principal] was sitting next to me, we were having lunch, and I said, 'This sounds good.' And he thought it did too.

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Training

Before schools become a part of Accelerated Schools, a training or orientation session is held for the participants - usually just the teachers and building administrators attend, but parents and support staff are welcome. The full inclusion of the entire school community is a growing phenomenon. The format of the training, it's duration and the providers vary . The purpose of the training is to acquaint the staff with the principles and process of Accelerated Schools. For schools, such as Calhoun, that will maintain a close relationship with members of the Accelerated Schools staff, training can occur throughout the course of the project.

Only a few weeks before school started Calhoun's teachers received notice to return to school one day early (with pay) to participate in a two day Accelerated Schools training session. Despite the short notice, the teachers' reaction to the training was surprisingly positive. One teacher commented:

> You know, I was shocked. I think I was more resentful than most people, and I knew about it. I mean, I had some background. Our teachers, I think, were surprisingly positive....Well, we always do [come back before school starts], but we had to come back a whole day early, and I remember receiving the notice through the mail like a week before. I was really resentful that I didn't know before...I thought, if I'm irritated, I bet a lot of people are....It was really, really amazing. I thought it was a wonderful start. People were there with smiles on their faces...They were there right on time with smiles on their faces and ready to go and just really enthusiastic.

The first day of training was held at Stanford, and the second day was at Calhoun. All teachers attended the first day except for a few newly hired teachers and one teacher who had not returned from a trip. A high ranking district office administrator participated actively. The training process on the first day involved a combination of lectures and presentations by Stanford staff, as well as small group activities. The focus of the first day was on the principles of the Accelerated Schools Project (unity of purpose, empowerment coupled with responsibility, and building on strengths), on how these principles shape the major components of a school (curriculum, instruction and school organization), the Accelerated Schools process, and on pertinent aspects of adolescent development.

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Lectures and presentations were lively, replete with many examples and anecdotes. The Calhoun staff participated actively in discussions. Presenters drew heavily on their own experiences as teachers, administrators, and parents. Overheads and flip charts were used extensively to both present information and to capture ideas. Dramatics were also incorporated when the villain of remediation and low expectations made his appearance. Presentations rarely lasted more than one hour, and they were punctuated with whole or small group activities. This format kept the teachers involved and prevented the material from becoming too abstract and theoretical.

Small group activities focussed on concerns specific to Calhoun. One activity called upon teachers to record the strengths of the Calhoun community (students, full staff, parents, community, district office, and administrators). Another, to be described in more detail below, called on them to develop a Vision for the ideal middle school. A whole group activity asked everyone to describe their best instructional experience (inside or outside of school). These activities served at least five purposes. First, they tied the ideas presented in the lectures to the teachers' own personal and professional experience. Second, they allowed the staff to start one of the first phases of the Accelerated Schools process - developing a Vision. Third, they illustrated the three principles in action - identifying strengths, giving teachers decision-making opportunities, and working toward a unity of purpose. Fourth, they allowed the staff to share information about themselves that others may have never known, and fifth, they provided an opportunity for groups of teachers who otherwise might not interact to work together. A physical education teacher commented during a break that this was one of the first times he worked with other teachers, and it made him feel more like a part of the faculty.

A large part of the afternoon of the first day was spent in small groups beginning the initial step of developing a Vision of their dream middle school. Teachers and administrators worked together in groups of about seven. The discussions were animated, creative, positive, and holistic (discussion including all potential actors in an ideal school). The groups took the task seriously and presented ideas that would eventually become part of Calhoun's Vision. At the end of the session, a

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representative from each group reported out on their key phrases, cognizant that input from support staff, parents, community and students was still needed.

On the second day, the training was held at Calhoun and involved more group work and less lecture and presentation. The focus of the day was on Taking Stock, with an introduction to the Inquiry process. The teachers who were not present the first day attended, as well as some of the classified staff. The schedule was not adhered to as carefully as the first day, in part because lectures and presentations did not punctuate it as regularly and because people had questions and seemed excited about beginning the work ahead. The questions focused on Stanford's commitment over the 4 -5 years of the project, how Stanford staff will be involved, the amount of time the process will take, and whether the district would provide any release time. Questions also showed that the staff was looking for a concrete recipe of "how to do it." This was their first discovery that this was going to be an on-going process that was approached collaboratively.

After a discussion of why schools should Take Stock and of what is involved in it, the entire group suggested possible areas for Taking Stock. The suggested areas were consolidated into seven broader areas that would become Taking Stock committees. They were: community resources, family involvement, curriculum and instruction, attitudes, discipline, achievement, and school organization/facilities. The staff broke into groups according to their areas of interest. They brainstormed appropriate questions, where to find appropriate data, and how to answer the questions (e.g. surveys, interviews, document review, observation).

By the end of the alloted working time most groups still had considerable work to do, and they were unclear about the direction their group should go. As one group leader asked, "I feel like a student, what do you want us to do now?" The Stanford project director explained at the end of the day that they will need to find time as a small group to finish their questions and work out strategies for finding the information. One teacher mentioned that they coordinate any survey efforts so that no one, especially parents would not be overwhelmed by surveys from various working groups. The administrators assured them that a system would be developed to consolidate the requests. They agreed to have their strategies for obtaining

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information by the first Tuesday in October. At this time, a Taking Stock core committee was formed with representatives from each committee to serve as a clearinghouse for information to the entire school.

Taking Stock

Taking Stock is one of the first steps in becoming an Accelerated School. The Taking Stock phase of the project is designed to encourage the school community to look extensively and intensively for pertinent information about the present situation at the school. The focus is on finding the strengths as well as the challenges currently present at the school. Information is gathered on areas the school deems important. Areas can include: the history of the school; information on students, staff, and school facilities; on curriculum, instruction and organization of the school; on the existing governance structure; on the community of the families.

The process of collecting, reporting, and discussing the baseline information usually takes several months of research, compilation, analysis, and discussion. Schools are encouraged to collect data through document review, surveys, interviews, and observations. The process provides important baseline information on which the more extensive Inquiry Process rests, and to which participants can later compare progress. The Accelerated Schools Project encourages the entire school community to actively participate in gathering the baseline data so that participants will begin to develop a sense of ownership over the process.[14]

As described above, Taking Stock at Calhoun started during the training, when teachers and administrators broke up into seven small groups to focus on different areas of interest to the school. Each committee selected a leader who also served on the Taking Stock core committee, composed of members of the Calhoun administrative team and other committee leaders. Considerable progress was made

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[14]Portions of the preceding paragraph and those introducing Vision,Setting Priorities, and Establishing a New Governance Structure are excerpted from *Toward Accelerated Middle Schools* by Wendy S. Hopfenberg, Henry M. Levin, Gail Meister, and John Rogers. August 1990.

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toward identifying questions and sources of data during the training, but most of the groups also met at their own initiative several times after school started to prepare for their data collection, and to analyze the data collected. Progress for most groups was rapid. One teacher missed the second day of training and several days at the beginning of the school year. When she returned, she was amazed at the progress, "I missed, I think, three days of school, and by the time I had gotten back, people were moving on it. I mean, they put me in a group, and the groups were already meeting." After examining the parameters of their focus area, they designed a data collection strategy. Most of the groups developed a set of survey questions for inclusion on the three master surveys (parents, students, staff) that were being coordinated logistically by the administration and the Taking Stock core committee.

The surveys focussed on communication between home and school, cultural issues, attitudes of students, staff and parents, expectations for students, attitudes toward parent involvement, school climate issues, and curricular instructional and organizational issues. Each survey was customized for each group. For example, the staff survey asked detailed questions about curricular issues, while the parent and student questions about curriculum were more general. Each group tried to prioritize questions to be included on each of the surveys, and they were encouraged to think carefully about what information they really needed and about how to ask questions. The committees realized that they had only one chance to ask baseline questions through a survey, so there was considerable discussion in all of the groups about which questions were most appropriate and useful. There was also a lot of back and forth editing of the surveys between the Taking Stock core committee and the full staff. Before the surveys were distributed, the parent survey was translated into Spanish and Portuguese.

The committees also identified sources of ir 'ormation other than surveys. Several of the committees examined records kept by the district office. For example, the Discipline Committee was interested in the total number of discipline cases recorded during the 1989-90 school year, as well how the cases broke down by grade level and ethnicity. The Achievement Committee asked the district for information on the mean growth rate on the CTBS test between sixth and eighth grade students in

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reading, language and math. The Family Involvement Committee turned to Calhoun's Home School Club for information on the number of parents who attended the previous year's Back to School Night and for information on the number, gender and ethnicity of parents who participate as classroom and activities volunteers.

The three surveys were distributed in early October. Essentially 600 students completed their survey, but the returns for the staff and parents were somewhat disappointing. Of the 70 staff surveys delivered, only 40 were returned. It is unclear how many of those who did not respond were teachers, since the survey was also distributed to all of the support staff. The return on the parent survey was curious. Approximately 100 parents returned the survey, which was a fair return, but the responses were skewed toward the Portuguese parents. In a school population in which 54% of the students were Hispanic, 25% Portuguese, 14% other White, and 5% were Asian, 65% of the parents responding to the survey reported speaking Portuguese at home, 23% reported speaking Asian dialects, and only 3% Spanish and 8% English. No one was able to adequately explain why so many Portuguese speaking parents completed the survey while others did not. This response, or lack of response, became data when the Family Involvement Committee began examining patterns of family involvement. The results of the parent survey were used cautiously for this reason.

On the whole, however, the staff and student surveys yielded a tremendous amount of data. Many of the questions were open ended, long answer types, and they had to be tabulated by hand. Others were recorded on Scantron cards and could be compiled on the computer. The bulk of the data compilation fell to a survey data compilation committee of six members (composed of Calhoun administrators or resource teachers and Stanford staff members). During this process, the Calhoun administrators and Stanford staff met frequently to discuss ways to facilitate the logistics of Taking Stock. The committee divided into three pairs, each responsible for compiling the data on one survey. When possible, they solicited the help of aides, Calhoun students, Stanford students, and parents, but all members of the survey committee spent hours compiling data and categorizing responses. One member of the Stanford staff described spending entire weekends surrounded by piles of surveys.

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The compilation of the student survey was difficult, because they tried to keep distinctions between the grade level and gender of the students. The Stanford project director wrote in her field notes:

> Survey compiling committees..., the steering committee members, [the vice principal], parents, aides, students, and many central office staff banded to mount the mammoth task of data searches, data entry, long answer synthesis, interview, and compilation into personalized committee packages.

Once the data were compiled, each committee received information on the questions they contributed (questions were coded for each of the seven committees). Taking both the survey and non-survey data, the committees were then ready to begin analyzing the compiled responses to the questions they had set out. The committees differed in the amount of effort they put into analysis. Within committees, there was also a great deal of variation on who did the most work. Generally, the bulk of the work fell to the committee leader or to a few hard working committee members. For example, on the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, the leader spent hours analyzing data from the surveys and from other sources. As one of her committee members said:

> I helped her, but she did most of it. She was incredible.... analyzing was incredibly time-consuming. I mean, I remember sitting here thinking, "My God, how was the average teacher going to have the time to look at this stuff."

Another teacher described a more equitable division of labor:

> I was on the Discipline Committee, and we went through some data that was given to us, and we summarized it. We broke up into meetings and the gal next door here, the two of us, put the stuff together and summarized it. Then somebody else on the committee - with a computer - made some charts and stuff. So we addressed strengths and weaknesses of discipline. I thought that was fairly useful. As long as the weaknesses are addressed and changed.

The committees met whenever possible, and many members of the staff were beginning to feel the stress of spending considerable time after school on committee work. The principal became concerned that the staff would "burn out" before the project had a chance to start if he could not find a way to accomplish some of the work during school hours. He met with the superintendent of schools, and on November 6 the staff learned that the superintendent had given Calhoun seven early release days

to use for the Accelerated Schools Project, in addition to three full days of staff development time given to all schools. They were the only school in the district to have early release days. On these days, students were released at 1:00 pm, and the staff had until the regular release time of 3:33 pm to devote to the Accelerated Schools Project. November 29th was the first early release day. The committees used this time to analyze their data and prepare for a presentation to the entire faculty scheduled for December 13. The first early release day provided an opportunity for the staff to meet as a whole with a focus solely on the Accelerated Schools Project. Administrators and district office staff were also available to answer questions. Three of the seven committees were well organized, focused and extremely productive. Two of the committees spent a lot of time determining whether they could use the parent survey since it was so skewed toward the opinions of the Portuguese parents. A central office representative offered to pay for parent phone interviews in Spanish to better understand the concerns of Spanish speaking parents. Only one committee was disorganized and ineffectual, largely because of its leader's style and lack of preparation.

The day of the Taking Stock reporting out, December 13, was one of the most exciting days of the Calhoun school year. Not only would the staff learn of each group's Taking Stock findings, but the entire school spent the morning enjoying the Vision Celebration (to be described later). The principal and vice principal opened the Taking Stock reporting out meeting with some brief comments, and then turned it over to the teacher who served as moderator. A representative of each committee presented findings. The following is a summary of each presentation. They varied in depth, presentation, and tone.

Community Committee

Two representatives gave a list of the community organizations which do and can offer services to students at Calhoun. The list included: organizations that are already involved in the school, such as Stanford University, the Elfin Society at General Electric, and City College; organizations suggested by parents on the survey; and organizations identified by the committee in response to areas of concern

expressed by parents. The patchwork snapshot presented a messy picture of how the community is currently involved at Calhoun. The committee did not define "community" or systematically examine potential sources of support in the community.

Attitudes Committee

This committee was responsible for determining the attitudes of parents, staff and students toward the school and each other. Their interpretation of the data stressed the positive; wherever possible they put a positive slant on the findings. For example, the staff was asked on their survey if they would send their own child to Calhoun. Fifty percent of the staff said that they would, while fifty percent said they would not. They ignored the fact that half of the staff does not think that the school is challenging or comfortable enough for their own children. On the other hand, once they had some help looking at the data, they found many important things that could and would be used later by the inquiry cadres.

Achievement Committee

At the last minute the teacher who was to present this committee's findings was unable to do so. The committee leader undertook the task with an honest and direct presentation of data that were not warmly received by the staff. The presentation focused on the low test scores at Calhoun. They revealed that 57-70% of the students were below grade level at every grade. Many of the teachers were initially defensive about the data, explaining that the students come to them well below grade level. The discussion continued when the committee leader pointed out that students' expectations of attending high school and college exceeded the staff's expectations, and that their low expectations might be creating self-fulfilling behavior on the part of the students. The committee leader stood behind her data, explained that students do make progress while at Calhoun, but not the progress called for in the Vision. She challenged the staff to take responsibility for the school's present situation. One teacher supported her, saying, "Look, this is our present reality. We're going to create a new reality together - our Vision." This comment helped calm fears of criticism.

Discipline Committee

This committee was well prepared and had worked carefully through the available data. Its members had prepared many attractive overheads, and they carefully explained their analysis process. They focused on the number of discipline cases by grade level and ethnicity, and on school climate. As was the case with other committees, they tended toward a positive interpretation of data. For example, on the student survey, 63% of the students responded that they felt that their culture is respected at Calhoun. The committee did not focus on the 37% of the students who felt that their culture was not respected.

Family Involvement Committee

This committee's data gathering was hindered by the skewed response rate to the parent survey. It was so unrepresentative of the school population as a whole that it was difficult to find patterns or trends in participation across the entire school. They included the non-responses from parents as data, concluding that an unwillingness to fill out a survey reflected a lack of involvement in the school. They were able to present data on volunteer rates and attendance at Back to School nights through data from the Home School Club.

School Organization Committee

This committee examined both the organization of the school and facilities. The committee found few problems with the facilities. The presentation was somewhat editorialized so it was difficult to draw conclusions about attitudes toward the current organization of the school. The spokesman did say that teachers and aides felt totally left out of decision-making. This information reflected attitudes expressed to committee members because on the staff survey, most teachers reported that they have "lots of influence over decisions" in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and discipline. Support staff indicated that they have some to no influence in these areas.

Curriculum and Instruction Committee

The presentation from this committee was extremely thorough and thought provoking. The committee leader presented a complete description of the current curricular program, described the ethnic and gender balance in classes, and raised some troubling questions about teacher expectations based on survey results. The data on ethnic balance in classes surprised many teachers who thought Calhoun was well integrated. Some data were quite startling. For example, while 71% of the students in Geometry (highest level of math offered) were White, 65% of the students in special language arts and math classes were Hispanic.

At this point, the meeting was almost over. The vice principal for discipline asked the group to identify potential roadblocks to using the Taking Stock data fully. Teachers mentioned pride. They felt that the findings in some ways were critical of what they had been doing. They also repeated that they face great challenges because so many children come to Calhoun under-prepared and below grade level. They acknowledged that their expectations of the students will have to be raised. The meeting ended with a short brainstorming session on possible challenge areas. Several that were mentioned included: involving more Hispanic parents, raising teacher expectations, making students more a part of things, increasing parental involvement overall, and raising achievement. The committees were asked to summarize their findings into the top five strengths and challenge areas. These were collected to be used later during Setting Priorities.

Vision and Vision Celebration

All accelerated schools establish a Vision for the school during the early phases of the project. The Vision is a shared product of the dreams of all participants (teachers, administration, other staff, parents, district administrators, the community, and students). The process of defining a Vision results in ownership of a common goal and long-term commitment to jointly achieving that goal. The school community creates a Vision of a school they hope to see in the future that will work for students, staff, and community.

Creating a Vision at Calhoun

The teachers and administrators at Calhoun initiated the development of a Vision, and the support staff, parents, and students contributed to it during the first three months of the school year. The teachers and administrators did most of their brainstorming over the Vision during the Accelerated Schools training and at a staff meeting held several weeks after school started. At that time, they met in small groups and suggested ideas and phrases that describe the kind of school they would like to see in the future, the kind of school they would want for their own children. In all, the staff suggested 182 different items that would contribute to an ideal middle school. The ideas covered quite a range, including: scheduling ideas, such as an earlier start time for school and common prep periods; attitudinal ideas, such as higher expectations for students and all teachers loving teaching; and curricular and instructional ideas, such as multicultural activities, interdisciplinary curriculum, and acceptance and realization that there are many ways to teach. The staff was also asked to describe what they think a graduating 8th grade student should have achieved after three successful years at Calhoun. The following are indicative of the 26 attributes suggested: an ability and desire to learn, positive self identity, sense of pride, erance, self discipline, and respect for the environment and other people. The staff ideas were recorded and combined later with ideas obtained from the classified staff, students and parents. In September, the input from the staff was completed, and the Taking Stock core committee took the responsibility of obtaining input from parents and students.

In order to obtain student and parent input into the Vision, the committee members decided to include questions on the Taking Stock surveys to elicit parent and student goals for the school. At this point in the Vision development process, parents and students were not yet on the Vision committee, although several joined the committee later. On the Taking Stock survey parents were asked, "What are the two must important hopes and dreams you have for your child at Calhoun." Students were asked, "What is your Vision of Calhoun Academy? What would you like to see for all students who graduate from the 8th grade?" The 126 parents attending Back to School Night also had an opportunity to contribute to the Vision. The principal

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explained the role of the Vision in an accelerated school. They handed out translated sheets asking for the most important things parents wanted for their children at Calhoun. Between the surveys and the Back to School Night responses, 226 parents and 600 students contributed to developing the Vision. Their responses were similar to those offered by the staff. They stressed a desire for a good learning environment, both in terms of learning skills needed in the future and to make students happy, successful, and well rounded.

After the ideas were all gathered, a Vision Committee was formed to synthesize Vision ideas from all members of the school community and to create a coherent statement that reflected shared goals. The committee's primary task was to take 17 pages of ideas (compiled from students, staff, parents and central office) and synthesize them. The committee was composed of three administrators, three teachers, two students, two parents and two Stanford staff members. They split themselves into two representative groups over a Vision dinner and began synthesizing the Vision statement. Most of the synthesis was done that evening, but a small subgroup (including one student) met the next week to write the draft to be sent out for approval.

The Vision, see Figure 3, was completed in early December. It generated excitement and interest throughout the school. In an effort to make it a part of the school culture, portions of it were read by the principal each morning over the public address system, along with the morning messages. Some teachers took a few minutes at the beginning of their class period to discuss as a class what the Vision statements mean to their students.

The Vision Celebration

The idea of having a Vision was stimulating to most of the people involved in formulating it, but the real excitement grew out of the Vision Celebration. Accelerated Schools encourages schools to use the completion of the Vision as an opportunity to publicly celebrate their dream. Other than suggesting that a schoolwide, public event occur, Accelerated Schools offered no blueprint for the celebration. A Vision

Figure 3

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Calhoun's Vision

The Calhoun Vision Statement........................December, 1990

Calhoun Middle School is a cooperative partnership of students, parents, staff, and community working together to create an environment in which:

All students have the freedom, the right, and the responsibility to learn.

All students can succeed, and celebrate their own and other's successes.

All students develop a love of learning, inquisitiveness about the world around them, and resourcefulness in meeting life's challenge; they are problem solvers, critical thinkers, and communicators.

All students are prepared, both academically and emotionally, for high school, college, and beyond; they know their choices and can achieve their dreams.

All students connect the past, the present, and the future by applying their academic knowledge to the world around them and learning through experience.

All students have the freedom to take risks in a safe and nurturing environment.

All students appreciate and build on the strengths of many cultures.

All students exhibit democratic values, ethics, and principles in their daily activities and interactions.

All students find opportunities to express their individual needs and talents through a variety of artistic, musical, technological, athletic, social, and intellectual outlets.

All students experience happiness, friendship, fun, self-confidence, and well-being during their years at Calhoun.

Celebration Committee was formed at Calhoun[15] to design an appropriate celebratory event. The committee was extremely creative and ambitious. They designed a multi-event assembly and a march to the county courthouse and city hall (both within a mile of Calhoun) on the morning of the second early release day (December 13).

In preparation for this event, the committee decided that each first period class should create something to symbolize a part of the Vision. At first they thought each class could make a sign, but someone suggested quilt pieces. Their feeling was that quilt pieces would be more permanent, and that the finished quilt would be there whenthe Vision is achieved. Each first period teacher approached the request differently, but most allowed the entire class the opportunity to contribute to the design, while, often only a few students actually created the quilt piece once the class had determined its design. One of the resource teachers provided the materials and oversaw the execution of the design. She was surprised that all of the teachers willingly allowed their students to participate:

> I just bought some sheets, and we just cut it and then I decided it would be neat if there was glitter and shiny things, and we wanted them colorful. So, we had kids coming in and out of here from classes working on them, and some teachers actually really allowed some time in class to do them. Some of the teachers thought it was a really unifying experience for their class, and 'why don't we have more of these things?' Which was a shocker!

The committee remained busy arranging the logistics of the march, setting an agenda for the assembly, and having students prepare signs to carry on the march.

The Vision Celebration differed from all other traditional Calhoun assemblies for several reasons. First, a cross section of the school community planned it, unlike most assemblies that were initiated by one or two people. Second, all three grades would attend at the same time. In the past, assemblies were repeated three times to avoid discipline problems associated with having the entire student body together at one time. In planning the Vision Celebration, they knew that it must include everyone for it to be a unifying experience. Third, for the first time, student speakers were solicited from the population at large, not just from the top students. For the Vision

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[15] No Stanford staff members were on the Vision Celebration Committee.

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Celebration, most of the student speakers were average or below average students, many of them Hispanic, while in the past they would have all been from the gifted and talented program and White.

Many students had an opportunity to become involved in the preparations for the celebration. All students were involved in making the quilt pieces. Forth to fifty students (deputy assembly members) made signs to carry on the march. Approximately six students prepared speeches, and members of the jazz band, the Downtown Upbeats, prepared appropriate music and an Accelerated Rap. Excitement and anticipation were high in the days preceding the celebration.

On the morning of December 13, all of the students, staff, and some parents and other visitors filed into the cafeteria as the jazz band played. The cafeteria was decorated with posters and balloons signifying the Vision. The energy was <u>high</u> and the excitement was contagious. After the Pledge of Allegiance and opening remarks from the principal, students took over. A student member of the Vision Committee described her experience working with a group of Calhoun staff, students and parents to create the Vision. Another student read the entire Vision to the assembled group. The real fun began when the music teacher and several students led the entire crowd in a rap about Calhoun Accelerated School. The rap emphasized several slogans that caught on at Calhoun - Accelerate, Don't Remediate and Franchise, Not French Fries.[16] Needless to say, the crowd was excited now. The deputy assembly members then paraded the posters they created to proclaim the Vision to those watching the march.

A memorable portion of the celebration followed when about five students gave speeches describing what the Vision meant to them. These were not student leaders; in fact, some were "below average." They were mostly minority students who were excited about the prospect of change at the school and at the realization that the staff was prepared to work hard for them. After a slide show, some brief speeches by Stanford staff, and the presentation of the quilt pieces, the school community was

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16. This slogan was the inspiration of one teacher who had worked in private industry for years before entering teaching. She thought they should encourage students to strive to own a fast food restaurant, not work in it.

prepared for the march on city hall.

The march was not a trivial activity. Over 600 students, the entire staff, parents and community members walked (to the accompaniment of the jazz band) across one of the city's busiest streets to the county supervisor's office steps. Mounted police blocked traffic for the crossing. Outside the county courthouse, one of the county supervisors accepted a framed copy of the Vision and encouraged the school to do its best. The group then moved to city hall and were greeted by the mayor-elect, who also received a copy of the Vision. The event was covered by newspaper and television reporters. Everyone walked peacefully back to school where students spent some time assessing the day and eating lunch. The day exceeded everyone's expectations. One teacher described the effect of the day on her students:

> We had a parade and, you know, nothing went wrong. The kids were great. We paraded around and nothing went wrong. There was a very special feeling. After that parade, we had a critique of it and the kids really had a very positive attitude about it. So, you know, they understand. I think they understand that we're doing something special here, and the teachers, the staff, the administrators are working hard to make this school a better place. And you know, I think we see that in the kids.

Another teacher described the effect of the day on the staff:

> I would suspect that a lot of people thought like I did, before - Why are we doing this? This is really stupid. A waste of time. A lot of people dragged their feet. A lot of good teachers said, 'Oh well, I'm not going to go on that walk' 'Well, I don't have a class that period so I won't have to do that.' It turned out everybody in the school did it. I mean everybody... Everybody, and I think we had one person left at the school to answer phones. It was requested that everybody join us on the walk. It turned out to be pretty amazing. I mean, I wish you could have seen 700 people walking. It could have been a total disaster - on public streets! Kids were absolutely amazing. It was really neat.

Everyone felt the day was a complete success. The Vision Celebration was better than anyone expected; students went home feeling like something special had just happened, and that special things were going to continue to happen at Calhoun. The teachers joined together for lunch and loudly celebrated their successful celebration. They faced the task of Taking Stock reporting out with optimism and exhilaration.

Setting Priorities

At this stage, Accelerated Schools compare their baseline (which they systematically examined through Taking Stock) with their Vision to determine how to move toward the Vision. The staff should examine the baseline information to determine how and where it falls short of the Vision. They will generate a set of priorities that, if addressed, will move the school toward the Vision. The Accelerated Schools Project encourages schools to limit themselves to three or four priorities, saving some for future work. This is a crucial activity because the cadres set up to address the priorities form the core of the Accelerated Schools governance structure.

At Calhoun, priority setting took place soon after the Christmas break. The Taking Stock core committee was involved in planning the activity although the Stanford staff facilitated the meeting to allow all of the teachers, administrators, and support staff to fully participate. This activity marked the beginning of more complete participation by the support staff. A few aides and other support staff were involved in the Taking Stock and Vision development, but all of the support staff were encouraged to be actively involved in this stage so that they could feel like full members of the Inquiry cadres. At this point, parents and students were still not regular participants in project activities.

The Taking Stock core committee discussed how the Taking Stock data would be presented to the staff for their review, how to deal with some of the shortcomings in the data and analysis (e.g. poor return on the staff survey, and overly positive interpretation of some data). They decided to make large posters of the summary of findings provided by each of the committees, as well as ones containing pertinent demographic data about the school and students. These posters would be hung around the media center for staff to easily study.

The next early release day (January 17, 1991) was devoted to setting priorities. The walls of the media center were lined with the posters. The Stanford project director put a copy of the Vision on an overhead and explained that their task was to compare the Taking Stock data to the Vision. She cautioned them to rely on the data

and not just on their "gut" feelings when setting priorities. She then explained how they would proceed. She divided the Vision into eleven parts and had the staff count off into eleven groups. Each of the groups was given one piece of the Vision to compare to the Taking Stock data. They were to pick the top five differences between the findings and the Vision.

The groups circled the room looking for data that indicated that their part of the Vision was not being achieved. For example, one group had the section of the Vision, *Appreciate and build on the strengths of many cultures.* They reviewed all of the sheets for data on where they were at that time in regard to appreciating and building on the strengths of many cultures. They looked for evidence of both strengths and weaknesses in the current situation. After an examination of the data and some discussion of what is and is not "cultural," they identified their five top challenge areas. The areas where the baseline data fell short of the Vision. This group's areas were: lack of survey response from the parents; repeated desire for more cultural activities; desire for cultures to be understood and respected; culture/community discomfort; and staff wants community involved. Their priorities were written on a large piece of paper and hung at the front of the room. The room was buzzing as all of the groups engaged in this process. Groups (and people) moved at different speeds. Some agonized over each item while others summarily dismissed items without much reflection. Most groups contained people of both persuasions, so discussion was lively.

The entire staff reconvened for "chunking and clustering" of the top areas of differences or challenges. Two members of the Stanford team were at the front of the room ready to record the staff's ideas on where patterns and similarities existed. Staff members suggested categories that would combine the priorities listed by the eleven groups. The initial categories were: curricular and extra curricular shortcomings, parent involvement, culture, academic achievement, student interaction, community, teachers. The category "teachers" was the last one mentioned, and there was some muttering in the room that indicated that some teachers did not feel that their attitudes or teaching styles needed examination. The room was alive as the whole staff (administrators, teachers, aides, other classified staff) suggested categories that would envelop all of the fifty five priorities identified earlier in this process.

They then determined whether some categories could be combined. Someone suggested combining community and parent involvement; all agreed. They also agreed to combine staff instructional styles and achievement. Someone else suggested combining student interaction and culture. At first, most of the staff agreed, but then people started mentioning other categories in which culture is an issue. They finally agreed that culture underlies all of the areas, and that they should have a separate culture group that supports the work of all of the others. The emergence of culture as a separate area was significant. Although time was running short, and many people were ready to reach consensus, several people felt strongly that culture should not be swept away by subsuming it into another group.

As time was running short, decisions were being made quickly. Despite the general mood in the room to come to closure, one teacher said, "We haven't really cut back. We have only labeled them." She suggested that the mandate was still too large. The Stanford project director acknowledged the problem, but said that "change and refinement would happen in a staggered way." She knew that further reflection and refinement would occur within the cadres. They agreed to rest on these categories and call a meeting soon to self select into cadres and choose cadre facilitators. There was an overriding sense of exhaustion but also one of completion and accomplishment. The only concern was that the hard work was done too rapidly and without proper reflection. The next day, the vice principal said that he felt:

> ...it's got to go back into the teachers' hands. We need to look at it because I think we accomplished a lot in eight minutes yesterday, and I'm not quite sure whether we just did that just to get done by the right time.

He also added that he wanted a request to reexamine the categories to come from the teachers - not from the administration. The categories stood; the staff seemed ready to move on with their work. There was a sense among the staff that the two hours of reflection that occurred before the final eight minutes of discussion allowed them to be satisfied with quick consensus.

Creating a New Governance Structure

The new governance structure of an Accelerated School brings the three guiding principles to life. The Vision gives the governance groups clear goals on which to organize their work. The principle of building on strengths acknowledges the contributions all members of the school community (both individually and collectively) can make as they become more active in the governance of the school. The principle of empowerment, coupled with responsibility is the essence of school-based management. The Accelerated Schools Project has found that three levels of participation are necessary to encompass the range of issues that must be addressed in a democratic, but productive way: cadres; a steering committee; and the school-as-a-whole. To function democratically, all of these governance vehicles should have members drawn from the school staff, parents and community, and the student body.

Cadres are the small groups organized around the school's challenge areas (as determined during the setting priorities stage). Cadres can be formed for continuing inquiry into areas such as curriculum or family involvement or for episodic challenges, such as planning for new facilities or finding time for other cadres to work. The cadres analyze and solve problems using the Inquiry Process. They systematically examine the underlying causes of the specific problems that the school faces, search for,implement, and evaluate solutions. Cadres are comprised of a self-selected membership set during the setting priorities stage. Roles on the cadres are clearly defined so that all of the work does not fall to one pe on. Each cadre should have a facilitator, recorder, visionary, time keeper, and closure person. These can be rotating roles, as long as they are established before each cadre meeting.

The steering committee consists of the principal and representative teachers, aides, other school staff, students and parents. Steering committee members can be elected, or they can be composed of representatives of the cadres with rotating membership over time to give all persons a chance to serve. The steering committee serves at least five purposes. First, it serves to ensure that cadres continually move in the direction of the school Vision. Second, it serves as a clearinghouse of information so that cadres communicate and do not operate in isolation. Third, the steering committee ensures that cadres stay on track with the Inquiry Process. Fourth, the

steering committee monitors the progress of the cadres and helps develop a set of recommendations for consideration by the school-as-a-whole. Finally, it deals with incoming information to the school as a whole.

School-as-a-Whole refers to the principal, teachers, teachers' aides, other instructional and non-instructional staff, and parent representatives as well as student representatives. The School-as-a-Whole is required to approve all major decisions on curriculum, instruction, and resource allocation that have implications for the entire school. The school as a whole must approve decisions before cadres begin implementation of experimental programs.

Forming Cadres

Forming cadres was the first step in establishing a new governance structure at Calhoun. The Setting Priorities meeting resulted in focus areas for five cadres: curriculum, parent/community involvement, culture, instruction/achievement, and student interactions. Staff members were given the opportunity to choose a cadre by filling out a form indicating their first, second and third preference. The vice principal took the forms and tried to give everyone their first choice, but he also tried to balance the groups so that each had a good mix of certified and classified staff and a mix of departments. Parent and student representatives had not yet been identified.

The January 31 early release day was devoted primarily to a review of the Inquiry Process presented by the Stanford staff and the vice principal. During the last 30 minutes of the meeting, cadre membership was announced. The vice principal said that 98% of the people were put in the cadre of their first choice. He described some attributes of a good facilitator, and he asked that the members of each cadre vote for the person they think would be a good facilitator. He said to keep some qualities in mind when choosing their cadre leader. Traits he mentioned were: responsible; people with organizational skills; strong, secure ego; delegator; good communicator; open minded; good listener; facilitator, not dictator; cheerleader; and a believer in The Accelerated Schools Project and the Calhoun Vision. People in the room did not appear to pay much attention to these recommendations. They were intently examining the composition of the cadres and whispering among themselves. Several

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people went to the vice principal and announced that they were changing cadres. Three people eventually changed cadres; two left the instruction cadre and one left the culture cadre - all to join the curriculum cadre. People asked if they could meet in their cadres before voting because they did not want to vote for someone who would not serve as facilitator. The cadres hastily assembled, and determined who would be willing to serve. Votes were cast - more on the basis of who was willing to do it than on the characteristics stressed by the vice principal.

The administrators and Stanford staff set up a meeting for all cadre facilitators the following week to provide additional information and to answer questions they might have about their role. Before the meeting, two of the administrators made binders that included: the Vision, a description of Accelerated Schools governance and the Inquiry process, a list of cadres, each cadre's list of concerns, Inquiry process note keeping devices, group dynamics information, meeting management information, and roles for cadre members.

The meeting touched on several critical issues. The first was group dynamics and meeting management. They stressed the importance of creating a warm, inviting atmosphere, while also respecting people's time. They suggested keeping meetings on target and sticking to the agenda. The second involved the various roles people will occupy within the cadre. They stressed that the delegation of roles to others serves to relieve the cadre leader of duties, and also makes others more involved in the process. The third was communication between cadres. They explained that the steering committee is one vehicle for communication between cadres, but they needed a system that all staff members could access. They decided that each cadre would be required to create and post the agenda and minutes of each meeting within a few days of the meeting. They decided to devote one wall of the mail room to an Accelerated Schools bulletin board on which the latest agendas and minutes would be posted. The fourth issue was the participation of parents and students on cadres, the steering committee, and in the school-as-a-whole meetings. Everyone supported the idea of including non-staff members and agreed that each cadre would determine how and when they would include parents and students. The fifth issue was how to develop an agenda for the first cadre meetings on February 14 using the Inquiry process.

The Steering Committee

The cadres were up and running by February 14, and the steering committee, the next level up in the governance structure, was also taking form. As described before, Calhoun had a steering committee (administrators and department heads) before Accelerated Schools and created a temporary one during Taking Stock (the Taking Stock core committee). The administration assumed that they would continue to have two steering committees for awhile - one fc Accelerated Schools and one for department heads. At the cadre leader meeting, however, they discussed the composition of the steering committee and agreed that there was no reason for such overlap; they would have one steering committee consisting of the cadre leaders, department heads, and administration. They agreed that many of the issues to be discussed would be the same, and that the inclusion of the department heads and cadre leaders would improve communication across the school. One teacher suggested that perhaps one day there would not even be such a division of roles by departments if they worked toward a more integrated curriculum. The first "post-Inquiry" steering committee meeting was held about two weeks later.

School-as-a-Whole

No formal vehicle for establishing school-as-a-whole meetings was set up at this time. The entire staff (and occasionally a few parents and students) usually came together at the beginning of each early release session, and news of the school and of the roject was related. Beyond the bulletin board and their system for sharing progress of each cadre and for approving cadre plans seemed premature to most of the staff. At this point in the project, the staff was ready to begin identifying and tackling problems through their cadres.

Changes Occurring During Getting Started

As the preceding illustrates, the Calhoun staff was very busy during this phase of the project. It was still too early to look for lasting changes in achievement, instruction, curriculum or even in the structure of the school, but changes that form the

basis for more lasting change were evident. By this time, the school culture at Calhoun was beginning to change. Attitudes and interaction patterns were changing; people were beginning to see Calhoun in a different light. This is the first phase of the capacity building stage in the Accelerated Schools process; tangible results are not expected until the implementation stage. The changes obvious at this time were reflected in the staff's internalization of the three guiding principles (unity of purpose, building on strengths, and empowerment/responsibility) into their interactions with each other, with their students and toward parents and the wider community. The changes were visible primarily in the attitudes, behavior, communication, and the decision-making process of teachers and administrators. Some changes related to students, families and community were also evident at this time. The following describes changes observed and reported among the teaching staff and administration and then describes changes related to students and the community. Many of the changes continued through the second phase, altered by the activities of the Inquiry process. Additional changes occurred in the second phase that will be described in Section Five of this report.

Changes Related to Staff

By this stage in the process, changes were evident among some of the teachers in terms of their interest in staying at Calhoun (or in teaching all together), and in their internalization of the Accelerated School principles. In both interviews and casual conversations with teachers, several mentioned that they were excited about the Accelerated Schools Project from the beginning because the philosophy fit closely with their own. This included both veteran teachers and new teachers. The following are comments from three veteran teachers who became very active in Accelerated Schools:

> Nothing in my philosophy has changed - not one thing. This is the thing that attracted me to the program, was that it was so consistent with my philosophy. My own personal philosophy of the way things should be done. And I said, 'Hear! hear! Finally I have somebody who knows what's supposed to happen.'

> Well, I see it as very positive because, like I said, I believe that students can achieve a great deal, and I think that when your expectations are high and

students feel that they can achieve those, and the motivation is there to try - you know, strive for excellence concept - I've always believed that. I think - I mean, I would much rather have students try and strive and maybe not reach the top, but not mediocrity, because that's what you'll get.

I'm not the kind of guy that says, 'Hey, this looks good! I'll jump on the bandwagon.' I think the concept of the project is a valid one. It is grounded in a lot of common sense. I regard myself as a common sense, practical kind of guy. When I read the original proposal, it just made a lot of sense to me. The approach was right.

New teachers also commented on the compatibility of the Accelerated Schools philosophy with their own:

Some of us have got our heart poured into it. What I've got my heart poured into is Calhoun... If Accelerated Schools does it, great. If it doesn't, it's okay. I've got my heart into making Calhoun succeed. Calhoun, in my opinion, schools in general, in my opinion, desegregation, in my opinion, have to start talking about educating all students. And not this classification crap.

The philosophy was such a good fit, that several teachers who considered transferring to other schools decided to stay at Calhoun to work with the project. One very influential teacher described her decision:

I had put in a transfer request, thinking I would go with the administrator who had been here. And when I got home and looked at where she was transferred to after Oakhaven[17], I went to the office the third day home and said, 'May I have my transfer request?' They gave it to me, and I tore it up, and I decided to stay here - for the accelerated program.

She also surprised everyone at a steering committee meeting when she announced that she was planning to postpone her retirement for at least another year. She described her decision:

...As we got into it this year, I thought. 'Hmm, this would be interesting to go through.' I mean, I could last two more years, and I'm aiming for two more years. I think I'll just do it now - like people losing weight, five pounds instead of fifteen - I'll go two more years, I won't go five more until I know exactly what I'm staying

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17. The former principal was at Oakhaven for only one year after leaving Calhoun. She was transferred to another school as part of a major administrative reshuffling.

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for.

A new science teacher said that jobs are available in science, but that she wants to stay for the project, "There's a lot of high schools that are asking for science teachers. I don't even want to apply. Being here - you know, we're doing something new."

Other teachers did not immediately see the connection between the principles and their daily work, but eventually they saw how they could incorporate the Vision and the Accelerated Schools principles into their teaching. Two teachers gave vivid descriptions of how they began applying aspects of the Vision to their teaching, with positive results:

> I was at a Home and School Club meeting, and [the principal] was talking about this kind of stuff [Accelerated Schools]. I was kind of bummed out about what do I do tomorrow and just things aren't working. You kind of keep that with you, and you stew about it. Then he said something, and he referred to that, that all kids, we accelerate, we don't remediate. And this group [his sixth period eighth grade class], I was even really remediating. I said, 'Well, you guys can't do this. We'll do something easier. It's something I do with the sixth graders because I need you guys to do something.' I made a decision there: No, those guys will do what the other class is doing. We'll just go one step at a time... It really struck me that this had to come from me, that I needed to look at it from a different angle. The philosophy that all kids will succeed and achieve and stuff -- I started thinking -- I looked at myself, and I was putting these kids in the second track instead of the same track. For that reason, I think it was a pearl of wisdom in there that made me survive and actually we did a much better job in the last five weeks than the five weeks before it.... The testimony -- just that all kids can succeed. You kind of assume that, but when you find yourself putting kids -- giving them easier stuff because it's such a hassle to try to keep them going with kids that you think are going faster and cooperating ... actually, the kids in that sixth period, in the four weeks we spent, did almost as much as the other kids did in the seven or eight weeks that they were spending with it.

> It [Accelerated Schools] has given me the Vision, and the Taking Stock portion has given me better visibility as far as a direction to go in to focus in on what I need to be working with these kids. Especially the Vision. I can see a lot of things -- when I see attitudes and behaviors in the class that don't fit, that gives me something to work toward.

The philosophy, principles and process of the project did not fit perfectly for all teachers. In fact, some of those who remained skeptical at this stage in the process did not believe acceleration will work with their students. One teacher explained his

reluctance in becoming actively involved:

> And those of us who have taught a while - 20 years- I've gone through districts, and I've gone through different programs, and they're all new and they're all revolutionary. And they fall by the wayside. And what I see as the nitty gritty is what happens in my classroom on a daily basis, working with the kids, working with the discipline problems and the lack of motivation in a school like this with Hispanic kids whose culture doesn't value [education] - and maybe the Stanford program eventually will address those things, and maybe they - I'm sure it wants to - but I have a hard time personally connecting what we're doing in the media center with the Stanford group to what I'm actually doing in my classroom. It doesn't affect me.

In addition to internalization of the Accelerated Schools principles, evidence of increased communication between teachers was abundant by this stage in the project. Prior to the Accelerated Schools Project, many teachers were relatively isolated; they met primarily with people in their department - occasionally with their grade level, but they had few reasons or opportunities to work with a cross section of the school. The Taking Stock and Vision committees were mixed, and the teachers appreciated the opportunity to work with colleagues they otherwise rarely saw. One teacher said that she felt that the school organization was already changing. She added:

> Well, I don't feel as isolated as I always did. I kind of feel like I could die in this room. I mean, it just seems like -- I should be happy that nobody's peeping down my back about things either. But, at times, the science department kind of like is all to itself, and I like the interdisciplinary.

Another teacher added:

> This is how I view Accelerated Schools. Well, first of all, the Accelerated Schools Project has done more to get all the teac rs working together than anything else in the school - anything. So if it's going to happen, something like this is going to do it.

The groundwork for inclusion of the support staff in the project was laid at this time. Several classified staff members attended the second day of training (when it was held at Calhoun). All of them received copies of the survey, and a few were involved in Taking Stock groups and Vision planning. Once the early release days were available, the support staff became more involved. By the Setting Priorities

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meeting, most of them were attending meetings and making contributions. Real integration of the support staff into the project did not occur until they began working on Inquiry cadres. This involvement will be described in Section Five.

Changes Related to the Administration

Changes in the attitudes of the administrators and in their relations with the staff were also evident by this stage of the project. The changes were due to their desire to alter patterns that had developed last year and also to make the Accelerated Schools Project work. Last year, teachers were critical of the principal for being too controlling, but they saw evidence of his slowly letting loose. He acknowledged that his style had to change in an accelerated school. He said, "Personally, I found that I have to adjust my style a little bit. I can't shoot from the hip as much." Both the principal and the vice principal found that the process required different skills than administrators are normally required to exhibit. They needed to learn to be facilitators rather than leaders, and to look for strengths rather than weaknesses. The principal described how difficult enacting the three principles was:

> ... democracy is not easy, and cooperation is an unnatural act in education. And I'm not trying to be flippant . It's just hard to develop an idea that a change - not just for its sake - but that we're moving forward, and we can all be a part of that. It's - to have the teachers be a part of the decision-making process was really hard.

They also found that they had to build the trust of the staff in order to work democratically. Delegating decision-making and responsibility to teams required that the administration trust the members of the team. In order to do their work, the team members had to trust the administration to take their work seriously and support their conclusions. The necessary level of trust was not there at the beginning of the year. However, at the time of the Setting Priorities, the vice principal noticed that the staff worked more like a team than they would have in the past. He felt that this indicated a growth in trust:

> I'm surprised. Well, we couldn't have done this last year. Working together on this kind of a project. I don't think, I really honestly don't think that, so that makes me feel good.

Q. What would have happened?

> I think that there would have been a lot more negativism. People would have been complaining. It would have been more of a gripe, bitching session. I don't think we would have ever gone through our agenda and got to the end.

He mentioned that he had spent a great deal of time building trust and that at this point, he felt that his efforts were beginning to be rewarded. He described the process of building trust:

> ...this program is different. Because I really feel it is. If we make it so, if we create that team that works together, we can do it. We can deal with anything. If you don't make that commitment though, it's not going to happen. So I see my role as being a cheerleader and being able to get out there and say 'this needs to happen, we can do it, we can do it!'

An unanticipated benefit of the project was that it helped integrate the new vice principal for guidance and discipline into the school and the administrative team. Her predecessors did not fit in well, and the principal and vice principal had already created a close working relationship. It could have been a difficult position for her to fill. She described her reaction when she was transferred to Calhoun:

> I think it's [Accelerated Schools] made it much easier. That's hard to say what it would have been like, but I think that I'm pretty sure that it wouldn't have been as positive an experience for me personally and professionally if it were not for this program because the communication that this program has, set a structure. It's so vital for the school, and I'm almost sure it [the communication] wouldn't have been here.

The administration also gave the Accelerated Schools Project partial credit for the discipline/guidance team that was established at the beginning of the year. During a discussion of changes brought about by the Accelerated Schools Project, the principal attributed the discipline/guidance team to the project. When questioned about this attribution, he said that the Accelerated Schools Project had already changed their mind set and that they were more willing to let go and to take some chances. He added that "accelerated thinking affects everything."

Changes Related to the Students

At this stage in the project, the students were very aware of the Accelerated Schools Project, but their understanding of what the staff would be doing was limited.

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They had participated in the survey; many had helped with the data compilation and with planning the Vision Celebration. All of the students participated in the Vision Celebration, and most realized that the school was trying to do something special for them. Portions of the Vision were also read over the public address system each morning, and some teachers discussed the meaning of the Vision with their students. As one teacher described:

> So, I'll take time out from class when they're asking about it, because I think that they need to understand what we're trying to do. I describe it in that we're all trying to work together to make school a place that the students are feeling that they're learning and that they're gaining in their person, that we want it to be a place that they enjoy and can work And it's an effort on the part of the people here at Calhoun and the students and the parents and the community.

An eighth grade student described in an essay a common perception held by students:

> When I heard of our Accelerated school I started listening to teachers and assemblies when they said that our school was the best I got very happy.

Some teachers saw signs of a change in attitude among the students. One teacher said:

> The kids have changed a lot in attitude. They're more responsible this year. I think it's part of the Calhoun Accelerated Program. Because we try to tell the kids, you know, 'We are an accelerated program. We're doing special things, and you have to show to this community that you're specia., that we're special, and strive very hard for that.

Other teachers also recognized a change in student attitudes, but they attributed it to the discipline policy established by the administrative team. As mentioned above, the discipline policy was one of the first results of staff empowerment.

Changes Related to Parents and the Community

The parents and community were not very involved in this phase of the project other than to complete the survey and contribute to the Vision. A few parents (ones who were already active in the school) helped with the Taking Stock data analysis and with planning the Vision Celebration, but there were no parents on the Taking Stock committees. There was consensus among the staff that both the school and this project needed increased parent involvement. This interest was demonstrated by their

creation of a family involvement focus during both Taking Stock and Inquiry. The cadre facilitators also agreed unanimously to solicit parents to serve on cadres. At this point in the project, some staff members were concerned that they would never successfully integrate parents and community members into the cadres, but others, including the school's community liaison, felt that the challenge would be met in time:

> I don't see it personally as a big issue. I don't see it as a big problem because we haven't put any effort into it. And I have this plan in my head - I just want the time ... and then bring everybody else into it, and we'll bring some and we'll have it done. You know that, it's really weird, it sounds weird. Because people make a big issue, and it's not. It's that we just haven't had the time for it.

Changes in the Structure of the School

By the end of the first phase of the project, some changes in the governance structure were occurring. The staff was becoming comfortable working in small groups and taking responsibility for their work. The Accelerated Schools steering committee was folded into the existing steering committee, with the understanding that cadre facilitators would have as much influence as department heads. One teacher even suggested that she would eventually like to see the department structure eliminated. Changes in the delivery of instruction were being discussed. The staff was already discussing the elimination of ability tracking and the restoration of electives into the curriculum. It was too early in the Accelerated Schools process to see tangible school-wide changes in curriculum and instruction.

The Context of Change

The changes in the school culture described above were evident only a few months after the project began, these changes (and more) will be re-explored after the description of the Inquiry process. Before moving on to the second stage of the project - the Inquiry process - both the process and the changes just described need to be contextualized. In this report, considerable time was spent setting the stage for a description of the Accelerated Schools process. This was necessary to provide a description of the school culture as it existed prior to the introduction of the Accelerated Schools Project. These contextual factors constitute the school's culture and have a

major influence on the shape of the project; they influence whether or not changes occur, and if they do, the shape they take. It is impossible to describe the total context, but portions of it need to be highlighted. The key contextual factors reside in the history of the school and in its internal workings. Other important factors emanate from outside of the school.

Historical Context

Calhoun's historical context has been described in detail in Section Three. Past experiences did not contribute to the smooth implementation of the project. Two factors in particular had to be overcome before teachers would feel free to embrace the project. The first was their sense of powerlessness in light of district office administrative reshuffling. Most of the veteran teachers had seen at least one principal and several programs transferred or discontinued for no apparent reason. They complained of becoming comfortable with a principal and devoting countless hours of work to programs brought into the school during the principal's tenure only to learn, after the fact, that the principal was to be transferred or the program discontinued. Unable to challenge these decisions, they retreated to the only place where they had some control - to their classrooms. One teacher summarized the attitude that had to be overcome at the beginning of the project:

> I'm really skeptical. It's because I've done it before. There's been so many times that we come in, and they say, 'Oh, we're going to,' you know. When we got the magnet program, we did the same thing that the Accelerated Schools are talking about. We wanted to raise the academic level here; we wanted to raise the idea for student achievement, and we were on our way. And then we got shoved [and the principal was transferred].

Also part of the historic context that had to be overcome was the lack of trust that developed between the teachers and the current school-level administration. Many of the teachers felt that they were deceived or cheated last year, and they scrutinized the administration closely before they allowed a trusting relationship to develop. The lack of trust limited the involvement of some of the teachers during this stage of the project. One teacher explained why she doubted the structure of decision-making at the school would change:

Well, I can see where it could, but I'm not really sure how far the district and the administrators will let it proceed. I mean honestly, it was kind of a blow last year that some of the questions that are asked - and they wanted input - I mean it's kind of like a farce because you'll give the input, and it will be pretty unanimous in a certain direction, and then... And it was the opposite of what the faculty said they wanted. And so it takes away the integrity and the trust.

A final piece of the historical context has a more indirect effect on the project's implementation than those described above. It is the fact that Calhoun is a desegregation magnet school. There is nothing in the desegregation plan that conflicts with the Accelerated Schools goals or philosophy, but the reality of implementing the desegregation plan set an odd context. The school needed to recruit White students, or they could not admit Hispanic students wanting to attend Calhoun. To attract White students, Calhoun became a magnet school with an emphasis on technology. Test scores at Calhoun also had to improve for the sake of the school and to attract White students. One method of raising overall test scores was to try to attract White students with relatively high scores. Given the tracking system at Calhoun, these students found their way disproportionately into the advanced courses (geometry, accelerated language arts, accelerated social studies). Although all programs were available to all students at Calhoun, there was a feeling among Hispanic students that the extra resources were brought to the school only for the White students. A teacher who was at Calhoun when it became a desegregation magnet described the Hispanic students' reaction:

> They [the White students] got all of the attention and privileges and the benefits and so on of the desegregation program. And I know for a fact that the other kids felt left out. They said, 'Why do they do everything and we don't?' Because there was a lot done for them, really. Since I've been here before to compare, I have a basis for comparison, and I can see that too. Of course, I wouldn't say that to the children. Even the children saw it.

Internal Influences

Project implementation was also shaped by the context of the existing school culture. At least three internal factors facilitated project implementation. One key influence was that some of the most influential teachers and administrators were very supportive from the beginning. They believed in the project and wanted to see it work. A teacher explained:

> We have an administration that's really behind it. [The vice principal] is just totally - it's fun to talk to him about it because he is so excited.... it's not pretend; it's real. And, he gets teachers in and out of his office all the time, and he is able to spread that. [The principal] is also really behind it. [The vice principal for guidance and discipline] is new to it, but she's really behind it.

When the staff realized that several of the highly respected but sometimes negative teachers were excited about the project, others who had been undecided chose to become involved. One teacher described why the involvement of key teachers could sway others on the faculty:

> ...I mean, everybody knows she's a wonderful teacher...But, boy, you just go in and visit [her] class, even once, and you just see. She is so excited about her subject... I mean, the kids think she's a wonderful teacher and for junior high kids to think a teacher is good. ...So, for someone like her to get fired up, that will permeate through.

Calhoun's staff composition also facilitated change. Calhoun had a good mix of veteran teachers, new teachers and experienced teachers new to Calhoun. This diversity gave the project the necessary mix of experience and enthusiasm, caution and creativity to set it in motion. One of the teachers also noticed this, and said that Calhoun should be successful with the project because they have:

> Good strong teachers who have been around awhile, as well as new teachers who may not have the experience but have enthusiasm and new ideas. I can see that working. A whole staff of aging people who have done it all; I don't see it working.

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A third facilitating factor was the early success of the discipline/guidance team. Within weeks of establishing the team, teachers reported fewer discipline problems and a more respectful student body. This made the teachers' job easier and also illustrated that change was possible at Calhoun. It also showed that the administration was listening to teachers' concerns and were willing to make structural changes to address them.

There were also several internal factors that hindered project implementation. For example, the existing governance structure of the school put some constraints on the project. Prior to the Accelerated Schools project, the school was compartmentalized into six departments and many more "compartments." Teachers were organized into departments, and other staff into functional groups (e.g. administrative, maintenance, cafeteria, security). Teachers had few opportunities to interact with people outside of their department. Departments differed in size, power and prestige. Considerable distrust existed, primarily of the language arts department, the largest and most influential. Teachers outside of the language arts department felt that it had railroaded the two hour language arts core into the curriculum, and many resented to loss of elective subjects. Suspicions of"empire building" resurfaced when the cadres were announced, and the curriculum cadre (which already had four language arts teachers) accommodated two more who changed cadres.

Limitations of the governance structure also prevented the support staff from becoming full members of the school team from the beginning. There were no school - as-a-whole meetings before the Accelerated Schools Project began, and aides and other classified staff never met with all of the faculty. Even in this stage of the project, only a few classified staff participated. Until the cadres were established for Inquiry, support staff had little involvement in the project, and many of them felt uncomfortable

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participating in meetings that previously had not been open to them.

Personalities and personal styles played their inevitable role in shaping the direction of the project. Calhoun's' staff had the full range of personalities, and this initial stage was the time for the staff to learn how to accommodate everyone. The traits that were most beneficial were openness, ability to share responsibilities, thoroughness, enthusiasm, risk taking, diligence, and trustworthiness. For many teachers and support staff, this was one of their first opportunities to engage in democratic decision-making and to serve as a group facilitator, and each person handled it differently.

External Influences

Factors beyond the school also influenced project implementation. The district's support of the project played an important role in building teacher support. Calhoun's administrators knew that they needed support from the district. The vice principal explained that they approached the superintendent for his support early in the process:

> One of the first things we did was to meet with our superintendent when we started becoming partly involved in this program and made him aware that - to be involved in something like this and do something unique, that we need district support. We needed the ability to say there's some things we don't feel we can participate in. And we were given assurance that that would happen.

The superintendent showed his support by granting Calhoun seven early release days and an additional $10,000 to use to support their planning. The release time proved to be both symbolically and practically important. The teachers, still wary from his administrative reshuffling, saw the release time as a symbol of the superintendent's support. As one teacher said:

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> That [release time] shows commitment from people with the purse strings. Our commitment is time. Otherwise it seems like, 'Oh, you want to do it? Why don't you have another meeting after school?' Release time shows that we can give you time to create something worthwhile.

The release time also had the practical effect of giving teachers a large block of time in which to work. Many of them felt that the project would not have taken hold without this time.

The Stanford team's commitment to Calhoun also contributed to the project's acceptance. The three members of the Stanford staff were very involved in the nitty gritty work of Taking Stock and Vision development. The teachers and administrators appreciated their hard work in helping with the data compilation, as well as their willingness to work individually and in small groups with teachers as they attempted to make sense of the data collected. The Stanford project director was careful to let Calhoun develop ownership of the project, and resisted taking the lead in any of the Taking Stock and Vision activities. After the training, she stepped back and became a resource, not a leader of the project. She commented before the January 17 early release day that this would be the first time she had stood in front of the group since training in August. During that time, the principal, vice principal, and key members of the staff developed ownership of the project.

An external event that could have had a very negative influence was the Program Quality Review (PQR) mandated by the State of California. As the Taking Stock data collection was occurring, Calhoun was also preparing for PQR. PQR is a required self study of several designated areas of the school's curriculum, instruction and organization. Every three years the school is required to examine three areas in depth to see how they can be improved. A set of questions and topics was sent to each school, along with a specific reporting format. The process was very different from Taking Stock, in which the school determined it's own questions and reporting format.

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Calhoun was saved from being overwhelmed by the two simultaneous data collection activities by using a lot of the Taking Stock data to fill out the forms, and by delegating most of the work involved in compiling the PQR packet to one of the resource teachers. After a PQR team came to observe and interview teachers, many Calhoun teachers commented that the PQR data collection and assessment process was superficial in comparison to Taking Stock. It increased the ownership some staff had in Accelerated Schools because they saw the value of school-initiated data collection rather than state-initiated data collection.

A rather ominous external influence became more obvious as the project developed - the state budget deficit. By the end of this stage, it was clear that the state budget deficit would be great and would influence the amount of money available to school districts. At this time, no one was aware of direct effects on schools, but the threat of lay offs and programmatic cuts loomed. One teacher described how the potential of cuts shapes involvement in the project:

> I think a big plus was the district giving us these ten days [seven early release and three full days]. I don't think it would have worked if the district didn't do at least that. I think it would have died on the vine, especially with the budget cuts coming. I'm still wary in that regard. I've been laid off, and I know how hopeless it feels sometimes. [The principal] says, 'Oh, we can keep all our programs.' [The principal] is not the only one deciding who will be here and who won't. We may have the program, but not the people. And quite frankly, I've seen great programs in this district die because the district says they don't have the money. It didn't matter how good it was.

The principal was also concerned about the effect of potential budget cuts on the programs at Calhoun:

> Right now we're under the gun. We've got to do all the things we have to do. We're going to have to meet with the money people and the personnel people and deliver some assumed cutbacks for next year. So it's going to not be good. And, we'll talk to the staff about that. I mean, there's a problem. How can we offer a quality program with [fewer] people? How are we going to do that? How

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are we going to offer foreign languages and math and science and all that stuff if we don't get the federal grant. How are we going to do all that?

His strategy was to seek any additional funds available. The most promising source was a federal grant to set up an aeronautics program in several schools in the district. Many people on the Calhoun and Stanford staffs were concerned that the grant would compromise the integrity of the Accelerated Schools Project. But the principal assured them that it could be fit under the Accelerated Schools' umbrella:

> We essentially will carry on as we see fit. As we feel appropriate. ... But I think we should be aggressive in all the things that are available to us. The Accelerated Schools model presents an opportunity for discussion for all those things.

At this stage in the project, the budget cuts were a source of anxiety; by the end of the year, they were a reality. The effects of actual budget cuts on the project will be discussed in the next section.

Section Five
Phase II - Inquiry

This section of the report follows the same format as the preceding section. By this time, the Calhoun school community had finished the first phase of the project and was ready to embark on the Inquiry process. This section describes the Inquiry process as developed at Stanford, the process and activities associated with Inquiry at Calhoun, and the governance structure as it developed during the Inquiry stage. The description of changes captures a series of snapshots of a school in the process of radical culture change which provide a glimpse of the more profound changes that may occur when plans are finalized and implemented. This section ends with a description of the factors influencing both the implementation of the project and the changes that occurred.

What is Inquiry?[18]

Inquiry is a process of identifying and solving problems. It is an ongoing process that does not stop after a few meetings or once initial challenges are met. Inquiry and the accelerated schools governance structure perpetuate restructuring and keep a school accelerating. The Inquiry process focussed on asking the right questions - questions whose answers will truly address a school's original concerns stemming from the comparison of the school's present situation with its vision. Decision-making in accelerated schools is very systematic and is accomplished in five phases.

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[18]Portions of this description were excerpted from *The Resource Guide* (forthcoming) and *Toward Accelerated Middle Schools* by Wendy Hopfenberg, Henry Levin, Gail Meister, and John Rogers. 1990.

The activities of the first stage involve focussing on the problem area. This is considered the most important stage of Inquiry because the question a cadre asks will direct the way its members think and the way the cadre organizes the rest of its work. During this stage, the cadre explores the problem fully from all relevant angles. The members informally gather information on the problem from as many perspectives as possible. They ask how parents, students, other staff members, the district office, the community might view the particular problem. This prevents cadre members from identifying a problem that fits a solution they already have in hand. Once they have thoroughly explored the problem, they develop hypotheses about why the challenge area exists. These hypotheses develop from the previous brainstorming session and will include a wide range of perspectives . The final activity in this stage involves testing all of the hypotheses to see which ones "hold water" and interpreting the results of the test. This process avoids the problem of concentrating on either too narrow a focus or on putting too much effort into something that does not really address the school's challenges. This process helps a school community concentrate on a set of solutions that is the most comprehensive and effective response to its concerns.

The second stage in the Inquiry process involves brainstorming solutions. Following the comprehensive examination of problems, cadres engage in a thorough review of possible solutions. They do not want to jump to the first attractive solution ; rather they look for the solution that best matches their unique needs. The two major steps in brainstorming about solutions are to look inside the school for ideas and expertise and to look outside the school for programs, ideas, and expertise. The Accelerated Schools Project encourages school communities to use the expertise within the school. Not only is this a good use of resources, but it also builds on the strengths of the school. Although a wealth of expertise exists in most schools, schools

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should also look outside for programs, ideas, and expertise.

In the third phase, school communities synthesize solutions into an action plan. The cadre members take the best from the solutions examined and develop a plan that is appropriate to their school. They do this with clear goals and objectives for the activities.

In the fourth and fifth phases, they pilot test their plans; and evaluate and reassess. Evaluation is an on-going process in accelerating schools. In each of the stages participants examine their progress, but once the action plan is implemented, they evaluate and assess the usefulness of the pilot program. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, they assess the strengths and weaknesses of the projects. At this time, they can decide to modify the project for more piloting, disband the project, or continue it.

The Inquiry Process differs in three ways from typical after-school and one-day staff development familiar to most teachers. First, Inquiry provides an outlet for school staff to look into challenge areas of their choosing in an in-depth manner, rather than looking into district or state priorities in a surface manner. Second, Inquiry encourages the school community to produce knowledge as well as transmit it - building on the many strengths at the school site. Third, Inquiry empowers those at the school site to make the changes they know are best for students (Polkinghorn, Bartels & Levin 1990). Inquiry will lead different schools in extremely different directions since Inquiry is the vehicle schools use to achieve their vision, which will be, by definition, unique to their school community. Results are also different because each school has a unique culture at the outset of the project, and the school community builds on its own strengths and experiences.

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The Inquiry Process at Calhoun

The Calhoun cadres had their first meetings on an early release day in February, 1991. Most of the cadres spent their first meeting agreeing on roles for the members[19] and discussing when and how they could extend membership on the cadres to parents, students, and the community. The cadres all met regularly throughout the remaining school year, sometimes on early release days but also before or after school between the early release days. They worked hard to initiate the challenging Inquiry process and develop confidence in it. One of the early lessons the cadres learned was that they were learning a process while they were learning about their focus area. In many ways, the Inquiry process seems unnatural when actually implemented in schools. School community members are not used to working together in small collaborative groups, and they are accustomed to making quick, solution-oriented decisions. Also, external opportunities and issues arise that are out of sequence with the Inquiry process. Often these opportunities and issues cannot be ignored or postponed. The following description of the five cadres (instruction, culture, student interaction, family and community involvement, and curriculum) as they moved through the first few stages of the Inquiry process is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the substantive progress of each of the cadres, and the second part examines how the cadres developed as small decision-making units in the school.

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[19] Prior to the first cadre meetings, the facilitators, administrative team members and members of the Stanford team met and drew up the following list of recommended roles: facilitator, typist or computer person, recorder, time keeper, visionary, resource person, closure person. Some cadres adapted these roles to meet the particular characteristics of their cadre.

Inquiry Within the Five Cadres

Instruction Cadre[20]

The initial charge of the instruction/achievement [21] cadre was to explore the relationship between the poor achievement scores of Calhoun students and instruction. Because the cadre chose to tackle the entire area of instruction, rather than a single aspect of it, they had a difficult time focusing on the challenge. After some discussion, they started out with a general analysis of the taking stock report with respect to achievement. This led into a whole session of criticizing the students. The following were some complaints about students:

- They don't come prepared to school.

- They don't bring their binders.

- They don't bring pencils.

- Most of them don't do homework.

- They don't care about learning.

- They don't have respect for each other.

- They do not respect the teachers.

For all of these situations, the cadre found immediate solutions: detention, a stricter homework policy, call in parents and let them see how their children act, don't allow

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[20] Portions of this description are excerpted from the *Resource Guide* (forthcoming). As an ethnographer, I had to choose between working in depth with several of the cadres or covering all of the cadres in less depth. I choose depth and worked primarily with the curriculum and family and community involvement cadres. Although I attended meetings of the other cadres when possible I have had to rely on reports from members of the Stanford team and other cadre members.

[21] "Achievement" was dropped from the cadre name after a few weeks because all cadres were addressing issues of achievement.

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students into the building if they do not come prepared, and many more in that same punitive vein. Until one of the members pointed at the Inquiry chart on the wall, and reminded them that they were jumping to solutions before they had even defined the problem.

They began to explore the idea that if children had fun learning or had some intrinsic satisfaction when they learned something, they would come prepared, and they would actively participate. They realized that they had an excellent example for this at Calhoun: The music teacher had the students come in one hour before school, many of them lugging their instruments. These students were not the "best" students. In fact, some of the more problematic students were in jazz band and in jazz choir. And yet, they came prepared; they practiced innumerable hours; they were patiently repeating the same pieces over and over until they were satisfied with their performance, and they learned to improvise and be creative. The cadre members asked themselves, "Why could this commitment and dedication to learning not carry over into the classroom?" With this question, they completed the problem exploration phase of Inquiry.

The Instruction Cadre focussed on only one hypothesis that was based on their own collective experience as teachers and learners. They hypothesized that learning can only occur when students are interested in the subject or topic; when what they learn is somehow relevant to their lives; and when they can use all their abilities building on their strengths.

In order to test this hypothesis, they decided to ask the students what powerful learning was to them. They developed a survey instrument and used it as an assignment in class. Each of the teachers in the cadre asked their students to fill out the following web:

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What did the teacher do?   What did you do?

Describe your most powerful learning experience.

Why do you remember this experience?   When do you use what you learned?

In some classes the students helped to summarize the data and to calculate percentages, in others the teacher prepared the summary. In the next cadre meeting, they analyzed the data of each teacher, and were not surprised that students preferred active, relevant instruction.

Student responses were divided into three categories: student activities; teacher actions and attitudes; and characteristics of the lessons. Students indicated that they enjoy activities such as role playing, hands-on activities, active learning, dramatizations, games, competitions, debate, field trips, computer projects, research activities, and projects. The actions and attitudes of teachers that they most appreciated were: high expectations and belief in the students; supportive, motivating, and insistent; caring for each individual student and for the group; individual help; demonstration of expected behaviors; modelling of learning processes; facilitation of learning; and rewards. A minority of students indicated that they prefer lectures. The characteristics of preferred lessons were: fun; novel and different; clear relationship to the outside world; important to current student concerns; involves students actively; interesting; useful; challenging and difficult but within reach of all students; dramatic

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and shocking; and related to rewards.

Although most teachers felt that they had not learned anything that they did not already know, they thought it was good to have these results from their own students, and to make their students aware that their teachers are concerned with their learning and want to satisfy their learning needs. A member of the cadre also pointed out that it was important to actively acknowledge what really works in teaching.

In this way the first school year as an accelerated school came to an end, and the instruction cadre was somewhat frustrated because they had not yet introduced any school-wide changes. But they felt that they had a clearer understanding of their problem: *When students do not want to learn, we must motivate them and not punish them.* They agreed that students need to be actively involved if learning is to reach its greatest potential. As the cadre reflected on the progress of other cadres, they realized that they did not draw an explicit connection between an implicit assumption (Calhoun students do not want to learn) and their conclusion about the characteristics of powerful learning. They agreed that their implicit hypothesis was: *Calhoun students do not want to learn because the school does not provide enough powerful learning experiences.*

The preceding description takes this process out of the context of actual school events. The instruction cadre followed the stages of the Inquiry process, but at one point, their efforts were diverted from the problem identification stage. In early March, several members of the instruction cadre attended a workshop put on by the Complex Instruction Project, a project developed at Stanford to encourage cooperative learning that eliminates status differences between students. The link between Complex Instruction and Accelerated Schools was clear to everyone, and the Complex Instruction team was looking for several middle schools to serve as pilot schools for their middle school materials. At Calhoun's request, members of the Complex

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Instruction team presented their techniques at a district-wide inservice day. Although the school came close to participating in the project, there was a general sense among cadre members and the entire staff that it was too early to make a major commitment to one instructional technique such as Complex Instruction. Once the school decided not to join Complex Instruction at this time, the cadre returned to the Inquiry process.

Culture Cadre

The culture cadre's greatest challenge (both short term and long term) rested in the complex and nebulous nature of their charge - to understand and act on the concept of culture. The concept of culture is not easily defined, and it is not surprising that this cadre tried repeatedly to redefine culture, the role culture plays in the school, and the role of parents as transmitters of culture. Despite the difficulty in defining culture, the cadre did generate the following list of thoughtful issues at their first cadre meeting. They determined that problems related to cultural difference occur because of:

- Ignorance of each other
- Stereotypes of each other
- Pressure to learn English, to use English
- Teachers think students that speak English understand everything
- Economic status creates sense of self (i.e. clothing)
- Parents teach prejudice
- Prejudice: feeling about self (names, derogatory stereotypes)
- The present war [Persian Gulf war] - does this have pressure on Arab students
- Group speaking other language seen as plotting or planning something - talking about them
- Teachers are not multi-lingual (some may feel alienated)

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- People are uncomfortable with others speaking another language - insecure -
  "Is this about me?"

- Must teach using the English language in California

- Recent immigrants may be uncomfortable

- We celebrate Cinco de Mayo, however, not Chinese New Year, etc.

Despite the good ideas generated in this first meeting, the cadre's progress was slow, largely because of a tension between wanting to engage in short term activities and doing long range Inquiry. This tension was partially due to the difficulty of defining culture but was also reflective of a split found in many cadres. People have different levels of comfort discussing issues in the abstract. In the culture cadre, some members were uncomfortable discussing culture on a more abstract level, and they fought to create something tangible, something immediate. Others worried that all of their efforts would be superficial if they did not understand the basic concept (culture). For example, at the second cadre meeting one teacher mentioned that they celebrate Cinco de Mayo and Japanese Flag Day, but they do not celebrate Chinese New Year. Another teacher stopped this discussion by saying that these things are really "overlay." He said, "We really don't understand anything about Chinese culture by going out to a Chinese New Year parade and out for Chinese food. It is better to do it in the classroom within the curriculum." After a discussion on how this would affect teachers, he gave an example of asking students to put together a Portuguese menu. They would have to talk to Portuguese people to do this and would gain an understanding of the role of food within their culture.

Several times the cadre attempted to move quickly to a solution, but other members of the cadre stopped them because they felt that the cadre had not adequately identified the problem; they other members felt that they should still be in the first stage of Inquiry. The following notes taken by a Stanford staff member at a

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March cadre meeting are an example:

> A quick and heated group discussion then ensued, which went something like this:
>
> teacher 1: Well then, what is the problem?
>
> teacher 2: A lack of exposure to other people's cultures.
>
> teacher 1: Well, what if teachers turned up at a church... or ate at a restaurant.. Are we solving the problems?
>
> teacher 3: Forget the problem, just get people in the school to look at other cultures in order to enjoy them.
>
> teacher 2: But we have to examine how kids see themselves, how they feel about other cultures.
>
> teacher 1: We have to define the problem so that we'll know if we've solved it.

They finally decided to develop a two prong approach. One set of activities would address cadre members' desire to do something immediately. The cadre proposed establishing an international club that would meet during "A" period. The club would provide insights into different cultures through understanding games, clothing, and foods of different peoples. The other set of activities would follow the Inquiry process and focus on how to recognize and respect the personal heritage of all students.

The facilitator brought this plan to the steering committee in April, and the steering committee approved the plan only after assurance that they would continue Inquiry into underlying problems of cultural difference. No progress was made on establishing the international club, and Inquiry did not progress beyond the problem discussion stage. Events that were cultural in nature took place on campus, such as a play about the cultural heritage of the city, but the culture cadre was not included in the decision to host these events. They were losing a sense of purpose and direction as the year progressed.

By the end of the school year the cadre was frustrated. All cadres were asked to discuss what they had accomplished and if they felt the year had been productive. All

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groups, with the exception of the culture cadre, felt their group was productive, and they looked forward to working with the same group, on the same issues next year. The culture cadre, on the other hand, felt they accomplished nothing and wondered if it would be productive to continue meeting next year.

Student Interaction Cadre

This cadre began Inquiry by examining the areas of concern that were raised on the survey during Taking Stock. They initially focussed on the issue of student safety and happiness because they were concerned that a sizeable percentage of students reported that they did not feel safe or happy at Calhoun. They did this before they had thoroughly examined all issues related to student interaction from all angles. They decided to see how widespread the concern was among students by taking an informal poll of students. Each cadre member asked at least five students if they felt happy and safe at Calhoun. The results were overwhelmingly positive; the students felt both safe and happy.

The cadre then had to refocus its energies and return to the process of problem identification. After some discussion, they decided that their focus should be on respect or lack of respect. They returned to the student survey information, and it confirmed the belief that there was a lack of respect on campus. They determined that lack of respect included self respect, respect for other students, respect for teachers, teachers' respect for students, teachers' respect for other staff, respect for culture, and respect for someone different.

Several cadre meetings were devoted to creating a set of hypotheses regarding respect. The twelve hypotheses identified were grouped according to those that had to do with the children, with adults, and with the social environment. After grouping them, the hypotheses read: There is a lack of respect because:

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- students have low self esteem (children)
- they do not have a sense of belonging (children)
- students seek attention (children)
- they lack pride (children)
- they lack ownership (children)
- students cover up for real feelings (children)
- they lack adult modeling (adults)
- there are inconsistent rules and consequences for bad behavior   (adult)
- students are not taught responsibility (adult)
- of low expectations for students (adult)
- all adults do not follow the school's set rules (adult)
- of changes in social morals (social environment)

Although the cadre eventually went through the stages of Inquiry before

identifying solutions, several members' desire to move quickly to solutions had to be

checked. The following discussion occurred after the above hypotheses were

identified:

> The facilitator asked the group for suggestions on how to test the hypotheses.
> There was quick agreement that they did not want to conduct another survey:
>
> cadre member 1: We've done some by observations, and we're tired
>   of surveys.
> facilitator: Can we go out to other students and see whether these really are
>   issues?
> cadre member 2: Let's look at test scores and referrals and observations.
> Stanford staff member: But, we have to be sure that these are the problems.
> cadre member 1: We can just use our eyes.
> cadre member 2: Didn't we do that when we came up with these?
> cadre member 1: We tested them before we came up with them.
> cadre member 2: That's not very good social science.
> cadre member 4: Some are just generalizations.
> cadre member 4: You know, the culture cadre is frustrated because they have
>   sort of junked their activities. They aren't doing anything.
> Stanford staff member: Look, we've done most of this [hypothesis generation]
>   now. Let's see which ones we can do something about.

At her suggestion, they clustered the hypotheses into the three groups mentioned

above. This tension between wanting to do the Inquiry process correctly (slowly) and wanting to move quickly to solutions was not unique to this cadre. The facilitator had to become facile at staying true to the process while recognizing cadre members' need to move more quickly.

By the end of the year, the group had developed a sense of ownership of their Inquiry area, and an understanding of the Inquiry process. Most of their work focussed on understanding the underlying challenges in regard to the issue of respect so that they could regroup in the fall and begin examining potential solutions to problems of social interactions at the school. Their only visible action was playing Aretha Franklin's "Respect" over the public address system one morning a week to raise students' awareness of the concept of respect. By the end of the year, they decided to change the name of the cadre from "student interaction" to "school interaction" because they felt that the challenge of respect was not limited to students, but included the adults as well.

Family Involvement

The family involvement cadre began as the parent and community involvement cadre, but by the end of the first meeting they had changed its name to family involvement. The initial challenge of this cadre was to define family involvement and explore the challenges associated with it. The cadre spent some time trying to come to consensus on a definition of what they meant by family involvement. After a few meetings, they agreed to define it as: *Positive and active support for students both in the school and in the home.* As a part of defining family involvement, the cadre engaged in the first stage of Inquiry: problem exploration. The cadre brainstormed their ideas on problems associated with family involvement, and they also explored the problem with people outside of the cadre. Between cadre meetings, each member

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informally asked five parents, teachers and/or students to discuss the issue of family involvement. One parent on the cadre contacted 15 parents by phone to explore the problem. This informal exploration helped them in their hypothesis formation. Actually, the process of problem definition and hypothesis generation was interrelated. The more they talked to parents, the broader their perspective became. For example, one hypothesis (Parents feel like second class citizens at the school) came from this informal exploration. During the process of defining family involvement, the cadre developed a list of hypotheses to test. At the end of this process, they had generated a list of about 25 hypotheses to test. The hypotheses are listed in Figure 4.

By April, the cadre was ready to start testing some hypotheses. After some random attempts at testing such a wide array of hypotheses, they decided to group them according to the following groups: parental negative attitudes toward school; student attitudes; restrictions on parent involvement; and problems residing in the school. They still realized that they had not tested any of the hypotheses. They decided that they needed to gather together a group of parents for a discussion of issues surrounding parent involvement. Without giving them the list of hypotheses, they would ask parents for their ideas on why parent involvement is an issue. Their next step was to identify a group of parents for this discussion.

They decided to use the upcoming Open House/Pasta Night to solicit names of parents who might be interested in attending a discussion group on issues in parent involvement. The cadre members a' a decided that the Open House/Pasta Dinner would be a good time to increase the general awareness of families about Accelerated Schools. They made banners for the tables with parts of the Vision on each and asked the principal to speak briefly about Accelerated Schools. They also designed a short form for parents to fill out stating:

Table 1
Family and Community Involvement Hypotheses

Parents have negative feelings toward the District. The District promised parents that their children could attend the schools which emphasized areas they were interested in (i.e. music, computers, etc.). However, when predetermined quotas were filled, children were denied access based on their race.

Working hours of parents conflict with school activities

Family problems, such as parents in jail, or abusive behavior, preoccupy some families.

Some children live in foster homes.

Parents do not trust the school or teachers.

Some parents do not speak English, and are afraid to try to communicate

Parents who may not have received an education look upon the school as a "Holy" place, and are afraid to come. They feel embarrassed and out of place.

Parents do not feel equal at the school. They feel they are not as important to their child's education as the teacher is.

The feeling of a close, tight-knit community is lacking, perhaps due to desegregation efforts and busing.

Most communication that parents receive is negative.

Parents may be "burnt out" by the time their children reach middle school. In elementary school, they deal with only one teacher, whereas at the middle school, they must deal with several.

Parents are not invited, and they do not feel welcome.

Students do not want their parents to be involved.

Parents do not like the way their own children treat them at school.

Students do not like the way their parents treat them at school.

Many families are run by a single parent

Many kids do not have fathers at home.

Parents and students fear retribution or revenge. They are afraid that if parents complain, the teachers or school will take it out on them.

There is a lack of understanding among parents that they can be involved at home, i.e. providing an adequate time and place for the child to do homework.

Parents do not have anything to do when they come. Parents do not know what to do.

Parents need help in how to deal with adolescents.

Teachers are reticent to talk to parents. Perhaps they have had a bad experience, or have not had success when contacting parents.

Parents are sometimes treated unprofessionally at schools. Appointments are not kept, or there are many interruptions.

Expectations of communication are unrealistic.

Some parents refuse to come to school and give no reason. They will not even discuss it.

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I would like to help celebrate our vision at Calhoun.

_____ I want to help Calhoun increase family involvement

_____ I want to serve on a committee with teachers and students to help achieve the Vision.

_____ I want to be involved but don't know how.

The cadre members were pleased with the response to the volunteer request at the Open House/Pasta Dinner. They received 90 forms back from parents who wanted to become more involved. Their next decision was how to respond to those who expressed interest. After discussing alternatives, such as focus groups or involvement on cadres, they decided to hold a parent night that would orient all of the potential parent volunteers to the Accelerated Schools philosophy and process, give them an idea of the present opportunities for involvement, and gain their perspective on the challenges of getting families involved and working toward the Vision. A letter was mailed to the 90 potential volunteers thanking them for volunteering and inviting them to the parent night. Follow up phone calls were planned, but few were made.

The cadre meeting before the parent night was devoted primarily to dividing up roles and responsibilities, and determining how to structure the meeting. The tone of the meeting was somber at first, because the facilitator and one active teacher member announced to the group that they had received final lay off notices, and would be unable to participate in the parent night. Other members of the cadre took over the planning and determined who should speak and what various members of the cadre should do before and during the parent night. The primary goal of the evening was to test their hypotheses by involving parents in small group discussion about factors that impede parent involvement.

The parent night was held the evening of May 21. Three Calhoun administrators, four teachers, three Stanford staff members, and three Calhoun

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students were there. Tables were spread with desserts and drinks. Parents trickled in slowly. Eventually ten parents arrived, and the evening began. Parents were given a description of the Accelerated Schools process at Calhoun. Following this description, everyone divided into small groups and the focus shifted to understanding what parent involvement means to the parents and to obtaining their ideas on what stands in its way. Discussion in all of the groups was lively, and resulted in many ideas and suggestions.

The ideas and suggestions were later divided into categories of: communication; public relations; obstacles to participation, and need for specific information. The cadre compared the ideas and suggestions of the parents to the hypotheses generated by the cadre and were pleased that the parents appeared to confirm 15 of the hypotheses. This would guide the cadre in searching for solutions.

The end of the year was bittersweet for the family involvement cadre. They were sad to lose their facilitator and one of their more active members (due to district-wide layoffs that will be discussed later). The remaining members were able to keep the momentum alive, but they did not relish replacing the facilitator, and they were sad to lose two friends and colleagues. They were pleased, however, by their accomplishments. They felt like they had followed the Inquiry process and saw its utility. They also built on the diversity of their group; they treated parent, student and support staff as full members of the cadre and benefited from their input. They also felt that they accomplished several things. They confirmed many of their hypotheses, and they identified a number of parents who wanted to be actively involved. They also identified several activities for the next school year, such as setting up a parent/teacher room on campus.

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Curriculum Cadre

The curriculum cadre's primary charge was to reinstate the electives program at Calhoun without compromising the gains they had made by instituting a two hour language arts core. This was a sensitive issue at Calhoun since the language arts teachers felt that it was too early to dismantle the two hour language arts core - it had only been in place one year - while other teachers felt that the language arts department gained approval for the two hour core without adequately anticipating the effect on the students and other programs.

Unlike other cadres, the curriculum cadre knew from the beginning that they had a deadline for their work. A schedule for the next year had to be developed by the end of the school year (within four months), and they knew that they could not engage in true Inquiry and develop the schedule. They decided at the first meeting to put off true Inquiry until after they designed next year's schedule; they decided to try to use the Inquiry process on a faster track in developing the schedule. This proved to be a difficult decision because the deadlines for the 1991-1992 schedule forced them to make important decisions quickly. They consoled themselves that they could revisit many of the issues once the schedule was finished. Many of the frustrations experienced by this cadre were the result of their decision to try to use a "fast track" Inquiry. They were compromising their ability to look in depth into very important issues.

They identified several areas that needed further study. First, they knew that they needed to determine the best schedule that would meet the needs and desires of the students. Second, they wanted to ascertain the degree of flexibility available in time and content for courses.

The cadre began review of the information from the Taking Stock survey. Parents and students indicated resoundingly a desire for electives. Those frequently

requested were computers, foreign language, music, home economics, and shop courses. They developed Figure 5 as a means of moving from strengths and desires to a course schedule that reflected the school's vision. As the figure illustrates, at the beginning of the Inquiry process, the student and staff strengths, desires, and needs were unrelated (and only partially known). The task of their inquiry was to systematically examine these strengths and desires as illustrated in the center of Figure 5. The cadre hoped that this examination would yield a schedule responsive to the needs and desires of students and in keeping with the staff's strengths and desires for the students.

As the cadre began examining the student requests, some members dismissed the students' desire for more computer classes as just a desire to play more computer games. Several members of the cadre insisted, however, that they did not know what the students meant when they requested "more computers". They developed a survey listing potential computer applications and asked the students to indicate applications they wanted to learn, and to explain why. Although "computer games" was checked frequently, the majority of students also selected keyboarding, word processing, and computer graphics. The students explained that they saw computers as the future and that computer skills would help them in school, college and at future jobs.

Students also indicated a desire to take courses in foreign languages, which the staff strongly supported. Once the cadre began discussing foreign language, they realized they had several issues to resolve. First, which languages should be offered? Second, should classes be geared primarily to native speakers (to help Hispanic and Portuguese students become fluent in their native language), and third, should they offer survey courses (one quarter of four different languages) designed to provide an overview of several languages to students? Two teachers agreed to examine available information on how to provide language classes for native speakers and

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Figure 5

Inquiry Aide for the Curriculum Cadre

student
desires
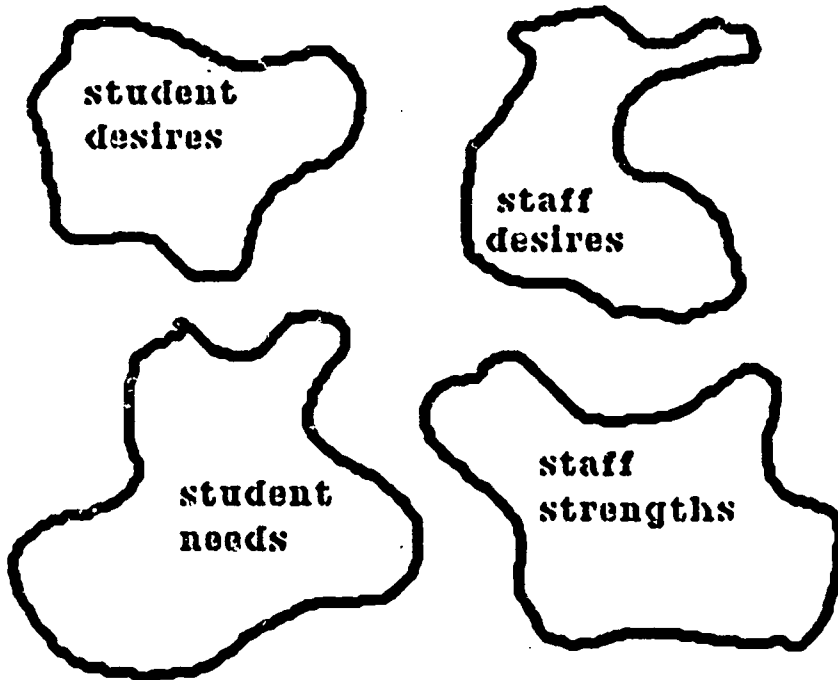
staff
desires

1. Identify students' needs and desires; staffs' desires and strengths as basis for curriculum building blocks

student
needs

staff
strengths

student needs		staff strengths
vision>>>	▨	<<<vision
student desires		staff desires

2. Find areas of intersection between four building blocks and vision

M	T	W	TH	F	S&S

3. Translate building blocks into appropriate schedule

report back to the cadre.

As work progressed on specific concerns about computers and foreign language, the cadre agreed that they needed a better idea of student desires and staff strengths related to electives in general. They designed a survey to poll students on courses they would like to take and another one for teachers on classes they would be able to teach. The poll indicated considerable interest in foreign languages, especially Spanish, computer and technology related courses, woodshop and home economics, alternative sports and exercise, and music. The cadre was pleased to find that teachers were available to teach all of the courses students desired.

The cadre's focus was not only on what to offer, but also on how to offer courses. Their current schedule was a typical one composed of six 50 minute classes (two classes were combined for the language arts core). They wanted to know how much flexibility they had in setting a schedule, so they called in an administrator from the district office to describe state and district requirements for course offerings. She told them that the only subject with a minimum number of minutes per week was physical education (400 minutes for every ten days). For other subjects, as long as they cover the main concepts, they were not locked into blocks of time. She assured them that the superintendent and the state encourage schools to link subjects, but she also warned them not to try to do too much. Her parting words were, "Remember, to eat an elephant, you have to eat one bite at a time." The cadre was excited by this news. They realized that they had the freedom to radically change the curriculum. For example, they could offer a seven period day if they wanted, or they could create interdisciplinary blocks. They tossed around scheduling ideas such offering semester courses or offering courses on a rotating schedule. Two teachers volunteered to review documents prepared by the State of California to find examples of proven

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creative scheduling.

These activities were underway when the principal and vice principal came to the cadre meeting on March 18 and reported that the district was proposing deep cuts in programs and personnel because of state budget cuts. The curriculum cadre was the first to hear of the effects on Calhoun's scheduling process and staffing, and the news profoundly changed the workings of the cadre for several weeks. The vice principal's immediate charge was to create a list of course offerings and course numbers by the end of the week based on a projected enrollment. The cadre tabled the planned discussion and began working on a realistic schedule based on the projected number of students and teachers. The discussion did not go very far until it was mired in the problem of how to keep the two hour language arts block and add electives. No closure was achieved, and the vice principal was left to create the schedule without consensus from the teachers.

Once the immediate crisis was over, the teachers returned to their focus on setting a new schedule. Although the cadre was exploring many alternatives to the current schedule, not all cadre members were happy with the movement away from the two hour language arts block. Many of the language arts teachers felt that the students were already behind, and they should be in academically demanding classes as many hours a day as possible. Many of the other teachers felt that the students needed alternatives, that they needed a place to shine, to build their self esteem. They talked about how students who do poorly in academic subjects live for their electives classes. The former wood shop teacher explained the function of his woodshop classes:

> ...They just don't offer those kind of courses, much to their dismay. Every day they say, 'Mr. __, am I going to get you for wood shop?' They have known me from sixth grade. 'When you become eighth graders, sign up.' But now, they can't. Like Jose there, he said, 'Oh, that sucks. I couldn't wait to take wood

shop.' The policy now is that if you are interested in that kind of thing, you can do it in high school or in the regional voc. center. The problem is that half of these kids, if they don't find something to interest them, they will be dropping out anyway. It really did a lot for self esteem to make something out of nothing. A lot of applied math too.

By the end of May, the cadre had to make some tough choices on a final schedule for the 1991-92 school year. The decision was finally made to eliminate the two hour language arts block and create a two hour humanities block (including language arts and social studies). The discussion became electric as cadre members weighed the ramifications of this decision. The following excerpt from field notes captures the excitement felt in the room as they felt the taste of empowerment:

teacher 1	There is so much in language arts to do. Four novels and the literature book are mandated by the district in one year. I can't do it now. How can we do it if we have a humanities block?
principal	It is time to be creative with the curriculum. We need reading and writing across the curriculum. It should be in math and science too.
teacher 2[22]	What is the word? "Empowered?" We are going to have to tell the district that we can't follow their mandates. To do this we will develop what really works. [to the principal] To do this, you need to give us planning time, not wait until September to do it.
principal	What about this summer? I will pay $100/per day to plan this summer. Don't worry about the district. I'll take care of them, even if I have to stand in front of a train to make my point.
teacher 3	I'll join!
parent	That's the best thing I've heard! I'll back you up to the district. I

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[22] This teacher had reluctantly participated in Accelerated Schools to this point, so it was especially powerful for her to make this suggestion.

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want kids to excel and the only way is to know math and science. But, they need hands on experiences to get them to learn. I'll help you stand in front of the train.

principal   The bottom line is that kids will be reading more with reading and writing across the curriculum.

The excitement of this meeting permeated the whole campus for several days. People were excited about planning an integrated curriculum. The vice principal became so excited by the possibilities that he created a sample schedule that took the cadre's discussion several steps beyond where most of the teachers felt comfortable. He came to the cadre with a set of five thematic strands in which students would take all of their courses. All subjects within the strand would follow a central theme. For example, in an aeronautics/aviation strand humanities, science and electives would all focus on the theme of aviation. Other proposed themes were pre-international baccalaureate, technology, active learning (i.e. the mind and body), and communication. The cadre members were intrigued by the thematic strands, but as they realized how difficult this would be to implement, they began to balk at the idea. They also felt that there was not sufficient time to work out some of the problems (e.g. if it would inadvertently retrack the school, if students could only take foreign language if they were in one strand, time for teachers to prepare for the strands). In the end, to the disappointment of the vice principal, the cadre members decided that they were not ready for strands yet. They did, however, recommend a schedule that included a two hour humanities block, reinstated electives, and eliminated ability grouping. Table 2 illustrates the changes in the schedules.

By the end of the year the cadre was exhausted but satisfied that they had accomplished something. At the final cadre meeting, they mentioned the following as accomplishments:

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Table 2

Calhoun Schedules

Schedule of Courses 1990 - 1991	Schedule of Courses 1991 - 1992
Math	Accelerated Math
Science/Home Ec., Art or Computer	Science/Aerospace
Physical Education	Physical Education
Reading (part of 2 hour block)	Integrated Humanities Core
Language Arts (part of 2 hour block)	Integrated Humanities Core
Social Studies	Exploratory or Foreign Language

- we "tossed the curriculum around" which we needed to do in order to grow.

- we worked effectively as a group

- we are better informed and realize the amount of flexibility we have

- we know student priorities and teacher skills

- we know what students mean by "computers"

- we can be creative in what we offer students

- we worked toward common rules, curricular objectives, and accountability

Summary

Despite the differences between cadres, some patterns emerged. A rhythm develops in cadres (and in individuals) as they internalize the principles and process of the Accelerated Schools Project. The following are stages through which most of the members of cadres passed. They were not always in this order, but the stages illustrate the ebbs and flows of excitement and exhaustion that characterize this kind of school level reform. One stage was characterized by concern over the amount of work involved in the process. At this point, the tasks looked insurmountable and the resources (time, money, personnel) insufficient to address them. Another stage was excitement over the possibilities for change. The world of new ideas was open, and creative energy was flowing. There was an awareness that long held ideals and dreams may be realized. This stage could be overwhelming because an unlimited array of possibilities opens up. In another stage, there was eagerness to do something. Cadre members felt frustrated over the tedious nature of group work and at the unwillingness of others to jump quickly to solutions. For some, this was a time for them to initiate their own "little wheels," or smaller projects that tapped their latent creativity and initiative. For others, it was a stage of disappointment and frustration. A final stage was the realization of accomplishment. Few tangible changes occurred

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during the first year, and it was not until people reflected on their activities that they realized that they had made major structural and attitudinal changes.

Cadres as Decision-Making Units

The preceding discussion focuses on the issues each cadre examined during Inquiry and on the movement the cadres made through the stages of the Inquiry process. This was one part of capacity building, but another part of capacity building was learning to work effectively within small groups, to develop a unity of purpose within each cadre. At Calhoun, the cadres included teachers, members of the administrative team, support staff, parents, students, and community members. All of the cadres had three challenges: to develop a unity of purpose; to accommodate members with whom they had rarely worked before; and to develop a system for distributing the work and developing ownership in the project among all of the members. The following describes this process.

Development of Unity of Purpose within Each Cadre

The first challenge was to develop a sense of group unity. The Accelerated Schools principle of unity of purpose had to be enacted within each cadre for the cadre to work effectively. When the cadres met for the first time in February, the cadre members found that they were working with unfamiliar teachers and support staff. In the past, most small group work was done by self selected groups, but the Inquiry cadres were selected based on interest in a problem area, not on friendship networks. In addition to working with unfamiliar staff members, the cadre members also had to try to accommodate students, parents, and community members into their groups. In the past, parents had been involved only in the parent organization, and students were not represented on any planning committees. A sense of group did not emerge

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immediately for most of the cadres, but over time it did. As described below, the sense of unity was usually limited to the Calhoun staff, since most of the cadres had trouble incorporating parents, students, and community representatives as full members of the cadres. One facilitator described the process on building unity:

> One of the things that I saw begin to happen yesterday with this group is that . . . we didn't start out as a group, but it's happening already. You can see it. And that's one of the things that, for us to really work effectively together, we are going to have to become a group, where we really feel some commitment to each other and some group process there and some social relationship between us.

Developing an identity as a group was difficult for some of the cadres because they felt that their cadre was not as important as others. It was clear from the beginning of Inquiry that the curriculum cadre would be working on issues of great interest to the entire school. Several teachers left their assigned cadres and joined the curriculum cadre because they wanted to have a voice in forming any recommendations the cadre would make to the school as a whole. The "abandoned" cadres had to convince themselves that their work was also important. Another issue of status between cadres, was the proportion of teachers to support staff on the cadres. Several cadres were composed largely of teachers, while others had nearly equal numbers of support staff and teachers. There was a sense that the cadres predominated by teachers were more important than the cadres with sizeable numbers of support staff. Some teachers changed their opinions when they saw the importance of obtaining views from other perspectives. As one facilitator said:

> It's interesting because you do see the kids from the campus supervisors' point of view. They see them in a very different light than you do. So we do have sort of a mix with teachers and have the supervisors and the aides who sometimes see them differently, because they sometimes aren't interacting as much as we are down in class, sort of helping but more on the fringe area. They see things that happen that we don't always see.

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The cadre facilitation was often critical to the development of a sense of unity among the cadre members. The facilitator was responsible for providing the structure to the group to move it ahead, but also for allowing active involvement of all participants. The facilitators all had opinions on the topics discussed, but they had to be careful not to use their role as a platform for their own ideas and opinions. The facilitator also had to ensure that some members of the cadre did not dominate discussions and that all members had a voice. Some facilitators were adept at drawing opinions from silent members, especially from students and parents. The role of facilitator was not an easy one, since they were seen as the "experts" on the Inquiry process, but they were also learning it along with the other cadre members. Although the facilitators always led the meetings, they often turned to the Stanford staff members or to the members of the administrative team for questions or help with procedure.

Accommodation of Diversity in Cadre Membership

The second challenge for cadres was to accommodate diverse members. The initial membership of the cadres included all of the teaching staff and all of the support staff (except for bus drivers, janitors, and kitchen staff). The support staff (office staff, teacher's aides, campus supervisors) had never been involved in school wide planning before. Some of them welcomed the opportunity to work with teachers on important issues, while others, for a variety of reasons, never actively participated. Often the support staff could not attend meetings because of their work schedule, although the principal tried to accommodate schedules. The support staff members, on the whole, were rather quiet in the initial meetings, but as a sense of unity formed in the groups, and they recognized that their opinions were welcome, they began participating more actively. Many of them attended meetings although they were not

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paid for the time.

The facilitators agreed before the first cadre meetings that all of the cadres would try to involve parents, students and community members as active participants in the meetings, but most of the cadres found this a difficult task. Each cadre approached identifying student, family, and community members differently. For example, the facilitator of the family and community involvement cadre approached several students and a parent before the first meeting, and they remained active participants throughout the year. In fact, the parent member and one of the student members took on major responsibilities for some of the cadre's data collection and hypothesis testing activities.

Both the culture and the student involvement cadres saw family and student members as vital to an effective examination of their problem areas. The culture cadre saw parents and students as culture bearers. They did not want to select parents or student members to merely meet an obligation. At the initial cadre meeting one staff member observed that student members would be crucial because the cadre really needed to know the perspective of students on the issue of culture. He thought that their participation might be more important than that of parents for relating the planning of the cadre to students because an adult's perception of culture and of important cultural events might be different from those of students. The student interaction cadre was concerned that the student members be representative of the student body. They identified a number of possible student members and classified them by grade, gender, ethnic background, academic ability, behavior and community. With these criteria in mind, they identified six students (two from each grade) that would provide a good cross representation of the student population. The cadre applied the same criteria to selecting parent members.

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The curriculum cadre focused on extending membership to members of the community, while the instruction cadre looked primarily for students and parents already known to the cadre members. The curriculum cadre felt that the business community should be involved in decision making since it is the source of much of the criticism of schools. The instruction cadre did not view parents and students as bearers of special insight into instruction. They addressed the issue of involving parents and students primarily to fulfill the obligation to include representatives of these groups on the cadre.

Although all of the cadres spent considerable time discussing the inclusion of members outside of the school staff and faculty, few successfully achieved it. Only one parent remained an active, sustained cadre member; others attended only one or two meetings. Community representatives displayed a similar pattern. Student involvement in the cadres was mixed. Two cadres maintained active, sustained student involvement. In the family and community involvement cadre, two students attended most of the meetings; they actively participated in discussions and assisted in all activities. These students were not the typical "involved" students; they were not among the top students academically, and they were not involved in student organizations. One of them had a history of discipline problems, but during the time that he was involved in this cadre, his behavior and school performance improved.

Cadre members did little to encourage these members to be more active. They assumed that the adults stopped attending because of time conflicts or because non-educators were not interested in the issues under discussion. They assumed that the students lost interest in the discussion and had time conflicts. One student said that she stopped attending meetings because she did not like to hear adults complaining.

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Distribution of Work and Development of a Sense of Ownership

The third challenge was to develop a system to distribute work and create a sense of ownership among all members. Before the cadre meetings began, the facilitators met with the Stanford team and the administrative team and developed a set of roles for each cadre. The recommended set of roles were: facilitator, recorder, time keeper, computer person (typist), visionary, closure person, and resource person. These roles were designed to distribute the work among the members and to encourage a sense of ownership through active participation. Each cadre had its own way of distributing roles, and some of the roles (e.g. visionary, closure person) were frequently dropped after a few meetings. In most cases, as the cadres began to identify activities that had to be performed (e.g. researching appropriate methods of teaching foreign language or interviewing students about their interest in parent involvement in the school) cadre members volunteered. As the cadres developed a sense of unity, the pool of people volunteering for activities grew.

The Workings of the Governance Structure

The principles and recommended practice of an Accelerated School's governance structure have already been presented in Section Four. During the first phase of the Accelerated Schools process (Taking Stock, Vision , Setting Priorities) the groundwork for a new governance structure is laid. By the end of this phase, cadres are formed ; membership on the steering committee is taking shape, and a format for school as a whole meetings is developing. During the second stage, the governance structure actually begins to function.

As the previous section elaborated, the Calhoun staff decided to form five cadres. They decided to streamline and integrate the existing steering committee

(made up of administrators and department heads) with the newly forming Accelerated Schools steering committee (cadre facilitators). They made no preparations for a regular school-as-a-whole meeting, other than to meet briefly before cadre meetings on early release days.

Roles and Relationship of Cadres

A detailed description of the activities of the cadres has already been presented. As governing bodies, they shared some qualities. First, their members established roles and delegated responsibilities among the members. Formalizing roles and relationships within the cadres clarified responsibilities and helped move the cadres in a productive direction. The cadre members saw themselves as participants in an on-going decision-making unit, rather than an ad hoc committee with no real structure and an unclear function. The roles also curbed a natural tendency for the staff members to look at administrators on the committees as the leaders. The administrative and Stanford members often helped facilitators with the Inquiry process, but they did not take over the meetings.

Second, the cadres took responsibility for decisions on basic issues affecting the school. They had sole responsibility for examining all aspects of their particular area. For example, the family involvement cadre spent its time defining family involvement and hypothesizing about why it is an issue at the school. The cadre members were responsible for determining how to test these hypotheses and the actions they should take. The culture cadre members knew that they should be responsible for decision about cultural issues and activities, and they became upset when the administration approved cultural activities on campus without their input.

Third, the cadres worked within a larger governance structure. They knew other cadres were working on related issues, and also, that decisions had to pass through the steering committee and eventually to the school as a whole. For example, the

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steering committee was informed regularly of the progress of the family involvement cadre. When the cadre proposed using the Open House/Pasta Night as a vehicle to increase family awareness of Accelerated Schools, the steering committee members made recommendations on their plans.

The Steering Committee

The steering committee was a rather large body (19 regular members). Membership consisted of the five cadre representatives, five department heads, five administrators, and four members of the Stanford staff. The steering committee usually met before school every two weeks. By the end of the year, it met weekly, at the request of its members. The vice principal usually coordinated the development of the agenda and facilitated the meetings. Meetings were very businesslike and discussions were usually limited by ambitious agendas and the time constraint inherent in holding meetings before school. The primary purpose of steering committee meetings was information exchange. Typically, all cadre representatives and department heads reported briefly on their activities and concerns. Given that this involved ten reports, little more could be accomplished. The reports were useful, even if brief, because steering committee representatives could go back to their cadre and report on what other cadres were doing and, in some instances, dispel rumors circulating the school about cadre plans. For example, the head of the physical education department came to one steering committee meeting upset with the curriculum cadre because she had heard that the cadre had set a schedule that involved two hours of physical education two days a week. She was assured that this was not the cadre's intention, and that no cadre could make final decisions without the approval of the steering committee. The steering committee also helped the cadres stay true to the Inquiry process and to keep their eyes on the Vision.

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Aside from its role as a vehicle for information exchange, the steering committee addressed a number of school wide issues. Some of the issues were basic operational questions, inherent in establishing a committee form of governance. For example, throughout the year the steering committee discussed methods of improving communication between cadres. Initially they decided to put up a bulletin board in the teachers' mail room. On the bulletin board were posted each cadre's agenda and minutes from the previous meeting and the agenda for the next meeting. They worked to develop a common format for agendas and minutes so that members of other cadres could easily find information. They also addressed the problem of poor cadre attendance at non-early release days. The classified staff members were often unable or unwilling to attend meetings beyond their usual work day. The steering committee discussed the problem and possible solutions. By the end of the year, they had come to no decision on how to increase attendance.

The steering committee was able to address some broader issues that went beyond governance. Often these were issues that were surfacing in the cadres, but went beyond the scope of the individual cadre's work. For example, the issue of accountability, consistency and high expectations for all students came up in several of the cadres. Cadre members expressed concern that other members of the staff did not have high expectations for students, were lax in discipline, and rarely required sufficient homework. Rather than leave these issues within individual cadres, they were discussed at the steering committee so that they would be debated in a larger forum. Other issues of a more global nature included how to rid the school of ability grouping (a decision the school made within the first year) and how to choose outside programs that will become integrated into the structure of the school. With the exception of the issue of tracking, the steering committee did not reach conclusions on these issues, but the discussions surrounding each issue brought many private

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concerns into a public forum and illustrated to the cadres how issues cross cadre lines.

The steering committee also continued to serve as an information exchange between the administration and the department heads, and between the departments. The principal usually presented informational updates at each steering committee meeting. The department heads described concerns and activities of the departments. For example, at one steering committee meeting, the representative from the media center described how to process lost textbooks; another teacher asked the committee to address the problem of student assistants in the office allowing friends to accompany them on to classrooms, and the head of the science department announced that she would be making a presentation on the science mentor project soon.

School as a Whole

The school met as a whole for a short time at the beginning of each early release day. Usually the meetings resembled faculty meetings more than they did Accelerated Schools school as a whole meetings. Student, parent and community representation at these meetings was spotty. Typically, the principal would speak first and talk to the staff about news of the school and upcoming events. These reports contained similar messages to those given at faculty meetings After he spoke, other staff members often made presentations. These reports were not always directly related to Accelerated Schools activities. The administration merely used the opportunity of a whole staff gathering to relay other information. In some instances, these gatherings were inappropriate for such presentations. For example, at a meeting near the end of the school year, the union representative brought copies of the new contract and discussed them with the staff. This presentation was particularly inappropriate because many people (students, parents, classified staff) were not members of the union, and four of the teachers had recently received final lay-off

notices and were uncomfortable listening to other teachers discuss their contract.

Although the steering committee discussed several appropriate times for a school-as-a-whole meeting (e.g. after the Complex Instruction workshop and at the end of the year), they always decided to use available time for cadre meetings. A true school-as-a-whole meeting occurred only a few times during the period of observation (January to June). One of the school-as-a-whole meetings served a cathartic function because it helped the school community deal with the proposed budget cuts. The school was in shock and in need of a chance to discuss potential action they could take. The steering committee decided that all cadres should dedicate some of their time to exploring the proper response of Calhoun to these cuts and report their decisions back to the school as a whole in order to respond collectively. When the cadres regrouped, the energy of sharin a problem and of potential responses to it electrified the room. The process gave the staff a sense of power and unity where a sense of hopelessness had been. The school-as-a-whole format worked well in this instance as a vehicle for exchange of ideas and solidifying the staff.

Some staff members were frustrated that more school-as-a-whole meetings did not occur. They wanted to have a chance to report out on their activities and hear about the activities of others. Although most people wanted this kind of exchange, few were willing to give up the time for it. The steering committee continually proposed using an early release day or part of an inservice day to have a school-as-a-whole meeting, but the cadres always chose to use all available time for cadre work. A school-as-a-whole meeting at the end of the year would have been a logical event, but the negative influence of staff layoffs and the press of the end of the year planning prevented it. The end of the year was celebrated by a Stanford sponsored lunch on the last day of class, and by a faculty roast on the teachers' last day.

Changes Occurring During Inquiry (February to June)

Changes at Calhoun became even more noticeable as the Inquiry process took hold. Changes related to the staff, administration and structure of the school were particularly evident. The process had a less immediate and visible effect on students, families and the community but the groundwork for more profound changes was laid. The Calhoun community knew that changes come slowly using the Accelerated Schools process and were warned to not look for changes too early. Many members of the school community were pleasantly surprised at the changes visible after this first year of implementation. The following describes changes related to the staff and administration, to students, families and community, and to the structure of the school.

Changes Related to the Staff.

Many changes related to the staff were evident at this time. Some of those evident at the end of Phase I continued (e.g. commitment to Calhoun and internalization of the principles), and others became evident. Communication among teachers, between teachers and classified staff, and between teachers and the administration improved tremendously. Many teachers credited the Accelerated Schools Project meetings with opening communication between departments. In a response to a request for evidence of changes, one teacher wrote a note saying, "I have spent time talking with teachers I probably wouldn't have found time or situations to talk with." Another said

> The departments now talk to each other. The departments stayed to themselves, but now there is better interdepartmental communication. There is a higher degree of unity for common goals. Before, they just worked to keep the status quo.

By the end of the year there was considerable talk of interdisciplinary work. Teachers were actually talking to colleagues in other departments about joint work, rather than

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sitting in department meetings bemoaning the obstacles to interdisciplinary work. The curriculum cadre's creation of a humanities core was visible evidence that interdisciplinary work is possible.

The Accelerated Schools Project became a vehicle for classified staff and teachers to interact. Prior to the project, most of the classified staff had little interaction with teachers. Instructional aides worked closely with one teacher but campus supervisors and office staff had only passing involvement with the teachers. Through the Accelerated Schools Project, they are now active participants in cadre work, and they are encouraged to attend all school-as-a-whole meetings. The following excerpts with several campus supervisors (c. s.) exemplifies the changed relations they feel with the teaching staff:

Q.	Tell me a little bit about since you've been involved in these cadre meetings. Has that changed your relationship at all with the teachers?
C.S. 1	I think so. Because even though I've worked here for a while, there were still a few teachers that I really didn't know. I think in the meetings, it just brought us a little closer to each other and we've gotten to know one another, which I really did like.
Q.	Is your voice heard equally to the teachers?
C.S.1	It gives us closeness, togetherness. I don't know, it doesn't -- before it was like the teachers were on one side and the other staff was on the other side, but I don't know, with these meetings, it's like -- I can't say it's like they're equal to us, but we feel just the same as they do.
Q.	Yea, you contribute something different.
C.S. 2	I felt easy about raising my hand and speaking out. Instead of being shy and afraid in the classroom.

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Q.   So, before this process happened, did you ever have times when
            you would meet together as a whole school?

C.S. 2   No, that's why I said I really like this idea, because before -- well,
            teachers are really always very busy, running back and forth, and
            we really never have time to sit and talk, rather than just a 'Hi,
            good morning' and that's it. And so I think it was a good idea.

Communication with the administration also improved greatly during the Inquiry

process. Four members of the administrative team served on cadres and were active

participants, but not leaders. Teachers were able to talk to them as colleagues, rather

than superiors. Teachers frequently came to the principal to talk informally, which was

less common last year. The principal noticed a definite change in the attitude of one

group of teachers:

> Many of those who are committed to the school in a leadership way now were
> the constant gripers. [They] used to come in braced for a fight. It was a real 'us
> and them' feeling before. That is gone.

The improved communication was related to the developing sense of a unity of

purpose at Calhoun. The entire staff had shared goals and a shared vision for the

school. They could talk to people in different departments, or to people holding

different positions in the school about their common experience (participating in the

Inquiry process) and common Vision.

The teaching staff also demonstrated increased trust of the administration.

Given that trust was at a low point before the project started, many members of the

faculty responded to overtures by the administration with caution. With increased

communication with the administration, a unity of purpose, and growing evidence that

the administration was willing to share power and responsibility, teachers began

letting down their guard. One staunch critic of the project and the principal admitted at

the end of the year that his opinior of the principal had "Changed for the better. He is incredible at p. r." He went on to say that he has seen change with the faculty and administration. He felt that teachers are beginning to trust the administration because the principal is standing behind their decisions.

Some other teachers were still leery, even at the end of the year. They were just watching for the slightest evidence of a breech of trust. They felt that the vice principal had made "tremendous change" in incorporating the Accelerated Schools model in all of his thinking and that he could be trusted. But, several of them remained highly critical of the principal as he attempted to adjust to a new process. For example, one teacher was furious with the principal for coming to a cadre meeting with news of the proposed teacher lay-offs without giving the facilitator prior knowledge of his message. He thought he was using the process by informing teachers at the first possible meeting, but she felt that he was grandstanding. She and some others also felt "betrayed" when their scheduling plans were suggested to be extended by the administration to include thematic strands.

The Accelerated Schools principle of empowerment was taking hold among the staff. Teachers were realizing that they could make a difference at the school. As one teacher said:

> We are starting to feel that what we decide will be put to use and practice. Before the cadres, there was a sense that input would be put to us - that decisions were made without us. We are seeing our work put in place for next year.

Several teachers began to take more responsibility for bringing innovations into the school, and others realized that they did not have to accept decisions made by the administration. For example, the Stanford project director had a discussion with a teacher at the end of the school year. The teacher was upset about the administration's attempt to implement the thematic strands in the new schedule. The

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Stanford project director reminded her that the teachers turned the decision around. The teacher admitted that they would not have been allowed to do that a year ago, but that this year they could use the Accelerated Schools process to turn it around.

The teachers were both excited and frightened by the thought of having influence and responsibility. Several teachers made comments such as, "It's amazing how we want power, and when we get it, we don't use it or know how to." Another said:

> I think the faculty is really happy about having the empowerment, the right to make decisions and be in on the process. They don't realize as many other people don't - fail to realize - that rights also carry their burden of responsibility.

The principal commented that he likes the idea of empowering teachers because it gives them more freedom to do what they want:

> The best curriculum is what the teacher is excited about. It doesn't matter what it is. Accelerated Schools has done that. It's hard to convince teachers that they have the freedom to do it - to get over doing what the principal wants.

Related to an increase in staff empowerment was a blossoming of creativity and initiative. As one teacher commented at the end of the year, "Accelerated Schools rejuvenated us. It made lots of us more creative." There were many examples of teachers taking chances within their classes that they may not have taken before. Several teachers seemed to rediscover creativity that had laid dormant, or they felt more freedom to try the things that previously they may have been afraid to try.

Two teachers warrant special attention for the projects they initiated. One decided to hold an egg drop contest at the school. The idea of the egg drop is not new, but it had never been done at Calhoun. The teacher became interested in the contest because it was fun, could involve the whole school, and encouraged the students to be creative. The teacher did not intend for the egg drop to become a major school activity when he started, but it became the "event of the Spring" for the students

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and staff. As interest in the contest grew, his creativity grew. He developed incentives for faculty to involve their students (and to become involved themselves), he recruited sponsors from local businesses, and he engaged in creative promotion for weeks prior to the contest (e.g. he wore an egg shaped helmet for days before the contest, played a version of "In the Mood" clucked by chickens over the public address system, and designed his own cartoons to encourage participation).

His enthusiasm caught on. There were over 400 entries; most of them from students. Some of the entries were cooperative ventures of groups of students, so most of the student body was involved. Many students put hours of work into their entries. The special education teachers commented that the egg drop was wonderful:

> The students are with the school, and they aren't going to be seen as dumb because they have had some really good ideas about how to protect their eggs. This really raises their self esteem, and their sense of belonging.

The special education teachers were especially gratified because one of their students designed the winning entry.

Some of the students worked with their parents to perfect an entry. The mother of one boy said that the project brought her son and husband closer. They worked together for days creating a geodesic dome to cradle the egg. She said that as soon as her husband walked in the door, the boy talked him into working on the project.

The event itself was a success. The students were attentive - hooting with pleasure at failed attempts, admiring well designed entries. At least half of the faculty and several parents submitted entries. After the event, the teacher designed a thank you note to the staff with an adaptation of a Far Side cartoon and the following note:

> WE DID IT! WE HAVE CREATED A CALHOUN MODEL FOR TOTAL SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT TO INCLUDE STUDENTS, TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AIDES, CUSTODIANS, SECRETARIES, PARENTS, BUSINESS AND POLITICIANS. WE ARE DOCUMENTING THE PROCESS AND EVALUATING THE PROJECT. WE INTEND TO PUBLISH THIS PROJECT AS AN ELEMENT

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OF CALHOUN'S ACCELERATED SCHOOL PROGRAM IN ACTION. I
APPRECIATED ALL YOUR HELP.

The other teacher thought that it would be interesting for the graduating eighth
grade students to evaluate Calhoun and the Accelerated Schools program. She
thought that Calhoun needed to know how students felt about their experience and
that the students would benefit from reflecting on their school and their involvement in
the school. She said that she wanted the students to know that the teachers have been
working hard through Accelerated Schools for them and that Accelerated Schools has
given the teachers a vision and a structure to accomplish what might otherwise seem
like too much. As the writing lab teacher, she was able to create assignments for
entire grade levels. In May, all eighth grade students were asked to write an essay
describing: their background; their sense of school pride; the quality of instruction at
Calhoun; the nature of student interaction; their involvement in the Accelerated
Schools Project; and their overall assessment of Calhoun. The teacher not only
developed guidelines for the assignment, but decided to make a video tape of several
key participants in the Accelerated Schools Project talking about Calhoun and the
Accelerated Schools Project.

Students' interest in writing the essays varied widely. Many wrote only the
minimum and did not think very deeply about their experience. Others, however, used
the exercise to convey their thoughts and experiences to the teachers. Most of the
quotations in this report from students are drawn from the essays. The Calhoun
teachers are also using the comments to reflect on issues of curriculum and
instruction.

By the end of the school year, many of the teachers were internalizing the
process and principles of the Accelerated Schools Project. The staff began
approaching issues both within their classes and concerning the whole school through

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the lens of the Accelerated Schools model. Teachers began challenging their own expectations of students, realizing that they may have lowered their expectations. They began seeing themselves as active agents of change, not passive recipients of whatever change may be thrust upon them. Some teachers, such as the Egg Drop organizer, became near proselytizers for the process. From his experience, he began exhorting his colleagues to think and act globally rather than locally. He said that teachers frequently do interesting projects or activities, but they do not have a major effect on the school because their ideas either remain in the classroom or affect only a few students. If the teacher were to think globally - as he did with the Egg Drop - the energy would be felt by the entire school, and others (staff and students) would learn that it is good to make change and think creatively.

Even some of the staunch critics of the project began to internalize its message by the end of the year. For example, in February one teacher made the following comment about the project:

> I don't know, all the Accelerated Schools thing is really very vague to me... I really have to question what the whole thing is doing, and this enormous use of time. Where is it all leading? Like the thing we had, was it last week? [laugh] If they could only hear the comments. We sat at the table afterwards. We saw that as one of the worst uses of time, and it makes me mad because we never had time to work on our classrooms and work on our programs...
>
> Q. Well, one of the principles behind Accelerated Schools is obviously to accelerate rather than remediate. Does that make sense to you?
>
> No, to a great extent, to some extent, yes, to another extent, no. I deal with a specific skill area, and that's math. It's easy to accelerate with an accelerated group, okay? But I have one Math 8 class... Well, what I've seen is it's kind of a dumping ground, and the kids that we have in here are - I've got this one class that has been very difficult...four kids out of a small class who were fresh out of Mexico and had very limited English... Up until this quarter I had four special ed. kids who were real discipline problems, all in one class. And they talk about

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accelerating them? Well it bothers me.

In a later interview, his attitudes had changed. As he said, "time heals." When asked if there have been any changes at Calhoun, he said:

> Definitely, there have been changes. No one can deny the fact that the time has been well spent to get to a sense of common purpose. The project has pulled the school together. It has helped the attitude of students. It is a self esteem builder for students.

A large percentage of the staff had begun to internalize the Accelerated Schools model, but many were still impatient to see things happen. Frustrations were always modified by comments that they know things will happen slowly. As one teacher said:

> And I think too a lot of teachers - and sometimes I feel like this too - what's going to be the result of this. Sometimes it just seems so far away, it seems like we've been in the Inquiry process for so long, and I think that sometimes looking at the end of the path, it just seems a long path. Long and winding road.

Another teacher said:

> It seems like nothing is happening, but actually it is. Underneath, something is happening. I get frustrated too. I want to be doing something, but then I think that I don't want to be doing the wrong thing. So I think, it's important that we do take the time. Playing "Respect" once a week is the only thing I can see that we're doing, but my attitude is changing. I used to say, 'Oh, families don't take time to really understand,' and I never asked why they didn't. I feel that I just want to do something, but do what? We might do the wrong thing.

Although major curricular and instructional changes had not occurred yet, teachers' attitudes toward their students were beginning to change. The goal of holding high expectations for all children was challenging a common belief that "our kids just can't do that." As discussed in Section Three, even before the Accelerated Schools Project began, the staff was divided between those who felt that students should be challenged and those who believed students would be alienated from a more demanding curriculum. Cadre meetings gave both camps a good venue to

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discuss their differences. Some staff members were able to discuss issues of accountability, consistency, and high expectations while others promoted offering a more varied, creative approach to engaging students. The staff quickly embraced the suggestion to eliminate ability tracking, especially when they realized it was creating internal segregation at the school.

The Accelerated Schools process was beginning to turn the whole staff into a community of learners (see Barth 1990 for a description of this concept). Several of the staff already felt that it was important to continue to learn, either through taking classes and workshops or by observing and exchanging ideas with others, but some of the veteran teachers did not see themselves as learners, Some of the teachers hoped that the Accelerated Schools Project would change those attitudes:

> I think that teachers can't get complacent, you know what I mean? One teacher at one of the meetings said, 'Well, I think that would be great for the younger teachers to observe,' and I said, I looked at [my friend] and said, "Gee, I mean, that's where I get my inspiration and a lot of my ideas, is by going to workshops and watching the people and talking....Why go into teaching if you think you know everything?

The excitement of learning by doing permeated many cadre meetings. The staff was not being "taught" in a course or workshop sense, but they were learning through their discussions with each other. For example, ideas flew as the family involvement cadre planned how to use the Open House/Pasta Night to increase parent awareness of the Accelerated Schools Project. The energy in the room grew, and one teacher repeatedly called out, "I love this. I love this."

Changes Related to the Administration

The preceding discussion points to several of the changes evident in the administration, especially to the increased communication and trust enjoyed by the

entire staff, and the administration's support for teacher-initiated change. The improved communication and trust came in part from sharing a unity of purpose, but it also resulted from working together as peers on the cadres. All of the members of the administrative team (except the principal) were active participants on one of four cadres, but none of them were facilitators. They tried to work as peers as much as possible, but they occasionally served as a resource when they had special knowledge or contacts. The interaction on the cadres helped integrate the new vice principal for guidance and discipline into the staff because she was seen as a colleague, rather than just the vice principal.

Although communication improved, it was still not perfect. Miscommunication contributed to the problem at the end of the year when the vice principal proposed thematic strands for next year's schedule. Some teachers, such as the one below, felt that he (and the principal) intentionally deceived them:

> I'm kind of disappointed. I thought we would have lots of say, but a lot has been dictated to us. For example, at the faculty meeting, [the vice principal] made it sound like we developed the strands. All we did was develop the humanities core.

Other staff members felt that it was a case of miscommunication. One member of the administrative team said that the vice principal thought the strands had come from the cadre and was surprised at their reaction. A teacher said that the faculty misinterpreted the vice principal when he presented the strands. They felt that he was presenting a finished product when actually he was describing a process.

The administrative team worked very hard throughout the year to internalize the Accelerated Schools process and to allow teacher-initiated change to flourish. The vice principal tried to use the process whenever appropriate. Teachers playfully wondered if he used the Inquiry process with his family since he applied it so broadly while at school. The principal commented that it changed his "personal management

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style." He said:

> From the first time I heard [the Stanford project director] speak of the concept of Accelerated Schools, it set the tone for me as a manager and as an educational leader. It opened doors to appropriate ways to bring the school to change.

Several of the actions of the principal and vice principal illustrate how the process had become part of their management style. For example, when they learned of the number of possible lay-offs and increases in class size due to the budget cuts, they did not develop a strategy in isolation. They came to the curriculum cadre and explained the problem and asked for suggestions. Even some of their staunch critics admitted that they would not have done that a year ago.

As administrators, certain responsibilities still rested with them, and they were perpetually trying to find the fine line between encouraging staff decision-making and doing their job. The principal described this tension at a steering committee meeting when he explained why the staff had not been included in a decision. He said that he will seek help whenever it seems necessary, but that there are some decisions that he just has to make. Some of them are clearly administrative decisions, and others should go to cadres. He said he thought that they were moving in the right direction toward more staff input. At the end of the year, deadlines from the district office pressed the administration into making decisions faster than a committee process could work. For example, the vice principal had to submit a schedule for classes before the curriculum cadre had finalized one. In response to some of the cadre members' complaints he said, "I'm as tuned into the Accelerated Schools process as anyone, but I have to get my job done. I don't tell teachers how to teach. They need to trust me to do right by them."

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The Accelerated Schools Project helped disperse duties among the five members of the administrative team[23]. Before Accelerated Schools, the principal and vice principal made most of the important decisions; they acted as a team. With the establishment of the discipline/ guidance team and the involvement of all of the administrators on cadres, decision-making within the administration was better distributed. There was still a sense that the principal and vice principal worked together and the discipline/guidance team worked together, but there was movement toward more shared responsibility. The vice principal for discipline/guidance commented that the Accelerated Schools Project helped her, as a new administrator, integrate into the school. She said:

> Building a team was not just a feeling, but it really worked that way. That was important for me as a new person. Instead of "I" it is "we" - the total staff, not just [the administrative team and Stanford].

In the past, although the principal and vice principal worked together, there was a sense among the staff that the principal called all the shots. That was changing because the principal delegated a great deal of the responsibility for coordinating the Accelerated Schools project to the vice principal. Most of the communication with Stanford was through the vice principal, and he was responsible for the steering committee. At a steering committee meeting in early March, the vice principal commented that as he was preparing the agenda he realized that the principal had always facilitated steering committee meetings in the past. The principal laughed and said that he was happy to have the vice principal take on this responsibility.

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[23] As described in Section Three, the administrative team included three administrators and two members of the guidance/discipline team who were not administrators but a resource teacher and a classified staff member who were doing administrative work.

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Changes Related to Students

Changes for students were not as obvious as those for the staff. Nearly all of the planning was for the students, but most of it was still in the planning stage by the time the school year ended. For this reason, many students were not very aware of what the project was trying to accomplish. In some ways the students were less aware of the Accelerated Schools Project at the end of the year than they were at the end of the first phase. The first phase had more visible and participatory activities (e.g. student surveys, and Vision quilt and celebration) than the second phase. For example, when students were writing their eighth grade essays, many of them could not think of anything to say about the Accelerated Schools Project. When prompted, they remembered the Vision Celebration, but many of them did not know what their teachers were doing on the early release days.

During the Inquiry process, students were actually involved in Accelerated Schools, but they may not have realized it. Some teachers made a point of telling students about what they were doing with the Accelerated Schools Project, and students were polled for their preferences in terms of electives for next year and for favorite instructional styles, but the students may not have associated these activities (or very public activities like the Egg Drop) with the Accelerated Schools Project. As the following excerpts from the eighth grade essays show, few of the students had a very deep understanding of what their teachers were trying to accomplish through the Accelerated Schools Project:

> I participated in making the Vision quilts and taking the survey. What we are trying to accomplish with the Accelerated Schools Program is learning new things. There are many exciting things that happened this year. For example, the Egg Drop Contest, the Vision Walk, and the half days that we have had are important.

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I have participated in activities connected with the Accelerated Schools Project. The first thing I participated in was the walk around City Hall. It was fun, but it was also tiring. Most of the people went because they wanted to get out of class. The second one was the quilt. When it was the time to show them, I went up and held it. I think they are trying to help kids here at Calhoun get a better education so they could be successful in the future, not a bum in the street. It is important for people to be what they want to be.

Even the more reflective and articulate students did not seem to realize that projects such as the Accelerated Schools Project take time before results are obvious. As one girl wrote:

The Accelerated Program brings more reputation and name to Calhoun than it does results in the students' education. I have participated in the quilt-making which started the vision and wasn't too bad, but the vision as a whole is not good. The vision basically states already known facts in print and that is a waste of time. I think the money[24] could have gone to better use and that we do not need to continue the Accelerated Program any longer. The students lose school time and for nothing; no results have come out of it yet. The staff we have acquired from Stanford are great. They really enjoy working with kids, unlike some of our teachers. If the vision is trying to change that, then it is not succeeding. From the sound of the program, even now it is over-exaggerating. It sounds a lot better than it really is.

The Accelerated Schools Project did have a profound effect on several students who actively participated in the Inquiry cadres. Only a few students participated actively; some found the topics of discussion boring and the inevitable disagreements among adult members disagreeable. These student cadre members did not attend meetings regularly. Those that did, though, were pleased to have a chance to work with teachers and to express their opinions. As described earlier, participation in one of the cadres helped at least one boy change from a trouble maker, to a participating

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24 The Accelerated Schools Project did not cost the school or district any money.

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member of the school community. He spoke at the graduation ceremony and before the School Board (in protest of the budget cuts) about the role of the Accelerated Schools process in reengaging him in school. Another boy wrote in his eighth grade essay:

> I am participating in a cadre right now. It is interesting in these committees because they deal with real life. To show that a school can rise to the top no matter what people think is wrong with it.

The effects of holding high expectations for all students were beginning to be felt. Formerly low-achieving students were beginning to take responsibility for their education. For example, several students spoke at a school board meeting to protest the proposed cuts at Calhoun, and they talked about the importance of keeping music and sports, but they also talked about what they have gained by working with teachers on the Accelerated Schools cadres. The boy mentioned above talked about how important it was to be on cadres and "solve problems with teachers, parents and teacher's aides." Another student speaker was in special education classes. He distinguished himself this year by creating the best entry in the egg drop contest and by giving a moving speech to the School Board about the importance of maintaining the momentum built this year. More students spoke at the eighth grade graduation, and they were not just the White "Gifted and Talented" students who had always been the speakers in the past. Several of the speakers talked about the changes at Calhoun they anticipate because of the Accelerated Schools project.

The image of Calhoun as a strong academic school was improving, and some members of the staff felt that Accelerated Schools contributed to this change. Scores on standardized achievement tests for the EDY[25] students exceeded the district average in all but eighth grade reading, and more students were on the honor roll than

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in previous years. Calhoun enjoyed a 50% increase in sixth grade enrollments[26] for the 1991-1992 school year. Although none of these improvements can be directly attributed to the Accelerated Schools Project, staff members felt that the Accelerated Schools Project had led to teachers holding higher expectations for students and that the philosophy of Accelerated Schools was attractive to parents of potential incoming sixth grade students.

Many members of the staff noticed a marked improvement in students' attitudes toward school and in their behavior. These improvements are largely attributable to the discipline/guidance team. As one teacher said:

> The biggest difference this year has been the discipline team. They have turned the school around. It's good for teachers to know they have support from the office. It's 200% better and will be better next year because the kids know the system. If I feel supported, I will feel better about teaching.

The principal felt the discipline/guidance team's success went beyond improving behavior of students. He said, "The transition of the staff about school governance happened because of the organization [the discipline/guidance team] created. This was the biggest success of the year ... It became a symbol of change."

The staff began to have more trust of students as reflected in the frequency of whole school assemblies. The Vision Celebration was the first time that all of the students had attended an assembly together, but after the success of this gathering, all-school assemblies became the norm, and student behavior was never a problem.

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[26] As a magnet school, Calhoun had to attract a certain percentage of White students before it could admit Hispanic students wanting to attend. Enrollment for the 1990-1991 school year was below capacity, and the principal worked very hard to try to increase enrollment by recruiting White students.

Changes Related to Family and Community

Calhoun witnessed a subtle increase in family involvement this year. There was a 90% increase in Back to School Night attendance, and record numbers of parents attended student honors assemblies and student of the month assemblies. For example, at one honors assembly there were between 75-100 parents in attendance, where there would have been about 10 last year. Because of the work of the family involvement cadre, even more dramatic changes should be evident in the second year. Their efforts have already been described in detail.

Parent involvement on the cadres was limited. There was only one parent who participated regularly and actively. It was a profound experience for him. He described the changes he saw at Calhoun since the Accelerated Schools Project began:

> It is like night and day. Teachers talk to parents. They talk to children. There is excitement. Excitement in the kids. They are part of meetings; they make speeches; they want to be visible. If parents know what's going on at school. Even if it is just one teacher, they will try to have the same relation with all teachers. We must expect teachers to care about kids.

Involving family members on the cadres was difficult during the first year. On many of the cadres, the Calhoun staff wanted to get to work on the Inquiry process and did not want to spend too much time devising ways to involve parents. Some of the staff members did not see that involvement of family members in the working of the cadres was crucial. Meeting times were inconvenient for working parents since they were always held either immediately before or after school, or on early release days. Several parents who attended a few meetings quit attending without offering reasons other than that they were too busy.

Involvement of community representatives did not increase because of the Accelerated Schools Project. The principal had been a vocal advocate of Calhoun in

the community before the Accelerated Schools Project started, and he was able to attract representatives of local government and business to major school events. For example, one of the members of the County Board of Supervisors spoke at several school-wide gatherings. These representatives did not participate actively in any of the Accelerated Schools Project planning.

Changes in the Structure of the School

Changes clearly attributable to the Accelerated Schools Project were evident in both the curriculum offered at Calhoun and in its governance structure. One of the most profound curricular changes was the elimination of ability grouping. Along with the elimination of ability grouping, they also eliminated the "opportunity class" which was designed to give students who appeared destined to drop out, the opportunity to stay in a self-contained classroom for all of their classes. With almost no debate, the school decided that, as an accelerated school, they could not divide students between classes based on their academic ability. The staff decided that Calhoun's practice of offering "accelerated" language arts and social studies was to end during the 1991-1992 school year. The principal and vice principal both said that it is antithetical to continue to track students if the school embraces the philosophy of holding high expectations for all students. Teachers became aware of the existence of internal tracking at Calhoun when they were compiling Taking Stock data, and they became more vocal in their opposition to tracking as they internalized the Accelerated Schools philosophy. For example, in May, the local newspaper ran an article on internal segregation, focussing on how many schools separate White and Asian students from Hispanic and Black students by channeling White and Asian students into "accelerated" tracks and Hispanic and Black students into "general" tracks. Teachers were proud that they had already recognized that this had occurred at Calhoun and

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that they were working to eliminate it.

Another major curricular change was the decision to alter the two hour language arts core and create a humanities core. This was a major accomplishment for the curriculum cadre. The language arts teachers had worked very hard to develop the two hour language arts core, and they were initially upset by the idea of eliminating it after only one year. Other members of the curriculum cadre were able to convince them that students need electives as well as core academic subjects. The language arts teachers were willing to accept the idea of a humanities core after the principal promised them that he would provide paid planning time over the summer and that he would defend any of the decisions they make if challenged by the district.

The change to the humanities core was only the beginning of possible interdisciplinary courses and projects. On a school-wide level, ideas of a science and math block were discussed and postponed. The thematic strands, although tabled for this year, will be discussed again in the curriculum cadre. There was considerable talk about how they would use the Accelerated Schools process to develop an integrated curriculum for the aerospace program that was awarded to the district in May. Interdisciplinary pairings were beginning to emerge as teachers worked together on cadres. For example, the computer teacher and writing lab teacher talked of working together to integrate graphics into students' writing assignments.

Changes in instruction were less visible. The school carefully examined the Complex Instruction program and decided to wait to sign up, partly because of its expense but also because they had not studied other alternatives. The process of examining this program made them realize that they have untapped resources within the school that might be more efficiently and effectively used. Through discussion of alternative instructional practices individual teachers began experimenting in their classes. Teachers began thinking of ways to move from worksheets and text books to

more interactive teaching techniques.

The Accelerated Schools Project gave Calhoun a process to make school-based decision-making work. In one year, Calhoun moved from centralized authority to democratic decision-making through cadres and the steering committee. As the vice principal said:

> The structure received from Accelerated Schools was important. I've been in education for so many years, and I've never seen a structure for team building. Usually we make some decisions and others complain.

A member of the discipline/guidance team said:

> The structure allowed us to focus, and it will keep us focussed. We won't get off on tangents, but we will still work on lots of things.

The process was not always smooth or perfect, but it created a very different governance structure than the one that existed before. The cadres and steering committee became effective decision-making bodies. They were able to work through the Inquiry process to examine problems and explore possible solutions. The changes in the governance structure not only gave teachers more decision-making responsibility, but they provided a place for classified staff to have a voice. In the past, the classified staff were rarely included in meetings, and when they were, they did not feel like they could be participants. The structure of the cadres and the philosophy of the Accelerated Schools Project made them feel comfortable as contributing members of the groups. The following discussion occurred among several campus supervisors:

C.S. 1   Before when we used to have meetings, like all in one group, I'd
          be kind shy to raise my hand and ask a question if I didn't
          understand it. I'd feel, 'Well, they might think I'm dumb or
          something.' But now, I feel really easy about asking a question.

Q.   Good. Do you think you would even in front of the whole school?

C.S. 1   No [laughter]

Q.   But within the small group?

C.S. 1   I think maybe because we are broken into little groups. Maybe
            that's why. And it's not like you are up in front of the whole thing
            and everybody is staring at you because our meetings are usually
            around a table so everyone's sitting down and it's not like you're
            the main attraction and everyone is just focussed on you. So I feel
            at ease there....

C.S. 2   Well, I like it. As far as that, I've been working here fourteen years,
            and I have never felt important or that they listened to me like I did
            with this.

The one part of the governance structure that did not change much during the

first year was how information was presented and decisions made by the school as a

whole. When the entire staff met, the principal usually ran the meetings as he would

faculty meetings. Staff members made presentations, but they did not take

responsibility for these meetings or have much input into how they were run. True

Accelerated Schools school-as-a-whole meetings did not occur because the staff

always chose to spend their time in cadre meetings rather than in school-as-a-whole

meetings. It was not until the end of the year that they realized that the benefits of a

reporting out session with all cadres participating would have outweighed using time

for individual cadre meetings.

Influences on Changes

The Accelerated Schools Project was the major influence on change at

Calhoun during this school year. The preceding discussion illustrates how the school

culture was in the process of rapid change by the end of the school year. Other

influences were also present, changing the school culture as well, and affecting the

shape of the changes brought about by the Accelerated Schools Project. As in the

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preceding section, these influences are grouped below as historical, internal and external influences. Some of these influences remained throughout the year, their influence changing as the project became increasingly internalized into Calhoun's school culture. Some of the influences, especially the historical ones, diminished as the year progressed.

Historical Influences

By the end of the school year, the historical influences (e.g. attitudes, events, or commitments made prior to the introduction of the Accelerated Schools Project) that had played a major role in shaping the first phase of the project had practically disappeared. For example, although critical in the first phase, the lack of trust between the administration and the staff had nearly disappeared by the end of the year. As the staff and members of the administrative team worked together through the Inquiry process, and the principal and vice principal stood behind promises made, the staff became increasingly trusting of the administration. A degree of wariness was still there at the end of the year, but it had diminished greatly.

Internal Influences

Factors residing within the school and within individual participants remained critical. The internal influences that were most important during Phase II were those related to group dynamics and individual reactions to change. One aspect of the existing school governing structure - the departmental structure - also influenced project implementation. Group dynamics were different in each of the cadres. Some worked together relatively smoothly, while others experienced dissention that temporarily derailed the Inquiry process. In all of the cadres, cadre members had to learn to work together without members of the administrative team leading the

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discussion and making final decisions. The facilitators, with only minimal training, had to lead the group through the Inquiry process, a process they too were still learning. Some natural facilitators emerged through the process, and were able to both internalize the process and lead their group through it as well. This was not a small feat in some of the cadres because of their size and heterogeneity.

Each person involved in the Inquiry process had a different threshold for ambiguity and conceptual thinking. At different points throughout the process, people became frustrated by the seeming lack of progress and the frequently tedious process of group decision-making. As one teacher wrote as a comment on changes he observed, "Maybe in our rush to accelerate, we expect too much too soon, which produces frustration." Most people were able to remind themselves that they were working toward a larger goal and that major change cannot take place overnight. This tension between wanting to do something and knowing that lasting change takes time was constantly influencing the work of the cadres.

The departmental structure of the school influenced project implementation. Prior to Accelerated Schools teachers' interactions were usually limited to colleagues in their department. Some departments, because of size and subject matter, were more powerful and influential in the school than others. The language arts department was clearly the most powerful department at Calhoun. Departmental rivalry was evident when teachers complained that the language arts department was over-represented on the curriculum cadre. The decisions of this cadre were always scrutinized to be sure that the language arts department was not "empire building."

External Influences

Although historical and internal influences continued to shape Calhoun's Accelerated Schools project, the most profound influence came from outside of the

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school - the California budget crisis. Calhoun's school district was already experiencing financial problems and had initiated personnel and programmatic reductions. The district had eliminated many of the central office staff, and they knew that cuts were going to be necessary soon at the school level. By the beginning of the 1990 - 1991 school year, the district was giving estimates of $2 million reductions, most of which would be made at the school level. At Calhoun, the financial climate made the administration and staff conservative in their plans, and gave the principal the incentive to seek additional funds from any available source.

By the beginning of 1991, news from the state level made those projections obsolete. California was facing one of its most serious budget crises in recent years, and the effects would be felt in school districts across the state. Fiscal problems at the state level in California translate into fiscal problems for school districts because, in an effort to equalize funding between districts, tax revenues for education funnels through the state. At first, districts thought they would be protected from major cuts by a 1988 constitutional amendment (Proposition 98) that guarantees a specific share of the state revenues to education (K - community college). However, the governor decided to exercise his option to suspend Proposition 98 for one year so that budget cuts would not all fall on non-educational programs. The state was in an uproar over this decision, but the governor stood by it. This decision affected all districts in the state, but some districts, including Calhoun's, were particularly hard hit. District projections of budget shortfall following these announcements reached $7.6 million. In mid-March, the superintendent presented a list of 29 proposed classroom support areas to either reduce or eliminate in the 1991-1992 budget as well as projections on the number of FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) per school, based on enrollment projections.

The programmatic cuts and reduction in teaching staff were a serious blow at Calhoun. One proposed cut was especially difficult; the district proposed reducing the

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music program for 6-12 grade by 75%. This meant that music could only be offered at the performing arts magnet school. All other schools would have no music program. The Calhoun Jazz Band, the pride of the school, was threatened. The school was also concerned with the proposed elimination of middle school library budgets and by the effects on class size of a reduction in the teaching force. The district proposed reducing the current FTE from 31.2 to 21.57. This would increase class size to 35 and eliminate the opportunity to use teachers in special programs such as the writing lab and the opportunity class. On announcing these proposed cuts, the district made it clear that there would be no negotiations.

Calhoun's use of the Inquiry process in response to these cuts has already been discussed. As described above, the staff continued their cadre work through this crisis and used the process to develop school-wide responses to it. As a school community, they wrote letters, spoke at a school board meeting, and signed petitions. The Inquiry process was becoming internalized enough that even teachers who received final lay-off notices continued to work and to promote Accelerated Schools. In fact, two teachers who were eventually laid off helped the Stanford staff make a presentation to a middle school interested in initiating the Accelereted Schools process the next year.

Although the staff continued to work, and even lauded the Accelerated Schools process as an effective way to work through a crisis, it had an extremely negative effect on the energy and concentration of the staff members. Staff members became concerned about their jobs and about the jobs of their colleagues (certified and classified). Thirteen members of the staff received lay-off notices and five teachers were eventually laid off. Even those who were secure in their jobs were unsure who their colleagues would be next year and what classes they would be teaching. Alliances that were developed through cadre work were threatened by the possibility

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of layoffs. Some teachers expressed a sense of futility in planning for a future that was so uncertain.

The pressure from the district to develop schedules and plans quickly made it difficult to follow the Accelerated Schools process. The administrators were put in a difficult position. On the one hand, they wanted to remain true to the Accelerated Schools process and involve appropriate cadres in decision-making. On the other hand, the district was requesting information yesterday, and they were allowing no exceptions. Some teachers became critical of the principal and vice principal for not following the process; they did not seem to realize that the administration was being pressured to produce immediately.

The district's stance of no negotiations bred a sense of powerlessness that was antithetical to the principles of the Accelerated Schools Project. The staff became excited as they planned responses to the proposed budget cuts, but were quickly deflated by the district's unwillingness to make any special concessions. The efforts put out by the school to save the music program were the most disheartening. The music program was the pride of the school, and the teacher highly respected by his colleagues[27] as well as by the students. The principal and several staff members tried to develop plans to support a music program with outside funds. One teacher even proposed that all teachers contribute a percentage of their salaries to support the music program. The district decreed that music programs in all of the schools (except the arts magnet school) would be cut, and that no efforts to support a program with outside funding would be allowed. Teacher empowerment took several steps backward with that message.

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[27] He had been voted Teacher of the Year for entire school district the preceding year.

One other external influence that was less dramatic than the budget cuts, but may have a more profound effect on the long range implementation of the program, was the desegregation order that shapes the school community of Calhoun[28] . Attracting White students to increase enrollment was behind so many of the efforts of the school throughout this year. Many members of the school community were frustrated by the fact that Hispanic students were on waiting lists to attend Calhoun, but the school was under-enrolled. They felt that their energies were better turned to making Calhoun as good a school as possible than to attracting students without a true commitment to the school. The district was also frustrated by the fact that in a time of financial crisis, they could not use a school to its capacity because of an integration formula set by the court.

Several weeks before the end of school, the district went to court and asked for a revision of the integration formula. The revision was granted, and Calhoun anticipated admitting 200 more students than anticipated. This news was a mixed blessing. On the one hand, some of the teachers that had been laid off could be rehired (not the music teacher), and the larger staff could accommodate more curricular choices. Also, many students who had wanted to attend Calhoun would now be admitted. On the other hand, the school would have to accommodate 200 new students and several new teachers. All of the work the vice principal had put into scheduling for next year would have to be revised.

The news came at the end of the school year so no one had a chance to carefully think through the ramifications for the school and how these changes would be dealt with through the Accelerated Schools process. The principal commented that over half of the students and one third of the faculty would be new next year. He

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28 See Mary Metz Different By Design 1986 for an examination of the influence of desegregation magnet plans on the school culture of middle schools.

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wondered how all of these new players would shape the Accelerated Schools process. He added that a hiring priority would be commitment to the principles and values of the Accelerated Schools Project.

At the end of the year, Calhoun also received good news in the form of a major financial boost. The district learned that they had been awarded a $3 million grant to develop an aerospace program in four schools; Calhoun had been selected to be the middle school. Few teachers knew much about the grant or the effect it would have on the school. The response of the faculty was subdued, largely because few people knew what the grant would do for them, but they knew that it could not bring back the jazz band.

The presence of Stanford staff members at Calhoun continued to be a positive external influence on the development of the project. A Stanford staff member was on each of the cadres and most of them attended steering committee meetings regularly. On cadres, they served as supporters, not leaders. The facilitator or other cadre members often turned to the Stanford staff member for clarifications on the Inquiry process. The Stanford staff members sat in on classes, worked with teachers and the administrative team on special projects, and tried to know the school as participants rather than outsiders. One administrator praised Stanford for, "being there when we need them, but letting us do the work." The Stanford and Calhoun staff realized that the school could not rely on Stanford to transform it into an accelerated school; that was the job of the Calhoun school community.

Summary

This section describes how the school community at Calhoun engaged in the first stages of the Accelerated Schools Inquiry process. The five cadres moved at

different rates through the process, but most of them finished the first stage of Inquiry - focusing on their real challenge - by the end of the school year, and they were ready to begin the second stage - brainstorming solutions - when school started in the fall. Most of the participants found this stage of the process exciting and frustrating, but worthwhile. They gained an appreciation for taking the time to develop a focus on what is really needed for Calhoun.

The second phase of the Accelerated Schools process is devoted to learning the Inquiry process, but it also provides an opportunity for the school community to develop small working groups that, over time, exemplified the three principles of Accelerated Schools. By the end of the year, most of the cadres shared a unity of purpose; they built on the strengths of their members, and they were a vehicle for empowerment of all members of the school community. These groups, along with the steering committee, became the foundation of a democratic governance structure.

The Inquiry process brought noticeable change to the school culture of Calhoun. Changes were most evident in the staff, administration, and school structure. The project had less immediate impact on the students (in terms of their achievement, and their relationship to each other and the school) and on family and community involvement, but the groundwork for profound changes was laid.

All of these changes were accomplished despite the budget crisis that could have demoralized the entire school. Rather than abandoning the planning that was already underway, Calhoun used the Inquiry process to work through the crisis. This illustrated to the school community the utility of the process, and the importance of the three guiding principles of the Accelerated Schools Project. By using the process and building on the sense of unity, strength, and empowerment, they were able to actively meet the challenge of the budget cuts.

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Section Six

Challenges to Accelerating Schools

The bulk of this report has been devoted to a description of the implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project at Calhoun Middle School. It describes the Accelerated Schools Project as an intervention leading to school culture change. Emphasis was placed on the changes observable throughout the first year (those attributable to the Accelerated Schools Project and other changes) and on the historical, internal and external influences on the implementation process. This report stops at the end of the first year, which, for Calhoun, coincides with the transition from the capacity building stage to the implementation stage of the Accelerated Schools Project. As the preceding illustrates, significant changes occurred during the capacity building stage. The members of the Calhoun school community worked hard to internalize the principles and process, and their work has resulted in some significant changes in attitudes, relationships, and in the organization of the school. Given that only a year has passed, Calhoun still has many challenges ahead. Most of the challenges relate to the actual implementation of action plans that are still in the development stage.

The design of the Accelerated Schools Project has minimized the challenges faced by both elementary and middle schools that are in the process of reform. Through a thorough understanding of the successes and failures of previous school reform efforts, the Accelerated Schools Project was designed to avoid many of the problems that plagued these earlier efforts and that threaten other contemporary reforms. In the following pages, the Accelerated Schools Project is placed in the context of other education reform challenges.

The Accelerated Schools Project's Anticipation of Challenges

The seeds of the Accelerated Schools Project were planted about three years after the controversial *A Nation At Risk* report was published (NCEE, 1983). By this time, the shortcomings of the "excellence movement" (the initial response to the challenges presented in *A Nation At Risk*) were becoming obvious. The excellence movement was founded on the belief that problems in education could be solved by adding to the current educational delivery system (Farrar, 1990; Glickman, 1990; O'Neil, 1990). During this time, many states and districts increased the number of hours and days children attend school. They imposed stricter graduation requirements, increased teacher salaries, initiated merit-based pay, and ended permanent teacher certification. A number of critics were able to predict the failure of reforms of this kind, and they have compared them to the futility of putting band-aides on a dying man. The critics hold that the entire educational delivery system must be abandoned or radically restructured. Some critics such as Sizer (1984), Fiske (1991), Cuban (1988), and Tyack, Kirst and Hansot (1980) point to an outmoded educational delivery system based on the industrial model of the late 19th century (top down management, uniformity of process and product). They contend that the "One Best System" that may have succeeded in industrial American is no longer appropriate for the late 20th century. In a more contemporary analogy, Finn (1991) sardonically titled one chapter of a recent book "American Education is to Education What the Soviet Economy is to Economy" - a system that world events has passed by. Sarason wrote that reforms often fail because educational policy makers:

> ... assume that change is achieved through learning and applying new or good ideas. They seem unable to understand what is involved in unlearning what custom, tradition, and even research have told educational personnel is right, natural, and proper (1990, 101).

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The Accelerated Schools Project is part of a more radical school reform movement - school restructuring - that has emerged in response to the failures of the excellence movement. The school restructuring movement seeks to overhaul the educational delivery system, not fine tune it or abandon it. Central to most restructuring efforts are: school-based management, teacher empowerment, increased parent and community involvement in schools, and decentralization. Restructuring efforts are looking to models both in education and industry (Fiske, 1991). As American industry discovered several years ago, our competitiveness is hampered by an archaic management structure and an under-utilization of the workforce. Educators are looking to corporate restructuring experts for advice on educational restructuring[29], and they are recognizing many common issues. For example, interest in teacher empowerment and school-based management relate closely to reforms in industry that brought production-level decision-making teams and quality circles into the structure of major American corporations. In addition, as corporations have begun to promote their "corporate culture" as a way of developing pride and ownership among employees and customers, schools are encouraged to examine their "school culture" to improve communication within the schools and community, and to better serve students (Deal 1988, 1990).

Restructuring schools (or any organization) is not a simple task. It takes more than establishing school-based management teams and attending workshops to accomplish even modest efforts at reform. The current "restructuring fever" may end quickly if states, districts, and schools do not recognize that it requires a radical rethinking of roles and attitudes, and that it cannot be accomplished without a structure

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[29]For example, the Center for Advancement of Teaching and School Leadership in South Carolina is sponsoring "Deming Workshops" across the state to introduce Deming's model of organizational restructuring to schools and districts.

or a process. The Accelerated Schools Project has already responded to many of the restructuring challenges. The following are five ways that the Accelerated Schools Project has responded to restructuring challenges.

First, the Accelerated Schools Project provides a process for accomplishing school-based management. Without a well-defined process, many restructuring efforts will flounder. As O'Neil (1990) comments, school-based management is not a goal, in and of itself, it is a process. Malen, Ogawa & Kranz (1990) found in a review of reports on school-based management, that it is an ambiguous concept that defies definition; it is a generic term for diverse activities. This, in and of itself, is not a problem, since the goal of school-based management is to be responsive to the unique culture of each school (Purkey 1990). However, if efforts at school-based management repeatedly fail for lack of focus, support, and training, this aspect of the restructuring movement will be discarded.

Second, the Accelerated Schools Project requires that participants develop shared goals. Too often schools embark on reform efforts without any unity of purpose. The reforms are either: pet projects of a few teachers or the principal; projects that the district office decides would be "good" for the school; or piecemeal attempts to change aspects of the curriculum, instruction, or organization of the school. A unity of purpose will help insure the sustained commitment of the staff that is lacking in so many reforms (Johnson, 1990). In many reforms, not only does the entire faculty not share these goals, parents and students were completely unaware of them. Some current school-based management efforts never go beyond making decisions on who can use the copy machine because they have never set their sights for loftier goals.

Third, the Accelerated Schools Project recognizes the need for schools to be responsible for their decisions. As Glickman (1990) comments, many school-based reforms of the 1960's and 1970's failed because no one was held responsible for their

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failures. The Accelerated Schools process requires that schools set goals and engage in self evaluation and assessment throughout the Inquiry process. By using the Inquiry process, the Accelerated Schools Project recognizes that problems are embedded in situations which are perceived differently by different stakeholders, and that underlying reasons are more powerful than easily visible cause-effect relationships. Through this process the participants should recognize efforts that are not working before too much damage is done.

Fourth, the Accelerated Schools Project does not impose a "look" on all schools. Each school is expected to change in ways appropriate to the existing school culture; the Accelerated Schools model merely gives it a skeleton on which to work. This lack of commonality makes it difficult to evaluate through traditional assessment techniques, bu* ∵ also will contribute to the ultimate success of the project. Purkey defends the variation in school-based management experiments as a natural response to variation in context. He adds:

> ...within each school, school-based management is again adapted to fit the school's culture - while it is theoretically possible that over time a strong school-based management program could influence the culture of the school, at the moment at least the reverse seems to be the norm (1990, 375).

Finally, the Accelerated Schools Project does not require a major injection of money into the school. Schools are encouraged to work with existing resources (materials, personnel, and time). Too often programs are established with additional resources, but they fail when the resources disappear. In the current fiscal climate in most states and school districts, schools cannot count on increases in their normal operating budgets. Restructuring efforts that rely on added resources (e.g. cover teacher planning time by providing overtime pay or substitute teachers) may fail when these resources are no longer available.

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Challenges to Calhoun and Other Accelerating Schools

As the preceding describes, the Accelerated Schools Project has already responded to many of the challenges associated with school restructuring. This should not imply that the project has met all potential challenges - an impossible feat in an imperfect world. The following are challenges that emerged during the data collection process at Calhoun. Most of the challenges are characteristic of challenges faced by schools at this stage in the implementation process. They are presented as generic challenges to the Accelerated Schools Project, with specific examples drawn from the Calhoun experience.

Internalizing the Accelerated Schools Principles and Process into the School Culture

In this report, the Accelerated Schools Project has been treated as an intervention designed to change a school's culture. This is very difficult unless the members of the school community want to change and embrace the principles, values and process of the intervention. Culture change is a slow process, and it cannot be imposed from outside. Changes in beliefs and practices have to grow within a context of an existing culture (Schlechty 1990).

One of the most difficult challenges of the Accelerated Schools Project is to make the project a part of the school's culture. As Deal (1990) suggests, reforms created outside of school often undermine important internal values and beliefs. Most reforms do not recognize and respect the existing culture and do not allow time for participants to internalize the new principles and make them a part of their school culture. This process is difficult because reformers do not take the time to understand the existing school culture, and even the members of the school community have difficulty articulating it. The school culture is just around them, like the air they breath.

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It is only when basic elements of the culture are threatened by change that people even think about it.

Accelerated Schools does not explicitly address the issue of school culture, but it is accounted for implicitly. The first phase of the project (Taking Stock and Vision) is essentially an exploration into the culture of the school. The Accelerated Schools Project is unusual in its willingness to take the time for participants to understand themselves before they set out to change themselves. The Taking Stock committees examine key components of their existing school culture. Through the Vision development, they determine what they would like the school culture to be like in the future. Rather than the reform changing their culture, the participants change their own culture through the vehicle of the reform.

The Accelerated Schools guiding principles encourage the school to create a more uniform school culture through the process of coming to a unity of purpose, a goal few schools attempt or achieve. The challenge for the Accelerated Schools Project is to ensure that people will begin working toward a greater communal goal, that their efforts reflect an internalization of the principle of unity of purpose. The principle of building on strengths can have a similar unifying effect. The challenge here is for all actors to share high expectations for each other and look for strengths in everyone. Once that is achieved, they will begin working toward change, not against it. Empowerment coupled with responsibility can produce unity rather than divisiveness if it is perceived as a unifying force. For example, Sarason (1990) presents two definitions of power. One describes power as something held over someone else. The other describes power as the ability to produce change. The former leads to conflict, and the latter to change. The challenge for schools engaged in the Accelerated Schools process is not to shift power; rather to rethink the relationship between power and change.

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The challenge for Calhoun and other schools entering the implementation phase of the Accelerated Schools Project is to keep the principles central to all thinking and to stay true to the process. By the end of the capacity building phase, the Accelerated Schools Project should be an umbrella for all activities occurring at the school, not one of a list of special programs. The principles constitute a major change in mind set; one that many people in education want to make, but still find difficult to achieve. The process require a radical shift in how decisions are made, and it is often tedious and time consuming. With the press of time and the natural tendency to return to old ways of thinking and doing, participants need to develop ways to remind themselves why they wanted to change. Once the principles and process are truly internalized, the need for these reminders will be less critical.

Accommodating to Change

The design of the Accelerated Schools Project helps it facilitate these unanticipated and unrelated changes. The Accelerated Schools Project is a philosophy and a process, and it is not dependent on personality or funding. Once the school community has internalized the principles and process of the Accelerated Schools Project, it can become a vehicle for adjusting to change, rather than being a victim of change. The resilience of the project in response to change is evident in the following comments by a Calhoun teacher and parent. The teacher commented on the effects of the budget cuts on the project and mused about what usually happens when crises occur:

> See, now that's the big cloud hanging over everybody's head. There's some hesitation on my part. I don't know about other people. Things in this district change so drastically -- especially because of the money....You can have great intentions, but what I'm hoping as I consider the program is...*This may set up a system where it's not dependent on budget or personality.... it's more attitude*

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than something physical.

The parent was asked to speculate on what would happen to the project if the principal left:

> I always believed that officers were not the ultimate controllers of subordinates. In the military, officers signed orders, but the NCO's carried them out. The teachers and students should keep it going. The project is now running at fourth gear. It might go down to first gear, but with the right orientation, it can't help but continue. [The principal] is now like water and vitamins to blossoms on a tree. Someone else would be just water. The tree would still grow, but the blooms wouldn't be as bright.

Working as a Team and Creating Trust

A major challenge for accelerating schools is to learn to work together for a common purpose. Team work is often made difficult by lack of trust and poor communication. Teachers are not trained to be group workers; their work is usually done in isolation from other adults. Many times, schools engaged in school-based management or other reforms find that they need some training in group process skills to accomplish their work (Fiske 1990). A lack of trust is often most obvious between the staff and administration, but it is also evident between teachers and even within ourselves. One of the initial challenges for Calhoun was to improve the trust between the administration and teachers. Great progress was made during this first year. According to Barth (1990), the improved trust between the staff and administration may signal improved relations throughout the school. He writes:

> My experience suggests that as it goes between teacher and principal so shall it go in the other relationships. If the teacher-principal relationship can be characterized as helpful, supportive, trusting, revealing of craft knowledge, so too will others. To the extent that teacher-principal interactions are suspicious, guarded, distant, adversarial, acrimonious, or judgmental, we are likely to see these traits pervade the school. The relationship between teacher and principal seems to have an extraordinary amplifying effect. It models what *all*

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relationships will be. (1990, 19)

The progress made in building trust between the administration and staff should continue especially if the central office administration becomes a part of the team. In the case of Calhoun, the central office supported the idea of the Accelerated Schools Project, but they were not actively involved in the process. The problems that arose surrounding the budget crisis may have been ameliorated if central office administrators had been more involved in the actual site-level process. The next challenge for Calhoun is to improve trust between cadres.

Another challenge is to better integrate family members and students into the Accelerated Schools process. Most schools are a long way from being true community schools when they start the process, and it is difficult to break down the barriers between the staff and families. The logistical problems of creating convenient meeting times and places for working family members and of communicating beyond the school are still challenges to Calhoun. The school also faces challenges beyond logistics. Where the staff has begun internalizing the principles and process of the Accelerated Schools Project, the same cannot be said of family members or students. They have not worked intensively with the project and have not developed a sense of ownership in it.

Encouraging Creativity and Innovation

Barth (1990) and Sarason (1990) call for schools to become sites for learning, exploration, and creativity for all members of the school community. They attribute many of the problems in education to the fact that teachers' intelligence, interest in learning and creativity is under-utilized. Barth suggests that schools become "communities of learners" with the principal as the "head learner." He analogizes to airplane safety instructions. Adults are encouraged to put on oxygen masks before

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helping children; in schools, adults should be learners so that they can better help children learn to be learners (1990, 42). The challenge to schools is to unleash the creativity in their staff within the constraints of federal, state, and district guidelines. Too often teachers believe that they cannot be innovative because of mandates from the state or district. Often these "mandates" are not actually regulations, they are merely practices that have become canonized by central office administrators, principals, and teachers.

A number of examples of increased creativity and innovation among teachers at Calhoun have already been presented. Their challenge is to continue to develop an environment conducive to exploration and innovation. The challenge for Calhoun is to encourage all participants to set the "little wheels" (the small innovations) in motion without detracting from the larger work of the cadres and the school-as-a-whole. Some of the teachers who have already begun to expand their horizons have done so through a change in mind set. They have begun to take each of their little ideas and explored them to the limit. The teacher who organized the egg drop contest (see Section Five) said that he never intended that it become a major school-wide activity, but as the momentum grew, he grew with it, rather than pulling back. As more teachers do this, the classroom level innovations will be more numerous. As parents rethink their role in the school and in their children's learning, their creativity will also flower.

Accommodating the Project to the Special Challenges of Middle Schools

Any school, elementary, middle, or high school will experience challenges when they initiate change. Middle schools, however, present some challenges that are not shared in the same manner by elementary or high schools. The Accelerated Schools Project staff anticipated many of the middle school challenges when they

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prepared *Toward an Accelerated Middle School* (Hopfenberg, Levin, Meister and
Rogers, 1990, Chapter 5). They recognized that the structure of the school and age of
the children would shape accelerated middle schools. The following discusses four
challenges that characterize middle school project implementation during the capacity
building stage of the project. Many other challenges related to middle schools will
emerge during t! 3 implementation stage.

One challenge is accommodating to a departmentalized school organization.
The division of the school into departments led to distrust of teachers in other
departments, to a large (and sometimes cumbersome) steering committee, and to the
sense that teachers have to attend too many meetings (all teachers had to attend one
faculty meeting and at least one department meeting a month). Calhoun was not
larger than many elementary schools (approximately 600 students and 42 teachers),
but its departmental structure led to divisions within the faculty that would not be seen
in elementary schools.The inclusion of sixth, seventh and eighth grades in a middle
school created a division between sixth grade teachers, many of whom were
credentialed to teach elementary school, and seventh and eighth grade teachers who
were credentialed to teach secondary school. Many of the sixth grade teachers
thought their students would benefit from an environment resembling an elementary
school, while the other teachers were trained to teach in a secondary school structure.

A second challenge to middle schools is involving parents in the project. For
many reasons, parents are less likely to be actively involved in their adolescents'
education than they were when the children were in elementary school. Some who
may have been active may either have returned to work by the time their children
reach middle school, or became tired of being involved in schools. Their children often
discourage them from being active, because, as early adolescents, they are distancing
themselves from their parents. Also, middle schools appear to be less accessible

since each child has six teachers rather than one. The challenge to Calhoun is to encourage the family involvement cadre to continue developing ways to communicate with family members that their involvement in school during the middle school grades is crucial to their children's success in school and that they can make a meaningful contribution to the school.

A third challenge is to develop an integrated curriculum given the entrenched departmentalization found in most middle schools. Calhoun, at the outset of this year resembled many middle schools across the country. It was essentially still a junior high school with sixth graders in attendance. Bells rang at regular intervals, and students moved between different classes, each class having no relationship to the other. Calhoun's only movement from the norm was the two hour language arts core. Otherwise, teachers taught subjects and curriculum that were determined by the state frameworks, text book publishers, and certification boards. There were few examples of teachers integrating what they were doing in their class with what other teachers were doing in their classes. Calhoun had little or no horizontal or vertical curricular integration. Calhoun is very typical of middle schools in this regard. As James Beane writes:

> The fact is that the subject approach has been with us for so long and is so deeply entrenched in our schooling schemes that it has virtually paralyzed our capacity to imagine something different. The network of educational elites - academic scholars, state departments of education, certification bureaus, and text and test publishers - forms an almost intransigent force that makes serious curriculum reform seem almost impossible. There is barely a language left to describe other possibilities for the curriculum (1991, 12).

The efforts of the curriculum cadre and the school-as-a-whole have already moved the school away from this structure. The two hour humanities core begins to integrate language arts and social studies, and the addition of an aerospace semester course links to the science courses and provides a technical application of scientific

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concepts. The challenge for Calhoun's curriculum cadre will be to examine the advisability and feasibility of further integration of the curriculum at Calhoun. The two hour humanities core and the science/aerospace courses are a step in this direction, but Calhoun is still far from a totally integrated curriculum in which students and teachers learn through themes that stress exploration not subject coverage (Beane, 1991). The Inquiry process will provide the vehicle for planning - a stage other middle schools have found necessary to successfully integrate middle school curriculum (Jacobs, 1991).

The fourth challenge is to accommodate the project to the special needs of early adolescents, especially to those who have already experienced school failure in elementary school. Accelerated Schools projects in elementary schools have the advantage of working with young children who are excited about learning and who have not yet experienced years of failure in a formal school setting. The elementary school students may come to school without some of the skills of their more privileged peers, but they are still excited about learning and anticipate doing well in school. By the time students in at-risk situations reach middle school, many have experienced school failure, and they have lost their excitement about learning, and their self esteem is low. The effects of the rapid physical, emotional and intellectual development of early adolescents on their school performance has been clearly summarized in *Toward an Accelerated Middle School*(Hopfenberg, Levin, Meister and Rogers, 1990). The changes experienced by young adolescents make students this age especially challenging to teach, and provide another reason to design a school more responsive to their special needs. The Calhoun school community is in the process of changing its attitude toward the students. They are checking the tendency to "write off" certain students and are looking for the positive in each individual student and in the behavior and attitudes of early adolescents. Their

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challenge is great; many of their students arrive below grade level and with attitudes that do not foster learning. The predominant student culture eschews academic achievement and discourages students from being "school boys" or "school girls." The school interaction cadre will be focussing most of its attention on fostering a sense of respect among all members of the Calhoun community, with the hope that increased respect will lead to different attitudes toward school and academic achievement.

Continuing the Project Without Outside Facilitation

The Accelerated Schools Project is designed to maintain itself without constant reference back to Accelerated Schools staff members. As a school community internalizes the principles and process, and builds on its own school culture, the project becomes the community's, not the Accelerated School Project's or a replica of another accelerated school. The project has intentionally developed a design that schools can implement with minimal involvement of outside facilitators. Too many reforms have failed because they were dependent on outside facilitation for their maintenance.

The Stanford Accelerated Schools Project staff members were very active in the capacity building phase of the project at Calhoun. Although they did not take leadership positions and tried to always remain in an advisory capacity, the Stanford staff members did influence the degree to which the project was internalized at Calhoun. The Accelerated Schools Project staff members have promised Calhoun that they will remain involved in the implementation of the project for several years, diminishing their time and altering their role over time. By the third year, the Stanford team will be involved in a trouble shooting and coaching capacity. Eventually, Calhoun will carry the project without regular input from the Stanford team. The Calhoun staff has been very grateful to theStanford team for their support, but they

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realize that they must eventually "wean" themselves from Stanford's influence.

Conclusions

The study on which this report is based was designed to examine the implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project in a middle school and to focus on changes that occurred during the implementation process, distinguishing, when possible, changes attributable to the Accelerated Schools Project and those that were not. It also examined the factors influencing these changes. From this broad focus, emerged an emphasis on the Accelerated Schools Project as an intervention fostering school culture change.

The report demonstrates that Calhoun is well on its way to becoming an accelerated school. The principles and practices of the Accelerated Schools Project are becoming part of the school culture as the school community internalizes and adapts them to the existing culture at Calhoun. Trust is building among all of the participants. The structure of the school organization is changing and becoming more democratic. Finally, the project withstood the challenge of the budget crisis; in fact the project was used as a vehicle to help the school through the crisis.

This report could end at this point, providing a detailed description of the implementation process, the changes observed, and an analysis of the factors affecting the process and changes. However, the question remains if its successes can be applied to other middle schools interested in embarking on the Accelerated Schools process. Many researchers and policy makers are skeptical of generalizations drawn from single case studies, even when they are rich in detail. They might say that this study of the implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project at Calhoun tells us little more than what happened at Calhoun. However, qualitative researchers have demonstrated that meaning can be drawn from single

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case studies (Miles & Huberman, 1984) if we seek analytic rather than statistical generalizations (Yin, 1989; Kennedy, 1979). To draw more general conclusions from a single case, we must stand back from the case and ask what lessons can be learned from this case and separate the generic and unique processes and influences projects will experience.

Other schools attempting to implement Accelerated Schools can draw many lessons from the process described in this report, and they may anticipate many of the challenges described above. The details will be different for each school, but other schools will probably find parallels with each of the challenge areas described. The final question for this report remains: If parallels can be drawn for most of the issues and challenge areas, what features of the implementation process at Calhoun might not exist in other schools? Many factors facilitated the implementation of the project at Calhoun, but four of the factors may not exist in other schools.

The first factor is the strong support of the administration for the project. The principal and vice principals embraced the Accelerated Schools Project from the beginning. Each administrator had his or her own personal reason for supporting the project, but they each shared a belief that the project would help them better serve their students and improve staff relations. Strong support of the administration is not the same as the administration taking on the project as their "pet" or that they used their charisma or political savvy to make the project work. If this were the case, the Accelerated Schools Project would be just another innovation that rises and falls with the administration.

The Accelerated Schools Project requires that the administration and staff change their mind set about the structure of the school and their expectations for the students and staff. This is not always easy, and the process can easily be stalled if the administration is not fully behind it. There were many times during the first year that

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the Calhoun administration could have backed down from their support of the project and returned to old management styles, but they were sufficiently committed to the principles and process of the Accelerated Schools Project to make the necessary changes, difficult and tedious as they sometimes were.

The second factor is the support of key members of the faculty. If influential faculty members had not supported the project from the beginning, it may not have succeeded. Many teachers at Calhoun were unsure about the project even though they agreed to participate in it. They had seen reforms in the past, and they were skeptical about becoming involved in another one. They could have easily decided that this project was no different than others. However, teachers saw that a group of well-respected, veteran teachers supported the project and were working hard to make it successful. At this point, they decided to become supporters as well.

The third factor facilitating the project development at Calhoun is the support provided by the Accelerated Schools team from Stanford. As a pilot school, Calhoun benefitted from active, sustained support from a team of Accelerated Schools facilitators. The Stanford team was careful not to lead or to shape the direction taken by the project, but they did provide ready checks on the process, and they kept the project on track. In essence, they were a presence. There were several times during the course of the project, that progress may have stalled had the Stanford team not been present. Even though the Calhoun community had the best intentions for the project, the press of their daily work (e.g. preparing lessons, submitting grades, completing reports for the central office, determining the schedule) might have pushed the project to the side. The Stanford team helped them over the point when they might have reverted to the status quo when time was short or problems arose.

The fourth facilitating influence is the support granted by the central office. Calhoun's central office was not active in the daily implementation of the project, but

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the decision to provide a series of early release days and $10,000 had both a practical and symbolic influence on the project implementation. Most school districts will not be able to grant schools engaged in the process early release days or other gifts of time. The Calhoun community used these days productively, and many teachers felt that the project would not have taken off without them. That is speculation, and many schools have been able to make time without such grants. Calhoun's central office showed its support through granting time and money; other central offices show their support by becoming actively involved in the daily implementation of the project, or in facilitating rather than blocking the changes generated at the school.

Epilogue

It is always difficult to end a description of an on-going change process. This report documents the changes that took place during the first year of the implementation of the Accelerated Schools Project, but it leaves open many questions about what happened with the project the following year. This epilogue will provide a brief description of some of the activities of the second year. The following account is based on reports from the Stanford staff since I was unable to track the implementation process in the second year.

During the summer, many members of the Calhoun staff were very busy with activities designed to transform Calhoun. Members of the new humanities department (created through a merger of the social studies and language arts departments) worked to design the humanities core; other staff members helped design training for two more middle schools about to engage in the Accelerated Schools process. Several teachers prepared for the aerospace offerings, and members of the math department prepared to teach algebra to all incoming eighth graders. The entire staff participated in an Accelerated Schools Project retreat before school started; they were ready to resume their work when school started in the fall. At the beginning of the 1991-92 school year, the Accelerated Schools governance structure was in place, and the Inquiry process was well internalized by many of the members of the staff.

Although the California budget crisis (and its resultant cuts in staff at Calhoun) was the major concern at the end of the 1990 - 1991 school year, some of the cuts were short-lived because Calhoun experienced a large increase in student population, and some teachers were rehired and new teachers hired. At the end of the previous school year the federal court allowed the school district to revise its integration formula, permitting the district to admit more Hispanic students into Calhoun. The student population grew 47% with a 300% increase in non and limited -

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English proficient students. Although teachers were hired to accommodate this increase in student population, class size increased from approximately 24 to 36 students. Staffing and student body changes slowed the momentum of the Accelerated Schools Project because of the demands of accommodating the new students and faculty. By November, new teachers and new students had adjusted to the school and to the Accelerated Schools process, and most of the cadres were again working productively.

The effects of changes in the size and composition of the student body were felt by all staff members since Calhoun had decided to eliminate ability grouping. Students were grouped heterogeneously in all classes in the 1991-92 school year. This decision was made because the school community was concerned that homogeneous grouping led to inequity in the school. Not all teachers enthusiastically embraced the idea of heterogeneous grouping, and the influx of large numbers of limited English speaking students led them to reconsider the wisdom of this decision. Most members of the school community, however, were commited to providing equal access to stimulating courses to all students, and they ensured that heterogeneously grouped classes remain.

As cadres worked to pick up from where they left their inquiry at the end of the previous school year, they had to bring their new members up to speed. In some cases, new cadre facilitators had to be selected because several of the facilitators were either laid off or transferred to other schools. The following are brief summaries of the progress enjoyed by the cadres.

The instruction cadre began the year at the second stage of Inquiry - brainstorming solutions to the problem that instructional practices were not reaching enough of the students. They decided that they would focus attention on three areas. They would find ways to catalogue and utilize staff strengths. They would plan for

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peer observation and coaching, and they would continue to explore the Program for Complex Instruction. Because of the tremendous increase in student enrollment, many staff were hungry for classroom management strategies and other ways to deal creatively with their class size increases and the heterogeneous groupings. In response to their colleagues' request, the instruction cadre sent out a survey to find the areas of staff development most needed or desired by the staff. The results pointed to an interest in positive classroom management strategies. In looking for solutions within and outside of the school, they realized that they had three teachers already qualified to present training in Fred Jones, a positive classroom management strategy. The steering committee and the school-as-a-whole approved the idea of using their own trained staff to present voluntary training sessions twice a week for the entire school year for interested teachers.

Once this was in place, the cadre returned to its primary focus on improving instruction based on what constitutes powerful learning. They cataloged the strengths and interests of the Calhoun teachers, as well as instructional strategies that work. In order to circulate the strengths of the staff, they developed and implemented an action plan for regular publication of a "Pearls of Wisdom" section in the school's daily bulletin. These "pearls" described effective classroom practices/projects going on in the school currently which support the research on powerful learning. They divided the responsibility of interviewing their fellow staff members among cadre members to ensure that at least one pearl was printed in the Calhoun daily bulletin each day. The pearls came from personal conversations and interviews with colleagues. After publishing these for awhile, they found that concrete suggestions of activities and organizational ideas were more useful than quotes. The cadre plans to put these ideas in a data base and compile them in a notebook in the media center.

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The cadre also moved forward with the Program for Complex Instruction (PCI). After SAW approval, the cadre visited another school to explore the program and reported back to SAW about their impressions. They were most impressed with the following: cooperation and collaboration; individual accountability; thematic approaches to studies; emphasis on self-esteem; critical thinking skills taught; incorporation of ESL students; and strategies for evaluation. They have identified partial funding for the program and sent representatives from each subject area to training over the summer. SAW plans to systematically spread the program throughout the school in the coming years. This cadre is developing action plans for the beginning of their third year to set up a schedule of peer visits, peer coaching and video taping for self study and to capture successful instructional strategies.

The culture cadre began the school year with a change in both membership and atmosphere. Where last year the cadre lacked direction and commitment from many of its members, this year some new members (transfers from other cadres and new faculty) bring enthusiasm and keen interest in the issue of culture. The cadre built on the previous year's work in stage one of the Inquiry process and re-explored the broad issue of culture. The cadre identified five overlapping areas where culture seemed to be a very important issue and has explored several of them in depth. They are:

- How students' cultural ignorance and prejudices may lead to negative feelings and hostility between different cultural groups (i.e. gangs).

- how some of the practices or values of our current educational system might do harm to individuals from other cultures.

- How our cadre and the school as an institution communicates with students and parents from other cultures.

- How the cultures (histories, values, customs, and languages) of different

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communities are being addressed in the formal school curriculum.

- How to build upon, value, celebrate and recognize the cultural strengths and diversity of all the members of our school community.

As part of these exploration efforts the cadre organized a presentation by the local police on the issue of gangs. The cadre members were impressed with the presentation and proposed to organize it again for the entire school staff, since their school was located in an active gang area. In fact, not long after the gang presentation, a drive-by shooting was witnessed by many students as it happened directly adjacent to the school property. Although an exploration by the cadre indicated that there were currently no active gang members enrolled in Calhoun, many students were "wanna-be" gang members. Cadre members felt that it was important for the staff to understand the issue as completely as possible so that preventative measures could be taken before it ever became a full blown problem for the Calhoun community.

By the spring, the cadre was on their way to developing solutions that fit their focus area more closely. They planned a Cinco de Mayo schoolwide celebration and tied it in with the curriculum. The cadre worked with the Humanities teachers to incorporate Cinco de Mayo themes in their curriculum. Students wrote cultural poems, and the Humanities department decided to develop a unit on Mayans. The Cinco de Mayo celebration gave visibility to the cadre and offering all staff and students an opportunity to address issues of culture and to recognize strengths within Hispanic cultures.

Although the issues this cadre wants to address are so broad and diverse, and the group has had difficulty focussing, the cadre felt determined to come together and focus for the next year to build on its success. The major issues that the cadre would

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like to address are: the lack of adequate representation of the students' communities' cultures in the curriculum; the need for cultural celebrations, appreciation and recognition by the school community as a whole, outside the classroom; and dealing with the presence of gangs in the local community.

The school interaction cadre (formerly the student interaction cadre) had moved through the hypothesis testing stage of Inquiry by the end of the 1990 - 91 school year. During the second year, they planned to continue working on the issue of respect. They were also asked by the school-as-a-whole if they would examine the area of accountability throughout the school. They discovered through their hypothesis generating and testing that consistency, respect, and accountability are related. Having consistent models seems essential for developing a sense of respect in the students and staff. They decided that they needed to develop schoolwide expectations for appropriate behavior and interactions.

The cadre members began examining the behavior standards and expectations of the administration, teachers, and other student supervisors. Through their review of teachers' classroom standards and consequences, and discussions with teachers, teacher's aides, student supervisors, and administrators, they found little consistency in what is expected of students and in the consequences for poor conduct. They concluded that in order to build and maintain respect within each student and everyone else in the school community, some common, agreed upon standards were necessary.

The cadre sent a general survey to the staff asking them if they would support a standardized "code of conduct" for every classroom. It would include standard expectations and consequences. The staff was in favor of the general idea. The cadre then collected and analyzed each of the teacher's classroom standards and started preparing a uniform set of expectations for the entire school based on

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everyone's input. They also investigated office records regarding tardiness, and they interviewed teachers, support staff, and administrators. They drafted some initial expectations but realized that they had not gotten enough input from the students. Students had stopped coming to cadre meetings, and even when reinvited, the students did not come. They sent two cadre members (one teacher and one campus supervisor) to the next student council meeting. The cadre members discussed their work with the student council members who then took the information back to their classrooms. In many classrooms there was extensive discussion over wording, especially deciding between the words "respect" and "courtesy." The student council informally surveyed the students, and they preferred the word "respect."

At this stage, they held an "open forum" for staff to discuss issues of school behavior that kept coming up in discussions. Issues of respect, consistency, discipline, tardiness, and the consequences were discussed. After some discussion, the staff agreed in this meeting that they needed to be consistent, but that the consequences they used should differ based on their own styles. The school community agreed that discipline is like teaching, and different styles of rewards and punishments are appropriate at different times - the key is consistency in response.

The school interaction cadre developed the following set of school-wide expectations:

- Be on time.
- Be prepared
- Be respectful
- Be respectful of other's property

The cadre then started addressing the consequences connected with various infractions of school-wide expectations. They set up several formats and checked them out with their colleagues by interview and survey. After making a presentation to steering, they presented a revised set of consequences to SAW. SAW accepted them

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with some revisions (designed to make them more positive). The new schoolwide expectations and schoolwide rules and consequences will be pilot tested starting on the first day of school next fall. The cadre will monitor the progress, evaluate the plan, and make refinements. The cadre plans to return to their original hypothesis list in the fall and continue investigating other reasons why there may be a lack of respect among the students.

The progress of this cadre is due to the hard work of all cadre members, including the support staff members. The cadre has always had a large number of support staff members, and they have become increasingly vocal and active at cadre meetings and at SAW meetings. They volunteered to do much of the investigating and reporting, substituting for each other so that they could take turns coming to meetings.

The family and community involvement cadre completed stage one of the Inquiry process by the end of the previous school year. The parent night held in May 1991 provided information that helped them confirm a number of the hypotheses they had generated. Confirmed hypotheses along with ideas generated at the parent night led the cadre to embark on plans to create a "parent room" at Calhoun. The parents confirmed the hypothesis that parents sometimes feel like second class citizens when they come to the school, and both parents and Calhoun staff felt that a parent room would provide a place for them to feel comfortable and involved. The cadre did not follow the second stage of Inquiry (brainstorming solutions) fully in dealing with this issue. They did not survey parents or ask how they would use a parent room. They did this in part because several parents felt so strongly about the parent room and offered to help set it up.

One of the first achievements of the cadre (and a sign of how the school is developing a sense of unity of purpose) was designating a room to be the parent room. The cadre chose the one empty classroom for the parent room - a room that was highly

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sought after by many departments (especially the Humanities department). Through the steering committee and SAW, the school decided that parent involvement was an extremely importnat goal for the entire school, and they voted to use the room as a parent room.

The cadre spent several months planning and executing all of the details of creating an inviting room for parents. They were disappointed in the amount of parent involvement in the planning, but they still felt that the room was important. A grand opening was held in December, and only a few parents attended. The cadre held a parent meeting and found that parents did not want a room just as a place to come and hang out; they want it as an information center where they can come to get information on what is happening in the school, on ways to work with their children, and on how to volunteer in the classrooms. They said that they would like the walls to be covered with information about Calhoun - about classes, attendence/discipline policies, student work, requests for help, etc.

The cadre also pilot tested a weekly "Calhoun Family Newsletter" designed to increase communication between the school and families. The cadre took this idea to SAW in December and following SAW approval began implementing it in March. Two cadre members collaboratively produce the newsletter. One collects the information from all members of the school community and edits it. The other types it and does the layout. The weekly newsletter focusses on what is going on in the classsrooms and school. Each week, the staff members submit brief paragraphs describing their latest activities. Each issue is in Spanish and English, and includes items on students who have received honors or who have written outstanding essays or raps. They occasionally profile a staff member or student. The newsletters are distributed to the students to take home to parents. Based on feedback from the staff and parents, the newsletter will continue in the fall because it appears to fill a vital communication

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need. Several parents volunteered to serve on cadres based on information in the newsletter.

The curriculum cadre had a rough beginning of the year. Several members were overwhelmed by their overloaded classrooms, while others were upset that all of the plans they discussed (but did not receive approval by the school-as-a-whole) at the end of the year were not in place. After a few meetings in which discussion was unfocussed and negat..e, the cadre resumed its work. This cadre had moved very quickly through the Inquiry stages last year because of the need to create a schedule for the 1991-92 school year. The current schedule (described at the end of the main body of this report) is essentially a pilot test.

The cadre decided to spend the second year assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the new schedule. They also set three goals for the year. The first was to design more humanities curricula through the integration of language arts and social studies, and articulation of such curricula through the three grade levels. The cadre planned for all humanities teachers to meet by grade level to develop integrated humanities units. The vice principal and humanities teachers found release time so they could get the work done. Since they did not receive text books, the sixth and seventh grade teachers totally created the humanities curricula they used. Although it was difficult at the beginning, the teachers felt very accomplished at the end. They organized the curriculum to follow the progression of time beginning with early humans. The eighth grade teachers did not move as quickly in designing curriculum, but they attended a workshop on innovative humanities teaching and were excited about possible changes.

The second goal was to examine the set of newly offered elective courses. This became the major focus of the year. They decided to evaluate the newly taught elective courses (created during the first year of the Accelerated Schools Project) in

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order to decide which should be taught in the following year. They conducted their evaluation through interviewing and surveying electives teachers. They also researched timelines and district requirements. They presented the curricular options to SAW along with survey findings and new ideas on course offerings.

The third goal was to integrate the aviation/aerospace grant activities across the curriculum. While the cadre did not formally address this goal, the math, science and aerospace departments began to meet and integrate their curricula on their own. Although issues such as those described below have slowed the Inquiry process for this cadre, they did develop a framework for the school by the end of the year. Their challenge is to institutionalize ways of working together on creating integrated curricula and assessing its effectiveness.

As was the case last year, the curriculum cadre's progress has been frequently derailed by concerns of a few members that often result in protracted debates over important, but not necessarily central issues to the cadre. For example, considerable time was spent discussing the following issues: inclusion of a guidance period into the schedule (eliminating sustained silent reading minutes); a move to a rotating schedule; and a suggestion to reconsider the advisability of heterogeneous grouping. In the latter case, the principal helped the cadre use the Inquiry process to frame the problem rather than to fight about it. They found that only a few teachers (two in the math department) had trouble with grouping of this kind, and even they had only a few students who were extremely challenging. The math department, in addition to accommodating heterogeneous grouping, was also implementing Project Equity which eliminated general math (all seventh graders take pre-Algebra and all eighth graders take Algebra). Teachers across all disciplines helped the math department develop strategies to make heterogeneous grouping work as they implemented this more challenging math schedule.

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As the above indicates, most of the cadres had a very productive second year. All cadres had moments when they were side-tracked or bogged down on details of plans. Members passed through moments of frustration over slow progress, but on the whole the school was pleased with its progress. This progress affected the entire school and helped stimulate a number of changes in the entire school. The following describes a few of the changes in the school as a whole.

One of the most obvious changes in the school was in its instructional program. The teachers spent the year creating strategies to most effectively teach heterogeneously grouped classes. This was often a challenge, but most teachers found it rewarding and stimulating. Most found that if they geared their classes for their brightest students, they were also able to reach all of the students with a little creative planning and innovative instruction. Even in the math department, where the duel challenge of offering heterogeneous classes and algebra for all eighth grade students created great frustration at first, by the end of the year all of the teachers were strongly supportive of heterogeneous grouping. The success of students who otherwise might have failed made everyone aware of the importance of high expectations for all. One eighth grader in particular really turned around. He was doing first grade arithmetic in seventh grade and was convinced that he could not do algebra in eighth grade. But, because remedial classes did not exist, he had to take it. He found that he understood algebra and actually liked it. He finished the year on the honor roll and now plans to go to college after graduating from high school.

Another change was in the incorporation of special projects into the school-wide vision for Calhoun. The 1991-92 school year saw the implementation of both Project Equity (the math project in which all students complete Algebra by the eighth grade) and an aerospace/aviation grant. Instead of offering these programs as add-ons to the core instructional program, they have been integrated into the core of the

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program under the umbrella of the Accelerated Schools Project.

Another change that was obvious by the end of the second year was the continued improvement in communication among all members of the school community. The school staff was increasingly aware of the interconnections within the school. People are adamant about working together toward the vision and helping each other. Teachers comment that no one ever thinks in terms of "my classroom" or "my department" or "my grade level." Instead, the principle of unity of purpose has been internalized by most of the staff, and they work collaboratively and make decisions for the betterment of the entire school, not for individual or small group gain. The decision to establish the parent room in a room that would have served the needs of the humanities department is an example of this unity of purpose. The only group of teachers that still feels somewhat out of the mainstream is the special education department. In an end of the year reflection, they shared that their students' self-esteem has dropped since Calhoun became an accelerated school. The students felt that now that the school is accelerated, they are "super stupid." The special education department will work more closely with the humanities department to better integrate curriculum and increase mainstreaming. They will also work with their students on self-esteem.

Communication between the teaching staff and the classified staff has also continued to improve. Here too is an example of the Accelerated Schools principles in action. The school community now recognizes the strengths of its classified staff, and they are building on them. For example, a campus supervisor who works closely with many limited English speaking students was made an honorary English teacher for her work with many of the students.

Many of the "bugs" in the democratic governance structure have been eliminated. Calhoun now has monthly school-as-a-whole meetings, and

communication from the cadres, to the steering committee, to all members of the school community has improved. They have now established a system in which cadres make recommendations to the steering committee where the recommendations are discussed and refined. Proposals are then included in the daily bulletin so that all members of the school community are aware of proposed activities. After having an opportunity to reflect on the proposal, all members of the school community can vote on proposed activities at the school-as-a-whole meeting. This process was used when the family involvement cadre proposed establishing a parent room. SAW wants to continue to smooth out the decision-making process. For example, they want to define "majority;" does it mean 51% - 60% - 75% - 100%? They also recognize the need to improve communication betwen cadres and to increase the involvement of parents and students.

During the second year of project implementation students have become increasingly involved in the project and aware of how it is changing their education. Students feel that they are working harder, but they are enjoying teachers' experiments with more creative instructional techniques and curricular ideas. Teachers are using more relevant activities, hands-on approaches, and cooperative learning activities in the classroom. Students are engaging in their own cooperative learning through a peer tutoring program that has grown rapidly. Student organizations are also using the Inquiry process as they determine activities. For example, Calhoun's chapter of the California Junior Scholarship Federation used abbreviated inquiry to determine what victims of the fire in the Oakland hills really needed. They were pleased that by asking a few questions, they were able to provided needed food rather than duplicating the efforts of other organizations.

Throughout the school year, students were involved in activities designed to make the vision meaningful to them. This was accomplished through the "kickstart

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committee." Formed at the beginning of the second year to share the vision with the new students, staff, and parents (3/5 of the school community was new), this committee organizaed a number of activities that took place during all of the classroom time of the early release days. Students were asked to rewrite the vision in their own words, and their versions of the vision were posted on the walls in the cafeteria. They also collaboratively created poems, songs, murals, raps, flags, etc. to illustrate how they felt about the vision.

As described above, the curriculum cadre and the instruction cadre are using the Inquiry Process to recommend systemic changes in how and what is taught. However, changes in curriculum and instruction are evident already in many classrooms across the school. "Little wheels" of creativity and innovation are becoming the norm rather than the exception at Calhoun. Teachers feel free to unleash their creativity, and they are working cooperatively to share and refine their ideas. For example, the seventh grade humanities teachers are sharing all of their ideas which enriches the curriculum for all of the students. For a unit on archeology/geography the teachers brought in bags of trash to simulate the process used by archaeologists when they attempt to reconstruct the past. They also asked students to design a time capsule for 1992 that would inform future archaeologists about our society. The students find the new curricular ideas much more engaging than a course of study dependent only on the textbook and on workbooks. Through all of these activities, students worked actively in small groups and engaged in problem solving that is only possible through active learning.

Several of the "little wheels" that emerged last year are becoming institutionalized at Calhoun. In the spring, "Egg Drop II" was another schoolwide success. This time the activity was integrated into the curriculum in several departments. The humanities classes wrote "Eggbituaries" for the "New Yolk Times"

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about the lives of the spent eggs. Art classes made posters for the event (one was "eggcelerated schools"). The math department used stop watches and calculated the acceleration of the egg drop contraptions as they fell. The science and aerospace department provided time for the students to plan, design, draft, and build their egg drop entries. The eighth grade class continues to evaluate their time at Calhoun as part of their writing assignments. This year's graduates felt the effect of the Accelerated Schools Project more than their predecessors and wrote about their enjoyment of stimulating curriculum and their pride in completing algebra. Numerous "little wheel" activities sprang up throughout the year as all members of the school community began to feel comfortable taking risks and experimenting with new ideas.

Probably the most important change over the second year is the continued elevation in the school community's expectations for the students. Through their efforts to change the curriculum and instruction, improve family involvement, understand school interaction and recognize influences of culture, the school community is increasingly aware of the potential of all of the students. Teachers are less apt to say "our students can't do that" and are more willing to set the goals higher and higher. The school still has many challenges (e.g. the budget crisis of last year is becoming an annual eve t), but the excitement of the first year continues as ideas are translated into action, and as students become engaged in their own learning.

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