

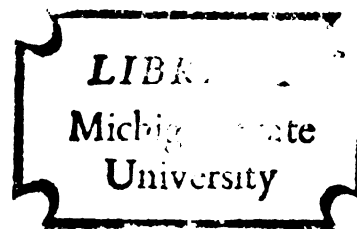
THE SUPPORTING ROLE OF AN OUTSIDE PERSON
WITHIN AN URBAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

ROBERT JOHN DUNN

1973



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ABSTRACT

THE SUPPORTING ROLE OF AN OUTSIDE PERSON WITHIN AN URBAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

By

Robert John Dunn

Purpose of the Study

I embarked on this experience, hoping to gain personal growth in working with a school staff to find out what ways there are for me to work with people, to find answers to those questions stated and I also hoped I could be of some benefit to the school.

Methodology

Having the permission of the superintendent and the principal of a biracial, urban junior high school, I entered the school opening day, September 5, 1972 and stayed until June 13, the last day of school. During this period, I interacted with the whole staff and initiated about 20 interventions to find answers to the following questions:

1. Can one have an effect on individuals within a school?
2. Can one have an effect on programs in a school?
3. Is the faculty able to accept an outsider?
4. Does the faculty see this person as beneficial to them?
5. Does the faculty see this person as a threat?
6. What are the constraints binding one who wishes to be a linking agent in a school?

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7. How can one who assumes the role of linking agent best conduct himself to achieve his end?

8. To what extent can the linking agent carry out programs?

Through the writers' interaction, daily notes and records were collected to answer these questions, which are briefly explained below:

Results

1. A school that has done very little over the years is now developing different electives and different programs. Some of these programs involve the same people who have been there for seven years. One teacher told me, "If it were not for you, I would not try anything."

I believe my role for some of these teachers has been one of support: support for them to develop ideas that they have and encouragement for them to experiment.

2. Several faculty members have told me, "You are the one responsible for all the changes going on. If it wasn't for you we would not be doing anything." Some of the changes they are referring to are several teams for next year, more electives for student, and students having a choice of where they want to be. I believe I have had an effect on programs.

3. I found limited acceptance in some groups and total acceptance in just one. My alliance with this last group came about one day when Teacher Rachael invited me to go a bar with them. Also, the principal invited me to administrative meetings and to the district extern program sponsored by Michigan State University.

4. Some members saw me as beneficial to them. Some teachers indicated to me that they would not have initiated programs and changes

Robert John Dunn

had it not been for my presence there this year. Many of them had been there for seven years without trying anything different. Some teachers also say these new programs are the sort of thing the principal has wanted for some time. Therefore, since both the teachers and the principal wanted these new and different programs in this school, I believe they both saw me as beneficial.

5. I was told by a teacher that some teachers were complaining about me. The teacher was informed of this by the principal. Upon questioning the principal further she found out that it was the older staff members. His statement was, "I guess if you were not doing anything then nothing would be happening." I also had been informed by other teachers that some other teachers did not like me.

6. There are three major constraints that I see. The primary one being the principal. The other being the teachers and their subgroups.

7. To accomplish what I set out to do, I tried to reduce the threat. I refrained from speaking out on controversial issues. I avoided making anyone defensive--especially in large groups. I always tried to be positive. I had to have a small group to test ideas with, to listen to, and figure out ways ideas could be implemented. My role allowed me time to talk with people without threat to their jobs. I tried to be consistent.

8. The limits of the administration, teachers, and the union proved to be my limits. If the principal could not live with the program, it had little support. If the teachers did not want the program, then it could not be carried out. The Bus Drivers Union so far has not allowed a teacher or an aide to drive a bus for a community class.

THE SUPPORTING ROLE OF AN OUTSIDE PERSON
WITHIN AN URBAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

By

Robert John Dunn

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Secondary Education and Curriculum

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I cannot say enough for some of the people who helped me through my program. To my beautiful, loving and supportive friend and wife, Ann. I do not know if I could have done this without her.

To Dale Alam, a friend and chairman, who has allowed me to be me. This is an authentic person who gives of himself and sacrifices so much. To John Suehr, a person who has pushed me to more openness and allowed me to test and experiment in return. To my other two committee members Bill Force and Sam Corl who have been so supportive with my program.

I want to thank those school teachers who made my year so enjoyable.

Then to my other friends, Ann, Bill, Gary, Jean, Mike that I have enjoyed over the past years.

To Joan, Marsha, and Barb who have been so helpful during this writing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Chapter

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
 Chapter	
CHAPTER I	1
Introduction	1
School	8
CHAPTER II	11
Change	11
Supporting Theory	13
Theoretical Framework	13
Philosophy	13
Rationale	14
Selected Goals	15
What Does This Mean?	16
Notes to the Council	17
Notes to the Teachers	18
Notes to the Administrators	18
Notes to the Parents	18
Note to the Students	19
CHAPTER III	20
Questions	20
Definitions	20
Research	21
Interaction of Developing Process	21
My Perception of My Role	23
Their Perception of My Role	24
My Expectations	24
Limitations	27
CHAPTER IV	29
General Description	29
Background of the School	31
School Organization	31
Description of Principal	34
Description of Assistant Principals	36
Some classrooms	38

Chapter

CH

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX

Chapter	Page
Security People.	42
Entry Points	43
Workroom	45
CHAPTER V	47
Selected Interventions	47
Faculty Interaction	47
Wednesday Meeting	48
Integrated Course	49
Negative Attitude	50
Teacher-Counselor	50
Faculty Weekend	51
Senior Citizens	52
Interest Hour	53
Middle School	54
Students Selecting Their Own Teachers	56
Elementary and Junior High Teachers	57
Alternative Room	57
Community	58
Grievance	59
Classroom Environment	60
CHAPTER VI	62
Summary	62
Conclusion for Questions	63
Questions Generated Through Study	69
Implications	70
Reflections	71
Recommendations for School	74
Linking Agent Skills	76
Recommendations for Further Study	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78
APPENDIX	82

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Since this dissertation is about me and my interaction within an urban junior high school, I see a need to provide at least a brief resume of my previous school experience.

I have taught for three years and in four schools. I graduated from college without a teaching certificate as I was not really sure that I wanted to be a teacher. However, I became involved with students by volunteering to tutor--first on an individual basis and then within a school setting. This proved to be the most exciting thing I had encountered. But what the students encountered in the schools saddened me, and I felt a compelling need to do something. I decided to enter the system as a teacher, not a tutor. Although I did not have a teaching certificate, there was a shortage of teachers, and many schools hired graduates in special fields.

My first teaching assignment was in an integrated junior high in a city of 200,000. The second was a semester later in an all-white suburban city junior high. The third was in a junior high in a city with a population of 1,000,000. The fourth was in an integrated high school in a city with a population of 50,000.

The first school was to be typical of my experiences in public school teaching. The interview that lead to my employment was a disappointment to me. The principal seemed uncomfortable talking about a philosophy of education and quickly switched the conversation to

sports. We found a mutual interest in boxing that provided a relaxed exchange of information--none of which related to students or his school or my expectations and qualifications. I was hired and assigned to teach math.

Many beginning teachers often are assigned "unwanted" students, and I was not to be the exception. This school tracked its students, and I received four classes of the lowest track of ninth graders. The administration never questioned the tracking system as far as I can remember, and the department thought it was good. It led to some deep-rooted (and self-righteous) beliefs for assigning grades. One math teacher thought that students on the high track deserved either an "A" or "B," those in the middle track, "B" or "C" and those in the lowest a "C" or "D," no matter how the learner responded. I challenged the tracking system, but no one else saw a need for change. I could not obligate myself to this ideology.

Some of the students I had in my classes were constantly in trouble in school, and, consequently, suspended frequently. The belief seemed to be that suspension alone was supposed to provide the needed incentive for corrected behaviors. An interested or concerned teacher was not encouraged to follow up. Most teachers and administrators endorsed suspension procedures and viewed the absence of a "disruptive influence" in class with considerable relief.

Although I experienced real enjoyment in the classroom, there was also frustration--in the sense that the students thought so little of themselves. A standard student comment in the beginning was, "I am dumb." This low self-concept was more often than not

reinforced by class assignments emanating from the central office and by track assignments made by teachers insensitive to this attitude, so prevalent among so many of the students. There were no choices in classes. My own classes did not have the same restrictions as the others in the school. Students were free to leave class at any time (I do not attempt to judge the wisdom of this at this time, only to indicate that it was so.) Also, students were free to discuss anything they wanted to in class, and we did.

As for me, the principal thought I should wear a sport coat all of the time, which I seldom did. He complained about my wearing sweaters and told me not to wear them. I never complied.

Shortly before Thanksgiving he confronted me saying, "I understand you let your students call you Bob." I said, "Yes". He told me that this was only going to cause problems. Sometime after Thanksgiving I was informed by the principal that since I did not have a teaching certificate, I might be replaced by someone who did. I started looking for another job.

When word of this became known, there was a strong show of student support. They wanted to have a sit-in as a protest, but I discouraged it. During this time, a young boy whom I had come to know well, although I had never had him in class, approached me. One of the few times he was not on "suspension" he had won first place in an art contest with a painting he called "Atomic Bomb". The painting looked like the world I see, he sees, and we both feel. He gave it to me and I still have it.

During my brief time at this school, the principal never discussed my concerns with me. Our only conversations came about when

he had something negative to say and the one time I was evaluated. We shared a basic disagreement here as well. I didn't feel it was a fair evaluation. Only his perceptions were given. Student evaluation was never considered. My own perceptions were given. My own perceptions of class conditions, the school, administration, etc. were of no interest to the principal. I never once heard a positive comment regarding my teaching although there was improvement in attitudes and self-concept in the class.

During the interview for my second teaching job, I told the principal that decisions in the other school were made by the principal. He told me, "You would never see that here." I was hired.

Two hours of the first faculty meeting were taken up with a discussion on scheduling. The faculty versus the principal. Toward the end of that discussion, the principal said, "It doesn't make any difference because I have already made the decision."

I didn't get to know very many students here as I had previously. I even was responsible for the suspension of a student which I will regret. In class we discussed very little that was of day-to-day importance to students in terms of their own vital concerns. We discussed math. When we would go outside in the spring, the chairwoman would say to me, "How do they learn any math outside?" I would say, "They do."

In spite of the fact that my occasional aberrations caused this type of observation from the department head, I was asked to return, but I refused. I chose to leave this school.

The following summer I went to Europe and put myself back together. It turned out to be a kind of personal odyssey for me.

The ebb and flow of traveling students, teachers, citizens of other countries and some touring Americans provided hours of interaction and testing of beliefs. I felt excited and refreshed as I took on my third position.

Here, textbooks were available in the classroom as a resource for those who wanted to use them--they were never used until I was forced to hand them out later. Instead we did a lot of things. We discussed, did math, and played games. Once a week after school I would open discussion with any students that wanted to talk. Some of the topics were religion, family, drugs and school. This last one caused conflicts. Students were going into other classes and questioning why they could not do certain things. Things came to a boil over, of all things, chocolate milk. The students wanted it and the administration turned down the request. The students went through the channels of student government and the administration. They were turned down again. They used our class time to organize petitions to discuss action. One way was through the school newspaper, but suddenly there was no longer a student newspaper. It was simply taken away from them. The students turned to me to sponsor it. I told them I would.

In the meantime, petitions for chocolate milk were being circulated. A student was suspended for petitioning. I was called in by the assistant principal shortly thereafter and told, "You know, you do not have a teaching certificate. Therefore, we have to replace you with someone who does. You have until Christmas vacation." Vacation was in two more days. He went on to explain it would not be wise to tell the students.

I will not explain the chaos that took place, but the students got their chocolate milk, and I got my two-days notice. Several teachers came up to me and told me I did the right thing here, but that they could not do it. One told me to get the teachers' union to support me. I didn't feel they would be able to help me as I was not a member and did not have a teaching certificate.

I went back to the university to get my teaching certificate, since this seemed to be the principals' excuse for firing me. Having this for "support," I set off again.

I was once more hired into a school without ever having met the principal prior to our first day of school. I had met the chairman of the Mathematics Department, however, it soon became apparent that it was one of the most ruthless schools I had been in yet.

I decided I would bide my time and observe the situation, the power structure and decision-making process. I wanted to see the effect the school had on the students. This, however was short-lived.

I was a "moving teacher" and one room in which I taught was 12 feet by 20 feet. The fire department had specified the room should hold no more than 18 persons. I agreed. I had two classes in this particular room. First 18; then 20; and finally, 30 students were assigned to that room. I made it a point to see my chairman and politely requested that he not send additional students to this small classroom, but rather to one of my other two classes which numbered between 30 and 41. He continued to send them. I sent them back. For this I got a "5" on my evaluation from the administration; the lowest you could get.

I set up centers in the room and to compensate for the overcrowding, I asked the assistant principal if I could use the auditorium for other students to work in because of my small classroom. He said, "No" because they would not be supervised. I did it anyway.

In the meantime, students were being suspended right and left from school--students that I knew. There seemed to be no due process or written rules to follow. This started many conversations in school and in my classes. The assistant principal was described as a "bouncer" by one female teacher. This man, who would stand outside my door to listen and see what was happening, told me I could not use the library anymore. No reason for this was ever given. Just prior to the end of this semester, another teacher and I found that our classes for the next term had been switched without our being consulted. I told my chairman I was not happy about it, and felt he showed no support for members of his departments, especially in matters dealing with the administration. Students who had been in my classes the first semester petitioned for me to come back. Parents called the principal and superintendent indicating support for me; but nothing happened. By this time of the year, the students had had it with the assistant principal and were trying to get rid of him. But nothing came of this either.

I was given my last evaluation. The chairman was in my class once for ten minutes, the assistant principal once and the principal once. They never asked me to discuss it. So I asked them to. After I had questioned them for a while, the principal, greatly agitated, shouted, "We are not re-hiring you--not because of your teaching

ability--but because you want to change this whole school. You ought to find some place more progressive."

Not long after, the United States invaded Cambodia. The students got together and said they were going to demonstrate the next day. I never knew anything about the plans for the following day until the end of the last hour of classes. Then, after school, several students asked me to speak at this meeting and I said I would.

The following morning the assistant principal came into my homeroom and accused me of organizing the demonstration; and, said if the students demonstrated, I would be fired right away. This took place in front of the class. That afternoon the school was surrounded by police cars, the administrators, and certain teachers who volunteered to patrol the school. The demonstration never took place. I was fired.

School

I came back to graduate school and enrolled in a program with an emphasis on curriculum. I was wound-up, very bitter and frustrated. I felt that schools had to change and that there had to be some way for me to function within a school situation.

At Michigan State University, I became involved with the concept that the whole school does not have to change. We can build programs that teachers can support and administrators can live with, where parents and students may choose their environment. This means students are not randomly placed and that each classroom is an alternative, selected by students, parents and teachers. This concept is being practiced at Kinawa Middle School in Okemos, Michigan, where I spent a term. I spent most of my time observing

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in "The School Within A School". This is an alternative learning environment within the regular middle school which ascribes to this concept.

During this time, I did volunteer to work with a high school trying to set up programs where students could select their own environment. However, at this school, I gravitated toward students again and several teachers. This came about when they started coming over to my home to discuss ideas that were of concern to them.

Later, at a faculty meeting, my name was brought up in connection with "Communism" and I was asked not to come back. I believe the reason for this was that my presence was causing conflict with some people who did not know me, but disliked the ideas that were attributed to me.

As part of my course work at the university, I had the opportunity to work with several groups of student teachers. At one school, the principal wanted me to develop programs for them. Believing program development must come from those involved, I encouraged the teachers to take on this responsibility. There was a lack of enthusiasm and readiness on the part of the teachers to do this, and nothing came of it. I never was able to work with people at this school to help look at this concept. The other school was more responsive to this concept. I became better acquainted with the teachers, and we had several long discussions. The parents also were interested in alternatives from which to choose. A plan to provide alternative environments within the school was agreed upon by the faculty.

As a continuation of my program, I participated in several off-campus courses with various school districts. This provided me with an opportunity to discuss the concept of alternatives with peers and other teachers with whom I was involved.

This dissertation is my attempt to work with this concept.

CHAPTER II

Change

If I were not accepted by an informal group within this school, I would be an outsider without support to work with people. An example of this is explained by Sibley where six chief leaders in a village did not support a project due to a conflict with the change agent. The project failed.¹

If I could be accepted by an informal group or groups, I could then identify people and leaders and have them disseminate their ideas. This is shown by Najafi where a woman, because of her motivation, ability in language, cultural understanding and official affiliations gained the respect and cooperation of the villagers to bring change in the community.²

There are many models for change. Kurt Lewin states:

. . . a successful change includes, therefore, three aspects: unfreezing (if necessary) the present level, moving to the new level and freezing life on the new level.³

These concepts were expanded by Lippitt to seven phases:

1. The development of a need for change

¹Arthur Niehoff, and Anderson Charnel, "The Process of Cross-Cultural Innovation", International Developments, Vol. 6, No. 2, (June, 1964), pp. 5-11.

²Ibid.

³Kurt Lewin, "Group Decision and Social Change" in Swanson, G. E., et. al., Readings in Social Psychology, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1952), pp.459-473.

2. The establishment of a change relationship
3. The clarification or diagnosis of the client system's problems
4. The examination of alternative routes and goals; establishing goals and intentions of action
5. The transformation of intentions into actual change efforts
6. The generalization and stabilization of change
7. Achieving a terminal relationship.⁴

Carlson states:

Part of the explanation of the slow rate of change in public schools, according to many students of organizational change, lies with the absence of an institutionalized change agent position in education.⁵

Havelock states:

The advantages of such an arrangement would appear to be related primarily to the concept of insideness. The linker is right there at the focus of need. He understands the client system in all its uniqueness.⁶

The above indicates a need for action research that might help a person in entering a school with the main purpose of processing ideas. It also lends itself to developing some linking centers with the public schools.

⁴Ronald Lippitt, Jeanne Watson, and Bruce Westley, The Dynamics of Planned Change, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1958), p. 312.

⁵Richard Carlson, "Barriers to Change in Public Schools", Change Processes in the Public Schools, (Eugene Oregon: The Center for the Advance Study of Educational Administration, 1965), p. 4.

⁶Ronald G. Havelock, et. al., "Planning for Innovation Through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge", (Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge, Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan), pp. 7-30.

Supporting Theory

The preceding material on change and the change process is compatible with attempts made throughout the year of study. The concept of change and the role identified as change agent, however, seem to imply direction. The linking agent concept as created in this study is a much more neutral term and requires a separate frame of reference.

Theoretical Framework

The following document represents a group effort to create a theoretical framework to support a transition from junior high schools to middle schools. The committee included the principal from the junior high school where I spent my voluntary year and several teachers with whom I worked throughout the year. I served as the committee coordinator and thus had ample opportunity to work very closely with the group. This is a preliminary effort for committee reaction and was not the final report which was submitted to the Instructional Council. It is included here because it seems to be the best available "back drop" to describe the theoretical frame of reference utilized throughout the year's study.

Philosophy

Because the nature of our society stresses freedom and the rights of the individual, these concepts should be reflected in the program of the school. It is recognized that students and teachers are different in their needs, abilities, interests, and personalities.

These differences should be recognized, respected, valued and sustained, and should be reflected in a diverse and flexible school program.

Rationale

Change should not be the end in itself, but it should be a vehicle for improvement. The intent of this sub-committee is to consider directions which will better provide for development of the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective needs of students in the post elementary years. We believe the following rationale to be of strong motivation for giving serious consideration of the Middle School concepts and their applications in the Lansing School District:

1. Desire of elementary and junior high staffs to improve program by considering alternatives
2. Dissatisfaction frequently expressed by elementary and junior high staff, students and parents regarding present programs
3. Provide an areana in which staffs of varied and diverse philosophies create alternative environments that reflect these differences
4. Utilize more fully the classroom space of the Lansing School District
5. Seek to achieve the Lansing School District's instructional goal, "to provide the instructional programs and services necessary to meet the wide range of needs and aspirations of the students in the Lansing school community"
6. Seek to achieve the Lansing School District's instructional goal, "to continually modify instructional programs and staffing patterns to meet the changing educational needs of students and to take advantage of new materials, techniques, and technology"
7. Create experimental programs and pilot programs into all schools
8. A need to provide an environment which encourages a staff to consider and create alternatives which reflect their own diversity, knowledge on how students learn, modern teaching techniques, and new equipment.

9. Development of programs to become more compatible with emerging elementary alternatives as reflected in the continuous progress efforts which proports to accommodate individuality and creativity
10. Development of programs to become more compatible with emerging high school alternatives which are designed to include options designed to change the purpose of public education from college preparation to life-centered education
11. Utilize the present teachers' attitudes, abilities, interests and personalities to implement alternatives which reflect the middle school philosophy
12. Moving toward the middle school philosophy would provide a basis for systematic evaluation of all programs within the school.

Selected Goals

1. To encourage each child to identify and understand his/her aptitudes, abilities, interests, aspirations, and needs
2. To help each individual realize the uniqueness of his/her intellectual, physical, and social capacities
3. To relate learning to life roles and assist all individuals in developing values and skills which will improve their potential for more effective living as children, youth and adults in their family and citizen roles
4. To help each student recognize what educational opportunities exist within the school system for his personal and social development
5. To develop alternatives for student self-direction in our age of increasing individuality with emphasis on decision making and choosing among options
6. To provide experiences that will encourage the individual to relate in a positive way to a variety of environments
7. To create an environment that is responsive to the needs of children who are or will be enrolled in the school, and to initiate means by which changing needs can be met
8. To provide maximum opportunity for continued development in academic areas (math, reading, science, arts, etc.) with emphasis on student center learning
9. To encourage the use of community resources as a part of alternative school experiences

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10. To continuously evaluate the degree to which the above goals are being met.

What Does This Mean?

Accepting the position that Lansing Public Schools value school autonomy, the committee determined that creating a Utopian model would confuse rather than encourage the creation of the middle school concept. There are, however, ways of generally describing in a practical sense the way the concept may reach implementation.

Implementation does not demand that everyone change. Obviously, today's schools are designed to meet the needs of many students, and the expectations of many parents and teachers. Hopefully, tomorrow's school will be designed to meet the needs and expectations of all students, parents and teachers. What does this mean?

It means that the basic program of a school remains as an important unit and attempts to meet the needs and expectations of a large portion of the community. Also, recognizing that communities reflect greater diversity than is currently recognized by the school, this proposal means that teachers must be encouraged to create alternative environments. These alternatives must respond to diversity; they must be carefully described; and, they must be viewed as options available to the total school community. This process can begin with the creation of only one alternative environment. A teacher creates it, students/parents select it, the other teachers accept it, and administrators support it and it exists.

A fourth sub-committee prepared suggested guidelines for program development, and it seems appropriate to include these at this point.

- a. The program would reflect diversity and flexibility. Teachers and students are different and these differences should be recognized and valued.
- b. The program should contain as many defined and described alternatives as teachers are willing and able to create.
- c. Described alternatives are program options available for parent/student selection.

These environments should reflect:

1. Primary purpose
2. Selected activities
3. Time use
4. Method of student evaluation and teacher evaluation use
5. Constraints.

Hopefully, the descriptions will yield enough diversity so that kids will have some meaningful alternatives from which to choose. Random assignment of students is not the answer to current problems or concerns. Students must elect the environment so that they have some stake in the success of the program. Most will probably elect to stay in the regular school program, but they simply must have a choice and be able to change their choice.

- d. The school program must take into account such factors as:

Students are dependent on the school environment for psychological as well as physical need fulfillments

Students who are constant school and classroom problems are probably demanding more freedom and getting more control

Adults are just not perceived by middle school age children as having much to offer in terms of psychological need fulfillment.

Notes to the Council

Here is our effort to respond to your charge. It is yours now for awhile, but we expect to hear from you soon. Please give our

thoughts some time and consideration. We stand ready to respond further if and when requested.

Thanks for the opportunity to get involved; to meet new friends; to share our thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions; to discuss and argue and smile; to dream; and, to grow.

Notes to the Teachers

Our report and recommendations are in the hands of the Council now, and we hope you find yourself in the proposal somewhere. We are really trying to create a method of encouraging teacher growth by extending building autonomy. We hope you can hear us say that this will go if we as teachers can encourage it to happen. Your degree of involvement is determined by your desires to get involved.

Notes to the Administrators

The Middle School Committee made some assumptions about you. We assumed that you want to take a leadership stance and that you will encourage teacher diversity. We assumed that you will support alternatives as program options for parents and student choice. We assumed that you are ready to get involved in the process. We are ready now to test our assumptions and would value reactions and feedback.

Notes to the Parents

We think you'll like our report and our continued efforts to initiate the process. We know that you want more to say about the school experience provided for your child. Our report emphasizes that you deserve an opportunity to get involved with us in the decision-making process. Our report calls for alternatives that

serve as options from which to choose. We have no desire to force decisions on you. We need some help from you. What are some alternatives that you desire for your child? We'll try to create them as your wishes become known. You should also realize that there is room for us all to make mistakes and our decisions are not always right, but we believe that together we can create reality and meet your expectations. Once we are able to create a variety of options, there will be no reason for your child to suffer through an unproductive, unfulfilling experience.

Note to the Students

Welcome to our middle school. This is the first year that we can remember that many of you came to the right school. We are ready for you now. We have always known that you were different, but we have really tried to recognize your similarities. Now we're going to respond to your uniqueness. We're pretty sure that you don't know your needs, but we will create some alternatives so that your choice can reflect those needs. We want you in the decision-making process so we can help you examine your uniquenesses. If your selected environment is not right for you, let us know, and we'll search together for the place that is right for you.⁷

⁷Lansing Public School System. Paper presented to the Middle School Committee, May 14, 1973.

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CHAPTER III

Questions

Can a person who is a linking agent make a difference in what is going on in a school?

1. Can one have an effect on individuals within a school?
2. Can one have an effect on programs in a school?
3. Is a faculty able to accept an outsider?
4. Does the faculty see this person as beneficial to them?
5. Do they see him as a threat?
6. What are the constraints binding one who wishes to be an agent in a school?
7. How can one who assumes the role of linking agent best conduct himself to achieve his end?
8. To what extent can he carry out his program?

Definitions

Linking Agent--An outside person who has affiliation with a public school faculty for the purpose of supporting ideas and helping to implement them. The person can be from the community, university, or other resources in the area.

Interventions--Ideas either I had or someone else had that were initiated in this school, which involved action on my part.

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Research

The research was done by general exploratory questions in the research proposal concerning the change process. It is intended that the study be heuristic and lead to hypotheses formulation to help me devise ways for other people who are concerned about this developing process.

The researcher who generates theory need not combine random sampling with theoretical sampling when setting forth relationships among categories and properties. These relationships are suggested as hypotheses pertinent to direction of relationships, not tested as descriptions of both directions and magnitude. Conventional theory claims generality of scope; that is, one assumes that if the relationships hold for one group under certain conditions, it will probably hold for other groups under the same conditions.⁸

The questions I have been primarily concerned with are on the first page.

Interaction of Developing Process

My plan was to define this junior high school the way I saw it and then to include the views of other people as they became apparent. These views included those of students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Then, these people who showed concern about developing ideas we would follow through with a plan of action.

Selection of people to become involved with was by a theoretical sample procedure.

⁸Barney G. Glassen and Anselm Strauss, "Theoretical Sampling", Sociological Methods edited by Noram K. Denzing, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), p. 17.

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Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find it in order to develop his theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory . . . (They) are not based on preconceived theoretical framework.⁹

After having described the junior high and the action which took place, I will then have some conclusions about what happened.

Heuristic research does not require that subjects be randomly selected. For my personal benefit I spent most of my time in one junior high that met with criteria that I had set up in my proposal. The permission for my involvement was granted from the superintendent, and he asked me to discuss this with several principals. I followed through and ended up in a southern part of this urban area.

I had several discussions with this principal during the spring and summer of 1972. The superintendent had informed the principal that I would like an internship in curriculum. The principal indicated that I might conceivably obtain a description dissertation out of this.

The school is set in an industrial population of 100,000. There are 1,120 students who attend this school; 25 percent are black, 68 percent white and the rest are Chicano. The school consists of 67 teachers and counselors of whom 8 percent are black, 3 percent are Chicano, and 89 percent are white.

⁹Ibid., p. 17.

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After having developed a fairly neutral relationship with the principal, the process of being socialized within the school was entirely up to me.

My Perception of My Role

In this paper, I have defined myself as a "link." As far as my term goes in this junior high school, I have described my work to the staff as similar to an internship in curriculum. This definition of what I hoped to accomplish seemed more inclusive than if I were to state simply that my sole motive was to gather information for a dissertation. It was not. I really hoped to make a difference in the school in a very positive way. I wanted to test my beliefs and all that I had learned from past experience in terms of schools and my own behavior in working within them.

My role, I hoped, would be a very nonthreatening one because I had no control or power given to me. The teachers knew that, and I hoped I would be able to build some trust with teachers in order for things to happen. No one had any control over me as to time I put in and the way I worked with people. The controls that did limit me were those that had influence on other people or structure.

I realized that if I were a threat to the faculty it would be difficult to accomplish my objectives; therefore, I tried to reduce the threat as much as possible. For example, I avoided discussions on many issues that I really believe people should speak out on issues such as war, bussing, presidential elections, abortion law reform, etc. I spoke only of issues that were vital to students and teachers in this school.

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Their Perceptions

Because I had offered my time and services without charge to the schools--and had been accepted on this basis, my role was not only not defined, but a mystery to the principal as well as the teachers. More than once Dick (the principal) would say to me, "I don't know what to tell you to do or what you can do. I really don't have a role for you as such." I always responded, "Don't worry about it. I feel comfortable doing what I am doing." Teachers also were curious about my role. My explanation generally was, "I am doing an internship in curriculum. This will give me some practical experience in working with teachers in schools." Basically their perceptions came from my own explanations of my role.

My Expectations

My intentions were to help this school become a better place for students and teachers. In order to do this I knew I would have to work with teachers and administrators. Therefore, I had to be socialized by the faculty and administration and learn the organization. I believed that once I had been socialized by some group of the faculty I could start having input to individuals. I hoped this input would start discussions of what was going on in schools; how people learn and what we can do about it.

Out of these discussions, I hoped several things would happen. First, I hoped the teachers would question what they were doing and why. Second, I hoped we could write up proposals that would go through the channels and be implemented. Therefore, if I did not have the trust and support of the faculty and administration and know the organization, nothing would happen; and my presence in the

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school would be totally ineffective. Here is what I really wanted to happen:

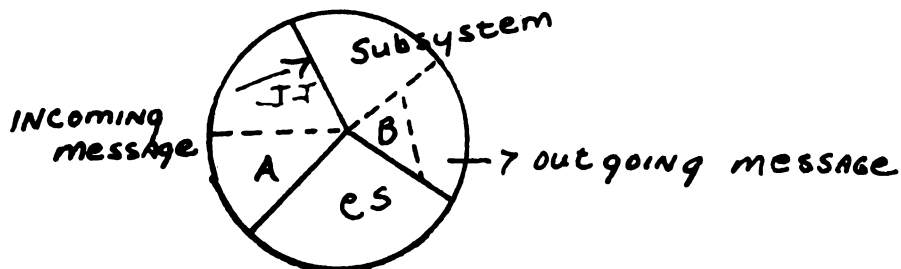
Ever since I have been a teacher and student, I have had the belief that the communication in a school is limited. The reasons are many; time and schedules being just two. I wanted to find out some ways to improve the communication between all the members in the school.

Teachers are continually taking classes, discussing ideas with people and wanting to develop ideas. Administrators are too. Realizing this is a valuable thing. I had to find a way to help them develop their ideas.

I hoped that this would lead to some common ground--a base where we could understand that we have some things in common instead of saying, "I have nothing in common with you." Along these same lines I hoped that ideas within the school would come up that I could help people to develop.

As Havelock has described:

. . . Virtually all the systems that can be identified and examined in the real world are likely to be open systems which contain both dynamic and static components which are themselves open subsystem.



¹⁰Havelock, Op. Cit., pp. 2-6.

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Therefore, I believed that a lot of teachers within this school had ideas that had not been developed. I felt I could identify these people and start working with them to help develop their ideas.

I wanted to implement some ideas of my own. The highest goal I set was to work with faculty members who would form teams. It was hoped that one of these teams would have the commitment and skills to provide an open classroom within the school. It was also hoped that parents and students would begin to select an environment they felt best suited to them. Another goal was to assist those teachers who were not comfortable with the traditional grading system to set up an alternative method of evaluation.

I hoped that my total experience within this school would raise the consciousness of some teachers--consciousness of what they were doing and what they could do, that they could indeed carry on change toward a better "world" for all those involved.

I have my beliefs, but these are not the same as the faculty in this school. Nor should they be. The question that can be posed is what would happen if I could not make a difference. The only way I can answer this question now is philosophically.

Had I been rejected by the school faculty, I would have left. If I had some support by teachers, I would have discussed the situation with them and planned some action. If the principal was receptive, this would set up some channels for decision making. If the principal was not receptive and the teachers were, I would discuss the situation with the superintendent. Fortunately, I was not rejected by the faculty. I had some teacher support and the principal was receptive.

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Limitations

Being a resident within the school and spending four days a week there has been beneficial to developing alternatives. This residency has provided the opportunity to go into teachers' homes for meetings and has given me first-hand knowledge of what is going on in the school. Authors J. B. Caird and H. A. Moisly cite the benefits of a residency:

Moreover, being permanently a resident--they have become accepted members of a community. The constant presence of such a source is a real reassurance to crafters embarking on some new scheme.¹¹

Since this descriptive research is through my eyes, it is in the first person. Some readers might not come to the same conclusions or have done things the way I did them. This only is a compilation of my experiences, perceptions, observations, beliefs--in effect, my trials and errors, high points and low points--my accomplishments and frustrations--a chronicle of some mistakes and failures--some successes; it must of necessity be of prime importance to me. It must become a source of review--an instrument of learning--a tool for an on-going, hopefully, a life-time process. At some point in time they may be helpful as a resource to someone facing similar problems--but its real value is to me.

Others might say schools involved in this study are not typical of other schools. Certainly it is different in some ways compared to others. However, there are things that might be similar, and I would hope that the reader would build on those concepts.

¹¹J. B. Caird and H. A. Moisly, "Leadership and Innovation in the Crafting Communities of the Outer Herbrides", Sociological Review, Vol. 9, (1961), p. 94.

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The biggest limitations were distance and time. If activities were at night, I often did not have the energy to drive the 25 miles back to the city after having driven it once already. Also, this writing took time away from my being involved with other social or informal events that I believe would have been beneficial in helping to establish a closer personal relationship and trust with the faculty.

Another limitation was my legitimacy within this school-- such as not being able to vote. Several times I could not be on a committee because I was not a staff member. This could have been rectified simply by having the principal in the beginning of the year stating "He is part of our staff and will have an equal vote."

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CHAPTER IV

General Description

This dirty brick school building is located in the southern part of an urban area on two major streets. There are three floors with a new adjacent wing to accommodate the extra population. At the southern end on the first floor are the industrial art classrooms. The west wing contains the administration offices, general offices, home economics, counselors' rooms, band rooms, special education rooms, the cafeteria, locker rooms, and swimming pool.

There are six sets of stairs leading to the other two floors. The second floor contains the science rooms, special education room, library, art rooms, and rooms that are used for English and students who bring their lunch to school, auditorium (which is seldom used) and the gymnasium. The third floor contains math rooms, including a math lab, English rooms, the teachers' lounge, social studies rooms and the workroom. All floors contain male and female bathrooms in certain areas. If you arrive at this school before 7:45 a.m., you will see students standing outside or in the doorway. Students are not allowed inside the building before that time. To make sure this rule is enforced, teachers stand guard at different places so students cannot go past. You will see several teachers at the doors, ends of the halls, and on the stairways.

Upon entering the school you will first notice the stairs going to the other floors. Then a sign which states, "All visitors

report to the office." Then you will see places for gates. These are to keep the students out of certain areas after the school closes.

The hours of required attendance for students are from 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. During this period, they have a 28-minute lunch break. The classes are 55 minutes long with a blaring bell to signify the end of an hour, a bell to signify a minute left to get to class, and a bell to signify the beginning of class. The students have five minutes to get to class.

The lunch period is split into four shifts. This makes some lunches start at 10:30 and every 28 minutes thereafter. The teachers are assigned the lunch time that they will have. This also causes some classes to be split into half segments to accommodate the lunch period.

As you walk around the school building, you will see the lockers that have locks--most classroom doors closed, several people patrolling the halls and very few students in the halls. Some of the doors have a small window and the rest are without an opening of any sort--a solid barrier. The teachers who have their doors open have very quiet rooms. One class was so quiet, I went in to see a teacher without even realizing that he had a class in session. I looked around and all students were facing him while he was taking attendance.

As you reach the main office you will see a list of the faculty. At the top are the administrators, of whom there are four. Dick is the principal, and he has three assistants: Pete, the Dean of Students; Sid, who is in charge of counseling; and Dawn who is in charge of curriculum.

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Background of the School

I have been told that there was some experimentation in prior years; for example, a team of six people that functioned for several years. This died out because a member left and others were tired of it. Another team was formed several years ago, but two members left, and the other two were unhappy with the situation. Also, at one time, the school had an hour a week set aside as an "interest hour" that lasted for two years. An interest hour is where teachers do something different from the regularly scheduled hours during the week. The students would select the subject most interesting to them.

Some reasons for which it was voted down by the staff were that some students would not sign up for a class or else they would skip the class. This caused trouble in the halls. This disruptive element was approximately 10 percent of the students. Some teachers could not obtain materials or else had to bring them themselves. This caused much confusion to a few teachers. To my knowledge this had been the only experimentation done by the staff prior to my arrival.

Some people say the reason they did not experiment was due to the student demonstrations. Demonstrations had brought parents in to monitor the halls. Also, these disruptions caused the Board of Education to put security personnel in every junior high building.

School Organization

The decision making body of the school consists of the principal and the total faculty. Within this school there are many subsets.

The department, the Faculty Council, the other committees in school and a School Community Relations groups are the main components.

The faculty is split into eight departments, each department has a chairperson. The chairperson is appointed by the principal and is supposed to work with people in his/her department for better programs. This person also sits on the Faculty Council, which is described later.

The departments meet once a month. At this time they discuss what is going on, what they can do, or anything else that is important. I have visited only a couple of these meetings. Usually I attend the administrators' meeting which meets at the same time.

It proved difficult to get everyone together for the administrator meetings. Their meetings, for the most part, have been dealing with the calendar of events.

What happens here is basically administrators making sure one of them is at all events. There are several reasons for this: in case some problems arise where they can be of help, to show their interest and concern, and because they themselves have a child in a sport or event.

Other committees that exist are: Auditorium, with 8 members; Faculty Affairs, with 11 teachers; Pupil Social, with 16 teachers; Community Relations, with 13 members; Student Relations with 12 teachers; and Finance, with 6 teachers. Each of these committees selects a chairperson who represents them at the Faculty Council meeting.

The formal organization of the faculty council consists of the chairperson of the department, the chairperson of each of the committees

and the total administration. However, this does not always hold true. If one person is going to be absent, then he or she is to find a replacement. This occurs often. Also, the chairperson of a department can be a chairperson of a committee, (which has happened).

This council is a mixed group with all segments of the school represented. The basic purpose of this committee group is to approve or disapprove suggestions regarding program, etc.

The decisions are made in the advisory group by voting after much discussion. Decisions made in the faculty meetings are also by voting without as much discussion.

The Faculty Council meets once a month from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in homes of the members. Items for consideration are placed on the agenda which is given to all faculty on the day of the meeting. Summaries of the meetings and any action taken is provided to the faculty within the next two days. Each week faculty members are issued an informational bulletin. Students also receive a similar notice of school events, etc. Daily reminders are issued on the PA systems.

There is still another group called the Faculty-Community Group. This started as a workshop last spring shortly after the school had experienced serious trouble with the student body. It consists of parents, teachers, students and administrators and is supposed to be responsible for decisions that effect the total school. The group has met seven times but has evolved into a discussion group, rather than a decision-making group.

The students have a student council that has two representatives from every social studies class. The representatives are elected by class vote.

In talking with the teacher who sponsors the student council, I discovered that there was a lack of enthusiasm on his part for using the small group technique for making decisions. His main concern at the time was how to "retrain" the students' minds so that their focus was no longer student disruption (now past-history). His other concerns were to spend available funds, i.e. whether to buy new drapes or just get the old ones cleaned.

Most of the students are placed in class randomly. The students have no choice about where they go. Seventh and eighth graders are required to take math, English, social studies, gym, science and one elective. Ninth graders are allowed two electives, omitting gym.

Description of Principal

The best way to describe Dick is through my own perceptions and those of the teachers and students. This will be revealed through conversations with him and about him.

Connie: He is the best God damn principal there is. He is just a hell of a principal.

Rachael: My only complaint against Dick is he won't take a stand; an example of this is his not taking a position on the program that uses teachers as counselors an hour a week.

Gary: He is pretty good. But every year he makes it a point to save a student. One year I told him either suspend this student, or I and forty other teachers are going to leave this building. He suspended the student.

Rachael: He is a very nice guy. I went to him last year about my fifth hour and he said, 'Go ahead.' (Rachael's fifth hour English class is a class on values).

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Dick, in holding one of his faculty discussion meetings, relayed the idea that values should be taught--that we should take a stand on values. Teacher Andrea reacted in the following way, "Last year I talked about Gods and Goddesses and parents got all upset. I will never do that again."

In a conversation that followed later Teacher Andrea said, "Did you see my yellow stripe this morning?" referring to faculty discussion. "It was all about last year when I was teaching about Gods and Goddesses. A group of parents were 'on my back' all last year. Dick would not help. That is why I won't teach anything about morality as such."

The students seem to have little personal contact with Dick. However, his decisions effect them and some of their views are reflected in such comments as: "He gives all the breaks to the black kids. If we are caught fighting, he suspends us. If they fight, he sends them back to class."

Dick views his role as principal as one of a benevolent, but firm and controlling, influence in the school. His behavior reflects a very strong need to control and to be informed of all that is happening. Dick's own observation of himself is revealing: "I have a big enough ego, I don't need my ego boosted."

The decision-making process comes from the top. Any suggestions effecting the school must be brought to him near their inception so that ideas have not been generated beyond his ability to personally mold them to his conceptions of what will be best for the school--or to axe them before they can become reality.

As I look at Dick, he stands about 6 foot, weighs 210 pounds. He has black hair with a tinge of gray, and he is balding slightly. His twinkling smile, as he talks, makes him a good candidate for Santa Claus!

Description of Assistant Principals

Sid is a middle-aged man--about 46 years old. He is quiet, balding, dresses moderately. He is responsible for all scheduling, for coordinating programs, and for supervising counselors.

The teachers seldom mention Sid. The only times that he has been mentioned, the comments have been positive. When Dick leaves the building, Sid is placed in charge of the school. When a faculty member thinks it would be better to have a student counseled instead of disciplined the student is referred to Sid.

Pete is recognized as the disciplinarian. He stands 6' 1" and weighs about 210 pounds. He was a coach and he played football at the University of Michigan. The teachers' comments regarding Pete range from: "He is a conservative man." "He is a real nice guy." to "He is a real 'dummy'." (Someone who had been affected in a very negative way by Pete's action.)

The students are suspended through Pete's office. He puts out a list that contains at least ten names per day and usually more. Once Pete was ill and Sid took over the responsibility for discipline. During that time, not a single student was suspended.

Dawn is the person in charge of curriculum in the school and this is her job description:

In keeping with the concept of maximum autonomy in planning and initiating instructional change while reinforcing the fact that all employees have a responsibility to implement the goals of the Lansing School District, the following is necessary:

- I All Assistant Principals for Instructional Services will complete a written monthly report and submit a copy to the Director of Secondary Education, the Director of Curriculum Planning and Development, and the building principal. These should briefly tell what was done the previous month and what is planned for the next month in each of the following areas:
 - A. Instructional programs with particular emphasis on reading and mathematics
 - B. Aid to classroom teachers and evaluation activities
 - C. Instructional Programming and Staff Development
 - 1. in general
 - 2. differentiated staffing and team teaching
 - 3. flexible scheduling
 - 4. relationships with the academic interest center
 - 5. individualization
 - 6. instructional materials center
 - 7. coordinate the activities of department chairman
 - D. Student and parental involvement in planning activities
 - E. Determination of the priority needs of the students in the building
 - F. Development of instructional objectives--based on the goals of the Lansing School District and the needs identified
 - G. Other
- II All Assistant Principals for Instructional Services will attend a monthly meeting set up for them to describe to one another the areas where they feel they are being most successful. In these meetings a good deal of emphasis will be placed on what changes are being planned for the subsequent semester on the basis of information gained during the present semester.¹²

¹² Job description for assistant principals in curriculum, (an unpublished paper presented to Assistant Principals).

Dawn is retiring next year. She is thought of in school as nice, but no one can point to anything she has done. A typical comment is, "She should be getting people together on this. She does not do anything."

She, in referring to herself, stated, "I am retiring next year. I am just waiting out the year."

She dresses well, and although her hair is silver gray, she appears trim and younger than she is. Although she was willing to discuss ideas with me, her ability to act upon them was non-existent.

Some Classrooms

The seventh graders are placed in reading classrooms instead of an English course. The original idea was to team the 7th grade reading teachers. They were to share ideas and work together, but this did not happen. The result of this is that each teacher has done something different.

Dee, a bubbly, cheery individual is experiencing the most conflict within the team. She is seriously concerned about the needs of students. She expected that they would hire someone who knew about reading. "I thought we needed a specialist!" she moaned.

Dee's classroom is divided into small groups. Students have choices in what they read in each center. Other times when they are all reading together, the class sits in a circle.

Sherry's class is geared to SRA. All the students have to read SRA in their daily reading class except on Friday.

I asked her how the students felt about this. Sherry said, "They love it. On Friday they race to the table with the books on it." Her class is very quiet.

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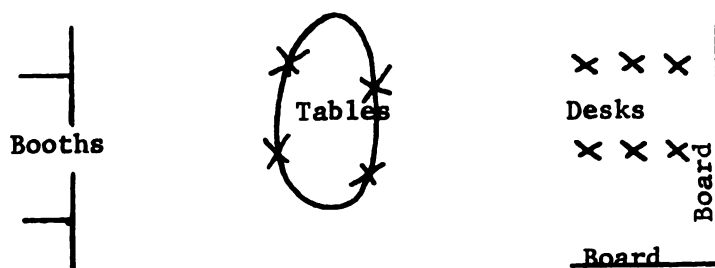
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The math department is operating with behavioral objectives. The program was designed last summer by some teachers in the Lansing School District. This program was then utilized by the teachers in this school. There have been several different reactions on this by the teachers.

Teacher Beth: I like behavioral objectives. This is just what we need. If a student does not pass them, they know what they have to do. I start with them where they are and help them accordingly.

Teacher Bev: The ninth grade students just don't work. It is really hard to tell the student(s) that this is what they have to do.

The math department has a math center. (This center was developed by each teacher taking extra students.) Then, those who needed help were sent to Tim. The math center looks like this:



Most of the times I visited it, Tim had music playing. Students were talking, some were working on math with Tim, some were at the board, and others were talking among themselves. The concept behind the center is that after determining what they could not learn in class, they were sent to the center. Tim then helped them with what they were doing, and then he sent them back to class.

Eighth grade English was combined with a history course and is now known as "humanities." Each of the three teachers is involved in a section on government or mythology or writing. The students are rotated every six weeks to another teacher and topic.

When encouraged to evaluate what they were doing, the general feelings of the teachers were, "We have to do something--but we aren't doing a very good job."

Rachael is doing something different fifth hour. This class was constructed to deal with values and drugs. She directed the class and took part.

"Find a partner, sit back to back. Now write something that describes your partner, like what she or he is wearing. Now check it out."

"Take off something. The person is to find out what it is. Write it down, check it out."

People switched and did it again.

Rachael: Now who wants to come to the front? (Students then volunteered,) Turn your back to the class. What am I wearing? (Student guesses some of it.)

She continues to ask the student what other students are wearing. She asks other students to volunteer. They do. The students are asked what other students are wearing. After this she states, "This is to start making you more aware of people."

The 7th grade social studies program is centered around movies and the assigned text. Several movies are shown each week. Three teachers are involved in the social studies area. I had contact with only two. Each varied his program only slightly; Jerry scheduled "current events" on Monday; Tuesday was "reading from the text," Wednesday was for "work on assignments and further reading;" Thursday "same as Wednesday;" Friday "assignments due." The movies are worked in whenever they arrive.

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Ron's schedule varied little from Jerry's.

I asked the classes how they liked the movies. "We don't understand them." "What do you do?" "We do our assignments and watch movies."

"Do you ever have a discussion?" The students said, "no." "Did you ever talk with your teacher about this?" Again, they said, "no."

The two music teachers are attempting to rebuild their program. Both are new this year. There is a general feeling that the program has deteriorated over the years.

Ron, the social studies teacher, had been the band director. He was replaced in order to rejuvenate the program. The band had been reduced to just one class. It now has two. The new band director has stated, "We need more. I want this place jammed with students. I am going to put signs all over in order to advertise. I just have to get them in here. They will love it."

There are four full-time and one part-time counselors; two white females, one white male, and a full time black male counselor. The one white male is part time; the remainder of his time he is teaching gym.

Some of their time has been spent doing scheduling, which takes away valuable time from their counseling. One counselor said, "I have not been able to meet with my counselees or groups in three weeks because of scheduling."

The home economics department has two women teachers. All classes are female.

Security People

There are two security personnel here to prevent trouble and to keep students from skipping classes. One is a white female. She is a large woman and is 5' 10" and weighs 150 pounds. She seems to be firm with the students. The students call her Mary. The other is a black male called "Vern" or "Mr. Smith" by the students. He is about 6 feet tall and weighs about 200 pounds. He is very authoritarian, and one can hear him bellow down the hall.

The staff perceive Mary as a nice person Vern, however, has run into a lot of conflict. He has told teachers that they are letting too many students out in the hall. Even when the students have passes to a place, he complains. The students had several meetings about him. One student told a group of teachers, "We don't need them (security people) here."

This negative feeling about the security guards' presence has permeated the whole faculty. In a discussion with Dick he told me, "I have had 14 meetings with the head person about those two. If I spend as much time on every two teachers, my time would be committed until next year." He commented further, "I would like to get rid of them." I said, "I agree, can't you do it through building autonomy?" Dick replied, "I think I can under that concept." Building autonomy is supposed to mean that the total staff makes decisions on what goes on in the building, such as hiring and budget.

Most of the teachers and students do not want the security people in the building.

Entry Points

My first entry was with Dick in the summer. I had several discussions with Dick during the summer.

My schedule for the first day was as follows: The day before school opened for students, Dick met with the teachers and introduced the new teachers and me to the faculty. A calendar of events was discussed. Dick then referred to the committees, "If you are doing the same old things, which are not beneficial, then get rid of them or disband the committee . . ." This was a faculty meeting in which general information was given by the administration to the teachers. As Pete was talking about discipline and tardiness, a teacher asked me, "Are these the things you were worried about when you become an administrator?"

I laughed. The teachers seemed restless, and some started talking to other people in the room.

Teacher Ray, whom I did not know at the time, sat next to me. He pointed out to me the discipline policy. Then he went through the faculty notebook, pointing out the uselessness of the faculty committees. The faculty was dismissed and told to meet in their committees. I joined the Community Relations Committee.

An entry point for me was the faculty lounge and workroom. The faculty lounge is a place where the teachers gather. The lounge is split into three segments; male, female, and co-ed. I would say most men visit the men's lounge, while few women are to be found in the women's lounge. The co-ed lounge is frequented mostly by females. However, some men use this lounge more often than they do the segregated

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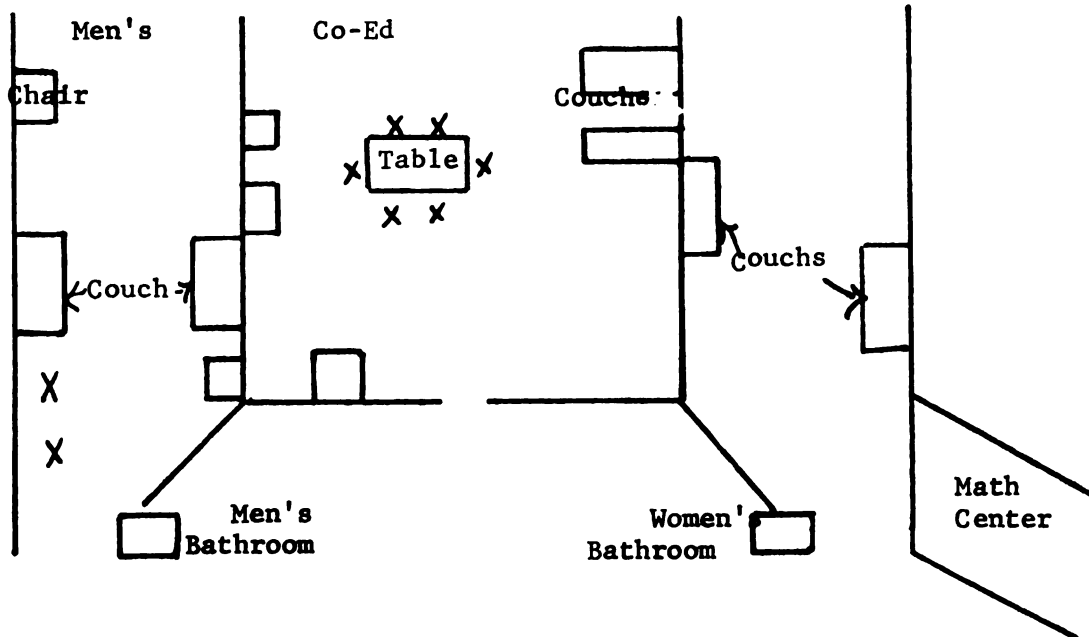
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lounge. Some people are rarely seen in the lounges. The reasons for this vary from teacher to teacher.

Faculty Lounges



Connie: I do not care for Joe making his loud remarks. He is always implying something that is none of his business.

Dick: Some peopl feel this is the only place where they can talk about administration. Some feel that the administration does not belong there. I have only known Dick to visit the lounge on one Friday.

Roberta: The reason I visit the lounge is to obtain information on students. Sometimes teachers will not visit me.

I: What about all the negative things you hear?

Roberta: When a teacher starts raving about how bad a student is, I ask him to step out in the hall. This way, all the teachers do not have to hear how bad the student is; it will not influence all the teachers.

Roberta usually comes up fourth hour to associate with a few of her friends. Most of the teachers only have one hour free, and this is

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part of their schedule. Therefore, they cannot leave class like the counselors. Seldom have I seen teachers in the lounge the same time they have a class.

Workroom

I was assigned the workroom as a place of operation by Dick.

The workroom looks like this on the third floor.



The room has given me contact with people who do not go into the lounges or who want to talk about concerns without everyone hearing them.

Dick is looked upon as the leader in the school. Most faculty members go to him with their concerns, but only selected students have any contact with him. Some teachers have no problems about seeing him. There are some that feel they are left out. As one teacher stated to me in the workroom, "Things are not like they used to be. The administration used to care about you. They used to have coffee and sit down and chat. That no longer exists. I guess it is like everything else that is changing."

Another teacher, Bev, was sitting next to her. I asked if this was the way she felt. Teacher Bev replied, "Yes, and we are not the only ones."

Some teachers meet socially outside of regular hours. There is a group of six or seven that meet at Scofes every Friday after school.

Another group plays basketball Monday at 6:30. There are still others that gather socially with whom I do not have contact.

I found out about Scofes (a local restaurant) when Rachael included me by saying, "We go to Scofes every Friday after school. Why don't you join us?" This happened the third week.

Dawn asked me if I wanted to attend the Faculty Council. I said that I did.

So my entry points were made by initially going to Dick, going to committee meetings, and being asked to serve on them, and having been present in the teachers lounges and workrooms for conversation and interaction.

CHAPTER V

Selected Interventions

The following section deals with some of the ideas I was involved with myself. The general outlay is the purpose, or why it was done; initiation, or how the idea was carried out; description, or the form the action took which was not necessarily the original form; and the accomplishments. If one wants to read some of the dialogue of what took place in the school and the actual proposals that were submitted, it is in the appendix under the same title as indicated in this section. This section is a synopsis of what took place.

Faculty Interaction

Purpose: My purpose was to help more teachers interact with each other and with the administration.

Initiated: I went to Dick with the concern that some teachers felt left out and suggested he should invite teachers in to talk informally with him. This never happened. So I went to Sid, the head of counseling and talked with him about the possibility of counselors inviting teachers in for informal discussions. He told me they had tried it before unsuccessfully. Then one day I introduced Dick to Dale Alam who in turn introduced Dick to Glen Gerrard, principal, at Kinawa Middle School in Okemos.

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Glen told him how he worked with his faculty. Dick then initiated a meeting with his faculty.

Description: Dick started meeting once a month with the faculty during their planning time. He invited everyone to Room 106 where he had coffee and cookies. The discussion took many forms.

Accomplishment: I felt good about the first several meetings. The teachers discussed much, and they were excited.

Wednesday Meeting

Purpose: To find a way to discuss ideas and to implement them.

Initiated: A teacher told me she had ideas that she would like to see developed. I suggested we get some other teachers together and meet at someone's home. We did.

Description: An open invitation was issued to the faculty for the purpose of discussing ideas at someone's home. Some teachers had some specific ideas and wanted help in developing them. Other people came to discuss ideas or find out what others were doing. Usually the group consisted of about 10 people with 5 members composing the "core."

Accomplishment: I believe this became the base for everything that happened in this school. It seemed to provide a

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philosophical and support base for two teachers (women) who were to become instrumental in initiating many of the changes. I got to know some people informally and felt good about this. The meetings continued until the holidays and vacations began to interfere. People were busy elsewhere and the momentum slowed. Then Dick had a meeting to revive interest and 30 people showed up. Since then, several groups have met regularly to make plans for next year.

Integrated Course

- Purpose:** I thought some male students would like a chance to take home economics--and that more girls would like to become involved in the industrial arts courses.
- Initiated:** I talked with those teachers who would be affected by an integration of these courses. Then several of us sat down to discuss the idea.
- Description:** It was never formally accepted by the home economics teachers. However, at one elective group meeting they decided that this would be an elective open to all for the following year.
- Accomplishment:** I believe the two home economic teachers did not want this but were forced to comply by the rest of the group. However, they never questioned it and voted for the program.

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Negative Attitude

- Purpose:** The co-ed lounge is where teachers continually condemn students. I wanted some teachers to be aware of it and not to use the lounge for that purpose.
- Initiated:** I brought it up at the Faculty Council and in several of the teachers' groups.
- Description:** In the Faculty Council and in several teachers' groups I attempted to approach the subject by asking teachers about positive things that happened to them--and whether or not they had any positive feelings about the students at that time.
- Accomplishment:** I believe several teachers became more aware of it and quit. There were fewer incidences after that.

Teacher-Counselor

- Purpose:** Given a chance where teachers had a smaller student group and could discuss anything they wanted to, both teachers and students would start to understand each other. This might provide initiative for some teachers to do something different.
- Initiated:** After trying to figure out ways for people who wanted to take part in such groups to do so, and providing for those who did not, I went to the Faculty Council to initiate the process. Then I

went to a committee of five who wanted to work on it and present it to the faculty. It was then passed by the faculty.

Description: Once a week students would spend an hour a week with a teacher they had selected. The ratio was 16:1, and those teachers who wanted to cover special subject areas were to inform the students of this. The students were to be permanent members of this group. The groups could be a continuation of 7th, 8th, and 9th graders or a single grade. This was to last the rest of the year.

Accomplishment: I do not know yet. I do know the small group who planned and did the work had very little to say about the operation afterwards. Times and topics were changed by the administration.

Faculty Weekend

Purpose: My thinking on having a faculty weekend was to foster better understanding of each other. From this understanding we could begin to allow these differences to manifest themselves in the school.

Initiated: The idea started at a Faculty Council dinner and was picked up by other faculty members. Then it was presented at the Faculty Council and to the faculty at large. The arrangements were made by a small group of teachers.

Description: The "retreat" was all set to take place in a wooded location 75 miles from the school. The theme was "I'm Okay, You're Okay," and we had 25 teachers sign up.

Accomplishment: The person who was going to run the workshop informed me he did not know the date was definite and therefore, he could not go because of the late notice. I made suggestions for several other substitute consultants, but Dick would not allow it. The communication between me and the consultant I had contacted was poor. His unexpected cancellation left me in an indefensible position. The teachers were very upset, and I began to fear that the relationships I had so carefully built would crumble. Two teachers with whom I had a deeper relationship listened to my explanation. I felt good about having at least two people who understood, but felt that such understanding never reached the rest of the faculty.

Senior Citizens

Purpose: I believe that senior citizens have skills that they can offer in school and that a lot of their talents are not being utilized. Therefore, I wanted to see them involved with our school so they could feel worthwhile and become options for teachers who wanted to use them.

- Initiated: I talked with Dawn about the idea and to several retired groups including the retired teachers associations. I also asked the teachers if they could use this as an additional resource. I passed this information on.
- Description: The retired teachers group sent out notes to all their members. The other groups were informed by their leaders.
- Accomplishment: I only heard from one retiree, and he never called back. Therefore, the attempt never succeeded. I did find out a little more about retired folks. Few have cars or drive; and if they are to become involved in civic activities, transportation must be arranged. I found, as I listened to one group's conversations, that they talked mostly of the deaths of friends--and death in general.

Interest Hour

- Purpose: I believe teachers have skills and interests other than just those utilized directly in the classroom; and that students have other interests than those traditionally available in the school. Therefore, my purpose was to see if we could open this up so that teachers and students could share interests and establish rapport--which often was lacking.

Initiated: I talked over the idea with some teachers. Then I went to the administration with it where it was favorably received. Then it was brought up in Faculty Council and was approved. I placed a note in the teachers' boxes to see if more wanted to help make plans to present it to the faculty. I received two responses. However, in the lounge, I began to get a lot of negative feedback to the idea.

Description: The idea was to take one hour a week where teachers offered a topic other than their individual subject area. The student would make his choice based on interest.

Accomplishment: Because so many teachers did not support the idea and still others felt too much was going on, I did not pursue it.

Middle School

Purpose: I believe some teachers do want to do different things in school with students. But, not being sure of just what else they could do, we had to start looking at differences. We felt the teachers could form teams and these teams or individuals could be different. Also, some students wanted to do different things. Therefore, we believed we could let the students and parents start

selecting the environment that they wanted. This, I believed would make school a better place for students and teachers.

Initiated: I asked almost every teacher in school if they wanted to visit Kinawa Middle School in Okemos. About 20 visited the school, and this started some teacher thinking. Dick then set up another visit to another school. Other teachers set up their own visit and I set up still another one in this district. Then workshops were set up for teachers; a class was offered and other resource people were brought in.

Description: Some teachers realized they wanted to and could do different things. A common statement from teachers visiting Kinawa was, "I wish I could enjoy my job like the teachers there do."

Accomplishment: The elective areas now offer more options. Sixth graders are being accepted for one self-contained class. One 7th grade team and two 8th grade teams have been formed. Ninth grade social studies and English are offering more electives. For this to happen, teachers had to learn to be more accepting of individual differences. Certain hostilities and suspicions are allayed and the general atmosphere improved.

Students Selecting Their Own Teachers

- Purpose: My purpose was to start letting the student have a choice of teachers they wanted to be with for a semester. This also would be beneficial to the teacher because the child wants to be with that teacher.
- Initiated: I talked with Sid about the idea. Then it was brought up in our Wednesday meeting. I then wrote up a proposal and John, a math teacher, said he would take it to the Faculty Council. Next it went to the faculty and was approved. There were also countless discussions in the teachers' lounge.
- Description: On a certain day, 8th and 9th graders would select their teachers. First the 9th graders and then 8th graders.
- Accomplishment: The students I talked with liked it. Most teachers liked it. The 7th graders that I have talked with would like to have the chance. The most important thing to me was how just a few people, three, could start a movement that sweeps a school. I feel bad about what happened to John. His friends criticized him for presenting the proposal and I could give him very little support. He also said he would never do anything like that again.

Elementary and Junior High Teachers

- Purpose:** I believe that junior high should follow through on some of the programs in which elementary teachers are involved. Therefore, junior high teachers had to find out what elementary teachers were doing.
- Initiated:** I talked with Dick and he set up one meeting with two elementary teachers. I then contacted the rest of the elementary school principals who have students who would be coming to our school.
- Description:** The initial meeting provided an exchange of information on what the individual schools were doing.
- Accomplishment:** This was the first time the two groups had ever met. Although some teachers seemed defensive about their programs, the teachers felt good about the meeting and had several more, which I organized. Then several groups split into subject-interest areas. This proved to be the first time elementary teachers had come together from different schools to talk over what each was doing.

Alternative Room

- Purpose:** Teachers only have two places to send students if the teacher has "had it" with a student. The counselor, who is already very busy, and an assistant principal, the disciplinarian. I perceived a real need for a room where students could "cool off" or

"pull themselves together." Hopefully, this could be utilized by teachers and students before a confrontation turned into a matter requiring more serious disciplinary action.

Initiated: I talked the idea over with some friends. Then I discussed it with Sid and several other counselors. After further deliberation with other people, I wrote up a proposal and took it to the Faculty Council. A notice was put out and I received all kinds of negative feedback on it.

Description: The room was to be relaxing--with games, TV, and anything else that would provide a change of environment.

Accomplishment: Because a significant member of the faculty was against it, I dropped the idea. The hang-up came not over the room itself but over staffing it. Some teachers believed they should not have to staff it but that they should be allowed to use it. I could not see any other way to maintain the room at that time. I believe this would have been beneficial for both students and teachers and regret it was not received favorably.

Community

Purpose: The community has very little contact with schools. Usually the only time parents talk with teachers is

when someone calls to complain about their child.

I thought if teachers and administrators would sit down informally in their homes this might start bridging the gap.

Initiated: I discussed the idea with the Community Committee and the leaders response was positive. We had set a place, a time and people to go. I had also talked with Dick and he said he liked it.

Description: Four teachers and one administrator agreed to meet in a parent's home. We had contacted other parents and the time was set.

Accomplishment: Dick withdrew his support of the project because he thought some of the teachers were not capable of handling this kind of situation. Nothing was accomplished.

Grievance

Purpose: A place where students who feel they have been mistreated by teachers or administration to go.

Initiated: I talked with several teachers about the idea. They were in favor of it and were going to get together.

Description: Two teachers were supposed to draw up guidelines.

Accomplishment: The two teachers never got together. Perhaps the main reason for this was that the man really did

not want to work with this particular woman teacher. Because the committees and its guidelines did not materialize, the school lost out on an opportunity to resolve some conflicts. There was also a group of parents who wanted this, but any suggestion or organization on their part also failed to get off the ground.

Classroom Environment

Purpose: I had to start somewhere with some of my concerns. I thought if I could find a way for students and teachers to interact about their classes this might be a start.

Initiated: I informed people at Faculty Council about this endeavor. None were very responsive. I had also talked with some other teachers and some students. These people were receptive. I then put a copy of the questionnaire in the teachers' boxes and asked them to meet in a certain room with the students.

Description: The discussion was going to center around the questionnaire.

Accomplishment: Only two teachers and four students showed up. The reason the students and teachers gave for the poor attendance was that other meetings were scheduled at the same time. But the students and teachers that came were satisfied and the students felt that it was a rewarding experience.

There were several other things that were initiated. I began a faculty newspaper that continued as long as I asked people for articles.

I obtained materials for people who wanted them and gave materials to people as they discussed topics. Dick had several articles dittoed and placed in teacher's mailboxes.

An independent learning program was accepted by the Faculty Council. This Council encouraged the faculty to use it, which some did.

I encouraged a teacher to offer a student law course. It was accepted by the students as the number one course and I gave the teacher my resources. But when it came time to offer the class he told me, "The classes are too large." So the law course was never actualized.

There were some students who wanted to change the lunch period. I told them I would support it if they would write it up. They never wrote it up.

In the beginning of the year there were conflicts over some machines being taken out of the teachers' workroom. I had several discussions with Dick and the Association to help clear this matter up.

CHAPTER VI

Summary

I embarked on this experience hoping to gain personal growth in working with a school staff to find out what ways there are for me to work with people, to find answers to those questions stated earlier, and I also hoped I could be of some benefit to the school. I knew from previous experiences that I was seen as a threatening person to some faculty members. Therefore, I knew I had to reduce the scope of my concerns and to deal only with those ideas and concerns which were pertinent to this school.

I began to discover people in the school whose philosophy and ideas were compatible with mine. We became a support group for these ideas-- most of which are presented in this document. There were even more ideas that people wanted and that I supported but that never came about; such as trips to Washington, D. C. and visiting community resources.

I did initiate several ideas that were not successful. That is not to say they would not work next year or several years from now. I would hope that they would. It is even obvious to me that as a person gains the trust of his colleagues, he will experiment more as his support system (which might be himself or a person in power) encourages him to.

I acted as a participant-observer to collect my data, analyze it, and then decided what to do next. The data I collected was about

my interaction with people in this school. This is not customary with participant-observation. A participant-observer usually only observes other people. I used my role to initiate action wherever possible.

I did not go into this school with the intent to change anyone because I believe a person can only change himself. I believe there are ways of helping when a person wants to change, such as saying, "I agree" when a person is looking for a little support. Furthermore, I did not want to change the school. I only worked with those people who were willing to do something different. If this made the school different, then they were the ones who made that possible because they wanted to do it.

Conclusion for Questions

1. Can one have an effect on individuals within a school?

A school that has done very little over the years is now developing different electives and different programs. Some of these programs involve the same people who have been there for seven years. One teacher told me, "If it were not for you, I would not try anything."

I believe my role for some of these teachers has been one of support; support for them to develop ideas that they have and encouragement for them to experiment.

Needless to say, I have not had an effect on some individuals. In some cases I have even had a negative effect. One teacher answered, "Get lost" in the evaluation sheet I asked the teachers to fill out on me.

Not one of the four administrators responded to the evaluation sheet. My response from the teachers was 12 out of 67. Seven other teachers came to me individually instead of responding on the evaluation sheet. When Dick failed to respond, I went to Dick with those evaluations that had been returned and we discussed them. I do know that through me Dick started meeting with teachers as described in Faculty Discussion.

So, in general, I would have to say I had an effect to the point where some people put into action plans they had, but had never allowed to go beyond the "idea" stage.

2. Can one have an effect on programs in a school?

Several faculty members have told me, "You are the one responsible for all the changes going on. If it weren't for you we would not be doing anything." Some of the changes they are referring to are several teams for next year, more electives for students, and students having a choice of where they want to be. I believe I have had an effect on programs.

3. Is the faculty able to accept an outsider?

I found limited acceptance in some groups and total acceptance in just one. My alliance with this last group came about one day when Teacher Rachael said, "We go to Scofes every Friday, why don't you come?" I did. I was also asked to go on a fishing trip by some other men and eventually was allowed to voice my opinion or concerns in faculty meetings.

However, I was not allowed to vote in faculty meetings. This came about when I seconded an issue and was told by one counselor I could not because I was not part of the faculty. This person could be the same one who told me to get lost. I do not believe anyone else would have challenged it because I voted in the faculty council and no one raised any objections.

The principal invited me to administrative meetings and I went. He also invited me to the district extern program sponsored by Michigan State University.

4. Does the faculty see this person beneficial to them?

Some members saw me as beneficial to them. Some teachers indicated to me that they would not have initiated programs and changes had it not been for my presence there this year. Many of them had been there for seven years without trying anything different. Some teachers also say these new programs are the sort of thing the principal has wanted for some time. Therefore, since both the teachers and the principal wanted these new and different programs in this school, I believe they both saw me as beneficial.

5. Does the faculty see this person as a threat?

I was told by a teacher that some teachers were complaining about me. The teacher was informed of this by the principal. Upon questioning the principal further, she found out that it was the older staff members.

After being informed of this, I checked the complaints out with the principal. His statement was, "I guess if you were not doing

anything then nothing would be happening." I also had been informed by other teachers that some teachers did not like me.

Initially some teachers only saw me as an idealist. They felt my head was in the clouds--my ideas impractical. Also, one counselor said, "When I first met you, I thought you thought you had all the answers. Now I know you are concerned about the students." So some did see me as a threat.

6. What are the constraints binding one who wishes to be a linking agent in a school?

There are three major constraints that I see. The primary one being the principal. The others are the teachers and their subgroups.

The principal has the power of encouraging, axe cutting, and preventing things from happening. I did not understand the power he could use until an idea was axed without my knowledge. This was the concept of teachers meeting with parents in the homes. There were other ideas that were dealt with in the same manner.

However, in most of our endeavors the principal has allowed ideas to formulate and be carried out to their conclusions. I cannot say enough about the conversations and the time he gave me to discuss these ideas.

Without the teachers' concern and support, none of the programs would have developed. Therefore, I had to be accepted by some teachers. The constraints that limited me here were time. I could not spend a lot of time with every group of teachers.

Since some teachers saw me as a "liberal" and "anti" what they believe, my entrance into this group was almost impossible. Another constraint was the women's social involvement. Not being a female, I was excluded from many of the social activities.

The possibility of splitting the staff into opposite poles was a concern of mine. I did not want this to happen. Therefore, I never told a person this program is "great" and yours is "bad," nor did I imply condemnation, or attempt to outwardly make value judgments. I did not have the patience to talk with some of the staff at length. Some of the faculty would not listen to what I had to say because they were set in their own ideas. One faculty member would not listen to anyone who could see bussing as a means to integration. The initial constraint was one of resistance to an unknown or new element. The role of linking agent needs to be defined and explained to the faculty in an attempt to overcome a natural and initial resistance.

Not being a bona-fide member of the faculty with full voting privileges was a detriment to full participation on my part within the faculty and may have been a reason or at least an excuse for reluctance on the part of many faculty members to be open and accepting of input from me. A natural suspicion existed which I worked hard to overcome. As I have indicated, I was only partially successful.

7. How can one who assumes the role of linking agent best conduct himself to achieve his end?

I can only answer this for me in this experience. Another time I might do something different.

To accomplish what I set out to do, I tried to reduce the threat. I refrained from speaking out on controversial issues. I avoided making anyone defensive--especially in large groups. This took a lot of patience on my part. I waited for a time when I was able to discuss conflicts--often casual meetings in the hall proved to be a better time to resolve some issues. I always tried to be positive. I had to have a small group to test ideas with, to listen to, and figure out ways ideas could be implemented. Therefore, I needed a trust group. This required a group who had similar ideas to mine. My role allowed me time to talk with people without threat to their jobs. I tried to be consistent. When I told someone I would bring something, or I would take their class over, I would follow through on this.

8. To what extent can the linking agent carry out programs?

The limits of the administration, teachers, and the union proved to be my limits. If the principal could not live with the program, it had little support. If the teachers did not want the program, then it could not be carried out. The Bus Drivers Union so far has not allowed a teacher or an aide to drive a bus for a community class.

Since I was there for only a year and the school will go on for many more years, the programs that teachers and administration want are up to them. These are the only limits I see. When they are ready and want to do something else, they can.

Questions Generated Through Study

1. Would teachers create more alternatives in a school where they decided what they wanted to do?

Some people will say that the community would be upset. I believe teachers could and would build better relationships with the community for two reasons. They would have to talk with the community about what they are doing and this would force interaction. Secondly, a child who was happy at school would certainly take that joy home with him.

2. Would teachers in a school which took more time to make decisions need administrators as they are now?

I believe people can make decisions. If we would allow maybe two days a week for decision making, and include parents, teachers, and students, all that might be needed would be a resource person to help them.

3. Would a staff where there is a process time set up with teachers and administrators become helpers instead of tellers?

From what I have seen of teachers and administrators, they act like they have been treated by the schools. They very seldom ask for help nor are there secure places for people to feel they can ask for help.

4. Are women becoming more involved with sensitivity groups and doing more experimental things than males?

The only people who I came into contact with who had any experience with "T" groups were women. When I talked with men about

sensitivity groups, they did not want any part of one. Also, the women were the leaders in initiating reform within this school.

5. Is teacher improvement related to taking university courses?

From the teachers who have taken courses their comments have been, "All professors do is lecture" or "I am tired of hearing professors condemning the school systems. Why don't they help us?" Then one eighth grade student told me "All teachers teach the way they have been taught."

6. Will the teachers continue to grow if there is a person in administration who will support them?

I believe many teachers will gravitate toward those teachers experimenting. The reason I state this is because they are not happy with what they are doing and will see this is an improvement.

Implications

This year has given me a chance to look at a new role for a person in public schools. The time has come for a person to be with the teachers in supporting teachers and students' ideas. Supporting does not necessarily mean saying that something is a good idea but asks questions so that individual(s) can understand the idea, the consequences of an idea and how to implement it. The person who assumes this role also could have and should have contact with the community.

I further believe that many teachers have standardized their teaching because they were not allowed to experiment earlier

in their career. This implies to me that if teachers are allowed to examine and use new ideas and concepts they will continue to grow and enhance their feelings about their profession as they go through their teaching years. Therefore, we must accept experimentation for those who want to do different things.

Reflections

As I entered into this school, I tried to be positive. I attempted to avoid saying negative things about the faculty. This was hard but I believe beneficial for me and the staff. I have no proof of this but I was told by several people that I have helped in unifying the staff and that this year is the closest the staff has ever been.

There is something positive to be said about every staff member. I have found Dick the best principal that I have ever worked with over a long period of time. Also, if someone would have told me that it takes only three or four people to make a difference in a staff of seventy, I would have doubted it. Now I know this is all it takes.

To say this school is meeting the students' and teachers' needs would not be true. I have seen classes where 50 percent of the students are receiving D's or E's. I looked through grade sheets, and found on the average 30 percent were obtaining D's or E's in every major area: math, science, English and social studies. Certainly the student council does not know or act on student concerns.

Very seldom do teachers act on students' concerns, as far as I know. The students have very little recourse in the discipline policy.

A common comment by some teachers has been, "I tried to do some things last year, but Dick would not let me." This has caused some teachers to give up. Also, some teachers who do try different things are called into Dick's office and discouraged in their attempts. One teacher was discussing values with students in the halls, and was told by Dick later that some teachers were complaining about her. Dick did not have the teachers, who complained, talk with her about what she was doing. Another example is the English department, which I believe is trying to offer alternatives for students. The department showed a movie for two days. Dick made the department chairwoman write up the objectives to justify the time spent on this project. The students had donated the money for the movie and wanted to see it.

I would say in conclusion that Dick readily accepts anything of a cognitive nature. Anything in the affective, Dick has a hard time allowing. This difference can be supported by Dick's reaction to the math department when it offered a math lab as described earlier. He wants to document the academic things the students have achieved. But when the students in a class on values explain how they have grown, Dick is not as encouraging because one cannot measure this growth. This to me is very sad, especially when he came back from a conference and wanted everyone to work on values with students.

Dick does get discouraged over the number of failing in the school, and the limited number of assembly programs available to

students, but never to the point where he has done anything about it. Even when he has had a chance to support alternative student evaluations for those teachers who want to try this, he has not. The reason he gives for his lack of support was based on the remark by one parent who said, "I do not understand the Cr-No Credit stuff." This refers to what we have now instead of the traditional D or E.

Better communication with the community can be worked out. We have telephones and letters to inform people of meetings to discuss these things--we have transportation available--or car pools can be established.

If it looks as though I am holding Dick responsible for the fact that very little has been done in his school in the nature of utilizing staff and new concepts and ideas, this is only partially so. The teachers are also responsible for failing to take a stand. But the whole educational system is at fault, too. How many educational courses are experimental? How many courses maintain the professors as gods? How many places are teachers, students, and administrators allowed to discuss their feelings, concerns and their actions? What are the rewards for being different or better yet, for being yourself? Professors are continually condemning what public schools are doing. Yet, many are not doing anything different in their own classes. Why should professors expect other public school people who do not have the time, or the autonomy to do what professors say they should do?

I believe this school is but a reflection of our larger society--The World; that we cannot expect other people to do what we

can do; and that until some places, like the universities, start changing we can continue expecting schools to be as they are.

I cannot explain all the feelings I have had this year. The ups and downs, the frustration of sitting patiently and saying nothing when I so violently disagreed with someone. I do know, this year has made me more optimistic about the future of schools, and, I hope, the world.

I have seen teachers who have not done anything for seven years attempting different courses. I know of a teacher who has spent over five years teaching in a safe, self-contained classroom, who enthusiastically plans to team this year. I know of several teachers who are never going to quit experimenting. They will continue to grow and be open as they enjoy their profession and their lives.

I want to thank these people who have added hope to my life and to my committee who have allowed me this year to do something that I truly enjoyed doing.

Recommendations for School

School administrators should support those teachers who are experimenting with new programs and classes. This means finding rooms, scheduling time as the teachers see the need to use time, encouraging those teachers who want to use alternative methods of evaluation, use them, and help the other teachers understand what others are doing. This can be done by having teachers describe their environment, as described in the theory section, and then have those teachers who want to discuss their environment do so. So when teachers come to the administrator about other teachers, the

administration can send them to that teacher to discuss the situation. I also believe the school would benefit if the administration would constantly discuss with the teachers what the teachers are doing to improve their classes.

I strongly recommend that administrators obtain skills in working with small groups. Some of these skills are listening, helping clarify statements, and drawing people into discussion. This could mean some sensitivity training experiences would be beneficial for the administration. This also means realizing people are different and supporting those differences.

For teachers and administrators to interact with and become involved with other innovative teachers, administrators and schools, I believe, stimulates the staff to think about different things than what they are now doing. I also recommend that the staff invite outside people into the school to help the staff look at what they are doing and help generate ideas about what the staff can do differently. I strongly recommend to continue the contacts that were built up at the University.

As an experienced based study, it seems appropriate to recommend that the university consider this type of study as a substitute for the dissertation. The candidate's committee could become much more involved in the internship and through this contact could guide the effort of the candidate and provide a support base for constant feedback and interaction.

Linking Agent Skills

The skills necessary to be an effective linking agent are very individual and personal, but until the role is more clearly defined, it seems the following are important:

The linking agent must be sensitive to others. This includes sensitivity to feelings, ideas and efforts. I saw some teachers destroyed by outside consultants who come prepared to make instant judgments without regarding the teacher as a person. Through this process the teacher became defensive and further communications were rendered impossible.

The linking agent must be patient. For me this was very difficult, I had to be careful not to put my expectations on them. Rather, I had to wait until they were ready and all I could do was facilitate this readiness. This does not mean getting them ready to do "my thing" but, rather, facilitate readiness to help them do "their thing".

The linking agent must be willing to experiment himself and be able to accept mistakes. The linking agent must be willing to take some risks that have potential failure built-in. This seems to be so because a linking agent is working on a day to day basis with people. There are no long range goals or defined strategies available.

The linking agent could probably profit from some sensitivity training experience so that he is better able to accept and give honest feedback. It also helps to be enough in touch with oneself so that he might realize what was happening to himself in the process. For me personally the experiences I had with Dale Alam and John Suehr at Michigan State University were very valuable to me. They

encouraged me to explore and experiment. They were always ready to give me open feedback and help me evaluate my own growth. During my year as a linking agent, they were the core of my support base and continued to serve as a feedback source.

The linking agent should possess the skill of clarifying. This often means asking questions that are not judgmental or threatening in an attempt to help people create. This also serves to help people engage in problem solving behaviors.

Recommendations for Further Study

Because of the countless human variables involved, the linking agent role requires more study and definition. To encourage further development it seems necessary to provide some source of financial aid for an intern interested in continuing the study.

Further study might reveal that the linking agent functions can be supported financially by a school system. This ultimately must be the case if the linking agent is to become a reality.

It would help define the role if someone could systematically follow-up on what continues to happen in my absence in the school identified in this study. This would serve to test the lasting effect of the role.

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Faculty Interaction

I was sitting in the workroom one day when Beulah said:

Betty: I just don't know about things around here.

I: What's the matter?

Betty: I would rather not talk with the administration here.

I: Bev, we cannot improve things unless we know what the matter is. I get the feeling that you don't think the administration cares about you.

Betty: That's part of it. The old administration used to talk to us, have coffee, and we would socialize more. Now teachers socialize elsewhere.

I: Are these your feelings too, June?

June: Yes, I do whatever I can in my classroom; then I go home.

I: Do you feel that others feel the same way?

Bev: Yes, but that is the time. I don't even know my neighbors. So why should I know what else goes on in other teacher's classrooms?

I: Do you see anyway to improve it?

Betty: No. That is just the way things are.

These two women are both elderly math teachers. They are dedicated to teaching math, and I believe concerned about the students.

I went to Dick about the situation that had arisen in the teacher's lounge and he agrees that teacher morale is a problem. He can identify at least twenty-five percent of the teachers that he has little, if any, contact with. He told me that he will call them in informally for coffee.

A Discussion with Dick Several Weeks Later

I: Have you started talking with some of those other teachers?

Dick: No, I have not had time.

I: Okay, let's see what happens. (I waited a week and asked him again.)

- I: Have you talked with some of those teachers who feel left out?
- Dick: No, I don't want it to seem unnatural.
- I: I don't want to keep on bugging you about it, but I think it is important.
- Dick: I agree with you.

Thinking nothing might happen, I went to see Sid.

Sid's Room

- I: I was thinking about a counselor's meeting, one where teachers and counselors would talk about common concerns.
- Sid: We attempted something like that before, but no teachers came. We thought that this would improve communication.
- I: I think teachers would come if you rotated the time-6th hour one week, 5th hour the next, etc. Also, if you have agenda listing the topics of discussion for those people concerned, it might create some interest.
- Sid: What we have tried is just having the counselors available one specific time. No one showed up. So now we just leave it up to the counselors to talk with people when they go to the lounge. There some people talk with them.
- I: Sid, what about a questionnaire?
- Sid: We've tried that. (Then Dick went to Kinawa Middle School in Okemos for a visit.)
- I: What did you think of Kinawa?
- Dick: What do you think I thought?
- I: (After thinking). It cannot be done here.
- Dick: Nothing is that simple. I talked with Geln G. (principal) and he told me it took a while. He had a Florida thing where once a week he takes off and just discusses with the teachers. This gets us around so that we can invite everyone in for a discussion during their prep period.
- I: That is a good idea. What follows is some of the first Florida meetings. (This conversation lead to the first Florida meeting between Dick and the teachers.)

Scene--Room 106

Dick asked all teachers to meet with him during their planning period.

Dick: I was at a conference here the coach from Albion said, "Any English teacher who is just teaching English should be fired." He continued on stating that we should all teach values. What do you think about it?

Teacher: We all teach values. As soon as I walk into class I am teaching values.

Brad: I just had a good example of this. One student just got new boots. I was looking at them and told him I liked them. The student said 'these are good nigger stomping boots.' I was not really sure of what to do. I could have said something but I did not.

Barb: Since you were not sure, then you'd do what you think you should do. I would do something different. Like one student was calling some one a queer and I laid into him. I gave a great speal of what I thought of name calling; I cannot do much about it when he leaves the class.

Pete: I think it is better when you get students to question what they are saying. Because for me to tell them that does not have much effect on them.

Walt: Last night on the advocates, John Holt spoke. I believe him to be a sincere person. He was saying how we should not have compulsory schools. That we can only teach when students are ready to learn. We can have buses going around with store front schools and regular schools.

Paul: I heard that it was good. On the Merv Griffin Show there were four economics professors. They were stating how two percent of the people control 80 percent of the money. How the government is not really run by the voters or legislators.

Dick: Look at the defense budget. That is where half of our money goes. Some people are still talking about the voucher system. . . . (He explains it.) What do you think about things here?

Paul: I certainly would like to have the students for a longer period of the time. After taking 10 minutes to get ready and 10 more to get dressed we have 35 minutes to do something.

Jack: That is my same problem in Industrial Arts. If we could have them for two hour blocks, it would be nice.

- I: You could get that through teaming. Where as a group of teachers you could plan on what you are going to do, how much time is spent where and more time with students.
- Ray: I would like to see a lot of options available to students. Where kids have a choice of which place they want to.
- Jack: Like Kinawa in Okemos.
- Ray: Yes, that is what I am saying.
- Jack: I I understand that S.W.S. is for the exceptional child.
- Rich: They told us it was a cross section of everyone. The child has to want to go there and parents have to agree with it.
- I: Last year I spent some time in it. One girl could not read very well.
- Joe: Then I am wrong.
- Dick: I did not think they had those problems out there.
- Andrea: I'm not going to take any risk after what happend last year. Just for my own sanity.
- Dick: Then you've backing out?
- Andrea: That's right.
- Rachael: I do it anyway. If parents complain, then I do not know about it.
- Dick: Thank you for coming. I hope you do not feel like you are being imposed upon. I want you to know that it is all voluntary. I also realize that it is the day before card markings and a bad time. Would you like to do this again?
- Teena: Yes. We enjoyed it.

Wednesday Meeting

One day Connie and I were walking down the hall together.

Connie: I sit in George Ferree's class and say "ya" that is a cool idea to myself, but I don't know how to implement it. He has had so many good ideas.

I: Ya, I know what you mean. (We departed and I discussed Connie's and my frustration with Dick. Dick said it was his responsibility to get out the way if he was in the way.)

Connie, I talked with Dick about what you talked about yesterday in mentioning ideas. Dick said he is to get out of the way. We could form a group of people who would be willing to discuss ways of implementing those ideas people have. Would you be willing to do something like this?

Connie: Yes, but it would have to be arranged ahead of time so I could make plans. I have every night after school planned for this week.

I: I would let you know ahead of time. Do you know any other people who might want to do this?

Connie: Rachael, Dee and that's about all.

I: I though we might try to cross department lines.

Connie: Well, Dee is my best friend now.

I: I will talk with her and some other people too. Rachael, I talked with Connie about ideas that she has. She would like ways to implement them. . . .

Rachael: That sounds good. When do we meet?

I: Anyone else?

Rachael: Dee, maybe Andrea. (I continue to ask John, Gayla, Harry, Bev and Mel.)

Gayla: I do not know if I could help but I will try.

Terry: Sure I would try to come.

I: That sounds good.

Mel: Okay.

Harry: I would come a couple of times to see if it would be worth it to me.

I: Okay. (I then relate this conversation to Dick).
I've got a group of teachers together and we are going to meet Wednesday after school.

Dick: Good.

I then proceeded to inform the rest of the people that I had contacted previously.

Connie: How many are coming over after school?

I: About eight or nine.

Connie: I do not know if I have room or not.

I: We can sit on the floor. Will you give me directions?

Connie gave me directions and I distributed them to the rest of the participants. We met at Connie's home with the following people present:

Ray, Mel, Gayla, Connie, Dee and myself. The conversation consisted mainly of finding out about the other participants involved in the group session.

Gayla: I used to be an assistant principal, and then I took a leave of absence to have my baby. When I returned I came back as a counselor. I had to live in the district if I was to stay as an assistant principal.

Mel: I taught in Alaska for two years, and at times I wish I were back there.

I: The reason we are here is because Connie was telling me that she has ideas but has no ways of implementing them.

Connie: I thought that if we could team teach or something like this I would have more time to work with the students.

Ray: Our building is not conducive to team teaching. We are built into so many things. The teachers should be able to have the summer paid for to think. We only have school 36 weeks, then the teachers are on vacation.

I: Ray, we can think of all kinds of things that get in the way. There is not much we can do about the contract now or the walls. So let's put our efforts in the direction that we can do something.

Connie: We have tried some things and I am tired of nothing happening. What is one thing we can work on? Some people think selecting teachers will go. If we go with 9th graders selecting teachers as an experiment

that might go. Maybe if the teachers see one thing go they will be supportive of other things.

Ray: Why work on it? Why should students select their teachers?

I: The students might not be able to get all the teachers they want. But they should have the same rights as college students do. Besides, students would have a better attitude in the classes they liked.

Connie: I notice that the students that like me, work for me.

Mel departs and Gayla follows shortly.

Connie: Let's see what happens. Who could I team with? I guess that is my problem. I can find some people.

Ray: I have to go. (Departs).

After some further discussion we get ready to go also.

Dee: I would like Dick here next time.

I: Okay, I will talk with him.

Connie: Let's do this next week. Ask some more people.

I: I agree. I want to see more older folks get together. I do not want to see the faculty split.

Dee: I can ask Barb . . .

Connie: I can ask Gary . . .

I: Thanks, I enjoyed myself.

Dee, Connie. We did too.

A week later we invited more people to attend our discussion group.

I: I'm concerned about evaluation. Not only evaluation of the teacher but of administration. We ought to start looking at evaluating people from their perspective.

Dick: This is something that has been discussed with us. We have really been discussing this quite abit.

Connie: We should have teachers be evaluated by their students, too.

- I: I agree with you, but some teachers would be afraid to. We ought to get those to do it if they want to.
- Dick: Peer evaluation is tough. Connie, what would you say about Dee's class would you be honest? It would really be hard if I evaluated Connie's school. I would probably lie.
- I: Maybe if we just let the peers come in to evaluate but not write it up.
- Dick: That is possible. I used to let teachers evaluate me.
- Connie: You ought to write this up for the paper.
- I: Why don't you?
- Connie: Okay.

We discussed some further ideas and decided to meet in another week. The following is dialogue from that meeting.

- I: I would like to discuss evaluations.
- Gary: Teacher evaluations or student evaluations?
- I: Both. Some schools are going to evaluations of students by computer. There are 99 items to pick from. They are descriptive sentences. We could write our own.
- Gary: I believe in grades.
- Ray: Why do you want to get rid of them?
- I: First they do not mean anything. They set up a competitive model.
- Ray: Hold it, where are grades set up as a competitive model? Speak in specifics.
- I: The math department.
- Ray: I don't know of anyone who specifically sets up a curve where 10%A--20% E's.
- Dee: I certainly think we ought to keep them.
- Ray: The grades measure what the students have learned.
- I: No. If they learned it, you are stating they could repeat it after 6 months to 2 years.

At this time people were asking all sorts of questions directed at me. I could not respond quickly enough and when I started to, someone else would ask a question.

Ray: They learned it for the test. That is knowledge that has been measured.

Gary: I think we need grades.

Ray: They will be living in grades in college so why change? There is no sense in change for the sake of change.

I: There are colleges that are doing away with grades. Students can get into college without grades.

Dee: I think there are more important things to talk about than grades.

I: What about teacher evaluations--where teachers set up their goals and are evaluated according to their criteria?

Dee: The only way teachers can start evaluating teachers is when they can have a say in the hiring. Maybe a chairman can evaluate you better.

I: I think its absurd if someone comes in to evaluate you according to their criteria. Dee, take your class. You would not last long in some schools. Besides, it's ridiculous to have Dawn evaluate you accordingly.

Dee: I know ahead of time when she is going to come in. I just tidy up my class.

Rachael: Anyone can play the game. Because they have to notify you before they come in according to the contract. Anyone who is half way smart can make it here in two years. They cannot write up anything that has not been observed, without notice. They have to tell you they are coming in.

Dee: What Okemos is doing is beautiful. They write up their goals and have different people evaluate you.

I: That is what I am talking about.

Dee: Before we can do this, I think we have to have a say in who is hired. Like I thought before we needed a reading specialist. Now I think its a waste. We should have been able to interview the people before they were hired.

I: I agree with you on selection process.

Ray: The court is starting to dictate curriculum.

I: I don't believe that.

Ray: What do you mean? Tracking is now outlawed and other things. You had better read the cases.

I: I have.

Ray: You better take another look.

Dee: I think we ought to talk about a better class for students. Like Johnny should be with teacher x.

I: Selection of teachers is going to be brought up at the Faculty Council.

Connie: That is good.

Ray: I don't know if I like it.

Dee: We did it at Eastern. It worked out fine. (She went on to explain.)

Ray: That sounds better.

I: The pass is going to be brought up.

Dee: I don't think we need it. I already do.

I: I realize that, so do other teachers. So let's legitimize it. Other teachers could then take advantage of it.

Dee: Do we take time to deal with it?

Rachael: You are not everyone else. Just because you do it does not mean everyone else does it.

Dee: I think instead of it we should have an independent study class. (Where in English Connie could help students with different things.)

I: I think that would be nice. But we would need more teachers and we can do this independent study thing now. We would need a teacher for math, social studies, English, and science. We don't have the money.

I: I agree with you that this is not the best thing, but it is a start.

Dee: I don't like it as well as the other but I can support it. Will you bring up the other ideas.

I: Yes.

We departed shortly after. In the following months we had several other meetings. Then Dick had one at his home where thirty people showed up.

I believe these meetings were the impetus to start alternatives for this year and next school year.

Integrated Course

I asked Jack and Roberta, a counselor, to sit down and discuss the possibility of integrating boys and girls into industrial arts and home economics courses.

- I: Why don't we make an integrated course where boys and girls can go Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to woodshop and Tuesday and Thursday to Home Economics and vice versa?
- Roberta: We had something like this before, but it only lasted six weeks. We could experiment with a small group.
- Jack: About 20 students would be a good number.
- Roberta: That would be good, I think. What about that size Jerry?
- Jack: That is okay with me. Don does not want any girls in his class. He has had bad experiences.
- I: I will talk with the home economics teachers. Sometime later I asked the home economics teachers about integrated classes. They told me they would think about it. Then one day I got a note in my mailbox.

B. Dunn

I have given the idea of the boys' home economic class great thought; but because of the subject matter involved, that is, all areas relating to being a homemaker, I'm afraid it would not be suitable for boys at the junior high level. If it was all cooking, it would be a different situation. There is a possibility that an idea like this could be explored in the future.

Mrs. Wask

The responses from other women home economics teacher were similar. Later in the year, I asked again about the situation. I was told by one "that I would be cutting other girls out who need it." She has also mentioned that there would be discipline problems unless it was all cooking.

I could not argue her earlier point. The only thing I could mention again, without success, was rotating the classes.

Later in the school year, as teachers developed plans for next year, the home economics teachers voted for the six week concept. This concept is every six weeks students can make other elective choices. Thereby, the boys were included in this arrangement.

Negative Attitude

- I: I have a concern about teachers' and their negative attitudes toward students that is expressed in the lounge
- Barb: I think our staff is the best there is about this. I hear more negative comment in other teacher lounges. For example, one teacher at Gardner said that a kid was almost an epileptic or an idiot.
- Dick: You still have not told me who he is.
- Barb: His name starts with a "c", and he teaches science.
- I: Beth, you don't think those comments go on here too? They do.
- Fan: Last year when I worked attendance, teachers would say "I have not seen him in a long time, and I am glad because of the trouble he causes."
- Dick: You still have not told me who they are.
- Fan: You can go look it up if you want to.
- Rachael: I agree with Bob. I'm even part of it at times. Sometimes I feel I have to let off steam. However, I never say anything positive about the student afterwards.
- Dick: Sometimes teachers have to let off steam.
- Barb: I know teachers do it, but not like other schools .

(The next day in the teacher's lounge.)

Andrea talking with Barb:

Remember in the first faculty meeting you explained the special education students becoming part of the regular program. You explained how dumb they are.

Barb looked at me, and we both seemed to know the problem. She was a leader of the negative attitude.

The men in the men's lounge very seldom discuss students. While in the co-ed lounge, it is mostly women who criticize the students.

Teacher-Counselor

During a summer talk Dick told me about an idea he had. The idea was to take the whole staff, 71 people, and split the students up among them. This would make a ratio of 14-1. But the idea only had a simple majority therefore it was not acted upon.

I went to Dick with the idea to renew it.

I: There is another idea. The idea of discussing with students in small groups. The idea you had last year of listing everyone to make groups of 13 or so. We could go with just those teachers that wanted to do it.

Dick: What would we do with the other 600 students?

I: I don't see them involved. We would only have enough for the teachers.

Dick: Talk it over with Sid.

Let me know. Anything else?

Dick: No, not that I can think of.

I: If there is let me know.

I then went to Jim.

Sid's Office

Sid: The problem I see is where teachers feel forced to do it. The moral factor here is important. When it involves the whole staff we feel it is important to have a 80 or more percent to go with it.

I: I agree with you totally. But there ought to be some way to manipulate the scheduling or time so we can do this. This certainly would help with communications. Maybe before school or after school.

Sid: I agree with you. I like the idea. Teachers moral is really important here though.

I: Think about it.

Proposal: We propose that an hour be set aside every two weeks for teachers and students to talk about concerns in small groups.

Rational: Because of large classes, shy students, and the inability of many to stay after school hours to talk, it is difficult to discover the real concerns of students and teachers. This proposal would provide an opportunity for both teachers and students to interact in a smaller group. We hope that this would lead to improved communications between teachers and students, and subsequently a better understanding of each other.

Mechanics: The group would meet every two weeks. We would hold it the same hour and same day, but rotate the hour missed. For example, we would meet first hour and omit 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.

The students would select the teacher they wanted to be with. Utilizing the entire faculty we would have groups of about 14 students. Therefore, like registration, once the group meets a limit size, the students would find another teacher.

We will work with smaller groups in the selection process, and using an alphabetical listing, ask students to select a faculty advisor.

Decision: We realize that if only a small majority is interested in this, the idea might feel forced upon a large majority. We feel that around 75% passing is a necessity to be effective.

Sid never mentioned it again. When I asked him about it, he said, "I have not given it any thought."

I wrote up a proposal and took it to the faculty council. Faculty council did not have time to act on it at the time of the meeting and said they would next time.

However, at the community relations meeting the teachers brought it up. They thought every week would be beneficial and I handed a copy to everyone. The community group accepted the idea and it was adopted by faculty council without too much discussion.

We then placed a copy in every teachers mailbox to think about, discuss or react to. I never heard anything on it. Then it was brought up at Faculty meeting.

Dick asked that mechanics would be ironed out and not to discuss the mechanics. Dick talked about twenty minutes on it giving the rationale and explaining it as an experimental model. Mel said, "Some of us already do this. We don't need to formalize it".

Connie: A lot of students do not get attention like this.

Someone asked how the counselor felt.

Dan & Gayla: We believe it would be good. Any extra counseling is beneficial.

Dick asked for a motion. There was and it was seconded. The voting was 37 to 10 in favor of it. Since this was not 75 percent and so many abstained Dick asked for a ballot. Dick was placed in their boxes.

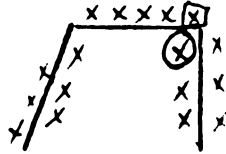
The results were the same. So we initiated the idea for five weeks. We asked teachers who did not want to discuss with the students to inform the students they would talk about their subject matter.

There seemed to be two comments from teachers. One being "the students just do not want to talk" and "It was just a great hour".

The program was evaluated at the end of the year. The students reacted similar to those of the teachers.

Weekend

I had been invited to the Faculty Council Committee, which I have referred to before. This was the first meeting and was held at Scofes for dinner. The tables were situated like this:



I sat in the one circled. Dick looked at the arrangement and stated, "Is there some otherway to arrange this so we can all see each other?" Then seeing that it would be difficult he sat with the one enclosed by the square. After few opening remarks, I asked him if there is any way to have an extern for the teachers.

Dick: We have this extern for administrators now, but not for the buildings.

I: I know that, but to me it makes more sense if it were to be within the school. This would provide time for the faculty to work together.

Dick: I agree with you.

I: What about a weekend workshop? Rachael, who had been sitting across from me said, "That would be a great idea.

Dick: We could plan on something like that.

Picking up on this is a counselor by the name Roberta. Her enthusiasm carried the rest of the table into the conversation.

Dick then got up and went to the end of my table to talk about this idea. The topic is continued to be discussed. At the end of dinner Dick stated, "Some of you might be wondering what we have been talking about. We have been discussing a faculty weekend someplace. We can find out more on this later though.

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Community Relations

Dick: There is something else. Last night at dinner the idea was brought up to go away for a weekend. A social evening with some planned activity was discussed.

Barb: What for? I could not see going up north for a weekend to socialize with this faculty. I'm task oriented. If we went up there for a task, that would be fine.

Dick: The main idea would be to get the faculty together -- to see each other away from this place. To talk with different people on the staff that usually you don't get a chance to.

Fan: You never answered my original question. Yes or no?

Dick: I'm not afraid of losing my authority, but there are certain things that we cannot do. Not letting students come to school would be one of these things.

Fan: What happens when the decision body wants to have open lunch period?

Dick: That takes board action. Anything within this school we can do.

I: If the decision is agreed upon by the body, would you take it to Candoli for board action?

Dick: Yes.

Barb: We would need big names to get people there.

Joe: Wiengarden will be here sometime in November.

Fan: Maybe some PGP Credit would help interest the faculty.

Dick: That was mentioned. Maybe even graduate credit, if we can get some people to sponsor it, would attract some.

Barb: Maybe if Carl Candoli and Matt Prophet came, with some of these people trying to get a little closer to administrative positions, they would want to come to talk with them; and some will be afraid not to come.

At the next Faculty Council Committee, we are asked by Dick about the weekend. This group is in favor of it. Andrea and Rachael volunteer to be chair persons; I also said I would help.

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Gayla, a counselor, had been in a "I'm Okay Your Okay" workshop last year. She thought that the person who ran this workshop would be a good person. Others around also thought so too.

Co-ed Lounge

Gayla: This is the program we had with Dayton. She gave it to Andrea and me.

I: I think there are some important things here.

Andrea: This really looks good to me.

Gayla: Should I call him and see if he will be busy then.

Andrea: That sounds good Gayla. (Gayla leaves.) Everyone should go through this because we get out of touch with what is happening. It is even good for wives to get away from their husbands.

I: I agree. (Gayla comes back and says he won't be in until 1:30. Andrea leaves. Gayla and I go to her office.) I think it is important to stay away from the concept of sensitivity.

Roberta: I agree with you. But how are you going to tell the people.

I: We can call it Humans Relation Workshop.

Gayla: I could talk with people easily on that idea.

Roberta: How are we going to contact people?

I: Just split up the faculty among us. Dick had told us he would contact Higgins Lake to find out the information.

Dick: It will cost for Friday night dinner, Saturday and Sunday breakfast \$31.20. For only Saturday and Sunday, \$21.00. How are we going to find out about the faculty?

I: Just split it up among the committees.

Dick: We have to know by Thursday at 4:00.

We leave. I go to the teachers' workroom where I am stationed. Here I meet Ray and Mel. I relate to them what I have found out.

Ray: This seems pretty expensive.

Mel: I guess so. (I see Gayla).

Gayla: Is there any money available for him?

I: Dick says transportation and lodging and maybe some other money is available.

Gayla: I don't think I could ask to come for nothing. Maybe CSEA (Care School Education Association) would have some.

I: Dick said he would talk with Wilson.

Gayla: Then I won't call CSEA. (Gayla leaves and Chuck enters).

I: The student teachers are invited to come along for the weekend.

Chuck: Good. But before I come I want to know the schedule. I want a lot of socializing time.

Andrea: We thought the evening would be a good time.

Chuck: I still believe you've got the cart before the horse.

Gayla: I agree. Let's see what is good here that we want. (We go through the pamphlet that she has been deciding on about what we think might be good.)

Next Day

I: Hello, Gayla, just looking for you. Have you found out anything more about Terry coming?

Gayla: He will come, but he has to check with his assistants. I have a copy of the weekend I was in. It was really good. Do we have the camp for the weekend of November 7, 8, 9?

I: Dick has reserved it for us. We need forty people. We have to know by tomorrow at 4:00 if we are going to keep it. (I go to the lounge.)

Chuck: Before I come I want to know what the plans are. I want a lot of free time if I come.

I: We plan on bringing in Terry from the university. Gayla had a workshop with him.

Chuck: Is it sensitivity? (He negatively implies this to me).

I: We thought some arrangements where it is structured for people might help people get to know each other. So there will be sensitivity for those who want it.

Mel: Is it going to cost me \$31.20 for the weekend?

I: Yes.

Mel: Still, it will be tough.

Gayla: We cannot get Terry and his assistants until December 1st. Is there any money available for him?

I: Dick is still checking with Wilson on funds.

Gayla: We don't know for sure then.

I: No.

Gayla: Then I will tell him that.

Connie's Apartment

This is our Wednesday after school meeting. This will be dealt with later on.

Dee: Is the weekend that is planned sensitivity?

I: We are not calling it that. There is planned interaction on feelings. We are calling it human relations.

Connie: What kind of things?

I: I'm not sure, but I would plan some different things like a trust circle or blind walk.

Dee: If those kind of things are planned, then I won't come! There is no way I will tell some of those people how I feel about them or anything else.

Connie: I won't either. If Jack has anything more to say or makes more loud remarks in the lounge, I won't be there either.

I: That is just the problem-- the lack of understanding. If Jack does not know what it is, then how is he going to do it?

Connie: Well I am not going to be the one to do it.

Dee: Nor am I.

I: If you two feel this way, I can just imagine what the others feel like. How about if we offer other options?

Connie and I never got close until we discussed more. Some discussion and a sensitivity group should be offered.

Connie: I would come then. Maybe if other people saw we were not all that kooky then they would join us.

I: I do not really like it, but I agree with you. There should be other options. I will bring it up in the committee.

Dick: We have money for Terry.

I: Last night we met. Some thought that we should have options. Some people will not come if it is just sensitivity.

Dick: Well it is sensitivity, and it is not.

I: I know, but Connie said if Joe came and had more to talk about in the lounge, she would not go.

Dick: We should have more on the committee to help us with this.

I: I agree. Gayla, I left Terry a note of what we wanted to do and the problem.

At a poker party where only men were invited.

Gary: We have money for him. (out of a clear blue sky.) You won't get forty there.

Dick: We've got to.

I: Why not?

Gary: Most want free time.

Dick: That is part of the schedule. We have to have forty if we go to Higgins.

I: Would you be planning some hikings for people and let them take advantage of what is there including all time free?

Dick: Yes.

Discussion with person for weekend.

I: Dayton Terry, we see some problems with the whole faculty having a sensitivity weekend. Some people will not come if there is only this offered. We thought some discussion groups.

Dayton: I'm not sure what you mean by sensitivity.

I: Dealing with your feelings.

Dayton: I understand. Even if I gave a lecture on transactional analysis, they would not really understand what it was about until they got involved with it. Then that deals with feelings. One of the assistants has given discussion groups and lectures. This could be an option. I am not into that though.

I: Will you come to the Faculty Meeting Monday?

Dayton: If I cannot come, I will ask my assistant Gary.

I: Okay. (Dayton calls, "I cannot make it, but Gary said he could come.")

I: Okay. Do you plan on going on the weekend?

Conversation with Teena, a special education teacher.

Teena: No, I have no reason just to socialize. What would be the function of the weekend?

I: For the faculty to communicate more. To talk about school concerns. To make a better place for students and teachers.

Teena: If that is the purpose, I might go.

I: We are talking about having Dayton Terry there.

Teena: If he comes, I'm sure I will go.

Gayla: Would you take over the talking with Dayton?

I: No, you know him and have started the contact.

Gayla: I don't feel I should because I don't plan on going. I think someone should who is going. Since you talked with him once you can continue.

I: Okay.

Room 106 Meeting call for Those Interested in the Weekend

Dick: We are gathered here to clear the air for the weekend. Some of you and other people hear different things. So here is what we have got going: Higgins Lake, \$31.20, \$200.00 for resource person, December 1, 2, 3. Now what do we want it to look like?

Gayla: Terry can do an "Im Okay Your Okay thing! She explains the workshop.

Connie: It is the first book, and people can explain it. We were there once. It was a good experience.

Roberta: We had one on "I'm Okay You're Okay"; it was pretty good

Jean and Beth: We could have nature walks and hikes too.

Dick: For those who might go with you. Then there is general consensus for those of "I'm Okay Your Okay". (Gary called me.)

Gary: I won't be able to come. I am going home sick.

I: What about another time ?

Gary: When? I cannot come Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

I: Next Monday sounds like a good time.

Gary: Okay. (He calls on Monday) My daughter is sick, I won't be able to come. Is there another time? I cannot come Tuesday or Wednesday.

I: Can you come as soon as possible?

Gary: Not this week; next week, Tuesday is available.

I: We have plans to go. We want everyone to feel comfortable about what is going on. The sooner the better.

Gary: We will plan on next Tuesday.

Lounge

Connie: We have about 20-25 people for the weekend.

Roberta: Talk with Dick. See what he has to say.

Rachael: This is the idea for opening night: sit around just stating positive things and writing them down about each other.

I: I like it, but it is too much for opening night. I don't know how people would feel about it. I would like to see it in the program.

Andrea & Gayla: I agree.

Teacher's Meeting

Dick: We have gathered here to inform you of the workshop. The purpose is to communicate better. It will not be

a sensitivity or T-grouping. I don't believe in it for a faculty. Now maybe someone else will take over, Roberta.

Roberta: Bob, you talked to some people.

I: We invited Dayton and Terry to come. But he was not able to. The concept will be based on "I'm Okay Your Okay". It will serve to attempt better communication between us and students and us.

Harry: I'm not coming. I don't need any of it. Besides it costs \$30.00.

Connie: I was just in a sensitivity weekend and I'm okay. But this will not be. There will be plenty of time to socialize. Like I don't even know some of you.

Dick: We need 40 people for the weekend. The committee will be around to see you individually. I certainly hope most of you can come. I tried to get money and can if 40 people come. They tell me about different programs that are a result of weekend get togethers. This is all I have.

Chuck to Harry: Are you going?

Harry: I don't know.

Room 106

Gary: I thought this would be a planning period to see if you wanted to go. But you are going?

Group: Yes, December 1st, 2nd, 3rd.

Gary: I don't know if Dayton knows. I never knew.

I: That is my fault then.

Gary: I will call him and find out. (Gary goes on to find out what we want.) I called Gary. I talked with Dayton this morning. I explained to him what went on. I told him I was surprised to find this out.

I: You are saying that you cannot make it.

Gary: No, we thought about what you people wanted. Since it was so late that we were informed, we would not be able to plan adequately. Terry is not able to make it. However, I have nothing planned for this weekend. I do have a social engagement, which is important to me.

I: I agree with you that your social engagement is important. I wonder if you could recommend someone else or where we might look around.

Gary: I would be skeptical of you getting anyone at this time that is professional. Anyone who is professional would turn it down. If you got someone who is second-rate, then you could hurt a lot of people. You could go get a two day high and then come back to the school with nothing happened.

I: I agree with you on getting a second-rate person. I will talk it over with the committee.

Gary: We could offer several Saturdays to work on a project. This is what I really heard people saying.

I: I will talk with the people, and then we will decide.

Hall

I: Dick, Dayton cannot make it for the weekend.

Dick: What! (Goes and lies his head against a wall. He comes back). What happened. (I explained.) Well, we can do several things. Cancel or get someone else. Talk with the rest of the committee.

I: That is what I thought.

Andrea's Room

I: Dayton cannot make it. Explain options 1, 2, 3.

Andrea: We really bungled this one. I think we ought to cancel. Then people will want to know who the other person is. Others will want to break out.

Rachael: What happened?

I: I explained. It is my fault.

Andrea: No, it is all of ours.

Roberta: I think we ought to cancel too then. Because if people will think this way, then we would have to cancel Walden Woods very late. That would not be fair to them. (Andrea has to leave. Rachael and I leave for Dick's office. We explain what we have come up with.)

I: What happens if we cannot cancel Walden Woods?

Dick: We will find out. (He then calls.) We have canceled. I don't understand. How he could do it.

I: It was my fault probably on the communication.

Dick: Let's go back to the drawing board.

As Rachael and I were coming out of Dick's office, Rachael tells Dee: The weekend has been canceled.

Dee: That is okay. I can really use the \$31.20. She keeps walking without being phased.

I went home that night believing there were going to be repercussions. I had to regroup and move along knowing I had made a mistake. The next day there was a notice in the teachers' mailboxes stating "weekend canceled--Dayton canceled out".

As I walked down the second floor Julie came out of her class, "Why did you cancel after all that? Why not get someone else?" I agree with you, but we decided people wanted Dayton and others would not come. Julie: "That's too bad."

Gary was on the stairway talking with Connie, "Here comes the epitome of organization."

I: It was my fault. We should have sent out a contract right away. I just never knew about those things.

Gary: Someone calls me up to referee a match, and I say yes. The next day I have a contract.

I: You are right.

My feelings were that this was a start. The next day was Friday and I went to Scofes. After some informal conversation Connie came in and sat next to me.

Connie: I bet you really got a lot of shit for this weekend?

I: Yes. I'm still getting it.

Connie: I think I deserve some of it. I really learned a great deal from it. What do you see happened?

- I: The first thing is I started dealing after someone else had made the initial contact. The next thing is I started dealing with a second person instead of the original person. The final thing is I expected when you set a date the person will be obligated to that commitment.
- Connie: Most of the people are blaming you.
- I: I know that. I also realize that I have to start all over again with some people. I realize I made some mistakes.
- Connie: I could not do what you are doing when Gary called you up and told you that; I would have gotten shaken up.
- I: Let me tell you what happened here. He had been invited three weeks before to come over. He said he would come over four times. He canceled them all. He was suppose to call me over the weekend. He never did. I called him about six times. Not one was returned.

Connie and I went on to discuss each other and what we thought of each other. After this conversation we hugged and kissed. She then went on to tell Dee to talk with me. Dee, you ought to talk with him. He is different than what we expected.

- Dee: I'm too drunk. Connie you move.
- I: Dee you say you don't trust me, and I would like to know why.
- Dee: This weekend thing -- I could spit nails at you. It was all your fault. Then this Wednesday after school fizzled. So why should I trust you? I could have come to the elementary thing; but since you organized it, than nothing for me. When you asked me to come and I said "no", you never asked why.
- I: I do not think that is my business. I trust that you would do the best thing for the students and school.
- Dee: I am not the only person who feels this way.
- I: I realize this, what can we do?
- Dee: First start kissing peoples' ass! Another thing is people realize that you are going to be leaving at the end of this year. We realize that. Dick is not that strong. I know that you are dragging Dick and a lot of other people. However, when you leave there is going to be a void.

I: So what do we do about it?

Dee: You have to get into the classrooms. Talk with students.
Know students. People see you as an idealist. They think
you are leading people that way. I agree with you.
Especially someone who loves Kinawa the way I do and
wants to go that way.

I: I will start doing that, anything else?

Dee and I went on to discuss each other. Then we went back to
the whole group.

We, at City Junior High School, would like to involve Senior Citizens with our school. This voluntary involvement would be with a few students in and outside of the classroom. What we would like is the following:

Three to work individually with students in Math.
Hours anytime between 9 to 2:15.

Six to work with small groups (2 or 3) or individually
with Reading. Anytime from 8 to 2:15

Three with knowledge or experience in History or
Government from 8-9 and 10-11.

One willing to work with individuals in Science from
12:30 to 2:15.

There also seems to be interest in crotcheting, knitting
and tissue flowers during the lunch period, 10:30 - 12:30.
This period is Split into four 1/2 hour segments. So, if
we could get one person for each of the above, then we will
have an idea of what to start with.

The days can be arranged between the individual and teacher.

At this time we cannot provide any transportation. We will provide
lunch for those who are here most of the day.

I will be in contact with you in the next couple of days.

Sincerely,

Robert Dunn

Senior Citizens

One of my first attempts to initiate something in the school
was to get senior citizens involved with the school. I called a
senior citizen's group and talked with Rev. Willington.

I: We are trying to get senior citizens involved with our
school.

Reverend: What do you want them to do?

I: I thought if we found out what they could offer then we
could offer that.

Reverend: Do you have transportation?

I: No

Reverend: I would find out what people wanted and then write a letter to different ones explaining what you wanted of them and then contact me.

I: Okay.

The next meeting

Reverend: Did you send out an information letter to teachers?

I: Yes. Here is a copy of the letter.

Reverend: Very good. This is exactly what we want to do. We want to get some of these retired people in here and find something for them to do. They have a skill and are just wasting it.

I: I agree that's why I set out to do this task.

Reverend: Have you had any contact with any othersenior citizens' groups?

I: No.

Reverend: I will give Margaret Whitehead's number to you and you can contact her. She will have a list of the other groups in the surrounding area. Tell her that I sent you.

I: Okay Reverend. Thank you for your help and I will send you a copy of the letter.

Genessee Community Center

Margaret: I am not sure what you want.

I: Basically to get senior citizens involved with our school and I handed her a copy of the letter.

Margaret: There are several people we can contact about this. We have some here on knitting and sewing that can be of help. C. Dittley is in charge of retired. (She calls Catherine Dittley, explains what I want.

Margaret: Can you make a meeting at 9:30 a.m. on the 16th?

I: Yes.

Margaret: Okay, he will be there. (on the telephone)

Margaret: This is the retired teachers group, they could be of the greatest help.

I: I agree with you. Do you know of anyone that could help us recycle the paper? A group started this project.

Margaret: Call Granjers Construction.

I: Okay. Thank you. Is there anything I can help you with?

Margaret: No. If any problems occur, contact me again.

I: Thank you for all of your help.

Teacher's Lounge

I: Brad, I talked with the senior citizens and they told me to contact Granjers. I will do that tomorrow.

Brad: Okay, let me know what happens.

I discussed with C. Dittley and other members.

Cather Dittley House, Former Assistant Principal School Board Meeting of the Senior Citizens

Catherine: We should let Mr. Dunn say what he wants to.

I: We thought it would be nice if senior citizens would get involved with our school. I have a letter here stating what we want.

Mike: You need a person in science. I could take that. We could take, and send a letter to 300 explaining what we want

Catherine: Maybe the school could pay for it. We don't have the money for the mailing.

Mike: We seem to be financially set at least that a partial sending to certain groups.

Catherine: We could identify certain people who we think might be interested, then send a letter in the monthly bulletin.

Mike: We would have the money to send a postcard to those few. I would imagine if this got going good other schools would be interested in it too.

I: I would think so.

Catherine: We could type it up then have the school run it off.

I: That would be okay.

Catherine: Well by Wednesday then we should be able to do it.

I: Very good. Thank you.

They sent out a letter postcard. I received one back stating he would help. I called him and he said he was too busy to do it then. However, he would call back when he was not too busy. He never returned the call.

Interest Hour

I asked Dawn "What would be the chance to get an interest hour here?"

Dawn: You mean an hour set aside where students go do something other than regular class?

I: Yes.

Dick: We had a happy hour here several years ago. We tried it for two years and then voted it down.

I: Why?

Dick: Some students were not going to classes and others would not sign up. These students caused trouble in the halls.

I: Do you still have the materials?

Dick: Yes. Joe and Jean worked on it before. You might want to talk to them. Ask Dawn for the materials.

I obtained the materials and went to see Jack in the lounge.

Interest Hour

I: Joe, you had worked on an interest hour before. Would you be willing to help me on one again?

Joe: I am pretty busy. Otherwise, I would be.

I: Joe would you be willing to look at it and help with any suggestions or ways to improve it.

Joe: Yes.

I: Dick, I talked with Joe and he would be willing to advise, but he is pretty tied up.

Dick: That is good. We did give it a good try. For two years we tried it. Then it was voted down. Even though there are some new teachers, it is going to be tough.

I: I know it. However, it is worth a try.

Dick: I like it.

I put a notice in the mailboxes asking for teachers who wanted to help develop an interest hour. I got back three volunteers. Out of the three people who volunteered, one was going to Kinawa for a visit.

I: Connie, when you go to Kinawa, obtain what they have done.

Connie: Okay.

Faculty Council

I: The interest hour I see is similar to the one you had before.

Pam: I cannot see it. Too many problems.

Sid: I think there were only a few. What, 5 - 10%?

Dick: Something like that.

I: I think it is worth a try for the majority of teachers.

Sid: I agree.

Dick: Motion?

Jim: I move we look into an interest hour.

Andrea: I second it.

Dick: All in favor (10). All opposed (2).

Motion carries.

Sid: Bob, that is all yours!

One might say the school would favor it. The day the council minutes came out on this, the lounge was buzzing with conversation.

Carl: I will offer math. I will not vote for it.

Harry: I also will offer science. It never worked then, and it is not going to work now. These sentiments were echoed by many others. Several teachers who support the idea told me. There is just too much going on now. We should wait. With this input coming in, I never pursued it further. No one ever asked me what happened to it.

Middle School Concept

One day Dick asked me "Are any of the teachers talking about team teaching or diffentiated staffing?" I said, "No. Not that I know of." This surprized me. I was really not sure Dick wanted to go this way.

So the next couple of days I asked teachers if they wanted to go to Kinawa Middle School. The reason I chose this school is because I happen to believe it is the best around this area. The response by teachers were generally yes. Some said "no" and I never pushed them any further on this.

An insuing conversation took place with Dick. This conversation was specifically about the physical education program. A lot of things were being swiped, girls fighting, and some students were not getting dressed.

I: Dick, the Kinawa Middle School has a good physical education program. We might take them out there. I have also talked to other teachers about going out there. You should come too.

Dick: Yes, the program has to be well organized.

I: It is.

Dick: Good.

I: Now some teachers want to go to Kinawa Middle School. What are the procedures?

Dick: No problem. Just send me a list and the days. I don't want more than four in a group. Because you get too many substitutes and it is a catastrophe.

I: That is fine. You ought to come too.

Dick: I'm too busy.

I: You need a break.

Dick: I know it. I took one last night.

I: Good. Then you can take another one.

Dick: Okay

Connie had mentioned to me she would like to team teach.

Connie's Room

- I: Connie, have you given anymore thought to team teaching?
- Connie: No. I would not even know who to ask. Maybe you can. I know Dee well, but she is a 7th grade reading teacher.
- I: You can cross lines with social studies and math. This way you will get more time to do some different things. Take a group some place. Work with a large group or a small group.
- Connie: This is my 2nd year of teaching. Some people will not take it lightly.
- I: We can work around that.
- Connie: You know more of the people than I do. Why don't you think of some people I could work with.
- I: Okay, I will do that.

Dick's Office

- I: Dick, have you talked to Connie about team teaching?
- Dick: No. Her best friend Dee is teaching 7th grade reading. That would hurt the reading program.
- I: What about a man like Ray?
- Dick: Ray won't be around here long with a Ph.D. He will either move up in this system or go to a university. So I don't want to plan on him.
- I: I agree.
- Dick: What about Margaret?
- I: Good. I will talk to her. (I went to see Margaret).

Margaret's Room

- I: Margaret how important is the art classes to you?
- Margaret: Why?

I: Well Connie is thinking about team . . .

Margaret: I don't know Connie very well. Besides the Mini course would really interfere.

I: I realize you would need some time to work things out.

Margaret: I can talk to Connie and see what happens.

I: Carol is talking with Judy C. Carol is free 2nd hour. If you need some time I would be glad to take your class.

Margaret: I have all my art classes planned through June. However, I only have 21 in one class. We could cut down on the art section.

I: Why don't you talk with her and lets see what happens.

I went to inform Connie.

Connie's Room

I: I talked with Margaret about the team teaching and she told me her thoughts.

Connie: I never thought of her, but I would like to team with her. Maybe next year. I am still talking with Judy.

I had given Dick the list of twenty teachers. Dick told me he had to talk with Bob Lott since there were so many people. Referring back to this conversation.

I: Sure am, I also believe I am doing some good there.

Hall

Dick: I talked with Bob Lott about getting all those teachers. He thought it would be hard. But he is going to let me know today.

Dick's Office

I: What did you find out from Bob Lott?

Dick: He had to talk with Candoli's office since we are looking at a middle school philosophy, he thought it would be a good idea. I told him that some people ought to visit what we are doing in Hill and Gardner and see what we are doing there. So what if we send some two groups to Okemos and two elsewhere.

- I: I have talked with some friends about the situation. I think it would be much more beneficial if they all went to Kinawa. Therefore, some people have volunteered their services to substitute at no cost.
- Dick: That is great. We have to take care of the legal aspects, which should not be a problem.
- I: I just talked with Terry and she wants to go. Also, she wants to be in on the elementary thing. I said okay.
- Dick: Good.
- I: Are you going to the lunch?
- Dick: Yes.

I arranged for the teachers to go to Kinawa.

At this luncheon Dick, met with Dale Alam. Dale asked Dick to go to Kinawa with him and several other university professors.

Dick accepted.

The next day I had a chance to talk with Dick about his visitation.

- I: What did you think of Kinawa?
- Dick: What do you think I thought?
- I: That nothing can be done here.
- Dick: Nothing that simple. What I did pick up was the Florida day. Where I set one day aside a week to discuss with teachers on their planning time. This will get at the problem you have brought up. (This problem was relating to some teachers not seeing or talking with the principal.)

In the next couple of days Margaret told me.

Teacher's Lounge

- Margaret: I talked with my husband about team teaching. He told me not to because it takes too much time. Maybe next year. I really don't listen to my husband.
- I: I will talk with Connie about it.

To make sure Dawn is involved with what I was doing I went to her.

Hall

I: Dawn, we have been working on several things. A community involvement while Connie and Julie are talking about team teaching.

Dawn: I don't know if it will work. Anything is worth a try. What can Connie and Julie do in a team teaching situation?

I: This would give them a bigger block of time to work with students in large groups and go places without interfering with other teachers. Also, Connie can teach social studies.

Dawn: Would that interfere with other social studies classes?

I: I don't think so. They could check on it to make sure.

Dawn: They could.

I: It still is in the talking stage. So I don't know what will happen.

Dawn: Maybe it will come off.

Lounge

I: Tim, what was your perception of Kinawa?

Tim: It made me discouraged to come here. They have so many things going on.

I: Can we do anything here.

Tim: We have to split our classes in half in order to do it. We have to have more facilities. Like if we took the basement and started using it, then we would have a start. What we are doing now is terrible. If I could see it in operation in an older school then maybe I could start seeing what we could do.

I: Tim why don't you give it some thought as to what we can do. Maybe we can see what happens.

Lounge

I: Rachael, did you enjoy it?

Rachael: Yes. They have a lot going on. They have two counselors. We have three full time ones--five part time. Their counselors do all the scheduling, etc. I wonder what ours do? We waste a lot of manpower. They have preventive counseling because of the counseling. That is good.

I: Jack, how did you enjoy it?

Jack: It was nice. The students and teachers enjoy coming to school. Like the principal said, the students want to come to school even when they are sick. Here it is hard to keep them and most of the time we spend controlling the classes. One course was integrated around the ecology issues and here they got all their math, English, social studies and science. We have to do something here. This is the first time I have been out of this school in seven years.

Dick's Office

I: I am arranging for the meeting with elementary people on November 29 or 30. Would you let me know which date the community thing is going to be?

Dick: Okay. (Seeing Rachael in the hall).

I: Do you see anything we can do here?

Rachael: Their building is conducive to what they are doing. Ours is not the staff theirs is. Student population is smaller.

I: I don't believe the classes we have hinder us that much. We can move from room to room. We only have 300 more students. It took a while to get the staff where it is now.

Rachael: That is what he said. We are starting to do some different things. Julie and Connie are teaming. The social studies is their mini course.

I: I agree. Give it some thought as to what we can do here.

At a faculty council meeting Dick told us that he invited Tom Gatewood, a middle school consultant, from Central Michigan to the administrative extern program. Several of City Junior people went.

One response to this persons idea was:

- Dick: Dee was impressed with the meeting Saturday. She would like to have a self contained classroom.
- I: I talked with her on Saturday. She talked about teaming with Ray. I told her I would not count on Ray being there, because he probably is looking elsewhere.
- Dick: I don't think he will be here next year either.
- I: I told her if someone is to be hired that we find people compatible for the nature of the thing.
- Dick: We made a reading program and found people to fit it. That never worked out. I don't know why.
- I: I think Dee was thinking Sherry would have a lot of expertise. Sherry does not communicate this or work with them.

I went on to explain that you do not make programs for people.

Dick followed through on the Florida plan. He also organized a trip for other faculty to Detroit. The reason he found an urban city was due to the general comments "They don't have students like we do." Or "those students come from a middle class or upper class and do not have the problems we do."

Dee's ideas have grown into several things happening for next year. This has helped with a course from the university run by Dick to develop programs for next year.

At a meeting called by Dick to develop alternatives for next year, 39 people showed up; over half the faculty. Next we broke this into interest areas. Those who want 7th grade, 8th grade, 9th grade, electives and those who want an integrated grades.

From what it looks like now. I see two sixth grades contained classrooms, several 7th grade teams, 1-8th, 1-9th team, bussing team, and the electives. The electives decided for 7th grade six 6 week terms and four 9 week terms for 8th and 9th graders. In other words, the students will have a lot more to choose from.

Student Selection of Teachers

I had talked to Sid, the assistant principal, about the possibility of students selecting their own teachers. Sid was in favor of it and said Dick was also.

With the administration in support, I told Sid "Let's bring it up in a Faculty Council." He said, "I will put it on the agenda." This meeting was a month off, and it gave us time to check out the way people felt about it.

So at one of our Wednesday meetings, the conversation went like this:

Dee: I think we ought to talk about a better class for students. For example, Johnny should be with teacher x.

I: Selection of teachers is going to be brought up at the Faculty Council.

Dee: That is a good idea.

Ray: I don't know if I like it.

Dee: I think students should be able to select their own teachers. College students can.

Ray: I don't know if they are competent enough to do this.

Dee: I think they are.

I: I do too.

Connie: Let's all get behind this so people can believe change can really happen.

Ray never said anymore, consequently there was general consensus for this idea. A couple days later I saw Sid.

I: Sid, are the items on selection of teachers still on the agenda?

Sid: Yes. I asked the counselors at our Wednesday meeting, and their voting was 3-2 against it. They gave humanistic reasons for it. Usually, they are more objective than the teachers. The reasons they gave was that students would be rejected by teachers.

I: We thought we could experiment with ninth graders and see how it works out. I thought I would go to Otto before Monday. (Otto Junior High has been doing this for a half a year.)

Sid: See Pete Nice; he knows you are coming. (Pete Nice is the assistant principal in charge of counseling.)

I found out later that day only two women voted for it in the counselor's section. This meant that all the men voted against the idea.

After visiting Otto Junior High, I wrote up the proposal. I wanted some feedback on it, so I asked Connie in the office. She read it and had a hard time with the mechanics of it. The mechanics finally were dropped after a discussion with Sid. Her only other comment was on the spelling of the word "their", I had spelled it "thier". She wrote the correction at the top of the page.

Then I went to Dee's class. Her response was:

Dee: I heard about your proposal. Connie said you need my rational mind.

I: Good. What do you think ought to be said?

Dee: You cannot even spell "their" right, I heard. Your logic is not very good.

I: Something I am having problems with is letting teachers decide who is going to be in their class.

Dee: You mean teachers are going to have a say in who comes in?

I: Yes.

Dee: Don't blow it. Teachers here have to be told exactly what to do. Have you ever worked with an inner city school?

I: Yes.

Dee: Then you know what to do. Tell them everything. I ought to write it up in the proposal.

I: Good idea. Maybe after you get frustrated enough you will do something.

Dee: I have to think logically for you, then I can just leave it. At this point she walked out.

I: I will let you read it, and then you can react.

After giving this some thought and realizing there had to be a balance, I went to the co-ed lounge. There were several people in there, and they responded accordingly.

I: Chuck, maybe you can help me. We are looking at student's selecting teachers. The problem came up that some teachers believe they should have a say in who comes into their classes. Others say no.

Joe: I like the idea.

Walt: You have to have teachers have a say in it. Otherwise, I am against it.

Chuck: I think, since this is a public school, any teacher should take any student.

I: This is the conflict.

Walt: Let the teacher decide if only she or he has had the student before and has had a conflict. Otherwise, they must take anyone.

Chuck: That would be okay.

I: Thanks all.

I went to the men's lounge where I met John. I explained what I was doing, and he was in favor of it. I asked him if he would bring it up in a Faculty Council. He said, "Yes."

I will describe John. John is about 5' 10" and a chubby two hundred pounds. He is in charge of audio visual and teaches two hours of math. Some of the labels his fellow teachers give him are racist,

sexist, and anti-liberal. He took his children out of public school because of the bussing issue and the "lack of structure" found in schools. John once told me, "When I was in a small school, I used to get a great deal of attention." He went on to explain his involvement with sports and his recognition from this. At this school he has very little recognition, if any.

John will say something that will stir someone up so he can get a reaction. He started on me once. He called me a "liberal".

I: What is a liberal?

John: A liberal is someone who wants to change things.

I: Do you like things the way they are?

John: No.

I: You must be a liberal then. (John laughs and leaves.)

My belief is that John is concerned and wants to be recognized. Therefore, I asked him if he would bring up the proposal. After this discussion, I went to Sid's office.

I: Sid, Walt thought if the teacher had the student before, and there was a conflict, then the teacher could say no. Otherwise everyone must be.

Sid: I could go for that easily.

I: Would you react to the rest of it.

Sid: Since we don't have any minicourses and all electives are basically offered by one teacher, there won't be a need to have description of courses. This also limits it to just the basics. We just let the student see the master schedule a week ahead of time. Make several alternative copies.

I: Then what I have is too complex. Thanks Sid. Anything else?

Sid: This part where you state all teachers will be selected is not really needed.

I: Okay. What else? After Sid edited it some more, I rewrote the proposal for selecting student teachers and obtained feedback from John and Connie. Would you read this John?

John: I agree with it.

Connie: I agree with it also.

A notice went out to teachers concerning the agenda for Faculty Council. Selection of teachers was one subject. Below is a copy of the proposal:

This proposal is asking for a 9th grade pilot program in letting students select their own teachers. We realize that this is new here. We believe that in this process that students will choose teachers with whom they are compatible. How often have we seen students attempt or get out of a class because of a mismatch? This would then cut down considerably on the rescheduling of students.

We realize that all students will not get their first choice. However, as a student signs up for a class, there seems to be a contract made between teacher and student. As the administration at Otto said, "The discipline has been cut down considerably". This same administration believes that grades have gone up overall because of the better rapport with students, which means more interest in class.

As we begin to see what students want and what teachers are able to offer, we can begin to think of offering more alternatives for students in utilization of the teacher resources.

Faculty Council Meeting

Gayla: I believe that students should be able to select their own teachers. Therefore I move that we adopt it.

Dee: I second it.

John: I move that we also include eighth graders.

Andrea: I second it.

Dick: Discussion.

Pam: I do not think eighth graders are competent or responsible enough to select their own teachers.

- Gloria: I am afraid the students will gang up together and select a teacher.
- Rachael: If we see this happening, we can ask them to be in another section. This kind of discussion went on for fifteen minutes.
- Dick: "Ready for a vote? All in favor raise your hand."
(Seven raised their hands.) All opposed. (Five raised their hands.) Admendment carries. Now for the selection. All in favor raise your hands. (Ten raised their hands.) All opposed. (Two raised their hands.) The motion carries. Sid you can work out the mechanics.

We asked people not to discuss the mechanics in this meeting. Also, to avoid the discussion it was left off the copy that was sent to the teachers for discussion.

This was enacted in the second semester. The mechanics that I proposed were not followed. Instead what happened with this is all ninth grade students signed at once which caused overcrowding for some teachers. Several students formed cliques and joined a particular class. This was a complaint and can be rectified.

PROCEDURE FOR SELF-SCHEDULING

On Tuesday, January 16, 5th hour will meet during the 1st hour. 6th hour will be omitted. At 12:17 students will go back to homeroom. 7th grade students will be taken to the auditorium for the continuation of the State Assessment Test. A PA announcement at approximately 12:30, will be the signal for 9th grade students to go to the teachers with whom they wish to enroll. At approximately 1:30 a PA announcement will start the 8th grade on the same procedure.

MECHANICS OF SELECTION

Each student will be given a print-out of their selected courses and a Data Processing "Header Card".

A student enrolls in a subject by going to the room where the teacher is and telling the teacher the hour and the class that he wants. The teacher will give the student a "class card." When the student has collected his six "class cards" he takes the course print-out, "Header Card" and "class cards" to the Cafeteria and checks out with a counselor.

After a student checks out, he is free to go home. Students who have checked out must leave the building.

PROBLEMS IN MECHANICS

If a student gets to a teacher and finds that there are no more class cards available, he may either select another teacher for that hour, or another hour for that teacher.

Students must take the courses listed on their print-out.

Students who do not complete their self-schedule, will be scheduled by Mr. Harvard.

Elementary and Junior High Teachers

There has been some discussion concerning elementary students as they arrive from sixth grade to City Junior High School. What kind of programs are presented? What are elementary teachers doing? Are we a continuation of elementary school or the beginning of high school? What actually is happening?

On Wednesday, November 29, 1972, at 3:30 p.m., all the elementary schools that feed into City Junior have been invited here. We have asked the upper elementary teachers to come and discuss with us what they see happening in elementary schools and the learners' perceptions of what goes on.

Elementary and Junior High School

A concern of mine is what happens when a learner goes from school to school without any follow through on programs. So I went to Dick with the idea of beginning to communicate with elementary schools.

Dick's Office

I: The elementary schools have different programs, and I believe it would be beneficial for the students if our staff started communicating with elementary staff.

Dick: That is a good idea.

I: I thought we could get them here, or we could go there and see what happens. I will be glad to coordinate it, but I will need some contacts.

Dick: We can do that.

I: When?

Dick: Next month or after that. (Smiling)

I: No. (Smiling)

Dick: We can go through the principal or Evelyn B. I have not been too happy with her. Maybe Bob L.--he is supposed to call me back today. I will talk to him then. (Dick contacted several elementary people and invited them to come to our school.) This is Jan and Ronnie.

Jan: I can leave now.

Dick: Ronnie is from Lyons; Jan is from Holmes. They are just telling us about their programs.

Ronnie: I am individualizing all the students. In math, they learn at their own rate. We test after every unit.

Dick suggested that we go to lunch and meet with some other faculty members: Joe, Dee and Gerry.

Ronnie explained how she had set up her math program. Next, she talks about operating an open classroom with centers.

Joe, the reading teacher, states, "I don't see how you can help the students unless you have people stationed at each one."

Ronnie: We have not tried it yet; we are not sure it will work.

Joe: I don't see how it works then. You won't be able to help them all.

Dick: I hope students will help each other. Maybe every one cannot do the same thing.

Dee: I want to come to your class.

Dick: Anytime. (They leave, and Ronnie and I walk the halls and visit classrooms.)

Shop Room

Jack: We are starting programs with several elementary schools. They are going to bring students here after school to build projects.

I: That is great.

Ronnie: Why couldn't you bring students to our school?

Jack: We could try. (Ronnie walks around.)

Ronnie: What do they do with this wood?

- I: Let's ask Jack. Jack what do you do with the wood?
- Jack: We throw it away or give it to crafts.
- Ronnie: I would like some. (I put some in a box and move on.)
In questioning her about what she saw in the morning she states, all the students are doing the same thing. At our school, they are all doing different things.
- I: Do you ever talk with former students?
- Ronnie: They come back all the time and tell us how boring it is, how they are doing the same thing again.

I ask Ronnie if she would come to a meeting with elementary and junior high people. She said that she would. We then went to Room 106 to meet other people and continue our conversation.

Room 106

- I: I would like to start communication between the elementary and junior high. Would your people be willing?
- Ronnie: Yes. We think it is essential if we are concerned about the students. Other elementary teachers are concerned too.
- Jan: We certainly are too. I would be glad to talk to other teachers about it. Would you like me to?
- I: Yes, even the principals should be contacted.
- Jan: Good.
- I: I will be in contact with you on this. Is there anything I can do to help you with it?
- Jan: We would like to start getting kids in here earlier. Maybe they could hear the concerts.
- Ronnie: When students come in here, they are lost; they could use someone to help them get around.
- I: A buddy system. I can get started on that. Would you write up an information sheets that could be forwarded to our school. Anything else? (I contacted other elementary schools.) I'm Bob Dunn from Walter French. We are attempting to start looking at what the elementary programs are doing so that we can build onto them. I hope to start some form of communication. We are asking the upper elementary teachers to come here.

Principal: That sounds good. I will talk with them about it and see if they will come. (After this contact I informed Dick). I am arranging for the meeting with elementary people on November 29 or 30. Would you let me know which date the community thing is going to meet?

Dick: I will. I won't be able to come because of the principal's meeting in Detroit, but go ahead with it.

I: I will.

The day is set up, and what follows is the first of several conversations with elementary and junior high school personnel. At 3:30 in room 106, elementary and junior high teachers met.

I: Why don't we get started. I'm Bob Dunn, the person who called this all together. (They go around giving their names.) What I thought we could do is have the elementary people tell us what they are doing. This might start us building on their programs instead of us just doing whatever we please.

Teacher: What I would like to know is what are the reading teachers doing?

Bob: We are doing various things. I can just speak for myself. I have the students reading various books.

Ronnie: I thought the teachers were working with the students on what they needed. If they needed comprehensions, that is what they got.

Bob: Some teachers might be, but I'm not.

Ronnie: Then every teacher is doing his or her thing?

Bob: Yes.

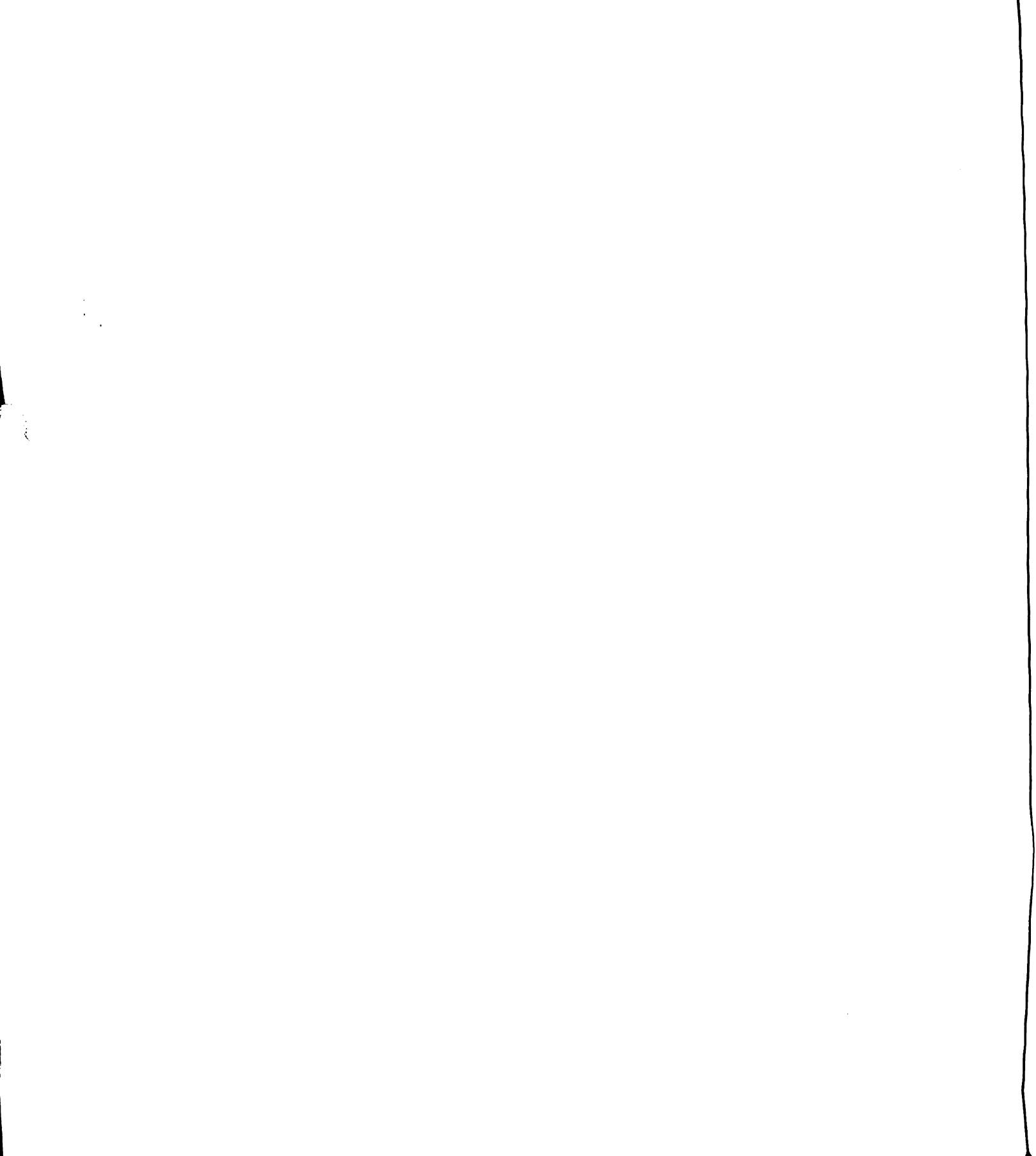
Gloria: What I find students having a hard time with is bibliography.

El. Teacher: If we can get the student to write a paragraph, then we feel good about it. Even if they are writing a sentence, we feel good. Most students are able to write a paragraph by the end of 6th grade.

Gloria: Students cannot even copy the text right.

I: Gloria, maybe that is a problem here. Maybe you and Bob ought to sit down and discuss the things you are doing. This certainly would help both of you.

- Bob: That is what I was going to say.
- Teacher: I want to know what is happening in math. The students come back to me and say they are doing the same thing that they did before.
- Bob: They don't in my class. They might in someone else's class. What bothers me is that it takes me four weeks to find this out. It would help me if I knew beforehand.
- I: What I hear her saying is it would be helpful if we could get some information on student achievement before they enter here.
- El. Teacher: We do send a form. Don't you get it?
- Dan: We don't get any forms! Maybe Sid does.
- I: Sid, do we get any forms from the elementary schools?
- Sid: Yes, I make the master schedule from this. Then they go to the counselor.
- I: Thank you. (I relayed this to the group.)
- Dan: I don't know anything about it. People have a similar delay on advanced math and science.
- I: There are two things I would like to mention. Several schools have open classrooms and do not give grades; then the students come here, and they get them. I think we ought to change to meet the student's needs.
- El. Teacher: I start putting grades on their papers the last semester. I also tell them that in junior high you have fifty-five minutes classes and cannot go to the bathroom anytime.
- Jr. H. Teacher: Don't you have the bathrooms in the rooms?
- El. Teacher: Yes we do.
- El. Teacher: We don't
- El. Teacher: Some students progress at their own rates when they are able to move around all the time. They should have something in junior high too, to allow the students this flexibility.
- Bob: What can we use for grades?
- I: They have computerized statements we can use.
- El. Teacher: I have a child, and one statement said he is doing well in math, and another said the opposite.



- I: The problems can be worked out. People started to leave.
- Dan: Thanks for coming.
- Rachael: We have to get people into our schools.
- I: I agree. Did you invite anyone?
- Rachael: Betty is welcome.
- I: Have you invited Bob over there? (She invites him and several other teachers too.) Rachael would you do two things for me? Write up a description of your room and a form to help explain what you think would be the best place for the child.
- Rachael: Yes.
- El. Teacher This was good. This is the first time we have gotten together. We ought to do this more often.
- I: I agree. We will try. The meeting lasted one and a half hours.

There were several other meetings arranged between elementary and junior high teachers.

Alternative Room

Rationale. We are asking for a room for both students and teachers. This room will be basically for those students that are having bad days; i.e., for those who are not usually the ones having "problems" in class and for those students who might realize that this is not his or her day and would be sent to this room.

We believe the reasons for this room are: (1) There are not too many places for the teacher to send the students, (2) There are not too many places for the student to let out his or her frustration on a particular day, (3) There are days when you have students you do not want to send to the office, (4) The counselors are not able to spend a full hour with every student sent to them.

This room we see is not necessarily a disciplinarian room, but one where students will be free to talk quietly, play games, read, and discuss with the person who is in charge.

We see this room having a maximum of 20. When this is filled, the students will be sent back to the teacher. We are also asking a maximum of three students from any room.

We think that limits must be set in order not to overload the room. This room, we believe, will be preventive in the sense that students will not have the fear of being suspended or disciplined. It should be a place where tensions may be relieved. Therefore, in order to serve these purposes we believe you are the best person to judge how often a particular student should be sent.

We would like to see that every student who is sent here has a personal conference with the teacher after school. This would be a chance for both teacher and students to talk about the situation.

Furthermore, a call home to see if we can be of any assistance or if the parents can be of any assistance in the situation might also prove beneficial.

Operation

Since we do not have a full-time paid person to run this room, we would like to see the staff run it. This could be set up in the following way: A teacher who has sent a student down will be responsible for a certain hour the following day or days. A schedule could be worked out from this to know what hours the room will be available. There also will be certain periods when staff will volunteer to be in the room. This would give the staff a chance to talk with some students more personally and to know other students.

I: Dan, I have been wondering about a room where students can go when they are having a bad day. Sometimes the teachers are having a bad day and do not want to put up with a certain student.

Dan: I agree. I have a perfect example of this . . . You might want to talk to Sid.

I: Thanks Dan.

Dan: Some teachers are not going to like this. It has to be put into a context where it will be of service to them, so that they are not bad or ineffective.

I: I agree. (So I leave to talk with Sid.) I was talking with Dan about a room where students who are having bad days, or are suspended may go. Some checkers, chess, T.V. could be available.

Sid: I was doing something like that last year in here, but we had to end it because they were in the hallway and an employee got fired breaking up a fight. I like the concept. Some teachers do not go for it. Some think they should just be suspended. Others are supportive.

I: I realize this. We would have to do a lot of talking.

Sid: A person to fill this room is a problem. We don't want students going all over the school from here.

I: I would like to find out if there are federal funds available and write a proposal. You could maneuver a room all the time. I do believe this room could feature some outside activities like walking in the woods.

Sid: I agree with you. I could find out if someone knows about the proposal and who to contact. (Student comes in for a lunch pass. Sid gives her one. Writes her name down.)

I: What are the channels we go through on this?

Sid: I could have it put on the Faculty Council agenda.

(Talked to several about the meeting Wednesday after school.)

Lunch with Dick

I: I talked to Sid about a room where we could have a different environment. Some place for students who are having a bad day with a teacher or just themselves.

Dick: My first response is "no," because of what happened last year.

I: We could find a room. I talked to Sid about funds by the Federal government.

Dick: It is going to take a lot of work selling it to teachers. I told students not to request that they have music during lunch in a particular room. They asked me why and I told them because of my past experiences. Once we almost had a full fledged riot. I did visit several schools that were doing things during lunch time. One place just opened up the gym and let them go at it. It was in a suburban area. They never had the kind of kids that we have. We used to have a full hour lunch program and let them play in the park until the community started calling the board and superintendent. The kids were always fighting like Junior High kids do. Some were stealing also. So we had to quit it.

I: You would be in favor if things could be worked out?

Dick: Probably, but it would be hard. (Later in the teacher's lounge I saw Rachael.)

I: Ray, I talked with Bill about those students that are having bad environments.

Ray: It is not always the teachers, sometimes it is the students.

I: I agree, but there has to be some place for them to go. Supervision does not help. The teachers have to look at things differently too.

Ray: I agree.

I: Give it some thought.

Ray: Okay.

Faculty Council Meeting

I: I am looking at a room where students are sent when they are having a bad day or teachers can send a student when they have had it with a student.

Dan: What would this room look like?

I: I would expect different games, a place to talk, and generally an enjoyable room!

Walt: I would expect a punishment room, where they would have to sit quietly or do work.

Sid: I would not want that. I think it could be a place where a student who is on his last chance could go. Some place where he would not be punished.

Dee: Who would decide? Student or teacher?

I: Both.

Fan: One student a couple years ago knew when he had had it. So he would leave.

Barb: Who is going to run it or finance it?

I: I would hope to see if there is federal money for a proposal and then see what happens.

Joe: I make a motion that we send it to student relations to write up a proposal on this. (It passes.)

Student relations group came back to me and asked me to write it up. After several weeks I wrote it up and discussed it with several people.

Pat: This is a good idea.

I asked Sid to respond, "After several weeks he told me, In theory it sounds good. Bring it up in Faculty Council."

I: Okay.

This was brought up late at the first Faculty Council and only one person responded.

Rachael: This is really good.

I: Why don't the rest of you read it over and react to it sometime in the next month.

Sid: It is getting late. (9:35). (So we quit.)

At the next Faculty Council meeting the room was discussed. There were little comments because of the lack of time. However, the vote was 5-4 in favor of it.

The next day I had a copy on my desk. Harry a math teacher, came into the men's lounge and told me about what he saw on my desk.

Harry: I don't think I should have to staff a room even if I use it. We have six counselors, three assistant principals and one principal to take care of those problems.

There were other teachers who agreed with him. These teachers, I believed, represented a fair sample of the teaching staff. Being toward the end of the school year, and realizing the lack of time to pursue it further, and faculty resentment toward responsibility; I never took the idea to the faculty. Only one person asked me about it and that was after the school year ended.

Community

A concern of mine is interacting with the community. So I went to Dick.

Dick's Office

I: I have been thinking that it is important to communicate with the community about what is going on in school. Some form of newspaper would be helpful.

Dick: I have thought of that myself. Let me tell you what we will do. The PTA has a bulk mailing, which is cheaper for us. We can send something in it. I usually have something in it. Very seldom or ever do I say what teachers are doing. Like this time I am sending out a calendar of events with the PTA mailing. I think the idea is an excellent one, but who would do something like that?

I: I don't know, but the English department is doing some neat things. Maybe Dee would.

Dick: We have a school reporter. This is something she could do.

I: I believe that is Dee.

Dick: Go ahead, the next mailing is the 18th. (So I went to see Dee.)

I: Dee would you be willing to write something up on your reading program for 7th graders for the PTA bulletin?

Dee: Sandy is in charge; talk to her. (I went to Sandy and asked her.)

Sandy: I will have something for you on Monday. (She did.)

Since I was involved with the Community Relations Committee, I went to the next meeting.

Room 116

I: I would like to see teachers call up every parent.

Roberta: We have been having a rash of girls fighting. Most of it is stemming from the neighborhood. If we could get some of these parents to meet in the

community plus others, then maybe we could get at these problems.

Jack: We have several things to go on.

Ray: Last year we tried to get teachers to call up every student in their homeroom. They even asked them to go to the parents home. Community meetings are tomorrow night, and we should not duplicate effort. Maybe the community meets tomorrow.

I: Why don't we get busy on one of these. (silence)

Jack: Well, lets go home.

The next day I went to see Roberta. She is 5' 6" and has red hair. She is a spirited, dedicated and active counselor. She is a delightful person to know.

Roberta's Office

I: Roberta, the decision of the group last night certainly is not going to act on the community thing for awhile. I believe we ought to do something now. Now, what about the community? Roberta, we can identify certain members who are fighting. We can go to the community with our concern.

Roberta: I like the idea, but I don't care for selecting specific parents.

I: We can identify certain parents who we want there. Then we can identify other parents who we want there or who want to be there themselves.

Roberta: Do we want the students there?

I: I think so. Since we are talking about them, I believe it would help if they could have their say. I believe we might want to talk with the parents first.

Roberta: How are we going to do it? A team approach and people who want to be there I think is the best way. Two, three or four faculty members could make up a team.

I: I think if we have parents and four teachers, it could be a teacher overload. Three is a bad number. One is cut out.

Roberta: Then two might be better. How can we meet people?

I: Just ask. We can split up the group.

Jack: I will get the list.

Dick: Good idea. There is Mrs. X here who will help. There is Mrs. Y; there is Mrs. Z; there is Mrs. P; there . . . We can offer to buy the coffee and ask them to use their homes.

Roberta: I agree with you. Why not get Jack to have a meeting Monday.

I: I will.

Community Relations--third meeting

Lee: This is more than we met last year.

Jack: Blame it on our administrative assistant.

Roberta: Give him credit.

I: We thought that we would go to the community with problems that are coming from community to school.

Bob: How?

Roberta: Go in groups of two to a group of parents. Discuss with them our problem. Lay it out like it is; the girls are not acting like young ladies. They are saying filthy things. Go see what happens.

Bob: Who is going to go?

Lee: I think a whole group should go, including the administration.

Roberta: How many?

Walt: Four at least.

Jack: Roberta should go since she knows first hand what the meeting is.

Walt: Who else wants to go? (The rest of the group raised their hands to correspond.)

Lee: Bob, me, Roberta, Gerry, Walt should go.

Someone: When and with whom?

I: How about Tuesday?

Group: Okay.

I: I think there will be a balance.

Dick: I sent a letter out and have not received an okay yet.

I: We are ready. (I leave)

The next day Barb, a social studies teacher, says to me, "I hear the community relations is going to the community."

I: Yes.

Barb: I think you ought to practice first. A group of us did this while we were on strike last year, just to understand the community positions.

I: I will discuss it with them. I think it could be beneficial. (I discussed this with Roberta, and she was for it. However, this was the last I heard of the project.)

I tried to talk with people about it and got very little information. One day after school several months later I mentioned it to Dick.

Dick: I made a booboo. I cut it because I thought it would do more damage than good. That was my mistake. Don't give up on it.

Classroom Environment

After some other topics, I brought this subject up at a Faculty Council meeting.

- I: I have talked with some teachers about a discussion group between teachers and students after school.
- Jack: We did that before, I don't care what another teacher is doing in his or her class. I don't care to hear students gripe just to gripe.
- Barb: It has to be task oriented. Just griping to be griping is no good.
- I: It will be.

A notice went out in the Monday bulletins, that there would be a meeting of students and teachers who wanted to discuss their classes. The next day I gave a copy of the questionnaire below to all the teachers.

CLASSROOM QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: For the questions which appear below, there are two columns of answer blanks. In Column A, use (+) true to indicate that you believe this should be true of classrooms; use false (0) to indicate that it is unimportant whether it occurs in classroom for the period of time indicated by your teachers' instructions.

Column A Column B

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1. The teacher's directions provide a clear understanding of purposes and goals. |
| _____ | _____ | 2. The methods or materials which are used to achieve purposes and goals are flexible, i.e., changes can be made according to student needs. |
| _____ | _____ | 3. There is an opportunity for a high degree of communication and understanding among students. |
| _____ | _____ | 4. There is an opportunity for a high degree of communication between teacher and students. |

- _____ 5. Student viewpoints which disagree with teacher viewpoints are listened to with respect.
- _____ 6. Classroom activities provide for productive learning, i.e., learning of facts and skills.
- _____ 7. Classroom rules and procedures are subject to change according to the needs of the members of the classroom.
- _____ 8. Every person has the opportunity to participate in classroom decision-making.
- _____ 9. The class is able to work together in some areas and still respect the right of individuals to express their own views or choose other values.

I had also talked with the student council's presidents; and several other other students that had been pointed out to me as leaders. I also talked with other students with whom I had come in contact.

I had talked to some of them several times about this adventure. They all seemed enthused and wanted to do it.

The day I had put "classroom environment" in the lounge, teachers started asking me questions.

This is one item on which we focused on Tuesday. This will be for discussion purposes; and hopefully, we can find some ways of solving some of the disagreements that arise.

Chuck: This is for after school?

I: Yes.

Chuck: What are the two columns?

I: The one column is for the ideal class and the other is for what really is.

Harry: No one can disagree with the ideal.

I: I thought that I would give a copy to the students and teachers and then see if there is a way to obtain these goals.

Chuck: No teacher would disagree with the ideal, but to do it is another thing.

Other teachers agreed with him. The bell rang for lunch. Chuck said privately to me, "Most of the teachers threw it away. Others never understood it."

That night two other teachers showed up and four students. We discussed finding ways for students to interact more with teachers and the student council.

A reason given for more teachers not showing up was Dick had called a meeting that day and there were several other meetings going on.

Parent Conference--Roberta's Office

- Roberta: Dee and I are writing up this proposal on parent conferences, do you have any ideas?
- I: I would start with a rationale, then a direct plan.
- Roberta: Okay. Why should we have it?
- I: Better communications with parents. Start better rapport with parents. More concern about their child. Better idea of what the teachers are like as well as parents. This might help some teachers understand the child better; say like someone is getting a divorce. Then maybe the teacher will know why the child is upset.

Dee and Roberta presented the following to Faculty Council:

- I Institute a nine week period, rather than a six week marking period.
 - A. Know your students better
 - B. More time for proper presentation of material and project completion
 - C. Less time spent in averaging grades
 - D. More time for student to complete assignments, i.e., illness
 - E. More time for unit completion, setting long term goals, with check points to their completion.
- II Report cards be given out by holding parent conferences, for the following reasons:
 - A. One to one relationship with parents re: grade and citizenship.
 - B. Teacher, student, parent accountable for grade earned and behavior
 - C. Improve communication and understanding
 - D. Helps develop a relationship between parents and school
- III Accountability for:
 - A. Student
 - 1. grade earned
 - 2. classroom behavior
 - 3. overall school behavior
 - B. Teacher
 - 1. grade given
 - 2. positive attitude toward learning
 - 3. active participation for child's education

- C. Parent
 - 1. behavior of student
 - 2. positive attitude toward learning
 - 3. active participation for child's education
- D. Overall gains
 - 1. better communication
 - 2. better understanding
 - 3. better cooperation
 - 4. errors

This was then passed by Faculty Council and the faculty without too much of a problem. It was enacted the second semester with tremendous success. Fifty-eight percent of the parents showed, and the remarks were generally positive. Also, the teachers remarks were positive.

This is the first time that this school had so many parents come to school.

Evaluation and Hiring of Teachers

At one of our summer meetings, evaluation of teachers came up; and I suggested to Dick that teachers have a say in the hiring of staff. Dick hesitated and said "as long as I have say in it too."

I: It could be a two way process. The teachers could recommend people to you to select from, and you could recommend to them.

Dee: Well, maybe.

This seldom came up again until one of our Wednesday meetings.

I: What, teacher evaluations? **Teachers set up their goals and are evaluated according to their criteria.**

Dee: The only way teachers can start evaluating teachers is when they can have a say in the hiring. Maybe a chairman can evaluate you better.

I: I think it absurd if someone comes in to evaluate you according to their criteria. Dee, take your class for example, you would not last long in some schools. Besides, it is ridiculous to have Dawn evaluate you accordingly.

Dee: I know ahead of time when she is going to come in. I just tidy up my class.

Rachael: Anyone can play that game. Because they have to notify you before they come in, according to the contract. Anyone who is half-way smart can make it here in two years. They cannot write up anything that has not been observed without notice. They have to tell you they are coming in.

Dee: What Okemos is doing is beautiful. They write up their goals and have different people evaluate you.

I: That is what I am talking about.

Dee: Before we can do this, I think we have to have a say in who is hired. Like I thought before we needed a reading specialist. Now I think it is a waste. We should have been able to interview the people before they were hired.

I: I agree with you on selection process.

Dee came to ask me at a later time if I thought it was possible. I said "yes." I also had discussed this with Dick in several other conversations.

In a meeting with the Superintendent, I mentioned it to him. He told me, "I asked Dick to put that question on his questionnaire. I'm trying to kick him a little into doing it."

Then at a Faculty Council meeting, Dick brought it up. "Next year we are going to be a pilot school in budgeting and selection of personnel. The budgeting will have nothing to do with teachers' salary. It will act only on how we want to use it."

As of this writing, no one has been hired, but the budget definitely has faculty involvement.

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