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A DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION, AND
FUNCTION OF THE MICHIGAN EDUCATION SEMINARS

Michigan State University

PH.D.

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1980

A DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION,
AND FUNCTION OF THE MICHIGAN EDUCATION SEMINARS

By

Richard T. Cole

A DISSERTATION

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1980

ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION, AND FUNCTION OF THE MICHIGAN EDUCATION SEMINARS

By

Richard T. Cole

The Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the researcher was to describe the establishment, operation, and function of the Michigan Education Seminars. This seminar series, sponsored by the Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C., was designed by the researcher to engage Michigan's top-level state educational leaders in discussions of actual or potential educational policy issues, and other policy issues that could affect public education in the state.

Design of the Study

The researcher identified the positional and reputational leadership of the state education policy community. He enlisted the commitment of many of these leaders to participate in the Michigan Education Seminars series. He recorded and transcribed the sessions and maintained a field diary. These data were combined with the results of interviews conducted at the end of the first year of the seminar series. The overall analysis of these data constitutes the basis for the research conclusions.

Findings and Conclusions

1. The decision to prohibit the Michigan Education Seminars from being used as a consensus-seeking body within the educational policy community may have been a significant factor in fostering open discussions among adversaries.

2. Top-level educational policy makers from diverse interest areas were willing participants in the seminar series.

3. Establishing the image of the seminar coordinator as a neutral among the various segments of the educational policy community was an important element of the series' credibility.

4. The success of the seminar series was related to the careful process used to identify policy leader participants, and to insure representation of all segments of the educational policy community.

5. The power to influence educational policy is not limited to those who hold official policy positions within the power structure, nor is it limited to the official organizations within this community.

6. The seminar series provided opportunities for top-level policy makers to socialize with one another and this socialization was considered important by the participants.

7. The series provided important opportunities for the exchange of information among policy makers within the same branches and agencies of government.

Richard T. Cole

8. The series provided leaders with a chance to develop an understanding of the technical considerations that formed the basis of the official policy positions of their organizations.

This work is dedicated to the people who constitute the educational policy-making process of Michigan. Most of them work passionately at their jobs. It is this passion that often ignites into near-violent disagreements over the style or method of meeting the educational needs of Michigan school children. It is a system in which political and physical violence occasionally emerges--a system in which grown men are still allowed to fight for causes.

It is also a system in which excellence prevails. It is the portrayal of the educational policy system in Michigan as "fragmented," without recognition of the excellence of its leadership and its dedication to common goals, that is the greatest fault in the abundance of literature.

It is to these selfless leaders that this work is dedicated.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sam Moore--chairman, chief advisor, cheerleader, and friend--said it had to be different. Bill Bridgeland and Ted Duane, premier social scientists, whose persistent demands and consistent devotion to quality are reflected in this work. The practical advice and constant encouragement of "Mayor" Gordon Thomas and Louise Sause constitute significant contributions to the study. Batting clean-up was Louis Romano, whose meticulous editing kept the game from going into extra innings. The value of his enthusiasm cannot be overstated.

Virginia Wiseman has made the complex seem possible. Susan Cooley, my editor and typist, was among Virginia's most significant contributions.

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The contributions of Phil Kearney to my learning and my life continue to be significant. And to the Institute for Educational Leadership and its leader, Sam Halperin, many thanks for the opportunity to do this.

Cliff and Lois have always been there, and Pas has maintained her moral support through even the toughest of times.

Lest we forget, the contribution of the researcher to this effort should not be overlooked.

WARNING TO READER:

It is the custom, if not the official practice, of writers in every field to "repair" quotations. It is never easy for most people to talk well. By that is meant that most quotes, when transcribed verbatim, could create the impression that the person being quoted is inarticulate.

Tape transcripts exist for nearly all quoted material. Despite this fact, all quotations have been given punctuation that relays emphasis--hopefully correctly. Stuttering, stammering, or verbal strike-outs, of course, were edited. Correction of tenses, prepositional placement, and other kinds of important syntactical considerations were given to all quotations.

Although the researcher attempted to be precise in his recount, all quoted material should be seen as paraphrased to this limited extent.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In 1977, the researcher organized a forum of state-level educational policy actors in Michigan; that forum was the Michigan Education Seminars. The participants in the forum were leaders from the executive and legislative branches of government, educational interest group leaders, and knowledgeable outsiders. The present study is a case study of the Michigan Education Seminars. The researcher acted as both fieldworker and coordinator of the Seminars from 1977 to 1979.

The seminar series derived from a program of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) in Washington, D.C. IEL provides funding to individuals in several states to create forums for educational discussions at the state level of leadership. Although IEL offers funding and program guidance, state associates (seminar coordinators) are free to configure their series according to their own perceptions of state needs and their personal abilities. This is the first major study of the IEL state seminars program in its history.

The Michigan Education Seminars were organized according to a plan described later in this document. The formation of the

seminar series was seen as having potential positive consequences for an educational policy process described as conflict oriented and fragmented. The importance to education of this study centers on its potential for being replicated at various levels of educational policy making in Michigan and other states, and to be perpetuated at the state level in Michigan.

Purpose of the Study

This is action research in which the primary purpose of the researcher was to describe the establishment, operation, and function of the Michigan Education Seminars. The project represents an effort to establish a forum for key educational policy makers and interest-group leaders in the educational community at the state level in Michigan. The environment was designed to create opportunities for informal exchange between educational policy adversaries. A reduction in the conflict-oriented nature of the state educational policy process as the result of such a forum was predicted.

The Michigan Education Seminars framework provided the researcher with a field setting for the observation of political interaction. The definition of the field of study as the state educational policy community allowed the researcher to provide analytical insights that extended beyond what occurred within the seminar sessions alone.

A secondary purpose of the researcher was to make specific recommendations for the replication, extension, and expansion of the Michigan Education Seminars. Program modifications are also

suggested. A central question of the researcher is whether the seminar series will survive.

Central Questions of the Study

Some of the major questions that the study helps to answer were:

1. Who are the leaders of Michigan educational policy making?
2. To what extent can the leaders of the diverse elements of the educational policy-making community be expected to participate in an informal discussion forum such as that designed for this study?
3. What are some of the factors in the state's educational policy-making community that can be manipulated to influence the participation of leaders of the educational policy-making community in the seminar sessions?
4. To what degree will the informality of the seminar sessions--as defined by a lack of decision making or consensus seeking--influence the degree and style of participation of the policy leaders?
5. To what degree is the perceived role of the coordinator of the seminar series significant in controlling the direction of the study--and the participation of the educational policy leaders?
6. To what degree will the concept of the seminar series be incorporated into the state educational policy environment, and what steps can be taken by the researcher to encourage the survival and institutionalization of the seminar series?

Nature of the Study

The researcher conducted a field study of the Michigan Education Seminars between July 1, 1977, and December 31, 1978. Top-level state educational policy leaders who took part in the forums are defined, and the formation and operation of the seminar series are described. Also described and analyzed is the relationship between the Michigan Education Seminars and the overarching educational policy-making process of the state.

The conceptual framework of the study was derived from open systems theory, in which the researcher was required to view the system under study from the standpoint of its interactions with and dependencies upon other environments. The researcher did not attempt to develop generalized theoretical constructs based on his findings. Rather, he demonstrated the utility of certain existing generalizations as applied to this research. To achieve this objective, open systems theory was used. The open systems framework is described more fully later in this chapter.

A field study model was applied in the research. The investigator used a combination of sociological research and practical politics to establish and analyze the Michigan Education Seminars. A positional and reputational analysis of the educational policy-making process in Michigan was used to identify seminar participants. State leaders were identified by examining organizational charts and then by interviewing selected leaders to determine who

was "reputed" to have the most influence upon the policy-making process.

Importance of the Study to Education

The study contains a description of a procedure whereby a forum of top-level state educational policy makers was convened for periodic discussions of actual or potential educational policy issues. This study is a useful tool for educational policy makers and students of the policy-making process who may draw from the experiences of the researcher and, perhaps, replicate the Michigan Education Seminars in a variety of educational policy settings.

The educational policy process at the state level is characterized by intense competition for increasingly limited funding. This intense competition in educational policy making should not be presumed to be limited to state-level educational politics. In this dissertation the researcher establishes and analyzes a process that has significant potential for reducing the conflict orientation of educational policy processes. The research design and implementation strategies may provide important clues to local and regional school officials seeking conflict-resolution mechanisms. This is a study of process. To the extent that the process for the organization and implementation of the Michigan Education Seminars can be adopted by a local school superintendent, for example, and applied to a local-level educational policy community, its value to education might be significant.

A superintendent or a union representative moving into a new community might find the positional and reputational analysis process an extremely useful shortcut in charting the educational policy process in the community. The process of positional and reputational analysis used by the researcher to identify seminar participants can be seen as an adaptation of the process used by news reporters entering a new "beat." The utility of this method is characterized by its ability to provide a sense of the network upon which the reporter must depend for important stories. The positional and reputational analysis process permits an individual to identify organizational leaders and to rank order them in terms of their relative importance in influencing the outcomes of the policy process. The identification of the strategies of positional and reputational analysis may help educational policy actors to develop systematic procedures for getting a political "lay of the land."

In a more specific sense, the findings of the positional and reputational analysis of the Michigan state-level educational policy process may be useful to a variety of educational policy actors. Leaders of the state educational policy process in Michigan were categorized according to the segment of the policy process they represented at the time the study was conducted. The specific policy actors who occupy positions of prominence in the state process were found to be fairly transient. However, much of the information provided will be useful for individuals who want to know more about the make-up of the leadership of the state educational policy

process. In the future, this aspect of the study will provide an important historical perspective.

The researcher concentrated on analyzing certain overt strategies he used to establish the Michigan Education Seminars as a neutral forum for educational policy makers. Among the most important overt strategies employed was the prohibition against attempting to use the seminar series as a consensus-seeking or a decision-making forum. The analysis of the effect of this decision on the seminar series may have ramifications for every level of educational policy making. The Michigan State Department of Education, for example, currently has more than thirty advisory committees. The leadership of this state agency may be inclined to reevaluate the efficacy of attempting to use such forums for consensus seeking, as a result of this study.

The Michigan Education Seminars relied on the philanthropy and "guidance" of the national Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). The role of the IEL in attempting to influence seminar content is discussed later in this study. That discussion might be helpful to IEL and other organizations seeking to establish forums in which educational or other policies can be discussed.

Finally, it is possible that this study may influence the overall condition of the educational policy-making process at the state level in Michigan. One of the original objectives was to discuss strategies the researcher and others used to increase the likelihood of the survival of the Michigan Education Seminars. To do this, the researcher chose to use a variety of different means to

"institutionalize" the seminar series. Among these means were the establishment of a relationship with the nationally based Education Commission of the States. This relationship is discussed in Chapter IV. Also, since the researcher was not a part of any official government agency or educational interest group, he was forced to resign his duties as coordinator of the state seminar series to facilitate its institutionalization. The selection of successors having been accomplished, the likelihood of the survival of the seminar series can be better estimated.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

Particularizing Versus Generalizing Analysis

The researcher concluded that a "particularizing analysis" (Lipset, Trow, & Coleman, 1970) framework was suitable both to this form of fieldwork and to the objectives of the study. In a fieldwork model, the researcher defines the field, enters it with as much advance information as possible, observes, records, analyzes, and reports. For the researcher to have a "conceptual map" (Lutz, 1977) to define and contain the field of study, a set of generalizations must be stated. If nothing else, generalizations reveal the biases of the researcher. In this study, generalizations are presented in the form of specific assumptions. No attempt was made to draw a set of generalizations from the experiences described in this study.

When a social setting is described in the context of an existing set of generalizations, fieldwork becomes to the social sciences what field testing is to the biological or physical sciences. When derived from a generalization, or a set of generalizations, fieldwork can demonstrate the validity of certain generalizations. Lipset et al. defined the unique identities of the two research approaches:

When an empirical analysis of a single case is to be carried out, it can be of either of two general types as follows:

a. Description and explanation of a single case, to provide information concerning its present state, and the dynamics through which it continues as it does. This may be called particularizing analysis.

b. The development of empirical generalization or theory through the analysis of the single case, using it not to discover anything about it as a system, but as an empirical basis either for generalization or theory construction. This may be called generalizing analysis (p. 169).

The way that general laws and particular experiences are treated provides the basis for distinguishing between particularizing and generalizing analysis. Particularizing research "uses previously known generalizations in order to help make particular statements" (Lipset et al., 1970, p. 169). These generalizations provide a framework within which the personal observations of the researcher can be used. In particularizing analysis, the generalization is used to assist the analyst in making particular statements.

The Open Systems Framework

This is a study of organizational behavior and of individuals within an organization. Major elements of the organization are

identified, and an attempt is then made to identify and describe interrelationships between them. At the same time, an attempt is made to define the environment within which the organization operates, and to identify interrelationships therein.

To be appropriate to this study, a conceptual scheme was required that met the dual challenge of operation and analysis. Specifically, the conceptual framework had to be relevant to a fundamental situation facing both the political operative and the researcher. The open systems framework achieves this utility. A system is described, in an open systems framework, from the standpoint of the interaction of its elements with elements of other systems. For an individual who is enmeshed in a political system, an open systems framework provides a logical means of viewing the system in which he works. Lutz (1977) suggested that in the political world of a school superintendent, for example, the possession of a "conceptual map" is instrumental to survival. Similarly, Mann (1975) noted that a consistent organizational frame of reference is essential to a competent administrator. Without an organizational guide, an administrator may be unable to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant events. Mann also suggested that the social analyst must be sensitive to

discrimination of relevancies--to the selection and valuation of objects, events, symbols, conditions, and other actors. These relevancies are, so to speak, carved from a total number of phenomena present in the overall setting. Of the phenomena which might have been relevant, the actors (decision-makers) endow only some with significance (p. 57).

An open systems analytical framework is also useful from the standpoint of research. A basic problem in studying organizations is that the environments in which the organizations exist are themselves changing. Open systems theory accommodates to this condition of shifting ground by emphasizing the necessity to view all systemic phenomena in the context of other related systems or subsystems.

Landau (1961) suggested that the primary function of systems theory is that its pragmatic nature permits the analyst to categorize data. Because research, like the life situations it attempts to represent, is imperfect, and because all research requires some form of compromise with ideal requirements, one often turns to heuristics. Heuristic theory is "not so much a predictive scheme as a method of analytically separating and categorizing items in experience" (Mann, 1975, p. viii). Mann proposed that all models of organizational research "should be treated as heuristics and not as algorithms: They are helpful but unguaranteed assists to problem-solving, not precise steps leading inexorably to definitive answers" (p. viii).

Wirt (1972) defined such an analytical framework as mechanisms

for converting inputs into outputs, demands and supports into policy. The conversion is new as its machinery--elections, referenda, boards, legislatures, all carefully authorized by some charter or constitution--as well as its personnel--executive, judicial and legislative. The personnel constantly interact in the conversion process, either with those outside or inside the political system. And their behavior stems from role definition imposed by that system (p. 16).

Easton (1965) provided a "simplified model of a political system" (p. 32). This model portrayed a political system as one

that simply relates with its greater environment. Demands and supports are processed through the system and result in policy. Systems analysis was an important conceptual tool in the present research.

Examining a System as "Open"

An examination of a political system as an open system requires study of the relationship between the system under study and its larger environment. According to Wirt and Kirst (1972), "This orientation provides a dynamic view of the political system and not the static one found in earlier, traditional, legal institutional analyses" (p. 13).

A political system interacts with its larger environment; in so doing it interacts with other political systems as well. In this interaction an environment is formed. An open systems framework implies, if not requires, an identification and description of competing as well as allied systems.

It maximizes the chance for interdisciplinary exchanges by focusing the attention of different disciplines upon a common object in experience (the political system) and upon the concept of "system" also common to other disciplines (Wirt & Kirst, 1972, p. 240).

The consistency between the study and the practice of politics is tied to the open systems framework. Such a framework "forces the student to see the political subsystem operating constantly in relation to other social subsystems" (Wirt & Kirst, 1972, p. 240).

Modern systems research can be differentiated from earlier systems research on the basis of an open systems conceptualization.

Much early research into organizations was represented by a closed system model. The realization that systems must somehow be related to their environments forced the development of open systems models.

The researcher adopted the open systems framework because it illuminates exchanges between a system and its environment. This was crucial to the present study because the Michigan Education Seminars is so clearly dominated by its environment. After examining the relationships that develop between systems--their interdependencies --a prediction of the survival of an organization such as the Michigan Education Seminars may be made. Once this principle is accepted, strategic planning to influence the likelihood of system survival can be undertaken.

Insofar as institutionalization becomes a prerequisite for stability, the determination of policy will necessitate not only a bias toward goals that are congruent with the organization's own character, but also the selection of goal-paths that offer maximum convergence as regards the interests of other parties (Emery & Trist, 1965, p. 29).

The interrelationships of social forces as independent variables within a political subsystem were the subjects of this study. The researcher was mainly interested in identifying and describing forces that influence a public policy subsystem and not upon the policy that is derived. What distinguishes this study from what Dye (1976) called a "policy-determination" approach is the emphasis on "process" rather than "product."

Central to open systems theory analysis is the concept of system survival or persistence. Through the process of importation and transformation of energy into a new and exportable energy, a

system achieves the condition of negative entropy. Entropy is a term drawn from biological science, and refers to the natural tendency of a system to die unless it is regenerated. A system is considered to be negantropic when it attains stability--when it reverses or holds in check the natural condition of entropy.

The view of the Michigan Education Seminars as open, interacting with its greater environment, creates a state that according to Emery (1965) "maintains the capacity of the organism [organization] for work, without which adaptability, and hence survival, would be impossible" (p. 22).

Assumptions

The present study is an analysis of the key policy actors in educational policy making in Michigan. Excepting the judiciary, it encompasses the variety of "policy elites" within and outside of state government whose involvement is critical to the disposition of educational policy. The predominant assumption of the researcher was that the development of the Michigan Education Seminars would be a welcomed addition to the milieu of education politics at the state level. A secondary assumption was that the seminars could outlive the researcher's tenure as coordinator, and in this sense be institutionalized. In conducting the study, the researcher also made the following assumptions:

1. The Michigan Education Seminars should be viewed from an open systems framework. A political system can be studied within the context of its constant exchanges with a larger social order. An

open systems analysis entails a willingness to describe the larger environment in which the system or subsystem under study is contained, or controlled. Therefore, the researcher provided basic information on the environment of government, of politics, and of educational policy making in Michigan.

2. Another assumption was that the goal described by Samuel Halperin (1974), Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership, could be realized. He contended that "it is important to develop patterns that may help narrow the chasm between key actors whose fullest talents are necessary in order for our educational system to operate with a reasonable expectation of success" (p. 189).

3. Open exchanges between policy makers result in better policies. Besides assuming that furthering the exchange between policy makers is, by definition, a useful endeavor, Moore (1971) proposed that the organizations represented by the policy makers are the direct benefactors of such exchanges:

Interagency cooperation means transcending merely a community calendar. The open sharing of resources--both material and personal--and intimate involvement of a broad array of interested people in multiple community agencies are essential (p. 12).

The value of interagency sharing was assumed in this study, and provided the linkage between theory and practice.

4. The environment of the Michigan Education Seminars can nurture open communication between policy makers with divergent views. Duane (1977) suggested that current political trends have increased polarity among interest groups. This polarity has as much produced as it has been a byproduct of modern "conflict politics." It was

assumed that some of the positive qualities of a consensus environment could be obtained in the Michigan educational policy-making milieu without establishing consensus as either an attainable or an acceptable objective of the seminar series.

5. The Michigan Education Seminars can be examined as a system in a struggle for survival. The system is assumed to be engaged in a constant struggle to obtain at least as much energy (information exchange) from its larger environment as it puts out. Without such a balance of trade, it is posited that a system will die--that entropy exists.

6. The existing condition of the Michigan educational policy community can be characterized as conflict oriented. It was further assumed that an effort to reduce hostilities of interest groups within the educational policy-making process would be useful as complex and comprehensive educational issues are interwoven through a process that requires input from a wide range of interests. Therefore, the creation of a forum that avoids consensus seeking and decision making has at least two beneficial effects. First, this type of system brings into fuller view policy concerns of those parties most likely to be affected by such policies. In this sense it serves as a harbinger. Second, through an open discussion of a full range of issues, common goals and interests become more obvious.

7. It was assumed that the participants in the Michigan Education Seminars represent the key policy makers in the state.

8. It was assumed that a reduction in the conflict-oriented nature of the Michigan educational policy community would result in

state policy that better reflects the needs of the variety of interests represented in the process.

Limitations of the Study

The study of the Michigan Education Seminars was limited by several factors. Among the most severe limitations was its case study design.

To begin with, in particularizing analysis the researcher applies a series of generalizations or assumptions to a given experience. The purpose is not to provide but rather to test generalizations upon which assessments of reality are made. A particularizing analysis is therefore limited to a discussion of the subject case; hence extension of the findings to other settings should be made with caution.

The research method of this case study was a further limitation. A fieldwork model was used to analyze the formation, operation, and function of the Michigan Education Seminars. Fieldwork is imprecise. It relies ultimately on the accuracy of the researcher's observations. The extent to which a researcher becomes "involved" in a system or case under study compromises his/her ability to provide a detached or objective account. In the system under study, the researcher was forced to be an intimate of many of the forces that assembled to create the system. Without this intimacy, the researcher would not have been permitted the opportunity to conduct the study. He would not have been selected to shape and coordinate the Michigan Education Seminars. Whereas the intimate involvement of the researcher

in the field under study created a condition under which considerable "color" could be provided the account, the subjective nature of the analysis must be considered a limitation of the study.

From the standpoint of the inherent benefits of a study in which variables can be isolated and manipulated to measure specific environmental effect, this study was further limited. The researcher was operating in an environment in which the variety of actors involved and the intensity of the issues discussed required that many conditions simply be "allowed to develop." Conditions developing in combinations made the identification of specific cause-and-effect relationships difficult to assess.

The study was influenced, if not controlled, by political exigencies. The researcher formed the Michigan Education Seminars in a political environment characterized by temporary coalitions of individuals and organizations. As a consequence, the results of the positional and reputational analysis could be a factor in, but not the sole determinant of, the selection of the participants in the Michigan Education Seminars. Despite the care taken by the researcher to identify "political considerations" that influenced the seminars' configuration and control, their "political" function limited his ability to adopt exclusively scientific methods.

The very nature of the process of interviewing elites runs counter to the strict discipline that accompanies interviewing. No strict pattern of questioning could be followed in the formal interviewing that provided the basis of the reputational analysis or the "post-first-year" analysis. No two interviewees could be approached

identically. As a consequence, the inability to report interview findings in absolute or quantifiable terms must be considered a major limitation of the study.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Procedures for data analysis are detailed completely in Chapter III--The Methodology Used in This Study. A brief overview of this procedure is, however, warranted in this introduction.

The data generated in this research came in as great a variety of forms as did the data-collection procedures. The data included: the researcher's impressions, written records of formal and informal interactions between the researcher and members of the state policy-making community and certain outsiders, audio tapes of seminar and steering committee meetings, newspaper accounts of certain activities related to the seminar series, organizational charts and other written documents of state policy-making organizations, and transcripts of interviews with top-level policy makers before and after the first year's seminar programs.

For each category of data a variety of analytical techniques, described by example in the following paragraphs, were employed. In every case, the method of data analysis selected depended on the particular needs of the researcher.

Techniques of data analysis used in this study accomplished a variety of purposes. In the first instance, information taken from the analysis of organizational charts was used to begin the process of selecting the study participants. From this list of top-level

educational policy leaders in Michigan was drawn a list of individuals who participated in the reputational analysis. The reputational analysis provided the researcher with data that would be critical to the conduct of a comprehensive analysis of the state's educational policy environment. It also served as the basis for the selection of seminar participants.

To carry out the reputational analysis, the researcher conducted a series of interviews with known state-level educational policy actors, in which they were asked to list the "top ten" individuals in the state who regularly influenced educational policy. The researcher counted the total number of times a policy actor named in any interview had been named by all the interviewees. Any analysis of this nature must be tempered by the knowledge of the researcher. As discussed later in more detail, there are a number of possible reasons why a state legislator would name his local school superintendent to such a list of state powers. Mixed into the numerical analysis and the personal impressions of the researcher for the identification of top-level policy makers was a variety of factors. Leaders were identified through informal conversations with other policy makers who were not formally interviewed. The seminar steering committee meeting audio tapes and the seminar session tapes furnished suggestions for other potential seminar participants.

As another example, to analyze interactions that occurred between participants at a specific seminar session, the researcher combined the following data: his personal recollection of the political environment to which comments by participants related, written

testimony provided by seminar speakers, audio tapes and transcripts of the seminar session, his minutes from the seminar session, and accounts provided in the post-first-year formal interviews. The researcher processed these data and presented them in a fashion that will help the reader gain a clear picture of the researcher's interpretation of major elements of the study of the Michigan Education Seminars.

The analysis chapters of the dissertation (Chapters IV and V) are organized according to categories that the researcher determined would lend themselves to a clear presentation of the data. For example, the data that the researcher judged relevant to an understanding of the process used to select seminar issues were analyzed. Other categories of analysis include: the function of the coordinator, a profile of the participants in the seminar series, the function of the seminar steering committee, and the relationship between the seminar series and the Institute for Educational Leadership and the Education Commission of the States. Further analytical categories depended heavily on the results of the post-first-year interviews. These categories of analysis include: the seminar participants' perceptions of the seminars' purpose, the effect of the seminar series on relationships among the policy-actor participants, the major issues of the seminars, the use of the seminars as a forum through which policy actors could promote specific proposals, the major weaknesses of the seminar series, and the likelihood that the seminars can be institutionalized in some form.

The method of analysis, therefore, like the operation of the seminar series, was situation specific. In every case the researcher attempted to present, in a broad array of forms, data that had been collected through a wide variety of methods.

Definitions of Major Terms

To eliminate possible confusion or misunderstanding, the following major terms are defined in the context in which they are used in this study.

Entropy: The tendency of an organization to die unless it is regenerated.

Open systems framework: The view of a system as interacting with other systems in its environment.

Particularizing research: Research in which the utility of generalizations is demonstrated through the presentation of a specific case.

Positional analysis: The identification of organizational leadership through a review of official organizational charts.

Reputational analysis: The identification of organizational leadership through an assessment of the opinions of knowledgeable sources.

Overview

Chapter I contained a discussion of the nature, purpose, and importance of the study. Also included were a brief explanation of the theoretical foundations of the study, research assumptions and limitations, data-analysis procedures, and definitions of terms.

A review of research on the educational policy process in Michigan is found in Chapter II.

The study methodology is detailed in Chapter III. The commonly used fieldwork techniques employed in conducting the study are explained in detail.

In Chapters IV and V, the research analysis is presented. The process for establishing and operating the seminar series is discussed at length. Included are the role of the coordinator, the function of the steering committee, and the relationship between the seminar series and other systems. Also contained in Chapter V is a review of the content of the six subject seminars; for one seminar session, the interactions between participants are thoroughly analyzed.

Major findings of the study are described in Chapter VI. The researcher poses further researchable questions and provides specific recommendations for extension, expansion, and modification of the seminar series.

CHAPTER II

THE MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY PROCESS: A RESEARCH REVIEW

Introduction

Governmental units have political functions. The central political function of a governmental unit is the arbitration of disputes arising over the distribution of economic resources. The character of a political system can be defined in terms of the process it uses to resolve disputes arising out of this allocation process. Such disputes are "imbedded in a network of economic, psychological, social-psychological and moral components" (Mann, 1975, p. 13).

The conversion processes that determine how the disputes over the allocation of economic resources within the educational-political system in the State of Michigan are resolved must be recognized. Once these processes are recognized, the findings of this study can have fuller meaning. More than simply explaining how the components of the educational-political system compete for limited educational resources, it was assumed in this study that "the conversion systems that allocate educational resources at the state level do not operate independently of their environment" (Wirt & Kirst, 1975, p. 121). The environment of the educational-political system, therefore, was perceived to extend beyond the network of

educators who represent educational special-interest groups and into the larger political arena composed of the institutions responsible for formulating and implementing state educational policy.

Besides the body of literature that was reviewed to develop the conceptual framework of this study (Chapter I), research relating to the special state educational policy environment was thoroughly examined. The latter body of research is discussed in this chapter.

The Educational-Political System in Michigan

Michigan's educational-political system has been the subject of numerous research efforts. Many of these researchers have reported similar findings. One stream of observations in the literature related to the crippling effect of the infighting that occurs when the forces constituting the educational policy-making community in Michigan compete for limited economic resources.

Frequently schoolmen themselves have made their own programs easy to oppose. Far and away the most common handicap to increasing school subsidies in the eight states (in this study) has been the inability of schoolmen to work and speak as one for a responsible general school aid bill. Effective organization is exceptional (Bailey, Frost, Marsh, & Wood, 1970, p. 246).

Hines and associates (1974) suggested that division and infighting between educational interest groups causes legislators to be frustrated with and ultimately hostile to the entire educational community, and that such division and infighting are a feature of Michigan school politics. They stated, "The inability of educational interest groups to align over common issues can be rather common,

especially in times when demands are in excess of existing revenues" (p. 21).

Bridgeland and Duane (1978) described the educational policy-making environment in Michigan as a "multi-conflict" arena. Hines et al. said that the "separate groups come to the legislature more in conflict than in consensus" (p. 23). Wirt and Kirst (1975) asserted that this "pattern has resulted from the inability of the profession to agree upon common goals" (p. 126).

Although "conflict, distrust and withdrawal of support are evident at every level of the education system" (Mann, 1975, p. 1), such characteristics have been given particular emphasis in the Michigan state educational policy research literature. Scribner and Englert (1977) observed that "Michigan's intense political culture has important implications and perhaps future consequences for educational policy" (p. 140). Masters, Salisbury, and Eliot (1970) described the warlike character of Michigan educational policy making as being without a formula to achieve consensus: "In Michigan there is no continuous or regular pattern of decision-making" (p. 69). Hines et al. also noted that attempts to put consensus-making groups together have failed. "The Michigan situation is compounded because the Educational Council, a loosely knit group composed of representatives from the interest groups, has been unable to come to agreement over most issues of any consequence" (p. 21).

In describing the Michigan educational policy-making milieu as "fragmented," Iannaccone (1967) wrote:

The term, educational oligarchy, describes their leadership. Michigan's fragmented structure of interests and interaction pattern with the legislature indicates a division of control, a pulling apart of leaders, a separation along interest lines, but with strong state-wide associations competing for the legislative ear (p. 288).

Scribner and Englert concurred, describing the political climate as "polarized" and "fiercely partisan" (pp. 138, 140).

On the basis of this review of the literature, it might be concluded that in no state in the nation could a project that requires the involvement of the broadest array of educational-political interests in informal discussions on policy issues be more ambitious than in Michigan. The development of the Michigan Education Seminars appeared to be highly unlikely if it was to be assumed that educational policy makers in conflict would not be likely to engage in civil dialogue in any form. Perhaps factors other than the conflict-oriented nature of educational policy making could be more damaging to a policy-making community wanting to develop support for programs that further its general good. According to Drachler (1977),

Political scientists have noted a series of conditions and practices that limit the school's effectiveness in gaining public support. Among them are: (a) schoolmen pretend that they are not engaged in politics and often deny their involvement. . . (p. 188).

Attempts to view educational policy making as apolitical have been promoted for several decades in the United States. Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) observed that:

The politicization of state school policy making is distressing to those who hold that education decisions should flow from the expertise of professionals, instead of from the influence-based accommodations of contending groups. From

the standpoint of comprehensive planning and rational decision making, a pluralistic system has some obvious drawbacks (p. 78).

Some individuals have argued that educational policy making should be free from politics. Education should be scientific: Decisions about who and what to teach should be made on the basis of competencies and societal needs and not on the basis of practical, political considerations. Wirt and Kirst (1975) described the origin of the apolitical interpretation of educational policy making:

At the turn of the century, a nationwide interlocking directorate of progressive university presidents, school superintendents, and law allies emerged from the business and professional elites in the cities. One of the aims of its members was to emancipate the schools from partisan politics and excessive decentralization. They saw political corruption as the prime cause of the inefficiency of education in large cities. Indeed, many politicians at that time regarded the schools as a useful support for the spoils systems and awarded jobs and contracts as political favors (pp. 6-7).

Despite the fact that attempts have been made and probably will continue to be made to limit partisan involvement in education, the interrelationship between the educational policy-making system and the greater political environment cannot be overlooked. Boocock (1976) suggested that politics cannot be separated from considerations of educational policy, and held that it is "important to keep in mind that all changes in the educational system are shaped by ideological and political forces that are themselves in flux. . ." (p. 25).

Others have suggested that not only is the world of education policy making indistinct from the world of politics, but, further, that little justification exists for attempting to differentiate

theories of educational politics from other theories of political behavior. Peterson and Williams (1972) stated,

Only if it can be shown that educational politics are distinctive in some fundamental respect from politics in other policy areas can one speak of a particular theory of educational politics. . . . We doubt that any such claim can be substantiated (p. 151).

In a comprehensive review of the literature on educational policy making, Lutz (1977) wrote, "These works were convincing proof that politics in education policy making are evident at every governmental level and in every phase of operation" (p. 19). He observed that although the apolitical myth of education continues to be so much the subject of educational policy making, the general consensus appears to be that such discussions are largely of a historical nature.

The existence of the apolitical myth has been a significant force in determining the study as well as the practice of educational policy making. The tendency for researchers and practitioners to view the educational policy-making system as a "closed system"--freestanding, albeit surrounded by politics--is still evident. Drachler (1977) suggested that it was the encounter of these "old forces" with newer, more pragmatic leaders in educational policy making that first shaped the modern politics of urban education.

The literature of politics and education is the work of a small group of political scientists and educators. . . . The reality of the politics of education in urban areas is obvious to legislators and citizens alike (p. 188).

In Michigan, the recognition of the dependency of education upon politics is nearly universal. Thus, attempting to devise a

system designed to minimize unnecessary political conflict within the system is given a head start by virtue of the fact that debates about the apolitical nature of the educational policy-making process are not required.

In its present-day context, the definition of educational politics differs little from the definition of politics in general. The study of tradeoffs, bargains, and compromise of public decisions is as relevant to education as it is to any other social discipline.

The central theme in many investigations of educational politics has to do with who has how much power over whom and how that power (or influence, authority, or control) is exercised (Scribner & Englert, 1977, p. 25).

The Elements of Michigan Educational Policy Making

In analyzing what has been said about the various elements of the Michigan educational policy-making process, some method of categorizing findings was required. Masters, Salisbury, and Eliot (1970) described in detail six groups that participate in Michigan educational politics: the Michigan Association of School Boards, the Michigan Education Association, the Michigan Federation of Teachers, the Michigan Association of County School Administrators, and the Michigan Consolidated Parent-Teachers Association. (The County School Administrators were put out of business in the 1960s, with the reorganization of Michigan intermediate school districts.) Masters and his associates identified those six categories as influencing the official educational process at the time of their study. They did not, however, address the forces within the official educational policy-making process that make the final decisions.

In conducting their case studies of twelve educational policy-making processes, Campbell and Mazzone (1976) used the following groups of respondents: state board members, the chief state school officer, state department of education administrators, the state board of education liaison, the governor, the governor's education staff, the director of finance or administration, legislative education or finance committee leaders, legislative house leaders, and educational interest group leaders. Included in educational interest groups were teacher associations and school board associations.

Iannaccone (1967) described those groups "coming to the legislature" as including the following interest groups: statewide associations of school board members, teachers of the AFT and NEA state affiliates, school administrators, and parent groups. Wirt and Kirst (1975) identified the following elements of educational coalitions: state teachers groups, school board association, school administrator groups, business groups, and, in some states, the American Association of University Women, the American Legion, and other essentially noneducational civic groups.

For the purposes of this study, four categories of interests were considered distinct components of the educational policy-making process in Michigan. They are as follows: (1) the executive branch of state government, (2) the legislative branch of state government, (3) educational interest groups, and (4) other interest groups that influence state educational policy making. In the ensuing review of what other researchers have written about the role and influence of

these groups in Michigan, the last two categories are combined because of the paucity of literature on other interest groups' influence on educational policy making.

The Executive Branch

The legislative arena is the scene of the majority of interactions between major educational policy actors. Part of the reason for this is that the State Board of Education is seen as having little power to institute educational policy, and its restricted influence on the legislature is partially responsible for what limited status it has within the educational policy-making community in Michigan.

Scribner and Englert (1977) characterized the State Board of Education as being

empowered with little authority and relegated to a constitutionally defined position. . . . The board is primarily dependent on professionals within the Michigan Department of Education; this dependence effectively isolates the board from external partisan influences, influences present in the executive and legislative branches of Michigan government (pp. 141-42).

Wirt and Kirst (1975) defined the Michigan State Board of Education as primarily a "legitimizing agency for broad policies; it leaves administration to the state superintendent and the state department" (p. 118).

The authority of the State Board of Education is generally acknowledged to be minimal. Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) concluded that the board has "little authority as policy makers" and that it is so "overshadowed by the chief state school officer in the agency arena as to raise doubt about what policy making functions, if any,

they performed beyond the one that was legally required [policy enactment]" (p. 69). Other writers have indicated that the State Board of Education is generally a weak force in state educational policy making, that it is generally ignored if not rebuked by the legislature, and that it is overshadowed by the state superintendent. Wirt and Kirst (1975) observed:

The board's problem is that localism makes enforcement of its policies very difficult. Local districts can find ways to circumvent the state because the board usually has no clear enforcement strategies. Further, state boards have little time or inclination to check carefully on local compliance, but must rely on staff work of the state superintendent. . . (p. 118).

Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) found some merit in the continued existence of a state board of education in the educational policy-making community in Michigan and elsewhere. The authors suggested that, however tentative they are,

state boards give some continuity to the life of an organization, that they provide education some insulation for day-to-day politics, and that they serve as useful links to the broader community and that they lend some prestige to the institution (p. 73).

The State Department of Education has been considered a somewhat autonomous and a rather influential force in educational policy making in the state. As distinct from the role of the chief state school officer--the head of the department--which will be covered later, the state department has "become increasingly politicized and pluralistic" (p. 78). Scribner and Englert (1977) suggested that the autonomy of the state department is a function of the statutory authority and constitutional responsibility vested in it:

Although they have evinced considerable interest in education, the executive and legislative branches possess little influence--beyond constitutional and statutory provisions--over the on-going operations of the state department of education (p. 136).

Scribner and Englert also posited that essentially two forces shape the administrative decisions within the department.

The clearest and perhaps the most significant force is

the prowess and the style of the state superintendent of public instruction, the department's leader; and secondarily . . . the almost contradictory value orientations that divide department personnel into two groups, which the researchers have categorized as traditionalists and reformers.

Not a monolith, united in purpose and action, the department is divided internally between the traditionalists, who favor a service role for the department, and the reformers, mainly newer personnel, who envision the department as champion of educational equality in Michigan (p. 147).

Although some time has passed since the influence of the two elements of the department has been analyzed, the leadership of the department has remained virtually unchanged over the past ten years.*

Much of the perceived influence of the State Department of Education comes from its ability to allocate resources within the educational-political process. Wirt and Kirst (1975) viewed the state agency as the "locus of a considerable amount of authoritative allocation of values, whether in formulating specific regulations, allocating federal funds to local districts, or executing the more detailed decisions of the state board" (p. 118).

Some researchers have viewed the state department as being able to distribute resources with almost total disregard for normal political contingencies and consequences. Scribner and Englert (1977) stated,

*A new permanent state superintendent was appointed in January 1980.

The Michigan Department of Education is able to allocate federal funds unfettered by obligations to special interest groups, political parties, and state officials. This freedom is the consequence of a unique combination of events and circumstances (p. 136).

These authors emphasized that the Michigan Department of Education is able to operate, at least to some degree, independently of traditional political consequences:

The Michigan Department of Education allocates federal aid undaunted by educational interest groups, state government, or the public. Education interest groups wrangle unceasingly as to the purpose and goals; fiercely partisan politics divide and conquer the legislature and the executive branches of state government; and federal aid issues do not impel Michigan citizens to action (p. 131).

Bridgeland and Duane (1979) suggested that the governor's staff recognized the relative independence of the department, and several other researchers have observed the apparent insulation between the department and the educational interest groups and important others. Bridgeland and Duane warned that the department must take active steps to guard against further insulation, and, in fact, to remove some of the existing insulation. Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) came to similar conclusions in their study of the Michigan educational system. They recommended

that the state educational agency actively encourage the various educational organizations to identify their common interests, interests that could serve as the basis for issue oriented coalitions among these groups in pursuit of improved education (p. 79).

Whereas several researchers have suggested that the department itself may be dangerously far removed from normal contingencies of reinforcement and punishment, the suggestion that the same distance exists between the chief state school officer (CSSO) and his

personnel was not found in the literature. In fact, the literature contained the opposite sentiment--that the CSSO occupies a position of nearly unchallenged authority within his department, if not within the educational policy-making community in Michigan.

The literature on the Michigan educational policy-making community consistently stated that at any given moment no single individual (with the possible exception of the governor) can have more influence on the educational policy of the state than can the CSSO. In fact, in Michigan, the CSSO is seen as relatively independent of and never subservient to the governor. The CSSO does not sit in on cabinet meetings, although occupying a statutory position on the state administrative board and on the state municipal finance commission (a fact not noted in the literature).

Wirt and Kirst (1975) suggested that the influence of any CSSO depends on several factors. Among these are "the strength and activism of the legislature, governor and the state board. Some state superintendents have dominated weak boards. Others have been limited severely by a strong legislature" (p. 118).

The impotence of the state board in Michigan has been clearly established. Perhaps no single impression should be made more clear: The manipulation and control of the State Board of Education in Michigan do not seem to be a great challenge or of great value. But the CSSO's domination of the legislature, which has also undergone major partisan shifts during his tenure, is even more fascinating. Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) noted that "some appointed chiefs, notably those in Texas and Michigan, have achieved considerable influence with the

legislature" (p. 71). Scribner and Englert (1977) went further: "The major architect of the patterns of allocation in Michigan is the state superintendent of public instruction" (p. 131). Whether the power of the chief state school officer in Michigan is statutory and constitutional, or the result of a system that has become so fragmented by competing groups as to make him the only individual with enough power intact to control important decisions, is a question that is not answered in the literature.

Another factor to be considered as a possible cause of the high status of the CSSO in Michigan pertains to his unique charismatic qualities. When he was appointed in 1970, John W. Porter became the first black CSSO in the nearly 200-year history of the nation. He is said to be the only employee in Michigan history to have risen through the ranks from a janitorial position (the lowest position in state service) to the top authority level. This rise occurred over a period of just fifteen years.

There is substantial reason to believe that the power of the current CSSO will not be easily transferred to his successor.* The literature, much of which predated the current superintendent's rise to power, contained relatively little about the charismatic (or perhaps legendary) nature of the superintendent.

One of the key points to consider in assessing the relative strength of the CSSO in educational policy issues is the strength and

*After this literature review was written, Porter resigned his position as CSSO and was subsequently appointed president of Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.

authority of the governor in these matters. It might be easy to assume that when a CSSO dominates the educational policy-making process in the executive branch it is a sign of weakness in the chief executive. The importance of recognizing what the literature seems to obscure in this regard should not be underplayed. The literature on the public educational policy-making process in Michigan portrays the governor's office as being only moderately involved in the educational policy process, and as a consequence implies that the governor's authority in these matters is also limited. Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) suggested that "governors are drawn into educational policy making particularly as school finance becomes a more visible state issue" (p. 71).

In their 1973 study, Campbell and Mazzoni noted that Michigan's governor was oriented toward achieving fiscal reform in school finance and taxation. As the issue of school finance became resolved, largely as a result of the efforts of the governor and his aides, the governor and his aides became less visible as educational powers. Wirt and Kirst (1975) stated that, in general, the role of the governor in education "has been restricted by the lack of expert staff in his office with a viewpoint independent from a state department of education" (p. 116).

But whereas in Michigan the governor's educational staff may be disheartened by a relative inability to control a department of education that is viewed as an autonomous agency within the executive branch, the governor himself may be satisfied with this relationship. Nowhere in the literature was there found evidence that

any researcher has interviewed the current governor, or one of his predecessors, to establish or refute this suggestion. Certainly his apparent decision to limit his official internal education staff to one high-level analyst suggests that the governor is not dissatisfied with the relationship he shares with the current superintendent.

There has been limited discussion in the literature on the role of the governor in the educational policy-making process. There has been even less discussion on the role of the state legislature. The following section contains a review of the literature on the latter topic.

The Legislative Branch

Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) observed that

the governors and the legislature . . . maintain control of state financial aid legislation. Issues of educational finance inevitably involve judgments on educational programs and priorities, so that the constitutional separation of education from general state government can never extend to many important educational issues (pp. 114-15).

Few studies have emphasized the role of legislative officials as policy initiators or respondents in Michigan. The legislative process is acknowledged to be the primary educational policy-making process in Michigan (Scribner & Englert, 1977). As a result, research devoted to an exploration of the process of influencing state educational policy making has been aimed at the executive agencies and predominantly at the educational interest groups.

Whereas no researcher on the Michigan educational policy-making process has directed his/her attention to a dissection of the forces within the legislature, much can be inferred about the legislature from a review of the related literature.

The dramatic shift that occurred during the 1960s from rural-Republican to urban-Democratic domination has been said to have been a factor in the shift of distribution of power among the interest groups (Scribner & Englert, 1977; Wirt & Kirst, 1975).

A relative independence from traditional labor-management coalitions in the legislature on educational issues has been attributed to several factors. Scribner and Englert suggested that all legislators identify to some degree with school board members as fellow elected officials. Iannaccone (1967) stated that competition between the two major teacher groups has served to fragment the power of labor. Wirt and Kirst mentioned that the legislature is largely unresponsive to education issues because labor and management rarely combine to exert their collective influence on the legislative process.

Several researchers noted that the legislature, in general, is unresponsive to the state school board (Campbell & Mazzoni, 1976; Scribner & Englert, 1977; Wirt & Kirst, 1975). Scribner and Englert observed that the CSSO is perhaps the singlemost significant consistent force upon the legislature.

Although the potential for such a situation was seen to exist, the legislature is rarely driven to action on educational issues by the governor (Scribner & Englert, 1977).

Although the legislature is often viewed as the focal point for the state educational policy-making process in Michigan, little has been done to identify its role as an initiator of educational policy proposals.

Educational and Other Interest Groups

Among the educational interest groups, the major division occurs between labor and management groups. Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) suggested that this division is so profound that it has "hindered, if not crippled" any chance of the formation of a state educational coalition in Michigan and in several other state systems (p. 72). Scribner and Englert (1977) suggested that the rivalry between labor and management interests in Michigan has greatly diminished the potential influence of an educational coalition on the State Department of Education. Wirt and Kirst (1975) also felt that in many states educational coalitions composed of labor and management forces have united to exert their combined influence on the legislative and executive process. Although, in Michigan, an "educational council" exists that comprises representatives of both the labor and management sides of the educational policy-making process, neither the literature nor personal experience indicated the importance of this group as a force in educational policy making.

In most states at various points in history, the interest groups favoring state assistance have formed temporary coalitions and in some cases long standing alliances. These coalitions may develop into permanent organizations, may be ad hoc one-time affairs, or may be the strategic devices of the State Department of Education. Their aim is to aggregate political resources. . . (Wirt & Kirst, 1975, p. 125).

Scribner and Englert (1977) observed that although the bargaining power of the educational interest groups varies in both degree and in kind, some groups have successfully amassed the elements of power necessary to persuade decision makers periodically to respond to their demands. But, in general, "lack of consensus among the various organizations and different power bases dissipates their bargaining power" (p. 136).

Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) also recognized this separation between labor and management in Michigan educational policy making.

These groups were divided sharply on questions of collective bargaining legislation, tenure, accountability, certification, professional practices boards, severance pay, unlimited sick pay and a host of other labor management issues. . . (p. 72).

Against this fragmentation of the labor-management elements of educational policy making in Michigan must be held some recognition of the alliances that exist between labor groups, particularly in education, and larger statewide labor organizations. Iannaccone (1967) observed that open conflict in the legislative process often draws

such organizations as the AFL-CIO in Michigan into the educational battles. [The American Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO]; otherwise these organizations would never have been involved. The process mobilizes social power from far-flung networks not usually participating in the legislative process. . . (p. 292).

Therefore, whatever public policy bargaining power the Michigan Federation of Teachers has, lies "in the support of organized labor" (Scribner & Englert, 1977, p. 137). Whereas the Michigan Federation of Teachers is much smaller than its rival Michigan Education

Association, the Federation relies on its alliance with the state AFL-CIO for protection, if not for leadership and control.

The Michigan Education Association, on the other hand, relies on a large membership. Because of competition for membership and an attitudinal change among teachers, particularly those in rural and large suburban districts, the MEA has tended to move toward teacher militancy (Scribner & Englert, 1977, p. 127). Wirt and Kirst (1975) noted that the "MEA is regarded by the legislature as a teacher-welfare bargaining agent" (p. 123).

Relatedly, Duane and Bridgeland (1978) observed that the basis of the MEA's power rests in its ability to control a resource-allocation process:

It is widely asserted by non-legislative interviewees, that the type of power exercised by the MEA is sanction or impact arising from the promise of rewards or the threat of punishments in campaign financing. . . (p. 15).

Although the ability of the MEA to speak for a broad array of educational interests has been reduced by expelling national- and state-level administrators from its ranks, it is still perceived as a powerhouse in Michigan educational policy making. Duane and Bridgeland attributed the MEA's power potential to its "ninety thousand members, or 82% of the public school teachers, and a professional staff of 131 including four full-time lobbyists" (p. 14). They emphasized, however, that despite its great potential the MEA "does not apparently wield commensurate control over state educational policy" (p. 13).

Although some researchers feel that the MEA has not yet reached its full potential for control of the educational policy-making process, Campbell and Mazzone (1976) stated that "it would be difficult to exaggerate the tremendous resource advantage that the teacher associations have over competing groups" (p. 72).

The Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA), the organization of school superintendents and upper-level administrative staff, has shown the most remarkable reduction in status as a power force in Michigan educational policy making in recent times. Among the reasons for this reduced influence are: its recent (1960s) independence from the National Education Association affiliate MEA; the emergence of the school boards association, with a central staffing capacity for local school districts providing such services as insurance and negotiators; and the emergence of the militant teachers' organizations as a coordinated and well-financed power force in conflict with the objectives of the administrative group.

Despite its apparently limited ability to influence the state educational policy-making process, the MASA was recently depicted as potentially being a major, if not the major, force outside of government within educational policy making in Michigan.

The education group with the greatest potential influence in Michigan is MASA. Representing nearly every community, its members are regarded as "authorities" on education matters at the local level. Because superintendents are generally perceived to promote the welfare of the entire district, MASA holds the strongest bargaining position (Scribner & Englert, 1977, p. 123).

Wirt and Kirst (1975) observed that because of the position its members hold as "highly respected members of their communities

with an image as local experts on education, [MASA] enjoys easier access to state legislators than do teachers" (p. 123).

Much has changed, however. Besides the relative positions of the educational policy forces having shifted internally because of the disaffiliation of the administrators from the NEA, and as a result of the increased staff capacity of the school board association at the state level, relative organizational power has shifted with larger shifts in demographic and social attitudes. In ten years, for example, the legislative power has shifted from an agriculture-based Republican Party to an urban-labor Democratic "sometimes coalition." Teachers, once unsure of their own status as a labor or a professional group, have "taken the oath" and the shelter of the more liberal climate of a labor-oriented legislature, and have emerged looking much more like a labor union.

Superintendents, on the other hand, have been driven into coalitions with their school boards and their state association, and have emerged with strengthened liaison to a much weakened Republican Party in the legislature. Further, Michigan Association of School Board members are "apt to have a better rapport with state legislators [than administrators], since, like legislators, most are elected by their own local constituency" (Scribner & Englert, 1977, p. 137).

Among the other educational interest groups, none shares the status of the two teacher and two major management groups. Scribner and Englert observed that the bargaining "power of the intermediate administrators is practically non-existent" (p. 137) The intermediate school district in Michigan lacks prestige among educational interest

groups, and is perceived as a service unit linking the department with the local districts--subservient to both, and not in any real sense a policy force in the state.

The Michigan Association of Elementary School Principals is seen as a force on the Department of Education solely in the policy-making arena.

Whereas permanent educational interest groups and their representatives constitute a dominant force in the educational policy-making process in Michigan, the process is increasingly bargained with ad hoc, single-issue interest groups. However influential these groups are, their impact normally does not extend beyond their single issue of concern. Probably for this reason more than any other, the treatment of community educational interest groups and ad hoc committees has been limited in the literature.

Summary

Several researchers have helped bring into focus certain aspects of the educational policy-making process in Michigan. Although there is not complete agreement in the findings, some similar themes seem common.

1. There is general agreement that the teachers' movement, particularly the Michigan Education Association, has achieved considerable growth in status as an educational policy force in the past several years.

2. A dramatic shift in power is occurring within management. Power is shifting from the once-powerful Michigan Association of

School Administrators to the newly respected Michigan Association of School Boards.

3. There was almost no reference in the literature to non-educational interest groups and their direct influence on the educational policy-making process in Michigan.

In the executive branch of government, four elements of the policy-making process have been extensively analyzed in the literature both as initiators of and respondents to political pressure: the State Board of Education, the Department of Education, the state superintendent, and the governor.

4. The State Board of Education has been seen as impotent in every sense except perhaps insofar as the implementation of rules and regulations to accompany statutory changes is concerned.

5. The Department of Education is divided. On one side of this executive agency stand the "traditionalists," who claim to see themselves as merely service providers, philosophically tied to a concept of localism. On the other side are the reformers--the outspoken advocates of state intervention and control. The department is seen as relatively autonomous in the allocation of resources provided by state and federal policy. The weight of such funding gives great power to those who are positioned to dispose it.

6. The literature supported the intuitive contention that the CSSO is a major force in state educational policy making. Research conducted on the role of the CSSO showed the current holder of the office to be a powerful force. Not only does he appear to operate relatively independently of the board that appointed him, but it is

also clear that he is not under the direct control of either the governor or the legislature.

7. The governor was not viewed as a major force in educational policy making in Michigan, except when he wants to be. On certain issues like school finance, the governor has demonstrated leadership--the ability to direct a major reform of the state's school finance structure. There is little evidence of recent educational leadership by the governor.*

8. The legislature has not been the subject of much discussion in the literature on educational policy making in Michigan. It has generally been acknowledged that the legislature is the target of activities of the educational interest groups, the CSSO and his staff, the State Board of Education, the governor and his staff, and others. But little has been done to study the specific process, internal to the legislature, by which decisions concerning educational policy are made. Of all that the literature in this field revealed, the lack of attention to the internal educational state policy process of the legislature is perhaps the most noteworthy.

*This observation may be a result of the relative paucity of recent research on educational policy making in Michigan. Also, in fairness, it must be restated that in one case study the governor's education advisors expressed concern about the relative independence of the state education agency. Whereas this may be of concern to the governor's staff, there is no reason to suspect that in this regard the governor's staff necessarily reflects his personal feelings. The governor appears to be content with the relationship that currently exists between him and the CSSO. There was no evidence in the literature to the contrary.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The methodology of this study was compatible with the overall goals of the research. To select the seminar participants, for example, a stratification model was developed that accommodated the analytical objectives of the researcher while acknowledging the practical politics of forming a policy council of educational elites.

The researcher's first task was to create a forum in which top-level educational policy makers could participate in discussions of actual or potential educational policy issues. The first requirement was to identify which elements of the educational policy-making community should be involved in it. A methodology by which the researcher accomplished this function is described in detail in this chapter.

Literature of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) described the Associates Program, under which state educational seminars in thirty states are funded, as "an evolving IEL activity which provides seminars and other forums for legislators and other policy makers at state capitals." With little direction from the IEL, the researcher proceeded to enlist major state policy actors in Michigan into the Michigan Education Seminars. Much of the

methodology section, therefore, contains a description of the sampling process used in the study. Results of the participant-selection process are reported in much the same way that samples are identified in other studies.

Fieldwork Overview

In this section the researcher suggests that many of the techniques of fieldwork as a form of research parallel the techniques of successful political operatives. In Dexter's (1970) words, "Research demands . . . balancing strategies and tactics in light of overall purposes, both theoretical and practical" (p. 11).

The similarities between Dexter's comments on research and Bridgeland and Duane's remarks on the politics of education are more than interesting. Dexter referred to "balancing" acts in research; Bridgeland and Duane referred to "compromise and balance" in politics. The latter authors centered discussions in a "multi-conflict arena" of school politics, whereas Dexter talked of "strategies and tactics of research." Dexter explained that the similarities between systems research and political endeavors lie in the fact that the ends, "both theoretical and practical," and not the means, are the subject. Bridgeland and Duane defined political ends in terms of policy.

Not unlike the manner in which others have described politics, Dexter suggested that fieldwork, or field research as it is often called "always ought to be and frequently is a process of continuing discovery" (p. 11). Geographical and cultural boundaries surround

what are perceived as political structures. As Wolin (1972) stated, in research "a field is defined by the way we propose to study it" (p. 15). Field researchers enter environments and report their findings.

In the present study, the researcher transcended one of the normal barriers of fieldwork. From the outset the researcher was known by the study's subjects. Because the researcher was personally and professionally acquainted with the major actors in the educational policy-making process in Michigan, his access to this policy network was both natural and complete.

Bordeleau (1977) challenged his colleagues to engage in this form of research:

If we are to gain reflections which are more than particulars, plainly we need a greater moving about by educators who can and will write. We perceive merit in autobiographies by educators whose work has political overtones. Their accounts can capture elements of policy formulation that slip through the fingers of writers using other general approaches (p. 19).

To define the field of this study, one must consider the entire political milieu of the State of Michigan. The field of this study was expanded beyond the sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars on the presumption that the seminar series interacted with the broader environment of state educational politics.

The Adequacy of Fieldwork Methodology

Lutz (1977) identified four methods that can be used to collect data on political systems and "to answer questions about power

in politics" (p. 33). Those methods--survey research, reputational analysis, issue analysis, and socio-anthropological research--are discussed in the following paragraphs. It bears repeating that it is doubtful if any single method of political system research is so comprehensive as to be singly appropriate for application to the comprehensive study of a political system.

One method for analyzing a political system is survey research. Through survey research a population is drawn; a sample is selected from which to collect answers about, for example, political values. Some elements of survey research were used in this study. Certainly, the participant-selection and elite-interview processes of the study are comparable to survey research.

Reputational analysis was another methodology used in this study. With reputational analysis, system leaders or informants are identified based on the perceptions of others familiar with the power structure, and through an interview process, the major actors in the system are identified. Specifically, one first attempts to select positional leaders, and then to identify the system of leadership within the educational policy-making community by interviewing "knowledgeable insiders"--often positional leaders. An advantage of reputational analysis lies in its ability to uncover policy forces who might not appear on formal organizational charts.

Another method for studying political systems is issue analysis, which "utilizes historical method as well as observation of present issues. Its fundamental technique is the direct study of

particular issues" (Lutz, 1977, p. 39). Issue analysis was a secondary methodology of this study. A major purpose of the seminar series was to provide a forum in which policy makers could discuss various aspects of current or potential educational policy issues. The fact that no clear formula could be applied to each individual issue under discussion does not suggest that issue analysis, however informal, did not play a role in the direction and outcomes of this study.

A fourth category of political research, socio-anthropological research, perhaps best describes the fundamental methodology of this study. Field analysis relies chiefly on participant observation in varying degrees. In this form of research,

The researcher recounts all formal or informal accounts of the activities observed, and makes use of informant description, informal interviews and depending on the nature of the study on questionnaires and surveys (Lutz, 1977, pp. 39-40).

The results of the study are reported in a form that is largely autobiographical in nature. Bordeleau (1977) called upon educators to enter the world of politics, both as active participants and as scribes. In describing his technique, Bordeleau said,

We perceive merit in autobiographies by educators whose work has political overtones. Their accounts can capture elements of policy formulation that slip through the fingers of writers using the other general approaches (p. 19).

Lutz's objection to the costs of socio-anthropological techniques was not a factor in this study. The inquiry required an extensive personal and financial commitment by the researcher. Whether the findings were to be reported or not, many of these

costs would have occurred anyway. However, without the framework of a formal study, less care would have been taken to keep detailed records.

Dexter (1965) proposed that field research "always ought to be and frequently is a process of continuing discovery" (p. 11). He also said that research "demands . . . balancing strategies and tactics in light of overall purposes, both theoretic and practical" (p. 43). Thus field study is a balancing act between two contrasting concepts. A system is formed to study elements of public policy making. At the same time, the field is analyzed as a sensitive political system requiring the gentle manipulation of an experienced political practitioner.

Some might choose to call this study a "case study" of the Michigan Education Seminars. Such a definition would likely consider the "contained" nature of the organization under review, the longitudinal nature of the research, and the intimate involvement of the researcher.

The Positional Analysis

Positional analysis was among the primary methods the researcher used to begin the process of identifying the individuals with whom the power to influence state school policy decisions was centralized. It was the basis of the sample selection.

First, the researcher selected as his units of analysis the four sectors of state-level educational policy making in Michigan

(executive branch, legislative branch, educational interest groups, and other interest groups). Next, the researcher analyzed each sector to determine the organization of that sector. From this, the incumbents of key positions on organizational charts of influential organizations could be identified. What follows is a discussion of the findings of the positional analysis within each major segment of the educational policy-making community, with the purpose of identifying the key positions on the organizational chart. Throughout the discussion, the reader will notice a distinction between the "positional" leaders and those who are often the individuals making key decisions in and around government.

The Executive Branch

The governor heads the executive branch of state government. In the executive branch of state government in Michigan, the State Board of Education is a separate entity, with the president of the board heading the organizational chart. Positional analyses are inadequate in identifying every individual who makes key policy decisions. For example, the governor may play a very limited role in day-to-day state educational policy making. His ability to designate key aides to influence the direction of the policy decisions warrants the inclusion of these aides in an analysis of the power structure. The reputational analysis, discussed in the next major section of this chapter, uncovered much of this "hidden" leadership. A deficiency of positional analysis is that it can leave the

impression that a high-positioned leader may, by virtue of his/her position, be a significant force in a power structure. The same statement can be made about organizations.

The State Board of Education in Michigan was described in the literature as playing a role in the outcome of major education policy decisions within the State of Michigan. The role of the State Department of Education would suggest that its constitutional supervisory board is in a significant position. A variety of reasons exist to suggest that the function of the State Board of Education is mostly ceremonial. The Michigan Department of Education is headed by an appointed chief state school officer (CSSO), the state superintendent, whose appointment is a major responsibility of the state board. The superintendent serves at the pleasure of the board. His chief assistant, the deputy state superintendent, serves at his pleasure.

The department is organized into sixteen service areas, which are clustered under five associate superintendents.* The CSSO, his deputy, and his five associates appear to hold the key policy-making and policy-implementation positions within the department. Besides these key actors within the department are two assistant

*The five associate superintendent positions are: Associate Superintendent, School Program Development; Associate Superintendent, Research and School Administration; Associate Superintendent, Higher Education Planning and Coordination; Associate Superintendent, Rehabilitation; and Associate Superintendent, Financial, Legislative, and Personnel Services. Within each of sixteen department service areas, directors have significant authority in policy formation and policy implementation. However, their ability to extend policy authority beyond their specific areas of specialization is limited.

superintendents, one for school and community affairs and one for public affairs.

The state superintendent, although appointed by the state board, derives much of his policy authority from certain constitutional and statutory responsibilities of office. He/she is in the line of succession for the governorship in the event of a successful impeachment, a resignation, or death. He/she sits on the state administrative council with the governor, the attorney general, the secretary of state, and the state treasurer. The superintendent is not, however, a member of the governor's cabinet.

The constitutional provisions defining the powers of the state superintendent of public instruction are broad (Article VIII, Sec. 2):

The state board of education shall appoint a superintendent of public instruction whose term of office shall be determined by the board. He shall be the chairman of the board without the right to vote, and shall be responsible for the execution of its policies. He shall be the principal executive officer of a state department of education which shall have powers and duties provided by law.

No other duties are prescribed to the state superintendent of public instruction in the state constitution; however, the statutes contain numerous obligations.

The deputy superintendent is the only person in the state department besides the CSSO who is not protected by civil service status. Despite the rigid civil service requirements, the superintendent has considerable freedom in selecting his/her associates and directors.

The important process of legislative bill analysis is largely controlled by the Director of Legislation and School Law, who is in the service area of financial, legislative, and personnel services. The Director of Legislation and School Law is the department's lobbyist at the state level, and as such provides the superintendent direct access to the legislative process. Conversely, the department lobbyist often is the legislature's point of access to the bureaucracy.

Perhaps the most powerful of the associate superintendents in the area of public policy making is the Associate Superintendent for Finance, Legislation, and Personnel. This officer is the departmental spokesman and administrator on budget issues, which are generally considered to be the most politically sensitive state public policy questions.

At the other end of the power spectrum among the associate superintendents are the associate superintendents for vocational rehabilitation and higher education. The duties of the Associate Superintendent for Rehabilitation are so clearly defined by state and federal statute that his opportunity to shape public policy is limited. On the other hand, the position of Associate Superintendent for Higher Education Planning and Coordination is largely without duties. The relative autonomy of the universities and colleges makes this position primarily titular.

The Legislative Branch

Identifying the educational policy positional leadership within the state legislature is difficult. One of the challenges of

the positional analysis was to limit the number of positions within the organizational chart that were identified as leadership positions. To the elementary school teacher in Dowagiac, the most trivial staff job in the state legislature might seem to be a position of high esteem. In reality, however, such a position guarantees no ability to influence policy. Therefore, in deciding which positions within an organization constitute likely authority, the researcher must detach himself somewhat from previous knowledge about the "movers and shakers" within the organization. Rather, he/she must concentrate on those positions from which the power to influence policy decisions appears to be delegated and reserve informed judgments for the reputational analysis.

At the time when participants of the Michigan Education Seminars were selected, the Michigan house of representatives comprised sixty-six Democrats and forty-four Republicans. The state senate comprised twenty-four Democrats and fourteen Republicans.

The person in the top leadership position in the entire legislature is the speaker of the house. Because of his authority to appoint house committee members, to appoint house staff, and to assign bills to house committees of his choosing, the speaker has more official authority than any other member of the legislature. There is no comparable position in the senate.

The speaker is not alone in his potential to wield great authority on educational policy making in the state house of representatives. Much educational policy, particularly at the state level, is influenced, if not controlled, by the budgetary process. This

places the chairman of the Appropriations Committee in a position of great authority on educational policy issues. Whether the appropriations chairman wields his authority directly on educational policy-making issues, or relinquishes this authority to subcommittee chairmen or staff, is an assessment that cannot be made in a positional analysis.

The minority party cannot be ignored in an analysis of a legislature. The ability to influence roughly 40 percent of the votes on any issue before the state house of representatives must be acknowledged. The chief minority position in the state house is the house minority leader.

Besides being involved in the appropriation process, two standing committees of the house find educational issues within their regular jurisdiction. Other committees are periodically involved with issues that, on several levels, influence educational policy. The two committees in the house that regularly influence educational policy issues are the house Education Committee and the house Committee on Colleges and Universities. Therefore, the chairpersons of these committees must be included in any positional analysis of the educational leadership of the legislature.

At the house staff level, the director of the House Fiscal Agency should be included in any analysis of positional leadership on educational issues. Because so many of the major educational issues ultimately revolve around questions of money, the directors of the two legislative fiscal agencies that serve as advisors to the entire legislature are at the top of the positional analysis. Other

staff positions in the legislature are less clearly defined in terms of positional leadership. The majority executive secretary of the house, for example, is in a position of exercising significant leadership in educational policy issues; however, occupancy of this position implies nothing about the willingness or ability of this staff leader to exercise authority over educational policy. The roles of staff leaders of both parties of the house, and the committee staff roles, are so poorly defined in terms of authority as to warrant their inclusion in a positional analysis.

In the senate, the roles of the leaders and staff are even less clearly defined than they are in the state house of representatives. Although the Democrats hold an even more commanding majority in the senate than in the house, the leadership in that chamber is so fragmented by constitutional provisions, by senate rules, and by tradition as to make the positional analysis almost meaningless.

The president of the senate is (by constitutional provision) the lieutenant governor. With a 24-14 Democrat margin, a Republican lieutenant governor can do little more than monitor the senate for the governor. The ability of the senate president to assign bills to committees has been eroded if not replaced by a hybrid process that permits the senate majority leader to control this process. The senate majority leader occupies the dominant position of leadership on the senate organizational chart. Again, his authority is shared with several senators. Foremost is the chairman of the committee on appropriations.

During the period of this study there were two standing educational committees in the senate: the Education Committee and the Committee on Colleges and Universities. The chairpersons of these committees must be included in a positional analysis. Also, however fragmented their power, the executive assistants to the senate majority leader and the partisan research staff leader can be viewed as holding key positions in the senate. The top leadership position in the minority party in the senate is the senate minority leader.

The deficiencies of a positional analysis become clear in examining the leadership of a legislature. For example, the chairpersons of the appropriating subcommittees for education are probably the most important single forces in influencing state legislative education policy within their respective chambers. A reputational analysis that includes information based on experience in the system reveals important findings about the "real" leadership--information not obvious from a review of the organizational charts. Certain legislative staff members, for example, particularly those who occupy third- and fourth-level positions in the fiscal agencies, or on the leaders' staffs, do not show up on a positional analysis, unless, of course, so many other positional leaders are included as to distort the actual leadership chains within the system. This phenomenon will be further discussed in the section devoted to the reputational methodology.

Note: The courts--a major public policy force in American education--have been ignored in traditional reviews of the educational policy structure. Perhaps no force has played a more dominant role in forcing policy change in the areas of school finance, desegregation, and

The Educational Interest Groups

A positional analysis of the educational interest groups requires consideration of both the organizations within this category and of the leaders within the organizations. Not all of the organizations that represent educational interests in Michigan could be included in this study. There are far too many such organizations, and new ones emerge every year. The organizations included in this study were selected because of the size of their membership and staff, and because of their visibility within the educational process in Michigan. Previous knowledge of the process, much of which was confirmed in the literature review, was used to identify those major educational interest groups of which a positional analysis was to be conducted.

A natural categorical separation within educational interest groups is the labor-management differentiation. The separation of the school administrators' organization from the Michigan Education (teachers') Association in the 1960s helped to distinguish between labor and management.

In the teachers' movement, two organizations--the Michigan Education Association (MEA) and the Michigan Federation of Teachers (MFT)--play a dominant role. The MEA has enjoyed the greatest growth in leadership in the past decade. Its administrative leadership is

affirmative action than has the judicial branch. Because their unique position as arbiters of social policy requires that the courts be detached from the preliminary process leading to educational policy making upon which they may ultimately rule, the inclusion of the courts and their officials within this study was not judged to be appropriate or possible.

split between an executive director and an elected president. The elected president, unlike his counterpart in the school boards association, is given a full-time job, an office in the main "union hall," and a home near the state capitol. The president of the MEA, with his connection to more than 80,000 state teacher-members, is the head of the organization. Sharing, or perhaps "vying for," the leadership of the organization are an executive director and staff. Much of the educational policy of the MEA is transmitted into the policy process through its lobbying arm, the Public Affairs Division. This division employs several full-time lobbyists whose sole duty it is to monitor and influence legislative and executive policy. Since it is a centralized association, with no dominant local or regional organization, the positional leadership of the Michigan Education Association is fairly easy to identify.

This is not the case, however, with the MEA's counterpart Michigan Federation of Teachers (MFT). The MFT is an affiliate of the state AFL-CIO. Although the MFT relies on the AFL to assist it in difficult policy-persuasion projects, the leadership of the MFT operates independently of the major union. The structure of the MFT, however, often finds a "tail wagging the dog" phenomenon, because the Detroit Federation of Teachers is not only the largest MFT affiliate, but it is also dominant. Although the organizational chart of the MFT would show its president to be the leader of the state association, the president of the Detroit MFT chapter commands much more public attention. The positional analysis, therefore, included in its

findings the leaders of both the state and the Detroit chapter. Neither group has regular legislative representation.

The administrative or management education associations are more difficult to analyze than the teachers' associations. The two major groups in the state--the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA) and the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB)--have adjacent offices in downtown Lansing. There, leaders of the two associations attempt to prevent teachers from becoming the uncontested dominant education force in the state policy process. The two groups, even when combined, have extremely small memberships in comparison to the teachers' association. In this context, the authority they command is remarkable. The executive directors of both organizations must be included in the positional analysis. Both groups, however, are organized with strong public affairs and legislative directors to provide daily access to the policy makers. Providing liaison to the Department of Education and the state board of education is also among the duties of these executives.

Several other organizations also fall within the management branch of the educational interest groups. The positional analysis of these organizations revealed little other than a staff chief (executive director) who has irregular interaction with the public policy makers. Among these groups are the Michigan Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals and the Michigan Middle Cities Instructional Group, alternately called the Middle Cities Education Association (MCEA). MCEA represents the interests of the dozen or so largest Michigan districts, with the exception of the Detroit Public Schools.

The difficulty at this point was not to identify the chief individuals within these smaller education organizations. Generally, these groups are run by strong leaders or leader-teams. Rather, the difficulty was deciding which groups were significant enough forces to be included in a study of the policy-making process. The reputational analysis was helpful in making such judgments.

The private sector of education in Michigan is certainly worthy of note in a policy study of this kind. Although an official organization known as the Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools shares in the credit for the nonpublic sector's considerable success within the legislative process during the past decade, the primary credit belongs to the Michigan Catholic Conference (MCC).

The first question that must be answered here is why the MCC is categorized with the educational interest groups instead of with "other" groups. Certainly the MCC can not be thought of as exclusively interested in the public policy of the state's educational system. However, the same can be said of the Michigan Association of School Boards, the Michigan Education Association, and the other groups that have interests that transcend traditional educational policy questions.

The MCC is a required participant in many major discussions of school policy because of its tremendous ability to influence the outcome of any policy action. Frequently in the past decade, it has been motivated to voice concern about many educational issues. The MCC has been particularly vocal in areas of school finance, and it

represents the interests of one major segment of the providers of school services.

The organizational chart of the MCC is of little value in identifying the positional leadership. Normally, the executive director of an organization is presumed to be its most powerful internal leader. But in certain organizations the "public affairs director" is a more dominant public policy force than is the chief administrator. For the greater part of this decade, the leadership of the MCC has been shared by its director and its director of public affairs. Both leaders have been largely independent of one another, with personal access to important board members.

The K-12 management sector, although substantially inferior to the teacher groups in grass roots potential and candidate financing, is substantially superior in "lobbying representation." Of the roughly forty to fifty full-time educational lobbyists whose primary endeavors are to monitor and to influence the legislative process, more than half are employed by individual local or intermediate school districts or combinations of these management entities. When working as a coalition, these individuals can significantly influence educational policy. Individually, their power seems much less real.

It would be fruitless to attempt to identify individual district lobbyists on organizational charts. Their influence on the policy process comes from their regular ability to capitalize on the personal and political relationships they have developed and nurtured while representing their employers in the state capitol. In a couple of distinct cases, these lobbyists have significantly more ability to

influence state public policy than their organizational leaders do; in such cases they occupy positions of great status, if not great title, within the state educational policy process.

In the public higher education management sector in Michigan, the presidents of the major universities are public policy leaders. Michigan has thirteen four-year public universities. Among these, Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, and Wayne State University have been given certain constitutional and statutory distinctions such as statewide elected boards of trustees. The remainder of the public universities have boards appointed by the governor. The presidents of these institutions can make significant policy advances by a well-timed trip to the state capitol. The public policy impact of the deans of Michigan university colleges of education is not demonstrable in sweeping reforms they have promoted. Rather, these officials are empowered to affect the direction of teacher training, and thus educational achievement in the state's public school systems, through actions that they may take at the university level.

The four-year higher education institutions are not represented by a single advocate of public higher education. Their state association, although it may be a powerful force in molding the internal policies of state four-year institutions, is a nonentity in the educational political milieu of Lansing. In fact, the previously silent Michigan chapter of the American Association of University Professors has taken it upon itself to step forward to make a heretofore-unheard-of budget presentation on higher education to the

governor's chief budget officer. College presidents are never suspected of representing interests extending beyond their "province."

The community colleges, on the other hand, have a fairly visible state organization, the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA), which can from time to time threaten to affect state policy on two-year institutions. The leaders of the MCCA must be considered in a positional analysis of the public policy-making power in the state. The presidents of certain community colleges must also be considered as independent forces within the educational policy-making community in Michigan. In certain cases, the ability of certain individual community college presidents to manipulate state policy in a way that ultimately benefits all community colleges may far surpass any such ability that their official association (MCCA) has ever demonstrated.

In the private higher education sector, public policy direction is more clearly centered in a single association--the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (AICUM). AICUM must be judged to be among the most significant, however subtle, of the educational interest groups in Michigan. Its clear objectives and smooth, quiet strategies have resulted in state programs that have, at times, outraged the public sector. Even at this moment, a well-financed campaign to strip legislatively authorized private college funding programs is threatened. The strength of the AICUM centers in its active alumni; its large and powerful (largely honorary) college boards of trustees; its more than thirty colleges; its identification with the church, particularly the powerful Michigan Catholic Conference;

and its centralized organizational leadership. AICUM is controlled by an executive director who operates through a highly personalized and informal network with his board-member private college presidents.

There is virtually no organized faculty policy force at the state level. Unlike the K-12 sector, in which the power is divided, at least somewhat, between a labor and a management sector as well as a public and a private division, the higher education sector has no clear higher education labor representative at the state policy level. The prospects for clear representation at this level seem rather dim, because the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the MEA vie to represent faculty members in collective bargaining, whereas faculty at higher-status and diversified institutions like the University of Michigan and Michigan State University refuse to be organized by anyone. The MEA leadership has already been identified. No clear voice for higher education has emerged from within the MEA in the public policy process. The AAUP has only recently staffed a Lansing office with an executive director.

Perhaps a hundred other groups and formal associations occasionally come into contact with the educational policy establishment. This positional analysis was designed to identify the major policy leaders and the positions within the organizational charts of the individuals who might be expected to wield the power of the education policy establishment.

Other Interest Groups

Other interest groups were defined as policy forces that, although they have "broader policy purposes," can be called upon to exert influence on the educational policy process. Some groups, like the state AFL-CIO, have a formal link to educational interest groups, in this case the American Federation of Teachers. The AFL-CIO could therefore be called an educational interest group rather than an "other interest group," unless the category "educational interest group" implies some deeper and more exclusive involvement in educational policy questions.

Perhaps the two largest statewide groups that occasionally involve themselves in educational politics are the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce. Although they have no regular involvement in education, they do have intermittent, issue-specific involvement.

The Chamber represents the state's business leaders. This group is likely to be characterized as "anti-tax," "anti-spend," and "anti-education."

If the Chamber represents a conservative viewpoint, the UAW represents a liberal position. This largest of Michigan unified labor unions can, on occasion, be a significant force in determining the outcome of key legislative actions in this domain.

It is particularly difficult to separate the positional from the reputational characteristics of educational policy leadership of the individuals within either organization. In the Chamber, both the president and the vice-president are former employees of the state

Department of Education. The power of the UAW, on the other hand, is voiced by a small cadre of professional lobbyists. The invitation to be included in the activities of the Michigan Education Seminars was extended to the leaders of both of these groups.

Another category of outside groups must be considered for inclusion in any forum of state educational policy makers. However often the fact may be ignored or denied, educational policy in this state is occasionally influenced by the media. Media can be divided into at least two categories: print and electronic media. The positional leaders of the media, the editors and the station managers, take little interest in influencing public educational policy. The responsibility for reporting state-level educational policy making is largely assumed by the two major wire services.

Other groups such as the League of Women Voters, the state Parent-Teachers Association, and the American Association of University Women are relatively quiet participants in the educational policy process at the state level. Since the three associations shared information on education provided by a single leader in Lansing, the now-deceased vice-president of the League, a consideration of their positional leadership was considered irrelevant.

The positional analysis reported in this study provided a starting point from which to identify the institutional and individual policy forces within the educational policy-making milieu of the State of Michigan. To locate the key players in Michigan educational policy-making circles, the researcher first had to determine the

major segments of the policy-making community by category. These categorizations were useful in drawing finer lines of policy-making leadership.

In this study, four categories of educational leadership were employed: the executive branch, the legislative branch, educational interest groups, and other interest groups. From these categories, important leaders were identified by reviewing the organizational charts of the various organizations. Although in this portion of the positional analysis the researcher relied on his personal experiences to separate, for example, "significant" groups from others, even that process was not totally subjective. It was based on the principle that, at least to some degree, the amount of authority an individual has within an organization is determined by the formal position he/she occupies. The process of sorting organizations is, however, much less objective.

In each of the three aforementioned policy categories--the executive branch, the legislative branch, and educational interest groups--certain important leaders in the educational policy area were not included in the positional analysis. The director of the state's budget office was not identified, although he possesses great power. Every state legislator, from time to time, wields important power in the educational policy-making process. Among the educational interest groups, ad-hoc committees and organizations occasionally had a significant influence on the educational policy-making process. These

groups were not included in the positional analysis, and were largely excluded from the study for a variety of reasons.

A reputational analysis is far more useful than a positional analysis in identifying leaders who play the greatest role in shaping state educational policy. The next section contains a discussion of the reputational analysis undertaken in this study.

The Reputational Analysis--An Overview

Real rather than "positional" leadership in a public policy process is not easily defined or identified. In the first place, leadership is probably best defined as a potential or a capacity. In a political sense, power is evidenced by the ability of its possessor to achieve political objectives. If the political environment concurs in a leader's ability to provide rewards or punishments, the leader is portrayed as powerful.

Many established political operatives perceive power as the function of an illusion created by its possessor. Much political behavior is directed toward creating this illusion of power. The extent to which one creates an illusion of power is the extent to which he/she will find it increasingly easy to exercise his/her will upon the system--to deliver or to withhold the resources that he/she alleges to have at his/her disposal. An individual's ability to maintain power within a political system depends partly on that person's ability to receive credit for the widest possible variety of political outcomes.

Early in the study, the researcher spent more than thirty minutes each with fifteen top-level positional leaders, drawing a list of the "ten most powerful leaders in Michigan education." By using this reputational analysis procedure, the researcher attempted to determine who those people within the system were who reached across the broadest spectrum of influences--those who had created the greatest image of power. Whereas the positional analysis was to a limited degree a preliminary analysis of the leadership potential of individuals within an organization, the reputational analysis was employed to explore the question of the exercise of power within the system.

Formal interviews were conducted at the outset of the study to help identify the "most powerful" educational policy makers in Michigan. These formal interviews were supplemented with private conversations with other educational policy makers or knowledgeable insiders at the state level. The results of less formal conversations were blended into the results of the formal interviews to formulate a substantial interviewee sample of the educational policy actors at the state level.

The Reputational Leadership

Selecting the individuals to be interviewed as part of the reputational analysis of Michigan's state educational power structure partly depended on their availability to be interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to generate a list of thirty-five to forty individuals who would become the original participants in the Michigan

Education Seminars. Individuals representing several of the major segments within the four categories (the executive branch, the legislative branch, the educational interest groups, and other interest groups) were interviewed to define the educational policy leadership at the state level.

Interview format.--Each interviewee in the reputational analysis was told that the researcher had received a grant from a Washington, D.C.-based educational institute to develop a policy forum for top-level educational policy makers in Michigan. The purpose of the interview was to identify individuals who should be included in discussions of actual or potential educational issues--individuals who consistently influenced the outcome of these decisions at the state level.

The interviewees were asked to rank the "ten most powerful educational policy makers" at the state level, by name. In some cases, interviewees were able to name ten individuals without difficulty. They were not prompted about categories from which to draw their candidates for distinction. However, in nearly every case, interviewees broke the educational policy system down into the same four general categories used by the researcher to separate the various segments of the educational policy-making community.

The executive branch.--The individual mentioned most frequently as a major policy leader in state educational policy making in the executive branch was the state superintendent of public instruction, John W. Porter. (Since the time of the reputational analysis, Porter has resigned from that position). On no list,

however, was he ranked as the greatest power. This may be attributed to the fact that the state superintendent is rarely visible as a major advocate within the formal educational policy-making process--his positions are either implied or are transmitted through aides.

Most notable is the fact that no interviewee mentioned either Governor Milliken or his chief aide, Doug Smith. A number of writers cited in the literature review recognized that the governor's authority to exercise control over the educational policy-making process is normally limited to issues of state financing of education. At the time of the interviews, the governor's chief educational assistant was new to the job, and had not become established as a leader in educational policy making. However, the governor's former aide, James Phelps, was the second most often mentioned executive branch leader in educational issues. Only months before, Phelps had moved from his office within the governor's quarters to an associate superintendency within the state Department of Education. His position as leader of the research and school administration division of the state department placed him in a key position to influence school policy. However, much of his perceived influence may have resulted from his relationship to the governor. His experience as a leader in school finance issues contributed to his high status as an educational leader.

The director of the state Department of Management and Budget, Gerald Miller, was acknowledged by several interviewees to be a major force on educational policy issues. His annual recommendations for school finance packages placed him in a position of constant influence

over school resources. Although not a member of the governor's internal staff, the director of this major department of state government is often referred to as "the governor" by policy actors in the educational and other policy communities. The power of the state budget director to influence the state budget is extreme. It is usually viewed as a negative influence.

The Department of Education's budget officer, Robert McKerr, is also constantly engaged in budget decisions that have a broad effect on the schools. Interviewees occasionally mentioned him as a powerful leader.

Finally, receiving mention as an emerging educational policy leader was the Director of School Law and Legislation, Patricia Widmayer. Although she was relatively new to the job, Widmayer's authority was considered to be related to the ability of the occupant of this position to control the flow of information from the department to the legislature and vice versa.

The legislative branch.--Speaker of the House Bobby Crim was identified as the key leader on educational issues in the legislature. Not surprising was the omission of the senate majority leader from the list. The senate, unlike the house, has rules and traditions that severely limit the authority of its leader. The speaker, on the other hand, besides having substantial official authority, is a "school guy." A former teacher, school lobbyist, and legislative staff member, the speaker is a recognized expert on school finance. His experience in the late 1960s as a staff member on a comprehensive Michigan school finance study undoubtedly contributed to his expertise

and interest in this area of government. Equally important, however, may be his ability to control the outcome of major educational policy issues through his chief educational aide, Gene Caesar.

Caesar was the only legislative staff member mentioned by the interviewees in the reputational analysis as a major force in educational policy making. Perhaps most important is the fact that several interviewees listed Caesar, not Crim, as the major force on state educational policy making. This was unexpected because of the great distance on the organizational chart between the speaker and his educational aide--at least two levels of staff members are between the speaker and this aide. Even more unexpected is the fact that the power of this aide is so uncontested.

The remainder of the individuals from the legislative branch who were listed within the "top ten" by various interviewees were members of the legislature. Included on the list were the education subcommittee chairmen of both legislative appropriations committees and the former education committee chairman for whom the state school aid act was named, Senator Gilbert Bursley. Beneath these legislators in perceived power in the legislative educational policy arena were the two chairmen of the education committees. Others receiving mention were the chairman and vice-chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

It is interesting that interviewees perceived the vice-chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Billie Huffman, as being more influential than his committee chairman, Senator Jerome Hart. This is probably attributable to two factors. First, at the

time of the interviews, Huffman was generally regarded as one of the two or three most influential members of the state senate. Second, Huffman's role in determining the outcome of the higher education budget bill is well documented and highly respected, as is his proclivity for fighting for his local school district's budget--and winning.

Whereas the chairman of the senate Education Committee, Senator Jack Faxon, was rated somewhat higher in the educational power structure than was his house counterpart, Rep. Lucille McCollough, neither was thought to be as influential as were the appropriations chairmen and subcommittee chairmen. This verifies a well-worn axiom of the legislature--that money is power. The exercise of power requires a manipulation of the reward systems upon which the process revolves.

Of the fifteen members of the legislature who were given credit for an ability to influence educational policy, three were Republicans. Although much of this discrepancy between Democratic and Republican influence resulted from the ability of the majority Democrats to determine committee assignments and the legislative agenda, the traditional impression of the Democrats as the "spenders" and the "bleeders," as opposed to the impression of Republicans as fiscal conservatives, probably had a substantial effect on these data and, in fact, may be evidence of the validity of these impressions.

The educational interest groups.--More than in any other category, legislative interviewees attempted to "load the data" in the category of educational interest groups. For example, an unusual

number of university presidents and local school district superintendents appeared on the legislators' lists of the top ten policy leaders. Not surprisingly, the legislators shared a common territory with the educational administrators. The proclivity of legislators to name otherwise innocuous educational administrators among perceived educational policy leaders might have been motivated by a variety of factors.

The interviewees had been told that the reputational analysis was being conducted to determine who would be invited to participate in a statewide forum for educational policy makers. Therefore, one motivation for legislators' attempting to include their local educational administrator on their list of "ten most influential" was the desire to curry the favor of a back-home power--these individuals might be invited to top-level state forums. This cynical interpretation must be tempered by the recognition that legislators naturally desire to upgrade the status of local leaders, an action that increases the perceived power of local educational administrators. The legislator hopes that this increased power can be translated into more money for the local district. This, of course, would also make the local legislator appear more powerful.

A second interpretation, however, is less cynical. This is that certain local administrators may, in fact, be doing an excellent job of lobbying. As a consequence, the legislator perceives the local administrator as a very powerful force in educational policy making. Further, an indication by the legislator that his local educational administrator is a powerful force may, in fact, be a

statement that the legislator is making about himself: "I am a powerful legislator and I am going to tell the interviewer who influences me. Because he/she influences me--a powerful leader--he/she is also, in fact, a powerful leader."

When taken as a group, legislators did not differ dramatically from the rest of the interviewees in their perceptions of educational power forces. The choices from outside and from within the educational interest groups of who were "the most powerful of the most powerful" were a varied and evenly distributed sample of every element of the educational policy process previously described.

The chief executives of both teachers' unions were identified as major powers, with the MEA leader polling only slightly better than the leader of the American Federation of Teachers. Representatives of both major management groups, the administrators and the school boards, were mentioned. In this case, however, it was the management lobbyists, and not the management executive directors or association presidents, who were named. In fact, in the educational policy-making process, lobbyists generally did much better in an analysis of perceived power than did their bosses.

This phenomenon might be attributable to a variety of factors. First, the lobbyists are closer than their bosses to the policy process, are often depended on to make decisions and report later, and as a consequence may, in fact, be the single most powerful force in state-level educational policy making as far as their organizations are concerned. Second, the interviewees were Lansing-oriented, and

the lobbyists are often simply better known to legislators and executive leaders than are their bosses.

One of the most interesting findings about the educational interest groups was that, under rare circumstances, one does not have to be personally known to policy makers to be considered a powerful force. This is especially true if one is the president of a public college, and if that college is one of the "Big Three"--Wayne State University, the University of Michigan, or Michigan State University. Perhaps an even more compelling observation is that to be a powerful college president one must also represent a "Big Ten" school--Michigan State University or the University of Michigan. Even though legislators criticized Clifton Wharton, then president of Michigan State University, for his absence from the state capitol, he was cited as a major force in educational policy making.

The only individual who drew as much acclaim during the reputational interviews as the presidents of the "Big Three/Big Ten" schools was the lobbyist for the City of Detroit schools, Richard Smith. The assessment of Smith as a major power in Michigan educational politics is relatively universal. After all, his district demands and receives a large share of the state school aid funds every year. Also, Smith has built a complex network of relationships with legislators and staff members from across the state. His district has the strongest ties to big labor, big business, and big government. It was no surprise to find him among the finalists in the "most powerful" category.

Perhaps at this point it is appropriate to observe that a reputational analysis of educational power elite strongly resembles a personality contest. This may be what makes reputational analysis such an interesting method for political system research: It characterizes the discipline that it attempts to study.

In the nonpublic sector, both the executive director of the Private College Association, John Gaffney, and the public affairs director of the Michigan Catholic Conference, Ed Farhat, were identified as powerful forces in the educational policy-making process--again no surprise. The omission of a private college president from the list is somewhat interesting. This omission is much less surprising, however, in light of previous observations about the "Big Three/Big Ten."*

Other interest groups.--In the other interest groups category, the lobbyist of the United Auto Workers, Frank Garrison, and the educational writer of the Detroit Free Press, William Grant, received some mention as major educational policy forces in Michigan. The impression that their interest in an educational issue could greatly influence the educational policy process is well-recognized.

*So as not to be accused of being overly emphatic about the importance of athletic prowess in the higher educational policy-making process, it should be pointed out that during the course of this writing Michigan State University returned victorious from the NCAA college basketball finals only to find the chairman of the house Appropriations Committee calling for the construction of a multi-million-dollar sports arena in East Lansing as a reward for the achievements of this "academic" institution.

Selecting the Participants

The researcher considered participant selection to be the critical element of a successful study of this nature. Selecting the participants for the seminar series involved consolidating information the researcher had collected over the years, as well as the results of the previously described positional and reputational analyses.

Besides the academic considerations of who should be included in the study--who should be named, or invited to be, a participant in the Michigan Education Seminars--other practical considerations were taken into account. Academic considerations were those factors that reflected actual power positions in the policy-making process. Practical considerations were notions of "political" etiquette that required inviting certain individuals to participate.

The list of participants was later expanded by political necessity as well as by design to include a variety of individuals who, although they were not universally recognized state-level educational policy leaders, for one reason or another could not be neglected. It must also be pointed out that the original participant list was limited for certain strategic and research purposes described as strategies in Chapter IV.

At a later point in this study, the relationship between the Michigan Education Seminars and the Michigan chapter of the Educational Commission of the States--the Michigan Education Council--is discussed. Although not all of the members of this gubernatorially appointed ten-member commission appeared on the initial list of participants, all of

them were invited to the first meeting of the Michigan Education Seminars and were subsequently added to the permanent participant list.

As noted in Chapter II, previous research on educational policy making in Michigan provided little guidance in identifying the major forces that influence that process in this state. To review, in recruiting participants for the Michigan Education Seminars, the researcher began by identifying major categories of policy actors. From these categories, finer internal discriminations were made to include the proper combination of policy makers in this process. (See appendices for the names of seminar participants categorized according to the four segments of educational policy making in Michigan [Appendix A], and listed alphabetically [Appendix B]).

The Executive Branch

The most obvious category for inclusion in the Michigan Education Seminars was the executive branch of state government. Members of this branch formulate educational policies and, more important, interpret and enforce such policies.

What segments of the executive branch of state government play the strongest role in educational policy making? The positional analysis suggested that the center of executive power could be found in the governor's office. The reputational analysis suggested otherwise. In the governor's office, one aide attempts to sort out the activity of the legislature, the state Board of Education

and Department of Education, and the educational interest groups as he advises the governor on educational affairs.

Also within the executive branch are the state Board of Education and the state Department of Education. In selecting participants for the Michigan Education Seminars, the researcher considered it essential that representatives of both the governor's office and the education department be included.

Beyond the education department and the advisor to the governor, other executive branch agencies play a role in formulating state educational policy. The governor's chief fiscal advisor, the director of the state Department of Management and Budget, presents state school recommendations to the legislature. The Department of Labor and the Department of Commerce also play a role in shaping educational policy within the executive branch of government--policy that often translates into state law and finance formulas.

The Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of government is another important influence on state educational policy. Under Michigan's constitution, the state Board of Education is virtually powerless to impose requirements on local school districts without the mandate of public law. The legislature has emerged as the final battleground for much significant state educational policy.

The legislature is fragmented by partisan differences, urban-rural differences, and labor-management differences. The legislative process is beset or blessed, depending on one's philosophy, with

rapid and relatively extreme turnover in leadership and in membership. During the period from 1965 to 1974, the leadership of the Michigan legislature shifted from Republican Party domination to Democratic Party control (and back and forth within the senate). Because of this condition and others, certain legislative staff members have maintained influence over many elements of this segment of the educational policy-making community. Their involvement as well as that of certain legislators in the Michigan Education Seminars was considered imperative.

The Educational Interest Groups

A third category from which to draw subjects for this study was the educational interest groups. There are several ways to divide the educational interest groups segment of the educational policy-making community. First, the educational interest groups can be separated along labor-management lines. Thus teacher groups become one subcategory and administrative groups another. Second, educational groups can be divided according to the level of educational programming with which they are most concerned. Thus K-12 becomes one category, community colleges become another, and four-year institutions and the associations that represent them become yet another. Third, an additional important subcategorical differentiation must be made between government and nongovernment schools. Within the category of private (nonpublic, nongovernment) schools, a further differentiation must be made. In Michigan, the private schools speak primarily

through the office of a major religious association, whereas private colleges have an independent association.

Other Interest Groups

Still other forces directly affect the educational policy-making process in Michigan, if only from time to time. These forces constituted the fourth major category of policy actors. To begin with, the media must be considered a potent force in influencing state educational policy. Big labor and big business also occasionally intervene in the process that results in state school laws and regulations. Groups like the League of Women Voters have played a vital role in educational policy making in Michigan, despite an organizational purpose that suggests that education is not the group's primary purpose.

The Exclusion of Certain Policy Leaders

The individuals originally invited to participate in the Michigan Education Seminars in September 1977 numbered thirty-eight. By the winter of 1978-79, less than eighteen months later, the list had grown to include more than 100 names. (See Appendix C for the list of seminar participants in September 1978.) Several of the leaders of the Michigan education community were excluded from the original participant list. How certain leaders were excluded from the original list of participants is a subject worthy of discussion.

The researcher was forced, by both the design of the study and the purpose of the seminars, to limit participation in the forums.

The appropriate size for the seminar was defined as one in which the participants would have the opportunity to interact with one another in response to the formal presentation of an actual or potential educational issue. The study was not designed to be a lecture series, although in some cases elements, at least, of some of the sessions resembled that format. A group of forty to fifty participants was considered to be the maximum-sized group in which a program of this nature could be conducted with a reasonable expectation of free-flowing conversation.

One of the factors that caused certain top-level educational leaders to be omitted from the original list was related to the researcher's practical judgment about the political process. The reputational analysis made clear, for example, that the speaker of the house is considered to be a major force in educational policy making. Much of this reputation must be attributed to the fact that in his corps of assistants was Gene Caesar. Caesar's powers are discussed at various points throughout this study. However, as has already been noted, Speaker Bobby Crim must be considered a major spokesman for educational issues in his own right. Because he is the leader of the legislature, the demands on his time are so great that there was little hope of his availability, even if he wanted to attend the formal sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars. At the same time, his special interest in education placed him in an excellent position to be called upon as keynote speaker at one of the sessions, an invitation he readily accepted. Governor William Milliken was excluded from the invitation list for many of the same reasons.

In the cases of both the speaker of the house and the governor, top educational staff leaders are generally regarded as representing, if not shaping, the educational policy views of their bosses. Both chief aides, Crim's Caesar and Milliken's Smith, agreed to participate fully in the seminars.

Others mentioned in the reputational analysis as educational policy leaders were excluded for another reason. One of the issues that the researcher was interested in examining was the extent to which public educational policy makers at the state level would view the Michigan Educational Seminars as a status organization. In other words, to what extent would individuals who are influential in the process feel that their exclusion from the Michigan Education Seminars was important? The only way that the researcher could expect to answer this question unambiguously was to exclude certain of these leaders and wait for their reaction. To some extent, the researcher was "fishing" for reaction--and reaction was forthcoming. This strategy is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter IV.

Once an initial formulation of categories of interest in the educational policy process was established, the process of identifying the major actors within each of these segments began. Balance between specific categories of policy making was sought in formulating the first list of participants. An attempt was made to insure representation from the executive branch, the legislative branch, the educational interest groups, and other interest groups. It was not difficult to achieve such a balance. More complicated was

attaining a balance between various segments of each category. Within the legislature, for example, the researcher sought bipartisan participation for many reasons. Although the legislative process in Michigan is dominated by one party, the participation of educational policy leaders from both parties is often necessary to pass key policy issues.

The researcher also felt it was important to maintain a balance between legislators and legislative staff. Whereas the reputational analysis verified that certain legislators at the state level are perceived as the dominant policy-making forces within this branch of government, it is the legislative staff who survive the elections. Successful, hard-working, and powerful legislators are often the ones whose successive victories lead them away from state-level educational policy making. Either they run for higher office, often congressional seats, or they are put into "leadership" positions in the legislature, and thus are forced by an expanded role to limit their participation in educational policy formulation. Hence the legislative staff members can be seen as the power behind the throne.

Observing and Recording Formal Sessions

The method of sample selection was instrumental in the construction of this research. The monitoring and subsequent analysis of the process required a variety of standard field work methods.

During the course of the study, audio records of every session of the Michigan Education Seminars were maintained. These

records were often, although not always, transcribed verbatim. Much of the recording that was done by the researcher immediately before, during, and immediately after the official seminar sessions was not of the nature that could be captured on audio tape. Much of the tape-recorded information did not relate specifically to the substance of the policy discussions that took place. The researcher maintained personal notes about his conversations with policy makers and about his perception of the subtle interactions that often occurred between them.

In addition to the audio tape of the session and the personal notes of the researcher, the secretary of the seminar series recorded highlights of the formal session, which the researcher later used to retrace critical discussions or comments. After every formal session of the Michigan Educational Seminars, the researcher reviewed the audio tapes. In every case, he prepared a post-seminar report and submitted it to the Institute for Educational Leadership.

Reading Documentary Materials

The challenge of selecting a discussion agenda for a state's top educational policy makers is an immense one. In reality, these individuals have relatively little access to future issues, to issues developing in other states or nations, or to issues emerging in the state's elementary and secondary school systems or in its colleges. Most of what the state-level educational policy maker does seems to involve the day-to-day administration of his/her office.

The problem that the researcher faced in preparing for seminars on issues that were not immediately before the public policy process, or that were appearing in confusing configurations, was identifying the key points from which civil discussion of the issues could depart. This process normally involved identifying experts who could present diverse positions on important issues. Once extreme positions were identified, the possibility of creating a balanced discussion was enhanced.

Beyond identifying the various positions on key issues or potential issues was the problem of identifying issues that were not fully developed. One method of identifying potential issues was screening documentary materials. For example, the annual reports of IEL Associates from the other states were a useful source of ideas for seminars. Other sources were letters and memos from the Institute for Educational Leadership. Educational periodicals, of course, provided another means of both identifying the issues and, once the issues were identified, establishing the various positions that could be represented in well-rounded discussions.

The researcher also wrote to eight major educational organizations in the state, and asked to be placed on their mailing lists. Among the mailings that the researcher regularly received and perused were the regular publications of the Michigan Education Association, the Michigan Association of School Boards, the Michigan Association of School Administrators, and the Michigan Association of Elementary Principals.

In addition to all the aforementioned resources, the public press provided valuable, albeit occasional clues to impending educational policy questions and the variety of potential areas of dispute.

The Post-First-Year Interview

A major purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of the Michigan Education Seminars on the educational policy-making process and on the policy makers. A variety of methods were available to accomplish this analysis. For example, the growth of the list of participants in the seminar could be taken as one measure of the program's success. The informal observations made by individuals involved in the sessions could also be the basis of valid measures for the study.

To identify the effect of the Michigan Education Seminars on the policy makers and the process of educational policy making at the state level, an interview procedure was designed. Over a three-month period in 1978, interviews were conducted in a variety of settings with nineteen individuals who had been regular participants in the Michigan Education Seminars.

Selecting the Interviewees

Interviewees were selected from the four major categories of educational policy makers used throughout the study: the executive branch, the legislative branch, educational interest groups, and other interest groups. An attempt was made to select interviewees who would represent the variety of interests or dispositions within each of these categories. For example, within the legislative branch,

interviewees included legislators and staff, Republicans and Democrats from the house and senate, as well as nonpartisan legislative officers. Within the executive branch, interviewees included departmental personnel and a representative of the governor.

The Interview Format

The interview format was designed to provide information that would be used for an evaluation of the effect of the process of the Michigan Education Seminars. The interviews provided a means for the researcher to identify certain perceptions of the program participants. (See Appendix D for a list of the questions used in the post-first-year interviews.) These perceptions were then analyzed for similarities and differences. The interviews were designed to provide information on the following subjects:

How successful was the researcher in identifying the major forces in the educational policy-making process in Michigan, and how balanced was the representation of the participants from the standpoint of the interviewee?

How appropriate was the initial judgment of the researcher to avoid attempts at consensus formation during the formal sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars? Did the avoidance of "task orientation" contribute to the success of the seminars?

In what ways did the seminars affect the relationships between educational policy makers representing normally antagonistic institutions, and in what ways did the seminars affect relationships between policy makers within institutions having allied interests?

How were relationships of participants within their own institutions affected by the seminars? This question was designed to uncover policy makers' reactions to the issues presented during the formal policy sessions, and in regard to ancillary exchanges that occurred as a consequence of the seminars.

Did the seminar program affect specific policy actions taken or observed by education institutions represented within the Michigan Education Seminars?

Are there other forums in Michigan serving a purpose similar to that of the Michigan Education Seminars?

Assuming that the Michigan Education Seminars would not always be coordinated by the coordinator or funded by the Institute for Educational Leadership, who within the Michigan educational policy-making community could assume the role currently being filled by the Institute's associate in Michigan? This line of questioning was pursued for several reasons. First, this question reinforced an earlier suggestion that the researcher was relatively detached, at least as much as possible, from a desire to be assured that the Michigan Education Seminars was filling a great need. Second, the researcher was attempting to uncover information that would lead to a prediction of the seminars' potential for survival.

What were the major reasons policy makers participated in the Michigan Education Seminars? This question was posed in such a way that the response could be both introspective ("I participated because. . . .") and speculative ("Most of the participants participated because. . . .").

Finally, because one of the objectives of the study was to provide guidance to future coordinators in Michigan or to those wishing to replicate this study elsewhere, a question was included that was designed to provide insight into the weaknesses of the current seminar format.

The systematic or "formal" interviews, as distinguished from "informal" conversations, were often followed by personal contacts of a less formal nature--telephone calls, casual conversations in the halls of the capitol, and the like. These discussions clarified issues that had been raised and provided additional insights into the function and effect of the seminar series. These follow-ups were normally conducted within a few days after the formal interview.

During the interviews, the interviewees were encouraged to elaborate on their answers, or to raise questions of their own. No strict interview question sequence was followed. After each formal interview, the researcher transcribed the results of the interview and recorded each comment on a chart that was categorized by question. In this way, the responses to each question could be viewed and analyzed as a separate entity.

Evaluating the Methodology

In answering the question: "How well did the data-collection procedure fit the purpose of the study?" several factors must be considered. It must be remembered that the original question of the study pertained to the effect and operation of the public policy forum--the Michigan Education Seminars.

Type of Study

The study was to be conducted in a forum that had not yet been created. Thus, at the outset, one purpose of the study was to create an environment in which the important educational policy makers would readily and regularly participate.

Other questions such as the identification of positional and reputational leadership, the assessment of the potential for survival of the organization, and the effect of the policy discussions on actual policy became secondary to the instrumental issue of whether such a forum could, in fact, be created. Thus the concepts of methodology and strategy tended to overlap in this study. In short, to study the relationships and interrelationships within the environment defined as the Michigan Education Seminars, the researcher was faced with insuring its survival for at least the eighteen months within which the data were to be collected.

The study was conducted on site. There was no way that the researcher could have remained detached from the environment in order to increase the objectivity of his findings. By the same token, a valid premise of field study is that the researcher is required to report his personal experiences in the field. Although it would have been possible to interact with policy leaders within their own environments and report the findings, not an uncommon policy research procedure, the idea behind this study required getting the leaders into another environment, a foreign environment, a "neutral setting." To do this, the researcher not only had to interact with the subjects,

but he also had to employ a variety of persuasive strategies to guarantee their participation on at least a minimal basis.

For example, in this study the researcher interviewed at length nearly half of the original thirty-eight participants before they became involved in the program. Many of these interviews were designed to identify the reputational leaders within the state educational policy-making community, and to make certain that no positional leaders were overlooked as "reputational leaders." An additional function of these interviews, however, was to discuss at length the potential for the creation of such a neutral forum, what it could do, how often it could be convened, who should lead it, and what should be the scope of the issue areas. Also discussed were tactics that could be used to encourage participation--a co-optation strategy, perhaps, but also an excellent means of developing an understanding of what would motivate policy leaders to participate in these sessions.

The problem of creating the environment, sustaining the environment at least through its developmental stage, and the problems inherent in interpreting human behavior based upon observations in a natural setting required the use of a field study model. This model proved to be an acceptable one in which to conduct the study.

Nelson (1975) identified three types of field studies: exploratory, descriptive, and hypothesis or model testing. Other field researchers have avoided such classifications because of the tremendous overlap that exists between each category. This study was clearly exploratory, in that the territory in which it was conducted

was largely a product of the study. The forum was established, its participants selected, and its purpose and functions largely allowed to evolve.

Besides this exploratory element of the research, a descriptive element also existed. The researcher stated as a specific objective of the study the production of information that would be useful to others wishing to replicate the study or to avoid its pitfalls.

To the extent that the basic assumptions of this study could constitute hypotheses or models, this field research might be described as model testing. The researcher was provided with little specific information about the appropriate procedures for establishing such a forum. Conversations with others from across the United States who were conducting policy forums under the auspices of the Institute for Educational Leadership were of limited value. The Institute provides little leadership, allowing each state seminar to develop in a style that is most compatible with the local policy-making environment and the attributes of the state coordinator.

This field study was primarily of the exploratory field model genre. This model, allowing considerable flexibility to the researcher, was the basis of the study. It was seen as adequate for the study when paired with the descriptive procedures employed.

The Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is thoroughly analyzed in a later chapter. (The field worker's credentials are included as Appendix B.)

However, to the extent that this role controlled the method of data collection, a discussion of it is appropriately within the domain of this methodology chapter. In field research, the researcher is expected to develop a role that is most compatible with the nature of the study. In this study, the researcher was required to take an active role in the development and operation of the seminar series. The researcher entered the environment with a history of working with and relating to the subjects of the study. This background provided him with several insights into the personalities and positions of the leaders of the policy-making community, and greatly aided in the establishment and operation of these forums.

The literature of field research offers a wide variety of acceptable options for the role of the researcher, from nonparticipating observer to active participant. This research was tied to the role of the researcher. It was required that the researcher identify the degree to which he would actively engage in determining the policies and actions of the system in which he was immersed for research (and other) purposes. Because the researcher was required to identify experiences that were to become significant in determining the outcome of his analysis, field research was seen to be a practicable methodology for a study of this nature.

Interviews

The range of interviewees used in this study was representative of the population of educational policy makers at the state level. In the interviews, care was taken to select interviewees who

represented the four segments of educational interests and the various interest or dispositional subcategories within each interest segment. The wide variety of interviewees represented in this study lent credibility to the interviewing process.

Sources

Besides the formal interview process, a variety of interactions occurred with sources within the state educational policy community. These interactions provided a check on the accuracy of the researcher's observations. Besides educational policy makers, other participants in the study--"knowledgeable outsiders"--provided a basis for cross-checking the researcher's observations.

Sampling

Although the length and thoroughness of the interviews varied considerably, at the beginning of the study a majority of the invited participants were personally interviewed. The process used for sampling insured that all of the most influential educational policy makers in the state would be identified. These policy makers became both participants and interviewees. In the final interview, all four of the educational interest segments and the various subcategories of interest or disposition within these segments were represented.

Common Language

The credibility of the field data is said to increase with the existence of a common language between the researcher and his subjects. The extensive professional experience of the researcher

allowed him to communicate in the special language of the state policy leaders.

Intimacy

The credibility of field data is threatened when the researcher is said to "go native." The likelihood of this danger is increased when the researcher brings existing personal relationships with subjects into the study. Such personal relationships can be said to influence the researcher's ability to analyze objectively the relationships and interrelationships within the community under study. The problem becomes greater when the participant observer attempts to "get the distance" required for objective research.

The credibility of this report was moderated by the degree of intimacy between the researcher and many of the subjects of this study. On the other hand, a high degree of socializing often leads to the collection of data that enrich a field report.

Public Presentation of Data

The researcher will share the findings of this study with individuals capable of detecting inaccurate findings. The researcher has taken particular care to obtain and, in some cases, report detailed transcripts from conversations, public meetings, and interviews. This report could receive wide attention within the educational policy-making community in Michigan. To the extent that it does, its credibility will be judged by those who are most capable of making such judgments--the major policy makers in Michigan educational politics.

Chapter Summary

A method for dividing the educational policy-making process in Michigan was employed, which resulted in four major categories: the executive branch, the legislative branch, the educational interest groups, and other interest groups.

Since the sample of the population to be studied constituted the participants in the study, e.g., the regular program participants and the interviewees of the analytical interviews, the process used to select the individuals included in these categories was described in this chapter.

The process for observing and recording the formal sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars was also described, as was the procedure of gathering information through informal discussions with sources and reading related literature.

The process for analyzing the influence of the seminars was described. The formal analytical interview format was discussed, as was the structure of the interviews.

Finally, the methodology was evaluated in terms of the type of study conducted, the role of the researcher, and the role of the interviews. Also discussed were the role of the sources, the length of the study, the sampling techniques, and other factors that placed the researcher in a position of providing valid and consistent interpretations of the results.

Other factors that will be used to judge the credibility of the study, such as the public presentation of the results and replications, were also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE SEMINARS

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the six seminars that occurred during the term of the study. The summary outlines the rationale for the individual seminars, profiles the participants, and describes the character of the major exchanges. As such, the first section of the chapter provides a quick review of the seminar year.

In the second segment of this chapter, the researcher identifies a single seminar session. From this session he can draw many of the specific exchanges that occurred between participants and speculate on their significance. The researcher describes this section of the chapter as an "interaction analysis" although it is certainly more than the interaction that occurred during the seminar that is being analyzed. In fact, the researcher suggests that so many subtle forces come into play in a policy setting as to make an analysis of verbal exchanges between actors largely irrelevant and potentially irresponsible in their ability to create false impressions.

The researcher selected one seminar for a more detailed analysis of several of the interactions between participants during the seminar. The particular interactions were selected because of

their ability to draw attention to certain characteristics of the seminar series the researcher feels are most noteworthy.

To select the seminar for the analysis of key interactions, the researcher compares the six seminars on lines ranging from amount and mix of participant attendance to the universality and currency of the seminar issue. Other factors are also considered.

Taped transcripts of the seminars exist, as do other records. Nevertheless, to suggest that an individual is capable of picking apart the hidden planned (or instinctive) meanings for political actions in these sessions would require a talent suitable for study by parapsychologists. It is important that in every case discussed in any part of this dissertation, the researcher recognize the wide variety of possible ways of accounting for any particular verbal exchange.

Nonetheless, the chapter is important for a variety of reasons. Among these are:

1. Its ability to provide a panorama of the entire seminar series.
2. Its ability to provide a feel of the type and intensity of the interactions that occurred within the sessions.
3. The degree to which the process of selecting the seminar to analyze could be seen as a well-disguised qualitative evaluation of the entire series.
4. The degree to which the chapter demonstrates the researcher's willingness to allow the forum to be manipulated into

becoming a vehicle for a specific educational policy position--
funding for declining-enrollment districts.

Overview of the Seminars

During the time frame covered by this study, six formal sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars were conducted. Seminars were similar in the following ways:

1. All seminars were agreed upon, if not planned, by a seminar steering committee that met formally three times during the first year of the seminar program.
2. Each seminar (with the exception of the introductory or planning one) centered on a discussion of one or two major subjects of actual or potential educational policy impact.
3. Each seminar (again excepting the introductory or planning seminar) had one or more primary speakers. The speakers generally made a formal presentation and then responded to questions.
4. Each seminar permitted some degree of exchange between seminar participants, often through the session chairperson.
5. Seminar participants were invited from a list of influential state educational policy makers and selected others that grew in number from thirty-eight to over one hundred.
6. A large number of "guest" participants attended many of the seminar sessions. These individuals included co-workers and colleagues of the participants, students, and others.

7. The length of the individual seminar sessions ranged from two and one-half to four hours.

Within this framework, a brief review of the six seminar sessions is given. From these six seminars, one is selected (Seminar 3: The Impact of Declining Enrollment) as the subject of a more detailed analysis of some of the elements of the interaction between some seminar participants that occurred during the session. Much of the summary is taken from the report on the seminars that was issued by the researcher to the Institute for Educational Leadership in September 1978.

Summary of the Six Seminars

Seminar 1: Identification of Key Education Issues--September 14, 1977, East Lansing, Michigan

Approximately thirty Michigan education policy leaders participated in the first meeting of Michigan Education Seminars (MES). The first order of business was a discussion of the purpose and goals of MES.

The attending participants affirmed the coordinator's opinion that the sessions should provide a "neutral" forum. The participants were nearly unanimous in establishing that the sessions should be "discussion and opinion oriented" rather than "debate and consensus oriented." This discussion provided the first and only attempt to achieve consensus undertaken by the Seminar participants during the year. It was established that the Michigan Education Seminars would be "process" rather than "product" oriented.

During the session an issue questionnaire developed by the Education Commission of the States was distributed to the participants, and they completed these questionnaires immediately. The questionnaire asked for an identification and a ranking of major state educational issues in Michigan. The questionnaires were later tabulated with the results circulated to MES participants. The results of this questionnaire would be helpful in identifying future seminar agenda items.

The following is a listing by rank order of perceived importance of the educational issues identified by the MES participants:

1. Educational Finances
2. Assessment and Evaluation Tied with Basic Skills Development
3. Federal-State Relations
4. Alternative Educational Structures
5. Equal Opportunity for Unique Populations
6. Competency-Based Education
7. Early Childhood Development
8. Public Opinion and Involvement
9. Cost Benefits and Cost Effectiveness Analysis
10. Governance and Structure
11. Educator Preparation Utilization and Evaluation
12. Education Administration/Management Planning
13. Equal Rights for Women
14. Child Abuse
15. Individual Rights and Responsibilities
16. Educational Personnel Benefits/Collective Bargaining
17. Curriculum: Programs and Reform
18. Discipline
19. Accreditation and Consumer Protection
20. Educational Technology
21. Ancillary Services

Many of the issues identified on the questionnaire were suggested as potential seminar topics for the 1977-78 seminar year. The suggestion was also made that the Michigan Education Seminars provide a forum for educators to discuss the potential impact on education policy of a constitutional convention in Michigan. Several of the participants were not, at that time, aware that the question of

whether or not a constitutional convention should be called would automatically appear of the 1978 Michigan General Election ballot.

Other issues suggested at this seminar as potential future seminar topics included federal and state relations, declining enrollments, minimal competencies, the relationship between business and industry and education, and job training. A suggestion was made, also, that the steering committee identify topics that would bring providers of other social services together with the school community for a discussion of subjects of mutual concern.

The discussion of potential seminar issues was followed by a social hour and dinner. During the dinner, an informal organizational meeting was held in which the relationship between the Educational Council and the Michigan Education Seminars as co-sponsors of the seminar series was confirmed.

Seminar 2: The Impact of a Constitutional Convention on Michigan Education--December 14, 1977, Lansing, Michigan

By December of 1977, the list of invited participants had grown to nearly fifty Michigan education policy actors. Outside the educational community, other forces in Michigan politics took note of the scheduled seminar on "The Impact of a Constitutional Convention on Michigan Education. The total attendance at this session exceeded seventy people.

Political forces, both in favor of and against the question of a constitutional convention, saw the Michigan Education Seminars as a unique chance to reach out and touch leaders in this very important

segment of Michigan politics. As a consequence, the chairmen of Michigan's two major political parties were anxious to address educational leaders on this important subject.

Article XII, Section 3, of the Michigan Constitution states:

Sec. 3. At the general election to be held in the year 1978, and in each 16th year thereafter, and at such times as may be provided by law, the question of a general revision of the Constitution shall be submitted to the electors of the state.

This provision was attached to the Michigan Constitution by its framers in 1963. The purpose of the December 14th session simply stated was to bring to the educational leadership of Michigan a ballot question that would be presented to the voters of this state within one year--should the State of Michigan have a Constitutional Convention?

The seminar session was divided into three segments. The first segment of the seminar laid the groundwork for what was to come. During the Constitutional Convention of 1961-62, which produced the Michigan Constitution of 1963, a film was produced by Wayne State University entitled "Michigan Can Lead the Way." The film was shown to the Michigan Education Seminar participants. The film, albeit only a surface study of the "Con-Con," refreshed the memories of the state's educational influentials as to what the key issues of the convention were.

Two of the central actors in the convention further strengthened the impression that the Constitutional Convention of 1961-62 was an important event in Michigan history. Weldon Yeager, a Republican delegate to Con-Con (and subsequently a state legislator) was first

to provide his impressions of the constitution-building process. A major interest of Yeager during the convention of 1961-62 and since has been questions of general and education taxation. He provided a position in favor of retaining the existing constitution, and modifying outdated or ineffective provisions through amendment. Adelaide Hart was a Democratic delegate to the 1961-62 convention. As a member of the Convention Committee on Education, Hart, a former teacher, became a leading authority on educational issues in the constitution. She also spearheaded the effort in 1962 to block the passage by the voters of the convention's product. She failed in her effort by only a few hundred votes statewide. Since 1963, Hart has watched the legislature and the courts as they have attempted to implement and interpret what in her opinion is a defective document. She identified those educational provisions that have been altered since 1963, and she recommended several changes to the education sections of the constitution that could be adopted in a new convention.

With the history of the 1963 constitution provided, we moved to the next segment of the Michigan Education Seminar program. Both the Republican and Democratic parties of Michigan were, in December of 1977, in the process of holding party hearings on the question of calling a new convention. Both Yeager and Hart had participated in this process. Also participating in this process were the two major state party chairmen, and both chairmen were present to testify before the educational leadership in Michigan.

Morley Winograd, the State Democratic Chairman, kicked off this segment by forecasting what the educational community would learn

as fact within the next several months--that a "tax revolution was occurring in Michigan." Winograd testified that throughout the state he had heard time and time again that people are "fed up with property taxes." Concomitantly, Winograd observed, Democrats were telling him that they were convinced that "while the cost of education is going up, the quality of education is going down." Winograd predicted that the school community would be faced with separate issues on the 1978 ballot to both limit state taxation and state spending, and to limit local property taxes while permitting the development of a "voucher plan" for education.

Republican Chairman William McLaughlin did not refute Winograd's observations about the status of the tax revolt and the citizens' perception of their schools. But he did emphasize that in his opinion, and the opinion of his Party, holding a constitutional convention would be the wrong thing to do at this time. McLaughlin identified a series of reasons why the constitutional convention question should be defeated. Among his reasons against the issue were: (1) the constitution has worked well to protect basic freedoms; (2) it lacks legal maturity, and needs more time to develop; (3) it has been very rarely amended; (4) many of the proposed changes could be taken care of by the Legislature; (5) there is no perfect constitution; and (6) the cost of a convention is very high.

The party chairmen and their colleagues from the 1961-62 convention were met with a barrage of questions from MES participants. Many of the questions were highly technical, involving the delegate nomination and election process and the process for writing and

adopting the new constitution. Subsequent feedback confirmed that much of the information provided during this segment of the session was taken back to the major educational organizations in the state, and that it helped to shape their organizational positions on this question.

After a brief break in the session, Senator Jack Faxon, Chairman of the Michigan Senate Education Committee, a MES participant, and a Democratic convention delegate in 1961-62, provided his insight and observations about what has happened "between then and now." His presentation outlined the "grave dangers" of a constitutional convention. Unlike his Democratic colleague, Winograd, Senator Faxon concluded that "amendment" is a better process than the convention when it comes to state constitutions.

From "insights and observations," the Seminar moved to a more statistical analysis of what has happened to the constitution between 1963 and 1978. Presenting a paper on this subject was Robert Queller, Research Director for the esteemed Citizens' Research Council of Michigan. Queller's paper identified the two changes that have been proposed for the education section of the constitution since 1963. In the tax section, three attempts to permit graduated income taxation have failed.

Senator Bursley, chairman of the seminar co-sponsoring Educational Council of Michigan, concluded the conference by emphasizing that in his opinion the goal of the conference had been accomplished. "Our goal was to bring out in the open some of the major education issues that might surface if there is a constitutional convention

called by the people of Michigan, and to get our state leadership thinking about them."

Seminar 3: The Impact of Declining
Enrollments--March 6, 1978,
Lansing, Michigan

For a variety of reasons that will be elaborated upon at a later point, Seminar 3 is the session that has been chosen for the more detailed interaction analysis that follows.

The American public education system has gone through a series of dramatic adjustments to changing enrollments in the past two decades. In the period beginning several years after the end of World War II, public education began to feel the intense pressure created by rapidly expanding enrollments. In the late fifties, the birth rate began to peak, although it is only in retrospect that the peak is recognized for the dramatic impact it would have on educational programming. Beginning in the early sixties, school enrollments began to plummet.

The effects of declining enrollments in Michigan public education have been felt for several years. It is only in the last few years that the impact of this national phenomenon could be seen at every level of education in Michigan. What is the likelihood that enrollments will continue to decline? How can school districts, and colleges and universities, respond to enrollment losses? What problems are associated with enrollment drops? Who on the state level is responsible for monitoring this problem and providing assistance to districts and institutions attempting to respond to associated problems?

On March 6, about 50 education policy leaders in Michigan were assembled by the Michigan Education Seminars to address the problem of declining enrollments. Some of the most qualified experts in Michigan education were assembled to present enrollment projections and to propose means of responding to declining enrollments that could be discussed in an open forum on this subject.

Among those presenting information on the declining enrollment problem in Michigan education were:

- Dr. Malcolm Katz, Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- Dr. Fred Whims, Director, Education Division, Michigan Department of Management and Budget;
- Dr. Fred Ignatovich and Dr. Stan Hecker, College of Education, Michigan State University
- Dr. David Goldberg, Director of the Detroit Population Study, The University of Michigan;
- Dr. Homer Elseroad, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education, Education Commission of the States, Denver;
- Senator Kerry Kammer, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee on Education;
- Representative Jim O'Neill, Chairman, House Appropriations Sub-Committee on Education.

The following is a brief summary of the major points of the presentations on declining enrollments.

The Michigan Department of Education completed a comprehensive task force report on declining enrollments in May of 1977. Their enrollment projections for Michigan public education were not optimistic.

- . Between 1975 and 1985, Michigan will lose 20 percent of its elementary school enrollment.
- . By 1992, the number of Michigan high school graduates will be at least one-third less than the number of 1972 graduates.

Most experts agree that there are two major causes of declining enrollments in Michigan. First, and most obvious, is the dramatic reduction in live births in Michigan. In 1957, the birth rate reached a high of 208,000. This resulted in an elementary enrollment peak at the kindergarten level in the 1962-63 school year. In contrast to this figure was a birth rate of 131,000 in 1976. Second, Michigan's declining enrollment problems are compounded by an economy that has been marked by a fairly dramatic loss of industry to the sun-belt and other states. Michigan has been losing industry, and with it go workers and their families.

Several problems are associated with enrollment losses in the public schools. Katz referred to this as the "cascading effects" of declining enrollments.

- . Teaching, a profession which once claimed "mobility" as a major drawing card, is now a relatively static profession. The increasing average age of teachers on a staff has caused the average salaries of staff members to go up.
- . As the average age (and years out of college) of teachers increases, the need for professional development programs increases. Professional development will inflate average per pupil educational costs.
- . The teacher tenure commission is under increasing pressure as the docket of cases brought by teachers who have been released by districts attempting to adjust to declining enrollments continues to grow.

Among the Department of Education suggestions for responding to enrollment drops were:

1. The adoption of further state school aid adjustments for districts suffering large enrollment decline;
2. the innovative utilization of vacant K-12 school buildings by intermediate districts and community colleges;

3. the utilization by the state of local school district projections in school bonding program approvals.

Dr. Fred Whims, of the State Department of Management and Budget, indicated that he had supervised an independent staff analysis of the impact of enrollment losses upon local school districts. Their findings were to be submitted to the governor. (The OMB recommendations subsequently were reported to the Michigan Education Seminars by Douglas Smith, Special Assistant to the Governor, at a session held on June 5, 1978.

Whims stated that the major purpose of the Department of Management and Budget study was to develop a model that could determine how different type school districts are affected by large enrollment drops. But, the report by Whims was not limited to K-12 education. For example, Whims observed that:

1. state college and university enrollments have dropped by about 1 percent per year for the past three years;
2. three universities (W.S.U., E.M.U., W.M.U.) are currently bearing the greatest burden of the enrollment decline;
3. major enrollment drops are beginning to occur at the community college level.

Whims indicated that the state's budget department was prepared to recommend to the governor that state efforts to relieve some of the problems associated with enrollment drops be continued, and perhaps expanded.

Dr. Fred Ignatovich and Dr. Stan Hecker are two acknowledged experts in Michigan education in the area of population projection. Their method of population projection, a "cohort survival" process,

provides a presumably accurate method of projecting school populations over a twenty-year period.

Their presentation was of a "good news--bad news" nature.

First the good news:

- . 1977 saw the first measurable incline (roughly 6 percent) in birth rate in Michigan in several years.

Now the bad news:

- . The enrollment declines will continue. Minor increases in the birth rate can stabilize populations, but many districts, particularly in urban centers, should expect continued declines;
- . There will be 14,600 fewer teaching positions in Michigan by 1981, far more than the number that could be assumed by attrition.

Dr. David Goldberg, a University of Michigan sociologist and recognized population studies expert, concentrated his presentation on the impact of K-12 declining enrollments on higher education. Unlike most of his colleagues, Goldberg appealed to the MES participants not to overreact to enrollment losses at the K-12 level when projecting future higher education enrollments. "I don't believe we are facing declining enrollments in college . . . where we are dealing with a population that has a choice about going to school." Goldberg emphasized that the college enrollment rate has been relatively stable. Where many experts feel the low-enrollment tide hasn't hit the college level yet, Goldberg suggested that college enrollment will not be affected dramatically by a lower birth rate and out-migration:

- . first-time enrollments in universities constitute only 17-18 percent of the total. According to Goldberg, more older people are going to college;
- . female enrollees are increasing as a percentage of the total;

- . part of the declining birth rate is a function of families spacing their children over a longer period of time. One of the effects of this spacing is that more money will be available for the family to send their children to state colleges and universities.

Goldberg said that despite Whims' presentation to the contrary, total enrollments are actually increasing at Michigan universities and colleges and the trend, he expects, will continue.

Dr. Homer Elseroad, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Education Commission of the States (ECS), was asked to provide MES with the national perspective on what is being done on a state-by-state level to deal with declining enrollments. He spoke of the universal problems of declining enrollments, the ancillary issues, and the various state methods of dealing with the problem.

The national school enrollment is fairly consistent with the picture in Michigan. Some states, particularly the so-called sun belt states, are experiencing an increase caused by in-migration. The enrollment drops that are occurring across the nation apply fairly equally to both public and private schools. The trend, according to Elseroad, is not expected to bottom-out until about 1983.

The impact of declining enrollment, when compounded with inflation rates, has been devastating to certain districts. The imposition of new programs has also dramatically increased costs over the past several years. Elseroad listed as examples handicapped programs, compensatory education, early childhood programs, and accountability and competency laws that require expanded administrative services.

A large number of state legislators have attempted to ease the burden on declining-enrollment districts by a variety of adjustments

to state school aid plans. Most of these adjustments have come in the form of "hold-harmless" provisions, allowing districts in decline to use an average of previous years' enrollment or to count "phantom students," some percentage of the loss over the previous years.

Districts capitalizing on enrollment loss have used this problem as an incentive for reduced pupil-teacher ratios, school consolidation and reorganization, and the closing of obsolete facilities. Other districts have found means of turning vacant buildings over to allied social agencies for other uses, such as senior citizen and community centers.

The declining enrollment has facilitated change in tenure and teacher contract laws. If the "bad" situation of declining enrollment is producing any uniformly "good" result, it is in "helping state education agencies and local districts develop the capacity to do better planning, better projections. . . ."

The summary discussion of the seminar on the impact of declining enrollments was "the legislative reaction." No two more direct and influential legislative participants could have been identified to react to the seminar subject than the chairmen of the two education appropriations sub-committees of the legislature--Senator Kerry Kammer and Representative James O'Neill. This segment of the program was chaired by MES Steering Committee member/Senate Fiscal Agency Director Eugene Farnum.

Farnum began the session by pointing out that Senator Kammer was taking the problem of declining enrollments into his own hands--his wife was soon due to deliver their second child. Later that

evening, the schools of Oakland County had a new student for the fall of 1983.

Kammer began his presentation by unveiling some "instant answers" to the problems of declining enrollments. One participant, he said, had suggested to him the expansion of the K-12 system of K-36, with a mandatory school age of 42. Perhaps the greatest problem with declining enrollment is that it is difficult to comprehend as a problem, said Kammer. "It is difficult for us in the political arena to communicate to our constituents why costs continue to rise or continue to stay the same when the number of pupils decline. To tell someone their school district has dropped from 18,000 to 15,000 and yet there hasn't been an appreciable reduction in cost is one of the difficulties . . . it's not easily communicated, it's not easily told."

Kammer observed that different communities can absorb different percentages of costs from enrollment declines, and he said he wanted to find out what factors control these differences. He also observed that his colleague, Representative O'Neill, was perhaps first to point out how unfortunate it is that declining enrollments have only in the past two or three years been significant enough as a political issue to command a search for solutions. Certain urban areas suffered losses several years ago, their enrollment drop has tapered off, and they are now not eligible for full participation in the funding solutions.

Jim O'Neill has handled education funding in the House of Representatives for many years. His district, Saginaw, is an urban center that suffered major enrollment decline several years ago. He

stated: "I'm sorry I'm not that upset with it [declining enrollment] right now because we've been through the traumatic condition of declining enrollment in my area." O'Neill stressed that the history of the problem of declining enrollments must be taken into consideration when the state acts to deal with this problem. He also emphasized the extreme difficulty that legislators have in explaining how they can design programs that fund more for less.

An essential political problem associated with declining enrollments is school closings. "When you talk about closing a school, or consolidating a district," said O'Neill, "all anyone can remember is the 1946 Husky team that went undefeated, and they are looking forward to that happening again in 1980. And if you close their school in 1979, they won't ever have that chance to win again."

"Another problem associated with the enrollment decline," he continued, "is a problem with K-12 districts accepting tuition students from smaller districts--a problem of 'raiding.' In the old days, it used to be the star quarterback or the basketball center, but now it's for warm bodies."

During the question and answer period, Kammer and O'Neill were asked about possible state incentives that could be provided for school district consolidation. Both legislators expressed apprehension about this notion. In fact, O'Neill suggested that a more reasonable alternative might be to eliminate declining enrollment aid, thus forcing consolidation upon districts too small to otherwise operate efficiently.

Kammer suggested that perhaps the major obstacle to a school district adjusting to changing enrollments is neighborhood political pressure that makes it virtually impossible to close a school. He stated,

I sort of hate to see any school building go out of public ownership. There was a long period of time when these school buildings were under-utilized, and now in my area at least, I am seeing them come into full utilization. They are being used for many other things besides the K-12 program. I see them being used for evening courses, recreation, drama classes, tumbling--they have become community centers, so to speak. I am loathe to see them go out of public ownership or use. I'm just wondering whether the federal government . . . makes commitments regularly for the purchase of land and facilities to provide recreational opportunity. If they were to somehow take over . . . the obligation of those buildings, and perhaps lease back classrooms to the schools, this might make it possible for districts to adjust, and keep the parents off their back.

Several participants expressed concern over the impact that the declining-enrollment crisis is having on the teaching profession. Mary Kay Kosa, a classroom teacher and a former MEA president, said:

I've never felt so old in my life as I do now because I'm one of those people who are at the upper edge of the teaching level. I think those of us who have been in public education for a long time are very concerned that there are few avenues for new, young people in the teaching profession. . . .

Early-retirement incentives was one of the methods suggested for bringing younger teachers into the profession.

The session was concluded with general observations about the heightened awareness of the participants about the short-range and long-range ramifications of the problem of declining enrollments for Michigan education.

Seminar 4: Educational Policy in the
Carter Administration--and a Federal
Department of Education; An Address
by Dr. William Pierce, Executive
Deputy, U.S. Office of Education--
April 14, 1978, East Lansing, Michigan

What promised to be just another speech on educational policy and the need for a federal department of education turned out to be a delightful, informal, and informative afternoon with Dr. William Pierce (Executive Deputy Commissioner of USOE) as he talked with his many friends attending the fourth session of the 1977-78 Michigan Education Seminars on the subject, "Educational Policy in the Carter Administration." His many friends in Michigan education call him "Bill," and they have watched him rise from Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Michigan to acting U.S. Commissioner on Education.

Augmenting the audience of nearly fifty, including graduate education students, university professors, executives from the state's legislative branch, school district officials, and officials of the state's major education-related associations, were members of the DOE Administrative Council, personally invited by Superintendent of Public Instruction John Porter.

Senator Bursley, Chairman of the Education Council of Michigan, called the session to order and announced that in response to an earlier MES seminar on "declining enrollments," Douglas Smith of the governor's office had asked to present Governor Milliken's proposals on the subject at the next session of the MES. The request was warmly received.

He also reported that a nationwide educational policy leader issue survey, which MES participants completed at the first session of 1977-78, had been tabulated. School finance, Senator Bursley reported, had lost its crown as the number one educational issue in America. Assuming the title was an issue that has rapidly gained its status as a heavyweight: "basic skills and minimal competencies."

In concluding this section of the program, Bursley introduced Dr. Frank Hartman, the federal legislative liaison for the State Department of Education. Hartman introduced Pierce.

Pierce's comments were both informative and entertaining.

For example:

On his boss's attitudes about smoking:

NEW Secretary Califano says: "USOE has done the least of any agency to carry out his initiative against smoking. If you get beyond the jokes and listen to what he is saying about kids who smoke . . . there is certainly medical evidence to support his position."

On the bureaucratic resistance to the move to create a federal department of education:

"Nobody resists change. . . . We all just resist being changed."

On Secretary Califano's perceived resistance to the new federal department of education:

"As I watch him, he is so intent on trying to bring about educational change, he just doesn't want to lose the principal vehicle he has to accomplish that."

On the likelihood of massive increases in federal education financing:

"This administration does not view the federal well as bottomless."

On Secretary Califano's "Project Common Sense" to debureaucratize the HEW rules and regulations:

"You'd think that a bunch of folks who were supposedly educated, and educated through the schools we say are doing a good job, could write regulations so that people could read them and understand them."

On whose fault this is:
"The lawyers'."

On community-school relations:
"We simply cannot turn our back on the role of the community, of the mayor, of the industries, in this whole business of educating kids."

On the concept of general aid to education:
"That does not seem to be popular with the administration at this time."

On the political clout provided education because of its relationship in the Health, Education and Welfare Department:
"I think we get squeezed between health and welfare."

On minimal competencies:
"After you have achieved equality of access, you have to ask the question 'access to what?'"

On the congressional reaction to the Administration's elementary and secondary education amendments proposal:
"If you read HR 15 carefully, although Congress did not accept many of our proposals, the final version contains significant amounts of the Administration's proposals."

What he doesn't miss about Michigan:
"The weather."

Pierce identified several areas of policy concern in the current administration. Among these are:

1. the creation of a federal department of education;
2. a concern for children from middle-income families seeking assistance in higher education, without losing sight of the basic purpose of Basic Opportunity Grants, and other programs aimed at children from a poverty background;
3. a concern over educational quality;
4. an examination of the common core curriculum concept, with an emphasis on basic skills;
5. a global perspective--the interrelationships between different cultures from a variety of viewpoints; and
6. efficiency at the federal level--streamlining the USOE.

Pierce also explained that internal teams had been developed within USOE to establish policy in the following areas:

1. teacher education--"What is the role of the federal government in teacher education?"
2. gifted and talented students,
3. the urban high school,
4. community-school relations, and
5. the relationship between formal and informal education.

Pierce said that he sensed a return to "competitive grants" rather than general education aid. He said that he doesn't, however, see this movement as an attempt to reduce the state's role. He emphasized that integration and desegregation programs are enjoying renewed interest in Washington. Pierce was optimistic that a new federal education agency will be created within the President's first term. He cited several areas of resistance generated largely by forces that do not want to be contained in such a new department, and he emphasized that such a department could provide greater communication between the federal, state, and local governments.

Seminar 5: Michigan Education Seminar
Meets the Federal Government--June 2,
1978, Detroit, Michigan

One of the best reasons for a state education seminar series to be affiliated with a national organization such as the Institute for Educational Leadership is that it provides opportunities for state educational leaders and policymakers with a national perspective to meet and confer. One such occasion occurred in early June when eleven participants in the Michigan Education Seminars met with sixteen

federal officials who were completing a tour of ESAA and ESEA Title I programs in the City of Detroit.

The federal officials represented the central office of Health, Education and Welfare Department, the National Institute of Education, the United States Office of Education, and the Congress. The expressed purpose of teaming MES participants with the federal officials participating in the IEL-funded Detroit site study was to interact with them on the subject of the implementation of the Detroit compensatory education and desegregation programs funded by the federal government. The discussion evolved early into an excellent give and take between Michigan education policy leaders and their federal colleagues.

Donna Gold, organizer of the trip for IEL, opened the program by emphasizing that the trip to Detroit "was not an investigation." It was essentially designed to give certain federal officials an opportunity to take a hands-on look at how federal programs "work at the state level and how they don't work." Before a discussion on the stated topics could begin, however, a HEW official asked MES participants to identify some major educational issues facing Michigan. Some of the issues raised are highlighted below:

Higher Education--"the inadequate competency level of students entering Michigan higher education"

One participant observed that "roughly 50 percent of the students entering our university do not make the cutoff point for taking normal coursework." Another participant stressed the need for improved "Upward Bound" funding by reporting that approximately 85 percent of all entering freshmen at one major state university are "in great need of improved communication skills."

Minimal Competency Testing

The Detroit schools reported that they are in the process of developing a test for high school graduation. The Department of Education expressed some negative feelings about 12th grade testing, but stressed that it had made strides in statewide assessment and life-role competency models.

"The band-aid approach will not work," said one state official. "We need to work over the whole system . . . to deal with competencies early on." We are most concerned," he continued, "with the entire question of secondary [education] reform."

The state's compensatory education director, Eugene Paslov (now Interim State Superintendent of Public Instruction), outlined five concerns regarding Title I, and asked the federal officials to take these concerns to heart and to Washington:

1. Formula: Michigan officials are concerned that certain of the new allocation proposals will cause leader states such as Michigan to "take a bath" in Title I funding;
2. Professional Development: There is a clear need for the federal government to advance efforts to fund programs to train compensatory education personnel;
3. Secondary Education: Because of problems in higher education reported earlier, and for many other reasons, efforts should be made to advance secondary-level compensatory education programs;
4. Parental Involvement: "We would like to see legislation speak more forcefully to parental involvement."
5. Youth Employment and Training: We haven't done much at the federal or the state level to articulate the myriad of programs aimed at youth training, employment, job development, career education, alternative education, out-of-school youth, and the like.

Federal and state education policymakers discussed a variety of other issues, including:

A federal department of education--most of the MES participants had heard Deputy U.S. Commissioner of Education William Pierce on this subject just one month earlier;

The tax limitation movement--is this effort going to be responsible for full federal education funding as the only way to run the schools?

Upward bound--with re-authorization of this program due next year, which aspects should be stressed by staff?

State-federal relations--state legislatures, especially in Michigan, are particularly resentful of so-called federal turnkey programs. Various suggestions were made as to how federal-state relations in education policy making could be improved.

Seminar 6: Manpower Training and Education: The CETA/YEDPA Program and the Governor's Recommendations on Declining Enrollments--June 5, 1978, East Lansing, Michigan

About thirty Michigan education policy leaders attended the sixth session of the Michigan Education Seminars. The sixth session of the Michigan Education Seminars for 1977-78 was "special" for several reasons.

First, it marked the completion of the first year of programming under the current coordinator--a year marked by the participation of over one hundred policymakers at various levels of Michigan educational politics.

Second, it was the first seminar in which the regular participants were able to see the impact of their labors in terms of direct policy feedback. The governor's special assistant for education, Douglas Smith, brought to the participants a series of recommendations on declining enrollments, influenced, if not generated, by an earlier seminar session. It was at this sixth MES session that a series of recommendations from the governor's office on the controversial issue of declining enrollment funding were unveiled. This action occurred in the midst of the annual school aid struggle which was occurring in legislative halls. It cued, if it didn't outline,

the Governor's reaction to pending legislative action on this critical issue in Michigan education.

Third, this seminar marked the accomplishment of an earlier stated objective of the coordinator--to bring educators together with allied social service providers for a discussion of a subject of mutual concern and interest. The leaders in both the State Department of Education and the State Department of Labor participated in the formulation of the seminar program and the ultimate presentation of the material.

This section of the summary is separated into two parts and presented in the same order as the seminar program.

The governor's recommendations on declining enrollments.--An earlier seminar session in March had been devoted to the subject of declining enrollments. At that session, the Director of the Education Division of the State Department of Management and Budget indicated that a study on the effect of declining enrollment on various-sized school districts was in process at the request of the governor. This, itself, was news to many state education leaders. Following the March session, the coordinator met with Douglas Smith, the governor's education advisor, who indicated a willingness to float the findings of the report and its recommendations at a future MES session. Time was made available at the June 5 session for Smith to present his findings.

Smith began with a brief historical overview of the development of the declining enrollment crisis in Michigan education. He identified the development of the declining enrollment as a problem being related to a school aid formula "driven by student enrollment."

He said the governor's office has developed data that indicated that no more than 40-50 percent of the state funds lost in a declining enrollment situation could be absorbed in the first year. The variables studied by the Department and the governor's office to determine a district's ability to adjust to enrollment declines included:

1. amount of decline,
2. uniformity of decline throughout the K-12 district,
3. location of school district (a comparison of rural versus urban districts), and
4. school and class size.

Factors identified that need additional study included:

1. the age and maturity of the faculty and
2. the age of the buildings.

From these factors a model was built to see how, given various assumptions, the district could respond to declining enrollments.

According to Smith, a preliminary utilization of the model described indicated that the districts having the greatest difficulty adapting to enrollment decline are small districts with low decline. Large school districts with large declines "are more easily able to take the actions to bring the budget back down to a place where it matches the kind of potential revenue loss that occurs with a loss of enrollments."

Smith indicated that using a spectrum ranging from small districts at one end to large districts at the other end (with various rates of decline) the governor modified an earlier executive proposal on declining enrollment funding. The governor's revised proposal identified a population of 7,500 students as the breaking point between

large and small districts. The formula reflected the thinking that larger districts could be expected to absorb a greater percentage of lost revenue through internal adjustments. Therefore, smaller districts would receive a higher rate of return from the state for the so-called "phantom student." Smith predicted that this would be the first year that a "major expenditure" would be made for districts suffering enrollment declines. He also predicted that the governor's funding formula would be largely ignored by the legislature this year.

Smith made two other observations related to this subject. An attempt should be made to deal with enrollment declines "within the confines of the formula--the fewer categoricals we have the better. The problem is a formula-related problem." Second, the problem of declining enrollments relates to the overall adequacy of state school financing. "If you didn't have enough money in the first place, you are trying to go back to a place . . . which wasn't adequate to begin with."

As somewhat incidental, but meaningful insights, Smith recommended that the entire education community confront the issue of expanding noninstructional costs. One other area of concern expressed by Smith is that we don't know what we are spending on special education statewide, and how much total funding is coming from where. An alternative to the use of categoricals for dealing with declining enrollment would be to improve the "front-end" of the formula so that it would cover the cost of decline.

The Manpower Training/Education--CETA-YEDPA Program.--This segment of the June 5, 1978, MES session was organized to provide a

perspective from the federal, state, and local levels to Michigan education policymakers. "The Federal Perspective" was provided by Christine Chudd, youth program specialist with the U.S. Department of Labor. "The State Perspective" was provided by a joint presentation of program specialists from both the Department of Education and the Department of Labor: Richard Jackson, Michigan Department of Education, and Robert Pendleton, Michigan Department of Labor. An overview of the state perspective was provided by State Superintendent John W. Porter, who besides his many other achievements has served on a presidential panel on this subject. "The Local Perspective" was provided by representatives of the major state recipient of CETA-YEDPA funding, the Detroit Public Schools. Representing Michigan's largest school district was Peter Manos.

Chudd's presentation identified the goals of new federal legislation defining and funding youth employment training programs. One of his major premises was that through the CETA program a closer alliance can be built between the education and the employment and manpower training communities.

Dr. John Porter, Michigan's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, believes that youth employment and training is the "second most important item that I have to deal with next to the overall quality of Michigan education. It is the most elusive issue that I have come across." Porter has long been involved in the issue of youth employment and training. He has served on a presidential panel on this subject, and in recent months has helped to establish a close

working relationship with Michigan Labor Department Director C. Patrick Babcock. Babcock says that articulation of CETA-type programs with the education community is essential to the achievement of its long-range goals.

Richard Jackson, of the Michigan Department of Education, presented the Department's position on CETA programs. He said the Department is intent on achieving a closer relationship between education and youth employment--that this is a central issue in the delivery of services to youth and that he saw the MES session as a unique chance to advise local education service providers how to better utilize the myriad of opportunities under CETA-YEDPA. "Some educators, said Jackson, "are fearful about programs within CETA moving into education." To some degree this fear grows out of a feeling that CETA-type programs encourage students to drop out of school programs. About the YEDPA program, Jackson said "these are demonstration projects--experiments . . . to test a variety of hypotheses . . . to explore ways to deal with transition from school to work. The federal government is beginning to recognize that a priority activity for youth must be the acquisition of basic skills. Work must be a part of the overall program, but work should be secondary and complementary [to the basic education program]." Jackson identified a variety of measures taken by the Department of Education to create a better relationship between school and adult life. Among these measures are a variety of internal task forces on the subject, created and chaired by Superintendent Porter, and in liaison with the State Department of Labor.

Bob Pendleton oversees the section of the Department of Labor responsible for the state administration of CETA. He began his presentation to MES by emphasizing that CETA is due for a congressional rewrite and that now is the time for the school community to speak up and voice their concerns in Washington, D.C. Educators have a great role to play in all of the CETA programs in Michigan, said Pendleton. Over \$500 million CETA funds will be expended in Michigan this year.

Under CETA programs for the "structurally unemployed" there is almost no interest in placing educational requirements on the program participants, Pendleton pointed out. In Washington a critical CETA debate evolves around this question of what services should be provided to, and what should be required of, the structurally unemployed. Pendleton said he welcomed the opportunity to address top-level education policy leaders, "to alert you that there is a large amount of CETA money in the state--and a lot of areas in which educators can make a difference. There is a role for educators in CETA," Pendleton stressed.

Superintendent Porter said that one of his primary goals as the chief state school officer in Michigan is to "achieve a linkage between secondary education and employment--as strong as the linkage between secondary and higher education. We want to have the Michigan Departments of Education and Labor be the employer of last resort for students and unemployed adults," said Porter. "The state should be compelled to see that young people get jobs."

Porter identified seven major problems in this policy area:

1. A lack of coordination between schools and labor--"we are working on that";
2. A lack of differentiation between in-school youth and out-of-school youth;
3. The absence of a clear relationship between educators and employment--the student has no insurance that he can get a job;
4. The lack of standards between CETA and vocational education;
5. The lack of compatibility between summer school experience and year-round experiences related to schooling;
6. The lack of a national commitment to reduce youth unemployment;
7. The lack of national, state, and local mechanisms to link jobs and youth together.

Porter committed himself to addressing these problems during the next several months. The Detroit Public Schools is the major recipient of CETA-YEDPA funds in Michigan. Peter Manos, Project Director, addressed MES concerning the problems of administration that confront a local school embarking upon this project. This was a most useful segment of the program, if for no other reason than it gave the federal and state administrators a clear view of the many obstacles, where removal could lead to a more direct and complete achievement of the lofty goals of CETA-YEDPA.

Criteria for Selecting the Seminar for Interaction Analysis

The March 2, 1978, seminar session on declining enrollment was selected for an analysis of the interaction among participants. A variety of the similarities of the six seminar sessions were identified in the introduction to this chapter. The researcher selected the declining-enrollment session to review in detail, based on several additional criteria.

Session Attendance

How well attended were the sessions, and which seminar sessions involved the broadest cross-section of participants?

Of the six sessions, participant attendance ranged from a high of thirty-nine (March 16, 1978, Declining Enrollments, Lansing) to a low of ten (June 2, 1978, Federal Education Officials, Detroit).

The participant attendance is, at best, an estimate. During every session certain individuals came and went, and it is suspected that a number of invited participants are not represented on the specific session attendance sheets. Further, "participant" is defined as an individual who was selected to participate in the seminar session and was represented in the "participant list" of the seminar series. Seminar attendees who were special guests of official participants, speakers in the session, or others are not reflected in the seminar attendance figures. (See Table 1, Participant Attendance.)

A definition of a session as "well-attended" must, however, include more information than the simple total number of invited seminar participants who attended. To judge how well-attended the various sessions were, the researcher looked at the four individual categories of seminar participants: executive branch, legislative branch, educational interest groups, and other interest groups.

Although Table 2 provides a detailed report of the participation of segments of each of the four categories of seminar participants, an overview of each one of the four categories provides sufficient detail to make a judgment about which seminar was best attended.

Table 1.--Participant attendance.

Session	Session Title	Total Participants ^a
Seminar 1	Identification of Key Education Issues--September 14, 1978	27
Seminar 2	The Impact of a Constitutional Convention on Michigan Education--December 14, 1977	31
Seminar 3	The Impact of Declining Enrollments--March 6, 1978	39
Seminar 4	Educational Policy in the Carter Administration--and a Federal Department of Education; An Address by Dr. William Pierce, Executive Deputy, U.S. Office of Education--April 14, 1978	17
Seminar 5	Michigan Education Seminar Meets the Federal Government--June 2, 1978	10
Seminar 6	Manpower Training and Education: The CETA/YEDPA Program and the Governor's Recommendations on Declining Enrollments--June 5, 1978	17

^aParticipants include those attendees who were invited to attend the session from the MES participant list. The numbers do not reflect attendees who were not regularly invited participants in MES.

Table 2.--Seminar participation, by category.

	September 14, 1977 Planning	December 12, 1977 Constitution	March 6, 1978 Declining Enroll.	April 14, 1978 Federal Education	June 2, 1978 Fed. Ed. (Detroit)	June 5, 1978 CETA/YEPDA	Totals	Average
<u>Executive Branch</u>								
Governor's Office	1	1	0	0	1	1	4	1
Michigan Department of Educ.	3	3	5	5	3	3	22	4
Other	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0
Total	4	5	6	5	4	4	28	5
<u>Legislative Branch</u>								
House Republicans	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
House Democrats	2	0	4	0	0	0	6	1
Senate Republicans	2	2	2	0	2	3	11	2
Senate Democrats	1	2	2	1	1	0	7	1
Nonpartisans	1	2	3	1	0	1	8	1
Total	6	6	11	2	3	4	32	5
<u>Educational Interest Groups</u>								
Higher Education	2	6	4	1	2	1	16	3
K-12 Labor	3	2	4	1	0	0	10	2
K-12 Management	4	4	3	2	0	3	16	3
K-12 Principals	1	1	2	0	0	0	4	1
Total	10	13	12	4	2	4	45	8
Other Interest Groups	7	6	10	5	1	5	34	6
Total Attendance	27	31	39	17	10	17	141	24

Table 3.--Attendance at the seminar session on declining enrollment,
by category.

Executive Branch

Phil Hawkins, Director of Planning, Michigan Department of Education
 Malcolm Katz, Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction
 Robert McKerr, Associate Superintendent for Finance, Michigan
 State Department of Education
 Dan Shultz, Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent
 of Public Instruction
 Fred Whims, Analyst, Michigan Department of Management and Budget
 Pat Widmayer, Director, Office of Legislation and School Law,
 Michigan Department of Education

Legislative Branch

Thomas Bernthal, Administrative Assistant to Senator Gilbert Bursley
 Gilbert Bursley, State Senator, Member, State Committee on Education
 Eugene Caesar, Education Consultant to the Speaker of the House
 Eugene Farnum, Director, Senate Fiscal Agency
 Kerry Kammer, State Senator, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Sub-
 committee on Appropriations
 Bill Kieth, State Representative, Vice-Chairman, House Committee on
 Education
 James O'Neill, State Representative, Chairman, House Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Appropriations
 Xylphia Orr, Administrative Assistant to Eugene Caesar
 Gary Sullenger, Fiscal Analyst, House Fiscal Agency
 Tom Wagomen, Fiscal Analyst, House Fiscal Agency
 Wilfred Webb, Administrative Assistant to Senator Billie Huffman

Educational Interest Groups

Fred Bertolaet, Assistant Dean, College of Education, University of
 Michigan
 Lloyd Cofer, Assistant to the President, Michigan State University
 Robert Ewigleban, President, Ferris State College
 Ed Farhat, Public Affairs Director, Michigan Catholic Conference
 Sister Monica Kostelney, Administrative Assistant, Michigan Catholic
 Conference
 Henry Linne, President, Michigan Federation of Teachers
 William Mays, Executive Director, Michigan Elementary and Middle
 Schools Principals Association
 Manuel Pierson, Dean, Student Services, Oakland University

Table 3.--Continued.

Educational Interest Groups (cont'd)

Eldon Rosegart, Legislative Liaison, Michigan Association of School Boards, Member, Waterford Public Schools Board of Education
David Ruhala, Legislative Liaison, Michigan Association of School Boards
Al Short, Legislative Liaison, Michigan Education Association
Dan Wellburn, Legislative Liaison, Michigan Education Association

Other Interest Groups

William Bridgeland, Faculty, Michigan State University
Edward Duane, Professor, College of Social Sciences, Michigan State University
David Goldberg, Director, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan
Stan Hecker, Professor, College of Education, Michigan State University
Fred Ignatovich, Professor, College of Education, Michigan State University
Mary Kay Kosa, Michigan Education Association
Elizabeth Kummer, Vice-President, League of Women Voters
Samuel Moore II, Professor, College of Education, Michigan State University
Roger Tilles, Attorney, Washington, D.C.

Participation of representatives of the executive branch of government was clearly the most consistent of any category of policy makers in the six seminars. In fact, executive branch participation ranged from a low of four (three sessions: September 14, 1978, Planning; June 2, 1978, Federal Education, Detroit; June 5, 1978, CETA) to a high of six (March 6, 1978, Declining Enrollment). A minimum of three officials from the Michigan Department of Education, and a maximum of five, participated in any individual seminar.

An average of five legislative invitees participated in the seminar sessions. Legislative participation is reported in Table 2, in five distinct categories. The categories, which combine legislative members and staff, include: House Democrat, House Republican, Senate Democrat, Senate Republican, and nonpartisan (staff). Legislative seminar participation ranged from a high of eleven (March 6, 1978, Declining Enrollments) to a low of two (June 2, 1978, Federal Education, Detroit).

Among educational interest groups, invitee participation in the seminars ranged from a high of thirteen (March 6, 1978, Declining Enrollments) to a low of two (June 2, 1978, Federal Education, Detroit). An average of eight educational interest group representatives from the invited participant list participated in each of the six seminars.

From the "other" interest groups category, an average of six individuals attended the sessions. Participation ranged from ten (March 6, 1978, Declining Enrollments) to one (June 2, 1978, Federal Education, Detroit).

The best-attended seminar was the session on declining enrollments. This statement is true in terms of the total number of policy-maker participants in attendance (thirty-nine as compared to an average of twenty-four for the six seminars). The declining-enrollment seminar also drew the largest number of participants from each of the four categories of policy makers (executive branch, legislative branch, educational interest groups, and other interest groups). (See Table 3.)

Universality and Currency
of the Subject

The seminar on declining enrollment involved the discussion of a subject that was both universal--affecting every element of education--and current--both the legislative and executive branches were considering the problem at the time of the seminar. For the purposes of conducting an analysis of the interaction among seminar participants, both of these factors were considered important.

In the first place, the participation in the seminar session would be presumed to involve a greater representation of policy makers if the subject area of interest was not confined to a specific group. The data reflecting the attendance in the seminar session may, in fact, be the best measure of the universal interest of the issue. If this rather commonsense presumption can be made, then the session on declining enrollments may have been the best attended by all categories of the educational policy makers because of the universal appeal of the subject.

A secondary reason for the interest in the subject of enrollment declines may have been the currency of the issue. In the K-12 and the higher education communities, public policy questions on how to handle enrollment losses were being discussed every day. In the K-12 sector, in fact, basic school finance questions on the funding of declining enrollments totalled more than \$20 million additional. In previous years the governor had vetoed proposals for financing enrollment losses. His disposition, at the time of the seminar, toward such funding could have significant consequences as the final funding package was being prepared for presentation to him.

Evidence of Impact

The purpose of this study was not to find evidence of the direct impact of the Michigan Education Seminars on the state's public policy. However, in the case of the state policy toward declining-enrollment funding, evidence is presented that suggests that the Michigan Education Seminars process may have significantly influenced the outcome of the eventual public policy action. As a consequence, the importance of analyzing the comments of various actors within the seminar session on this subject adopted a certain limited relevancy.

Availability of Data

Detailed taped transcripts were made of each of the six seminar sessions during the study. Those recordings, and supporting written transcripts, notes of the coordinator, supportive documents, and other materials, were reviewed to select a seminar upon which to

do a limited analysis of the interaction between participants and within the sessions.

Since verbatim records were kept for each session, the availability of detailed records played no role in the selection of the session for more detailed analysis. Information contained on the transcripts, however, was an important consideration. The most common complaint heard about the seminar sessions was that too many of these sessions were lecture oriented. To discuss the interaction among seminar participants in a particular session, therefore, a session had to be selected in which significant interaction between participants occurred. Although the total time-in interaction was not calculated for each session, the researcher concluded that interaction among participants and between participants and speakers in each of two sessions far exceeded interaction in any of the other sessions. The two sessions in which the greatest amount of interaction among participants occurred were June 2, 1978--Federal Education (Detroit)--and March 6, 1978--Declining Enrollments. Because of the variety of other factors relating to the cross-section of participants, and the universality and currency of the subject, the March 6, 1978, seminar on declining enrollments was the clear choice for the interaction analysis.

Summary

An analysis of the interaction of participants in a specific session of the Michigan Education Seminars was conducted. Seminar 3: The Impact of Declining Enrollments, March 6, 1978, Lansing, Michigan,

was selected as the proper session of the six upon which to conduct such an analysis for a variety of reasons, including:

1. Attendance at this session was representative of a broad cross-section of educational interests.
2. The subject was current.
3. The subject affected a variety of educational interests.
4. There is evidence that the public policy resolution of the subject was substantially altered by the session.
5. There was ample interaction among participants and between participants and guest speakers during this session.

A Summary Analysis of Some Major Exchanges
Among Participants

Rationale

Through the analysis of several sets of exchanges of participants in the March 6, 1978, Michigan Education Seminar on declining enrollments, the researcher demonstrates a few important points. The primary purpose of this analysis is to demonstrate the figurative nature of interaction in this series of seminars of top-level state educational policy makers. The researcher warns that a literal interpretation of the interactions and exchanges among policy makers engaged in a policy forum can be dangerously misleading. In an attempt to demonstrate this point, the researcher takes a series of statements from the transcript of the seminar session on declining enrollments. He attempts to identify several factors about the person making the statement, the person to whom it is possible to presume the statement was being made, the presumed position of the organization

represented by the person making the statement, the action that the statement may have signalled, and the wide variety of possible interpretations of the motivation and meaning of the statement. Emphasis in the analysis is placed on a variety of elements of the message, including the sender, the receiver, and the text of the message itself.

An Overview of Session Number 3

The seminar on declining enrollments has been discussed at several other points in this dissertation. A summary of the agenda and presentations at the seminar were discussed earlier in this chapter. Various aspects of the seminar are also reviewed in Chapter IV. For example, under the subheading "The Major Issues," a major discussion occurred on the way that the subject of declining enrollments came to be a topic of a Michigan Education Seminar session.

To review, the researcher was approached by Doug Smith, education advisor to the governor, with the suggestion that a seminar session be devoted to this issue. Smith was very clear in his rationale. The resolution of the declining-enrollment issue would be substantially influenced by the governor's budget office--particularly Dr. Fred Whims, Director of the Education Division of the Department of Management and Budget. Smith felt that in order for the budget division to become responsive to the difficult question of enrollment losses, they would have to experience, first hand, some of the major concerns of the leadership of the education community of the state. The Michigan Education Seminars, then, could become the forum to

provide such exposure to the governor's budget advisers. It could also expose the educational community to an internal problem facing Smith.

Legislative efforts in years past to institute a "hold-harmless" provision for districts suffering severe enrollment declines had only been approved by the governor at a very limited level. It is also important to note that at the time of the seminar, the chief budget officer of the Michigan Department of Education had been told by the governor's budget officers that the concept of increasing the funding for enrollment loss was not viewed with favor.

For further background, it is significant to note that proposals for funding enrollment losses were not uniformly well received in the legislature. Also, the proposal that had been proposed by the State Department of Education called for a \$30 million budget category for funding declining enrollments. The seminar session was held in March. The legislative budget process traditionally begins during this period, and is normally concluded by the middle or end of June. The governor's budget recommendation for education, offered in January, contained no provision to increase funding of enrollment losses. It is within this framework that this discussion occurred.

The Role of the Department in the Seminar

Politics cannot be analyzed or interpreted as distinct from the personalities involved. The original agenda for the March 6, 1978, seminar on declining enrollments was to have included the following: Part I was to have been a twenty-minute introductory

presentation by Dr. Fred Whims, education division director of the Michigan Department of Management and Budget. Whims was scheduled to kick off the seminar program with a report on his department's "project to assess the impact of declining enrollments on Michigan education."

The purpose of putting the Department of Management and Budget at the beginning of the agenda was because it was this department that the seminar session was designed to flush. In other words, since the major education associations and the education department were already committed to substantial funding for enrollment loss, it was the budget office that was to become the target of the session. They were blocking the funding--they should be forced to express the "state's concern."

Apparently, however, the Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Malcolm Katz, took some offense at the notion that the Department of Management and Budget would be discussing the state's concern. His assistant insisted that since the department had earlier done a major study on declining enrollment, coordinated by Katz, he should be placed at the head of the agenda. The researcher could not dissuade the department--an advocate of declining-enrollment funding--from putting themselves in the position of running interference for the governor's budget office.

Katz began his presentation by excusing himself from a need to report any declining-enrollment data by taking credit in advance for what Drs. Stan Hecker and Fred Ignatovich of Michigan State University were about to report in their statistical review of Michigan's

enrollment situation. He said: "I am sure that Drs. Hecker and Ignatovich will be reporting later on some of the significant findings relative to projections for Michigan. Their work was done in association with the Department; there is no need to do that twice. . . . We did, a year and a half or so ago, undertake a major study of declining enrollments."

Katz went on to say the study produced four recommendations. The major recommendations centered on funding for districts to absorb the effect of large enrollment declines.

Katz's concluding comment should be read in this context: He is now a self-appointed spokesman of an executive branch whose leader had consistently opposed (once to the point of veto) legislative efforts to fund an enrollment-decline formula. Katz said: "The actions, however, that have been taken following these [Department study] recommendations have not been followed up to the extent that they have not been translated into legislation at this time."

The message sender, Malcolm Katz, Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction, did not attain this position in the State Department of Education because of an inability to read political charts. The long-time former superintendent of Michigan's East Lansing School District, one of the state's richest districts, Katz was either ill-advised on the declining-enrollment issue or he simply misspoke himself. But his comment, in any case, seemed to lay the blame for the miserly funding of declining enrollment to date at the steps of the legislature. The comments of both education appropriations subcommittee chairmen of the legislature would later bear

witness to a legislative reluctance to express enthusiasm for much funding. But their voting behavior would later substantiate the symbolism of their objections. The legislature had taken positive funding action on declining enrollment for two consecutive years, despite gubernatorial resistance, including veto action, the first year.

To determine who was the target of Katz's message and how his message was interpreted during the session and later by the researcher, more information is required. Since Katz's presentation had been imposed upon the agenda, the researcher moved immediately to an introduction of Dr. Fred Whims. Whims' comments were followed by Drs. Ignatovich and Hecker (Michigan State University, College of Education), authorities on K-12 population projections, and to Dr. David Goldberg (University of Michigan, Center for Population Studies), an authority on higher education enrollments. Therefore, more than one hour had elapsed between Katz's comments and the first line of questioning from the audience. It must, further, be pointed out that in his testimony Whims had notified the participants that the budget office was in the process of conducting a major study on the impact of declining enrollments upon the finances of different-sized school districts.

The first question in the question and answer period was, on its face, a rather academic one directed to Stan Hecker. Dr. Wilfred Webb (former superintendent of the Hazel Park Schools, who was then an education consultant to the vice-chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations) asked Hecker if any study had

ever been done to tie the impact of declining enrollments to the size of the school district. Earlier, Katz had taken credit in advance for Hecker's work. Now Webb, whether by accident or design, was helping set up Katz for Gene Caesar--as if Caesar needed help. Hecker said "No."

The next question came from Gene Caesar, education advisor to the speaker of the state house. Caesar said: "Regarding Dr. Katz's preliminary presentation--in 1975-76, the legislature mandated the study by the department [of education] along the lines that Dr. Whims has described, and somewhat of the order Dr. Webb is describing. I was somewhat disturbed that your task force report made no reference to that first report, although some of your findings were somewhat contradictory to general assumptions made at that time. Why didn't the task force call upon the results of the earlier study?"

A hush drew over the crowd. Caesar had assaulted Katz. Caesar seemed to be accusing Dr. Katz of having buried the results of a department study on declining enrollments done under a legislative mandate in 1975-76. The accusation implied that the earlier study had been buried because of a difference in the findings of the two studies.

Katz was required to respond. His response provided little aid to his defense. Katz to Caesar: "I can only speak for my beginning with the department [Katz had joined the department in late 1975]. To inquire what the results were of that particular study, I have no familiarity with it. The study here at hand [1977] was related, as I indicated, to a first study of what known objections

would be [sic]. I think you are referring, if I am not mistaken, Gene, to a financial impact study. Does anyone have any comment on that?"

Katz was clearly flustered by Caesar. He had asked to speak as coordinator of what he reported to be a comprehensive Department of Education study on declining enrollments. He had suggested that legislative inaction was the cause of the problem in addressing financial problems related to declining enrollments--a totally inaccurate observation. He had been able to express no knowledge of a study on the financial impact of declining enrollments done two years earlier in the department. He was unable to answer a fairly direct charge by a high-ranking legislative staff person that the results of the earlier department study had been buried because of their conflict with findings of the more recent study. The best he could do was publicly solicit help. And help was on the way.

Bob McKerr, long-time director of the education department's finance division, has as much credibility on deposit in the state legislature as anyone in the school community. Fortunately for Katz, McKerr was in attendance at the seminar session on March 6, 1978. He jumped to Katz's relief. McKerr stated: "On the particular subcommittee of which I was chairman, we did look at that report, Gene, and we didn't use it. It served its purpose in that it identified essentially one thing and this is that those districts that had experienced declining enrollments did not reduce services but went out and gained additional millage to continue their programs. The particular study Dr. Katz referred to really was of a different nature.

That is, not attempting to deal with what districts had done in the past, but to identify some of the problems of the future, especially in light of the acceleration of declining enrollments in the years to come--to identify some of the problems and some of the solutions. We did utilize the study."

Caesar: "Will that first study be available to Dr. Whims?"

McKerr: "If he wants it."

McKerr had helped reestablish the credibility of the department, if not of its deputy director. It could be speculated that McKerr had several advantages over Caesar. First, McKerr had Caesar's respect. They had sparred before; they had also co-authored monographs on school finance. McKerr also knew that he had great credibility among legislators and others in the audience. Most significantly, he knew that there was probably not another person in the room besides Caesar who had read the now-three-year-old department report--and no one, including Caesar, would remember its specific conclusions.

The substance of Caesar's comments got lost in the style of the exchange. If he was right, and probably only he and [perhaps] McKerr knew, the department had gotten off the hook.

The point of reporting this exchange was to show how the exchange that many seminar participants remember so clearly bore so little relationship to a resolution to the issue. In the presence of top-level policy makers from the legislative branch, the credibility of the executive branch--particularly the education department--had been threatened. The attention became focused, if only for a time, on the Department of Education, and not on the Department of Management

and Budget--the original target of the program strategy. Had the education department people asked the researcher why the budget office was giving the "State's Concern" instead of simply imposing themselves on the agenda, a costly and totally irrelevant distraction could have been avoided.

What motivated Katz to insist upon being placed on the agenda? One should presume that Katz is a highly dedicated public servant who believes very strongly in the open exchange of ideas in a public forum. One should also presume that he felt he had a legitimate and important contribution to make, and under such circumstances he is obligated to do so. There may have been an element of pride involved, too. Why was the education department not asked to keynote this conference? He should have asked. Perhaps Katz was feeling a certain resentment that the state budget office constantly plays such a major role in programmatic aspects of state education policy.

It should be remembered that the state budget office of the Department of Management and Budget (DMB) is officially the accounting arm of state government in Michigan. In fact, however, it is the "laundry" for much of the governor's policy-making staff. Much of the central office of DMB was shifted directly from the governor's policy staff in the mid-1970s as a means, some suggest, of dramatically reducing the payroll of the governor's office without reducing his staff.

Whims, a classified civil servant, in his address to the seminar session, spoke for the governor about declining enrollments:

"This is a broad issue and one the governor is very much concerned about." Perhaps Katz wanted to be on the agenda because he resents the fact that a civil-service unit chief in the budget office of the State Department of Management and Budget could express the governor's concern about an issue, and his boss, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, is not permitted membership in the governor's cabinet.

Caesar could have been factually accurate in accusing Katz and the department of burying facts on declining enrollments. He could simply have been testing Katz's overall knowledge of the subject. Perhaps Caesar was grandstanding--showing off for the fun of it or for the benefit of a new staff assistant who accompanied him to the meeting. Although the researcher has occasionally heard the grandstand charge applied to Caesar, he has never found a Caesar statement to be totally without substance. Generally, although the approach may be uniquely "Caesarian," there is an underlying important observation being made--one from which much can be learned.

But, again, the concentration of this analysis is on what was going on within the meeting, and this emphasis can be just as misleading about the significance of the seminars as it would be to ascribe significance to the Katz-Caesar interaction, insofar as the outcome of the declining-enrollment-funding question is concerned. The substance of the session on declining enrollments was in what was done in preparation of it, and in the kind of activity it might trigger. By itself, the seminar session was simply an exhibition hall, a demonstration center. Policy was not made there.

The Role of the Department of
Management and Budget in the Seminar

The purpose of involving Fred Whims in the seminar session was to put him on the spot. He and his department were, according to many sources, chiefly responsible for the governor's opposition to increased declining-enrollment funding.

Whims: "There are times when I feel comfortable appearing in front of a group of individuals. This is not one of them. . . . No one in the state is happy with the issue that is before us." Whims recognized that the education community was not pleased with the way DMB was dealing with declining enrollment funding.

"We are in the process of recognizing the problem in K-12, and it is now on us in community colleges and four-year institutions." This statement appeared to be a clue to future action by DMB. In budget terminology, a problem is recognized when funding is provided to deal with it. Whims then went on to make his previously referred to expression of the governor's concern. He went one step further: "I really think it would be more appropriate for Doug Smith to be here speaking today on this issue. I know he is on your committee."

Where was Doug Smith? The researcher did not know Smith would absent himself from a meeting he had called. Was Whims signalling that he was suspicious that he had been set-up by Smith--brought before the education community to address an issue that he had addressed in private through the promotion of gubernatorial opposition to increasing declining-enrollment funding? "I think he [Doug Smith] conveniently got himself out of this," said Whims to

the seminar participants. Smith could have been absent for a variety of legitimate reasons. Regardless, his judgment to absent himself from the meeting probably was in the best interest of his overall strategy.

Whims continued: "As we get into this crucial issue, we are finding that the unanswered question is not whether there is declining enrollment, but rather should declining enrollments be funded. . . . We agree that there are declining enrollments--and that declining enrollments should be funded. . . . The question is now how much should the funding be. . . . We really do not have good data to assist us in this decision. . . . We are developing a case study to assist us."

The preceding paragraph strings together essential components of the first five minutes of Whims' comments. He had made an important concession to the school community--he would fund enrollment losses at some level.

Whims said his study would be done within several weeks, and at that point the extent of the governor's support would be made public. The sale had been made. The essential figure had been influenced. He was using the Michigan Education Seminars to alert the Michigan school community that the thinking of the administration was changing on declining enrollment.

Whims occupies an extremely important position in the Milliken administration. So well concealed are his powers, however, that he was not mentioned by any of the interviewees during the reputational analysis as a major force in school policy making. His boss, Gerald

Miller, was mentioned, however. Since education policy in K-12 and higher education lies exclusively within Whims' jurisdiction in the budget office of DMB, his potential to have significant influence upon the educational policy process is unquestioned. His remarks acknowledged the existence of a problem and "recognized" a need to take action.

It is important to remember that at this point the encounter between Katz and Caesar had not occurred. The exchange between Katz and Caesar was explosive. Whims' monologue, although more subtle, was far more significant to participants who were concerned about the likely executive disposition of declining-enrollment funding.

The Legislators' Interest

The Michigan Education Seminars have been described as a "harbinger"--providing a warning of potential difficulties. The March 6, 1978, seminar on declining enrollments provided an important insight into the disposition of key legislators on the question of financing declining enrollments. The governor's office was the perceived logjam on declining-enrollment funding. The legislature had several times expressed a commitment to financing inordinate enrollment drops in local districts. By 1978, however, much of the enrollment loss that was related to the flight to the suburbs had already occurred. Inner-city school populations were beginning to stabilize. Now, enrollment loss was almost totally a function of a declining birth rate. It was occurring in the suburbs.

Four legislators were present at the March 6, 1978, seminar. Then-Senator Gil Bursley,* Republican from Ann Arbor and chairman of the Education Council of Michigan (ECS), was serving as a co-chairman at the session on declining enrollments. It was never mentioned during the seminar that in the late 1960s and early 1970s Bursley had been a state leader in the "ZPG" (zero population growth) movement. The education appropriations subcommittees of the senate and house were both present at the seminar session. Senator Kerry Kammer (D-Pontiac) represents a district that includes, as a major portion of the district, the inner-city Pontiac school district. Jim O'Neill (D-Saginaw) represents another of the oldest and most urban school districts in Michigan. Representative William Keith (D-Garden City) was vice-chairman of the house Education Committee at the time of the seminar session. His district includes the school districts of Garden City, Inkster, and part of Westland. These communities largely represent a cross-section of Detroit suburbs. Garden City is an old white community, a bedroom suburb of Detroit. Inkster is also an old community, predominantly black; its residents for the most part work in the area's automobile forges and assembly plants. Westland was called the nation's largest township in the mid-1960s. Also a white Detroit bedroom suburb, Westland underwent dramatic population growth through the mid-1970s.

To attribute accurate meaning to the statements and observations of policy makers, it is important to understand where they

*In the fall of 1978, Bursley resigned his Senate seat to become President of Cleary College, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

came from. During the post-first-year interviews, one of the interviewees who could be classified as a knowledgeable outsider expressed that he had taken some offense at the fact that during the session on declining enrollment one legislator had "expressed provincialism" in relating his feelings on the entire declining-enrollment situation to his legislative district.

A careful review of the record shows that all of the legislators who discussed the substance of the issue tied their analysis to the experiences of their local district. More interesting, perhaps, is the fact that this phenomenon is not reserved exclusively for legislators. Dr. Stan Hecker, Michigan State University professor, in responding to questions from the floor, tied most of his responses to his experiences in helping the Livonia Public Schools respond to enrollment declines.

In the course of their formal presentations, Kammer and O'Neill both expressed grave reservations about K-12 declining-enrollment financing. This probably came as quite a shock to a number of those in the audience. In fact, this "shock effect" may have been the very reason for their expressing concern about declining-enrollment funding. Kammer:

Declining enrollment is something. Perhaps its greatest difficulty is that it is difficult to comprehend. It's difficult for us, in the political arena, to communicate to our constituents why costs continue to rise or continue to stay the same when the number of pupils declines. To tell someone their school district has gone from 18,000 to 15,000 and yet there hasn't been an appreciable reduction in cost is one of the difficulties. If anyone has an easy explanation that can be understood by the parents of those 18,000 children-- particularly when the discussion comes to which schools shall

be closed--if anyone has the answer, I'd like to know it. It's not easily communicated, it's not easily told.

Kammer continued:

My commitment [is] that I will do what I can to bring an equitable increase in dollars to treat the declining enrollment problem. I don't believe it will be an easily sold improvement by any means. It's going to take a lot of communication to those legislators that represent growth areas and those legislators who represent urban communities whose areas have already gone through the declining enrollment experience five, six, seven, or eight years ago--ten years ago. And at that point they were crying for assistance to help them meet their declining-enrollment situation. At times there was just one vote on committees for that assistance and everyone turned a deaf ear to those urban communities. I think it should be said, and I think Rep. O'Neill will say it again, as a matter of fact I think he said it first, that it's unfortunate there wasn't the same level of commitment and support for declining enrollment five or six years ago when there were just a few affected communities as much as there is now when we're finding increasing numbers of school districts affected by declining-enrollment circumstances.

O'Neill primarily echoed Kammer's comments:

I'm sorry. I'm not that upset with it right now because we've been through our traumatic condition with declining enrollment in my area. Declining enrollment is an old problem to some of us. It's a new problem to many, many more, and that's why I think it has become such a serious problem--because there are more school districts becoming involved in it.

Perhaps I can best inform you of my position by the paragraph of a letter I wrote last week--I won't read the whole letter. I addressed it to a school man in the state of Michigan, a very respected superintendent of schools. The paragraph [says]: "I am fully aware of the declining enrollment problem. However, I also recall that a few years ago many of these same school districts were clamoring for a fourth Friday and second semester count of students because of increasing enrollments. At the same time, inner-city school districts were experiencing the traumatic effect of declining enrollments because of the flight of citizens from the inner-city school districts. Absolutely no support was given in taking this into consideration in the formalization of the state aid bill. The state aid bill six to eight years ago severely penalized the young people, taxpayers, and employees left in those inner-city school districts. In fact, school people from those inner-city school districts and their elected legislators had to fight off attempts of those

districts gaining students at their expense from having double counts of membership placed in state aid bills. This is fact, not fiction."

O'Neill continued:

I will be very honest with you. I will look very closely at any declining enrollment formula that we adopt keeping this in mind because the city of Saginaw, which I represent, we got hit hard in 1970-71-72. In fact, we heard testimony last week from Pontiac. From Pontiac, I think the gentlemen said in 1971, 3,000 students they lost. Nothing was done. I don't know how those districts survived. Probably they cut their throat. Probably they did away with art and music, intramural sports, things such as this. I think all of us should take this into consideration when they discuss this problem of declining enrollments.

The message was coming through clearly. Three key legislative leaders were putting the word out that their disposition was quite the opposite of provincial. They represent areas that will be largely unaided by declining enrollment funding--districts that were ignored five or six years earlier when "white flight" from Pontiac and Saginaw was causing dramatic declines in school populations in these districts. They were talking about their districts, but they were using their own districts as a means of expressing their generosity. They were supporting increased funding for declining enrollment despite the treatment their districts had received in years past.

Perhaps this message was being directed at the education interest group leaders who might otherwise have taken Whims' comments as a cue that the war was over--that there was no need to apply further pressure. Perhaps they were creating an atmosphere in which they could trade off their support for declining-enrollment funding for the support of certain education interest groups for other reforms.

O'Neill suggested that perhaps the consolidation of school districts is the proper answer to problems created by enrollment declines. He stated: "I have asked Dr. Porter to look into it and to come up with a possible program or a suggestion for the consolidation of [local] school districts . . . intermediate school districts is another can of worms. I think some incentives will have to be proposed. . . ." To O'Neill, school district consolidation poses no particular political problem. His representative district is contained within a single school district, Saginaw, one of the state's largest. His district had already undergone substantial enrollment declines. Any declining-enrollment funding formula would generally take dollars out of the basic formula and distribute them to those suburban schools suffering the most dramatic school aid losses. His comments about consolidation got the attention of David Ruhala, deputy director of the state school board association.

Educational Interest Group Leaders
Speak for Their Associations

When one talks consolidation to the school boards association, one threatens their membership. Ruhala stated: "On that question, have any proposals dealt with the thing Rep. O'Neill just emphasized--that perhaps we need to start looking at some incentives--some built-in financial, or fiscal, state aid incentives for districts to consolidate on a voluntary basis?" He continued:

Politically the stick won't work. Associations such as ours and others will oppose mandatory consolidation; whereas if there are ways we can encourage districts where feasible through financial incentives to go on some kind of consolidation, then I think we ought to try it before we try the

mandatory or stick approach which has failed several times. With all due respect to all the proposals that Senator Bursley and others have introduced to encourage districts--or to force districts--to consolidate, I think it has got to be tried on an incentive approach first. Is anyone working on this kind of concept? That's certainly something we hope the department will take a look at in their study. Not just to study the feasibility of it but also how we can develop some incentive approaches.

We would be the first to admit there are certain districts that ought to be consolidating. But we also will oppose as firmly as we can any kind of mandatory [consolidation] approach unless it's done on a voluntary basis. I think there can be incentives built in. I'm not a fiscal expert, but I think we ought to be able to build in some incentives to encourage those smaller K-12 or intermediate districts to look toward reorganization.

Kammer: "I think we have to be careful that the cost of the carrots doesn't exceed the cost of the jackass." [Raucous laughter.]

O'Neill: "Another thing [we could do] is to delete the \$6 million from declining enrollments. By going bankrupt maybe they [smaller outstate districts] would be forced to consolidate. That's not a very happy alternative, but I think that it might be a fact of life."

Katz: "Dr. Porter is personally chairing a group to consider consolidation plans. The intermediate superintendents are looking at consolidation of districts."

Bills that would force school consolidation surface periodically in the legislature. They are normally promoted by education-oriented legislators, and they are always opposed by the school boards association. An association, any association, is obligated to fight for the life of a member that is threatened by legislation.

This is a primary function of an association. The school board association is no different.

Although mandatory school district consolidation, or reorganization, or annexation bills surface periodically in the state legislative hopper, they always seem to be spurred by a different issue (curriculum questions, school finance, now enrollment declines). These bills never seem to pass, and they always leave hard feelings between the school boards association and the "education" legislators. "Education" legislators tend to be the bleeders and the spenders--generally urban Democrats or liberal Republicans like Bursley who are not threatened by mandatory consolidation because it can have very little impact upon their district. This sort of reverse provincialism--Detroit and Ann Arbor legislators trying to decide what's best for Uby, Tyre, and Bad Axe school children--has done a great deal to create an appearance of an "anti-education" element in the legislature. Since Ruhala could see the potential for a resurfacing of the consolidation issue, he used the Michigan Education Seminars forum to warn the departments (education and perhaps also management and budget) that unless they want a fight on their hands they had better not mix up the declining-enrollment funding with mandatory consolidation. He left himself some breathing space, however, by suggesting that if continued consolidation is required, perhaps an "incentive" plan could be acceptable.

Threatening the Department of Education is one thing. The school boards association can bring the wrath of the legislature upon the department if it is so inclined. The department understands the

grass-roots authority of the school boards association almost instinctively. But legislators tend to react somewhat differently to threats. Perhaps Kammer overacted in suggesting that the "cost of the carrot was greater than the cost of the jackass." It was a strong remark nevertheless--and actually quite out of character for the tenacious red-headed boy-wonder state senator from Pontiac.

Ruhala was using the seminar forum as an opportunity to promote the views of his organization. He was being very direct about it--perhaps hoping that his openness would avoid a confrontation that could substantially disrupt the educational policy community. Ruhala was unabashed in his attempts to influence the participants in the seminar forum. One professor who was involved in the seminar programs commented more than once about Ruhala "lobbying" other participants in the seminar.

During the post-first-year interview, when asked if he had had an opportunity to promote proposals during the seminar session, Ruhala said: "No problem, but you might vary the interaction format a little bit." Ruhala suggested the possibility of small interaction groups.

Ruhala was flaunting the influence of his organization. The target of his influence at that time was probably the education department. But it appears that Kammer, especially--a legislative leader--found it necessary to attempt to rebuke Ruhala.

Ruhala's attempt to influence participant policy makers not to attempt to solve the declining-enrollment problem with forced consolidation was direct and to the point. No less overt was the

attempt of Dan Wellburn, MEA head lobbyist, who followed Kammer's remark to Wellburn's rival school board representative.

Educational Interest Group
Representatives Speak for Themselves

Wellburn stated:

Now that we have Dave Ruhala's attention . . . no one has said anything about inducements for early retirement. The retirement law is already written to fund 55/30 and out for retirement. [A teacher is eligible for full retirement compensation if he/she is 55 years of age and has 30 years of teaching experience or acceptable credit.] If we give some incentives, some teachers might take early retirements. That's a possibility that might be looked at. I am very much off the record here as far as my association goes, but it doesn't hurt to study some of the alternatives.

Wellburn's suggestion that his position was not necessarily consistent with the position of his association probably didn't fool many of the participants. What he was proposing was that in order to open up some jobs for new teachers in this era of enrollment declines, that state should subsidize early-out programs for teachers. Wellburn, like Ruhala, talked about incentives--he called them inducements.

There was no evidence in any of the six sessions of seminar participants suggesting potential solutions to problems that would be against the best interests of their organizations, or against an official organizational position. Wellburn's suggestion that he was not reading from the grail when he proposed inducements for early retirement weakens in the context of Mary Kay Kosa's comments about five minutes later. Kosa was president of the MEA around the late 1960s and early 1970s. She currently serves on a variety of committees as a MEA representative. She stated:

Many of us feel a concern about a lack of young people coming in, and think that it is time for us to move out and offer more opportunity for young people to get into the profession. However, we are not old enough to retire [55]. We have developed a certain level of income which we don't see any other avenues to go into. So, if you could move the retirement age down . . . you may have considerable numbers of teachers leaving the profession.

The fact of the matter is that despite Wellburn's pleadings to the contrary, the position that he was promoting regarding early retirement inducements--which was reinforced by Kosa--was not likely to cost Wellburn his job. Several times during the seminar sessions, participants suggested that they were speaking on their own behalf--not for their association. Never, however, did the researcher record an occurrence when an individual promoted a notion that appeared to be against the best interests of his/her organization.

One school lobbyist who recently shifted from one management association to another found himself in a position of having to support a bill he had opposed for nearly twenty years. "I've opposed the bill so long that I believe it is bad legislation. How can I argue for it now?" the lobbyist commented to the researcher.

The likelihood that seasoned organizational spokesmen would ascribe positions on major issues that deviate from the official organizational position is highly unlikely. In the first place, the individuals who participated in the seminars were generally major policy actors--people who participate in the development of the positions of their organizations. The organization's positions should be presumed to be consonant with their personal positions.

Second, among the most common theories of persuasion is that a person's attitudes are shaped by what he/she says. If an individual, as in the case of the lobbyist who changed jobs after twenty years, says anything long enough, one might logically presume that he/she will begin to believe it.

Third, regardless of the alleged neutrality of any forum, common sense would prevent a political leader from espousing a notion he/she would later be forced to oppose. What would be worse is for such a leader to oppose a position he/she is forced to support in the formal, less "neutral" setting.

Although the opportunity for participants to express personal positions was noted to exist (during the formal post-first-year interview), no solid evidence of such an occurrence was found despite the rhetoric of Wellburn and several others.

Summary

The discussion of some of the interactions that occurred during one of the sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars is of limited use. In the first place, the researcher would question the validity of any suggestion that what occurred within the confines of any particular seminar session is of substantive importance. Whether dramatic orations, for example, are ever singularly responsible for altering a juror's opinion is questionable. That such a modification of position often occurs in an informal meeting of top-level policy makers is unlikely. For the most part, the sessions were used by the participants to update their informational portfolios

on the issues of the day. When the sessions witnessed heated exchanges between varied representatives of the educational policy community, such exchanges were rarely based on the substance of the issue of the day. Such was the case with the Caesar-Katz exchange, for example. The issue Caesar raised was not what the department found in its assessment of declining enrollment. Rather, the issue revolved around whether Katz had used the data generated two years earlier--whether he even knew it existed. Deeper than that, the issue might have been why Caesar had not been asked to participate in the study, whether the results would be given to the Department of Management and Budget, whether Katz had insulted the legislature with his ill-advised insinuation that the legislature had failed to enact the important declining-enrollment recommendations to the State Board of Education. In any event, probably the only major significance of the Katz-Caesar volley was that it distracted from the main attraction--Fred Whims and the Department of Management and Budget.

The fact that the seminar program existed and that Doug Smith had arranged to put Fred Whims on the agenda may have resulted in an increase in the declining-enrollment section of the state aid act of more than \$20 million. Whether this was "good" or not is a question that can never be answered. Several legislators and others raised some subtle problems with declining-enrollment funding during the session. Had Whims withheld all of his judgment until he had heard everyone else in the meeting speak, he might have been much less "optimistic" about declining-enrollment funding. But he was scheduled to be first on the agenda. And despite Katz's untimely suggestion

that it was the legislature that had failed to finance enrollment losses adequately, Whims went ahead in describing new steps "the governor" was taking to deal with enrollment-loss funding. Whether Katz had opened the session or not, Caesar may still have used the opportunity to attack the education department for its alleged failure to report adequately the first declining-enrollment report.

The comments of Senator Kammer, Rep. O'Neill, and Rep. Keith regarding their concerns about financing declining enrollments were primarily symbolic. All three had supported aid for enrollment losses in years past. And in the final analysis, Kammer and O'Neill's support was a necessary requisite for raising the declining-enrollment funding from \$6 million to \$26 million.

The exchange between Kammer and Ruhala appears on the record to be significantly more hostile than in reality it probably was. Ruhala gave a full minute on incentives, and in five seconds Kammer leveled him by suggesting that the incentive was of greater cost than was the value of the districts Ruhala was suggesting receive it. Ruhala's comments may have discouraged the Department of Education from promoting consolidation as a means of dealing with declining enrollments--but it is doubtful that they would have done that in any case. Again, the central issue was how the Department of Management and Budget would ultimately advise the governor. That decision was not made in the seminar session. And the seminar discussion probably did little more than provide a deadline for certain actions to be taken within the Department of Management and Budget.

Other examples of the interaction that occurred within the seminar sessions further illustrate the inherent problems with literal interpretation of the discussions between top-level policy makers. The recounting of these discussions provides interesting insights into the complexity of communications between policy actors representing diverse viewpoints in an informal policy forum. They reflect the tendency for policy actors at this level to use these seminars to reinforce related lobbying strategies and to restate organizational positions sometimes under the banner of personal opinions. The interaction that occurs within these sessions, however, probably bears little relationship to the final policy decision under discussion. And a casual, literal interpretation of the exchanges between leaders at this level may be extremely misleading to the novice policy analyst.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS

Introduction

This is a study of the development, operation, and function of the Michigan Education Seminars. The analysis chapter contains a discussion of elements of the impact of the Michigan Education Seminars on the educational policy milieu of the state.

The researcher has segmented the analysis chapter of this dissertation into a variety of subchapters. This chapter begins with a brief recapitulation of the structure of the analysis. It is followed by a discussion of the process in the selection of the issues.

The third section includes the function of the coordinator and strategies employed in enlisting participants. This discussion is followed by a discussion of profiles of the participants in the seminar series and a review of the responses to the questions that were posed to many of the seminar participants after the first year of operation of the seminar series.

The remaining sections include Function of the Steering Committee, Relationship to the Education Commission of the States, Relationship to the Institute for Educational Leadership, The

Perceived Purpose of the Seminars, The Question of Consensus, Impact Upon Relationships, The Major Issues, The Promotion of Issues, Major Weaknesses of the Seminars, The Question of Survival, and Summary of Chapter.

For the first several sections of the analysis chapter, the researcher relies upon a variety of information bases. The importance of the personal observations and reactions of the researcher in a field study must be emphasized. The variety of other data bases used to analyze the effect of the method of developing the seminar series includes: the research of others, the original positional and reputational analyses used by the researcher to develop the list of potential participants in the Michigan Education Seminars, informal interviews with some of the participants in the Michigan Education Seminars over the eighteen months of the study, and the formal interviews conducted with nineteen of the seminar participant policy actors conducted after the first year of the seminar series was completed.

Formal interviews form the basis for much of the analysis section. In the sections beginning with "The Function of the Steering Committee" and concluding with the "Summary of the Chapter," the

analysis reflects specific comments on the participants interviewed after the first year of the seminar series.

The researcher selected a group to be the steering committee for the seminar series before the first formal seminar session. This original group of six policy actors in Michigan was largely made up of "friends" of the researcher. The steering committee helped to provide some degree of official sanction for the seminar series. The steering committee was gradually expanded to number fourteen state-level policy actors. The role of the steering committee, its impact on the direction of the seminar series, and its function of providing some degree of "political insulation" for the researcher are analyzed in the section entitled "The Function of the Steering Committee."

The seminar series could be viewed as a subsystem within the larger system of educational policy making in Michigan. In this context, the Michigan Education Seminars must be seen as having interacted with a variety of other systems or subsystems. Interactions between the Michigan Education Seminars and other systems or subsystems could be seen each time a seminar was convened. During these sessions, policy actors representing a wide variety of social interests brought the attitudes and policy positions of their organizations to bear upon the group discussion.

One of the systems with which the Michigan Education Seminars could be seen as having interacted was the Michigan chapter of the

Education Commission of the States. Its leadership became directly involved in the operation of the Michigan Education Seminars as a co-sponsor of the seminar series. Devices used by the researcher to enlist the participation of the Education Commission of the States, and then to harness or limit the influence of this organization on the seminar series, are analyzed within the section entitled "Relationship to the Education Commission of the States."

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) was responsible for providing the financing for the Michigan Education Seminars. Some criteria for reporting on the limited number of required state seminars are expressed in contract letters and other documents of IEL. The extent of the actual control or influence of IEL on the state seminar in Michigan is analyzed within this section. Although personal observations and references to written documents of IEL form the basis of this section, some attempt was also made in the final interviews-- those conducted after the first year of operation of the seminars-- to uncover the perceptions of the participants of the role of IEL in influencing the direction of the state seminar series.

It is in the sections beginning with "The List of Participants" where the results of the post-first-year interviews become most important in the analysis of the development, function, and operation of the Michigan Education Seminars. In this section, an important question was answered: How well did the attendance at the seminar series represent all of the major interest groups in education?

The next section, "The Purpose of the Seminar," is an attempt to develop a definition of the purpose of the seminar series. In much the same way that public policy is imputed from its impact upon the society that it is applied to, the definition of purpose of the series is imputed from the analysis of the specific expressions of those policy actors in Michigan who participated in it.

Furthermore, the question of the effect of the decision to preclude the seminar series from decision-making or consensus-seeking behavior is analyzed. The conceptual underpinnings of this important decision are also discussed in this section.

What impact did the seminar series have on the relationships between leaders of diverse organizations within the educational policy-making community at the state level? What impact did the seminar series have upon the relationships between leaders within the same branches of government or special educational interest groups? These questions were asked directly of the participants of the Michigan Education Seminars in the post-first-year interviews. The responses to these interview questions are reported and analyzed in the section entitled "Impact Upon Relationships."

Although this study cannot be described as a policy analysis because of its process orientation, participants were asked to discuss the impact that the session had upon their organizations with regard to two specific policy issues. These issues were presented and discussed in seminar sessions during the first years of its existence as

it was constituted for this study. The questions were selected to reflect two distinct types of policy issues.

The first, the potential impact of a proposed state constitutional convention, was analyzed because of its broad-sweeping nature. Also, this question was not "imminent" in the sense that it was, at that time, the subject of heated debate within the state educational policy-making community of Michigan.

The second issue, the impact of declining enrollments on elementary, secondary, and higher education in Michigan, was both current and unresolved at the time of the seminar series in which it was discussed.

What impact did the discussion of these two questions have on the educational policy-making milieu of Michigan? This question is analyzed in the section entitled "The Major Issues." Again, the analysis is dominated by a discussion of formal interviews with seminar participant policy actors conducted at the conclusion of the first year of the seminar series.

Finally, the question of the potential for the seminar series to survive after the researcher completes the study is important. This question permits the evaluation, in tangible terms, of the overall success of the study. As it was the explicit intent of the research to institutionalize the seminar series given the need for such a series, the analysis of the "Question of Survival" provides useful insights of the participants into these prospects.

In the summary of the chapter, the results of the analysis of the Michigan Education Seminars are reviewed.

Structure of the Analysis

How the Michigan Education Seminars series was to be analyzed was seen to be a critical element in all that was to follow. Questions analyzed by the researcher before the first seminar session to determine the appropriate structure of the seminar series included: the role of the steering committee; the relationship of the seminar series to the Education Commission of the States and to the Institute for Educational Leadership; the method of selecting issues for discussion in the seminars; the selection of the participants in the seminar series; and the ground rules for the seminar series, including the question of whether an attempt would be made to use the seminar series as a consensus-seeking device.

Before the first seminar session, the role of the researcher as the coordinator of the seminar series was thoroughly discussed with several individuals. All of these individuals were to become participants in the seminar series. Some of these persons played an active role in the supervision of the research.

A system was devised to identify and select the seminar participants that relied heavily on "elite interviewing" techniques. Elite

interviewing techniques have been described as the most flexible interviewing techniques available to the social scientist in a study of this nature. The review of correspondence and the field diary methods were also used.

At the conclusion of the first year of the seminar series, twenty participants were identified to be surveyed. The questions for the post-first-year interview were selected and classified according to their properties for revealing important findings about the impact of the seminar series on a variety of elements of the policy-making process. Also discussed in the interviews were important questions related to the prospects for the survival--the "institutionalization"--of the Michigan Education Seminars. The interviews were also used to develop a homogenized definition of the purpose of the seminar sessions.

Questions that would reveal the interviewee's perception of the importance of the consensus or policy orientation of the series were included in the post-first-year interview. The question was used to bring evidence or to refute the proposition that the avoidance of consensus-seeking objectives of the seminar series would produce an environment in which meaningful discussions between diverse interest group leaders in educational policy in Michigan would occur. The interview also attempted to establish whether the

proposition that no other policy discussion forum similar to the Michigan Education Seminars exists in this state.

The participants, their roles, and their reaction to the seminar process and format were considered to be of vital interest. As a consequence, questions designed to reveal the interviewees' perceptions of the representation of diverse educational interest groups in the seminar series were included in the post-first-year interview. The researcher developed interview questions which were designed to uncover the impact of the seminar series upon the relationships of individuals between diverse educational organizations and within their own organizations. Such questions helped develop clues about the motivation for participation of top-level Michigan educational policy actors in the seminar series.

Two of the major issues which became subjects of the Michigan Education Seminars series were discussed in detail in the interviews. An attempt is made to determine, in this minor deviation from the "process orientation" of the study, what policy impact these issue discussions in the seminar had upon official organizational (and governmental) actions. An analysis of the degree to which the participants may have used the seminar series to express official positions of their organizations, and to influence others in this regard, is aided by one of the interview questions.

Finally, and most significant, is the question of system survival. One of the interview question series attempts to reveal the likelihood of the institutionalization of the seminars.

The specific questions asked of the participant interviewees can be seen to reflect the issues perceived to be critical to a full understanding of the development, function, and operation of the Michigan Education Seminars.

There are many unique advantages of using a subsystem like the Michigan Education Seminars as a laboratory for research in the public policy process. For example, many of the basic assumptions which affected the design of the organization can be traced specifically to personal statements, records, and reports. Many elements of the seminar series that an unknowing future historian might perceive to have simply evolved were, in fact, contributed, and were often stated explicitly to the participants or to others.

Such is the notion, for example, with the requirement that the Michigan Education Seminars would not engage in decision-making or consensus-seeking behavior. In tracing formal records, one finds evidence of the basis for the decision not to use the seminar series as a consensus-seeking mechanism. The minutes, in fact, of the first session of the Michigan Education Seminars (September 14, 1977) reflect both a reluctance to attempt consensus seeking and the justification for this position. The strength of the field study grows with the availability of such official records. The maintenance of such records was important to both the analysis and structure of the series.

The Selection of the Issues

The Michigan Education Seminars, during its first year of operation as constituted for this research, was composed of six formal seminar sessions. In these sessions as many as one hundred representatives of the educational policy-making community gathered to listen to presentations and exchange views on a variety of subjects. The method whereby these subjects were selected was seen as critical to the potential for success of the seminar series.

A variety of guideposts, or general rules, guided in the selection of the issues for presentation at the seminar sessions. The researcher projected that in order to remain an effective coordinator of the seminar sessions, he would have to refrain from giving the impression that the ideas for the seminar discussion topics were his. The rule that all seminar issues would appear to have come from someone other than the researcher, therefore, was never violated.

A second rule was that the education policy issues discussed be of at least minimal significance to all segments of the educational policy-making community in Michigan. Although this rule was never forgotten, some seminars were targeted to particular segments of the educational community. In these cases, seminar participation was promoted by attempting to point out to all potential participants the possible ramifications to the broadest possible constituency of the issue being discussed.

Another general rule was that the issues that would be selected for the seminar series would be issues upon which the discussions could significantly impact. In other words, there would be little

merit in debating the relative merits of the Headlee Amendment--a constitutional tax-limitation amendment in Michigan--in the Michigan Education Seminars. Educational organizations were unified in their opposition to it. After its passage, however, a discussion of its impact on the educational community would be in order.

An attempt was made to identify issues for which new materials could be generated. The opportunity for organizations to make formal presentations to such a representative sample of educational policy leadership in Michigan was not to be taken lightly. Countless hours of preparation could go into the development of materials to be presented at the seminar sessions, and the stimulation of such generation of such materials was seen as a useful service of the seminar series.

An analysis of the specific situations that led to the selection of certain issues on the agenda, item by item, is indicated at this time.

Approximately forty members of the state-level educational policy-making community participated in the initial seminar of the series. This seminar was designed to provide insight into the kinds of issues that the membership of this community would like to see and hear discussed in the seminar sessions.

In this session the participants were unanimous in affirming that the sessions should attempt to be "neutral," that they should not be consensus oriented, and that the issues should meet certain criteria of acceptability.

During the session a questionnaire developed by the Education Commission of the States was circulated and completed by the participants. The purpose of the questionnaire was to rank-order, from a list of potential educational issues, those issues that seemed at that time to be of greatest concern. Two of the issues on this list were to become future subjects at Michigan Education Seminar sessions. The questionnaire results, then, provided the justification for the selection of these seminar issues.

During the discussion of pending educational issues that ensued at the convening seminar, the question of the future constitutional ballot issue calling for a constitutional convention was raised as having important possible consequences to the educational community. Since this issue also met the aforementioned criteria, it was immediately scheduled for discussion at a future seminar.

The Institute for Educational Leadership occasionally suggested issues for seminar discussion. The seminar steering committee reviewed many of these suggestions in the several formal and informal meetings that occurred during the eighteen months of this study. It was in these sessions that decisions could be made about which IEL suggestions would be accepted. The seminar steering committee provided the justification for the selection of these issues for seminar discussion.

In one case, an individual participant of the Michigan Education Seminars suggested a seminar topic in order to assist him in obtaining a commitment on the issue from within the branch of government in which he served. This specific situation is recounted in the analysis of

"The Major Issues" provided later in this chapter and in Chapter VI. The issue was declining enrollments, and the question was what action state government would take to assist school districts reeling under its effects. This issue was taken before the steering committee for concurrence in its inclusion as a seminar topic, and for the political insulation that the researcher felt he needed.

Another seminar program was devoted to a discussion of the potential for a federal department of education. The question of such a federal agency had surfaced in several seminar sessions and in the discussions of the seminar steering committee. The potential of using this subject as a discussion item for state seminars was also raised by IEL. The then-deputy United States Commissioner of Education was recruited for a Michigan Education Seminars discussion on the subject of a federal education department and for a more general discussion on state-federal relations.

Another issue that became the focal point of a Michigan Education Seminar was a discussion with federal education and congressional officials in Detroit on the subject of compensatory education and busing. These officials were in Detroit to meet with the school officials of that district. They had asked the Institute for Educational Leadership to arrange a meeting with state-level educational policy makers in which their observations could be checked at the end of their official inspection. Several of the general rules for issue selection were violated for this seminar. The violation of these rules can be linked to the rather limited turnout at this seminar.

For instance, the selection of this issue was seen as coming directly from the researcher via IEL. There was no seminar or steering committee discussion of it. The issue not only applied to a limited segment of the educational community, the K-12 sector, but it applied to an even more limited segment, the City of Detroit. Since the discussion could have little impact upon the federal law on compensatory education or on school busing, there seemed to be little way the session could meet the rule that required potential impact as a criterion. This, however, did not turn out to be the case. One of the participants at this session was then director of compensatory education programs in the state education department, Eugene Paslov. Paslov, who has since replaced John Porter as (interim) chief state school officer in Michigan, made several specific recommendations for program revisions. Whether the USOE officials and congressional staff acted on these recommendations is unknown, but certainly the potential for impact was found to exist in this seminar. No new materials could be generated for this seminar; hence another rule of issue selection was violated.

Despite its limited turnout, there seemed to be no lasting negative effects of selecting this issue as one of the six seminar issues for the year. In discussions with participants held after this seminar, the nearly universal complaint about the session was that it was held in Detroit at 8:00 a.m. Detroit is roughly ninety miles southeast of the center of educational policy making in Michigan: Lansing, the state capital.

The final seminar session of the year was unique for several reasons. First, it was a two-part seminar. There were two separate and distinct topics on the agenda. Second, one element of the session was devoted to a discussion of the direct policy impact of a previous seminar on the subject of declining enrollments. It was in this seminar session that Doug Smith, the governor's education advisor, brought to the seminar participants a series of recommendations for providing special financial aid to Michigan districts suffering dramatic enrollment drops. This issue and its ramifications on the seminar series are also discussed at a later point in the dissertation.

The second segment of this seminar session allowed the accomplishment of one of the objectives that had been expressed for the seminar in the convening session, in September 1977. This issue was the establishment of federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funding, and the implications of this program on education in Michigan. One of the central presenters at this session was the state chief school officer, John Porter, who stressed that the involvement of educational officials in affairs that had been traditionally in the exclusive domain of the State Department of Labor was a major concern of his administration. He emphasized that the youth training programs in employment-related fields "is the second most important item that I have to deal with next to the overall quality of Michigan education."

A variety of issues was presented to participants for discussion during the first year of the Michigan Education Seminars as

it was constituted for this research. Most of these items met the variety of criteria established to select agenda issues. In the case where the criteria were not met, the attendance at the session was dramatically reduced. This reduction in attendance may have been an artifact, however, related more to the geographic location of the seminar than to the other criteria for seminar issue selection.

The Function of the Coordinator and Strategies of Enlisting Participants

The function of the coordinator is one of the most significant issues of this research. The coordinator of the seminar series is also the researcher in this study. The dual role played by the researcher, as coordinator, provided both benefits and obstacles to the research.

As coordinator, the researcher was responsible for the logistics of the seminar. He was required to walk the political fence of selecting meaningful and sometimes controversial issues while avoiding the alienation of any representative of the state educational policy-making community. This function was aided by the initial decision to eliminate situations in which any organization or individual could be outvoted in the process of consensus seeking.

As researcher, the coordinator had to record and analyze everything from formal seminar and steering committee sessions to the most trivial conversations with educational policy leaders.

There is no clear formula for specifying the appropriate degree of participation of the researcher in a field study. The charge of this research, however, severely limited the

ability to be anything other than a completely participating observer of the process.

Field work is normally defined as a form of case study in which the researcher can vary in his degree and level of involvement with the environment under study. The range of involvement runs from the detached observer-recorder to the role of active participant.

Of the problems accompanying active involvement in a field study, one that is widely mentioned in the literature is the phenomenon of "going native" (Junker, 1960; Wax, 1971). Going native is described as the loss of detachment that can accompany assimilation into a community of study. Objectivity is often sacrificed at the altar of intimacy in a field study. What the researcher loses by a gradual inability to stand back and analyze a process as a pure researcher, however, may be regained in his ability to provide color to the account. Color is developed through recording and reporting events and relationships in ways that can only come from involvement. Such involvement in field studies is said to be related to acceptance of the researcher by the major actors in the environment.

The degree of involvement of the researcher in his field may be largely controlled by the complexity of the environment under study. The complexity of the environment may or may not be related to the sophistication of the people who compose the environment. Uniqueness of the environment is another factor presumed to be related to the ability of the field worker to become involved in it.

Factors such as the complexity and uniqueness of the field under study affect the ability of the researcher to remain detached

from the affective domain of the field while he attempts to interpret what is happening there.

The ultimate question is not what the appropriate role of the field worker should be in the study of an environment. Rather, the question is to what degree has the social scientist been required to become an integral part of the environment under study in order to be able to describe it in the richness of detail necessary for meaningful interpretation and analysis. On this general question there can be no consensus in the literature because the literature is consistent in recognizing that all fields are in some regards unique.

Among the unique qualities of this research is the fact that the concept of "going native" does not really apply. In this research, the researcher began as a "native"--an accepted member of the larger policy environment into which the Michigan Education Seminars was designed to become a subsystem. His ability to report was a function of his intimate knowledge of the field. This knowledge can also be attributed to his success in establishing the subsystem that became the focal point of the field study, the Michigan Education Seminars.

His ability to report, further, was a function of his ability to attain some level of scientific detachment--not to maintain it. Hence the term "going native" does not accurately apply to the case study in point. Rather, a new term--"getting civilized"--is more accurate in reflecting the research phenomenon described in this section. Scientific detachment of the researcher was not to be lost by

involvement in the field. Scientific detachment was to be gained by the conduct of this research.

To maximize his effectiveness in field research, the researcher must study "what role he ought to play, and within the limits of the possible, adapt himself to that role, realizing always that changing situations may call for a changing role (Dexter, 1970, p. 14). In this case the political operative was to adopt the tools of the researcher without losing the qualities of the "native" that allowed himself to have entry to the field. Particularly when dealing with what certain social scientists are fond of calling "policy elites," the researcher must be willing to adopt unique and innovative practices for getting into the environment. But even for the researcher who has already achieved such status, the problems of dealing with top-level policy actors are complex.

In interviewing situations, for example, influential people are often unwilling to accept the assumptions of an interviewer. What detail may be lost in many field studies within a public policy forum because of the reluctance of the interviewee to relate personal accounts to an untrusted or unknown social scientist? Public policy makers often are reluctant, or otherwise unable, to conform to standardized lines of discussion in interviews. Standardized interviewing and other research techniques have been found to be inadequate to accommodate information which may turn out to be extremely important in developing the complete, technicolor picture of the field of study (Dexter, 1970; Dye, 1976).

Dexter's (1970) observation is significant: "In elite interviewing it cannot be assumed--as in a typical survey--that persons or categories of persons are equally important" (p. 6). The field worker must be able to differentiate between the abilities of certain respondents in interviews to provide accurate accounts. He must be able to identify the biases of the interviewee. It is strongly suggested in the literature that, in order to be more effective in a public policy setting, the field worker must attend to developing the rapport and relationships between himself and the subjects of the study to permit the accomplishment of the objectives of the research.

The researcher in this study was a recognized participant in the public educational policy-making process. He employed interviewing techniques that best suited the needs of the situation at hand. In situations where the interviewee could provide a clearer account under the influence of poorly lit restaurants and extra-dry martinis, such an environment was provided. If it meant recording the observations of the interviewee on the back of a placemat, then such an appropriate tool of field research was employed. Accounts of such interviews were then later transcribed onto a more permanent record.

If the field researcher would have been unable to differentiate relative degrees of importance of the interviewees in the study, his ability to function as a coordinator of the seminar sessions (or as a paid professional lobbyist) would have been in serious question.

No such reports were heard during or subsequent to the time of this study.

Dye recommended such active involvement in a public policy field study. He criticized those "scientists who argue for minimizing the direct disciplinary links to government out of a concern about the development of scientific theory" (p. 13). In fact, Dye advised that it is not outside the proper domain of a public policy analyst, more than simply to conduct the study, to advise policy actors in the development of their dispositions and attitudes toward public policy issues: "It is better to provide government policy makers with social science information than to let them act without it" (p. 14).

In this field work, the researcher was no less a participant in the environment than any other participant. For all intents and purposes, the subsystem under study within the broader field of educational policy making in Michigan did not exist before the planning and implementation of this research. Elaborate strategies were employed to enlist the active involvement of top-level state educational policy actors in the forum under study. Without these strategies, sessions of the seminar could not have been convened.

Although the strategies used to enlist participation are referred to in various sections of this study, it is worth reviewing a few examples now.

Careful selection of the participants for the seminar series occurred before the first session. In some cases, the organizational chart leaders were specifically requested to participate in the seminar

session and to authorize, if not encourage, their subordinates to attend the sessions. In one case, a personal friend (and former employer) was enlisted partly to lend the leverage of his office and the respect of his reputation to the seminar sessions. John Porter, then-chief state school officer in Michigan, played a major role in applying both the sanction and the leverage to insure participation of other department officials in the programs of Michigan Education Seminars. His active involvement in three of the seminars is presumed to have stimulated the attendance at those sessions.

Another strategy for involvement of participants that is touched upon at other points within this study is the strategy of exclusion. There are certain individuals who it was predicted could not be directly convinced to involve themselves in the activities of the Michigan Education Seminars. With certain of them, a waiting game was played.

On at least two distinct occasions, and possibly as many as five, the researcher was approached by policy makers who wanted to participate in the seminars out of a perceived anger at not having been invited. Here, the fact that research was being conducted, a fact well-publicized among key participants, provided an alibi and allowed an explanation for the strategy of

exclusion, for, in fact, the strategy of exclusion also permitted the researcher to have something of a control group. By excluding certain leaders from the participant invitee list, the researcher could argue that he had established a control group of "other top-level policy makers." This control group procedure, he could argue, gave him an opportunity to see whether those leaders who were not attending the sessions, those who were not receiving Michigan Education Seminars materials, were, nonetheless, informed of some of its activities.

Finally, this strategy tripled as a means of excluding certain policy makers who were seen as being potentially disruptive or divisive, or were perhaps perceived as being too busy even to bother to invite to the regular sessions.

Perhaps the most significant enlistment or involvement strategy was the "honesty is the best policy" strategy. Many of the original seminar participants were interviewed in private sessions before the completion of the planning of the seminars, long before the first session in September 1977. They were told in this interview that a seminar on educational policy issues was being planned for top-level leaders in this field. They were told that they were being interviewed because they were considered to be educational policy leaders. They were asked to help identify other significant influentials in state-level educational policy making, because without the involvement of such leaders the program's potential could not be reached.

After all this, the stage was set to ask the interviewee to himself make a commitment to attend the Michigan Education Seminars. In some cases they were also asked to participate on the steering committee.

This strategy was extremely effective. It involved no distortion or deception. Such tactics were considered to be outside the realm of appropriate strategies for enlistment in what was hoped to become a credible and hospitable educational issue-discussion forum.

A totally uninvolved and detached social scientist could not have conducted this research. To have established the reputation as a neutral actor in the policy-making process, years of effort in operating as a liaison between the various elements of the educational policy-making community were invested. The suggestion that the researcher was a "neutral"--a suggestion that will be verified in the interview analysis--bears no relationship to the degree of intimacy he shared with any of the individual participants in the public policy-making process.

Stories of the researcher's having been seen slicing a drive onto the road off the eighth tee at Forest Acres Golf Course where he was playing a round with the executive director of the Michigan Education Association could be shared with the head of the school administrators' association without damaging the perceived neutrality of the researcher. The director of the administrators' group could relate equally amusing stories about being involved with the lobbyist from the Detroit schools in a head-standing contest on the researcher's pontoon boat. Both association leaders were aware

of the deep friendship between the researcher and the public affairs director of the Michigan Catholic Conference, and they used this knowledge to transmit messages during the period immediately preceding one of the greatest struggles between the public and private education sectors in Michigan of the century. Numerous examples exist where, without the intimate relationships with the participants in the public policy study, the color demanded of a field study of public policy systems would be absent.

Further, and perhaps more important, is the fact that the success of the study was contingent upon the active participation of these "intimates" in order for it to be successful, at least during its formative period. The strategies of enlistment were largely dependent upon soliciting friends in the policy process for a commitment to participate. These intimates also provided useful guidance as the program developed.

At several points in the study, it was found that without making considerable modifications to the program content or process or participant list, the survival of the seminars could have been threatened. One such example occurred when a program to involve federal education officials in a discussion of mandatory special education in Michigan was proposed. This example is discussed in the section of the analysis chapter entitled "The Function of the Steering Committee." However, it is important to note at this juncture that without a certain legislative staff member being committed to the success of the seminar series, a seminar could

have been held that had potential for severely disrupting the entire state government of Michigan.

The role of the researcher in this field study demanded, more than simply permitted, his active involvement as a participant in the field. In politics, friendship is often the commodity of exchange. To deny this would be to discredit a system that operates, in this regard, on a very sacred and high code. The values expressed through friendship in politics are the values that are, at the same time, both highly respected and despised. It was friendship with many of the instrumental policy actors that was called upon to enlist their initial involvement. It was friendship that in many respects influenced the process that was used to shape the organization of the seminars, and it will be friends who have been called upon to carry out the seminars in the future.

The role of the researcher in this field study must be understood as something different from the traditional social science model for field research. Rather than being seen as an outsider who moved in, the researcher in the study must be seen as the insider who moved, to some degree, out.

The Profile of Some of the Participants

The process of selecting the original participants in the Michigan Education Seminars combined a variety of methodologies. Associates who occupied top-level educational policy positions were identified and enlisted to help design the program outline and the

strategies of enlistment. Organizational charts of the major segments of the educational policy-making community in Michigan were reviewed to determine "positional leaders." Positional leaders, and those perceived as knowledgeable insiders, were polled to determine those who may not have key organizational positions but were perceived generally to be leaders on educational policy issues. This process of positional and reputational analysis was thoroughly described in the methodology chapter of the dissertation.

A variety of political factors were also considered in developing the participant list for the Michigan Education Seminars. By political factors, the researcher suggests that the participant list was balanced so as not to give the impression that any particular sector of the educational policy-making community was dominant in the seminar series. Such an impression would jeopardize the "neutrality" of the forum that was a primary objective of the research to establish.

The legislative participants, for example, were selected to reflect that element of the legislative process with relatively limited power to affect educational policy--namely, the Republicans. Although their distinct minority status in both chambers of the legislature puts them at a distinct political disadvantage, their absence from the seminar sessions would be seen as a personal and a political affront to an important element of public policy making in Michigan. Thus, whereas the positional and reputational analysis of the legislature shows few Republicans in positions of authority, they

were, nonetheless, well represented in the list of seminar participant-invitees.

In cases when it was obvious that an underling was actually a greater influence on the process than was his boss, sometimes politics dictated the appointment of both to the participant list for the Michigan Education Seminars.

In many cases, it was possible to include in the membership of the Michigan Education Seminars participants with such wide and varied backgrounds in the public policy process that the exact segment of the educational policy community into which they could be properly categorized was obscured. A review of some of these cases will give the reader several impressions. First, the educational policy-making community is a diverse group of individuals with varied backgrounds. Second, often people in the educational policy-making process at the state level represent more than one interest at once. Third, leaders of the educational policy-making community at the state level are often catapulted into these positions with relatively little background in education per se. Fourth, leaders often switch positions within the educational policy-making community, evidence of the value that diverse interests hold in a knowledge of the process.

For example, Jerry Dunn, one of the most powerful public school district lobbyists in the state, was classified as a representative of the educational interest group segment of the educational policy-making community, and it can be suggested that he represented the administrator's viewpoint in K-12 education. However, it could also be suggested that he represented the higher education community, since

he is a Regent of the University of Michigan. William Keith, the vice-chairman of the House Education Committee, brought to the Michigan Education Seminars the perspective of a major policy force in the educational process in the legislature. A Democrat, Representative Keith also brought to the Michigan Education Seminars the perspective of a local school board member. He had served on the Garden City school board for over a decade before being elected to the Michigan legislature.

The fact that there is no clear path to the pinnacle of the educational policy process at the state level in Michigan is best demonstrated by the story of Gene Caesar, cowboy book writer. Actors at the top level have frequently endured a wide variety of policy responsibility before arriving at this level of leadership. But just as frequently, it seems, they have not.

Caesar, judged by many to be the single most influential force in the educational policy-making process in Michigan, came to the legislature as a relatively low-level House staffer in the late 1960s after a successful career as a novelist and free-lance magazine writer. His features in Argosy and True-type magazines in the fifties and sixties placed Norman Mailer and Jimmy Breslin as contemporaries. He won national recognition as "cowboy writer of the year" in the 1960s.

Caesar is known for his quick and clean research, his blunt memos on school finance, and his quick-draw style of politics. He is both feared and respected in Michigan educational/political circles.

In 1971, Senator Gilbert Bursley, Republican of Ann Arbor, was named chairman of the Senate Education Committee. In what may have been one of the significant moves of his political career, Bursley named Caesar to be his aide to the committee. Caesar's job was to rewrite the State School Aid Act, shifting it out of the deductible millage formula that had served the state's wealthy districts so well in the past into a power-equalization formula designed to reduce the per pupil spending discrepancies between the state's richest and poorest districts. Meanwhile, with Caesar in the Senate analyzing, writing, and talking about a plan that could be used to rectify many of the state's school finance problems, the executive secretary to House Speaker William Ryan was also working on the same problem.

Bobby Don Crim had devoted the better part of his political life to school finance issues. After losing his Davison House seat in 1966, Crim lobbied for an intermediate school district and served on the Michigan School Finance Study published in 1969 and named for its senior author, J. Alan Thomas.

Crim's plan differed in detail, if not objective, from Caesar's. But Crim, not satisfied with being the most powerful legislative aide in the Michigan legislature--some say in its history--ran again for the legislative seat he lost six years earlier. This time he won, and his school finance plan gained new status.

In an unprecedented legislative leadership vote, Crim, freshman legislator from Davison, was named Majority Floor Leader of the

Michigan House of Representatives, number two position in the lower chamber. His move from chief aide of the Speaker in November 1971 to House Majority Floor Leader in January 1972 gave the legislative oddsmakers new reason for believing that when major school finance reform was passed it would be named after Bobby D. Crim.

What followed, through mid-year 1973, was one of the most bitter legislative educational policy battles of the decade, and it boiled down to Crim versus Caesar. Incredibly clever political manipulation, some called it vicious, led to the passage of a new school aid act for Michigan, and when it was signed it bore the name of Gilbert E. Bursley. Caesar, a Senate staff member, had won. He had devised a formula for school finance and a political strategy so exacting as to be able to beat the Majority Floor Leader of the Michigan House of Representatives in his own chamber with his own Democratic votes.

The elections of 1974 found Bursley reelected, but the Republicans in a 24-14 minority. The Democrats took the committee chairmanships, and with them went Caesar's job as education committee aide. Few observers would have guessed that Caesar would land so squarely on his feet. But he did, as chief education advisor to his former adversary, the new Speaker of the House, Bobby D. Crim.

Several of the other participants in the seminar series have made a variety of interesting career moves in the state policy arena.

Roger Tilles went from nonpartisan Director of School Law and Legislation for the Department of Education to member of the State Board of Education to Executive Secretary to the Speaker, Crim, of

the State House of Representatives within a period of a few months.

Doug Smith went from administrative assistant to Bursley (where he studied under Caesar) to the Michigan Association of School Boards (under David Ruhala) to education advisor to the Governor in a few weeks.

As has been mentioned, Jerry Dunn is both lobbyist for a configuration of local school districts and regent at the University of Michigan, a Democrat. He was elected regent shortly after losing his seat in the Michigan Senate in the same year that Crim first lost his seat in the Michigan House--1966.

This researcher came to Lansing as aide to Republican Senate Education Committee chairman in 1970. In 1973, when Roger Tilles left his job as school law and legislation director for the department, this researcher took it. Later in 1974, he left that job to become executive secretary to the Majority Leader of the Senate, William B. Fitzgerald. With Fitzgerald's dumping in 1976, he became a private sector lobbyist, after a short break as a full-time day student at Michigan State University. Through some of the period covered by this study, he was associate campaign manager for Fitzgerald's ill-fated run for the seat occupied by incumbent Milliken.

Appendix A contains three tables showing the composition of the Michigan Education Seminars from September 1977 to fall 1978.

Table A1 is a list of the original participants of the Michigan Education Seminars--those who were invited to the convening session on September 14, 1977. Table A2 is a list of these original participants, categorized by educational policy segment: executive branch, legislative branch, educational interest group, and other interest group. Table A3 shows the growth of the Michigan Education Seminars up to September 1978. By that time, the participant list had grown to nearly one hundred. The participant invitation list was to pass the one hundred mark in the early fall of 1978. It currently exceeds 120.

Examples have been provided that depict the tendency of educational policy actors at the state level in Michigan to remain, despite job changes, in positions of influence within this community. Further examples of such transiency exist. However, it is interesting that there are segments of the educational policy-making community in Michigan that can be characterized as quite stable.

Of the three original seminar participants who were members of the legislative staff of the legislature, only one, Tilles, has moved, and he did so to run for political office. Tilles is currently in law practice in Washington, D.C., and it is interesting that one of his "anchor accounts" in Washington is the Michigan Department of Education.

Among the legislators themselves, only five of the eight original seminar participants are still members of the legislature. In the State Senate, the 1978 election presented fourteen new members of this body of thirty-eight. Most of the Senate changeover was

caused when members "fell to ambition"--running for higher elective office and mostly failing.

One finds attrition of all forms among the Michigan Education Seminars. Although much of the attrition is among the legislators, they and others have left the ranks due to death, loss of election related to scandal and over-ambition, promotion, withdrawal related to political exhaustion, and simple disappearance from the scene. How well these education policy maker attrition data would compare with a list of policy makers involved with other social service disciplines is unknown. But one thing is certain: Regardless of how familiar one was with the educational policy-making structure at the state level, a prolonged absence from the scene could produce a rather dramatic form of culture shock upon reentry.

Further specific examples of such changes follow. Edward Vandette, although still a state board member despite an unsuccessful attempt to win a congressional primary, is no longer president of the board. Michael Usdan (who is credited with conceiving the idea for state seminars like the Michigan Education Seminars while an associate at the Institute for Educational Leadership) is no longer president of Merrill-Palmer Institute in Detroit. He is currently Commissioner of Higher Education in Connecticut.

Other important changes include John Porter's resignation as state school chief and his acceptance as head of Eastern Michigan University. Representative Willian Keith is still vice-chairman of the House Committee on Education. After his reelection, however, he was appointed to head the House Committee on Colleges and Universities.

Jeffrey Graham has moved from Deputy Director of the State Department of Commerce to Governor Milliken's inner circle of advisors.

Edmund Farhat is no longer public affairs director of the Michigan Catholic Conference. He resigned his post in December 1978 to move into a lobbying job created when this researcher became associate manager of the Fitzgerald for Governor campaign. David Ruhala recently announced his resignation as the legislative director (many contend de facto head) of the Michigan Association of School Boards to become an oil lobbyist. He will be replaced by Kathleen Strauss, Michigan Education Seminars steering committee member and aide to Senator Education Committee Chairman Jack Faxon.

Senator Gil Bursley is still active in Michigan Education Seminars and the Education Commission of the States, despite his resignation from the legislature to become president of Cleary College in Ypsilanti. Joe Billingsley, one of the charter Michigan Education Seminars members, literally disappeared, some speculate overseas.

Not to be forgotten is Representative Mel Larsen, who resigned from the Michigan legislature to run for Secretary of State in 1978. An active Michigan Education Seminars participant, after his predictable loss to Richard Austin, Larsen ran a campaign within the Milliken administration to become the Director of the State Department of Commerce. He lost again. Getting this job was the Republican State Party Chairman, William McLaughlin, whose vacated position was run for and won by Mel Larsen.

Although not a universal rule, movement of educational policy actors from chair to chair within the educational policy-making community is commonplace. Perhaps the most notable deviation from the pattern of movement from branch to branch of government, even from party to party, is John Porter, chief state school officer through most of the time in which this research was conducted.

Coming to Lansing in the late 1950s, a scholar-athlete from Albion College with a teaching certificate, Porter was told that the teaching job he had been promised in the city schools was no longer vacant, the quota of black teachers having been filled. Forced to work as a janitor in the state capitol building, Porter at the Civil Service 01 level moved from the lowest level state classified position to the highest, as associate superintendent of the Higher Education Division, in a period of a little more than ten years. As far as anyone around Lansing is able to tell, Porter is the only man in the state's history who so thoroughly traveled the state employment ladder. For those analysts who viewed the Michigan educational political structure in the early 1970s to have reported on the mystique of the state superintendent without having reported as a major factor in this mystique his legendary climb through the bureaucracy was an incredible oversight.

A common thread weaves its way through the leadership of the educational policy-making community of this state. Most of the individuals who have been, or will be, named as members of the leadership of this community can be characterized as hard workers. They are uniformly dedicated to the betterment of the state's educational

system. Most of the leaders work passionately at their jobs. It is this passion that often ignites into near-violent disagreements between factions of the educational community over the style or method of meeting the educational needs of Michigan school children. It is a system in which political and physical violence occasionally emerges. Classic battle has occurred between Caesar and Crim, Crim and Dunn, Billingsley and almost everyone whom he has met from time to time. It is a system in which grown men are still allowed to fight for causes.

It is also a system in which, for the most part, excellence prevails. It is the portrayal of the educational policy system as fragmented, without recognition of the excellence of its leadership and its dedication to a common purpose, that is the greatest fault of the abundance of literature on the educational policy-making process in Michigan.

How well did the participants in the Michigan Education Seminars reflect the composition of the educational policy-making community of Michigan? This question was asked of the interviewees in the post-first-year survey conducted by the researcher.

Generally, interviewees saw the seminar sessions as being composed of individuals representing every major sector of educational policy making. Their responses reflect the feeling that neither they, nor their opposition, were advantaged by the mix of policy makers included in the sessions.

Overall, responses to the question of representation of the leaders of the major educational policy-making groups ranged from "one likes to think [that the representation was good]" to "the

seminars were K-12 heavy." The latter objection was raised by only one individual.

It should be noted that in the interview setting, educational policy makers created the same four essential segments of the policy-making community used by the researcher to identify participants for the study: executive branch leadership, legislative leadership, educational interest group leadership, and other interest group leadership.

During this phase of the interviewing, other attitudes of some of the major participants were revealed. A university professor, for instance, described the participants as a "core of people who could not afford to be absent." This reveals an important perception of the interviewee's concept of motivation of attendance in the Michigan Education Seminars. He thought that the participants were motivated to attend the seminars partly out of a desire not to be left out of the action, and he cited as evidence the fact that on several occasions key policy makers had sent aides apparently to record and report what had transpired in the session.

Robert McKerr used this interview as an opportunity to chide the researcher. He suggested that the original participant list was incomplete--that it did not represent the true leaders in educational policy making. McKerr was not on the original list of participants, and he complained rather bitterly of this fact when he called the researcher before the second session and wanted to know why he had been left off the list.

A local school district superintendent said that a "wide variety of representatives" participated in the seminars. He said that he viewed such participation as necessary because issues in education "have gone into another dimension. It is no longer a management versus labor environment. The environment establishes the need for multidimensional representation."

One respondent suggested that it was the steering committee that provided the core representation at the Michigan Education Seminars. He said that the remainder of the participants seemed to drift in and out of the various sessions, dependent entirely upon how closely they perceived the sessions to be within the specific domain of their organizational interests.

As has been noted earlier, the only negative comment regarding the balance of representation in the Michigan Education sessions came from two individuals. One said it was "K-12 heavy." The other, a college professor participant, suggested that the "K-12 representation is small."

The governor's education advisor, Doug Smith, suggested that the "continued attendance of a wide variety of representatives of educational interest groups was the best indication thus far of the success of the Michigan Education Seminars."

An analysis of the raw numbers provides very little information on this point. The participant list grew from less than forty to over one hundred participant invitees. Although certain segments of the educational policy community have more representatives on the list than do others, this bears little relationship to who actually showed

up at the seminar sessions. Attendance figures were presented in Chapter IV.

Function of the Steering Committee

The need for the researcher to designate a group of individuals from within the educational policy-making community as a steering committee for the seminar series was one way for him to insulate himself from some of the possible negative political consequences of attempting such an endeavor.

The seminar program was designed to provide useful information on potential or actual educational policy issues to top-level state policy makers. The educational policy makers themselves, therefore, were logical candidates for deciding what issues they wanted to endorse or propose for inclusion on the seminar agenda.

The initial seminar session was an exploration of potential issues for Michigan Education Seminars. Such a large and varied number of potential issues existed after this first session that the researcher needed help sorting and establishing priorities.

The steering committee also provided a buffer between the participants and the researcher. It would have been impossible to have scheduled every potential seminar subject that was requested. Some subjects were so controversial and explosive that they would have created severe trauma within the educational policy-making community. The steering committee provided a logical means of approving and certifying content of the seminar sessions. A committee comprised of some of the state-level policy maker participants was charged with sanctioning, if not developing, the program.

The most interesting discussions on major educational policy issues often occurred within the steering committee meetings. The steering committee meetings were mini-seminars. The steering committee was composed of fourteen individuals by the end of this research. Many of the members of the steering committee were significant leaders in their segment of the educational policy-making community.

The first session of the steering committee was held two weeks before the initial seminar session.* Before then, each individual member of the steering committee had been interviewed in an informal setting. They were asked to meet to discuss the potential composition of such a seminar series. They provided evidence that would later become a part of the data used in the reputational analysis of the state's educational policy-making community. During this initial session of the steering committee, the researcher reviewed his contract with the Institute for Educational Leadership and identified his personal objectives for the Michigan Education Seminars program. It was also at the original seminar steering committee meeting that the question of whether the seminars should be used to develop specific policy recommendations was first discussed. Unanimous agreement was reached on this point--the steering

*The original steering committee of the Michigan Education Seminars was: Jeffrey Graham, Deputy Director of the Michigan Department of Commerce; Elizabeth Kummer, Legislative Vice-President and Education Director for the Michigan League of Women Voters; Eugene B. Farnum, Director of the Senate Fiscal Agency; Roger B. Tilles, Majority Executive Secretary, Michigan House of Representatives, and State Chairman of NOLPE (National Organization for Legal Problems in Education); Patricia Widmayer, Legislative and School Law Director for the Michigan Department of Education; and Gary Sullenger, Fiscal Analyst, Education, Senate Fiscal Agency. This appears as Table A4 in Appendix A.

committee concurred with the researcher that consensus-seeking and decision-making behavior would not be an appropriate objective of the sessions.

Several of the steering committee members were aware of the history of the Michigan Education Seminars. Sponsoring two seminars on compensatory education, it had been the goal of the earlier Michigan Education Seminars to recommend changes in the basic act which could be implemented by the legislature. As the post-first-year interviews reveal, at least one of the major forces in the earlier Michigan Education Seminars saw this consensus-seeking and policy-recommendation aspect as the cause of its quiet demise.

It was also pointed out during this first meeting that the researcher intended to build a strong relationship with the Education Commission of the States (Michigan Council). There was support for this recommendation, and the initial approach to offer Senator Bursley co-sponsorship of the first session was supported.

The steering committee discussed a variety of issues that could be used as potential items for the Michigan Education Seminars agendas and agreed to the date and place of the preliminary, or convening, session. The seminar program was officially launched.*

*By June 1978, the steering committee of the Michigan Education Seminars had been expanded from the earlier list to include Bursley; William Bridgeland and Edward Duane, social scientists from Michigan State University and early participants in this research; David Ruhala, Deputy Executive Director (legislative director) of the Michigan Association of School Boards; William Kieth, Vice-Chairman of the House Committee on Education; Doug Smith, Education Advisor to Governor Milliken; and William Sederburg, then senate staff member and now state senator.

Subsequent additions included David Haynes, Administrative Assistant to the Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Appropriation

Perhaps no function of the steering committee, as it developed, was more important than the check that it provided that no overly explosive issue got placed on the formal seminar agenda.

The following account is included as a means of demonstrating the significance of the steering committee in the operation of the Michigan Education Seminars.

In October 1977, a recommendation was made by the Institute for Educational Leadership for the various state associates (seminar coordinators) to conduct a session within their state on the subject of how well their state special education laws fit the requirements of P.L. 94-142, the newly enacted federal Education of All Handicapped Act.

In the second steering committee session, which was held in the state capitol building in October 1977, the seminar coordinator recommended that such a session be the subject of a seminar for the Michigan Education Seminars program. He presented to the steering committee a proposed agenda for such a session. The agenda would have included a report by the special education director of the Michigan Department of Education, an opinion by the legal advocate for the Michigan Association of Retarded Citizens, a panel discussion with various legislative and executive staff members, and a possible presentation by a federal official conversant in the application of 94-142.

for Education, Kerry Kammer; Kathleen Strauss, Special Assistant to the Senate Education Committee and its chairman, Jack Faxon; Thomas Bernthal, then Assistant to Bursley and now Assistant Director of the Michigan Community College Association; and Robert Muth, Executive Director of the Middle Cities Education Association.

It was learned in this session that a special study committee had been formed by the department to investigate this very question. Further, and perhaps more important, it was learned that a discussion, particularly in the presence of a federal official, of the implementation of this federal act could jeopardize every federal dollar coming into Michigan.

A telegram had been sent only a few days earlier to the Senate Majority Leader from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The telegram warned about public evaluation of the state's programs for the handicapped. The telegram specified that a judgment of noncompliance by the federal government, regardless of the circumstances or severity, could result in a complete withholding of all federal dollars to the state until the noncompliance was either disproven or resolved.

A memo was sent to the Institute for Educational Leadership, with a copy of the NCSL telegram, and it was recommended that IEL revise its requests for such meetings in the states. Such meetings could result in the production of self-incriminating evidence--evidence produced at the request of IEL--which could severely disrupt state and federal relations.

The steering committee of the Michigan Education Seminars provided guidance, political insulation, credibility and status, ideas, and a variety of other services. The steering committee also will provide long-term stability to the seminar series.

Relationship to the Education Commission
of the States

One of the first research goals was to use the Michigan Council of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) as another vehicle for fulfilling many necessary functions.

The Education Commission of the States is headquartered in Denver, Colorado. In every state capital, an ECS chapter of state educational policy leaders, appointed through a variety of state-determined mechanisms, meets periodically to discuss concerns about the condition of education in the state and in the nation. Another important annual issue of the state ECS chapter is to select representatives to attend the national convention. ECS is part national testing company, part national educational research organization, and part educational-social group. Its visibility as a major force in Michigan educational politics has been less than high.

Why did the researcher want to establish a permanent working relationship with ECS? What did he have to offer ECS?

First, the researcher, along with his IEL colleagues, was asked to establish a relationship with ECS by the Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C., Sam Halperin. At the first national meeting of state associates--directors of state educational seminars--that the researcher attended, Halperin asked all

associates to get together with the state ECS chapters. No explanation was requested.

Second, the Michigan Education Seminars had no legal standing to hold a meeting in Michigan. One of the prominent reasons for discouraging consensus seeking was because the researcher felt that the seminars had no legal or statutory authority to include officials of the government in decision-making sessions.

ECS, Michigan chapter, is identified in the statute, and although it, too, has no decision-making authority it is something of a legal entity. On the other hand, the Michigan Education Seminars and its parent IEL had virtually no legal standing in the state.

The ECS spokesman in Michigan was, at the time of the initiation of the seminar series, Senator Gilbert Bursley. Whatever prestige or respect the researcher might have had in Michigan educational politics at the time of the initial session of the seminars, Bursley had more. He has served on national commissions of ECS and has gained national recognition for Michigan for his forward-thinking positions on important educational issues, particularly those involving school finance and educational programs for migrants and the disadvantaged.

Bursley had something else to offer the Michigan Education Seminars by his leadership of ECS--Republican credentials at the top. The researcher is a Democrat, and it was important that the Michigan Education Seminars not be encumbered with partisan identification. Bursley was ideal.

The ECS, on the other hand, was motivated by a need to do something to justify its existence in Michigan. Again, this is a rather casual interpretation. However, several of the post-first-year interviewees noted that before the Michigan Education Seminars, the ECS in Michigan had had no substantive identification. They had no money either. With Bursley no longer chairman of an education committee with a budget, he likely had nowhere to draw expense money to pay for the lunch or the dinner meetings of the EDS. The Michigan Education Seminars had a budget and a reason to meet with the leadership of Michigan ECS, so a marriage that may have been based partially upon money was made.

Meetings of the ECS and the steering committee, or a core of the steering committee, of the Michigan Education Seminars were occasionally held in tandem. Several members of the Michigan Education Seminars (and its steering committee) were also members of the ECS. There is currently an interlocking relationship between boards of both organizations.

Much of the working relationship that developed between ECS and the Michigan Education Seminars centered on the personal relationship between the researcher, Bursley, his aide, Tom Bernthal, and the late Liz Kummer, who sat as member-secretary of ECS in Michigan. At that, the relationship was sometimes strained.

Such was the case when, in November 1977, it was learned that the ECS of Michigan, over the signature of chairman Bursley, had sent a formal ECS questionnaire to the entire participant mailing list of the Michigan Education Seminars. The questionnaire

was a refined form of the questionnaire that had been circulated at the September 14 seminar session. It asked potential respondents, for the second time, to rank-order educational policy issues in Michigan by perceived importance. The action was irritating for several reasons.

First, the researcher learned about the questionnaire when his doctoral committee chairman, a participant in the seminar sessions, showed it to him. He had not been sent a copy. Second, he didn't want the seminar participants to begin to feel like guinea pigs--a point made very emphatically to the Institute for Educational Leadership when it attempted a similar scheme.

Again viewing the Michigan Education Seminars as an open system within a larger open system, its relationship, which has earlier been described as co-equal, is interesting. ECS had energy to import to the Michigan Education Seminars in the form of prestige, counterbalancing partisan identification, and the like. The Michigan Education Seminars had money and a program with staff. ECS could take its meaning from the Michigan Education Seminars and return the status of its national identification in trade.

One thing ECS had to offer the Michigan Education Seminars, however, was not realized until late. Ways to "institutionalize" the Michigan Education Seminars were sought. The program could not simply be turned over to ECS and be expected to survive. But what could be done in the future would be to depend on ECS to provide the look of institutionalization, the continuity of leadership on the

steering committee, and the regularity of programming necessary to increase the likelihood of the survival of the seminars.

Relationship to the Institute for
Educational Leadership

The tendency might be to look upon the Michigan Education Seminars as a relatively free-standing system within Michigan. In many cases state seminars might be more accurately viewed simply as subsystems of the larger IEL, for although evidence is presented in this section that IEL attempts to exert influence upon its state programs, it will also be demonstrated that such influence can be safely ignored.

To review, IEL is an umbrella organization affiliated with George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Its programs range from the seminar series in over thirty state capitals to a National Public Radio program called "Options in Education."

Its associate director for state programs is one of the most highly respected state agency educational research experts in the United States. C. Philip Kearney designed, or at least significantly influenced, the Michigan accountability model and its related reading and mathematics statewide assessment program. He is considered to have been one of the significant influences on the professional development of John W. Porter, state school chief during most of this study. At the same time, a majority of the diverse elements of the public policy process in Michigan have a great fondness for

Kearney. Presently he is one of several strong candidates to fill the vacancy of the state superintendent position.

Kearney is a personal friend of the researcher. His desires to demonstrate the potential for an effective educational seminar series motivated him to entrust this program to the researcher as one of his first official acts as IEL associate director. This might be an overstatement, and somewhat figurative. However, the importance of making certain that the Michigan Education Seminars was among the most outstanding in the nation was largely motivated by a desire to fulfill a personal as well as professional commitment to Kearney.

Responsibilities for the coordinator of the Michigan Education Seminars were loosely defined in a letter from Kearney to the researcher, dated June 21, 1977:

1. Plan and implement the MES, conducting a minimum of five, and preferably more, seminar activities during the MES year, i.e., July 1, 1977, through June 30, 1978.
2. Provide our office, the associates program, with:
 - (a) advance information about coming MES activities,
 - (b) brief summary-evaluations of each MES activity,
 - (c) appropriate financial reporting.
3. Maintain continuing contact with TAP and IEL, including participation in the semi-annual conferences of IEL Associates.
4. Submit an annual report at the end of the MES year to include:
 - (a) an analysis of the Michigan education political scene, identifying major issues and projecting MES activities in terms of these issues;
 - (b) a summary of the year's activity; and
 - (c) an appraisal of MES in terms of its effectiveness and how it might improve its programs.

The criteria used by IEL to select state associates were outlined in a letter from IEL Director Sam Halperin to Laura Bornholt, Vice-President for Education of the Lilly Endowment, Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1978:

How is the associate chosen? The associate is the key person in the program. The appointments of associates are made on an annual basis and represent the most important set of decisions made by TAP at the national level. The program's success in any given state is largely dependent upon the associate--on his or her character, reputation, energy, political acceptability and general ability to get policy makers to respond positively to seminar invitations.

During the course of this study, the direct involvement with IEL was limited. Kearney was in regular phone contact with the researcher. Several meetings occurred, two in Washington, D.C., one in Toronto, and one in Reno, Nevada, and Sacramento, California, in which the associates from throughout the country were assembled to participate in three-day seminars to discuss their state program. IEL regularly issued memoranda in which particularly successful seminars in other states could be promoted.

The Institute for Educational Leadership provided special funding for programs in particular subject areas and appealed to the associates to hold sessions on these topics. One such recommendation was entitled "How Well Does the Michigan Mandatory Special Education Act (198, P.A. 1979), and Its Rules, Implement the Federal Education of All Handicapped Act?" The effect of this particular suggestion was discussed in an earlier section of this dissertation. However, it is important to note that IEL does encourage associates to hold specific seminars on particular subjects from time to time.

Over the course of the year and a half of this study, Kearney was a regular participant in the Michigan Education Seminars. His participation in these seminars, however, was as an outside observer. He seemed inclined to refrain from active involvement in the policy discussions. His presence at the various state seminars, however, is designed with a specific purpose in mind. One purpose is to provide IEL with the direct contact from the state educational policy-making processes across the country.

During the course of this study, the researcher met with IEL associates from across the United States. During these sessions, associates discussed various aspects of programs occurring throughout the country. At one of these sessions, the announcement was made that IEL would hire an individual from among the associates to coordinate a project designed to provide a panoramic view of educational policy making and major educational issues across the United States. The researcher was appointed to a steering committee charged with responding to this activity. The contractor was Professor Ellis Katz, Director of the American Institute for the Study of Federalism, Temple University, Philadelphia.

Among the suggestions made by Katz in his study outline was that the participants in the associates program seminars across the United States be sent a "comprehensive" survey instrument to determine major state policy issues.

At the IEL semi-annual meeting in which this questionnaire was discussed, the researcher raised strong objections to its distribution. The objections raised were based upon the questionable

scientific validity of the instrument and the meaningless responses it would generate; the fact that in some states questionnaires had already been distributed to seminar participants, the impression that the questionnaire conveyed that the seminar participants were becoming a part of some national experiment was a bad one; the compositions of the state seminars were extremely different and because of the varied samples, data would be relatively insignificant; and that the associates were theoretically selected based upon their vast knowledge of state issues, and they were capable of answering most of these questions.

The researcher's objections were nearly totally disregarded. When word was let out that the questionnaires were to be sent despite objections of at least one state associate, the researcher responded with a twenty-page response to the survey questions. No questionnaires were sent to Michigan.

The suggestion has been made in contract letters and official documents of the Institute for Educational Leadership that the state education seminars are fairly free to be run according to local standards. However, subtle pressures from IEL influence, if not control, the operation of state seminars around the country.

Two examples have been given. In the first instance, a special education conference was being proposed that in the eyes of the steering committee of the Michigan Education Seminars could have been severely damaging to the state's economy as well as to the credibility of the state seminar series.

The second example showed the Institute for Educational Leadership consenting to refrain from direct surveys of state seminar participants in Michigan only after strenuous objections of the researcher were raised. The researcher was engaged in what he believed to be the protection of the best interests of IEL.

The Michigan Education Seminars is a relatively independent and relatively free-standing program. Its description as a subsystem is more accurate in terms of the relationship to the larger system of educational politics in Michigan than it is to its relationship with IEL.

The Perceived Purpose of the Seminars

The Michigan Education Seminars has been described by the researcher as a program in which top-level state education policy makers can be convened for a discussion of actual or potential education policy questions facing the state education policy process. One goal of the researcher was to create an environment in which top-level policy makers could engage in an open exchange of information, attitudes, and ideas on potentially controversial issues.

This research was aided by the fact that the environment in which it was conducted was the planned product of a research and implementation effort coordinated by the researcher himself. Even

under these circumstances, it is difficult to pinpoint a definitive statement of organizational purpose that would be mutually acceptable to all participants in the study. Purpose, like policy, is best imputed by those who use and otherwise are affected by it.

The researcher sought to establish just what the purpose of the Michigan Education Seminars was, during the course of the research, by asking those most affected by it to explain it. To that end, a question was developed for the post-first-year interview that would pose the question directly: "Describe the major purpose of the Michigan Education Seminar." The reactions of the nineteen interviewees, although distinct in some particular way, were at the same time almost eerily similar.

In the first place, it was clear from the interviews that the concept of the neutral forum had penetrated the vocabulary of many of the participant policy actors. Besides reference to the "neutrality" of the forum, a parallel observation was frequently recorded in the interview sessions. One repeated statement of purpose for the Michigan Education Seminars was to "bring together" diverse elements of the educational policy-making process.

In the six seminars that were conducted during the term of this research, representatives of the executive branch, the legislature, educational interest groups, and other interest groups were brought together to discuss a broad array of actual or potential public policy issues. But the concept or notion of "bringing together" seemed to reflect more than the simply physical presence of otherwise adversaries in the same room. Many participants noted that the seminar

environment was hospitable. A central element in the definition of the series' purpose, therefore, related to the environmental conditions it created. A large number of the participants who were interviewed noted the "uniqueness" of the environment produced by the Michigan Education Seminars.

"Neutrality" and "hospitality" were attributed to the seminar sessions by the interviewees. The capacity of the series to draw together a "diversity" of education interests was also noted by several participants as an element of "purpose" of the series.

One legislative staff person stressed that "the major purpose [of the seminars] is to bring a diverse group of educational policy makers together on a single educational problem or a family of problems." Eugene Farnum, Director of the Senate Fiscal Agency, went beyond suggesting that it was simply a diverse community of top educational policy makers that defined the purpose of the Michigan Education Seminars. He suggested that the major purpose is "the cross-fertilization of ideas among diverse policy types within the state. We managed to bring together the interest groups in an atmosphere that was neutral. It was a neutral forum."

Then-deputy director of the Michigan School Boards Association, David Ruhala, described the neutrality of the series as a "barrier-free environment in which leaders can dissociate themselves from organizational positions and begin to communicate with one another. They can talk about issues without feeling that they are on the spot."

Perhaps the nearly universal perception of the provision of a neutral environment being an element of the seminars' purpose was

related to a feeling that institutional objectives were not being injected into policy discussions within the seminar sessions. In contradicting this perception, no evidence exists of a participant (in a seminar session) expressing a position or an attitude that was contrary to what would be the expected position of his/her association.

Another element of "purpose" attributed to the seminar sessions by the participants during the formal interviews was "informational." One interviewee suggested that it was not the educational issues that were brought before the Michigan Education Seminars that were of greatest significance in terms of the forum's capabilities for exchanging information. Rather, "the Michigan Education Seminars is an effort to apprise education decision makers or leaders of the broader issues affecting education."

In the original memorandum described by the researcher at the initial session of the Michigan Education Seminars, he said, "I see the seminar series as an opportunity to provide high-level exposure to issues that range beyond traditional boundaries of the school community, but that perhaps treat education as one component, albeit most important, of broader social programs." This objective was addressed in at least three of the seminars that were conducted during the eighteen months of this formal study. Perhaps the boldest example of this was the seminar session that addressed the prospects for a constitutional convention and its potential implications for the

educational community of the state. A second example of this would be the seminar that focused on the subject of CETA-YEDPA federal funding for job training and opportunity-related programs.

A minority of the interviewees suggested that an element of the purpose of the Michigan Education Seminars was to bring together those individuals responsible for the institution of public educational policy with those upon whom public policy would ultimately impact.

Among the most frequently mentioned elements of "purpose" attributed to the seminar sessions by the participant interviewees were: the provision of a "neutral" and "hospitable" forum; the ability of the series to attract a "diversity" of education interests; and the ability of the series to provide information to policy leaders--information regarding educational issues and information regarding broader social and political issues that affect education.

The Question of Consensus

As has been suggested earlier, the only issue in the current history of the seminar series for which a consensus action was taken was that consensus would never be sought again in the Michigan Education Seminars. Several of the interview responses provided important insights into the effect of the decision by the researcher not to allow the seminar series to be used to generate consensus opinions.

For a variety of reasons, the researcher prevented the seminars from being used as a consensus-seeking organization.

1. The administrative hassle would be incredible. Who would keep the records? What process would be used to take the votes? Would the Middle Cities Education Association, for example, have the same number of votes as the Michigan Association of School Boards? Would the MEA with its five resident participants have five votes while the MFT with its sometimes participation have one vote? When the consensus action was reported, would each group participating be required to sign off, and would the sign-offs be recorded?

2. How is dissent handled in a consensus situation? Would one have to get consensus on what consensus means? How does one determine what rules for consensus to use to get consensus on what consensus means? Does "consensus" suggest "unanimity" or "majority?"

3. Would the question of participation in the Michigan Education Seminars require definition in the statutes? Under whose authority would the participants be selected?

4. How does an official policy maker express his consensus opinion (his vote) without prematurely committing him/herself to what may become a politically untenable issue?

5. How would one protect the Michigan Education Seminars from becoming what so many advisory and ad hoc committees seem to have become--a dumping ground for controversial issues that policy makers

do not want to decide (as the constitution and the law require them to do)?

6. What meaning would a consensus decision have to the average legislator, for example? Would he/she care that some self-annointed advisory group had given him/her a consensus decision? Would he/she resent having been precluded from participating in the compromise that led to consensus?

7. Does the concept of consensus decision making imply that all groups are always partially correct?--or that their correctness on an issue can or should be determined by the political manipulations organizations are able to make in a political consensus-making procedure?

8. What impact do the prospects of coming to a consensus-seeking stage in a debate have for limiting free discussion? Would a policy actor under such circumstances be permitted the luxury of showing the substance of his hand, or would he be required to play his cards close to his vest?

At the initial convening session of the Michigan Education Seminars, September 14, 1977, the attitude on this question was quite clear. Under no circumstance could the diverse group of people who were being asked to participate in these forums be expected to continue participating if they were constantly engaged in a struggle to acquire sufficient support to permit their particular policy position to be represented as a consensus position.

This point was made very clear by the then-Public Affairs Director of the Michigan Catholic Conference, Ed Farhat, who observed

that on questions regarding government aid to private education there could be no possible circumstance within a group constituted along the lines of the Michigan Education Seminars under which the position of his organization toward the subject could prevail in a public vote.

Although the feelings of the participants on the question of consensus seeking in the Michigan Education Seminars seemed obvious, the researcher believed that the philosophical basis of the unanimous opposition to consensus-seeking behavior would be of interest. Therefore, the second question formally posed during the formal interviews was, "Should the Michigan Education Seminars be task oriented--should official positions be developed?"

The responses to this question seem to reflect the segments of the educational policy-making community from which the interviewees came. For example, the late Vice-President of the League of Women Voters, Elizabeth Kummer, perceived her role in the governmental process to be one that hinged upon her ability to move important public policy issues forward by causing diverse elements of the educational policy-making community to communicate with one another until compromise could be found. She was emphatic in her opposition to a task-orientation framework for the Michigan Education Seminars. "Although you must have some sort of structure, with a task oriented format you can get bound in political gamesmanship."

A legislative representative expressed equal concern with the question of task orientation for the Michigan Education Seminars program. He stressed that under such a format the Michigan Education

Seminars could "interfere with the committee system of the legislature." He further stressed that within the State Department of Education an elaborate advisory committee system already exists to provide homogenized recommendations to the executive branch of government.

The advisory council system of which this interviewee spoke comprises more than thirty individual advisory councils to the Michigan State Board of Education. Among them are the advisory councils on Adult and Continuing Education Services, Arts and Education, Bilingual Education, Compensatory Education Services, Elementary and Secondary Education, Equal Educational Opportunity, and several others.

In an informal conversation between then-Deputy U.S. Commissioner of Education, Dr. William Pierce, a former deputy superintendent of public instruction in Michigan, and the researcher, after a session at which Dr. Pierce addressed the Michigan Education Seminars participants, he made the following observation. Dr. Pierce suggested that one of, if not the most, significant changes that he had seen in the educational policy-making process in the past ten years was the proliferation of advisory and ad hoc committees charged with developing policy recommendations for the formal policy promulgation bodies. To paraphrase his comments, he suggested that there were two essential purposes for the advisory committee to an executive branch agency.

The first purpose was that the advisory committee was a body to which the official government agency could ship highly controversial issues that it did not feel equipped to resolve on its own.

This action can be taken with the full knowledge that the advisory committee is even more poorly positioned to resolve the issue through consensus, and as a consequence the "no-action" action can be taken by the bureaucracy without fear of being accused of being "bureaucratic."

In those cases where the agency wants to adopt a controversial policy without suffering the possible consequences of such an action, the advisory committee can be advised that if it does not come up with an alternative within a fixed period, the controversial action will be taken.

One of the seminar participants described the Michigan Education Seminars as "process" rather than "product" oriented. He suggested that rather than attempt to develop specific policy recommendations in the future, the Michigan Education Seminars should continue with the current approach. He described the seminars as sessions in which the educational policy makers representing the widest possible views on the variety of issues presented can openly articulate the basis for their opposition with their adversaries.

A second question asked of the interviewees revealed an important set of observations that relate to the question of consensus. The interviewees were asked whether they were involved in any forums that are similar in design or content to the Michigan Education Seminars. A clear majority of those interviewed noted that the major distinction between the Michigan Education Seminars and any other forum involving state-level educational policy actors is that

the Michigan Education Seminars does not attempt to seek policy recommendations.

The single most commonly mentioned educational policy forum in which the policy members said they participated, other than the Michigan Education Seminars, was the Educational Forum. The Educational Forum is a group of the representatives of eight of the major statewide educational associations. In its meetings, executive and legislative pending actions are discussed. Although no member of the executive or legislative branch is an official representative in the Educational Forum, representatives from these segments of the government are occasionally invited to discuss public policy issues with the leaders of the various organizations represented.

Consensus seeking is a critical element of the Educational Forum. Keith Geiger, President of the Michigan Education Association, described the process used in the Educational Forum to arrive at consensus: "We agree to disagree on certain issues and then to exclude the areas of disagreement from the discussion." Another educational interest group representative in the Educational Forum suggested in an interview that positions were taken in the Educational Forum under those circumstances when unanimous agreement could be reached.

David Ruhala, of the school boards association, suggested that there were three substantial differences between the Michigan Education Seminars and the Educational Forum:

- (1) The Educational Forum is restricted to the educational interest groups for official participation. (There is no membership from the educational policy makers from the executive or legislative branches of government, and only the most influential of the public educational groups are represented.)

(2) The Educational Forums are meetings without the official organizational leaders. They involve second and third tier organizational leaders. (3) The major difference between the Educational Forum and the Michigan Education Seminars is that the Educational Forum attempts to arrive at official positions.

Two of the formal interviews suggested that the Education Legislative Advisory Council (ELAC) for the Michigan Department of Education bears some similarity to the Michigan Education Seminars. ELAC is a group of school lobbyists, primarily, who are periodically convened by the Department of Education to review pending legislative and executive actions. One legislative interviewee suggested that "ELAC takes positions on legislation that is already developed. MES does not deal with specific legislation." A representative of a major educational interest groups said simply: "ELAC is similar [to the Michigan Education Seminars] but different."

The major difference between the Michigan Education Seminars and any other forum in which participants were involved centered on the non-consensus-seeking nature of the Michigan Education Seminars. Consensus seeking was seen as an objective to be avoided in the seminar sessions. The researcher cited a variety of logistical problems with consensus seeking, including the tendency for consensus seeking to encourage "political gamesmanship," the possible interference with the legal-political policy determination process, and the "process orientation" of the seminar series.

Impact Upon Relationships

One of the major assumptions of the study was that the Michigan Education Seminars would have a positive impact upon the

relationships that existed, or were to exist, between the major educational policy actors in the state. Again the interviews were helpful in providing insights into this issue.

The assumption was really stated in two parts. First, it was assumed that the participation in the Michigan Education Seminars would positively affect the ability of policy makers representing adversarial organizations to begin to relate to one another on a personal basis. It was assumed that by discussing problems confronting the educational community, most association and government leaders would realize that despite their differences in proposed approaches or solutions, their objectives were similar.

The second part of the assumption, however, is more subtle. One of the major problems confronting the administration of education today derives from the inability of individuals within the same branch of government, the same department, the same political party, the same association or a related one to communicate common goals to one another and to agree upon priority solutions. A seminar series of the nature of the Michigan Education Seminars could therefore provide an opportunity for inter- as well as intra-agency communication.

A separate but related assumption involved the expression of motivation for attending the seminars. In other words, an attempt was made to impute from the verbal expressions of the participants the reasons why they attended the seminars, and in this way to get a better understanding of the strengths of the program. Many of the responses to the question regarding motivation for attending the seminar session are placed in this section because the "impact upon

relationships" was one of the major reasons cited by the participants for why they thought policy makers attended the sessions.

A legislative staff director said that one of the reasons he attended the seminar sessions was because it gave him an opportunity to see one of his key staff members in action--and that he gained increasing confidence in this staff member as a consequence.

An educational association leader said that he used the seminar session to develop materials for publications for his membership. He said that upon his return from a seminar session he would sit down with his organizational publication editor and discuss ideas for feature and news accounts of the issues discussed.

Doug Smith, the education advisor to the governor, said that the declining enrollment seminar provided the best example of how the existence of a program such as the Michigan Education Seminars can greatly enhance intra-branch cooperation. "I have spent more time battling with the Department of Management and Budget on the issue of declining enrollment than with any other educational policy force in the state." Smith referred to a struggle that had been occurring within the executive branch of state government on the question of whether the state legislature should, by special category, fund districts that are suffering an inordinately high enrollment loss. "The session on declining enrollment came at a crucial time. I had just fought a major battle with the Department of Management and Budget, and at a crucial time they were asked to come in to a seminar and make a commitment to the educational community. That is a major purpose that the Michigan Education Seminars program serves," said Smith.

The Department of Management and Budget had to come out and say something, and what they said to the education community was that they would be willing to reexamine the question of declining enrollment. They promised to return to the Michigan Education Seminars with some specific proposals to discuss with the educational policy forces represented.

Associate State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Robert McKerr, testified to the accuracy of Smith's observations. He suggested in the post-first-year interview that he had observed a dramatic shift on the question of declining enrollments within the executive branch of state government. He attributed this shift in policy as having been initiated by the fact that both the governor's education advisor, Doug Smith, and a key spokesman on the issue from the Department of Management and Budget had been on the same seminar program.

The fact that the two key executive branch actors on the question of declining enrollment had been forced to make a presentation on an issue which had, heretofore, been unresolved within the executive branch forced them to get together and work out their differences. The fact that the otherwise somewhat isolated Department of Management and Budget witnessed first hand the educational community's agony on the question of declining enrollment provided incentive for resolution of the issue.

Elizabeth Kummer, of the League of Women Voters, recognized the function of the Michigan Education Seminars in providing a mechanism to help foster intra-agency communication.

Tom Bernthal, then-Administrative Assistant to Senator Gilbert Bursley, said that "on a social basis, it [MES] helps. The fact that we didn't deal with specific legislation allowed us to communicate on a higher plane with the members of the legislature and legislative staff who were present at the sessions. And the fact that this communication occurred in the presence of the top-level educational interest group leaders permitted the discussion to be quite honest and open."

A legislative staff analyst said that the issues discussed raised questions that required individual participants from the same agency to get together after the seminar and develop answers.

On another level of communication, one of the primary functions of the Michigan Education Seminars is that it provides the opportunity for social exchange between people who are normally in a position that could be described as antagonistic within the policy-making milieu of the state. Through these social exchanges, the educational policy makers begin to develop a sense of common purpose and begin to see that, in many cases, disagreements are often on the subject of form rather than substance.

The overall reaction to the direct questions on the impact of the Michigan Education Seminars on relationships between individuals in the educational policy-making community of the state was that it provided a forum for social and informational exchange. The expression of opposite positions by component adversaries can lead to a thorough discussion of the problem being addressed. In

this manner, common ground can be found and eliminated from the debate. Concentration then centers on the major issues of disagreement.

In the educational policy-making process of Michigan, much of the tension that exists has been between labor and management on the traditional issues that divide them. In this context, the common goal of delivery of a better educational service has been obscured for both the major policy actors and perhaps the knowledgeable observers of the process.

Perhaps the most significant role that the Michigan Education Seminars played during the term of this research was that it provided an opportunity for diverse elements in the educational policy-making community to relate to one another on a more personal basis than is normally provided in the decision-making process. In this context, the social hours that often followed the seminars, and the informal dinners and other meetings that were generated among rivals as a consequence of these social hours, could be considered among the most significant aspects of such a program.

There seems to be a common perception among certain "outsiders" that the upper echelons of policy-oriented associations and organizations are in constant interaction with one another. A sort of conspiracy theory, this notion can probably be traced to the days of politics that were dominated by the "smoke-filled room" approach. There seemed to be little evidence of this condition existing in educational policy making in Michigan today. The opportunity for educational policy actors to relate to their adversaries in a social

setting was one of the major reasons given for why they had attended the sessions.

The interviews confirmed that important social exchanges among educational policy makers had been stimulated by MES at two levels. Interviewees suggested that the opportunity was provided by MES to interact with other leaders within their organizations, as well as with leaders representing other interests.

The Major Issues

This is a process-oriented study of a major subsystem within the educational policy-making environment of Michigan politics. It is not a policy analysis. An entire dissertation, or perhaps many, could be devoted to an exploration of the impact that seminar sessions such as the ones constituted for this research have on the specific enacted policy of educational interest groups and government.

Nonetheless, a brief discussion of the policy implications of the Michigan Education Seminars was considered to be of potential interest to students of the policy-making process. As a consequence, interviewee-participants were asked to report upon the impact of the seminar sessions on two specific policy issues and their resolution within their organization. Earlier references to policy actions on declining enrollments have appeared in other sections of the analysis of the study. The declining enrollment issue was selected for a minor impact analysis because at the time of its

presentation to the seminar participants it was an unresolved issue, it was relevant to a large number of the regular participants in attendance, an official action of the government was about to be taken (or at least the potential existed), and the researcher had reason to believe that evidence could be presented that directly linked governmental action to a discussion that occurred within the seminar.

The second issue, the question of a potential constitutional convention and its possible impact upon education, was selected for a minor policy impact analysis because it was not of immediate urgency: The question was to be on the ballot more than one year after the discussion in the seminar, it was relevant to a large number of the interest groups and governmental-leader participants, and the nature of any action taken by an association or governmental entity could not influence the specific question of whether the issue would appear on the ballot. Rather, policy leaders were, at that point, deciding how to advise their constituents and members.

Little evidence exists that the discussion on the constitutional convention had a significant effect on any organization represented in the Michigan Education Seminars. In what turned out to be somewhat of an overstatement, Tom Bernthal, Administrative Assistant to Senator Gilbert Bursley, said that the "con-con session caused a shift in Senator Bursley's position on the issue. He is now an advocate."

Several group leaders reported that they used the session to initiate discussions within their organizations on the question of the ultimate organizational position on the constitutional convention.

Elizabeth Kummer "utilized the background information presented at the session on the constitutional convention. We were in the process of getting concurrence against the constitutional convention issue. Nothing that was presented at the seminar gave us any reason for feeling that we were wrong in our position."

Gene Farnum, Director of the Senate Fiscal Agency, said that the question of a potential constitutional convention forced the Senate Fiscal Agency to begin planning "to watch the issue as it develops and to think about its impact on state financing."

One educational interest group leader said that the discussion on the constitutional convention had a clear impact upon his organization. "Morley Winograd's* comments confirmed his perception of what needed to be done to immediately address the public attitudes about public education. We used the con-con materials in the Educational Forum. It helped the Educational Forum come to an opinion on the subject, and it also was instrumental in the reformation of the Educational Forum's Council Against Parochiad."

On the question of the Michigan Education Seminars' impact on declining enrollment financing in Michigan, the evidence is most clear. The most dramatic example of the effect of the seminar series on the declining enrollment financing issue was provided by state education department finance chief Robert McKerr. McKerr suggested that the seminar on this subject was directly responsible for a

*Morley Winograd was at that time the Chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party. He has since resigned and was replaced by Olivia "Libby" Maynard, Fitzgerald's running mate in the 1978 gubernatorial campaign.

major shift in the position of the Michigan Department of Management and Budget (DMB): "The Department of Management and Budget switched its position on the submission of the governor's budget between Christmas of 1977 and May of 1978. Prior to our conference, the Department of Management and Budget was saying that since there is no evidence of impact, how do you propose to verify the effectiveness of the [declining enrollment financing] program?"

In the declining enrollment seminar, the chief of the Department of Management and Budget's educational division presented the department's position on a panel that had been selected by the governor's educational advisor, Doug Smith. At that session, the DMB was being forced to make its position against declining enrollment financing a public one. Smith later testified in the post-first-year interview that it was this presentation that forced the department to "get off the dime."

One legislative analyst-interviewee suggested that the session on declining enrollments "changed the approach. There is dramatically increased funding this year. Our forum provided the basis for discussion at a very critical point in the process. It presented the problem, stimulated thinking, and forced those individuals who were hedging their bets to make a clear and precise commitment to the educational policy community."

A university participant observed that the discussion on declining enrollments provided the clearest example of the "parochial nature" of the state legislator. "[One legislator] sat around and talked about his district constantly." Two important messages were

absent from this observation. First, in the final analysis, the legislator is in a position where he has very little to relate to other than his local district--at least this is normally the case. Further, this is precisely his job: to relate to the problems of his local district and to work on solutions that, while they meet the needs of his local district, are appropriate in a broader policy context. The second point is more important, however. In the presence of a Department of Management and Budget official who was saying there is no way to gather evidence of the impact of declining enrollment financing in statistical terms, a political display that gives the bureaucrat another measure of impact can be important.

A legislative analyst said that the discussion on declining enrollments "forced us to go back and do some double checking. We still think that Goldberg was wrong." The analyst was referring to David Goldberg, an economist from the University of Michigan, who presented his opinion on the impact of declining enrollments on higher education. Among his observations was that declining enrollments in elementary and secondary education were largely irrelevant to higher education in Michigan. He observed that universities can adjust the impact of enrollment declines by adjusting entrance standards and by redirecting their pitch for new students at different populations.

The purpose of the Michigan Education Seminars was not to influence public policy directly. It is process-oriented research. Its objectives are process oriented. The assumptions of the study

clearly state the researcher's belief that the seminar series will affect public policy decisions. But the researcher also recognized the difficulty associated with validating such claims.

There is substantial reason to believe that the seminar session on declining enrollments had a significant influence on the government's resolution of the financing questions associated with the issue. The impact on the constitutional convention issue is less clear.

The Promotion of the Issues

A considerable question that deserves further exploration is to what extent forums such as the Michigan Education Seminars should create an atmosphere in which educational policy actors are encouraged to promote organizational or personal causes. As was the case with many of the questions used to stimulate discussion during the interviews, a somewhat indirect approach was taken to explore whether the seminar sessions were being used for this purpose. The evidence on this point is quite clear. The Michigan Education Seminars is seen as an important vehicle for some policy makers to promote proposed solutions to educational policy problems.

Specifically, the question was asked of the nineteen post-first-year interviewee-participants: "Did you have the opportunity to promote proposals to deal with the problems facing the educational community in Michigan?"

"Yes, I had the opportunity to present my position. I didn't take full advantage of it," said one representative of the educational policy-making community. She went on to say that although she didn't prepare adequate summaries for her membership on the issues presented, she did note that many organizations had. Among the organizations cited was the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB).

She said that she had observed in a variety of MASB publications during the course of the study that references were made to the Michigan Education Seminars and to the positions presented during these seminars by the variety of interest groups involved. She used this question as an opportunity for criticizing the coordinator of the Michigan Education Seminars for not having provided more clear, concise, and timely summaries of the sessions to be distributed among the organizations, and she was not alone in this criticism of the researcher. However, she really didn't answer the question that was posed.

The issue was not whether the seminars provided an opportunity for the participants to promote within their own organizations or outside in the public world of the educational policy-making community issues that were presented at the seminar. Rather, the question was whether, within the seminar, the individual representatives of the educational policy-making community had the opportunity to promote issues or positions they brought into the seminar and as a consequence to modify the positions of the seminar participants on these questions. After this question was reviewed, it was modified in later interviews to address specifically the question of the influence exerted during the seminar sessions upon other participants.

A legislative analyst-interviewee suggested that the Michigan Education Seminars is "wide open for anyone with a pet interest to present issues that they want presented. It provides an opportunity for gentle leadership."

A representative of a local school district refused to comment on the question. It was not clear to the interviewer whether the refusal to comment was related to the lack of clarity of the question, the refusal on the part of the interviewee to expose himself as having used the Michigan Education Seminars to promote the interests of his organization, or to some other factor.

One interviewee who was also a participant in the steering committee suggested that it was in the steering committees of the Michigan Education Seminars where the specific positions of the organizations were most clearly articulated, and where the interest in persuasive appeal was greatest. It was at these sessions where the agendas were set for the Michigan Education Seminars, and where the specific presenters were identified. Therefore, it was in these steering committees where at least one interviewee felt the greatest opportunity for persuasion, and for influencing the total educational policy-making process, could be exercised. "If a person were paranoid, he would believe that the steering committee was a bizarre cabal." He suggested that one way of dealing with this basic paranoia would be to release periodic "one pagers" about the kinds of things that were talked about in the steering committee.

The interviewer rationalized that he had at various points throughout the sessions offered the opportunity to any participant

to take part in the Michigan Education Seminars steering committee. He also stressed that he had reported on the discussions of the steering committee in the formal sessions of the seminars and repeatedly asked for volunteers for the steering committee.

This respondent also observed that, in some cases, participants appeared to be rather intimidated by the makeup of the participants in the educational policy forum that was provided by the Michigan Education Seminars. He cited the example of the Public Affairs Director of the Michigan Catholic Conference, Ed Farhat, who "appeared that he was going to swallow his cigar when the discussion of the impact upon Parochiaid in relation to the potential constitutional convention was mentioned. This was the first session, and Farhat knew that he was badly outnumbered." The respondent observed that he later saw Ed Farhat in private conversation with Senator Gil Bursley, and implied that he perceived the conversation to center on the question of this underrepresentation by the private school community.

Another respondent from the academic community observed that "there was a lot of playing to the gallery occurring during the seminar sessions. A lot of people looked like they were attempting to impress somebody with their positions on issues."

Senator Kerry Kammer, Senate Appropriations Education Subcommittee Chairman, said that he didn't see the Michigan Education Seminars as a forum in which he should present his personal views on educational policy issues, as much as he saw the seminars as a means for him to observe the attitudes of educational interest groups--

attitudes that would soon come to play as the legislators debated the issues discussed in the seminar sessions.

Bob Muth, Executive Director of the Middle Cities Education Association, described the Michigan Education Seminars as a "learning situation for me. You discover what people say and you examine how they say it. It gives you a much broader base of understanding-- maybe not on the issue, but on the actors that will determine the outcome of the issue in the public policy process."

Doug Smith, Education Advisor to the governor, suggested that the Michigan Education Seminars is the only forum in which he could get "the gut-level reaction of a diverse group of policy makers. It saved me time by providing me with a captive audience."

Major Weaknesses of the Seminars

The fact that the seminar series, the Michigan Education Seminars, is viewed as a successful and meaningful addition to the educational policy-making community of the state is obvious to the researcher. An important component of this "action research," however, is to provide future coordinators of this or similar seminar series with several recommendations for improving upon the ability to achieve some of the basic objectives that have been stated earlier. As such, the post-first-year interview was seen as an opportunity to poll some of the more active seminar participants who were participants in the seminar sessions.

One major weakness of the seminar series could also be seen as a major weakness of the research. The individuals who for some

reason or another did not participate in the seminar series were largely ignored by the researcher. Beyond a certain point, few attempts were made to enlist reluctant participants in the seminar sessions. The recruitment and enlistment strategies used by the researcher were clearly delineated at an earlier point in this dissertation.

What became even more obvious to the researcher as he conducted the formal evaluative interviews was that he had not interviewed any of the individuals who had been given the chance to participate in the seminar sessions but had refused. Many individuals did not participate in the seminar sessions. The largest group of these individuals were legislators. And there is little basis for speculating on their reluctance or inability to attend seminar sessions. But the importance of their attendance is not to be considered a given, either. Nonetheless, a major weakness of the seminar--that some potential participants did not attend the sessions--becomes a major weakness of the research. The researcher did not attempt to find out why.

The value of asking the question directly--"What was the major weakness of the seminar series?"--is questionable. Several of the weaknesses are apparent in observations that many of the interviewees made on other questions.

The seminar did not really provide a significant opportunity, at times, for exchange and dialogue. It often was lecture oriented, with little time for question and answer periods, and as such perhaps the use of the word "seminar" is a misnomer.

The observation that the participant list favored the K-12 sector of public education was to some extent counterbalanced by the observation that it favored higher education participants. Certainly the latter is more true than is the former. Perhaps a weakness of the seminar was that its subject matter was more oriented toward the K-12 sector than it was toward the higher education sector of public (or private) education. But if this is true, a minor modification or adjustment could correct the defect.

The feeling of the researcher that at times the promotion of the Michigan Education Seminars bordered on a "Barnum and Bailey" approach, and that it was becoming known as "Rick Cole's Seminar," was counterbalanced by the observations of Elizabeth Kummer. She said the researcher was too low key, that he hid under a bushel, that he tried to pass the credit for the program off "to everyone other than himself."

The suggestion that the seminar would have been a more popular forum if the researcher had spent more time promoting and reporting on it was also counterbalanced. One respondent suggested that the somewhat amateurish approach to the promotion of the seminar series contributed to its impression as a "neutral forum."

In the final analysis, the weaknesses of the seminar will be judged in the context of the ability of future coordinators to carry on with the program.

The Question of Survival

The question of the potential for the survival of the Michigan Education Seminars is discussed in the next chapter in a context that demonstrates the validity of some of the observations that came from the formal interviews. Again, this is a question that will ultimately be answered in retrospect. One can only speculate at this point. However, an attempt was made to project into the future by asking three indirect questions to the nineteen interviewee-participants in the post-first-year interviews. The questions were: "Assuming that the Institute for Educational Leadership chose to appoint a new coordinator for the Michigan Education Seminars, in which segment of the educational policy-making community would one look to find the person who could most appropriately coordinate this program (the executive branch, the legislative branch, educational interest groups, or other)?" Second, "Can you name an individual within any segment of the educational policy-making community who might be a likely candidate for operating the seminars?" And third, "What would you estimate the total cost of operation of this program to be over the course of one year?"

The question of the cost of the Michigan Education Seminars series was dropped from the interviewing format. The interviewer quickly sensed that the interviewees were reluctant to answer the question--possibly out of a fear that since these were educational policy makers representing the government or large associations, they were about to be "hit up" for funding. This was far from the case.

On the question of which segment of the educational policy-making community could conceivably be called upon to operate the Michigan Education Seminars, the responses were relatively uniform.

Through a process of exclusion, most of the interviewees concluded that no segment outside of their own could provide an individual who would be sufficiently impartial or viewed as sufficiently "neutral" to operate the Michigan Education Seminars effectively. In fact, with only one exception, there was no suggestion by an interviewee who had been asked to respond to this question that he/she was in a position to operate the seminars.

This presents a very interesting dilemma. Most of the interviewees seemed to feel that the success of the Michigan Education Seminars was largely a result of the fact that the coordinator of the program--the researcher--was not viewed as being aligned with a variety of divergent educational and other interests. He was sometimes called into the middle of educational disputes to negotiate difficult arguments between "two friends" on a limited basis. He was seen as a professional lobbyist representing a variety of statewide associations, none of which were directly concerned with educational issues. He was known to be doing research for a doctoral dissertation--a person who was interested in the "academic" questions surrounding educational policy making.

Gene Farnum, Director of the Senate Fiscal Agency, acknowledged that in the Michigan Education Seminars he and his education analyst, Gary Sullenger, were presenting the interests of the legislature: "If I assign Sullenger, there is no way he can function without carrying the legislative mantle. You couldn't ask MEA to

coordinate these sessions and expect that they would be neutral in their dealing with the school boards. You couldn't expect the school boards to function in such a session. You could pick someone from a school of education to operate the Michigan Education Seminars, but he would have to have hellish personal credentials in the political structure of educational decision making in order to have sufficient credibility to carry the program off."

Bob McKerr, from the Department of Education, said: "You couldn't expect the department to do it. People would say it was being done with ulterior motives."

Tom Bernthal, Administrative Assistant to Senator Bursley, suggested that "we already have a number of advisory councils. I see this as a chance to get outside of the educational policy-making community and to look in. In order to do that you need someone from outside the educational policy-making community to help you do it."

Senator Bursley observed that the Department of Education policy councils are concerned with consensus, that they provide a forum for the varied variety of sides of any issue to be presented, but they are notorious for promoting the interests of the Department, as well they should be.

Another respondent suggested that "you certainly don't want to put it with the governor. You weren't looked at as coming from any sphere of interest, but it takes a certain personality to operate a forum of this type. Doug Smith [the governor's education advisor]

has the personality to run it if he were dissociated from the governor's office."

Another university professor took a different tack. "Almost anyone with the right kind of technical and people skills could bird-dog the seminars. The critical element is in the steering committee." Although this opinion will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter, it is difficult for the researcher to disagree with the observation that there are others within or perhaps outside of the educational policy-making process who could be expected to coordinate the program efficiently.

One observer stressed that the responsibility of the operation of the Michigan Education Seminars could not be placed with an organization such as the Education Forum, which was previously described. "It must have funding that is distinguished from all other organizations within the state."

When asked specifically whether the Education Legislative Advisory Council could operate the Michigan Education Seminars or whether that forum could be broadened to include the Michigan Education Seminars, the general consensus was that, again, the Education Legislative Advisory Council is an animal of the Michigan Department of Education and must be viewed as such. As a consequence, the forums could not be viewed as neutral and, in the words of David Ruhala of the Michigan Association of School Boards, "the leader cannot be a major actor in the public policy process."

Representative Keith observed that "the organizer of the group cannot participate in the debate on the major issues presented to the

group. There must be objectivity--the agenda must be seen as independent of the major actors. There must be a status organization involved such as the Institute for Educational Leadership in order to pull it off."

Bob Muth of the Middle Cities Education Association said, "The Education Commission of the States is close to being able to manage the Michigan Education Seminars. People in the group are afraid of the Michigan Department of Education and its increasing role in state policy making."

Doug Smith, the Education Advisor to the governor, suggested that "maybe the governor, because of his statesmanlike reputation could coordinate the Michigan Education Seminars." But Smith suggested that it would be the perception of the governor as a statesman, and not his role as the leader of state policy, that would make this possible. "It is," said Smith, the governor's "personality and style of leadership" that make his leadership of the Michigan Education Seminars a potential reality.

Smith explained how the executive branch must be separated between the governor and the Michigan Department of Education. The Department is somewhat independent of the governor, said Smith. Despite the positive relationship that exists between the governor and the department, it is a "major occurrence" when Governor Milliken and John Porter get together. He suggested that the leadership role of the governor and his position of coordinating the major policy forces to develop viable state education policy put the governor in the position of potential leadership in the Michigan Education

Seminars. "If you believe in the premise of the Seminars [neutrality] you can't have anyone else provide its leadership."

Elizabeth Kummer of the League of Women Voters, and also secretary of the Michigan Education Council of the Education Commission of the States, suggested that the Michigan Education Seminars was the contributor to the establishment of an identity for ECS in Michigan. "Without it we would have been hard pressed to have any impact on the policy process whatsoever."

Tom Bernthal suggested that "I don't think the Education Commission of the States would have been sunk without the Michigan Education Seminars. But the Michigan Education Seminars gave the Education Commission of the States in Michigan a shot in the arm. This program is exactly what ECS should be doing--a good blend of Washington, D.C., and Denver." Bernthal went on to conclude that the arrangement between the Education Commission of the States and the Michigan Education Seminars was one of the most positive aspects of the study and implied that perhaps the Education Commission of the States should be looked toward for future leadership of the Michigan Education Seminars.

An objective analysis of this section could lead the reader to assume that once the current researcher drops this assignment, the seminar series will be doomed to failure. The reader will find later that this is not the case. In fact, the role of the coordinator of the seminar and the importance of his perceived neutrality could be greatly overstated by the interviewees.

In the first place, it was the researcher who conducted the interviews with the policy actors who participated in the seminars. Their comments and reflections probably were biased by the presence of the researcher in this evaluation. Second, the question of survival was couched in an attempt to get the interviewee to recommend someone to take the place of the current coordinator. The participants were apparently quite pleased with the way that the seminars were being conducted. The seminar series had not embarrassed them. The seminar series had not been used to promote positions they did not agree with. They were never asked to give their organization's stamp of approval to any action of the seminar series. Perhaps most important, the researcher was careful not to imply by asking the question about who could take over the program that he was interviewing them for the job. Since they probably did not, in most cases, perceive themselves to be eligible coordinators, why should they recommend someone else and leave the door open to the seminars' being conducted by an adversary? Third, the concept of the neutrality of the seminars may have little to do with the perceived neutrality of the coordinator. Perhaps the seminar could be turned over to a coalition of otherwise adversaries. Other configurations could be contemplated.

The solution that the researcher developed for handling the transition of leadership of the Michigan Education Seminars--the institutionalization of the series--is detailed in the "Epilogue" to the dissertation. Suffice it to say that the responses to the questions asked of the participant-interviewees that are detailed in

this section provide few clues to the solution that the researcher used to help insure the survival of the Michigan Education Seminars.

Summary of the Chapter

Nineteen formal interviews were conducted at the conclusion of the formal study of the Michigan Education Seminars. The interviews were designed to identify specific attitudes relative to the development, function, and operation of the seminar series. Questions relating to the prospects for future survival of the seminar series were also asked. The interviews provide the basis for the analysis. But the analysis is supplemented with many of the other research tools of the fieldworker.

The structure of the analysis of the Michigan Education Seminars was seen as critical to the development of the program. How the seminar series was to be analyzed provided important clues to how it could be developed and coordinated. The researcher reviewed techniques including the positional analysis of the policy-making community of Michigan. He also reviewed the particular difficulties in conducting interviews with educational policy elites. He alluded to earlier methodological considerations of the study, including the keeping and analysis of written records and the transcription of the seminar sessions.

The selection of the issues to be presented to the seminar participants during the sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars was also discussed. The process for the selection of these issues was carefully outlined.

In some respects the function of the coordinator of the seminar series was seen as most critical to the success of the program. Considerations regarding the role of the researcher in fieldwork were reviewed. Unlike most fieldwork models, where a trained social scientist must enter a field and maintain the scientific detachment required to report his findings accurately, this study was different. Here, the researcher was already a "native" and his job was to obtain the scientific detachment needed to report his findings in a usable and meaningful way.

The overt strategies used to develop support for the project--to recruit and enlist top-level policy makers for participation in the steering committee and the regular sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars--were described with examples of how these strategies had been put into place.

Some of the participants of the Michigan Education Seminars were profiled. Among the biographical observations was the fact that so many of the top-level policy actors in Michigan politics seem to move in and around various positions of power. Interview responses were cited, indicating that the participants in the seminar sessions generally thought the entire educational policy-making community of Michigan was well represented in the seminar series.

The function of the steering committee was outlined with a discussion of how its original members were recruited, and emphasis on the fact that personal friendships within the educational

policy-making community had been relied upon for help in building the original support for this research project.

Also discussed was the underlying rationale behind the effort to develop a close working relationship with the Michigan chapter of the Education Commission of the States. A discussion of the variety of reasons why the Education Commission of the States in Michigan would have been interested in teaming up with the Michigan Education Seminars occurred. Among the most significant reasons cited was the fact that the Education Commission of the States chapter in Michigan was largely a group without a function before its co-sponsorship of the Michigan Education Seminars series.

The Institute for Educational Leadership is the parent organization for the Michigan Education Seminars series. It provides the financing, the sanction, and some of the ideas for the structuring and operation of the Michigan Education Seminars. In the section in which the relationship between the two organizations was discussed, evidence was presented of the subtle but real influences the Institute attempts to exert on its member state seminar series. Also discussed were the steps taken to avoid these influences and the consequences of this action. In that section it was concluded that although the Institute for Educational Leadership does, in fact, exert influence upon its member state organizations, it will allow the state programs to remain relatively autonomous. It was also concluded that, in an open systems framework, the Michigan Education Seminars could only loosely be considered a subsystem of the Institute for Educational Leadership. It should, however, be

considered a subsystem within the larger educational policy-making system in Michigan.

In pursuit of some of the broader questions associated with the development, function, and operation of the Michigan Education Seminars, a definition of the purpose of the Michigan Education Seminars was developed by analyzing the way its purpose was described by participants. Member-participants of the Michigan Education Seminars perceived the organization as a "neutral forum." In fact, the term "neutral forum" was used by many of the participants. Above this, the participants saw the seminars as a means of "getting together" a broad cross-section of the very diverse educational policy-making community of the state.

Seminar participants reported that the decision to avoid the creation of a consensus-seeking purpose for the Michigan Education Seminars was a good one. A wide variety of reasons was given for why the decision to avoid a consensus-seeking atmosphere in the seminar series seemed logical as the program was being developed. The perception of the interviewees confirmed the validity of this judgment. The decision to avoid consensus was among the most significant reasons for the success of the seminar series.

The Michigan Education Seminars can be seen as influencing two major types of relationships between top-level educational policy actors in Michigan. In the first instance, seminar participants reported that the series had a positive effect on their relationships with adversaries in the policy-making process. They also reported,

however, that perhaps the most significant effect the seminar had was upon relationships with other leaders in their own organization. Evidence was presented of the inter-agency communication that was developed within the executive branch and resulted in substantially modified state policy, directly as a result of the seminar series.

The opportunity for policy makers to get together with their adversaries in a hospitable climate was shown to be a major motivator for attendance at the seminar sessions.

Two major issues were discussed in a minor policy impact analysis. The issues were chosen to be analyzed for different reasons, but both were subjects of independent seminar sessions. In the case of the constitutional convention ballot question that, in 1977, was more than one year away from appearing on the state's ballot, the evidence of impact of the seminar series is limited. But in the case of the financing of declining enrollment, several seminar participants recognized that the Michigan Education Seminars broke a major log-jam in the executive branch of government. The seminar session was designed by the educational advisor to the governor to accomplish this purpose.

Several seminar participants reported that they used the sessions to promote issues before their colleagues in the policy-making process.

Although some of the problems encountered by the Michigan Education Seminars appeared scattered throughout the analysis chapter, a specific question on the major weaknesses of the seminar revealed

little useful information. The researcher speculated that his presence, asking the evaluative question, may have intimidated the respondents. He also speculated that had he been more careful to select some interviewees who had not expressed an interest in coming to the seminar sessions, this section of the analysis might have been more meaningful.

The issue of the survival of the Michigan Education Seminars was explored with three basic interview questions. In essence, interviewees were asked to help select a new coordinator. They were uniformly reluctant to recommend that anyone new be appointed to coordinate the Michigan Education Seminars.

The analysis of the Michigan Education Seminars showed the seminar series filling a void in the educational policy-making community in Michigan. Both the seminar series and its coordinator were well received in the educational policy-making community. The seminar sessions were well attended and seemed to fulfill a variety of different purposes for the attendees.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Case in Review

The Michigan Education Seminars is a series of informal sessions in which leaders in state-level educational policy making in Michigan periodically meet to discuss a wide variety of actual or potential education policy issues. The seminars in their current administrative and political configuration were formed in July 1977.

The researcher organized and operated the Michigan Education Seminars with the funding support of the Ford Foundation, under the auspices of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), Washington, D.C. Individuals who were found to frequently affect public education policy in Michigan were invited to be participants in seminar sessions conducted from September 1977 through December 1978. The temporal boundaries of this study are July 1, 1977, through December 1, 1978.

Six separate sessions ranging from two to four hours in length were conducted during the first year of the Michigan Education Seminars. These six seminars involved more than one hundred leaders in Michigan's legislative and executive branches of state government, school administrator and teacher lobbyists, directors of state associations for teachers, school board members, and others. A variety of university officials and faculty from Michigan public and private universities were also involved in the study. Most notable among these were at

least three university professors who have published in the general area of public policy analysis, two of whom have written extensively on the subject of Michigan's public policy process. The original founder of the Associates Program, the program under which the IEL funds and supervises the Michigan Education Seminars, sat as a participant in the first and several subsequent Michigan Education Seminars. At that time the president of a higher education institution in Michigan, the Associate Program founder, Michael Usdan, assisted the researcher as he began to formalize the process of involving educational policy leaders in the planned sessions.

Several other leaders at various levels in Michigan's official public education policy process attended from one to as many as six of the seminar sessions.

The researcher reported the activity of the first year's programs of the Michigan Education Seminars in a field study on the organization and coordination or administration of what is seen as a separate system within the Michigan education policy process. To do this, the researcher first formed the system. A primary measure of the successful formation of such a system is the caliber of its participants and their degree of commitment to the concept of the Michigan Education Seminars.

The researcher used an "elite interviewing" process which, when combined with a knowledge of the organizational charts of the various segments of the state's power structure, was used to both identify those within the process who were reported to be influential

as well as to secure the commitment of these interviewees to join the process.

The research was predicated on a variety of expressed as well as implied assumptions.

The Major Assumptions

A major implied assumption is that the creation of a multi-interest, multi-issue, education policy discussion group for state leaders would be "good" for the educational process. This assumption obviously derives from a more basic belief that not all is well with public education policy in Michigan and that the policy is somehow related to the process by which it is made. These constitute one type of assumptions--assumptions that are basically intuitive, reinforced by personal experiences and not disproved in the literature.

Assumptions of another kind amount to a description of the way in which the researcher views, studies, reports, and operates within the state public policy-making process. These assumptions constitute the researcher's view of this world.

The researcher subscribes to an open systems analytical framework. Contrasted to a closed system approach in which a system is studied as a single, free-standing organism, an open systems framework views systems as interacting with other systems. More than simply a different way of looking at things, the open systems framework defines interaction in terms of imported and exported energy, without with entropy, the natural tendency of all systems to move toward extinction, could not be negated. The open system theorist,

then, concentrates on a more complex, if not the bigger, picture-- the picture of the subject system relating to other systems. Evidence of direct impact of the Michigan Education Seminars on specific state policy actions testifies to the importance of this conceptual framework, as well as for the existence of negantropy.

The existence of negantropy is an essential criterion in the definition of a system as open. The absence of negantropy is, of course, the existence of entropy, which, as has been stated several times within this report, is the natural tendency for all systems, biological or social, to move toward their own death.

Since a prediction of the persistence or "survivability" of the Michigan Education Seminars was considered to be an essential objective of this research, a focusing on the role or concept of negantropy was considered essential to the operation of this research.

Since it was accepted by the researcher that open systems will struggle to achieve a state of negantropy, in pursuit of the fountain-of-youth as it is, no attempt was made by the researcher to dissociate himself from this effort. In other words, the researcher established the successful attainment of a "better" public education policy process in Michigan as a higher level goal than, say, scientific detachment. Much in the way that the ornithologist would be inclined to fix the broken wing of an eagle in order to have a subject to study, the researcher fought for the acceptance of the Michigan Education Seminars.

Besides the evidence presented on the direct policy impact of the seminar series on state policy, evidence is also presented to

suggest that an essential core of state policy makers is also concerned, though perhaps not equally, with the question of the survival of the Michigan Education Seminars. Their interest, for example, in helping to identify a future seminar series coordinator suggests that the series will continue long after this report is presented. As evidence of the researcher's involvement in the system and commitment to its survival, the direct question of whether or not the Michigan Education Seminars will or should survive was never asked.

Another set of assumptions is operational in nature. The success of the study, it was assumed, for example, would be contingent upon the researcher applying political leverage upon the identified policy makers to get them to participate. The enlistment of such commitment should not be left to chance in effective political strategy. Leverage can be behaviorally defined in much the same way that power is defined in the literature. Although no common definition exists for the word "power," it is frequently defined in the context of an individual's ability to administer consequences, both negative and positive, to behavior.

To apply leverage for participation, a variety of tactics were employed. These tactics included establishing direct lines of communication with positional leaders in organizations in order to ensure the participation of subordinates who were often the reputed leaders within the positional leader's arena; insuring that the issue discussions were led by individuals whose status commanded a certain following; and selecting issues upon which important attitudinal biases could and would be openly discussed.

Another assumption in this operational category was that, since there was no statutory authority for the existence of Michigan Education Seminars, certain principles must be honored. The researcher saw no responsibility to subscribe to the rigid legal standards of Michigan's open meeting act. This act pertains to public bodies. These bodies are defined in terms of their specific identification in the law, and not in terms of their membership. This realization carried more restrictions than it did freedom, however. How could the researcher justify the political positions of the Michigan Education Seminars? Since no answer was readily available, he developed the following logic, which serendipitously provided a key to the series' success.

The participants in the sessions were to be individuals responsible for public debate and action on public questions. The coordinator had no authority to place them into a private meeting at which commitments on public questions were made. Further, it dawned upon the researcher that such meetings would certainly lead to the eventual extinction of the seminar series, as such public decisions of the nonpublic and nonofficial Michigan Education Seminars would be disavowed (along with the forum) by participants with dissenting opinions.

Thus, it became obvious to the researcher that, above anything else, consensus attempts and subsequent "official" positions were to be avoided by the Michigan Education Seminars. Consensus occurs after the fact; it is a report that requires no formal structure for the recording of votes. "No dissent was heard" is one meaning of

consensus. "Unanimity was recorded," as the term consensus seems to imply to so many of its seekers, was not considered to be an objective of the seminar proceedings.

The Environment of the Michigan Education Seminars

To cope with a complex environment, one must first define it. The environment of the Michigan Education Seminars is the entire public policy process of the state of Michigan. Its status is not defined in the statutes, but it is guaranteed by the constitution. The simplicity of the concept is profound. If one perceives the limitations of an environment, one limits it. But the impact of the seminars, or its capacity to reach into complex supersystems, was not limited by the researcher. Rather, it was presumed that the survival of the system was contingent upon its ability to interact with larger and perhaps more official environments.

Thus the schematic for the Michigan Education Seminars is not the traditional one of placing another planet within a common atmosphere orbiting around a single sun. The schematic for the system created is more one of adding a sun to a large body of planets previously seeming to be in random orbit. The goal was to place some order in the universe.

The subject system then becomes somewhat unique. It is viewed as a system which can resolve disputes, explore strategies, and take other necessary steps to prevent internecine warfare. It becomes the object providing gravity to the policy universe. It both gives advance warning of crisis and provides a magnetic force for helping

form a more uniform orbit for the various spheres of influence in the educational policy process.

The environment of the Michigan Education Seminars cannot be defined. An example of the unique program approach of the seminar series being reviewed and discussed in an international foundation board meeting can be given--as can its direct influence upon federal officials.

The concept of "connectivity" is important in understanding the full significance of this research. It proposes that an open system's interaction with other open systems, the basic tenet of general systems theory, can be defined in terms of interrelationships between elements of the two environments. The fact that the secretaries of two rival labor unions are lovers could be an example of connectivity between these two environments. The connectivity need not be formal or officially sanctioned to exist.

If the survival of a system is contingent upon connectivity, it makes sense for the system "to have friends in high places." This researcher operated in the knowledge that not all leadership appears on the organizational chart. Leaders whose "unceremonial" positions insulate them from the public consequences of corporate or bureaucratic decisions often make these decisions nonetheless.

Environments, therefore, cannot be separated as to power or influence on simply a vertical diagram; that is, in terms of the official influence of the variety of levels or positions within an organization, or in the organization's position of status within the policy-making community. Environments can be viewed on a horizontal

measure. In other words, although it seems environments are affected by individuals at a variety of levels, they are also influenced by environments otherwise viewed as distinct.

A field, therefore, is defined by situations that are within the practical ability of the researcher to describe. But the tendency to draw a "closed-systems" schematic of the environment of the Michigan Education Seminars was avoided in this research, as it is avoided by successful political operatives.

The Pronouncements in the Literature

The literature provided general guidance to the conduct of this research. That Michigan's education policy environment was among the most conflict-oriented of any of the American states studied was interesting but not useful. If anything, this interpretation portrayed an environment that would be resistant to attempts to encourage communication rather than an environment that was ripe for it. In this sense the research is misleading.

The history of the apolitical myth, that education should be free of politics, was not relevant to devising strategies to work with the sample drawn for this study. The researcher will debate anyone so naive as to assume that the leaders of the educational policy process in Michigan don't understand the connection between educational politics and politics in general.

There is no real distinction to be found in the literature between educational politics and politics. This researcher found no current research which suggested that educational politics is anything

other than politics. This research presumes that politics is the exercise of power. The end, education in this case, can be meaningfully separated from the means, politics. Politics is the medium and not the message.

Most researchers acknowledge that the education policy process can be segmented as to function. Thus the legislative, the executive, the judiciary, interest groups, and others seem to be reasonably discrete categories into which all education policy actors will fall. Within these segments, an understanding of practical politics, the names and faces, and a distinct knowledge of the specific system under study becomes essential as an antecedent condition of further understanding of the system. Thus, labor and management associations divide, as do public and private groups, as does "lower" and higher education. As the categories become more discrete, specific knowledge of the system becomes increasingly important. A small AFL-CIO affiliated teachers' union can be said to have greater potential impact on public policy than can a larger independent teachers' association. Whether the power is exercised is another issue.

The literature supports casual observations about the changing balance of power in teachers' and managers' affairs in state policy. It avoids specific references to the legislature, a body undergoing recent rapid changes. The literature helps identify the philosophy and structure of the state department of education, but it cannot account for changes that occurred over the past three years. The literature does not portray an understanding of the potential

significance of the United Auto Workers in major educational debates. The people developing the policy do.

The interviews and experience with the leaders in Michigan politics were much more useful than was the literature in providing practical information that guided the formation and administration of the Michigan Education Seminars.

The Strategies of Research

This research is oriented toward a demonstration of skills rather than a thorough exploration of a specific question. The need to find a research model which presumed, if not required, a practical ability to apply learning was required. The field methods provided that model.

The researcher adopted an approach to the research that would not presume that great general knowledge would derive from it. He turned to the age-old distinction between particularizing and generalizing research. This research may produce general principles, such as the principle on consensus, but it cannot verify these principles. What the research could do is take some common principles, such as those making up the general systems conceptual framework, and test these principles in action. Thus we have the study of the particular case--particularizing research.

Although evidence of the direct impact of the Michigan Education Seminars upon public education policy can be presented, this is not a policy analysis. In policy analysis, the dependent variable is the public policy. Manipulations in the policy environment are

controlled to produce discrete events defined in terms of public policy. This is a study in organizational behavior.

The major elements of the organization are identified, and an attempt is made to identify and describe interrelationships between these elements. At the same time, an attempt is made to define the environment within which the organization exists and those with which it interacts.

Selecting the Population

The participants in this study are said to represent the elite in Michigan education policy making. The participant list was drawn from the positional and reputed leaders of the process. At the same time, adjustments to the participant list were made to provide political balance; that is to say, balance between labor and management views, balance between K-12 and higher education, balance between Democrats and Republicans.

Certain leaders were excluded from participation. The governor and the house speaker were not asked to participate. Their time demands are great. Their status within the state could make their participation command performances for staff and the press and could severely disrupt the discussions. Their subordinates are largely empowered to speak on their behalf, and they are capable of doing that.

The researcher also left various leaders off the participant list as a means of providing a partial control. One way of measuring the process impact of the seminar series was to begin the process

of conducting the seminars and to see who stepped forward to request an invitation to participate.

Comparing the original participant invitee list (September 1977) with the much-expanded 1978 list, one finds that the growth in participation was largely in people who were at the fringes of power in educational policy making. If nothing else, this fact supports the contention that the process of identifying the original participants was thorough.

The Steering Committee

A steering committee, which grew to number fourteen education policy activists, provided great support in the achievement of Michigan Education Seminars goals. The steering committee met frequently to discuss potential seminar issues. These discussions became a separate series of mini-seminars--no-holds-barred discussions in which the major educational issues facing the state were identified and analyzed in terms representative of the major educational interests in Michigan.

The steering committee also helped identify potential new participants. It sanctioned administrative decisions of the researcher ranging from the decision of letterhead to the selection of seminar speakers. It provided direct interchange with the Education Council of Michigan, a gubernatorially appointed body of a dozen education leaders who are the formal agent of the Education Commission of the States in Michigan. This relationship, triggered by creating an overlapping directorship between the seminar series and the education

council, is seen as a key to the long-term survival of both entities in this state.

Besides the credibility provided the seminar series by a high-powered steering committee, such a committee also provides political protection, if not a degree of insulation, for the coordinator.

Methodologies Employed

The identification of segments of the educational policy-making community and the enlistment of selected participants resembles a stratified sample selection process.

Field methodology is seen as an appropriate methodology for this research largely because it is a most flexible, comprehensive research model. It permits the researcher to adopt a situational ethic, to respond to changing conditions, and to manipulate environmental events toward desired outcomes.

A research model has a varying capacity to permit description, evaluation, prescription, and explanation. The field model, in a particularizing framework, provides the descriptive and explanatory sense of color absent from other approaches. It also permits the development of elegant combinations of simple social research techniques as research objectives are pursued.

This study combined positional analysis, reputational analysis, issue surveys, and other discovery techniques to provide a research prototype that could be described as socio-autobiographical.

Describing the Researcher's Major Findings

The structure of the research of this study cannot be separated from the organization and operation of the Michigan Education Seminars as a new force at the center of state educational politics. Extensive interviewing was conducted after the final session of the first year's operation of the seminar series. What the interviews, and related data-collection devices, produced is a series of general conclusions--conclusions that may have a broader application to the construction and operation of similar forums for top-level policy makers. The conclusions are not meant to be wide-sweeping generalizations; their application to other systems can only apply to the experiences of those who might attempt to transfer such information in the future. The conclusions reported are based upon the findings of the study of the Michigan Education Seminars and are reported within this context. They are not exhaustive as reported.

1. Perhaps the most counter-intuitive conclusion of this study is that attempts to engage in consensus seeking in ad-hoc committees and other forums of policy makers may be a serious impediment to the development of rapport and understanding between the adversaries at this level.

The experience of operating the Michigan Education Seminars led the researcher to perceive that the absence of a consensus-seeking or compromise-seeking objective of the seminar series freed the series and its participants from the typical parliamentary and political entanglements that normally accompany the seeking of such objectives in official policy settings.

Specific questioning of the participants who were interviewed after the first year of operation of the seminar series confirmed the perception of the researcher that the participant policy makers enjoyed the opportunity to engage in discussions of controversial policy issues. The absence of a concern for seeing that their official organizational positions appeared on the record or in the compromise recommendations aided in the development of a hospitable climate. No recommendations were sought in the seminar series, and no recommendations were made.

The researcher found that a setting in which discussion and not decision was the medium seemed to alleviate any fears of organizational leaders that they or their segment of the educational policy-making community was underrepresented. Everyone had a chance to voice his/her opinion or that of his/her organization. Traditional political maneuvers to coalesce, filibuster, boycott, and the like were unnecessary. Participants expressed a desire to insure that such a neutral atmosphere be maintained by the Michigan Education Seminars in the future.

There was no expression by any of the participants that the seminar should be used to develop official or unofficial recommendations to any body. Their interviews were similar in stressing that the establishment of a territory in which a "time-out" from the game of educational politics could be taken was an essential ingredient in the success of the program.

2. Another somewhat counter-intuitive conclusion of the study is that top-level educational policy adversaries have a genuine

respect for the opinions of one another, and they welcome the opportunity to engage in an exchange of their organizational attitudes on policy issues. No evidence exists that is more convincing on this point than is the regular participation of the leaders of the Michigan educational policy-making community in the seminar series.

One question in the post-first-year interview asked the participant-interviewees to describe the purpose of the seminar as they saw it. The most universal description included reference to the opportunity to discuss issues with their adversaries. A secondary related conclusion is offered. That is that the adversaries within the educational policy-making process recognize that beyond the differences that exist among their respective branches of government and organizations, political circumstances often force their universal dedication to the improvement of the educational discipline to become obscured.

Further, the researcher concluded, and the participants reported, that in Michigan, at least, no similar forum exists in which top-level educational policy makers can meet and confer on important policy questions without fear of organizational or other political reprisal. The informal, unofficial, and consensus-avoiding character of the Michigan Education Seminars contributed to the positive reception that this forum has been given.

3. Besides the consensus-avoiding nature of the seminar series, other factors are important in establishing an atmosphere of neutrality for a forum of top-level state educational policy makers. That the maintenance of an atmosphere of neutrality is an important

key to the success of an informal forum of top-level policy makers is an important conclusion of this study.

The interviews and other data-gathering techniques employed by the researcher painted a clear picture of the seminars as a neutral forum. The participants described the forums as sessions in which they had no reluctance to identify the concerns and political fears of their organizations.

The participants described the researcher as a "neutral" in the process. They relied on him on several occasions to provide counsel and suggestions for the resolution of different policy disputes. They perceived him as appropriately academically and experientially grounded to be an impartial respondent to concerns that they would raise in private meetings. They perceived that it was neither the expressed nor the hidden agenda of the coordinator to put any participant on the spot or to embarrass him/her. The establishment of this "forum and coordinator neutrality" is judged to be an essential ingredient of the success of the Michigan Education Seminars and should be used as a model in similar forums.

4. Other researchers attempting to establish similar forums should take note of the careful procedure that was employed in this research to insure the participation of all major elements of the educational policy-making community in Michigan. The researcher has concluded that the involvement of all major segments of the educational policy-making community was essential in the success of the seminar series.

Evidence of the validity of this conclusion, at least in its relevance to this specific study, lies in the universal expression of the participants that the forum participant list did not favor any segment of the educational policy-making community. It is important to reflect here upon earlier conclusions.

Would this perception have been the same if, for example, the forum were engaging in the development of policy recommendations for the legislature? One can only speculate that if a consensus on the issue of aid to private elementary and secondary educational institutions had been sought, for example, the representatives of the nonpublic education community would have felt grossly outnumbered and would have been forced to boycott the meetings. As it was, however, the private educational representatives were given the opportunity to informally express their concerns to a wide array of public educational leaders at the very time when the two segments were otherwise in open warfare over a proposed constitutional ballot issue on state aid for private education.

5. The power to influence the educational policy-making process is not limited to those who hold the official policy positions within the policy structure. The best evidence of this conclusion is presented in the reputational analysis of the educational power structure of Michigan. This analysis shows that several of the positional leaders of the power structure indicated lower-level staff and bureaucrats are often in positions of great influence in determining the outcome of important policy questions.

The finding that within this educational policy community in Michigan the positional-educational leaders often occupy their official positions of authority for a short period of time provides further evidence for this conclusion. Educational policy leaders in the legislature, for example the elected leaders, often quickly move up and/or out of the educational policy system. Sometimes, however, after they leave the official positions of authority, they remain significant influencers in the process. It would be possible to suggest that the researcher at least partially fits this characterization.

Usually a change in the organizational chart has little to do with the change in the legislative staff and the bureaucratic structure, although change in position and status does occur here, too. Although this fact might not be readily apparent to the researcher or the policy analyst, it is very clear to the leaders within the policy structure.

6. There is substantial benefit to a policy structure when top-level policy adversaries are given the chance to "socialize" with one another. Many of the policy leaders who participated in the seminars cited as one of its greatest benefits that it gave them an opportunity to meet their adversaries in a nonadversarial setting. The opportunity to exchange jokes, personal anecdotes about their problems within their own political structures, and to discuss their experiences "growing up" in the policy structure, was reported by the policy makers as one of the most important aspects of the Michigan Education Seminars series.

Perhaps it is worth noting a personal observation of the researcher at this point. Politics must be addressed in a "business-like" manner in order for an individual to have long-term success as an operative in the process. He/she cannot "take things personally." To a person, the educational policy elite within the state cannot take their business too seriously, either, and expect to have longevity. They occupy their positions within the educational power structure because of their ability to maneuver within their own organizational power structure. They have learned how not to savor too much their victories, and how not to suffer too much their losses. Without this dispositional skill, they would be unable to maintain their authority within their own power structure. Whereas their constituency may expect them to be chauvanistic, the results required involve building coalitions with former enemies and negotiating disputes with former friends. The only thing that is permanent in politics is its temporary nature. Perhaps it is this reason that the educational policy makers in Michigan report that the socialization aspect of the seminar series was very important to the series' success. The series gave adversaries the chance to grow to learn one another's limits and abilities.

7. The opportunity for organizational leaders to discuss issues with colleagues within their own organization in the presence of adversaries is an important aspect of an informal policy-issue forum of the nature of the Michigan Education Seminars. Several of the seminar participants reported taking great interest in watching

organizational colleagues operate within a forum comprised of the widest possible range of antipathetic dispositions.

In some cases, lower-level leaders had the opportunity to see the kinds of difficult negotiating situations their leaders are confronted with each day. In other cases, information was presented in the sessions that permitted the leaders of a particular organization to go home and review their positions within the context of this enlightenment.

In at least one major case, a leader within the executive branch used the forum to force another leader within one of the major state departments in the same branch to "fish or to cut bait" in a public meeting. He put a colleague within the same branch of government into a position where the official, expressed position of the Governor had to be clearly articulated. This experience was credited with making a major advance in the important state educational policy question of what to do about "declining enrollments in K-12 education."

8. At the highest levels of an organization, leaders are not often permitted the luxury of engaging in the "triviality" of important policy questions. They are shielded by their staffs from the important antecedents to the policy positions that they are later expected to defend and/or administer. The establishment of an informal state-level policy issue forum can be an important avenue for a top-level policy leader to reduce the vulnerability of being trapped into defending a position that is politically difficult to defend.

The opportunity to periodically engage in policy discussions in which otherwise trivial detail is reviewed in the presence of the major spokesmen for the adversary forces in the dispute was a welcome opportunity for many of the participants of the seminar series.

Several leaders reported that the reason that they participated in the seminar series was to insure that they were getting a little look at the background that resulted in the formal position of their organizations. They simply did not want to be left out of a periodic discussion on issues that at that time, or in the future, could be linked to their political survival.

In several cases, also, participant policy makers reported that they used the policy forum to express personal concerns about the direction of state educational policy in the presence of many of the actors with whom they would eventually have to resolve disputes. In this sense, the seminar provided a soap box and could be viewed as a harbinger. Lest one forget, it provided a good forum for certain policy leaders to get the word to their staffs.

9. Perhaps the most important conclusion of the study is that such a seminar of top-level state policy makers could be assembled--and that the interest in the programs could be maintained.

Recommendations for Further Study

A final section of this dissertation addresses potential further exploration of future researchable propositions or of those propositions from which new propositions could be derived. This is,

of course, the most desirable endeavor of a doctoral dissertation, for it permits predictions as well as specific recommendations.

Under the category of researchable questions, two possibilities seem obvious to the researcher. First, a follow-up study on the Michigan Education Seminars addressing a specific question as to its impact on the total educational policy milieu in Michigan could be conducted in five or ten years. Whether or not the Michigan Education Seminars still exists in its current form or some variation of the current theme becomes somewhat irrelevant. This study could address the modifications of the program process that occur over a five-year period, based on a research methodology quite similar to the one employed in the current study. He/she could also find a way of attempting to address specific policy issues and to determine the impact of the Michigan Education Seminars on the disposition of those issues.

A second alternative would be for a researcher to immediately begin to study certain questions that relate to the Michigan Education Seminars, such as its impact on policy, and could follow the Michigan Education Seminars through its next year of operation, for example, to determine whether examples such as the one cited by the researcher in which the state's public policy on the question of "declining enrollments" could be found in the future operation of the Michigan Education Seminars. From a communications science standpoint, a researcher could examine the Michigan Education Seminars and study the question of whether the relationships that develop during discussions in the formal sessions of the Michigan Education Seminars have

a direct effect on the ability of public policy makers to communicate with one another better in their day-to-day interactions.

Recommendations for Future Seminars

For the individual attempting to establish a program similar to the Michigan Education Seminars in this state or in another state, a few of the recommendations that follow may be very useful. First, the ability of the seminars to be recognized as a creditable institution within the public policy process seems hinged largely upon the official connections that can be made between the leadership of the education seminars program and the official educational establishment. Therefore, the establishment, as a primary objective of a potential coordinator of a seminar series like the Michigan Education Seminars, of a steering committee comprised of a cross-section of the leaders of the educational community, or whatever political community the seminars are aimed at, seems crucial.

A second observation is that the attempt to maintain the interest in the Michigan Education Seminars program, and its participation, seems incumbent to a certain degree upon the creation of an aura of exclusivity surrounding the program and its operation. One of the dangers that the next coordinator(s) of the Michigan Education Seminars will confront is that the Michigan Education Seminars, in many respects, have become so popular as to attract the participation of an extremely broad cross-section of the educational policy-making community in this state. In many cases, lower-level participants are not involved because of their inability to score high on assessments of their reputations as leaders in the educational policy-making

community. In order for the Michigan Education Seminars, or any seminar program of its nature, to continue to reach into the highest levels of public policy making, it seems critical that chiefs be speaking with chiefs and that those Indians who are involved in the program are there clearly because of their recognized ability to orchestrate the political process in such a manner that their will can be exercised upon it.

The future coordinator of the Michigan Education Seminars must not be afraid to "go completely native." By this is meant that the proper political approach to the establishment of a "neutral forum" may be contingent upon a form of politics that could be most simply described as "Swiss." By that is meant that the coordinator of the seminar session must view himself in a position of being dependent on the variety of forces in the educational policy process for the successful attainment of the objectives of the seminar program. As a consequence, he must be in a position where organizational representatives, legislators, and members of the executive branch and others who may be at odds, or in the Swiss analogy, at war with one another, are beholden to him/her to the degree that some form of political leverage can be exercised to ensure their full participation and to keep the coordinator from becoming engaged in warfare. In order to do this, the coordinator, it seems to me, must place himself in a position as an arbitrator in the system, one who is recognized for his ability to carry messages from one camp to another and to arrange sessions in which various potentially explosive issues can be resolved short of organizational warfare.

The coordinator of future Michigan Education Seminars, or other similar seminars, must be conscious of a need to make the issues presented to the program participants general enough to be appealing to a broad base of interests whose participation in the program is necessary for its success. At the same time, however, he must be cognizant of the fact that public policy makers are faced with a wide variety of choices about how to spend their working days in their most productive ways, and as a consequence must make decisions of where and how to spend their time, based upon the criticalness of issues to be discussed. As a consequence, not all issues can be lofty, esoteric, and philosophical--some must be current, meaningful, and potentially dramatic in their nature and in their potential impact on the public policy process.

The coordinator of the seminar session must be fully cognizant of the political powder keg upon which he is sitting. Earlier, the Michigan Education Seminars had been defined as more than another simple system in the educational policy-making process. In fact, the researcher attempted to describe the Michigan Education Seminars as the force that provides order to the educational policy-making process and in many ways is the sun in that planetary structure of state organizations and interest groups. Whereas this analogy may not stretch to the Michigan Education Seminars' taking credit for providing energy upon which the educational process operates, the analogy certainly could be stretched to include the possibility that the Michigan Education Seminars provides a magnetic attraction which helps to keep the various educational organizations in compatible orbits.

In order to be maximally successful in establishing this kind of character for a system such as the Michigan Education Seminars, the coordinator must be extremely careful not to put himself in the position of appearing to be in control of the information that is being presented to the seminar participants. Under no circumstances should he/she ignore the opportunity to provide credit to a steering committee or to an individual participant for the suggestion of an issue that is brought before the seminar session. He should also capitalize on those opportunities that may present themselves for a seminar participant to coordinate a particular session of the seminar program.

Finally, the importance of avoiding a consensus format for a Michigan Education Seminars type program has been stressed and restressed throughout this report. An extremely interesting endeavor would be for a research-oriented public policy analyst to conduct a study in which the effect of the consensus orientation could be separated, identified, and analyzed. One would have to design a specific research model in order to establish the relative effectiveness of organizations that attempt to achieve consensus and to contrast the effectiveness of these organizations with organizations in which consensus is not sought.

As has been previously mentioned, the Acting Commissioner of Education, William Pierce, commented to the researcher in an informal discussion on changes in educational public policy making across the states, that the proliferation of consensus-seeking advisory committees was perhaps the single most significant change in educational policy making to have occurred in the past decade. He identified a

variety of reasons why the formation of advisory councils in many respects has tended to increase the bureaucratic deficiencies of state-level educational governmental organizations. Among those he suggested was the tendency for the official educational organization to throw to advisory commissions those issues upon which the official organization was not yet ready to take a position. If the advisory committee is organized in such a fashion that a wide variety of divergent interests are represented on a specific issue, the bureaucracy recognizes that the likelihood of a specific recommendation coming from that advisory committee is faint. On the other hand, if an educational organization does have an issue that it recognizes the advisory committee will come to quick and clear consensus on, and if that consensus position is predicted to be consistent with the disposition of the official educational organization, then the issue is also referred to the advisory committee with the knowledge that the advisory committee will sanction the predetermined behavior of the educational organization. The Michigan Department of Education has over thirty advisory committees, one for each of its major service areas and several others that cross the service-area borders.

It seems to this researcher that under the right circumstances the State Department of Education could be offered a proposal by an enterprising public policy analyst to modify the charge of at least several of the Department of Education policy-advisory bodies in such a way that it no longer became the requirement of those bodies to seek and achieve consensus before bringing a position to the state board or to the State Department of Education hierarchy. The advisory

committee could become a forum in which the variety of divergent attitudes on a specific public policy issue could be raised and discussed. The coordinator of the advisory committee would then be in a position to report to the State Board of Education or the State Department of Education in a manner that reflects the attitudes of the variety of different interests involved. This would throw back into the lap of the official public policy body the responsibility for aligning itself with the positions of whatever interests with which it happens to be in agreement.

In this manner, none of the constitutional or statutory responsibilities of the official government body would be violated by the establishment of a policy advisory group. The policy advisory group could not be in a position of stalling important public policy decisions. It would not be used as a place in which those decisions would be stalled because of the advisory group's inherent inability to come to consensus. Rather, the function of such an advisory committee would be discussion oriented, with much of the political manipulation and maneuvering that occurs in such bodies being avoided because of the understanding that a consensus position is neither desired nor required.

Research Extensions

Many of the other recommendations or potential areas of further research into some of the questions examined in this study could be called research extensions. In at least two cases such extensions have been attempted. In one case the effort was extremely successful; in other cases it would be premature to judge. The

extensions of the Michigan Education Seminars program come in at least three distinct categories or forms.

In the first case, the concept of the Michigan Education Seminars could be specialized to deal with individuals within the public policy forum who represent a specific group or interest. As an example, the Michigan Education Seminars format and status were used to create a Michigan Education Writers Seminar in November of 1978. As a joint effort with the Michigan Press Association and the Office of Public Information of the State Department of Education, education writers from across the state of Michigan were identified and their editors were sent a letter from the executive director of the Michigan Press Association asking the editor to send the education writer to a conference in Lansing. At this conference the State Department of Education leadership and other leaders in the educational public policy forum addressed a variety of educational issues in a session that provided continuous interaction with the members of the press. The program was based on the notion that the members of the Michigan education press corps were largely without access to the basic information that could help them navigate through the state educational public policy process and would lead to a more accurate and complete analysis of important educational policy issues in the press.

Roughly twenty education writers from across the state of Michigan attended the Michigan Education Writers' Seminar. Presentations were made by the Michigan Department of Education leadership, a variety of the executive directors and elected leaders of several

state education associations, and several legislative education leaders including the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The State Department of Education used this opportunity to present several documents to the members of the Michigan press that would assist them in analyzing educational questions confronting them in the day-to-day functioning of their jobs as education writers. The program concept was offered by the senior education writer in the state, Bill Grant, the education writer for the Detroit Free Press, who was the keynote speaker at the morning session for the Education Writers' Seminar. Grant stressed that the number of education writers in attendance being young and relatively inexperienced writers was a reflection of the amount of status that the major editors and newspapers ascribed to this subject area. But he stressed that in order to do a more effective job of reporting, much of the information that was being offered at the session would be extremely useful, especially to the fledgling newspaper person.

A similar format could be used for a variety of other groups to provide access to top-level state education leaders and to invite those state education leaders to a session with a particularly interested constituency. One example that has been offered is for a Michigan education lawyers' seminar, in which those individuals representing school districts and teachers on the variety of education-related questions that they face in their day-to-day jobs could be called together and introduced to the policy makers at the state level who write the laws under which the legal community operates. School building managers could also be called together for such a meeting.

Such a session could be more specialized than would be the case for the education writers or the education lawyers, but it could include discussions with legislators and members of the executive branch on questions of bonding, millage elections, and such questions as the use of computerized energy management to reduce school expenditures.

A second area of logical expansion for Michigan Education Seminars type programming would be into a different level of educational policy making. The idea is to mix those top-level state educational policy makers with local educational policy makers and implementers. Such a proposal was originally offered by a combination of university professors who served as participants in the Michigan Education Seminars. The proposal suggested that the Michigan Education Seminars become a vehicle by which state educational policy makers are periodically assembled and taken into local communities for what in effect would be town meetings with educational policy makers representing the variety of interests within a given region of the state. The proposal was discussed with the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, and the suggestion was made that a more comprehensive proposal be drafted and presented to a foundation that may be interested in funding such a project.

Almost coincidental to that discussion, the Mott Foundation in Flint, one of the largest foundations in the world, approached the coordinator of the Michigan Education Seminars with a very similar suggestion and suggested that the Mott Foundation be the recipient of the proposal on this project.

A proposal was drafted with the involvement of several of the participants who were instrumental in developing the idea in the first instance and submitted to the Mott Foundation. The proposal suggested simply that a group of state-level educational policy makers be assembled and develop a program explaining the processes by which educational policy decisions were made at the state level. A program of this nature could be used to discuss specific issues confronting the state educational policy community and, as a consequence, leaders in the state educational policy community would have a much better notion of what the local reactions to those issues might be. There were a variety of other potential functions for this type of programming that were described in the proposal.

A third area of potential spinoff for the Michigan Education Seminars would be to take the concept of identifying and collecting top-level educational policy makers for discussions on actual or potential public policy questions and applying it to other areas in which public policy decisions are significant. Examples of these possible areas of extension might be the law enforcement community, the social services community, mental health and corrections, or any of the variety of areas where special interest groups with generally common goals find efforts to achieve those goals thwarted by their inability to communicate with one another.

Partially as a result of the model provided by the Michigan Education Seminars, a project is currently being considered to develop a Michigan mental health news service. The function of that service would be to create a mechanism whereby the variety of interests

located throughout the state who have regular concerns about public policy issues confronting the mental health community could be advised of those developing policy issues. More important, however, is the understanding on the part of those who would be the primary sponsors of the Michigan mental health news service that the editorial board of the Michigan mental health news service, being composed of the major mental health interest groups and perhaps government officials involved in questions of mental health, would be required to meet periodically to review the method by which the mental health news service analyzes and reports the variety of issues with which they are concerned. This is suggested to have great potential for dramatically expanding the amount of communication between the major policy actors in the mental health community and could be a model that could be applied to a variety of other settings.

Speculation along these lines provides partial documentation for the special status that should be ascribed to action-social research. It bears important testimony to the need for individuals interested in the development and operation of emerging power structures to carefully examine what has occurred in this study as reported. It should also provide incentive for individuals who were not involved in the formation or operation of the Michigan Education Seminars to involve themselves in a more thorough and perhaps detached analysis of the program and its impact and perhaps more important its promise to the public policy process in Michigan and to public policy making in general.

Epilogue

The analysis of the development, function, and operation of the Michigan Education Seminars was "action research." A major goal of the researcher was systematically to design a program series that would help reduce the tension that exists within a community of policy makers at the state level that, at least, could be seen as having one common goal--the improvement of education in the state of Michigan. A secondary goal was contingent upon the successful attainment of the first. This goal can best be expressed as the "institutionalization" of the system.

An essential component of the research was the identification of an organization or more than one organization into which the Michigan Education Seminars could be transferred, and the identification of a person or persons from within the organization(s) who would be responsible for the continuation of the series.

In September 1979, the final recommendation of this research was framed. This recommendation is included as an "epilogue" to the dissertation because the recommendation was not framed until after the final draft of the dissertation had been written, and actually occurred long after the conclusion of this study. But the recommendation is being included in the final text of the dissertation because of its potential importance in documenting the success of the researcher in attaining his overall objectives.

On August 15, 1979, the researcher wrote the Director of The Associates Program, Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)--the parent organization of the Michigan Education Seminars--and formally

announced his desire to resign as coordinator of the seminar series. In his letter he recommended that the relationship between the Michigan Education Seminars and the Educational Council of Michigan (Education Commission of the States) be strengthened by the selection of the de-facto chairperson of this organization as the new co-coordinator of the Michigan Education Seminars. The Education Commission of the States in Michigan is largely shepherded by Doug Smith, the representative of the national organizational chairman--Michigan's Governor William Milliken. Smith is Milliken's education advisor.

To balance the appointment--and maintain the perceived neutrality of the seminar series--the researcher recommended that David Haynes be designated co-coordinator. Haynes is chief aide to the chairman of the Michigan Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, Senator Kerry Kammer. Haynes, being a employee of a Democrat in the legislative branch, would seem to balance well the involvement of Smith, an employee of the Republican head of the executive branch of state government in Michigan. (Since the selection, Haynes has become Director of State and Federal Relations for the Grand Rapids Public Schools.)

On September 25, 1979, a formal letter was sent to Smith and Haynes requesting that they accept the offer to be co-coordinators of the Michigan Education Seminars for the year 1979-80. They agreed to undertake this responsibility. The gavel was turned over to Haynes and Smith at the October 11, 1979, seminar on the "Educational Progress in Michigan in the Decade of the Seventies," which was the last session chaired by this researcher.

Nothing can guarantee the success of the seminar series of the future. However, the researcher predicts that whatever accomplishments he had as coordinator during the formative years of the Michigan Education Seminars will be multiplied in future years. And he is satisfied in leaving the seminar series in the hands of Smith and Haynes that he has successfully discharged his duty to the Institute for Educational Leadership, to the educational policy makers of Michigan, and to the doctoral committee who supervised this dissertation and permitted the researcher to engage in important "action research."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MICHIGAN EDUCATION SEMINARS PARTICIPANTS

APPENDIX A

Table A1.--The original participants in the Michigan Education Seminars.

Fred Bertolet	Associate Dean, College of Education, The University of Michigan
Joseph Billingsley	Legislative Agent, Michigan Federation of Teachers
William M. Bridgeland	Assistant Professor, Social Sciences, Michigan State University
Gilbert Bursley	Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations, and Chairman, The Michigan Education Council of the Education Commission of the States
Gene Caesar	Majority Education Specialist, Michigan House of Representatives
Lloyd Cofer	Assistant to the President, Michigan State University
Herman Coleman	Executive Director, Michigan Education Association
Edward A. Duane	Associate Professor, Social Sciences, Michigan State University
Gerald Dunn	Regent, The University of Michigan, and Lobbyist, Metropolitan Association for Improved School Legislation
Robert Ewigleben	President, Ferris State College
Edmund Farhat	Public Affairs Director, Michigan Catholic Conference
Eugene Farnum	Director, Senate Fiscal Agency
Jack Faxon	Chairman, Senate Committee on Education
John Gaffney	President, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Michigan
Keith Goldhammer	Dean, College of Education, Michigan State University
Jeffrey Graham	Deputy Director, Michigan Department of Commerce

Table A1.--Continued.

Bill Grant	Education Writer, <u>The Detroit Free Press</u>
William Jowett	Member, House Appropriations Committee
Kerry Kammer	Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
C. Phillip Kearney	Associate Director for State Programs, Institute for Educational Leadership
William R. Keith	Vice-Chairman, House Committee on Education
Mary Kay Kosa	Former President, Michigan Education Association
Elizabeth Kummer	Legislative Vice-President and Education Director, League of Women Voters of Michigan
Melvin Larsen	Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Samuel Moore II	Professor, Department of Administration and Higher Education, Michigan State University
Earl Nelson	Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Social Services
James O'Neill	Chairman, Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
James Phelps	Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education
John Porter	State Superintendent of Public Instruction
George Potter	Chairman of the Board, Jackson Community College
Eldon Rosegart	Member, Waterford Board of Education, and Assistant, Michigan Association of School Boards
Douglas Smith	Special Assistant to the Governor (for Education)

Table A1.--Continued.

Gary Sullenger	Education Fiscal Analyst, Senate Fiscal Agency
Roger B. Tilles	Executive Secretary to the Speaker, Michigan House of Representatives, and Chairman, Michigan Chapter, National Organization for Legal Problems in Education
Michael Usdan	President, The Merrill-Palmer Institute
Edward Vandette	President, State Board of Education
Dana Whittmer	Superintendent, Pontiac Public Schools
Patricia Widmeyer	Director, Legislation and School Law, State Department of Education

Table A2.--Original participants in the Michigan Education Seminars,
September 14, 1977, by sector.

Executive Branch

- Governor's Office
Doug Smith,* Education Advisor
- State Board of Education
Edward Vandette
- Department of Education
John Porter,* CSSO
James Phelps, Associate Superintendent (Program)

Patricia Widmayer, Lobbyist
- Department of Commerce
Jeffrey Graham, Deputy Director

Legislative Branch

- Senators (Democrat)
Jack Faxon,* Education Chair
Kerry Kammer, Education Appropriations Chair
Earl Nelson, Social Service Appropriations Chair
- Senators (Republican)
Gilbert Bursley,* Appropriations Committee Member
- Senate Staff (Nonpartisan)
Eugene Farnum, Fiscal Agency Director
Gary Sullenger, Fiscal Analyst
- House Members (Democrat)
William Keith,* Education Vice-Chair
James O'Neill, Education Appropriations Chair
- House Members (Republican)
William Jowett, Appropriations Member
Melvin Larsen, Appropriations Member
- House Staff (Democrat)
Roger Tilles, Majority Executive Secretary
Gene Caesar, Education Advisor to the Speaker

Education Interest Groups

- Labor (K-12)
Joe Billingsley, MFT Lobbyist
Herman Coleman,* MEA Director

Table A2.--Continued.

--Management (K-12)

Jerry Dunne, Multi-District Lobbyist
Eldon Rosegart, MASB Analyst

--Nonpublic (K-12)

Edmund Farhat, Public Affairs Director, Catholic Conference

--Higher Education (Public)

Robert Ewigleben, President, Ferris State
Keith Goldhammer, Dean, Education, Michigan State University

--Higher Education (Nonpublic)

John Gaffney, Director, Private Higher Education Association

Other Interests

Elizabeth Kummer,* Vice-President, League of Women Voters
William Grant, Detroit Free Press
Fred Bertolaet, Assistant Dean, Education, University of Michigan
Edward Duane, Professor, Michigan State University
William Bridgeland, Professor, Michigan State University
Samuel Moore II, Professor, Michigan State University
C. Philip Kearney, Director, Associates Program
Michael Usdan, Director, Merrill-Palmer Institute

*Members of the Michigan Education Council (ECS).

Table A3.--Participants in the Michigan Education Seminars, September 1978.

Babcock, C. Patrick	Director, Michigan Department of Labor
Bernthal, Tom	Administrative Assistant to Senator Gilbert Bursley
Bertolaet, Fred	Associate Dean, College of Education, University of Michigan
Billingsley, Joseph	Legislative Agent, Michigan Federation of Teachers
Brandt, August	Director of Government Relations, Flint Community Schools
Burns, Jo Ann	Lansing Public Schools
Bursley, Gilbert*	Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Chairman, The Michigan Education Council of the Education Commission of the States
Bridgeland, William M.*	Assistant Professor, Social Sciences, Michigan State University
Caesar, Gene	Majority Education Specialist, Michigan House of Representatives
Candoli, I. Carl	Superintendent, Lansing Public Schools
Cofer, Lloyd M.	Member, Education Council of Michigan
Coleman, Herman	Executive Director, Michigan Education Association
Cook, Thomas G.	Dean, School of Education and Learning Resources, Ferris State College
Duane, Edward A.*	Associate Professor, Social Sciences, Michigan State University
Dunn, Gerald	Regent, The University of Michigan; Director, Metro. Association for Improved School Legislation
Early, Ronald	Michigan Education Association
Eckstein, Peter	Research Associate, United Auto Workers

Table A3.--Continued.

Elliott, Don	Deputy Executive Director, Michigan Association of School Administrators
Ewigleben, Robert	President, Ferris State College
Farhat, Edmund	Public Affairs Director, Michigan Catholic Conference
Farnum, Eugene*	Director, Senate Fiscal Agency
Faxon, Jack	Chairman, Senate Committee on Education
Gaffney, John	President, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Michigan
Goldhammer, Keith	Dean, College of Education, Michigan State University
Graham, Jeffrey*	Executive Assistant to the Governor
Grant, Bill	Education Writer, <u>The Detroit Free Press</u>
Haueter, Josephine	Michigan Department of Education, School Law Consultant Emeritus
Hawkins, Philip H.	Special Assistant for Planning, Michigan Department of Education
Jowett, William	Member, House Appropriations Committee
Kammer, Kerry	Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education
Katz, Malcolm	Deputy Superintendent, Michigan Department of Education
Kearney, C. Philip	Associate Director for State Programs, Institute for Educational Leadership
Keith, William R.*	Vice-Chairman, House Committee on Education
Kosa, Mary Kay	Member, Education Council of Michigan
Kostielney, Sister Monica	Public Affairs Assistant for Education, Michigan Catholic Conference

Table A3.--Continued.

Kummer, Elizabeth*	Legislative Vice-President and Education Director, League of Women Voters of Michigan
Larsen, Melvin	Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Linne, Henry	President, Michigan Federation of Teachers
Mays, William, Jr.	Executive Secretary, Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association
Manthe, Daniel R.	Assistant to the Superintendent, Wayne County Intermediate School District
McAnaw, Richard	Public Administration Programs, Western Michigan University
McCollough, Lucille	Chairperson, House Education Committee, House of Representatives
McKerr, Robert N.	Associate Superintendent for Business and Finance, Michigan Department of Education
Moore, Samuel, II	Professor, Department of Administration and Higher Education, Michigan State University
Murphy, David	Assistant Director, Senate Fiscal Agency
Muth, Robert	Executive Director, Middle Cities Education Association; Assistant to Dean for Programs, College of Education, Michigan State University
Nelson, Earl	Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Social Services
O'Neill, James	Chairman, Appropriations Sub-committee on Education, Michigan House of Representatives
Phelps, James	Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education

Table A3.--Continued.

Pierson, Manuel H.	Dean, Student Services, Oakland University
Porter, John	State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Potter, George	Member, National Board for Community Colleges, and Education Council of Michigan
Prophet, Matthew	Deputy Superintendent, Lansing Public Schools
Ranville, Michael	Education Specialist, Senate Democratic Staff
Rosegart, Eldon	Member, Waterford Board of Education; Assistant, Michigan Association of School Boards
Ruhala, David*	Assistant Executive Director for State and Federal Relations, National Association of School Boards
Sederburg, William*	Executive Director for Legislation, House Republican Staff
Smith, Douglas*	Special Assistant to the Governor for Education
Smith, Richard L.	Assistant Superintendent, Office of Legislative Affairs, Detroit Public Schools
Straus, Kathleen	Staff Director, Senate Education Committee
Sullenger, Gary L.*	Education Fiscal Analyst, Senate Fiscal Agency
Tilles, Roger B.	Chairman, Michigan Chapter, National Organization for Legal Problems in Education
Usdan, Michael	President, The Merrill Palmer Institute
Vandette, Edward	President, State Board of Education

Table A3.--Continued.

Wagamon, Tom	Analyst, House Fiscal Agency
Welburn, Dan E.	Legislative Affairs Division, Michigan Education Association
Whitmer, Dana	Superintendent, Pontiac Public Schools
Widmayer, Patricia*	Director, Legislation and School Law, State Department of Education
<hr/>	
Cole, Richard T.	Coordinator, Michigan Education Seminars
Griffiths, Ginny	Secretary, Michigan Education Seminars
<hr/>	
New Participants:	
Evans, Eva L.	Director of Education Planning, Lansing School District
Kosovac, Dorothy A.	Adult Education Association of Michigan
Prince, Henry	State Director, American Association of University Professors
Copp, Charlotte	President, League of Women Voters
Fiedler, James D., Jr.	Department of Management & Budget, Office of the Budget--Education Division
Haynes, David	Office of Senator Kammer, Michigan State Senate
Lobenherz, Bill	Michigan Association of School Boards
Whims, Frederick R.	Director, Education Division, Office of the Budget, Department of Management & Budget

*Michigan Education Seminars Steering Committee.

Table A4.--Original steering committee of the Michigan Education Seminars.

Jeffrey Graham	Deputy Director, Michigan Department of Commerce
Elizabeth Kummer	Vice-President, League of Women Voters
Gary Sullinger	Analyst, Senate Fiscal Agency
Roger Tilles	Executive Secretary to the Speaker of the House, and President, National Organization for Legal Problems in Education (Michigan)
Patricia Widmayer	Director of Legislation and School Law, Michigan Department of Education

APPENDIX B

THE RESEARCHER'S BACKGROUND

APPENDIX B

The researcher became involved in the state-level educational policy-making process in Michigan while he was an undergraduate psychology student intern at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo. A Michigan state senator was instrumental in acquiring state funding for an experimental school program in which the researcher worked. The senator, then-Chairman of the State Senate Education Committee, hired the researcher as his chief assistant in 1970, and he held this position until 1973.

While a Senate staff member, the researcher was responsible for routine Senate Education Committee assignments and served as chief staff member on one other standing committee and two special Senate committees. In one case he prepared a special Senate Education Subcommittee report on the use of drugs to control the behavior of school children. The results of this project received widespread attention in the press.

The second project was more comprehensive. A special Senate subcommittee was formed to examine the procedures for training and certifying Michigan school teachers. In 1971, the researcher began assembling panels of representatives of interest groups, e.g., teachers' union, school board and administrators' association, deans of teacher colleges. Informal discussions and committee hearings, combined with private interviews and independent research, resulted in a committee report that justified a legislative predisposition toward extensive reforms in teacher training.

In 1973, Dr. John W. Porter, Michigan's chief state school officer, hired the researcher as Director of School Law and Legislation for the State Department of Education. As the superintendent's lobbyist, he established himself within the school policy community in several ways. As the department's official spokesman before the legislature, he could vouch for or speak against the favored programs of educational interest groups on behalf of the State Board of Education. Also, the researcher was viewed as the chief lobbyist for the legislature within the State Board and Department of Education. Because of his publicly reporting to the board on legislative trends and positions, the legislators and special interest groups now had some way of speaking, however indirectly, to the board. They only needed to persuade him of the relevancy of their remarks.

Since most of the major educational policy issues drop into or emerge from the legislative arena, the Educational Legislative Advisory Council (ELAC) of the Michigan Department of Education can be the scene of heated debates by diverse elements of the school policy community at the state level. The researcher served as chairman of ELAC. He established ELAC as a "neutral" setting (as few hidden agenda items as possible) and established himself as an advocate of reconciliation among educational policy adversaries.

The researcher returned to the State Senate in 1975. Whereas he had left as chief staff member to a committee chaired by a Republican senator, he returned less than two years later as the chief staff member to the Majority Leader of the Michigan Senate, a Democrat. It was as Senate Majority Executive Secretary that he had, in some

respects, the greatest influence on school policy in Michigan. In this position, one with little direct or official tie to the educational community, he was called upon to negotiate disputes within various segments of the school community.

During 1975-76, the researcher helped resolve crises over school finance bill form and sponsorship in the Senate. He worked as an arbitrator between labor and management forces on a teacher strike bill that was passed by the legislature and ultimately overruled by executive veto. He helped pass a revised school code, a process he had begun with the department. He set up the first legislative meeting in which legislative leaders made a public commitment to resolving local districts' fiscal problems created by dramatic enrollment drops. The resultant legislation was also vetoed by the governor.

In the spring of 1976, the researcher organized an effort to defeat Proposal C, the tax-limitation proposal. With the approval of the Senate Majority, he identified a list of potential participants for a campaign to defeat the proposal and called the first organizational meeting at the Michigan Catholic Conference office building in Lansing. The proposal was defeated in 1976, largely by a unified school community--labor and management, public and private, "lower" and "higher" education. The absence of such a coalition in 1978 is partially to blame for the subsequent passage of a similar proposal. In early 1977, Democratic state senators, reeling under the pressures of an incalculable variety of political forces, chose a new Senate leader, and the researcher began to search for a new job.

By the spring of 1977, the researcher was back in the thick of the public policy process, this time from a new vantage point. He had joined a "lobbying" firm that had among its clientele more than twenty powerful Michigan professional and trade associations and business concerns. The Institute for Educational Leadership asked him early in the summer of 1977 to begin a reconstruction of the Michigan Education Seminars. It is at this point that the study began. Since then, the researcher has been associate campaign manager of a gubernatorial campaign and is a founding director of a public relations consulting firm that is representing a variety of public and private interests.

Interest and working knowledge within the subject system is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition of good fieldwork. As Dexter (1970) stated, "The interviewer must have some capacity to catch the interviewee's meaning, to perceive the framework in which he is talking, if he is to get much out of the interview. Otherwise, he is merely recording verbal behavior" (p. 19).

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE MICHIGAN EDUCATION SEMINARS AGENDA

MICHIGAN EDUCATION SEMINARS AGENDA

Lansing Hilton Inn
(Room - Regency A)
7501 West Saginaw
Lansing, Michigan

March 6, 1978

12:00 LUNCH IN REGENCY "A" (Lunch will be buffet style; cash bar will be available)

Welcoming comments from the co-sponsors: Richard T. Cole, Coordinator, Michigan Education Seminars; Senator Gilbert Bursley, Chairman, Education Council of Michigan (ECS).

"THE IMPACT OF DECLINING ENROLLMENTS"

1:00 STATE CONCERN

Introduction; the Michigan Department of Management and Budget project to assess the impact of declining enrollments on Michigan education.

Dr. Fred Whims, Department of Management and Budget.

1:20 K-12 IMPACT

Presentation on K-12 enrollment projections for Michigan public and private schools on a state and regional basis, and the implications of these projections.

Dr. Frederick Ignatovich and Dr. Stanley Hecker, Professors, Department of Administration and Higher Education, MSU.

1:40 POST-SECONDARY IMPACT

Projections of post-secondary enrollment in Michigan as a function of demographic and other related factors.

Dr. David Goldberg, Professor of Sociology and Director of Detroit Area Study, University of Michigan.

2:00 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (first three speakers)

2:30 WHAT OTHER STATES ARE DOING

A discussion of various state legislative approaches to the problems created by declining enrollments.

Dr. Homer Elseroad, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education, Education Commission of the States, Denver, Colorado.

3:00 REACTIONS OF KEY LAWMAKERS

The two state legislators most responsible for the Michigan education budget will make comments, and field questions on the issue of declining enrollments.

Senator Kerry Kammer, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Sub-committee on Education;
Representative James O'Neill, Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee on Education.

Panel coordinator: Eugene Farnum, Director of the Senate Fiscal Agency.

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