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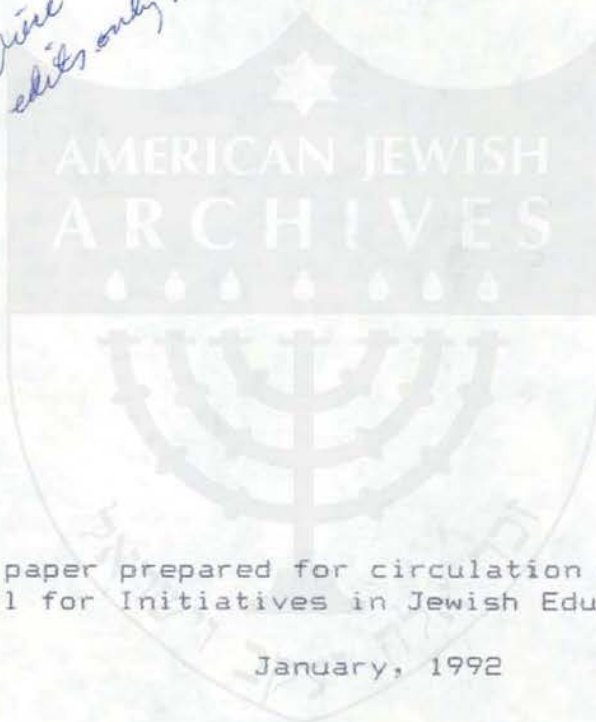
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THE CHALLENGE OF SYSTEMIC REFORM:
LESSONS FROM THE NEW FUTURES INITIATIVE FOR THE CIJE

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Clear & well-written
I'm pleased our piece is
useful. Minor edits only.
GW.

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THE CHALLENGE OF SYSTEMIC REFORM:
LESSONS FROM THE NEW FUTURES INITIATIVE FOR THE CIJE

In 1988, the Annie E. Casey Foundation committed about $40
million over a five-year period to fund community-wide reforms in
four mid-sized cities: Dayton, Ohio; Little Rock, Arkansas;
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Savannah, Georgia.[1] The reforms
were aimed at radically improving the life-chances of at-risk
youth, and at the core of the agenda were changes in educational
systems and in relations between schools and other social service
agencies. Despite major investments, not only financial but in
time, energy, and good will, from participants as well as the
Foundation, the New Futures Initiative has made little headway.
According to a three-year evaluation:

> The programs, policies, and structures implemented as part
> of New Futures have not begun to stimulate a fundamental
> restructuring of schools. For the most part, interventions
> were supplemental, leaving most of the basic activities and
> practices of schools unaltered. At best, these
> interventions have yet to produce more than superficial
> change (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 51).

This is not a matter of failing to allow time for programs to
take effect, nor is it the problem that weak outcome indicators
prevented recognition of the benefits of innovative programs.
Rather, the programs themselves have hardly been implemented.

In light of striking similarities between New Futures and
the CIJE's lead communities project--in the conception of the
problem and in strategies for addressing it--consideration of the
struggles of New Futures provides important lessons for the CIJE
which may allow us to avoid the pitfalls that New Futures has

encountered. In this paper, I will describe the design and implementation of New Futures, and show its similarities to the CIJE's agenda. Next, I will summarize New Futures' successes and frustrations.[2] Finally, I will explore the implications of the New Futures experience for the CIJE.

The Design of New Futures

Just as the CIJE was born out of dire concern for the fate of American Jewry, the New Futures Initiative emerged in response to a sense of crisis in urban America. Like the CIJE, New Futures is concentrating major assistance in a few locations, and emphasizing community-wide (or systemic) reform, rather than isolated improvements. At the heart of New Futures' organizational plan are community collaboratives: local boards created in each of the New Futures cities which are supposed to build consensus around goals and policies, coordinate the efforts of diverse agencies, and facilitate implementation of innovative programs. These collaboratives began with detailed self-studies which served both as part of their applications to become New Futures cities, and as the groundwork for the agendas they developed subsequently. Each city developed a management information system (MIS) that would gauge the welfare of youth and inform policy decisions. Like the CIJE, the Casey Foundation listed certain areas of reform that each city was required to address, and encouraged additional reforms that fit particular contexts.[3]

Another similarity between New Futures and the CIJE is the decision to play an active part in the development and implementation of reforms. Unlike the sideline role played by most grant-givers, New Futures provided policy guidelines, advice, and technical assistance. New Futures has a liaison for each city who visits frequently. According to the evaluators, "the Foundation attempted to walk a precarious line between prescribing and shaping New Futures efforts according to its own vision and encouraging local initiative and inventiveness" (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 8).

The New Futures Initiative differed from the CIJE in that it began with clear ideas about what outcomes had to be changed. These included increased student attendance and achievement, better youth employment prospects, and reductions in suspensions, course failures, grade retentions, and teenage pregnancies. New Futures recognized, however, that these were long-term goals, and they did not expect to see much change in these outcomes during the first few years. The three-year evaluation focused instead on intermediate goals, asking five main questions (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 17):

1. Have the interventions stimulated school-wide changes that fundamentally affect all students' experiences, or have the interventions functioned more as "add-ons"...?

2. Have the interventions contributed to...more supportive and positive social relations...throughout the school?

3. Have the interventions led to changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment...that generate higher levels of student engagement in academics, especially in problem solving and higher order thinking activities?

4. Have the interventions...give(n teachers and principals)
more autonomy and responsibility...while also making them
more accountable...?

5. Have the interventions brought to the schools additional
material or human resources...?

Although Wehlage and his colleagues observed some successes,
notably the establishment of management information systems, and
exciting but isolated innovations in a few schools, by and large
the intermediate goals were not met: interventions were
supplemental rather than fundamental; social relations remained
adversarial; there was virtually no change in curriculum and
instruction; and autonomy, responsibility, and community
resources evidenced but slight increases.

New Futures' Limited Success

New Futures' greatest achievement thus far may be the
"improved capacity to gather data on youths" (Education Week,
9/25/91, p. 12). Prior to New Futures, the cities had little
precise information on how the school systems were functioning.
Basic data, such as dropout and achievement rates, were not
calculated reliably. Establishing clear procedures for gathering
information means that the cities will be able to identify key
areas of need and keep track of progress. For example, the data
pointed to sharp discrepancies between black and white suspension
rates, and this has made suspension policies an important issue.
The outcome indicators showed little change over the first three
years, but they were not expected to. New Futures participants
anticipated that data-gathering will pay off in the future.

The intermediate outcomes, which were expected to show improvement from 1988 to 1991, have been the source of frustration. None of the five areas examined by Wehlage's team showed major improvement. For example, the most extensive structural change was the rearrangement of some Little Rock and Dayton middle schools into clusters of teachers and students. This plan was adopted to personalize the schooling experience for students, and to offer opportunities for collaboration among teachers. Yet no new curricula or instructional approaches resulted from this restructuring, and it has not led to more supportive teacher-student relations. Observers reported:

> (A)t cluster meetings teachers address either administrative details or individual students. When students are discussed, teachers tend to focus on personal problems and attempt to find idiosyncratic solutions to individual needs. They commonly perceive students' problems to be the result of personal character defects or the products of dysfunctional homes. "Problems" are usually seen as "inside" the student and his/her family; prescriptions or plans are designed to "fix" the student. Clusters have not been used as opportunities for collaboration and reflection in developing broad educational strategies that could potentially address institutional sources of student failure (Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 22).

The failure to take advantage of possibilities offered by clustering is symptomatic of what the Wehlage team saw as the fundamental reason for lack of progress: the absence of change in the culture of educational institutions in the New Futures cities. Educators continue to see the sources of failure as within the students; their ideas about improvement still refer to students' buckling down and doing the work. The notion that schools might change their practices to meet the needs of a

changed student population has yet to permeate the school culture.

Another example of unchanged culture was manifested in strategies for dealing with the suspension problem. As New Futures began, it was not uncommon for a third of the student body in a junior high school to receive suspensions during a given school year. In some cases, ͵Suspended students could not make up work they missed; this led them to fall further behind and increased their likelihood of failure. In response, several schools began programs of in-school suspensions. However, out-of-school suspensions remained common, and in-school suspensions were served in a harsh and punitive atmosphere that contradicted the goal of improving the schools' learning environments.

The newspaper account of New Futures' progress focused on a different source of frustration: the complexity of coordinating efforts among diverse social agencies, schools, and the Foundation. This task turned out to be much more difficult than anticipated. The article quotes James Van Vleck, chair of the collaborative in Dayton: "As we've sobered up and faced the issues, we have found that getting collaboration between those players is a much more complicated and difficult game than we expected" (p. 12). Part of the difficulty lay in not spending enough time and energy building coalitions and consensus at the outset. Otis Johnson, who leads the Savannah collaborative, is quoted as saying: "If we had used at least the first six months to plan and to do a lot of bridge-building and coordination that

we had to struggle with through the first year, I think it would have been much smoother" (p. 13).

The push to get started led to an appearance of a top-down project, though that was not the intention. Teachers, principals, and social workers--those who have contact with the youth--were not heavily involved in generating programs. Both the news account and the evaluation report describe little progress in encouraging teachers and principals to develop new programs, and school staff appeared suspicious about whether their supposed empowerment was as real as it was made out to be (see Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman, 1991, p. 31).

Inherent tensions in an outside intervention contributed to these difficulties. The use of policy evaluation has made some participants feel "whip-sawed around" (Education Week, 9/25/91, p. 15). A Dayton principal explained, "We were always responding to...either the collaborative or the foundation. It was very frustrating for teachers who were not understanding why the changes were occurring" (Education Week, 9/25/91, p. 15). Another tension emerged in the use of technical assistance: While some participants objected to top-down reforms, others complained that staff development efforts have been brief and limited, rather than sustained.

According to the evaluation team, the New Futures projects in the four cities have suffered from the lack of an overall vision of what needs to be changed. How, exactly, should

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students' and teachers' daily lives be different? There seem to be no answers to this question.

Implications: How Can the CIJE Avoid Similar Frustration?

The New Futures experience offers four critical lessons for the CIJE: (1) the need for a vision about the content of educational and community reforms; (2) the need to modify the culture of schools and other institutions along with their structures; (3) the importance of balancing enthusiasm and momentum with coalition-building and careful thinking about programs; and (4) the need for awareness of inherent tensions in an intervention stimulated in part from external sources.

The importance of content. Although New Futures provided general guidelines, no particular programs were specified. This plan may well have been appropriate in light of concerns about top-down reform. Yet the community collaboratives also failed to enact visions of educational restructuring, and most new programs were minor "add-ons" to existing structures. Wehlage and his colleagues concluded that reforms would remain isolated and ineffective without a clear vision of overall educational reform. Such a vision must be informed by current knowledge about education, yet at the same time emerge from participation of "street-level" educators--those who deal directly with youth.

This finding places the CIJE's "best practices" project at the center of its operation. Through a deliberate and wide-ranging planning process, each lead community must develop a broad vision of its desired educational programs and outcomes.

Specific programs can then be developed in collaboration with the CIJE, drawing on knowledge generated by the best practices project. In addition to information about "what works," the best practices project can provide access to technical support outside the community and the CIJE. This support must be sustained rather than limited to brief interventions, and it must be desired by local educators rather than foisted from above. In short, each lead community must be able to answer the question, "how should students' and educators' daily lives be different?"; and the best practices project must provide access to knowledge that will help generate the answers.

Changing culture as well as structure. Jewish educators are no less likely than staff in secular schools to find sources of failure outside their institutions. Indeed, the diminished (though not eradicated) threat of anti-semitism, the rise in mixed-marriage families, disillusion with Israel, and the general reduction of spirituality in American public and private life,[4] all may lower the interests of youth in their Jewishness and raise the chances of failure for Jewish education. Thus, Jewish educators would be quite correct to claim that if North American youth fail to remain Jewish, it is largely due to circumstances beyond the educators' control. But this is besides the point. At issue is not external impediments, but how educational and social agencies can respond to changing external circumstances. In New Futures cities, educators have mainly attempted to get students to fit existing institutions. If CIJE communities do

the same, their likelihood of failure is equally great. Instead, lead communities must consider changes in their organizational structures and underlying assumptions to meet the needs of a changing Jewish world.

How do CIJE plans address this concern? The intention to mobilize support for education, raising awareness of its centrality in all sectors of the community, is an important first step, particularly since it is expected to result in new lay leadership for education and community collaboration. New Futures' experience shows that this tactic is necessary but not sufficient. In New Futures cities, community collaboratives galvanized support and provided the moral authority under which change could take place. Yet little fundamental change occurred. Educators have not experimented much with new curricula, instructional methods, responsibilities or roles, because their basic beliefs about teaching and learning have not changed.

It is possible that the CIJE's strategy of building a profession of Jewish education address this problem. Perhaps unlike the secular educational world, where methods are well-entrenched, professionalization in Jewish education will carry with it an openness to alternatives, encouraging teachers to create and use new knowledge about effective programs. Professionalization may bring out the capacity to experiment with "best practices" and a willingness to adopt them when they appear to work.

Balance enthusiasm with careful planning. Those involved in
New Futures believe they should have spent more time building
coalitions and establishing strategies before introducing new
programs. Douglas W. Nelson, executive director of the Casey
Foundation, regrets that more time was not taken for planning.
He observed: "We made it more difficult, in the interest of using
the urgency of the moment and the excitement of commitment, to
include and get ownership at more levels" (Education Week,
9/25/91, p. 13). Again, it is not just the structure that
requires change--this can be mandated from above--but the
unspoken assumptions and beliefs that guide everyday behavior
which require redefinition. Institutional culture cannot be
changed by fiat, but only through a slow process of mutual
consultation and increasing commitment.

Lead communities also need a long planning period to develop
new educational programs that are rich in content and far-
reaching in impact. This process requires a thorough self-study,
frank appraisal of current problems, discussions of goals with
diverse members of the community, and careful consideration of
existing knowledge. If "lead communities" is a twenty-year
project, surely it is worth taking a year or more for
preparation. Deliberation at the planning stage creates a risk
that momentum will be lost, and it may be important to take steps
to keep enthusiasm high, but the lesson of New Futures show that
enthusiasm must not overtake careful planning. The current

schedule for the lead communities project (as of January, 1992)

appears to have taken account of these concerns.

 Awareness of unavoidable tensions. New Futures' experience

highlights tensions that are inherent to the process of an

outside intervention, and the CIJE must be sensitive so the

effects of such tensions can be mitigated. The CIJE must

recognize the need for stability after dramatic initial changes

take place. The CIJE's evaluation plan must be developed and

agreed upon by all parties before the end of the lead

communities' planning period. Technical support from the CIJE

must be sustained, rather than haphazard. While the CIJE cannot

hold back constructive criticism, it must balance criticism with

support for honest efforts. Many of these tactics have been used

by New Futures, and they may well account for the fact that New

Futures is still ongoing and has hopes of eventual success,

despite the frustrations of the early years.

Conclusion

 The New Futures Initiative, the Casey Foundation's effort to

improve the lot of at-risk youth in four American cities, has

been limited by supplemental rather than fundamental change, the

inability to modify underlying beliefs even where structural

changes occur, and by the complexities of coordinating the work

of diverse agencies. Although it will be difficult for the CIJE

to overcome these challenges, awareness of their likely emergence

may help forestall them or mitigate their consequences. In

particular, the CIJE should help lead communities develop their

visions of new educational programs; think about cultural as well

as structural change; ensure a thorough self-study, wide-ranging

participation, and careful planning; and remain sensitive to

tensions that are unavoidable when an outside agent is the

stimulus of change.

> Lo alecha ha-m'lacha ligmor, v'lo ata ben horin l'hibatel
> mi-menah. Ha-yom katzar v'ha-m'lacha m'rubah, v'ha-poalim
> atzeylim, v'ha-sahar harbeh. U-va'al ha-bayit dohek ---
> Pirke Avot.

> (It is not your responsibility to finish the task, but
> neither are you free to shirk it. The day is short and the
> task is large, the workers are lazy, and the reward is
> great. And the Master of the House is pressing --- Sayings
> of the Fathers.)
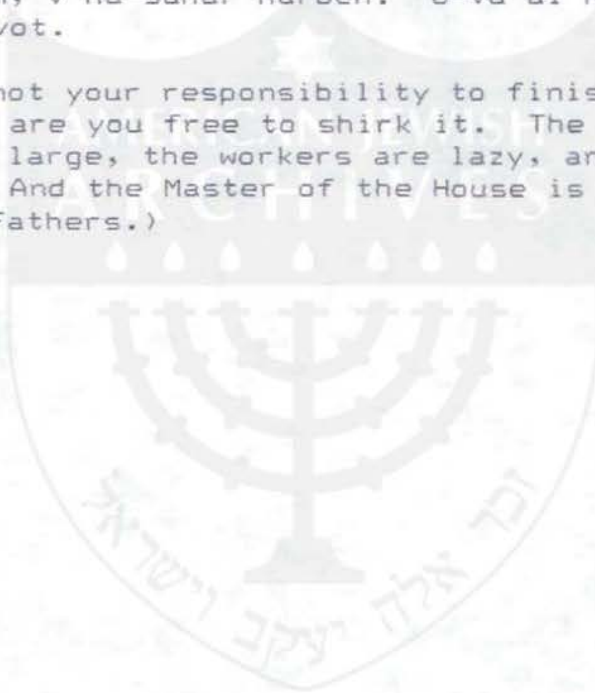
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Lawrence, Massachusetts, was originally included as well, with an additional $10 million, but it was dropped during the second year after the community failed to reach consensus on how to proceed.

2. This account relies largely on two sources. One is an Education Week news report by Deborah L. Cohen, which appeared on Sept. 25, 1991. The second is an academic paper by the Casey Foundation's evaluation team: Gary G. Wehlage, Gregory Smith, and Pauline Lipman, "Restructuring Urban Schools: The New Futures Experience" (Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, May 1991).

3. The reforms required (or "strongly encouraged") by the Casey Foundation were site-based management, flexibility for teachers, individualized treatment of students, staff development, and community-wide collaboration. This list is longer than the CIJE's, whose required elements are building the educational profession and mobilizing community support.

4. On the decline of spirituality in America, see Robert N. Bellah et. al, Habits of the Heart.

RESTRUCTURING URBAN SCHOOLS: THE NEW FUTURES EXPERIENCE

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RESTRUCTURING URBAN SCHOOLS: THE NEW FUTURES EXPERIENCE

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I. THE MEANINGS OF RESTRUCTURING

Restructuring of America's schools has caught the attention of a broad audience. The word "restructuring" has reverberated through governors' mansions, legislative halls and board rooms as well through the schools. Motivations behind the endorsements for structural change appear to differ among various interest groups; some are concerned that tomorrow's workers become more competitive in an international economy, while others are concerned about the social inequities that result when young people are poorly prepared academically or drop out of school. In fact, restructuring has multiple meanings and goals, and it is important to be clear about what these are and how each is expected to affect the education of America's youth.

The literature on restructuring reflects four distinct themes, each with its own programmatic efforts at change (Center on Organization and Restructuring, 1990). One addresses the nature of **student experiences** in school. This broad category is concerned with the quality of curriculum, instruction, assessment, school climate, discipline and student support in non-academic areas. In view of the criticisms that have been leveled at schools during the past decade, we can ask about the ways in which restructuring will improve the core academic and social experiences of students. A clear example of an attempt to improve curriculum, instruction and assessment in a fundamental rather than superficial manner is found in the Coalition of Essential Schools that advocates an in-depth study of an interdisciplinary curriculum for secondary school students.

A second theme concerns the **professional life of teachers.** This dimension addresses the range of new roles and responsibilities that define teachers' work. Teachers, it has been argued, need to work more collegially and be more involved in making decisions about a number of

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school matters including the grouping of students, curriculum, shared teaching responsibilities and their own professional development. Activities of the Center for Leadership in School Reform in Louisville, Kentucky; the American Federation of Teachers' Center on Restructuring; the National Education Association's Center for Innovation in Education; and the Rochester, New York project based on the Carnegie Forum Report (1986) all emphasize reorganizing the professional lives of teachers.

Third, **school governance, management and leadership** is a major focus of much restructuring. This category refers to the ways in which authority and accountability are allocated and calls for new mechanisms for making decisions that involve sharing power with parents and others in the community. School councils, site-based management and shared decision making, each somewhat different concepts, have been advocated to redistribute decision making authority with the intent of making schools more responsive, effective and accountable. Examples of this variation of restructuring are found in Chicago's recent move to local school councils, Dade County's site-based management projects, and the provision of school choice for parents and students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and throughout Minnesota.

Finally, finding ways for schools to draw upon **community resources** has increasingly become an issue in trying to enhance the chances of disadvantaged youth in achieving school success. Efforts are underway to integrate and coordinate health and social services for children and families, programs for youth employment, incentives and mentoring for higher education as well as to infuse private sector resources into the curriculum and academic experiences of students. An assumption is that these resources can succeed in providing youth with the additional support and experiences they need to succeed academically. One example of this strategy is Eugene Lang's "I Have A Dream." In addition, local efforts have been launched in a

number of communities such as Portland, Oregon in which comprehensive social and employment services are coordinated through the schools.

These four dimensions of restructuring are not mutually exclusive. Taken together they form a "radical" agenda that, if fully implemented, has the potential for producing schools quite different from what they are currently. A focus on changing student experiences, in particular, suggests especially far-reaching changes in schooling. Having noted this, however, we also believe that many proposals for structural change are only loosely linked with improved educational outcomes for students. A major problem with some of the restructuring rhetoric, for example, has been the failure to address issues about the substance of what is taught and how the most valuable kinds of knowledge and skills can be successfully conveyed to students. To elaborate, is the purpose of restructuring schools to reshape them in an effort to teach the current curriculum and content more efficiently and effectively? Or is the point of restructuring to change what is taught? If the agenda is changing the curriculum, is the intent to be more responsive to those who have a history of performing poorly; or is the change intended to provide a more challenging curriculum to those who already succeed in school? Can restructuring of the curriculum successfully serve both groups? This is a central issue because the final judgement about the success or failure of restructuring will be based on the quality of knowledge, skills and dispositions acquired by students.

We believe the issues of curriculum (i.e., determining what content is taught and how it is taught) highlight a fundamental problem that has not been fully recognized in the restructuring movement. Changes in the content of curriculum are difficult to achieve for a number of reasons, but at root these difficulties can be located in the professional educational culture that currently constrains and governs schools. Organizational changes alone are not likely to lead to substantive changes in the content of schooling. We will argue that unless restructuring is directed at the

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schools' core cultural beliefs and values affecting the quality of students' experiences and teachers worklife, the modification of mere organizational structures will have little pay-off in terms of better outcomes for students. Restructuring must address not only organizational forms, but also the myths, customs and traditions of schooling that now shape day-to-day experiences of students and faculty. However, if the culture of the school must be changed to obtain different results for students, we are faced with the difficult question of how this can be done. The difficulty of changing the fundamental experiences of students and teachers is borne out by our investigation over the past three years of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's five-year New Futures Initiative. One part of New Futures' multi-faceted approach to youth problems has been an effort to restructure schools. The difficulty of accomplishing this goal, however, has demonstrated that the implementation of significant organizational and even programmatic interventions does not in itself guarantee changes in the cultural regularities commonly encountered in American schools. The effort we studied acknowledged the need to change schools in fundamental ways to improve student outcomes, but despite a considerable effort by the Foundation and some members of each community, we have as yet found little promise in the initiative's educational interventions.

The failure to initiate a reform process likely to result in school restructuring occurred despite a recognition by the Casey Foundation of a need to go beyond the schools to mobilize political support for institutional change. The central and unique feature of New Futures was the formation a local collaborative organization designed to marshall the community's political will and power for reform. It was hoped that by bringing together a wide range of groups with a stake in education it would be possible to create a political environment capable of supporting major changes in each community's schools. The collaborative was to capitalize on the new interest in educational change that was and continues to be broadly shared. For example, the collaborative

was to build its agenda partly on the fact that the public now believes that education is fundamental to a skilled work force and a secure place in the highly competitive global economy.

In what follows, we describe the first three years of the Casey Foundation's New Futures Initiative in more detail and the forms it has taken in four school systems. We offer an analysis of why so little has changed in the day-to-day life and outcomes of students despite a substantial infusion of resources and effort. Drawing on our experience with this initiative, we conclude with an agenda for restructuring that is directed at bringing about the cultural changes we believe are necessary if similar efforts to restructure American education are to achieve more success than what we have witnessed in the New Futures schools.

II. THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION'S NEW FUTURES INITIATIVE

New Futures was born out of a desire to take dramatic action in response to the problems of at-risk youth. The Annie E. Casey Foundation believed that "The seriousness of problems afflicting too many of today's young people is now largely beyond debate' (CSSP, 1988). It was clear that too many young people were failing--failing to acquire the skills and knowledge that will allow them to meet the challenges of being good workers, citizens and parents in the 21st century. In response, the Foundation committed itself to a unique social experiment in which significant financial resources (about $40 million over five years) and technical assistance over and beyond the grant were to be infused into four medium-sized cities with the aim of substantially altering the life chances of at-risk youth. New Futures took aim at the symptoms of failure found in high dropout rates, low academic achievement, teen pregnancy, and unemployment. New Futures initially intended to focus community attention on these symptoms, but more fundamentally it was designed to develop new institutional strategies and resources for a variety of organizations that serve young people at risk of various forms of failure. This institutional focus was based on two premises. First, much of the responsibility for the failure of youth rests not only on individual

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children and their families but on the shoulders of the whole community--schools, businesses, social services, local government; and second, New Futures was premised on the belief that a coordinated, collaborative effort was needed among these local institutions to consolidate and focus resources.

The four communities selected by the Foundation--Dayton, Ohio; Little Rock, Arkansas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Savannah, Georgia--were asked to examine critically their current efforts to serve disadvantaged young people. Each community was asked to develop a baseline study that reflected on the adequacy of schools, social services, health, employment systems, local government and the private sector. From this information, a proposal to the Foundation was to be crafted for addressing youth problems.

As indicated earlier, central to New Futures was the creation of a new collaborative organization to coordinate community plans on behalf of at-risk youth. Specifically, the collaborative's mission was to: 1) identify youth issues and raise the community's awareness of the need to respond to those issues; 2) identify specific problems in providing services and opportunities for youth; and 3) set goals and offer strategies for providing more effective responses to the needs of at-risk youth. In addition, the collaboratives were responsible for raising new money to match the Casey grant. To carry out this mission, the Foundation believed that collaboratives would need to acquire political and economic power to assist in legitimating new priorities and policies. Launching a new institution with this power was recognized as controversial and problematic because an effective collaborative implied limiting some of the autonomy and prerogatives of disparate institutions accustomed to doing business as they saw fit. The Casey Foundation's "Implementation Guide" sums up the challenge in this way:

> The development of the New Futures Collaborative is seen as a long-term, incremental process leading to a significant set of changes in the way in which institutions define the problems of at-risk youth, plan services for them, receive

funding, and relate to one another. It is an ambitious agenda, unprecedented in its scope and complexity (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1989).

In addition to organizing a collaborative, the Foundation indicated that each city needed to develop a "case management" system that would perform three functions: (1) provide at-risk youth with a caring adult who could offer support during the middle school years if not longer; (2) provide access to an array of services from agencies within the community; and (3) provide the collaborative with a continuous flow of information on the problems of youth and the institutions serving them. As the eyes and ears of the collaborative, case managers were to be a source of practical information essential to assessing the effectiveness of programs and institutions. Case management was intended to support the collaborative's role in coordinating strategies to better serve youth, but it was also seen as essential to planning new programs and promoting institutional change.

Finally, it was assumed that each collaborative needed accurate, timely data on a number of variables if it were to carry out its obligation to identify problems, set goals, establish policy and monitor the progress and effectiveness of institutions. Each city was required to develop a management information system (MIS) that measured the status of students on ten "outcomes" including: achievement, attendance, suspensions, course failure, retention in grade, drop outs, teen birth rates and youth employment. In general, the MIS was seen as a powerful tool that the collaborative and its member institutions would use for gathering data necessary to track the welfare of youth, make policy and leverage institutional change in schools and other youth-serving agencies.

Far from leaving the cities to their own devices to develop these and other components of the initiative, the Casey Foundation took a very "activist" role, providing a considerable amount of direct assistance and advice to the collaborative. Each city was assigned a liaison who made frequent visits to interpret New Futures policies and guidelines. Such advice was supplemented

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by technical assistance directed at creating not only the MIS technology and case management systems but also helping with school reforms, health and employment programs. The Foundation attempted to walk a precarious line between prescribing and shaping New Futures efforts according to its own vision and encouraging local initiative and inventiveness. Inevitably the Foundation was sometimes seen by the cities as over-bearing and imposing; at other times, however, it was also criticized for not providing enough guidance.

With respect to schools, the Foundation prescribed that each collaborative should develop a plan to alter the nature of educational practice. To many citizens in the four communities the need for substantial changes in the schools seemed self-evident given the high incidence of student failure. Baseline data for 1987-88 from each school system predicted academic disaster for many youth. In Dayton, for example, 78% of all ninth graders, 75% of tenth graders and 64% of eleventh graders failed one or more courses during the academic year. In Pittsburgh, these rates were lower but still considered too high: 59% of the ninth graders, 54% of the tenth graders, and 41% of the eleventh graders failed one or more classes. Other data spoke of additional problems in these systems. Suspension rates were high; in Savannah middle schools, 33% of the sixth, 29% of the seventh and 26% of the eighth graders received suspensions during the year. In Little Rock junior high schools, 34% of the seventh, 33% of eighth and 34% of the ninth graders were suspended. A sharp discrepancy between black and white rates existed in these districts, leading some people to question the fairness and effectiveness of discipline in these schools.

Concern about students dropping out was also prominent in each city. Dropout data for the baseline year of 1987-88 from these systems, however, was suspect. For example, Dayton reported a 7% dropout rate for 1987-88, and yet enrollment attrition between the tenth and twelfth grades was about 30%, suggesting a much higher dropout rate. Similarly, in Savannah the

dropout rate was reported at 4%, and yet the high failure and retention rates in the system

suggested that many more students than this were probably leaving school before graduation. In

each city, these and other data told a story that suggested the need to develop a better

understanding of school outcomes and conditions; the data also seemed to imply a need to re-

think the policies and practices that currently dominated the schools.

The Casey Foundation issued two documents describing the general principles its staff

believed should govern school restructuring. The first of these, the "Strategic Planning Guide"

(1988), identified a set of "long-term structural reforms" of schools it suggested were necessary to

change the educational outcomes of youth at risk. The second, an "Implementation Guide"

(1989), circulated near the end of the first year of the initiative, reemphasized the need to change

the fundamental experience of students and teachers in schools. According to the Foundation, it

was essential for schools to adopt "curriculum modification, new teaching strategies and

organizational restructuring" if the growing cohort of students at risk of school failure were to

become academically successful. The Guide identified five "long-term structural reforms" that

would make it possible for schools to address these problems:

> (1) Restructuring should result in increased autonomy at the school building level, site-based management and teacher empowerment that would free educators from centralized bureaucracies and their stifling effects.

> (2) Teachers needed greater flexibility in scheduling and grouping students in order to create positive environments and innovative curricula that promote achievement for at-risk students.

> (3) Restructuring was to make schools more responsive to students through various forms of individualization and the elimination of "slow" and "fast" tracks. In addition, schools were encouraged to find incentives that would lead to greater academic success for those now in lower tracks.

> (4) To support teachers in their efforts with at-risk students, schools needed to offer extensive training or staff development activities.

(5) Consistent with the overall rationale of New Futures, schools were urged to find ways of collaborating and coordinating with other organizations and agencies, both public and private, in an effort to multiply the potential of existing resources.

The ambitious nature of the New Futures Initiative should not be underestimated. It called not only for the familiar set of reforms that have been associated with restructuring, school improvement and effective schools, but it has also attempted to link these strategies with changes in other major agencies in the community that have responsibility for youth. In doing this, the goal has been to produce a comprehensive and coordinated approach to at-risk youth that responds to school, home and community problems assumed to interfere with school success and later life chances.

Before answering questions about the extent to which New Futures has been successful in bringing about the kinds of change sought for schools, we summarize the interventions implemented during the first three school years of the five-year initiative; i.e., 1988-1991.

III. NEW PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND STRUCTURES

In the competition for the Casey Foundation funds, each city wrote a proposal describing its plan of interventions. The initial proposals, and subsequent revisions, represented a set of strategies authorized by the various individual organizations, such as the school system, as well as an overall plan of action designed by the collaborative body. Some of the interventions were strongly suggested or even required by the Foundation. As already indicated, the establishment of a "case management" system was a common intervention in the four communities. While the shape of these systems varied from city to city, all provided new human resources to serve students by advocating for them in and out of school and providing coordination of social services for them and their families. The intent was to support students and thereby increase their ability to succeed in school. Although case management itself was not viewed as an educational intervention, it was hoped that the presence of additional support staff with a different

perspective on students would create a new dynamic in schools that would contribute to institutional change.

After-school or extended day programs of varying scope were also introduced in three of the cities at the very beginning, with Little Rock adopting this strategy in the third year. In Pittsburgh, where this program has been most fully developed, extended day activities are offered three days a week for two hours following the final period of the school day. This program has a number of objectives: closer ties with other community resources, enriched social experiences and enhanced academic skills. The kinds of activities offered include sports, academic support, arts and crafts, video production, photography, fashion, and volunteer projects. Extended day in all cities has been open to any student, and activities have in fact attracted both those considered at risk of dropping out as well as those who were not considered at risk.

Extensive staff development activities supported by New Futures also have been common in three of the cities. This training has been largely aimed at helping teachers gain the knowledge and skills needed to implement important elements of the initiative. Staff development has generally taken the shape of brief in-service training sessions or longer "institutes" which have offered information regarding a variety of innovative instructional approaches or strategies for enhancing participatory forms of governance. Because Pittsburgh already possessed a sophisticated district-wide staff development process, New Futures funding there has not been used for this purpose.

The primary interventions implemented in each school system are listed and described below.

Dayton

In Dayton, two middle schools were selected as pilots for a number of interventions. The proposal called for:

o clustering of students and teachers

o an advisory period called "home-based guidance"

o extended day activities

o incentives to reward student performance

o "Beyond the Basics" curriculum and interdisciplinary units

o case managers for all students

Clustering was the center-piece innovation in Dayton which brought together core subject teachers (English, reading, math, social studies and science) to share a common group of about 120-150 students. Cluster teachers have been given a common daily planning period during which they can address a variety of issues that range from difficulties with a particular student to jointly planned and taught lessons. In principle, clustering has provided an opportunity for students and teachers to participate in a learning community capable of providing a level of caring and support generally absent in large secondary schools. To cultivate more supportive teacher-student interaction, a home-based guidance period was added to the daily schedule. The 16 to 20 students enrolled in each home-base were to receive counseling from teachers on a regular basis in an effort to overcome the inability of typical counseling staffs to provide frequent, personal contact with students.

To encourage student engagement in academic work, cluster teachers were to implement a variety of curricular reforms. Among these was a "Beyond the Basics" curriculum that stressed problem solving and the discovery of meaning, connections and patterns as opposed to rote learning. To facilitate the development of this curriculum, each cluster was given the freedom to create interdisciplinary teaching units, vary instructional groups, and alter class schedules. Assistance for implementing these changes was to come from the central office in the form of

funding and advice, while day-to-day teaching was to be supplemented by remedial teachers or aides within the cluster setting.

For the students, particularly those who were having academic difficulties, incentives have been offered. A fund of $15,000 was available to teachers in each pilot school to create student rewards for good attendance, academic improvement and good behavior. The money was spent on items such as t-shirts, pizzas and amusement park trips.

Little Rock

In Little Rock, five junior highs participated in the reform effort during the first three years. The proposal called for:

o clustering in several grades based on four core subject teachers sharing about 120 students

o in-school suspension (in year 2)

o a pilot program using teachers as student advisors (TAP)

o interdisciplinary units

o case managers for some at-risk students

Like Dayton, Little Rock placed its greatest hopes on clustering. Unlike Dayton, clustering did not involve all grade-levels or all pilot schools. Teaching staffs could vote on whether or not they wanted to cluster, and some chose not to do so. In one school, seventh and eighth grade teachers clustered, while at another, it was only the eighth grade. As in Dayton, the purpose of this structure was to create common times for teachers to meet about students, teaching and curriculum. It was also argued that closer teacher/student relations could be developed as a result of clustering, something it was believed would be especially beneficial for children at risk. Cluster teachers were expected to develop one or more interdisciplinary units during the year, and this was implemented by some of the clusters. These units were to study a common theme from the perspective of each discipline. For example, a unit on violence included

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reading a novel on the subject, discussing causes of violence in social studies and reading statistics on violent crimes in math.

The in-school suspension (ISS) program was developed in response to disciplinary problems and the high rate of suspension in these schools. Students were assigned to the ISS self-contained classroom for "non-aggressive" disciplinary infractions, such as repeated tardiness to class. While in ISS, students have been required to continue work on their regular assignments. This new program was intended to avoid the harsh consequences of out-of-school suspension which often results in course failure and even retention because of missed academic work.

The Teacher Advisor Program (TAP) was established at two junior highs where 16 teachers have agreed to counsel about 190 students identified as those most at risk. Teachers meet with students regularly to serve as mentors and counselors regarding both school and non-school topics.

Pittsburgh

In Pittsburgh, eight schools including elementary, middle and high schools were proposed sites for New Futures, but the major reform activities have occurred at two high schools. In addition to case management, educational interventions have taken two forms:

o academies within the traditional high school

o extended day or after-school activities

o case managers for at-risk students

The academy concept was adapted from a successful business and finance academy already operational in the system. At one high school, "health care technology" has been adopted as the curricular theme for about 40 tenth-grade students. A contract between parents and students and the faculty has been developed to elicit commitment from students that they would attend class and participate in exchange for a promise from teachers that students would graduate on time.

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Curriculum and instruction have emphasized cooperative learning and a "hands-on" approach to health care. Students have been bused for one class to a local technical school for the health care training.

At the other high school, about 90 in-coming ninth graders not enrolled in any of a number of other special options have been targeted. Four core subject teachers with a common planning period have taught this group. A vocational theme has not been used in this academy; teachers have instead concentrated on providing a more personal school-within-a-school atmosphere. Students with high math scores have been tracked into a college bound program and those with lower scores, into the vocational track. The elimination of the "general" track in Pittsburgh has also been part of the general school restructuring proposal.

Savannah

In Savannah, two middle schools, and later a third, served as pilots for a set of interventions that included:

o STAY team in each school (counselor, social worker, nurse and in-house suspension specialist)

o Individual Success Plan for each at-risk student

o CCP learning labs (Comprehensive Competency Program)

o accelerated promotion policy for retained students

o modified academic curriculum for at-risk students

o in-school suspension

o extended day activities

o case managers for all identified at-risk students

In conjunction with case managers, the STAY teams have written Individual Success Plans for each at-risk student; these are much like the individual educational plan employed in special education. By involving case managers, the school social worker and nurse, the Individual

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Success Plans were meant to address students' home and social problems that interfere with school success. Home visits and conferences with parents have been part of this process.

Providing students with academic success has been the goal of the "modified curriculum" and the Comprehensive Competency Program. The latter has been situated in a specially constructed laboratory setting in which students use programmed materials and computer-assisted instruction developed originally for Job Corps participants. Students scheduled into the CCP lab spend about three hours a day learning math, language arts and an amalgam of social "functions" subjects. The modified curriculum was essentially a remedial program designed to teach basic skills in each of the core subjects.

To encourage student engagement in the modified curriculum and CCP labs, a new district policy allowed previously retained students to receive an "accelerated promotion." Those who succeeded in raising their achievement on a standardized test to a higher grade level have been promoted an additional grade at the end of a semester. For example, a twice retained sixth-grade student can skip seventh grade if he/she tests at that level in math and reading.

In response to the very high rate of out-of-school suspension, Savannah middle schools also implemented an in-school suspension program like the one in Little Rock.

In summary, the four school systems undertook a variety of strategies, some of them quite similar, that they believed would eventually produce more favorable outcomes for students. The strategies were intended to respond to the academic problems and to the social/personal needs of students. In addition, some of these interventions proposed to alter the roles and responsibilities of teachers. Others drew on external resources in the broader community.

While the potential of this array of interventions seemed to vary, in general they promised to have a favorable impact on students, teachers and schools. In the long run, the impact on students was to be measured partly by the ten outcomes monitored by the MIS in each city. In

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the short run, it was unrealistic to expect major changes in some of these measurable outcomes; for example, no major shifts in achievement scores were expected in the first three years. In the meantime, it was important to assess impact on several intermediate goals, especially the extent to which a process of restructuring and change was occurring in schools that might be eventually expected to produce improved achievement and graduation rates.

IV. RESTRUCTURING SCHOOLS OR FIXING KIDS?

We began our research with an investigation of five central questions drawn from our understanding of the New Futures educational agenda as well as our own earlier research on schools successful with at-risk students (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko and Fernandez, 1989). These five questions not only guided our research but they also imply a set of criteria for judging the extent to which schools were restructured.

1. Have the interventions stimulated school-wide changes that fundamentally affect all students' experiences, or have the interventions functioned more as "add-ons" that supplement the conventional school program for students labeled "at-risk"?

2. Have the interventions contributed to the development of more supportive and positive social relations between students and teachers and administrators throughout the school?

3. Have the interventions led to changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices that generate higher levels of student engagement in academics, especially in problem solving and higher order thinking activities?

4. Have the interventions resulted in new roles and responsibilities for teachers and principals that give them more autonomy and responsibility over their own buildings while also making them more accountable for the educational success of their students?

5. Have the interventions brought to the schools additional material or human resources from social services, colleges, businesses and other organizations from the private sector to support school reform efforts and enrich student experiences?

Underlying these questions is our assumption that in schools primarily populated by children who are educationally at risk, narrowly conceived programs will be unable to overcome widespread academic failure. Our previous research indicated that fundamental changes must be introduced into both the social relations and educational experiences encountered in schools such

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as those in the New Futures cities if students' alienation and disengagement were to be overcome. Far-reaching institutional reforms within the school rather than supplemental programs, aimed at fixing those labeled at-risk students, were required to reconnect children to schooling.

We believe that taken together these five questions provide a basis for studying institutional change, rather than simply providing data about the effectiveness of specific programs developed in each city. Data gathered in response to the five questions offered evidence about the extent to which New Futures educational interventions were contributing to the kind of institutional change that would, in time, result in improved student outcomes. At the end of the third year of the initiative, however, we must report that a school restructuring process likely to lead to improved outcomes for at-risk youth has not yet begun. Table 1 summarizes our findings about the character and impact of various programmatic interventions.

Table 1 about here

The findings summarized in this table are based on the five questions underlying our research. In following sections, we elaborate these findings. We describe the extent to which the interventions brought about: (1) fundamental as opposed to supplemental change; (2) more harmonious social relations between students and teachers and administrators; (3) more engaging curriculum and instruction; (4) new roles and responsibilities for educators; and (5) the use of new community resources by the school.

(1) Supplemental or Fundamental Change

The great majority of New Futures interventions were supplemental in nature. Case management, for example, has been one of the most visible of the programs introduced into the schools. Although its value goes well beyond the schools, case management has functioned as an

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add-on to the schools and stimulated few or no institutional changes likely to benefit at-risk youth. In Dayton, for example, New Futures money was heavily invested in case managers. While they have provided additional information about students and have contributed to a higher level of concern by teachers regarding the impact of outside-of-school problems on student performance, case managers were not in a position to influence classroom practice. In fact, case managers typically have been asked by the school to help students adjust to unquestioned institutional policies and practices. In some instances, the services and information provided by case managers have served to reify teachers' conceptions about the nature of school failure, confirming their belief that only changes in the home or the broader community will lead to higher levels of student success. While there is without question an element of truth in this analysis, it misses entirely the ways in which approaches to teaching and learning continue to perpetuate failure rather than overcome it.

New tutoring programs, student incentives, and modifications in school discipline practices such as the creation of in-school-suspension programs were similarly supplemental in that the main assumptions and activities of school remained unchanged. Like case managers, STAY teams in Savannah have provided another resource for students unsuccessful in school, and in fact they have helped some students modify their disruptive behavior. Institutional practices, however, that lead to students' problems have remained unchanged. For example, despite a public statement by the president of the Savannah school board that out-of-school suspensions should be substantially reduced in the middle schools, this practice has continued with only modest reductions in numbers.

Although extended day activities, a common intervention in three cities, have provided students with important opportunities for enrichment and less formal interaction with teachers and other adults, they as well have remained distinct from the "real work" of the school. Like

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most extra-curricular activities, they supplement the school's traditional offerings rather than serve as the foundation upon which more fundamental school changes might arise.

One strategy which had the potential of altering students' classroom experiences was interdisciplinary curriculum. However, in Little Rock this was characterized as little more than the coordination of already existing topics in several subjects. In Dayton only a handful of teachers attempted interdisciplinary curriculum and it served mainly as a break from business as usual built around field trips or other special events. For example, one cluster developed a week-long unit that focused on the city featuring field trips and guest speakers but did not attempt to integrate knowledge across disciplines. If fully developed, the modified curriculum in Savannah also could have resulted in some change in students' classroom experience by focusing on a reduced number of topics to allow for a deeper concentration on essential skills and knowledge. However, the absence of a shared conception of what a modified curriculum should contain and a lack of planning time eventually led to a variety of products and practices which proved troubling to teachers and administrators alike. This experiment, which was to include the four core subjects, had virtually disappeared by the end of the second year of the initiative in favor of the standard district curriculum.

A few other interventions across the four New Futures cities did approach the goal of fundamental school change. If fully implemented, these could have done more than simply supplement the schools' offerings. Many, however, were not presented as reform strategies intended to serve all at-risk students, let alone all students, but instead were seen as limited strategies addressed to a small sub-group of at-risk students. The academies in Pittsburgh, for example, were restricted to small groups of teachers and students in two large comprehensive high schools. Although they provided at least some of the conditions needed to generate deeper changes in social relations and curriculum and instruction, they have functioned as isolated

alternatives rather than as models of systemic reform. The same was true of Savannah's Comprehensive Competency Program labs. The labs have offered a different approach to learning but they have been available to no more than 60 students, out of a population of 300-400 students per school identified as at risk. This intervention, too, has functioned as a small alternative program within the larger school. The Teacher Advisory Program in Little Rock has also provided a model of how teachers might offer their students the forms of interpersonal support they need to become more successful academically. It has been restricted, however, to less than 200 students in a school system where hundreds of students could benefit from such attention and care. As yet, the district has taken no steps to expand it further.

The rearrangement of middle schools into clusters of students and teachers in Little Rock and Dayton has provided some structural conditions favorable to fundamental changes in conventional school practice. Now a central component of middle school reform in a number of schools across the country, clustering can reduce the anonymity often felt by students in larger schools; it also offers teachers the opportunity to collaborate in decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, scheduling, and student life (including support services and discipline). In Little Rock, only teachers and students at one or two grade levels were clustered, making the innovation less extensive than it might have been. In Dayton, all middle school teachers and students were assigned to clusters the year prior to New Futures; the initiative provided additional resources in an effort to achieve more effective implementation of this innovation at the pilot schools. This structure, however, has not yet led teachers and administrators to introduce new forms of curricula and instruction nor to establish in a systematic way more supportive relations with students. For example, at cluster meetings teachers address either administrative details or individual students. When students are discussed, teachers tend to focus on personal problems and attempt to find idiosyncratic solutions to individual needs. They commonly perceive students'

problems to be the result of personal character defects or the products of dysfunctional homes. "Problems" are usually seen as "inside" the student and his/her family; prescriptions or plans are designed to "fix" the student. Clusters have not been used as opportunities for collaboration and reflection in developing broad educational strategies that could potentially address institutional sources of student failure.

In summary, most New Futures educational interventions functioned primarily as peripheral "add-ons". Some of these were either grafted on to the beginning of the school day, like a home-based guidance period, or onto the end, as with extended day. Other interventions were directed at specific sub-populations of students who were defined as at-risk. In most cases, interventions focused on identifying a student's individual problems and then prescribing remediation or services for personal or family problems. While remediation and services were undoubtedly valuable to some students, these do not constitute school restructuring. In fact, few interventions were aimed at transforming schools, let alone entire districts.

(2) Social Relations

It is in the areas of peer and student-teacher relations that the New Futures initiative has had some positive impact. Although few of the improvements in social relations have become school-wide in scope, interventions have provided some teachers with both the opportunity and permission to assume more personal and supportive roles with students. This has been especially true with the Pittsburgh academies, CCP labs in Savannah, and clusters in Little Rock and Dayton. Each of these has involved placing teachers with smaller student groups in which somewhat different expectations and working relationships were to be cultivated. These grouping practices have contributed to the creation of conditions that allowed for more care and support by teachers for students in academic trouble. Some teachers eventually came to speak of students as "our kids" and during their common planning periods explored strategies for addressing students'

problems. Unfortunately, teachers' discussions frequently resulted in recommendations to refer students elsewhere (e.g., to school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or other human services professionals) and thus did not become a catalyst for more fundamental changes in their own practice.

Despite these pockets of new teacher-student relations, as a whole the climate of most New Futures schools remains adversarial. Even though new forms of social relations appeared to be successful in addressing at-risk students, they generally have been unable to gain credibility and currency among a critical mass of faculty. Instead, a preoccupation exists among teachers and administrators for maintaining control and discipline with punitive methods. This contributes to an environment characterized more by conflict and exclusion than care and support. Even though alternatives to suspension, such as in-school-suspension, have been introduced into a number of New Futures schools, the presence of these programs has not called into question either the use of disciplinary sanctions for fairly trivial offenses such as tardiness, gum chewing, or loose shirt-tails, nor has it led to an investigation of the underlying institutional causes of student misbehavior.

Adversarial relations between staff and students in the Savannah middle schools was identified very early as a major problem area, and proposals indicated a need for schools to revise their practices. Yet data on out-of-school suspensions have continued to reveal the persistence of the problem. For example, about one-third of all sixth graders in the Savannah system were suspended during the 1988-89 and 1989-90 school years. Slightly more than one-half of all black male sixth graders were suspended during each of these two school years. These data reflect a well-entrenched practice by school administrators of suspending students for a wide variety of offenses including being tardy to class, "sassing" a teacher and "not showing proper respect" to adults. A large number of the suspensions are for more than one day, resulting in many

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unexcused absences. This means that class work can not be made up which, in turn, leads to lowered grades and even failure and retention in grade for some students.

Despite an explicit intention to reduce out-of-school suspensions among at-risk students in the New Futures schools through the use of ISS and the counseling assistance of the STAY teams, the old practices were unchanged. During the second year of the initiative, one school suspended 215, or 66%, of its New Futures students during the 1989-90 year. A second school was somewhat more successful, suspending 127, or 42% of its targeted at-risk students. A third school, just beginning a small pilot New Futures program, suspended 60, or 74% of its at-risk students during the year. Of course, suspending students is sometimes necessary and should remain one of the tools available to administrators, but it is doubtful that the scale on which it is used in Savannah is warranted in view of the impact this has on the learning environment of the schools.

Within individual schools the atmosphere of social relations remains not only adversarial but also inconsistent. In Dayton, for example, one of the pilot schools has painted in large letters on the most visible wall in the school office the following statement:

> We will work as a team in a trusting environment where every student will be treated with dignity, experience success, and have access to caring and supportive adults.

Despite these words, a proposal to tighten conditions in the in-school suspension room was brought before the faculty. The proposal, written by teachers, advocated that blinds in the ISS room be kept closed all day, that students not be allowed to eat lunch in the cafeteria, that the room be stripped of its computer and television monitor, and that students be prevented from contacting their friends between the first and last bells of the day. During the discussion, a teacher protested that ISS was not intended to be punitive and that the proposal verged on the inhumane. She said she would not allow her daughter to be placed in this kind of detention.

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Nevertheless, a majority of faculty felt that the purpose of ISS was to punish students and voted in favor of the proposal.

It has become clear that simply creating new structures--such as STAY teams, clusters and case management--has not been sufficient to bring about changes in social relations that dominate the day to day life of schools. Teachers have continued to respond to students who misbehave as if their actions are unrelated to school climate and policies. Rather than finding ways to alter the conditions that lead to such problems, many teachers and administrators respond by removing students from the school. As yet, no New Futures schools have addressed in a systemic and institutional manner the ways in which some kinds of student misbehavior are also products of school experiences.

(3) Curriculum and Instruction

We indicated that the original New Futures proposals promised to change teaching and learning as a means for increasing student interest, motivation, and achievement. However, most of these proposed interventions were not implemented, or were implemented in only a cursory fashion, or were implemented and then abandoned. As a result, the core of classroom activities observed in most New Futures schools remained traditional with teachers relying on worksheets, textbooks, district guides, and preoccupied with the coverage of discrete facts and skills.

Typical of the content and teaching in many classrooms is the following scene from a seventh grade social studies class in Little Rock:

> The teacher asks, "What are the varieties of products in Latin America?" Several students shout out answers. He lists them on the board. "Write these down. You'll need to know them for the test."
>
> Then he asks, "Why is the population growing?" A boy says: "Because they want to urbanize." "No!" he says and then proceeds to offer his own extended explanation. "Take that down, too, it may be on there." There is no discussion.
>
> They move on to labeling countries and capitals on mimeographed maps of Latin America. After finishing the labeling, the teacher repeats and reviews the

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process they just completed, this time on an overhead projection. A girl says, "El Salvador--isn't that where they're having a lot of trouble?" "Well, yes," the teacher replies, "it's very volatile, but we'll talk about that another time."

After again reminding the class about the need to know the information for the test, he tells the students to spend the remaining twenty-five minutes of the period finding the answers to the questions at the end of the chapter. Meanwhile three boys pass around a comic book, another boy reads a sports magazine behind his book. In the back row, a boy is rendering a remarkable likeness of a 1957 Impala in his notebook, and there is an endless procession to the pencil sharpener.

Of course, not all classes were as uninspired, nor was the content as mindless as what was presented in this one. We observed a few instances in which teachers were attempting significant curricular innovations that had the potential for making school interesting and providing students with challenging, worthwhile content. In one case, a math teacher in Little Rock was using a number of imaginative techniques to teach algebra to "regular" track students who ordinarily would be taking a general math curriculum. The teacher approached the task with the goal of making her students mathematical thinkers and problem solvers rather than stressing the memorization of mathematical procedures. The experiment was highly successful in that most of her "regular" track students learned the concepts and problem solving skills associated with algebra, but it was also a failure because the next year, upon entering Algebra II, these students were at a disadvantage. They were not properly "prepared" because they had not covered the same curriculum as other students, which was the expectation of the Algebra II teachers. There was no institutional support for students who had taken an alternative route to learning mathematics. A teacher's innovations and success were canceled out because they were not part of a systematic attempt to improve the level of math achievement for regular or at-risk students.

We found that the Health Academy in Pittsburgh has provided some engaging learning experiences for students enrolled in this special program. Although the curriculum and instruction encountered core subjects such as social studies and English remained little changed from courses found elsewhere in the Pittsburgh school district, the single health technologies class

featured learning opportunities directly related to skills associated with different medical professions. Students, for example, had an opportunity to practice CPR and use different medical equipment. Student response to this program has been positive, in part, because of its use of experiential learning.

In Savannah's CCP labs, many students with long histories of school failure found an instructional format that enabled them to succeed with highly structured programmed basic skill materials. Their ability to learn in the self-paced and supportive environment provided by the carefully trained teachers made it clear that previously low achieving and failing students can learn conventional content. Without the CCP labs, many of these students would have ended their educational careers in middle school.

But we need to be clear about the nature of the content of CCP materials. CCP labs have provided remedial education by drilling students in basic skills associated with reading, mathematics and career awareness. They have not challenged students to engage in problem solving or higher order thinking activities. While a "successful" intervention, CCP has provided low achieving students with little more than a mechanical education in narrowly defined basic skills.

Overall, then, New Futures has not produced promising changes in the substantive content students learn. It has stimulated almost no fundamental change in the primary intellectual activities that dominate students' lives in school. Nothing has yet succeeded in moving educators, whether at the top of the school hierarchy or at the building level, beyond the patterns of curriculum and instruction that have characterized schools for decades. Most educators continue to rely upon familiar objectives, methods, texts and conceptions of testing and assessment. With only a few exceptions, systematic efforts to challenge students with a curriculum built around problem-solving and the need to engage in higher order thinking were absent from the classroom.

We believe there are a number of reasons for the absence of fundamental curriculum reforms. From our observations and conversations with educators, the most important reason was that the schools did not believe that fundamental change in curriculum was needed. As pointed out earlier, most educators in the New Futures schools believed that the problems that created at-risk students were problems within the students, not in the school and its curriculum. Further, it was assumed by some teachers that each subject was defined by a clear sequence of topics, concepts and skills that must be learned in the proper order. For example, teachers expressed the belief that students can not perform more difficult "higher order thinking tasks" in a subject until they have mastered prior "basic" knowledge and skill.

There were other impediments to broad changes in curriculum and instruction, few of which have been addressed by the New Futures initiatives. In all of the districts, national norm-referenced tests, pupil performance objectives (PPOs), minimum performance tests (MPTs), or district-mandated examinations have been cited by teachers as reasons for stifled innovation. In Pittsburgh, each subject has a syllabus-driven exam originating in the central office for which teachers must prepare their students. Teachers in Little Rock said they had little choice but to focus on rote skills in subjects like mathematics and language arts because of the state's MPTs which determine whether or not students can move on to high school.

In addition, some teachers with whom we spoke indicated a desire to develop more challenging curriculum, but they said they found little support for the intensive and extensive professional development needed to reshape curriculum and instruction. With the exception of Pittsburgh, teachers in the other districts pointed out that no sustained and coherent staff development programs were available to support the adoption of new instructional strategies. Although the Casey Foundation has funded a number of staff development activities, these have generally consisted of short introductions to strategies such as cooperative learning or

interdisciplinary instruction; no long-term guidance has been offered to teachers toward restructuring the curriculum.

In general, curricular innovation was stymied by a interwoven set of beliefs about the locus of problems producing at-risk students and an acceptance of a curriculum that already existed. With few exceptions, teachers did not express privately or publicly a strong desire to change what was taught. As a result, curricular and instructional reform in New Futures schools has tended to be much more rhetorical than real.

(4) Educators' Roles and Responsibilities

One of the premises of some current school restructuring efforts is that educational improvement is inhibited by the high degree of centralization characteristic of most school districts. This centralization means that regulations, decision making, and the allocation of resources all serve to stifle building-level innovations and to inhibit the sense of ownership by faculty that would make school programs more effective. It is argued that schools should be restructured to include elements of site-based management and shared decision making involving teachers and principals (Clune and White 1988; Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz 1990). Instead of teachers working in isolation, teams or clusters could work collegially in carrying out their teaching responsibilities; instead of principals or department chairs making most decisions about building policies and allocation of resources, faculty could share this responsibility.

While this conception of restructuring was less central to most of the proposals from the New Futures cities, the Casey Foundation encouraged organizational reforms that would stimulate greater faculty investment in their schools. One concrete way of encouraging staff involvement was the Foundation's suggestion that each school conduct some form of rigorous self-assessment in the second year. By having staff examine the status of various problems and programs in their own building, it was hoped that at least two things would result. First, staff would have a better

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understanding of what kinds of changes were needed; and second, they would have a sense of ownership of interventions because of their involvement in the assessment process. The assessment was a concrete, if limited, method of preparing staff to participate in the restructuring of their schools.

The response at the district level to this request by the Foundation varied. The Pittsburgh schools indicated that they had just recently conducted a building-level assessment which they believed satisfied the Foundation's intentions. The Dayton schools said they would conduct such an assessment with a standard format called the Middle Grades Assessment Program. In fact, this was never carried out, and instead small groups of administrators visited the two pilot schools, conducting their own investigation and submitting a report to the superintendent. No systematic discussion of the findings was ever conducted in the schools affected. The Savannah schools indicated that they would use their own Meritorious Schools program of assessment which required each building to examine a number of aspects of their programming. The format probably met the letter of the Foundation's request, but not its spirit. Nevertheless, neither of the New Futures pilot schools carried out a careful study using the Meritorious Schools criteria.

Even in Little Rock, where the request for self-assessment was most fully realized, its impact on teacher reflection and school practice has been minimal. The faculties used an assessment system developed by the Center for Leadership Reform in Louisville, Kentucky to evaluate their schools along eight dimensions of school effectiveness: shared vision, participatory leadership, results orientation, customer success, commitment to innovation, commitment to quality control, flexibility and support. A group of teachers from each school participated in a training period and then collected data over a four to eight week span, analyzed the data, and prepared for a culminating activity--a mock trial in which the entire faculty heard evidence on the school's demonstration of several of these standards. The findings were intended to lead to a

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plan of action for the school. According to the overall scheme, this was an important process because it legitimated the airing of concerns. In at least one school it actually served as a catalyst for some frank discussion of faculty disagreements and conflicts. However, the impact was short-lived and the assessment largely failed to initiate greater reflectivity among school staffs on an on-going basis as the Foundation hoped. In some cases, the process was lost in the welter of year-end tests, surveys, and paperwork. Once completed, it was scarcely referred to again, and there has been little observable increase in dialogue, debate, or collective thought about substantive issues of school governance, leadership, vision, social relations, or curriculum and instruction. Despite its promise, like many other New Futures innovations, the assessment became "another program" or "activity" that failed to influence the faculty culture overall.

Other New Futures programs also held the potential of providing teachers with new roles and responsibilities in regard to scheduling, student discipline, and instructional practice. Only rarely, however, have teachers begun to explore the possibilities inherent in these structures. For example, teachers have been uncertain about how best to use increased opportunities for collaboration. Most were accustomed to working as individuals in separate classrooms and had little or no experience within the school of cooperating with others on group projects. Simply providing time to meet as occurred in Dayton was thus no guarantee that teachers would know how to work together in ways likely to result in improved student performance.

In Dayton, teachers and principals felt all along that their freedom to explore different alternatives was limited. The extent to which this belief was well-founded remained unclear, but two years into the initiative, one teacher noted: "They are still not empowering teachers; they are still not giving us a choice. They try to make it seem as though we have choices, but they are just manipulating us." One principal noted that central office staff expected him to "do all of this but

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don't make waves. Do the job, do it right, do it right the first time, reform it, get rid of folk that won't improve, change the folk that can, but don't make waves."

In Pittsburgh, teachers and principals observed that two competing messages came from the central office. One message was carried by language about site-based management conducted by "cabinets" in each school, but a more powerful message came from the continuing control over curriculum through the use of syllabus-generated tests to maintain teacher accountability. This implied a seriously reduced range of options for curriculum innovation. In some respects, the most interesting situation was found in Savannah where teachers and principals had become so accustomed to their lack of participation in decision-making that few articulated a desire to play a role in the initiation of new educational ventures; such a role appeared to lie outside their conception of what was possible. By the third year of New Futures, however, educators in one Savannah middle school had begun to take seriously the idea that they might develop some form of site-based management in which teachers and the principal could play a more decisive role in decision-making. After a number of staff visited restructuring schools in Louisville, Kentucky, plans were made to begin thinking about a new vision for their own school.

(5) Use of Community Resources

Central to the Foundation's vision of New Futures is the need for increased coordination and collaboration among the multiple stakeholders who serve disadvantaged youth. Included are schools, health, social services and higher educational institutions; business and employment services; and other private organizations such as churches, neighborhood centers and service clubs. The plan is to link these through a local collaborative organization in ways that would allow them to strengthen their ability to serve young people.

How this linkage can occur has not been fully developed in any of the cities, but they have begun to explore several possibilities. From the beginning, the clearest linkage was through the

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case management system which could assist needy youth in gaining access to health and social services. In each of the cities, students and their families have been linked with a variety of services needed for their support. To this end, each of the cities has made progress in sharing certain information across organizations. This was achieved through interagency agreements and, to a lesser extent, through a management information system for case managers that has been under development in each city. In general, few resources have been brought into the schools to build new programs or enrich the curriculum. As pointed out before, this was understandable in view of the assumption that the curriculum was essentially sound; what the schools needed were students better prepared to learn what was being offered.

Exceptions to this generalization can be found in Pittsburgh where the extended day program and the Pittsburgh Promise "compact" have resulted in new resources and programs. Extended day, for example, has provided some students with an opportunity for driver's education at a community college; a treatment center has offered group counseling; academic tutoring was provided by an adult education center; Duquesne University trained students in peer tutoring techniques; a neighborhood counsel focused on leadership training for young black males; and a high school and senior citizens residences joined to provide a mutually supportive "generations together" program. While most of these programs were small, affecting only a few students, their presence has suggested the educational potential of a close school-community relationship, but by the end of the third year plans were being made to cut back extended day because it would be too expensive to maintain once the Casey Foundation funds were gone.

The concept of a school-business "compact," similar to the one pioneered in Boston, was a high priority of the Pittsburgh school system. The agreement between the schools and the business community, called the Pittsburgh Promise, pledged higher achievement and completion rates in exchange for job opportunities and hiring preferences for graduates. As part of the

Promise the schools began to develop a number of programs to strengthen career education. New Futures high schools have career centers staffed by a person who provides information to students about careers, brings people from the community into the school and arranges for summer jobs. These summer jobs were intended to be introductions to career ladder positions. In the second year of the program, 165 students were placed in companies like Westinghouse and Pittsburgh Plate Glass as well as hospitals, architectural firms and law offices. While on the job, students were assigned a mentor who was to make at least weekly contact with the student. Generally, these placements were seen as high quality experiences by students and adults alike. However, observers and school staff have raised doubts about the extent to which the students selected for these experiences are really "at risk" of school failure. The selection process has attracted a number of students who appear to already have the skills and characteristics required by businesses, hospitals and law offices; one career specialist at a high school estimated that only 10 out of 80 candidates could be labeled at-risk when they applied for job placements.

Another issue is how a school-business compact might strengthen curriculum and instruction for at-risk students. Initially, the concept of a compact, either in Pittsburgh or in a more recent variation in Savannah, did not include a vision of financial and technical support for the development of new "high tech" curricula that would make students employable in "good" jobs. For example, the small but promising Health Technologies Academy in Pittsburgh has focused mainly on entry level knowledge and skills. It has not built its curriculum around the diverse high technologies that are essential to growing health-related field. Pittsburgh, with its many hospitals, technical schools and universities, would seem to be an ideal environment for this kind of curriculum. These shortcomings aside, the Pittsburgh Promise and the Savannah compact provide the kind of foundation that could, in the future, substantially increase resources needed to introduce at-risk students to the opportunities of skilled work.

The small areas of progress with the Pittsburgh Promise, and to a lesser extent in

Savannah, only serve to dramatize the enormous task that is ahead. For the most part, New

Futures cities have as yet not grappled with the challenges of up-grading the curriculum for

students wanting a high quality technical education. While each of the cities boasts

technical/vocational programs, these serve only a fraction of the students who could benefit from

them.

Summary of Findings

Data gathered in response to our five research questions indicate that in general New

Futures has not yet initiated a comprehensive restructuring of schools of the kind needed to

address the problems of at-risk students, nor is this kind of change on the horizon. To be sure, a

variety of new programs, policies and structures were implemented in response to the New

Futures Initiative, and some of them initially looked promising as building blocks toward

restructuring. By and large, however, these were supplemental programs and by the end of the

third year of the initiative had not led to significant changes in school practice. Interventions were

supplemental because they were aimed at a few at-risk students or because they were "add-ons" to

the main fare offered by schools. Moreover, most interventions were based on assumptions that

defined the problem as one of treating and remediating students who were seen as deficient in

academic and personal skills. This limited focus meant that traditional policies, practices and

curriculum remained much the same.

In three of the cities, interventions were aimed at improved school climate, support and

care for students. While these goals were achieved by some teachers, overall school climate was

generally dominated by adversarial relations. Opportunities to change curriculum and instruction

have not stimulated much interest or effort; the best, most successful examples have been small

alternatives that do not influence the larger school setting. The focus of many programs has been on conveying low-level skills and fragmented bodies of knowledge, much as in the past.

A few steps have been taken to involve teachers in the restructuring process by giving them a role in decision making. Some responsibility for developing and implementing new policies and programs at the building level has been acquired by staff, but with mixed reactions. Many saw their involvement as after the fact; i.e., they were left to respond to the plans and policies developed at a higher level. Some building-level educators believed that they have been given more responsibility without greater autonomy and resources. Whatever the case, and it has varied some from district to district, new roles and responsibilities for teachers have not been a major product of New Futures. Nor have the schools shown much initiative in attracting public and private resources to create new curricula and experiences for at-risk students.

We found that the culture of the New Futures schools remains largely unchanged, suggesting that even the presence of an external political force in the form of a collaborative committed to restructuring has not in itself been sufficient to overcome institutional inertia. Despite calls for changes in the way business is done in schools, most teachers and administrators carry out their day to day activities in much the same way they did before. More importantly, for most students, most of the time, school has been largely unchanged.

One explanation for this lack of change is the persistence of certain deep-seated assumptions by educators that student failure is not the result of institutional practices, but instead is primarily due to students' personal, family and social background characteristics. As a consequence of this perspective, educational reforms developed in New Futures cities have tended to focus not on school change, but rather on providing more social or academic support and remediation to meet the individual needs of students at risk. Given this orientation, it is not surprising that little institutional restructuring has occurred. Regardless of rhetoric that implores

educators to develop "effective schools," institutional characteristics have so far not been viewed as an important part of the problem.

V. RESTRUCTURING AND CULTURAL CHANGE

One could argue that our findings are predictable, the result of institutional features of schools which make them particularly resistant to fundamental change. There is a sizeable body of research describing a common institutional resistance to change. One line of research describes schools as "loosely coupled" organizations with a weak authority system (Weick, 1978); these organizational features in conjunction with a diffuse technology of teaching and complex political environments make the transformation of schools particularly difficult. As a result, reforms have historically had a tendency to be short lived or superficial and fail to alter the curriculum, instruction, the roles of either students or teachers, or the goals of schools (Cuban, 1988). Applied to the New Futures experience, it could be argued that the interventions conceived by reformers and planners could not be implemented at the building level in ways that produced the kinds of results desired; i.e., no direct organizational mechanisms existed for assuring that teachers and administrators employed interventions effectively.

Others have argued that the complexity of teaching itself makes reform at the classroom level difficult and unlikely to be affected by policy directives and/or structural changes alone. The individualized technology of teaching and the specialized knowledge of teachers makes their participation central to the successful design and implementation of reforms (Lortie, 1975; Freedman et al, 1983). The failure to involve teachers, who are the implementers of change, and the failure to account for the particular nature of their work has been identified as a central weakness in past attempts at mandated reform (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Weatherly & Lipsky, 1977).

Another strand of literature suggests that even when educational reforms are consciously designed to transform core school activities, they are often absorbed by established and routine practices of schools. Reforms are inevitably filtered and mediated by the existing culture in a school and/or community. Interventions tend to be revised to conform to the ethos that has been built to guide school practices, even when such revision is contrary to reformers' intentions (Popkewitz, Tabachnick, & Wehlage, 1982). These cultural factors are especially powerful because they are often implicit and only dimly recognized by professionals. Making professional assumptions and beliefs problematic is difficult because schools are characterized by a remarkable lack of reflection (Sarason, 1982). The implication is that even reforms assumed to explicitly challenge educators' assumptions and taken-for-granted practices may be subverted by the power of conventional school culture to determine practice.

Generally, then, various studies of school change indicate that the cultural core of schools is difficult to challenge by new programs that require new or alternative beliefs, practices and social relations. In this respect, New Futures has faced the same difficulties as most other educational reforms. We might conclude that much of the resistance to change encountered by New Futures is not unusual and can be attributed to fairly generic institutional features common to most American schools.

Despite the difficulty of changing schools, it is also clear that change is possible. For example, schools are influenced by and responsive to a complex set of local, state, and national political influences (Smith, Prunty, Dwyer, 1981). Various entitlement programs, bilingual education and the Education of All Handicapped Students Act (PL 94-142) are examples of educational reforms clearly responsive to national political pressures. The decentralization of schools in New York City in the 1960s was the result of local political pressures, while state minimum performance standards and the curricula they shape are the result of political interests

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within the states. Indeed, the impetus for the wave of educational reforms of the 1980s has not been produced primarily by educators but rather by the changing nature of the American economy. A driving force for reform has been an alliance of business and political leaders who seek ways of strengthening the country in response to a highly competitive global economy. This has created a powerful new audience for those with plans for changing the schools.

The New Futures Initiative is partly a product of this trend toward trying to build political support for educational change. New Futures hoped to capitalize on the concerns expressed by business and community leaders about the large number of at-risk students, the social costs they represent and the low level of skills they bring to the work place. From its inception, a promising aspect of New Futures was that instead of relying solely upon internal initiative for school reform, it sought to stimulate the educational change process from the outside. Authorizing, supporting and sustaining school change was seen as a major responsibility of the new collaborative organizations which were expected to have significant political power in their respective communities. In line with this thinking, the Casey Foundation invested substantially in developing these new organizations in an effort to assemble economic resources and to establish the political and moral authority for changing schools, among other institutions, based on the problems of at-risk students. Clearly, most school reform efforts in the past have not had this kind of basic political support at the local level.

This strategy seemed to be on target at the beginning. What initially characterized New Futures in the four cities was a public rhetoric, not only from educators, but from a host of influential citizens who called for educational change. In contrast to the self-satisfied stance most local communities take toward their own schools, these leaders, after viewing the critical nature of the problems facing young people in their communities, seemed to openly admit that fundamental change was needed. In short, there appeared to be a local political context, and in several cases,

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also support at the highest levels in the state government, that was championing a new educational agenda.

The assumption was that this new agenda forged by the collaborative in each city could generate support for substantial structural and policy changes. The collaborative, given the status of its members and the importance of its mission, was in a position to alter the community's perceptions of their schools and develop a broad community consensus for change. In other words, the potential of New Futures seemed to be the shaping of a community culture about acceptable practices of schools and outcomes for youth. In doing this, the collaboratives could build on the rhetoric of the Casey Foundation and local proposals that emphasized a commitment to educational equity by responding to students most at risk of failure and dropping out and that publicly offered a sharp critique of the way schools had operated in the past.

It seemed that such a community agenda and critique by those outside schools would authorize and stimulate serious reassessment by those within them. Despite the rhetoric and the political clout of the collaboratives, however, in each of the four cities it now appears that not enough people within the educational establishment saw in New Futures a mandate and opportunity for the fundamental changes in schooling the Casey Foundation envisioned. But maybe more important, those who did see such a mandate did not have a clear enough vision of how schools might be different. This is reflected in the quite limited, cautious, and, for the most part, supplementary character of the educational innovations they have implemented to date.

In retrospect, the Foundation's strategy of encouraging coalitions of community leaders committed to institutional change, but especially educational change, has as yet failed to stimulate the development of two obvious but essential ingredients--a high level of commitment and a visionary but practical plan. The assumption was that community leadership could stimulate and authorize fundamental change and that restructuring plans would be forthcoming capably of

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making a difference in the day-to-day life of students and teachers. However, the desire for change at the community level has not yet been translated into actual movement within the schools. If there was a flaw in the overall strategy, it was a failure to anticipate that collaboratives have tended to act as boards of advisors. Rather than the collaborative developing a common vision of restructured schools, they have delegated the task of conceptualizing restructuring to superintendents and school board members as the authorities on education.

This deference to authority, at least by the end of Year 3, has not produced innovative programs with great potential for restructuring schools. To be sure, some individuals in each of the school systems have worked hard to introduce far-reaching reforms, but without exception they have been unable to move the rhetoric of change into decisive action at the school building level. While some plans were conceptually flawed, even the best plans from the central offices were misunderstood or resisted at the school level. From the perspective of principals and teachers, persistent claims of being isolated from decisions and imposed upon unreasonably by the New Futures process have prevented change from being much more than superficial and symbolic.

The Content and Process of Restructuring: Seven Components

Regardless of their shortcomings, efforts to bring about the restructuring of New Futures schools during the first three years of the initiative provide insights into how educational change can be approached more productively. While we believe that this involves both political and educational responses, a thorough analysis of the political response is beyond the scope of this paper. What we can offer is an analysis of the educational content of restructuring by addressing recurrent organizational, curricular and professional culture issues in all schools. Our analysis identifies some of the missing elements in the process and content of change in New Futures schools, and out of this analysis we have developed criteria for judging whether or not a

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comprehensive restructuring process is underway. We believe that these criteria articulate a refined definition of what needs changing, why and what outcomes can be expected from restructuring. By introducing these criteria, we hope to change the conversation among educators and the public about the restructuring movement.

The seven criteria are divided into two sets. The first three address a vision of outcomes for students that includes: (1) a sense of membership in the school; (2) student engagement in authentic work; (3) and valid assessment of student performance. The last four criteria are aimed at educators to guide the process of restructuring to achieve these outcomes: (4) moral commitment to disadvantaged youth; (5) reflection and dialogue about education; (6) empowerment to respond to educational issues; and (7) strengthened resources for the school. If schools are working toward the three outcomes for students by implementing the four processes that facilitate them, then we are willing to say that comprehensive restructuring is taking place.

The seven criteria provide a framework that is both informed by educational theory and grounded in empirical data. They reflect a synthesis and interpretation of data we collected during the first three years of New Futures as well as previous research on alternative schools for at-risk youth (Wehlage, et al, 1989). Taken separately, none of these standards is new; together they are a heuristic for restructuring schools. The seven criteria provide a framework for considering organizational, political, sociological, curricular, and pedagogical issues and their interrelation in the process of change.

Leadership is also essential to the process of school change; the system as a whole must be characterized by leadership at the collaborative, superintendent, district, and building levels. Leadership must be integral to the seven criteria we propose for assessing institutional change. Our assumption is that such change proceeds from a top-down/bottom-up process of interaction and mutual influence between official leaders and practitioners (Fullan, 1982). This interactive

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process helps develop shared meanings and sharpens the collective educational vision. What has been missing in much discussion about restructuring in the New Futures cities is a vision of a "good school" based on concrete, substantive practices. The seven criteria proposed below suggest concrete policies and practices upon which to build a good school.

1. Student Membership in School.

In New Futures schools, highly punitive discipline policies, an over-emphasis on control, and often adversarial relations between students and teachers create a climate which increases the alienation of students already distanced from school by their lack of academic success. An essential condition upon which to build academic success is for students to feel that they are members of the school community (Wehlage et al, 1989). One of the most persistent difficulties New Futures schools face is developing school membership for students who have a history of failure and conflict with the school. An initial step would be identifying impediments to membership by assessing school policies and practices. As a start, data disaggregated on the basis of race and gender for attendance, suspension, failure, and retention can suggest problems with membership for particular groups of students.

Informal academic and personal counseling and other demonstrations of care and support by adults can play a critical role in fostering students' attachment to the school. The school system can demonstrate its support by authorizing this adult role and providing appropriate staff development. At the school level, time must be allocated for students and adults to meet for mentoring, counseling, and informal personal conversations. While authorization and time can facilitate adult mentorship, these conditions do not guarantee that adults adopt mentoring relationships with students. In some New Futures schools, despite new opportunities, teachers continue to resist playing a more extended role with students. Without forging a school culture of

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adult support, much as is found in some alternative schools, adults may not accept the responsibility for mentoring students.

Survey data indicate that nearly all children in New Futures schools believe that education is important, but fewer are certain that teachers are committed to their success. To build a sense of membership, particularly for typically marginalized groups, educators must demonstrate commitment to the success of all students regardless of their academic achievement, race, or social circumstances. The clear articulation and fair application of performance and behavioral expectations in conjunction with sustained support and encouragement can also increase the likelihood that students will have a positive school experience (Wehlage et al, 1989). Effective disciplinary policies must be aimed at helping students find productive ways of resolving conflicts with peers and adults.

2. Student Engagement in Authentic Work.

Most school work in New Futures schools can be described as the repetition of drill and practice and the accumulation of fragmented bits of information with apparent relevance to neither real-world problems nor the kinds of thinking tasks productive adults perform (cf. Newmann, 1988; 1991). In contrast, curriculum characterized by "authentic work" emphasizes production of socially useful, personally meaningful and aesthetically valuable knowledge. Authentic work requires students to actively produce, rather than reproduce, knowledge. Authentic work involves students in solving "rich problems" which allow them to construct their own meanings and thereby give significance and coherence to abstract concepts (Resnick, 1987a; 1987b; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989). In contrast to the superficial coverage of many topics that tends to create a shallow or false understanding, an authentic curriculum stresses in-depth knowledge for students and a role for teachers that is akin to coaching (Sizer, 1984).

While few people would argue with the assertion that schools have a obligation to help students gain the skills and knowledge to participate in mainstream institutions, far too many children complete their education without the ability to become successful adults. An authentic curriculum can potentially overcome this failure by connecting learning with real life and giving students concrete experiences similar to those they will encounter in the social, political, and economic organizations they will have to negotiate when they leave the classroom (Wehlage el al, 1989). Such a curriculum not only reinforces the usefulness and applicability of knowledge, but also introduces poor, minority, or otherwise marginalized youth to institutions they might not otherwise encounter. A variety of community service, internship, apprenticeship and college programs can provide the experiential basis for the application of mathematics, science, language arts and social studies.

In New Futures schools remediation and a slower, low level curriculum are the normative response to under-achieving students. In contrast, curriculum should build on students' strengths and interests (Knapp & Shields, 1990; Levin, 1988) while recognizing that they are capable of exercising multiple forms of intelligence (Gardner, 1983). This approach tends to encourage engagement and support high expectations. It mirrors real world problem-solving by requiring students to work together and draw upon several types of intelligence, skills, and competencies.

A curriculum characterized by authentic work requires more than altering instructional strategies, teaching to different learning styles, or developing new instructional materials--although all these might be necessary. The more fundamental barriers to authentic work in school are the beliefs in which the current model of curriculum is rooted. What is needed is a paradigm shift at all levels of the school system and the forging of a professional culture around a new conception of curriculum and instruction.

3. Authentic Assessment of Student Performance.

A consistent problem in New Futures schools is that norm- referenced, standardized tests, state minimum competency tests as well as teachers' own tests promote superficial coverage and memorization of discrete facts and procedures. These forms of assessment are a significant obstacle to a more "authentic" and engaging curriculum. They also provide little information about what a student can actually do with the knowledge she/he has acquired in school. In contrast, assessment of learning and achievement in terms of performances and products calls for the application of knowledge and skill (Archbald & Newmann, 1988). Performance-based assessment has the potential to promote students' in-depth understanding and integration of knowledge while more closely paralleling real-world tasks.

Forms of assessment are closely tied to models of curriculum and instruction. The logic of current assessment in New Futures schools provides support for the existing curriculum. Hence, it is possible that by adopting more authentic forms of assessments an important lever for curriculum change would be created. Assessment systems based on more authentic measures of student achievement should produce information useful for the development of school improvement plans.

4. Moral Commitment to Disadvantaged Youth.

Successfully educating all young people, including those most alienated from school, is a moral obligation in a democratic society. Leadership should create a public awareness of the need for educational equity, because it is the right thing to do and because it will benefit the whole community. In articulating this moral commitment, leadership should recognize the serious consequences faced by disadvantaged youth who are not served well by the schools as well as the consequences to community welfare of an undereducated group of citizens. The superintendent, board of education, and the community's leadership should publicly articulate an agenda aimed at

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responding to unequal experiences and outcomes of disadvantaged youth. Such an agenda serves to legitimate and authorize policies and practices that will benefit low-achieving students. It is the "will" component of what Milbrey McLaughlin describes as the "will and capacity" needed to bring about school change (McLaughlin, 1987). Creating a public agenda based on the recognition that successfully responding to the needs of at-risk youth is partly a moral issue is a critical task faced by most communities. Certainly in New Futures cities building a community culture that puts a priority on the needs of at-risk youth is unlikely to develop until the moral dimension of the problem is accepted. It is precisely this obligation that collaboratives must generate to authorize the kind of comprehensive school restructuring that needed to serve students now failing.

At the building level, moral commitment must be reflected in the way adults relate to students. The worth of students is not determined by their academic success, race or social class. In restructured schools, discourse among staff about students affirms their dignity and potential. The daily actions of staff toward students furthermore expresses concern, care and hope. In this context, teachers extend themselves to students not only because it promotes learning but because students need the support of a caring adult. These practices reflect values that may not be shared by all educators. In fact, the culture of many schools runs counter to these values. Nurturing respect, support and advocacy for students, however, is a crucial underpinning to all other aspects of reform.

The moral commitment of schools should be judged in part by the priority given policies and practices that serve the least successful students. The success of schools should be measured by the achievement and participation of the most economically and educationally disadvantaged students in the district. Commitment to developing the capacity of schools to educate marginalized students is manifested in school restructuring, special programs, staff development,

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careful review of outcome data, and monitoring the impact of general policies involving suspension, failure, and retention.

5. Reflection and Dialogue about Educational Issues.

In New Futures schools, curriculum and instruction, discipline policies and practices, the character of relations between students and adults, and much about daily life in school are taken for granted despite academic disengagement, high rates of suspension, and low achievement. These taken-for-granted practices embody a culture which sustains the status quo. Creating schools in which all students are likely to achieve success will require challenging many of the assumptions encountered in conventional schools (Sarason, 1982) and constructing new, shared educational "meanings" (Fullan, 1982). Evidence from New Futures schools suggests that without this cultural transformation educational reforms often make little difference in the substance of schooling because they are simply adapted to on-going practice and interpreted to fit existing assumptions. In contrast, reflective dialogue among educators is manifested in a critical analysis of existing curricula, instruction, school policies and practices and assumptions about student abilities. Constructive dialogue leads to plans of action (Elmore, 1983; Elmore, 1979-80).

We have found that the willingness of most teachers and principals to openly question institutional assumptions is predicated in part on the authorization of this kind of dialogue by central office administrators. Without this sort of authorization, few school staff will see the value in expending the energy to critique either their own practice or the institution in which they work. Without broad institutional support, critical reflection and experimentation can become an exercise in futility or recklessness. Central administration must take the lead in criticizing policies and practices and facilitate the development of a shared view of the problems (Elmore, 1983). This is essential to foster a culture throughout the district that supports educational change. An

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initial step is to ensure that data regarding achievement, suspension, retention, and drop-out rates are systematically discussed throughout the district.

Vehicles for on-going reflection and dialogue are needed: collegial structures for planning, evaluation, and peer observation, with time for these activities scheduled during the school day seem full of potential. Systematic, long-term training in group process, leadership, effective practices, and clinical observation must accompany structural reforms that promote collegiality.

6. Empowerment to Respond to Educational Issues.

Empowerment is more than the right to talk about change, it is the ability to have some impact on conditions and events. In New Futures schools teachers do not have power to affect school-wide decisions. Many principals have little influence over important decisions that affect the schools they lead. For example, the use of resources for staff development is controlled from the central office. Ownership and commitment to a process of school change requires initiative at all levels of the system, and particularly from the bottom-up in traditionally top-down districts (Weinshank et al, 1983; Meier, 1987; National Committee for Citizens in Education, 1988).

A salient feature of restructuring is changing roles and relationships to enlarge the responsibilities of principals and teachers (Raywid, 1988). These responsibilities are best assumed in the context of a shared culture and collaborative relationships between teachers and administrators (Rosenholtz, 1989). Principals, teachers, parents, and students must be empowered to address issues related to curriculum, instruction, structuring of time and space, and educational outcomes (David, 1990). They should be given appropriate resources and then held accountable for achieving stated goals.

However, formal revision of decision-making structures is not sufficient either. In New Futures schools where teachers' authority has been expanded, e.g. through clusters, they continue to define their role within traditional bounds, rarely testing the limits of their empowerment. This

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is largely a question of challenging the traditional culture of authority and circumscribed roles of both teachers and administrators. To do this staff need to be informed about the governance process, the constraints policies place on school level decisions, substantive issues related to curriculum, and organizational alternatives available to schools. Restructuring requires educators to develop an orientation to problem solving and a professional obligation to take risks that might substantially improve schools. But risk-taking by building-level staff requires authorization and public support from district and community leaders. School system administrators can actively promote entrepreneurship and experimentation at the school level through a supportive culture characterized by public validation, incentives, technical assistance and other resources.

7. Strengthening School Resources.

Transforming curriculum and social support for students will necessarily require additional material and human resources. These include labs, personnel, support services such as school clinics and accessibility of social services, new expertise, and time for planning and dialogue about educational issues. One avenue is the re-allocation of district resources to the building level. This includes redefining the roles and tasks of central administrators to provide additional assistance to schools as they implement building level plans. However, schools also need to use untapped resources located in the local community.

Additional resources can be found through collaboration with community agencies and institutions. Business and university partnerships, neighborhood organizations, health clinics and mentor programs all offer opportunities for educators to enhance the support they need in creating a good school. Enterprising principals and teachers need the authorization of the superintendent and school board to develop these relationships in the community. They also need information, technical assistance, and time to develop collaborative plans, write grants, and implement experiments. Apart from what individual schools do, the district leadership should

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establish a formal community collaborative structure that links schools with public and private resources.

Nowhere is the need for cultural change more evident than in the attitudes of some educators toward parents; they continue to be viewed, at worst, as detrimental to their children's school success, or at best, as compliant school supporters. We find little evidence that parents are seen as resources or that their perspective could contribute to educational reform. Educators need to energetically search for effective means of informing parents and bringing them into schools (Comer, 1988; Epstein, 1987). However, substantive participation by parents requires more than formal inclusion. It is predicated on the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions. Parents, especially those with the least understanding of educational systems, need assistance in the participatory process.

VI. CONCLUSION

The programs, policies and structures implemented as part of New Futures have not begun to stimulate a fundamental restructuring of schools. For the most part, interventions were supplemental, leaving most of the basic activities and practices of schools unaltered. At best, these interventions have yet to produce more than superficial change. The most serious limitation of the interventions was their implicit assumption that the problem was to find ways of altering students rather than the institution. This assumption has helped to maintain the ongoing culture of the school. Deep-seated professional beliefs and behaviors underlie interventions that focus on academic remediation and responding to what are seen as the social pathologies of family, neighborhood and social class. Maintenance of the traditional school culture has produced a substantial inertia that has prevented the introduction of far-reaching change in New Futures schools.

The original vision of change articulated by the Casey Foundation and the language of local proposals has not been sufficiently clear or compelling to cause a rethinking or reformulation of social relations, curriculum and instruction, educators' roles and responsibilities, or connections to the community. We believe that framing a more persuasive and far-reaching vision is required. The seven criteria discussed in the previous section are an example of such a framework. The criteria could be used as a touchstone against which to evaluate reform proposals. For example, to what extent does a proposal promote reflection and increased building-level authority to act. Such efforts will require making *time* for reflection and decision-making as well as providing capacity-building activities aimed at enhancing teachers' and principals' knowledge. As yet, reflection of this scope is not evident in New Futures schools partly because few educators involved in the initiative are skilled in the use of group processes that could bring issues into a public forum. Furthermore, few are prepared to use evaluation data or design in-house research studies to assess the impact of their own practices and innovations. For reflection to become a reality in schools attempting to restructure themselves, the disposition to use tools associated with reflection still must be developed.

Similarly, for teacher empowerment and site-based management to become more than slogans, educators need to be given the authority and acquire skills to work effectively as a decision making body. As suggested earlier, teachers in some New Futures schools now have more control over issues such as scheduling, the development of disciplinary strategies, and student incentives; few, however, have much influence over curriculum development, budget, or hiring--areas of significantly more import in terms of school improvement. In addition, experienced teachers in New Futures schools have worked for years in an institution that has generally disregarded their input and treated them as line staff responsible for complying with rather than influencing administrative decisions. Reversing years of powerlessness will require

more than the formation of cluster teams and committees. Teachers must be convinced that their school is in fact responsive to their concerns and given support to develop the skills required to use their power effectively. The implementation of carefully conceived strategies aimed at achieving this end has not been part of the New Futures Initiative in any of the cities.

We argue that transforming the schools must address the ways that educators conceive of and act out their professional roles. The seven criteria provide a set of practical guidelines that can inform both discussions about restructuring and the development of specific tasks aimed at transforming the culture of the school. As a whole, the criteria form a coherent and comprehensive set of issues we believe must be addressed if the rhetoric of restructuring is to lead to the cultural changes necessary to significantly alter the educational experience of all students. They provide an agenda that the New Futures collaboratives could use as the foundation upon which to build a unique vision of education for their own cities. As yet, neither school nor community leaders have ventured very far "outside the box" of conventional schooling. Some strategy needs to be developed to extend their discussions abut educational change. We believe the seven criteria could serve as a catalyst for this kind of discourse.

The criteria, furthermore, offer educational policy makers and school administrators a set of intermediate outcome measures. Such measures provide goals other than criteria such as higher test scores or lower dropout rates, goals that are easy to measure and politically important, but which are likely to change slowly. Focusing only on these ultimate outcomes can divert attention away from the need to make more fundamental changes in the process and content of daily practice in the schools. In some New Futures cities, for example, pressure to increase student achievement on standardized tests has led to a preoccupation with the development of test-taking skills and a mastery of information encountered on these examinations; this preoccupation has impeded the development of needed curricular and instructional reforms.

Until attention is directed to an investigation of the deeper organizational and epistemological changes implied by the seven criteria, educators will be constrained in their conception of innovations.

The cultural changes in schooling implied by the seven criteria necessarily occur within a broader political context. If political support is absent, it is unlikely that any conceptual framework regardless of its relevance or utility can be implemented. There is, however, an interactive relation between visions of educational change and the coalescing of political support for change. A strong and plausible vision of educational restructuring could potentially focus dissatisfaction with current schooling and at the same time suggest ways in which seemingly competing agendas might be reconciled. For example, throughout most of the twentieth century schools have vacillated between a concern about equity and a concern about excellence. The demands of a post-industrial economy are now forcing us to recognize that the economic well-being of individuals as well as the health of the United States requires us to successfully educate all children regardless of their economic or ethnic backgrounds. An educational agenda capable of achieving both equity and excellence could bring together previous adversaries in support of the more far-reaching changes we believe must be part of the restructuring movement. The seven criteria, by focusing on the creation of a supportive educational environment and the creation of genuinely engaging learning experiences, illuminate factors that if acted upon could overcome the dichotomy, which more than any other, has contributed to the cyclic swings in philosophy and practice in American schools.

The promise of the New Futures Initiative, as well as similar efforts to link schools to other community institutions, is that by tapping into the multiplicity of groups who have a stake in education it may be possible to create a political environment supportive of the institutional changes described here. It is unlikely that schools on their own possess the credibility or authority

to initiate changes that challenge in any deep way the current conception of educational practice. This is one of the central lessons from reform efforts in the 1960s and 1970s. It is furthermore unlikely that any single outside agency, including the federal government, possesses the persistence or the supervisory apparatus needed to bring about a more fundamental transformation of school culture. These changes may only be brought about when a variety of stakeholders define and strive to enact a new vision of education. Collaborative ventures like New Futures are now bringing some of these stakeholders together. As yet, the educational visions which have arisen from this process have been limited. Perhaps possessed with a clearer understanding of what needs to be accomplished, the New Futures collaboratives might yet fashion an image of education powerful enough to legitimate a major restructuring of their city's schools.

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Table 1

Intervention	Supplemental/ Fundamental Change	Impact on Social Relations	Impact on Curriculum and Instruction	Changed Roles and Responsibilities for Educators	School Use of Community Resources
DAYTON					
Extended Day (Activity Period)	Supplemental	Minimal	None	Some	Minimal
Incentives	Supplemental	None	None	None	None
Clusters	Fundamental (whole school)	Some	Minimal	Some	None
Interdisciplinary Units	Supplemental	None	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Advisory Period (Home-based Guidance)	Supplemental	Minimal	None	Minimal	Minimal
Case Management	Supplemental	Some	None	None	Some
LITTLE ROCK					
Clusters	Fundamental (part of school)	Some	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Teacher Advisory Program	Fundamental (part of school)	Some	None	Substantial	None
In-School Suspension	Supplemental	Minimal	None	None	None
Interdisciplinary Units	Supplemental	None	Minimal	Minimal	None
Early Morning Tutoring	Supplemental	None	None	None	None
Case Management	Supplemental	Minimal	None	None	Some
PITTSBURGH					
Academies	Fundamental (part of school)	Some	Minimal	Some	Minimal
Extended Day	Supplemental	Some	None	None	Some
Case Management	Supplemental	Minimal	None	None	Some

Intervention	Supplemental/ Fundamental Change	Impact on Social Relations	Impact on Curriculum and Instruction	Changed Roles and Responsibilities for Educators	School Use of Community Resources
SAVANNAH					
Comprehensive Competency Program	Fundamental (part of school)	Minimal	Substantial	Some	None
In-School Suspension	Supplemental	Minimal	None	None	None
STAY Teams	Supplemental	Some	None	None	None
Modified Curriculum	Supplemental	None	Some	None	None
Individual Success Plan	Supplemental	Minimal	None	None	Some
Accelerated Promotion	Fundamental (whole school)	None	None	None	None
Extended Day	Supplemental	None	None	None	Minimal
Case Management	Supplemental	Minimal	None	None	Some

staking s.m — in way to address crisis in ch

prog's poorly conceived, poorly implem
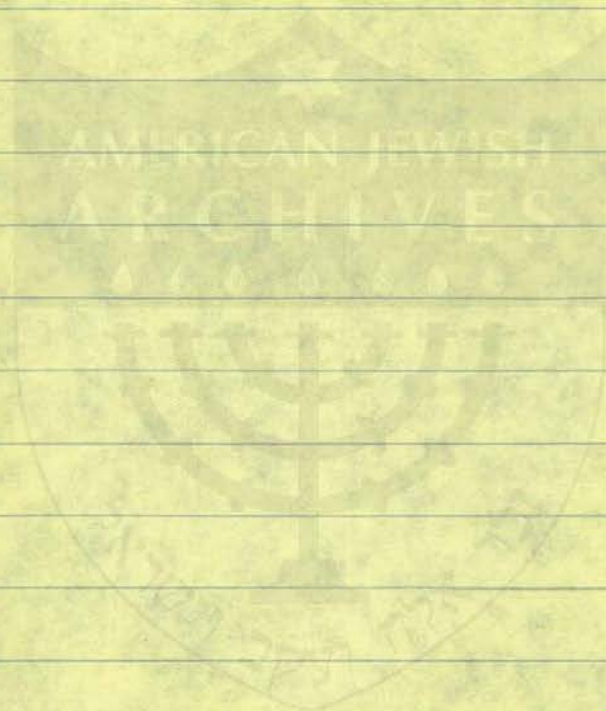
Same gap, see old job + new, get psyed
- if incompet for old, incomp for new

but altern is to battle

same sense
of crisis

design

common collab — devel plan — same reg elems ✏2
case mgmt   — plus optional
MIS
activist role — d.r ass't
        — liason
        — tech asst

unlike CIJE, listed outcomes — e.g. do, t.pros
        — Maweu, recogn slow to ch
        — focus on intermed outcomes . . .

long-term expectats, agenda — like CIJE

sumz. sims?

lim success

soc rel, ctl, roles, res
        — supplem (add-on), lim impact
        — ess . . .
— data-gath as benef — on track to put progs in place?

reasons
    ⎛ — lack of vision
    ⎜ — haste to get started
    ⎜   — too much top down
    ⎜ — ~~limited~~ ~~less~~ staff dev not sustained
    ⎜ — complexity of coord
    ⎜ — inherent tension due to outside interven.
    ⎝ — inherent ~~oversight~~ ~~expectas~~ tensions of eval + renewal — policy shifts

(2) culture — fix the instits
— true that form proots — but bo s. dgs
the ft
— how will CIJE address?
— profle
— commun web. te
— good start — b. t need to get inside instits

<u>implics</u>

(1) Content — part of vision
— sustained staff devel
— involvmt of "str lev" parties
— impto of "best pracs"

— indeed
W et al cncles
are about content
for NF sites

balance enthus w/ caution
— get a good plan, good self-study
— realistic
— wide range of involvmt
— not just in design of stud, but culture — coalition-building

(3)

— if 20 yr prog, should be willing to spend 2 yrs plus
if necess
— but don't lose momentum
— current sched — 7/99

aware of unavoidable tensions
— outside agency — balance cd. t w/ suppt
(4)
— sensitive to need for stabilizig
after ch are made
— eval planning
place will help
— tech suppt — sustained

W, S & L

~~3&4~~

1-2 themes of restruc
  - S expers
  - prof life of t's
  - schl gov, mgmt, ldshp
  - coord new of community resources

3-4 unless restruc → schls core cultural beliefs & values
                affecting ss expers, + work life,
        mere modif of org strucs little payoff t's at carg

  — address not just org forms, but myths, customs, tradtts

4   "despite a consid effort ... we have as yet found little promise in the initised area"
4   "central unique feature of NFI was format of a local collab org designed to marshall the comm-y
                                                    polit will & power for reform"
5 NFI — despite invests in of resources, effort,
              little changed in daily life, outcomes of ss

6 Miss, on of local collabs - identity issues, raise awareness
  — also resp to raise $ - ident spect probls in prov servces, opps
      to match casey grant   - set goals + offer strategies
  — need power — controvers becaus limits actn of existing instits
7 — case mgrs
   — MIS

   Fomd at took activist role — direct asst & advice
       — person + technical asst

9 Stat Planning Guide (1) incr actn at schl level
                       (2) + flexibility - sched, grps
                       (3) indivz to replace trkg; incl incentives
                       (4) staff devel
                       (5) collab w/ other agencies

new progs
- Dayton - clustering of ss & ts...
- Little R - clustering; In Sch Susp, TAdv Prog
- Pitt - academies; ext. day; elim gen trk
- Sau - STAY teams; Ind Succes Plan

- meas efft'v by outcomes, but not expecting short-run changes eg in ach.
  - focus on intermed goals

evaluat
q's - 1 sch lev - ch att & expens? 2 pos soc relats btw s, ts, adm, u?
    3 ch in curric, instr, assmt → higher engag, probl solv? 4 new roles, resp for ts? Mus,
    5 add't res to schls?   → more action?

(1) great major of interv were supplem, not fundam

        - eg clusters - in Dayton - seem fundam
                        - but not led to new curr or more suppt   refs w/ss
                            - at meetigs - ts consid admin & adv ss
22   - ss probls in the ss, not schl

(2) some pos impact - ts, ss in smaller gps   p.24
23   - but as a whole, relats remain adversarial - or inconsistent
     - despite success, not credible for ent mass of fac
        - instead, preocc w/ control + discipl thn punitive meths
        - eg little redu in o-o-s suspens'on;
        - punitive use of i-s suspens'ons

(3) clsrm activs remain trad't
        - eg's...
        - eg of good alg class for "reg" ss - successful, but ss still disadv for next yr
28   - why? most impt reason - schls did not believe fund curr ch needed
                - probls in ss, not schl or curric
            other reasons - std'z tests
                    - Ms off supt for innov
                        - short intros, but no long-term guidance

(4) t's rarely took adv of opps for new roles   p.30 little real self-assessmt
     - es providing time to meet was no guarantee t's would know how to
        - accustmed to isolat   work together
        - felt no real opp to explor alterns

(5) some eg's of collab - tho lim in scope, shows potential
34   - nb Pittsburg - ss in special prog, mainly not at-risk !
      - limited impact on curric

36
Summary - for most ss, most of the time, s. wll largely unchanged
    - reasons - persistence of assmg that s. wll failure not the
          result of instit procss, but ss characteristics
           - so reforms tend to focus not on s. wll ch but on
             providing more supprt, remedial

37   could argue findings predictable   - loose coupl
                              - complexity of teaching
        - but ch still poss   - mediated by existg culture

    - seemed would work - polit supprt; collab; recognz probls

    - missing - high level of commitmt

          - visionary but practical plan
              - collabs delg task of concepz restruc to
                            superint, s. wll lds

             - some plans flawed
               - even best misunderstood or resisted
             - t's + prns still say isol from decs

needed components
(1) membshp in s. wll
(2) s engag in auth work
(3) valid assmt of s perf
(4) moral commt to disadv youth
(5) reflec + dialog about educ
(6) empowermt to resp to ed issues, - revise dec - not status - but also need ch culture
(7) strengthend res for s. wll - nb parents need be seen as resources

top-down, bottom-up united influence - interactive process

Learning from others: The ~~3 yr assm~~ of NFI + its implies for the CIJE

3 yr assmt of NFI: Implies for CIJE
& lc's

probls

↗too much top-down
haste to get started
staff dev – short intros, not long-term guidance

lack of vision
—espec in curriculum

adversarial relats btwn ts & ss not ameliorated

complexity of coordination
—getting agencies to collaborate – t.m
—consuming
—including intraagency disputes

expectats for quick results
expectats for lots of $

involvemt of lots. dons

constant eval + reeval.
—caused freq policy shifts

(not just no outcomes yet, but no programs)
(don't forget positive aspects of NFI – e.g. (long-term expectats, agenda)
—focus on intermed goals)
~~complexity of coordination~~

data-gathering mechs as a benefit

not just org forms, but culture must be addressed
[not just org + culture, but those that directly affect ss]

implies

involve ts + prins at outset
longer period for planning, coalition-building
sustained staff devel

focus on content
—implts of "best pracs"

---

ed aspects
NFI bears striking sims to CIJE
strategies – local collab orgs
– evaluat in place + need for acc + timely data – MIS
– S exper; t + ult le; ms/gov/lead; coord commun res
overall – same model: concentr on a few, learn how to do it
thrust – long-term, incremental process
– began w/ self-study – used for proposal → succ

Students line up for a drink during break time at Fort Dearborn Elementary School.

Foundations rise to reform but commitment unclear

by Stephen K. Clements

F oundation giving to Chicago's public schools rose dramatically in response to school reform, but the prospects for continued high support are by no means certain as the novelty wears off and new issues arise to beckon funders.

Some foundations, such as the mammoth John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, have made long-term pledges of support; MacArthur's is $40 million over 10 years. The Fund for Education Reform, a common pot of money for small reform grants to schools, has grown as more foundations have contributed. And a survey conducted earlier

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this year for the Donors Forum, an association of 137 area foundations, revealed that most funders planned to contribute the same amount or more in 1991 as in 1990.

AN ANALYSIS

But other indications are not so encouraging. Less than half as much money was raised for this fall's local school council elections as for Round 1 in 1989. The Joyce Foundation, a regional foundation, recently dropped its Educational Ventures Fund—which gave Chicago schools grants of roughly $4,000 to $7,000 for innovative projects—to free up money for educational projects elsewhere in the region. A few other large foundations may soon make similar shifts, a number of foundation officials believe.

Some 50 cities around the country have public education funds to provide grants for a wide variety of improvement efforts—from model school programs to teacher training; these funds typically draw on foundation and business resources. A similar multiple-donor funding project in Chicago has long been discussed but now appears stillborn.

At times, foundations eliminate programs for reasons unrelated to their support for the cause—too much staff time required, for example. In general, though, foundations have an attention span of only three to five years and normally decrease high levels of funding for a given cause after that time. If this holds true for school reform, foundations may slacken support before reform's effects on student achievement become known, a period that reform watchers generally say may take five to ten years.

Turnover among foundation staff and board members, may also affect long-range foundation plans for school support. No one can say with assurance, therefore, that foundation funding of reform will remain at current levels.

Lowered levels of funding could have harmful effects because, so far, much funding—and much of the city's attention—has been focused on getting the new organizational structures in place. The hard part lies ahead, as the school community tries to change what goes on in thousands of classrooms. Changing the behavior of students, teachers, principals and parents is the real challenge of reform.

Finding the best ideas to fund, assessing their results, spreading the word about effective programs and prodding cash-starved schools to implement them will be difficult for foundations as well as for everyone else in the school system. Getting promising new programs into the schools with the most disadvantaged children will be especially difficult. These schools frequently lack the experience to turn ideas into specific proposals and to get grants to make them a reality.

The burden of success or failure will not, of course, lie solely with foundations. Their millions of dollars represent but a fraction of the school system's $2.3 billion budget.

How much to whom?

There is ample evidence that foundation giving for public school improvement has risen with reform, but precise numbers are hard to come by. The Internal Revenue Service requires foundations to report only how much they give to whom, not for what purpose; the amount of information that foundations voluntarily disclose through their annual reports varies widely. Further, there are no standards for classifying grants by purpose.

In recent years, a number of organizations have sought detailed, comparable information through interviews or questionnaires, but attained a response rate of only about 30 per-

cent. The most recent survey, conducted by Iris Krieg for the Donors Forum, found that at least $9.7 million was spent by Chicago-area foundations on Chicago public school improvement in 1990. (That's about half of all education grants and 5 percent of all grants for all purposes.) The public school total jumps to at least $12 million with the addition of school-reform grants from some foundations known not to have responded to the survey. That figure is dramatically higher than the $7.5 million a comparable 1985 survey uncovered.

The 1985 study, conducted for the Donors Forum by the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, also reported that the bulk of the money went to basic skills or student "enrichment" programs—for example, neighborhood centers to teach reading and math, and youth leadership development efforts. Moreover, many of these programs were run by a handful of university-based institutes and non-profit agencies. Only about 11 percent of the funds went to support research and advocacy. Hence, but a small part of the foundation money given in 1985 was aimed at bringing about change in the Chicago public schools.

Reform Act role

While there are no reliable estimates available of foundation giving to Chicago public schools from 1986 through 1989, it is clear that foundations helped set the stage for passage of the Chicago School Reform Act in 1988.

First, their grants helped build the organizational infrastructure necessary for the school reform movement to get rolling. Foundations supported research and advocacy groups like Designs for Change and the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, which were able by the mid-1980s to document many of the problems plaguing the school system. Foundations had also recognized the Saul Alinsky tradition in Chicago by supporting for a number of years community groups like the United Neighborhood Organization and The Woodlawn Organization. The interests of these research/advocacy and activist groups converged after the 1987 teachers strike, and soon the reform movement was barreling along with both ideas and neighborhood muscle.

Several foundations also helped bring about two conferences, one in 1987 and the other in 1988, at which reform strategies being tried in other parts of the country were discussed. (The business group Chicago United also sponsored a similar important conference in 1987.) The idea behind these conferences was not to dictate a reform approach for Chicago, but to see what was working—and not working—elsewhere.

In addition, a few figures—like John Corbally, then head of the MacArthur Foundation, and Anne Hallett of the Wieboldt Foundation—participated directly in reform move-

ment activities. Corbally was co-chair of Mayor Harold Washington's Education Summit in 1987-88, and Hallett urged reformers to adopt a site-based management model similar to the one eventually embodied in the reform act. (Following passage of the act, she also helped found the Citywide Coalition for School Reform.)

Still, these foundation activities were but a small part of the larger reform movement. Once the reform train started to steam along in 1987, it's likely that reform would have happened with or without coordinated foundation support.

Reform Act follow-up

After the reform act became law, foundation involvement increased significantly and in an unprecedented way. A large number of foundation program officers and representatives began participating in meetings held by advocacy and activist groups to talk about implementing reform. Some got involved to learn about reform so they could be more responsive to the needs of the school community. But many more engaged themselves because it represented a rare opportunity for them to be involved firsthand in shaping policy.

Many foundation staffers were emboldened, too, by the work of the Education Group of the Donors Forum. This was an assemblage of education program officers from several dozen foundations who began meeting frequently in late 1986 to discuss ways to improve education in the city.

Their meetings not only enabled staffers to bone up on education theory and practice—particularly in the area of systemic change and restructuring—but also to learn how and to whom other foundations were giving money. One result was that the sometimes disparate foundations began moving in roughly the same direction. In fact, conversations with foundation officials outside Chicago suggest that the level of collaboration among foundations and grant recipients here was greater than in any recent policy-making endeavor elsewhere in the country.

Another result was that the foundations were willing and able to respond quickly to the reform act. And the menu of reform-related initiatives they funded is extensive, including advocacy, classroom projects, school-improvement projects, publications (including *CATALYST*), reform research and monitoring, reform conferences and get-out-the-vote drives. Little, if any, money went to principal training and support.

Independent and corporate foundations took different paths, William S. McKersie, a former program officer for The Joyce Foundation, reports in an unpublished paper. "Independent foundations emphasized improving the [reform] act's weaknesses," McKersie writes. "More and more, they emphasized teacher training and educational innovation. Corporate foundations tended to place more emphasis on immediate implementation of the act, and gave greater support to the acquisition of materials and the coordination of services."

Because foundations increased *total* education funding to accommodate reform initiatives, they were able to continue funding many pre-reform educational programs, such as the basic skills and enrichment programs, McKersie says.

Foundation funds are used interactively with other private-sector investments. The money for this fall's local school council elections, for example, was distributed to community organizations that had arranged partnerships with other non-profit agencies and businesses to collaborate in promoting citizen involvement in schools.

Has all this reform-related foundation money been well spent? It is a difficult question to answer. In the first place, not enough time has passed for the effects of some programs to be visible. For example, foundations have provided substantial funding for the Consortium on Chicago School Research, which in the coming years will provide crucial survey data and other information about school reform. Second, foundations themselves have little ability to assess the efficacy of their own efforts. Foundation staffers can list the number of schools and estimate the number of individuals who have been touched by their grants or can point to instructional materials produced by programs they supported, but the

How to get money, services for your school

by Susan Klonsky

In a city the size of Chicago—with a dozen major universities, hundreds of foundations and thousands of business and financial institutions—schools have barely scratched the surface of outside help. But obtaining such help takes school initiative and planning. Here are some pointers:

■ **THINK DEVELOPMENT.** Candy and bake sales are fine for immediate needs—repairing and replacing broken equipment, for example—but long-term educational change requires long-term fund raising. LSCs should gather members of the school staff and community, including local businesses, into a development group. Some schools, including Norwood Park Elementary, 5900 N. Nina, and Alcott Elementary, 2625 N. Orchard, have set up not-for-profit organizations to work on community relations and fund raising.

■ **THINK VISION.** Presenting a clear picture of how you want your school or class to change is the key to winning foundation grants, which range from small sums for individual teachers to multi-year funding for schoolwide planning and restructuring. (Don't expect any money for building repairs, ordinary supplies and maintenance or other routine expenses that public dollars should support.)

Some schools write themselves off, reasoning that their test scores are too low or too high for foundations to be interested. But decisions about funding are made largely upon the extent to which a school has a common well-articulated vision for change.

■ **THINK NETWORKING.** Schools can enhance their chances of obtaining grants by linking up with other schools or community groups to craft joint projects.

■ **DEVELOP SPECIALISTS.** Select one or two members of the school community or staff to receive training in proposal writing. One way to spot such talent is to request teachers to write proposals describing their ideal classroom improvement projects and then submit the best ones to a foundation that makes teacher grants.

The Board of Education used to provide free training on proposal-writing through the Department of Grants and Technical Assistance. But the board recently closed the program to help balance its budget. The Donors Forum, an association of foundations, offers two-day courses on proposal writing. The next one will be held Nov. 13-14. The fee is $150 per person. For reservations, call the Donors Forum Library (312) 431-0265.

■ **VISIT DONORS FORUM LIBRARY.** Located at 53 W. Jackson, Chicago's library of philanthropy is open free to the public. It offers information about foundations, the programs they support and proposal deadlines. A helpful staff points visitors to useful reference guides.

■ **CONSULT YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY.** The sixth volume of the Leadership Learning Library, a set of videotapes and guides published and sent to all schools last spring by Leadership for Quality Education and the Citywide Coalition for School Reform, walks LSCs through the grant-seeking process. It is called "Hidden Community Resources." For more information, call LQE at (312) 592-6532.

■ **TAP INTO THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.** Several business groups aim to draw schools and businesses closer together. They offer direct assistance, typically "consulting" from volunteers, and referrals. Such groups include Leadership for Quality Education (312) 592-6532, the Executive Service Corps (312) 580-1840 and Volunteer Network (312) 606-8240.

The Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry offers business connections and pre-employment programs for elementary and high schools, but it reports that fewer than a fourth of Chicago schools have made use of its services. For more information, call (312) 580-6945.

■ **GET ADOPTED.** More than 10 years after the "Adopt-A-School" program was launched in Chicago, a third of the schools remain "orphans."

It's time for schools to seek out businesses and other organizations and pull them into new partnerships. Here's how: Contact the president or community relations manager, preferably by letter, to request help with financial aid, goods and in-kind assistance. Arrange for a meeting. Invite business officials to visit your school: for an assembly, holiday event or open house, or to speak to students on career day.

Examples of such initiative include McDowell Elementary, 1419 E. 89th, which invited the 87th Street Business Association to an annual weekend retreat, and Garvy Elementary, 5225 N. Oak Park, which has joined the local Chamber of Commerce.

■ **TAP INTO THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY.** Since reform began, the largest reform-related foundation grants have gone to university education departments. By agreeing to become part of a research project or be a site for student teachers, schools may receive financial assistance, computer link-ups, consultation and staff development. Write the dean, noting staff members who are alumnae of the college. Capitalize on contacts with individual professors.

■ **BAND TOGETHER FOR POLITICAL ACTION.** While pursuing private money, don't ignore the need to work with other schools and organizations to protect public funding gains, such as state Chapter 1, and to demand fiscal accountability from the general superintendent, the Board of Education and the Illinois Legislature.

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gram is to give schools discretion and control" over their budgets, he explains.

Counters Dixon: "In that case, why have Chapter 1 at all?"

The other side of the question is whether schools are spending the money in ways that increase student achievement.

"Principals must learn to be innovative," says Walter Allen, director of the board's Chapter 1 office. "This is something they've never had before. If your kids can't read or do math, you can't have people buying copiers, paper and pencils. What does that do for the educational environment?"

"Many LSCs don't have the sophistication" to find good programs, acknowledges Jones. Instead, they might opt for one-day workshops or hire community residents with little or no educational background as "consultants." "That's not what the program was intended for," Jones adds.

Many principals, who take the lead in developing spending plans, are new on the job and just learning. But even experienced principals say good spending plans are difficult and time-consuming to develop.

"You have to know your students and their needs, know your community," says Janice Todd, who taught at Byrd more than 15 years before becoming principal six years ago. "Just to spend $200,000 isn't easy."

Being able to carry over funds from year to year is important for good planning, she adds. One example is her plan for a full-day pre-kindergarten.

Only seven children signed up for the program this year, and she needed at least 15 to be able to hire a full-time teacher. After careful thought, she bought some supplies and equipment and set aside money to hire a half-time teacher the second part of the school year, and has already planned for additional spending for a full-time teacher next year.

Todd also cautions that money isn't always the answer. "Our hope is that it [Chapter 1] will translate into improved learning. I'm not necessarily convinced money is the key—good teachers, parents and other things are involved. All growth is not tied directly to money." ■

Lorraine V. Forte is managing editor of CATALYST.

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impact of these efforts cannot easily be measured.

Also, historians, graduate students and others likely will analyze and reflect on some of the larger issues raised by foundation involvement in Chicago school reform. Some, perhaps, may be critical of the extensive foundation staff involvement in various reform activities. This intimate involvement of some staffers with colleagues in other foundations and with grant recipients may have harmed the foundations' ability to be objective about grantmaking.

To be sure, area foundations have been funding a variety of educational schemes—including the parent-involvement approach of Dr. James Comer, Ted Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools and the RE:Learning project sponsored by the Education Commission of the States. But they never seriously challenged what reform groups proposed as the main thrust of reform, site-based management.

Another issue worthy of analysis is foundations' role in sustaining and strengthening organizations that deal with education issues. Had foundations helped foster a greater variety of research and advocacy organizations prior to reform, a greater number of well-informed viewpoints may have been considered. Traditionally, though, foundations have been reactive, responding only to those who ask for money. A broader question is whether supporting advocacy and community organizations is a good investment. With staff members, rent and promotional work, they are expensive endeavors.

What analysts conclude on these issues could well affect the way foundations—both locally and across the country—approach school policy change in the future. ■

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boys and girls separated because the *personal nature* of the sessions. Each group meets once a week, but children with more severe problems might also have individual counseling sessions. About 200 children are now participating in the program.

Group sessions focus on topics such as drugs, self-esteem or avoiding gangs, but also include unstructured time. "We always make time for what they want to talk about," Alderson says. The students learn to handle problems such as how to cope with a death in the family.

Also, students who lose control in class and need "quiet time" to calm down are given the chance to sit in a counselor's office before returning to class.

"I learned that if we have problems at school, we can talk to the counselor," acknowledges Karval Williams, 10, whose cousin was killed in a gang-related shooting. "She taught me it was okay to be sad, to cry and be angry."

For more information, contact Yvonne Alderson (312) 535-5340. ■