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Howard L. Denton, Jr.  
Loyola University of Chicago  
DEVELOPING AN ADMINISTRATIVE MATRIX FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Efforts to improve classroom performance in urban public schools tend to be a function of the dynamic demographics of larger American cities. Currently, public schools are confronted with the need to more effectively educate the increasing number of poor and minority students in metropolitan populations. The Push for Excellence Program appears to have some promise as a possible vehicle for improving urban education. Thus, the administrative role in implementing this kind of a program is critical.

This study is designed to examine and describe the operating administrative structure developed by and for the local high school to implement the Push for Excellence Program and to assess administrative components related to the program's operation. The thrust of this project is to analyze the procedures, actions and postures taken by administrators to set in place the Push for Excellence Program. The data collected from surveys, interviews and case studies will be used to recommend an administrative matrix for implementing the Push-Excel Program.

The major conclusions of the study are:

- 1) Common elements were identifiable within the range of administrative behaviors cited by principals during the implementation process.
- 2) Principals implementing the Excel program indicated that safeguards are necessary to prevent the development of unreasonable expectations.
- 3) The attitudes of the principals play a major role in the implementation process.

The results of an analysis of the collected data and related information show that principals did use administrative behaviors to implement the Chicago Push for Excellence Program which had common elements. Specifically, those elements were:

- 1) Selling the program
- 2) Seeking teacher commitment
- 3) Demonstrating personal involvement
- 4) Advocating the program

These results support the basis for an administrative matrix for implementing the Push for Excellence Program.

DEVELOPING AN ADMINISTRATIVE MATRIX FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

by

Howard L. Denton, Jr.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate  
School of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

January

1980

## VITA

The author, Howard L. Denton, Jr., is the son of Howard L. Denton and Laura (Rose) Denton. He was born April 28, 1930, in Chicago, Illinois.

He completed his elementary and secondary education in the public schools of Chicago, graduating from Morgan Park High School in February of 1947. Howard Denton entered the Chicago Teachers College in September of 1947, and was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Education, with a minor in mathematics, in June of 1951. He received the degree of Master of Education from DePaul University in June of 1965.

He began his teaching career with the Chicago public schools in 1951. He was a successful candidate for the certificate of principal in 1967. In June of 1968, Howard Denton was assigned as the Assistant to the District 23 Superintendent. In August of 1969 he was assigned to his present position, Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to my advisor, Dr. Melvin Heller, and to Dr. Jasper Valenti and Dr. Phillip Carlin, who offered valuable suggestions, constructive criticism and encouragement throughout the preparation of this study.

I wish to thank Mrs. Maureen Ott for typing the final draft of this paper.

I am especially appreciative of the patience, understanding and suggestions provided by my wife Denise, and my daughters Cheryl and Dianne, throughout the writing of this paper.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	ii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Need for the Study . . . . .	9
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	11
Research Hypotheses . . . . .	12
Definition of Terms . . . . .	13
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE . . . . .	14
Introduction . . . . .	14
Literature Related to Administration . . . . .	14
Organizational Change . . . . .	23
Development of the Push for Excellence Program . . . . .	49
III. RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES . . . . .	56
Introduction . . . . .	56
Data Collection from Principals . . . . .	57
Indepth Study Approach . . . . .	60
Treatment of the Data . . . . .	62
Greiner's Model for Organizational Change . . . . .	63
IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA . . . . .	69
Introduction . . . . .	69
Responses to the Questionnaire . . . . .	69
Study of Two Schools . . . . .	97
District Superintendent Interviews . . . . .	115
Hypotheses . . . . .	117
Greiner's Model of Successful Change . . . . .	119
Principal Implementation Behavior Model . . . . .	122



Chapter	Page
V. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	126
Conclusions . . . . .	126
Interpretation and Implications . . . . .	127
Recommendations . . . . .	137
APPENDIX A . . . . .	141
APPENDIX B . . . . .	149
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	156

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	RESPONSES TO ITEM 1 . . . . .	71
2	RESPONSES TO ITEM 5 . . . . .	77
3	RESPONSES TO ITEM 8 . . . . .	82
4	RESPONSES TO ITEM 11 . . . . .	87
5	RESPONSES TO ITEM 14 . . . . .	91

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations	Page
Plate I	
DYNAMICS OF SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION CHANGE -- GREINER'S MODEL . . . . .	66
Plate II	
ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIORS AND COMPONENT INTERACTIONS . . . . .	124

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

It is not reasonable to expect that schooling alone can create equality of opportunity when equality does not exist in the world of jobs, of social relations, or of politics. But it is perfectly reasonable to expect schools to contribute to the goal of equal opportunity instead of perpetuating the status of birth.<sup>1</sup>

Recent demographic studies describing the population of the larger metropolitan areas in America indicate that professional educators are now serving a public school clientele that is significantly different from the urban school population of the 1950's. When the socially stratified concentric circles of cities are drawn they now encompass a large percentage of poor and minority families. Given that the more middle class families with school age children have elected to live in the suburbs ringing major cities, public school systems recognize the need to change their approaches to work effectively with a different population. Inherent in this recognition is the realization that in the past

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Kenneth Keniston, and the Carnegie Council on Children, All Our Children, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York, 1977, p. 48.

public education has not been generally successful in providing poor and minority children with the skills, training, and vocational information necessary to enter the main stream of American society.

In order to maintain their viability and contribute to the health of large cities, public school administrators are searching for strategies to serve effectively the new users of large city school systems. Innovative programs purchased with the infusion of federal monies in the 1960's failed to provide the clues needed to help classroom teachers and principals with the different tasks confronting urban education. Indeed, there has been only limited success with programs developed with federal dollars to spur academic achievements of poor and minority children. The search for a solution set continues; educators are looking for approaches which can help large city children overcome the deprivations which are an intricate part of their social heredity. Professionals are no longer confident that additional money can buy the needed solutions.

Federal financial aid did enable urban educators to develop a wide variety of programs designed to narrow the achievement gap. The urban child, described as educationally and culturally deprived, was offered compensatory education programs ranging from Headstart to after school reading. School systems sought to emulate the cost effectiveness ap-

proaches of business and experimented with buying instruction or management services from private industry.

Today there remains a wide range in the funded programs. Many of these programs provide for smaller instruction groups and the use of advanced technology. The federal dollars spent for urban education have been helpful but no one program has been acclaimed as the answer to the problem of upgrading the in-school performances of city children. The acuteness of the problem is highlighted by the newly developed proficiency tests which show that minority children constitute a disproportionate percentage of students who do not score well.<sup>2</sup>

It does not surprise urban observers that the city poor do not perform well on tests. The charge for years has been that lower class families do not participate in a productive manner in the public education arena. Green gives his reasons for these problems:

Throughout our nation's history, attempts have been made to control access to educational opportunity. Advantaged Americans have systematically and deliberately manipulated the educational system to stifle the aspirations of lower income citizens. Only through a long, hard struggle have minorities and poor people gained some access to equality and educational opportunity, and the struggle is continuing today.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>National Assessment of Educational Progress Newsletter, Vol. XII, No. 4, p. 2, August 1979.

<sup>3</sup>Robert L. Green, The Urban Challenge - Poverty and Race, Follett Publishing Co., Chicago, 1977, p. 238.

Teachers and administrators tend to blame environmental factors for the student's poor school performance. The educators include in the environmental factors the physical conditions of the neighborhood and family organization, but see the lack of stimulation in the home as the basic reason for poor performance of minority students in school. They report that parents do not actively support school programs, attend parent meetings or assembly programs, nor do they explore with their children reasons for poor report card grades. However, some staff members of urban schools realize that the attitudes of both parents and students tend to reflect several factors operating in the community. Consideration must be given to:

- . The feelings of parents who honestly believe that their chances for advancement in society were foreclosed by their minority status. Good school performances failed to help these parents. It is difficult for these parents to convince their children of the long range value of education since staying in school did not work for them and others like them.
- . Minority and poor children do not find in their neighborhoods any evidence of

a relationship between good school performance and the observable good lifestyles. Are there paydays for those who are successful in the classrooms?

- . In communities where survival is always high on the agenda, there is little peer group recognition for earning an "A". It appears that the applause should be for those who stay alive despite systematic neglect. Seldom are the models held up by parents, teachers and ministers, those known to the youngsters who have earned the right to success badges: fancy automobiles, fine clothing and folding pocket money.
- . The attitudes of students who, when asked, say they go to school because they are supposed to.<sup>4</sup>

Staff observations are supported by the findings of

Ogbu:

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<sup>4</sup>Manford Byrd, Jr., Operational Approach to Alienation, A speech given on February 11, 1972.



The evidence uncovered in the study strongly suggests that blacks and similarly placed minority groups often reject academic competition with members of the dominant groups. The reason they fail to work hard in school seems to be, in part, that such efforts have not traditionally benefited members of their group: In terms of ability and training, they have generally received lower social and occupational rewards when compared to members of the dominant group. In general, caste-like societies and their schools, as well as the minorities themselves, all contribute to the lower school performance of minority group children. Lower school performance and lower educational attainment are functionally adaptive to minorities' ascribed inferior social and occupational positions in adult life.<sup>5</sup>

It is suggested by Ogbu that the motivated student views achievement in school as inherently valuable because of the relatedness of a successful school career and his answer to the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" There is, then, a need to help more members of minority groups to see the value of schooling. Professional educators hope that community leaders recognize the magnitude of the task of making education work, for all groups, as a tool for effective adjustment to the adult world. Lay groups and educators will need to study very closely the relationship between school and society:

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<sup>5</sup>John U. Ogbu, Minority Education and Caste, Academic Press, New York, 1978, p. 4.

In all societies, education acts as a bridge to adult social and occupational status, but in castelike societies education prepares children of different castes for their different social and occupational positions in adult life. The schools in these latter societies are therefore not organized to train castelike minorities to achieve equal social and occupational status with members of the dominant caste.<sup>6</sup>

Sensing the complexity of the problem, tiring of the stream of special programs, and feeling that schools alone could not bring about needed changes, local community based organizations began to applaud successful students. Modeling their programs after earlier efforts of churches, sororities and fraternities, these groups did make students and communities aware of a growing feeling that good school performances have value. These efforts were especially evident in middle class black areas where parents had witnessed the succession of programs designed for minorities and then realized that blacks had to be in the forefront in the preparation of their children to play larger roles in the American society even though there was no assurance they would be allowed to participate. However, before these kinds of actions can bear fruit, many poor and minority parents must again be persuaded to invest their time and energy in a project which did not pay off for their generation. The slowly changing social climate in the country

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

could convince many parents to make an extra effort to spur their children to do better in school with the expectation of gaining better lifestyles.

John U. Ogbu and Kenneth Keniston agree that economically isolated children can best be helped in understanding the relationship to school performance and their potential for upward mobility by 1) seeing firsthand examples of the relationship and 2) having parents very supportive of the concept and the school's efforts. Other approaches will certainly help during this process.

While it is possible to find examples of successful minorities in almost every vocational category, the most visible ones are those in sports and entertainment. The prominence of blacks in these fields make it possible to explore and establish with minority students the relationship between the long hours of practice and future success.

The Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, President of Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity), became the first nationally known spokesman for an organized effort to get students to apply the same effort and intensity to their school work as athletes and entertainers put into their practices and performances. Jackson promoted this idea in the hope that it could help make succeeding in school make sense to poor students.

This effort to revitalize urban education became known

as Push for Excellence. The Push for Excellence is viewed by some large city school systems as a viable vehicle for bringing together diverse community elements; parents, teachers, and students; to work cooperatively to improve first, the acceptance of academic success as a worthwhile goal and subsequently, school performance of urban children.

If Push for Excellence is to be easily replicated, then the implementation of the program in high schools should not require each principal to invent independently a launching procedure. A study of the Excel programs now operating will provide insights to the approaches employed to bring it on line as well as a better understanding as to what is involved when a school commits to the program.

#### Need for the Study

In recent months the Push for Excellence Program has received wide coverage in the mass media.<sup>7</sup> The program was featured on a national news show and commended by the late Hubert H. Humphrey. Several education journals have reported on the Excel program's promise. Piqued by the possibility that the program could work, school board members and administrators are taking a closer look at those schools where the program has been operating for the past two years.

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<sup>7</sup>A selected list of published materials on the Push for Excellence Program is included in Appendix A.

One of the major concerns of inquiring school personnel is how the program is administered at the local school level. That the administrative structure of the Push for Excellence Program is of major importance to schools contemplating its use is readily understood when it is realized how different the operation can be from either locally or federally funded projects. Because of its unique features the Push for Excellence Program requires analysis and interpretation of the local administrative structure to help school districts consider the program's potential. Excel is unique in that:

- . it provides few, if any, additional resources
- . principals volunteer to participate
- . the program was developed by a non-professional, community based organization which maintains staff to work with the schools
- . Operation PUSH, originator of the Push for Excellence Program, brings to the participating schools some controversy.

It should prove very helpful if, as the program continues, principals and other administrators could know what the practitioners found to work best administratively in

operationalizing the Push for Excellence Program.

In order to assess properly the feasibility of participating in the Push for Excellence Program, school administrators need to understand not only the underlying concepts but also the administrative tasks, roles and behaviors which will constitute the network needed to support the implementation phase of the program.

### Statement of the Problem

This is to be a study of the administrative behaviors in which certain high school principals engaged in an effort to bring about changes in their schools. This effort was a part of a plan to utilize existing resources to redirect the school community toward the recognition and internalization of academic achievement as a meaningful, acceptable and worthwhile goal.

This project is designed to examine and describe the operating administrative structure developed by and for the local high school to implement the Push for Excellence Program and to assess administrative components directly related to the program's operation. Thus, the thrust of this project is to analyze the procedures, actions and postures taken by administrators to set in place the Push for Excellence Program. The plan for the execution of the project design involves three phases:

- . describe the initial administrative actions leading toward implementation of the Push for Excellence Program
- . determine ongoing administrative behavior directly related to the program, its maintenance and possible expansion
- . use the data collected from surveys, interviews, and case studies to recommend an administrative matrix for implementing the program.

#### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will help guide this project:

1. Principals can identify a set of administrative actions essential to the successful implementation of the Push for Excellence Program.
2. Principals can identify certain administrative actions as counterproductive or nonessential in implementing the Excel Program.
3. Administrators who are not school building principals involved in the program can describe common strategies.
4. School principals consider their actions

to implement the Push for Excellence Program as more distinctly different from their regular duties than do higher level administrators.

#### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the basic terms that are used can be defined as follows:

- . Push for Excellence: The set of goals, objectives and related activities endorsed or approved by the board of education.
- . Excel: Used interchangeably with Push for Excellence.
- . PUSH: Acromyn for People United to Save Humanity--an organization which seeks justice, economic improvement and equal rights for blacks and other minorities.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The review of the literature will be divided into three sections. The first section will review selected published materials related to research and investigation in the field of administration. The second section will concentrate on investigations of the nature of organizations and organizational change. The last section will cover the development of the Push for Excellence Program.

Given the large number of investigations in the areas of administration and organization, the review of the literature is not inclusive but representative of the available materials.

#### Literature Related to Administration

One of the more widely held axioms in education circles is that the building principal is the most important person in the school organization. The quality of the educational program in a school is seen as a reflection of the skills and leadership qualities of the principal. Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer describe the major tasks required of the principalship:

The principal is a key person in the administrative organization. He performs administrative tasks similar to those of a superintendent of schools but he does so within the policy limit of the system. Instructional leadership, community relationships, staff personnel, pupil personnel, facilities, finance, business management and organization are all areas in which tasks must be performed at the school building level as well as the level of central office administration. . .

The principal is the chief interpreter of official policy of the system for his staff and for the school community.<sup>1</sup>

As the individual assigned the task of directing education programs in a school building, the principal plays a role which to a great degree is defined by practice. The expectations of a principal's role behavior pattern is reflected upon by the American Association of School Administrators:

The professional leader reflects the hopes, the professional beliefs, and the considered judgements of the staff, his spirit, his roles, his administrative skill, and his overall leadership make for success or failure. More than anyone else, he determines the new horizons and lifts the sights of his associates. More than anyone else he has the power to encourage or discourage. More than anyone else, he can pull together the

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<sup>1</sup>Roald F. Campbell, John E. Corbally and John A. Ramseyer, Introduction to Educational Administration, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1966, p. 225.

threads of the planning, thinking and evaluating of his associates and make a whole cloth of them.<sup>2</sup>

Brain also recognized the importance of the building principal when he wrote:

As the leader of his school, the principal is responsible for providing the leadership that results in establishing common goals for the entire school staff. Further, he is responsible for leading not only his teachers but the entire staff.<sup>3</sup>

There are some investigations which concluded that the principal's role is not critical to the successful operation of a school. Some investigators feel that the problems in the society impact negatively upon the efforts of schools. The effect of these forces acting on the schools and the actors within the schools are beyond any administrator's control.<sup>4</sup> Briner and Sroufe suggest that investigators who reexamine the principalship may find that principals do not have all of the power and status traditionally invested in the position:

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<sup>2</sup>American Association of School Administrators, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Association of Secondary School Principals and National Education Association Department of Rural Education, A Climate for Individuality, Washington, 1965, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup>George B. Brain, "Increasing Your Administrative Skills in Dealing with the Instructional Programs," Handbook of Successful School Administration, Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1974, p. 504.

<sup>4</sup>Conrad Briner and Gerald Sroufe, "Organization for Education in 1985," Educational Futurism 1985, McCutchan Publishing Co., Berkeley, California, 1971, p. 80.

Upon closer inspection, however, we discover that the principal is usually a man who is delegated all of the responsibility, but no power to fulfill it. The principal's position is quite hollow and, like a priest, he is only the defender of a higher authority. Being this dependent, his eyes are ever cast upward and are little concerned with those around him. . .

The principal is as much a victim of this system as the child because of his role in the incarnation of the problem. As an individual he is practically powerless because he is subject to anonymous authority on all sides. His tasks are largely menial and in the long run not very important.<sup>5</sup>

The literature provides ample evidence indicating that very few investigators would agree with Briner and Sroufe for the majority of the observers believe that the principal's role is critical to the success of a public school.

Investigators have maintained a strong interest in the behavior of school building principals. The thrust of many of their earlier efforts were toward the identification of the desirable traits and characteristics of a good administrator.<sup>6</sup> These "studies have attempted to determine physical, intellectual or personality traits of the leader."<sup>7</sup> The results of these studies show some differences in the

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander, Group Dynamics: Research and Theory, Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston, Illinois, 1953, p. 536.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

areas listed above, between accepted leaders and other group members. These studies have also produced a range of lists of how an administrator should look, how he is to deal with his staff and even how to work with community organizations.

Other investigators have concentrated their efforts on examinations of administrator's behavior. What the principal does and how he does what he does determines, to a large measure, how the school functions. The what he does--his act or actions--constitutes his administrative behavior. The findings indicate differences in behavior patterns, differences which the investigators want to formalize for use in the process for selecting and training school administrators.<sup>8</sup>

The research efforts to establish lists of traits and desirable characteristics of administrators have not proved to be as helpful as the investigators first hoped. The findings are not consistent nor do the traits deemed desirable appear with sufficient regularity.<sup>9</sup> The short comings of the trait approach may have served to redirect the research in the field of education administration.

A need to define basic terms better is a first step in reformulating research on the education executive. There

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

are some investigators who have indicated that "administrator" and "leader" are not mutually inclusive terms. An administrator may not be a leader--it is not given. Some writers see administrators as primarily concerned with maintaining the status quo, while leaders are basically change agents.<sup>10</sup> Other writers award leadership status to persons in high offices or position. Halpin states that, ". . . all school superintendents and school principals are administrators and ipso facto leaders."<sup>11</sup> Shartle's operational definition of the term "leader" encompasses descriptions found frequently in the literature.

Naturally in selecting persons for study one must apply a definition or have specific criteria. We may define a leader in several ways, such as the following:

1. An individual who exercises positive influence acts upon others.
2. An individual who exercises more important positive influence acts than any other member of the group organization he is in.
3. An individual who exercises most influence in goal-setting or goal-achievement of the group or organization.
4. An individual elected by a group as a leader.

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<sup>10</sup>Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer, p. 164.

<sup>11</sup>Andrew W. Halpin, Theory and Research in Administration, MacMillan Co., New York, 1966, p. 28.

5. An individual in a given office or position of apparently high influence potential.

Since we are studying organization in business, industry, education and government, we have chosen initially to select on the basis of the last definition, namely persons in high office.<sup>12</sup>

A description of administrative behavior from Thelen ties elements of administrative behavior to what some say are acts of leadership:

Administrative behavior has two kinds of consequences. First as action it brings about some sort of immediate change; and second, the attitude communicated with the action may reinforce or change relationships among people. This latter change carries with it the possibility of changes in motivation, readiness, trust, confidence, and the like. The feelings going with administrative action, then, bringing about changes the implications of which are long range. Every administrator knows that many of his acts imply relative judgments about the men he judges to be helpful for various purposes, those he sees as cooperative, those whose ideas he most wants and so on. . .

Administrative behavior is perceived and reacted to by many people; and that the behaviors of the administrator are themselves affected by the perceptions and feelings of those about him.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Carroll L. Shartle, "Studies in Natural Leadership: Part I," Harold Guetzkow (ed.), Groups, Leadership and Men, Russell Publishing Co., New York, 1963.

<sup>13</sup>Herbert A. Thelen, Dynamics of Groups at Work, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1954, p. 113.

If it can be agreed that administrators are also leaders, then it is necessary to look more closely at what a leader is and what a leader does. Leader is defined by Funk and Wagnall's as (1) "One who or that which goes ahead or in advance, (2) One who acts as a guiding force, commander, etc." Campbell said leaders are "change agents."<sup>14</sup> Hemphill takes an operational approach; his definition of leader states: "Traditionally, leaders are those who perform leadership acts although anyone in a group may at any-time perform a leadership act."<sup>15</sup> Bartky follows Hemphill's lead defining leadership in terms of leader behavior. Bartky states: . . . "leadership is concerned with influencing people."<sup>16</sup> The leader influences people by example, teaching, mediation and coercion.<sup>17</sup>

That investigators in the area of school administration use the terms leader and administrator interchangeably is evident from the way the words are used in the literature. There is evidence, however, of a preference by some investigators to assign administrative actions to a person occupying

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<sup>14</sup>Campbell, p. 164.

<sup>15</sup>John K. Hemphill, "Administration as Problem Solving," in Halpin (ed.), Administrative Theory in Education, MacMillan Co., New York, 1958, p. 92.

<sup>16</sup>John A. Bartky, Administration as Educational Leadership, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1956, p. 59.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



a position and to reserve decision on leadership until that quality is demonstrated. That an individual is officially placed in a high office or position gives him administrative rights and obligations to maintain the organization as it exists. If the high office holder demonstrates the ability to change the organization to better serve its goals, he then is a leader.<sup>18</sup> What he does to effect the change is leadership behavior. Indeed, such behavior is so defined by Hemphill: "Leadership behavior is. . . to initiate a new form or practice for accomplishing an organizational or group objective."<sup>19</sup> Fiedler's definition is similar: "By leadership behavior we generally mean the particular acts in which a leader engages in the course of directing and coordinating the work of his group members."<sup>20</sup> The acts referred to by Fiedler can be described as follows:

An act is a sequence of behavior that occurs in the following three phases: the formulation of an intention, i.e., the recognition of a state of affairs to be realized; an operation governed by the intention; and a comparison of the intended with the realized state of affairs. . . .

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<sup>18</sup>John Hemphill, "Personal Variables and Administrative Styles," in Donald Erickson (ed.), Educational Organization and Administration, McCutchan Publishing Corp., Berkeley, California, 1977, p. 504.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Fred E. Fiedler, A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1967, p. 36.

Leadership behaviors may be (1) effective in that they help solve the problem, (2) successful in that they caused structured interaction but did not necessarily contribute to the solution set.<sup>21</sup>

Hemphill also takes the position that an individual becomes an administrator when he is assigned to an administrative position but must take action to chart a new course to become a leader. A determination by a school building administrator that there is a need to utilize the resources of an organization in different ways in order to maximize its effectiveness, is a step toward the introduction of change.

### Organizational Change

It is generally recognized that schools, as an arm of government, must operate within regulations established by federal and state agencies.<sup>22</sup> By legislative acts and regulatory mandates the schools have prescribed actions to be taken in relationship to a wide range of activities. Administrators must build into their organization vehicles to enable schools to meet demands of the various governmental agencies.<sup>23</sup> In this process the local school principal retains the task of operating his school in a manner to best

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<sup>21</sup>Hemphill, 1958, p. 92

<sup>22</sup>John Martin Rich, Challenge and Response: Education in American Culture, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1974, pp. 177-210

<sup>23</sup>ibid.

meet the community's needs. To operate effectively principals may need to modify their school's organization.

The literature suggests that principals behave as administrators when their schools are considered to be effective organizations acting upon the students in a manner acceptable to their client-communities. These same principals would be considered leaders should they act effectively upon feedback indicating that their schools are failing to deal with high priority educational concerns as conceived by communities, school boards, parents or local political leaders. Principals must remain alert to the informal evaluations of schools in order to determine what changes or corrections could be made. Principals must carefully consider any planned change in light of the reluctance of school organizations or their communities to move away from that which seems to work.

Brickell points out that neither parents nor school boards exert great pressure for new instructional programs; however both groups can be decisive if they oppose what is going on.<sup>24</sup> Further, at the local school level there is pressure for change even in those situations where there exists a strong desire to maintain the status quo:

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<sup>24</sup>Henry M. Brickell, Organizing for Educational Change, University of the State of New York, State Educational Department, Albany, New York, 1961, p. 20.

A school, like any other institution, tends to continue doing what it was established to do, hold itself relatively stable and resisting attempts at restructuring. There is a sound reason for this: Stability in the institutional structure makes for maximum output of the results that structure was designed to produce. Any change in the arrangement of its elements tends to cut down production, at least until new habit patterns are formed.

There are two distinct groups of people who might be expected to influence structural change in the local public schools: the public, which is external to the institution, and the profession, which is internal to it. The process of local educational change is determined by the relationships of these two groups: the public and the board of education as external, the administrators and teachers as internal. . . .

When the school is asked to produce a different kind or a different quality of education, some rearrangement of its institutional elements may be in order. One of the tasks of a chief administrator --such as a superintendent of schools-- is to take external demands for different results and translate them when necessary into new patterns for organizing the elements of the institution.<sup>25</sup>

Brickell's statement is supported by Kirst:

The studies in this volume indicate the superintendent and top school system line and staff officials usually have the political influence--the ability to get others to act, think or feel as they intend--on internal issues. Internal issues do not require extensive negotiations with elements in

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<sup>25</sup> ibid., p. 19-20.

the political stratum not primarily concerned with the public schools. Moreover, with the exception of some large cities it is usually the superintendent and the central staff that concerts and aggregates influence so that specific proposals relating to external issues are adopted.<sup>26</sup>

Further supportive statements were made by Boyd:

To begin with, there are two distinct types of change that impinge upon local educational policy making and substantially shape its agenda. First, and perhaps most striking, there are the increasingly important developments and forces external to the local district (state and federal mandates, court decisions, and so forth) that create demands and constraints to which the local district must attend. Second, there are the often slower and less obvious internal developments within the school district that are related to the life cycle and aging process of the community. Usually, the two types of change, internal and external, are dealt with separately in analysis of school politics; however, one of our goals should be to try to relate them, for there is ample reason to think that external developments complicate and exacerbate the problems posed by internal developments.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Michael W. Kirst (ed.), The Politics of Education, McCutchan Publishing Corp., Berkeley, California, 1970, p. 5.

<sup>27</sup>William L. Boyd, "The Changing Politics of Changing Communities: The Impact of Evolutionary Factors on Educational Policy Making," The Changing Politics of Education, ed. Edith K. Mosher and Jennings L. Wagoner, Jr., McCutchan Publishing Corp., Berkeley, California, 1978, p. 202.

When the need for change is recognized by the principal there are actions he can take if he elects to assume a leadership role in bringing about a rearrangement of the organization elements of the school. In planning the actions he wants to take the principal takes into consideration the manner in which the various components of the current organization are placed. The principal's thinking should be reflective of knowledge of organizational theory. The principal must also see these tasks as a part of his responsibilities.

Some writers state that because of the power of teacher organizations and informed communities, principals are unable to influence, to any great degree, what goes on in the school house. These statements are supportive of Briner's findings that principals have not had full control of their schools. Additional corroborative data was reported by Erickson. Erickson found that some "scholars are beginning to stress the extent of the administrator's powerlessness to impress his personal image on the organization."<sup>28</sup> This view quite obviously negates the Great Man theory but does not find substantial support within today's education climate. Porter, for one such writer, concludes:

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<sup>28</sup> Donald A. Erickson (ed.), Educational Organization and Administration, McCutchan Publishing Corp., Berkeley, California, 1977, p. 459.

Contextual factors partially determine organizational design and behavioral consequences, but there is still considerable latitude for those in positions of power. . . to exercise options in design to influence behavior. . .

Those who control an organization's resources thus have a certain amount of "strategic choice" in deciding what kinds of designs they want, and this means they have a choice in influencing the predominant types of behavior that will be characteristic in the organization.

The individual in the organization still has the discretion to say how he will perform and interact with others.<sup>29</sup>

While the urban educational administrator may frequently act as if he does not have sufficient latitude to exercise his leadership, there are still important areas where his influence is decisive. The key to the successful exertion of influence may lie in development of a better understanding of organizational behaviors.

An examination of the nature of organizations should provide administrators with helpful insights. Parsons describes an organization as follows:

A formal organization in the present sense is a mechanism by which goals somehow important to the society, or various subsystems of it, are to some degree defined. . . it is also a part

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<sup>29</sup>Lyman W. Porter, Edward E. Lawler and Richard J. Hackman, Behavior in Organizations, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1975, p. 271.

of a wider social system which is the source of the "meaning" legitimation or higher level support which makes the implementation of the organization's goals possible.<sup>30</sup>

Shartle's definition tends to be more direct. He states that "an organization is considered as an arrangement of related functions in which persons perform tasks that contribute to one or more common objectives."<sup>31</sup> Bartky states that the word organization "denotes both a process and a state of being--the process or state of being in which two or more people coordinate the efforts and pool their resources to achieve given purposes."<sup>32</sup> Inherent in the concept of organization is the realization that the tasks required to achieve goals will be divided up among the organization members. The division of tasks and the agreement of purpose combine to regulate the behavior of the organization. Bartky makes the following observations:

A person who joins any organization agrees to submit himself to restrictions and regulations. . .

An organization cannot prosper unless it regulates the behavior of its members to some extent. . .

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<sup>30</sup>Talcott Parsons, "Some Ingredients of a General Theory of Formal Organization," in Halpin (ed.) Administrative Theory in Education, MacMillan Co., New York, 1958, p. 44

<sup>31</sup>Carroll L. Shartle, p. 75.

<sup>32</sup>Bartky, p. 32.



Every organization sets up acceptable behavior patterns, develops its own language, and creates its own value system. In short, every organization has its own culture.<sup>33</sup>

The prime tasks for the organization administrator include defining purposes and assigning tasks. Should the purpose become known explicitly to the organization, the task assignments are made easier. However, there remains a critical job for the administrator: determining what he will ask of each member after taking into consideration their skills and attitudes. The success of an effort to change an organization can hinge upon the ability of the administrator to determine what task to assign to which group member. As Porter indicates, people respond to organizations as individuals. "It is not the objective structure or design that people respond to but the experienced structure."<sup>34</sup> Individual differences cause differences in the kind of organization preferred.

Active consideration of the needs of organization members employs what is generally termed the force field approach. Force field is

An attempt to examine a group's existing desires, fears, hopes, yearnings, and prejudices so that leaders can reach organization goals while

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>34</sup>Porter, p. 224.

allowing group members to reach some of theirs. . . The technique is one of charting the forces which help the group to move toward organizational goals against forces that block progress.<sup>35</sup>

The skilled leader knows he must divide the work and make assignments to individual organizational members. Such assignments would seek to match the tasks with the special skills or talents of the group members. Each person would specialize--perform those functions he does best. All of these efforts would be coordinated by the leader to guide the organization toward its goals. This kind of organizational specialization can be both efficient and effective.

There is no point in organization if it avoids specialization, since it is through specialization that organization achieves the best results. One of the most important and difficult specialties is decision-making.

Decision-making specialists concern themselves with three general functions:

1. Clarifying the purposes of the organization.
2. Coordinating the organizational effort.

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<sup>35</sup>Taylor McConnell, Group Leadership for Self-Realization, Petrocell Books, New York, 1974, p. 48.

3. . Determining, assigning and supervising the various jobs to be done.<sup>36</sup>

Bartky goes on to state that those decisions which concern the purpose of the organization are termed organizational policy, while those concerned with coordinating the efforts of the organization members are called administrative policy. Regulations which determine how a task is to be performed are known as operational policy.<sup>37</sup> The basis of many decisions made in the three areas named above are directly related to the resources and size of the organization.

Administrators seeking to maximize the effectiveness of their organizations should weigh carefully all available data before making decisions related to organizational or operational policies. Careful consideration would be given to the need for the organization to function within a framework that is as comfortable for as many members as possible while maintaining group effectiveness.<sup>38</sup> Another consideration would be the level of training and education of the

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Bartky, p. 36.

<sup>38</sup>Porter, p. 240-42.

group members. Porter indicates that the level of training of staff is certainly an element which would receive an administrator's attention. He states that, "The more skilled and educated the employee the less direct control is needed --professionals are experts and therefore produce less if the organization exercises a great deal of control."<sup>40</sup>

School organizations, staffed primarily with professionals, would require less control but a great deal of motivation.

When considering group size as an element of effective organization, the administrator recognizes that the smaller the group, the more effective the leader can be. McConnell states that gaining majority agreement in small groups presents real problems in that it can be very difficult to obtain commitment to task by any dissenting organizational member. Consensus is most important when it is necessary for all group members to perform in order to accomplish the organizational goal.<sup>41</sup> To promote group effectiveness administrators would keep the working groups small while striving to obtain long term commitment to goals. There is also a need to consider other factors external to the organizations.

Environmental factors play major roles in determining how an organization will function, what approaches are

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>41</sup>McConnell, p. 51.



indicated to the administrator, as well as the structural elements of the organization. Leaders who face social or market conditions which vary a great deal within a short time will design their organizations to react quickly. A predictable situation would make different demands. Porter describes these conditions:

The more that an organization faces a stable environment, deals with familiar and relatively simple tasks, and contains a work force in which only a small number of individuals at the top possess long experiences, technical skills and strong desire to exercise discretion in making decisions, the more a high degree of concentration of authority located at the top of the organization seems appropriate. If on the other hand, the organization generally faces an unpredictable and constantly changing environment, involves many complex tasks and contains a work force in which skills and experience are fairly broadly dispensed, a more widely distributed system of authority would seem to be called for, with a consequent greater degree of autonomy for individuals and units at the lower levels in the hierarchy.<sup>42</sup>

The organizational structures that Porter refers to are related to three administrative factors; authority, activity, and control. The three factors are described as follows:

Authority--Where is it located in the organization--how is it dispersed?  
Is authority at the top levels only  
or found in all unit levels of the  
organization?

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<sup>42</sup>Porter, p. 259.

Activity--How will activities be performed? What are the rules, standards, procedures on the how of the activities in terms of

- . specialization--the degree tasks are subdivided
- . standardization--having rules and procedures specified
- . formulization--having rules and procedures in writing

#### Control

Standards--By whom are they set?

Sensing--Who sees what is going on?

Comparing--Who makes the comparisons?

Effectuating--What and who corrects, rewards and punishes?<sup>43</sup>

There is no single organizational design that will have positive effects on the behavior of all types of individuals and in all environments . . . different parts of organizations appear to require different designs. Some combination of context and structure works better for the organization and its employees.<sup>44</sup>

The principles of organization design and structure described above are general and may be used to reach different sets of objectives which require an organized effort to achieve. What is recognized are the administrative elements which are common to organizations regardless of the mission. Thus, principals and other education administrators

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 260-261.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

can utilize the research findings of the investigations in the field of organization theory and administrative behavior.

Halpin recognized these commonalities when he wrote:

When the public school is compared with another institution it may be found that the organization's tasks differ and that the situational conditions which influence the behavior of work groups differ, but the major dimensions of administrator behavior are the same. Obviously, nothing is to be gained by minimizing the differences between education, industry and government but it would also be a mistake to gloss over similarities among these institutions . . . To the extent two institutional settings are alike, knowledge gained about behaviors of administrators in one setting is equally applicable in the other.<sup>45</sup>

Litchfield agrees that many administration principles are generally applicable to different fields:

The constant movement of executive personnel from business to government, from the military forces into large businesses, from both government and business into education, is emphatic testimony supporting our convictions that knowledges and skills are transferable from field to field because of an essential universality in the administrative process itself.<sup>46</sup>

Public school systems look to superintendents and principals to design and construct organizations to deliver educational services to a community. Few members of the client

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<sup>45</sup>Halpin, 1966, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup>Edward H. Litchfield, "Notes on a General Theory of Administration," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 1, June, 1966, p. 8.

community expect a profit or loss statement each year from their local public school but there is an informal evaluative process which is used to assess the effectiveness of public education that holds the administrator responsible in ways similar to administrators in other fields. Principals and superintendents are frequently compared to their counterparts in business. It is imperative, however, that professional educators see profitability in terms of the educational growth and development of students.

Thus, administration in an educational organization has as its central purpose the enhancement of teaching and learning. All activities of the administrator whether working with the public, the board of education or the professional staff should ultimately contribute to this end.

To enhance teaching and learning, administrators are required to perform three major functions: 1) discern and influence the development of goals and policies; 2) to establish and coordinate an organization concerned with planning and implementing appropriate programs; and 3) to procure and manage resources, money and materials necessary to support the organization and its program.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the three functional tasks suggested by Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer, education administrators must also exercise leadership in the schools by introducing and supporting change. However, bringing about change in a organization remains one of the most challenging responsi-

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<sup>47</sup>Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer, p. 83.



bilities of the education executive. Resistance to change is captured in many well known sayings, i.e., "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." This saying serves to hide the real fear and anxiety people have about an alteration of the status quo. Kotter and Schlesinger describe four reasons people resist change: 1) a desire not to lose something of value, 2) a misunderstanding of the change and its implications, 3) a belief that the change does not make sense for the organization, and 4) a low tolerance for change.<sup>48</sup>

To counteract resistance to change and improve the changes for successful organizational change there are, according to Kotter and Schlesinger, four actions an administrator may take. These actions include:

1. Conducting an organizational analysis that identifies the current situation, problems and the forces that are possible causes of those problems. The analysis should specify the actual importance of the problems, the speed with which the problems must be addressed if additional problems are to be avoided and the kinds of changes that are generally needed.
2. Conducting an analysis of factors relevant to producing the needed changes. The analysis should focus on questions of who might resist the change, why, and how much; who has information that is needed to design the change, and whose cooperation is essential in implementing it; and what is the position

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<sup>48</sup>John P. Kotter, and Leonard A. Schlesinger, "Choosing Strategies for Change," Harvard Business Review, Vol. 57, No. 2, March-April, 1979, pp. 106-107.

of the initiator vis-a-vis other relevant parties in terms of power, trust, normal modes of interaction, and so forth.

3. Selecting a change strategy . . . that selects specific tactics for use with various individuals and groups . . .
4. Monitoring the implementation process . . .<sup>49</sup>

To effect changes and counteract the barriers to change, administrators need to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the organization members, skills in three areas--technical, managerial and conceptual. Skills in these areas are inter-related and mutually supportive. In a schema developed by Briner for looking at the principalship in the three areas or dimensions, he prescribes a dominant role for the conceptual aspect:

The conceptual dimension provides stimulus and directions for the other two dimensions as the total educational enterprise strives to achieve perfection. In the conceptual dimension the administrator's concerns are directed to the entire school program, to the community setting, to learning and the individual. In this phase of his role the administrator seeks out, and capitalizes on, the teacher's interests and goals. He meets, encourages and helps teachers as they strive for quality in educational practice. The excitement and the adventure of unusual ideas inject novelty into the program and invigorate growth.

Managerial and technical functions provide the setting for exploring new ideas . . .  
In the conceptual dimension dissatisfaction

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

with the status quo and agitation for change were allied with quest for perfection; the managerial and technical tasks are derived from this dimension. This is not to suggest an inferior place for the managerial and technical aspects of the principalship. On the contrary, these two dimensions are critical, for ideas for experimentation and innovation can be translated into action only with the help of good management and technical skills. The conceptual dimension must be dynamic, since its prime function is to induce change, but the managerial and technical dimension must also be dynamic to accommodate change.<sup>50</sup>

To serve effectively as change agents principals have to play key roles in motivating staffs and interpreting the rationale for introducing change. Change agents need a broad knowledge base including information about the changes indicated and the professional needs of staffs. Getting staff involved in a new approach to the teaching-learning operation is a difficult assignment as Campbell points out.

Stimulating members of an organization is as complex as human personality itself. What seems to be effective in an administrator's relationship with one person may not be effective with a second. There is no cookbook procedure for stimulation although certain kinds of activities seem useful in many situations.<sup>51</sup>

Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer see the development of effective communications as one of the more important activi-

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<sup>50</sup>Briner, pp. 124-5.

<sup>51</sup>Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer, p. 148.

ties to help principals stimulate staffs. Communication must go in all directions: up, down and across to provide access and to assure staff that they are "in the know" about what's going on at their schools.<sup>52</sup> Positive communication activities are essential to efforts of principals working to install innovative programs. House has written about the need to overcome professional isolation through the use of open communication lines:

Many administrative innovations do not become teaching innovations since the teacher's world is not that of the administrator. Professionalization, which enhances innovation diffusion within professional groups by promoting social interaction, inhibits diffusion across professional barriers.

Since the basic diffusion process is the transport of innovation across social networks, interactions are complex. Teachers, however, remain isolated in classrooms within schools, which does not enhance the diffusion of new ideas within the profession. In terms of epidemiology, if a teacher were "infected" with an innovation, it would be difficult for him to pass it on except to teachers in his school, who would, in turn, be isolated from other professionals.<sup>53</sup>

House makes it clear that he believes that innovation will be accepted only when the barriers to change can be overcome. Instrumental in challenging these barriers is the personal

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>House, p. 13.

involvement of the principal or superintendent. "Personal contact is critical for innovating diffusion because it allows a full-fledged information exchange and the full exercise of personal and social influence as every "door to door" salesman knows. Anything that structures the flow of face-to-face contacts is likely to have a profound effect on the innovation diffusion.<sup>54</sup> Administrators advocating innovation make extensive use of personal contact to elicit the support of teachers. Gaining staff support is likely to prove to be the most difficult task. If an innovation is to be successfully introduced it would require, according to House, an enthusiastic advocacy. The advocacy is defined as "a group which protects and propagates something."<sup>55</sup>

An advocacy for an innovation does not just develop. Almost always there is someone, frequently charismatic, who takes charge and leads his colleagues:

At the center of advocacy is a single person who initiates, organizes and provides direction--the entrepreneur. He may be a teacher, or even a parent, but within the limits of school structure, he is ordinarily an administrator.

Entrepreneurship is an orchestration of diverse personal needs directed to a common goal. It is easy to be cynical about the manipulations and motivations of the actors. Yet it is difficult to

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

see how an advocacy, however large or small, could be built in any other fashion if it is to work effectively. Whether belief in common cause comes before or after an individual sees that his needs are being met is a moot point.

What is clear is that there must be an ideology or common cause in which to believe and that individuals must satisfy certain needs if the organization is to survive.<sup>56</sup>

Education entrepreneurs have the following characteristics:

- . Assurance that career mobility is upward.
- . Confidence in their ability to lead and influence others.
- . Ready access to the organization's resources.
- . Ability and time to concentrate on a single point.<sup>57</sup>

Education entrepreneurs are usually younger than most administrators with a history of success in their careers, and actively seeking means to establish themselves as promotable.<sup>58</sup>

Although Williams, et al., do not view principals as entrepreneurs they do charge school building administrators

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>57</sup>Dennis Dresang, "Entrepreneurialism and Development Administration," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 18, No. 1. March, 1973, pp. 78-83.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

with the responsibility for those above the principal level to provide the climate and tools which will enhance the chances for the institutionalization of innovative programs.

Our data indicates that an attempt should be made by schools concerned with implementing innovative practices to insure that the principal is oriented behaviorally toward staff needs and expectations--rather than institutional needs and expectations . . .

A high level of organizational renewal cannot be mandated through district direction, but the principal, as the officially designated leader, has considerable power to either encourage or discourage the organizational renewal process. The principal must recognize staff needs . . .

To achieve goals, to implement change and to create a dynamic enthusiastic environment in which to work, a principal must be more heavily concerned with his staff needs than he is with institutional requirements.<sup>59</sup>

Throughout the literature there are calls for specific behaviors by the school administrator to maximize the quality of educational services through organization changes even though he realizes the effect of the teaching staff in terms of actually implementing any such changes. Therefore, inherent in change for the organization is the changeability of the staff.

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<sup>59</sup> Richard C. Williams, Charles C. Wall, Michael W. Martin and Arthur Berchin, Effecting Organizational Renewal in Schools: A Social Systems Perspective, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1974, p. 40.

The principal is expected to tailor his behavior and leadership styles to the needs of his school community taking into consideration the personal needs of the teachers, current research findings and the materials resources. As complex as the task is, it is one which can be accomplished.

Sergiovanni and Carver concluded:

Despite the maze of legal regulations, certification standards, local expectations and financial restrictions, administrators are able to vary the structural dimensions to create an organizational environment best suited to accomplish school functions. It is not, then a question of new professional specialist positions or not centralized decision making structure or not, formal rules or not status system or not. Rather, it is the school executives responsibility to arrange for structural dimensions in light of his assumptions, the motivations (needs) of those in his schools, and the effect of varying structure on the functions of the school . . . .

In summary, school executives functioning in formal organizations have four ends towards which to strive with varying degrees of commitment: to produce (to increase performance efforts towards school goals); to produce efficiently; to adapt programs, procedures, and technologies continually; and to maintain satisfaction of personnel. These ends are accomplished by structuring the organization in certain specific ways.<sup>60</sup>

Another approach to organizational change is taken by Ohme who states that a successful change requires a combination

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<sup>60</sup>Thomas J. Sergiovanni and Fred D. Carver, The New School Executive: A Theory of Administration, Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, 1975, pp. 143-45.



of good leadership and client involvement. The merit of the planned change, while important, is not the critical factor. Strategies need to involve the clients and practitioners with capable leadership.<sup>61</sup> Goodlad, however, sees more complex problems confronting administrators planning changes. He feels that modeling change for schools after models used for business only compounds the problems.

Goodlad states:

Applied to the improvement of schooling, the model usually assumes an institution incapable of improving itself, an institution not devoid of goals, not with different goals but with inadequately defined goals. The model also assumes more intelligence outside of schools than in them and a relatively impotent, passive target group of personnel.<sup>62</sup>

Schools are complex, when viewed as social systems and subcultures, not readily adaptable to general models for organizational change; a view shared by Hall. In the past, according to Hall, investigators have focused their efforts on institutional planning and support structures, attitudes

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<sup>61</sup>Herman Ohme, "Ohme's Law of Institutional Change," Kappan, January, 1979, p. 345.

<sup>62</sup>John L. Goodlad, "Can Our Schools Get Better?", Kappan, January, 1979, p. 345.

about change and the institutional variables that affect the possibility of a successful change.<sup>63</sup> It is the implementation of change plans that is seen by a number of researchers as the critical factor in shaping school practices.

Frey comes with different approaches after investigating innovations and organizational changes. He concludes that the change process is dynamic, thus introducing the possibility that both the actors and the innovation may be changed during the implementation process. Frey contends that these bilateral changes are the result of decisions made during the use of innovation. He states that, "Within the study, the innovation and the user have been thought of as being in an analogical relationship. That is, every program specification has a corresponding user practice."<sup>64</sup> While this dichotomous relationship does not cause alteration of the innovation it can point up differences in priorities. Frey also found major differences in goals of the designers of innovations and the users:

The designer's goals and purposes may be thought of as focusing their awareness. That is, the program specifications

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<sup>63</sup>Gene E. Hall, A Longitudinal Investigation of Individual Implementation of Educational Investigations, ERIC Document Reproduction ED 140507, Bethesda, Maryland, 1977, pp. 14-20.

<sup>64</sup>William P. Frey, The Impact of the Implementation Experience on an Educational Innovation, ERIC Document Reproduction ED 140497, Bethesda, Maryland, 1977, p. 30.

that they use must be within the domain defined by their goals and purposes. On one hand these act to guide the selection of appropriate specifications and provide an integrity to program design; on the other hand they act as blinders for program design. The user is not necessarily blinded in the same manner nor is his integrity necessarily tied to identical goals and purposes. In short the user has the potential of being aware of greater domain of alternatives than the designer. One may conclude that users may have much to offer designers in terms of alternative program specifications, goals and purposes.<sup>65</sup>

The differences between users and designers of innovation does not end with Frey. These differences may also indicate why education has not made the organizational change indicated by environmental forces. Despite the assumption of new roles and titles such as change agent and organizational development consultants, few of the planned changes have been institutionalized.

Howes proposes that a major reason for the lack of successful change is due to several factors.

- . change theorists have not established a viable, dynamic theory of changing nor have they identified the "manipulable levers of changing."
- . managers have not been trained to work effectively with change
- . the process of adopting innovation

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

is not clearly understood.<sup>66</sup>

Based upon the outcomes of her study, Howes describes the implications related to institutional change.

- . Managers can be more successful if they make an effort to prepare staff for the change and then assist personally in the implementation.
- . Findings in this study support theorists who feel it is most important to know the organization in detail--including situational factors. External strategies should not be employed without investigating the situation where they would operate.<sup>67</sup>

Organizational change remains a challenge to the theorist and the practicing administrator. The information uncovered by investigators serves as guideposts and points of departure for others. There is, however, a body of information which can help the on-the-job professional.

#### Development of the Push for Excellence Program

The legal and moral victories won during the American social protest movement of the 1960's did not bring immediate relief for the long-term problem of improving school

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<sup>66</sup>Nancy J. Howes, A Contingency Model for Predicting Institutionalization of Innovation Across Divergent Organizations, ERIC Document Reproduction ED 136394, Bethesda, Maryland, 1977, pp. 4-5.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., pp. 29-30.

performances of minority and poor students. Chicago and other urban communities examined their situations hoping to find evidence of improved school performances after the introduction of federally funded programs. Test results continued to show that school systems were not effectively coping with the tasks.

At the same time professional educators were reviewing the delivery of services to minority and poor children, some local communities were making their own assessments. They found that principals had become outwardly more sensitive, textbooks were multicultural and multiethnic, minority teachers were in more classrooms, bias based upon non-academic factors was indeed officially banned. The more obvious impediments to the success of the urban child were more or less under control. Communities still wanted the expected turnaround in academic achievement which the above changes were to produce. As a community based organization, the Education division of Operation PUSH proposed that what was lacking was the motivation to achieve in school.

This group recognized that poor people and their children did not really see success in school as the key to solving their problems. To restore the community's faith in education and schools the Education division suggested the development of a citywide effort to motivate public school students to work hard for academic success. Thus, under the auspices of

Operation PUSH a committee of the involved organizations was formed. Representatives from the Chicago Teachers Union, the Illinois Office of Education, the Chicago Board of Education and the Education division developed a program in 1973 called Motivation for Excellence. The major purpose of the Motivation for Excellence program was to do whatever was necessary to encourage urban youth not only to stay in school but, while there, strive for academic excellence. In the introductory statement of the proposal the Motivation for Excellence committee came to the following conclusions:

In seeking solutions various groups and individuals have identified those agencies and factors seeming to pose the problems and have suggested that eliminating the problem(s) would result in the solution(s).

However, calling for the closing of schools, the firing of personnel, the raising of salaries, the alteration of textbooks and subject matter--and other such actions--have not yet yielded the results sought. Therefore, something other than--or in addition to--the exposing of that which is wrong must come forth if significant change is to take place . . . .

We suspect that lifestyles and incentives (or lack of incentives) have something to do with the inner city student achieving on a lower level than his outer city counterpart..

Our proposal deals with positive steps towards motivating excellence and providing learning incentives for students; teaching incentives for

- teachers; and participatory incentives

for parents . . .<sup>68</sup>

The program as proposed would build mechanisms for rewarding publicly excellence in academic achievement. Students and teachers would be recognized, praised and honored by their communities annually with the most outstanding receiving special attention at a citywide ceremony.<sup>69</sup>

One of the beliefs which did undergird the Motivation for Excellence program was that poor families did not have the means to reward their children for school achievement. The importance of the inability of parents to make such rewards was clear to the committee for they realized that there was no evidence in the child's world that it would pay for him to do well in school.<sup>70</sup> Parents with incomes above the poverty levels can and do provide more immediate goals for their children: an allowance bonus, a new recording, a trip to an amusement park, etc. Poor families do not have the resources to make these kinds of deals with their children. The poor parent does not have the time, energy nor the information to, on a parent to child basis, recognize academic success.<sup>71</sup> Though the Motivation for Excellence program

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<sup>68</sup>Operation PUSH, "Motivation for Excellence,: A proposal, 1974, pp. 2-3.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>70</sup>Howard Denton, Notes from the Motivation for Excellence Committee Meetings, November-December, 1973.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

gained initial support from all of the cooperating agencies it lost momentum when the political realities of 1974 caused posturing not flexible enough to accommodate Operation PUSH.

Push for Excellence grew out of the same needs which formed the basis for Operation PUSH's earlier program. Push for Excellence, however, quickly gained a great deal of exposure and approval by the popular press. The media attention to Excel increased after a pilot program was approved for implementation in ten high schools by the Chicago Board of Education on May 26, 1976. When it became known that the Excel program would be considered by the Board television station WBBM editorialized:

. . . Jackson has come up with an ambitious "Push for Excellence" program to be initiated in ten Chicago high schools. The plan calls for improved behavior in the halls and stricter dress codes.

. . . The reading, writing and arithmetic teams must surpass the athletic teams. And students must help eliminate drugs and crime in their schools.

Chicago School Superintendent Joseph Hannon supports Jackson's program, and so do we . . .<sup>72</sup>

Raspberry, writing for the Washington Post, stated that Jackson's Excel program made sense:

Maybe publicity is one of the reasons behind his (Jackson's) 10

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<sup>72</sup>Gary Cummings, "A Push for Excellence in Our Schools," An Editorial Televised April 23, 1976.



principles for moving the public schools toward educational excellence. And there is, for me, the embarrassing risk of sounding like his personal press agent. Still I believe the principles are worth passing on . . .<sup>73</sup>

In an issue devoted to minority, multicultural and bilingual education, one professional journal describes the Excel program:

The PUSH Program for Excellence is built on a solid foundation of socialization theory. It begins with the premise that socialization is most successful when the forces which shape a child's attitudes and behaviors operate in a consistent and unified manner to communicate beliefs and understandings essential for success in the society of which he is a part.<sup>74</sup>

As the Excel program received more attention from the mass media efforts have been made to characterize it as a back to basics idea. That it is a return to the old way is not denied by the PUSH people. Ellis sees it as a back to basics program with goals that are "deceptively simplistic."<sup>75</sup> The throw back to basics is found in urging youngsters to learn well the skills traditionally taught in schools and to

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<sup>73</sup>William Raspberry, "Jessie Jackson's Plan for Improving Education," Washington Post, October 27, 1976.

<sup>74</sup>Eugene E. Eubanks and Daniel U. Levine, "The PUSH Program for Excellence in Big-City Schools," Kappan, January, 1977, p. 386.

<sup>75</sup>James E. Ellis, "Back to Basics," Saint Louis Post-Dispatch, January 30, 1978.

follow the work ethic. Simply, goals include "classroom discipline, high academic achievement and respect for traditional American institutions.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

#### Introduction

Given the purpose of this study and the kinds of data required to carry out the purpose, it was necessary to obtain from participating administrators descriptions of their actions during the implementation stages of the Push for Excellence program. Thus, the school building principals who are or who have been in the program were asked to react to a 17 item questionnaire. Other administrators were interviewed to determine their approaches to managing the Push for Excellence program. Finally, in-depth studies were made of the administrative practices for two Chicago high schools in the program.

This chapter describes the instruments used to collect the data as well as the techniques employed in the interview process. A review of the items on the questionnaire is also presented in this chapter along with a description of the interview guide. Finally, there is a section which describes the treatment of the collected information and Greiner's model for organizational change.

### Data Collection from Principals

The target population for this study consisted of all persons who were or who had been named by action of the Board of Education, City of Chicago, as principals of schools in the Excel program. Ten present principals and three former principals were mailed a 17 item questionnaire. In the individual letters which accompanied the questionnaire, principals were asked to cooperate in the study by reacting to the survey instrument.

The questionnaire was designed to solicit information from the principals using minimal prompts and allowing the respondents to react with little or no interference from the instrument itself. If the above conditions were to be met then the questionnaire would have to contain mostly open-end items. The use of open-end items is, for the purpose of this study, in keeping with Payne who spells out the merits of the free-answer or open-end item:

The free-answer is uninfluenced, it  
elicits a wide variety of responses. . .  
it provides background for interpreting answers to other questions. . .  
it gives the respondent a chance to  
have his own say-so with ideas which  
more restrictive types of questions  
would not permit him to express.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 17 items on the questionnaire, 13 are free-

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<sup>1</sup>Stanley L. Payne, The Art of Asking Questions, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1951, pp. 49-50.

answer while the remaining four require a check-off of suggested responses. The respondent has the option in the closed questions to write in a response not listed. Items numbered 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 16 were designed to obtain descriptions of the actions the principals took specifically to implement the Push for Excellence program. Careful consideration was given to these items during the construction of the instrument so that there was no suggestion of a "looked for response."

The closed items may have provided some areas of consideration for the respondent when he answered the open-end questions; however, it was important that the investigation have some form and internal balance, thus the four closed items. Basically, the four closed items were to obtain the level and nature of involvement by the principal, community and staff.

In the construction of the questionnaire a concerted effort was made to avoid the presentation of items which could be viewed as a means of evaluating the program or participating agencies. However, two items, numbers 11 and 17, asked the principals to evaluate his administrative actions by identifying actions which were most helpful and those to be avoided during implementation. The prompts used served to help the administrator recall general areas which may have required his attention during the implementation stage. Further, the use of open-end items did not preclude the need

to have all the respondents address the same general areas of administration. The free-answer items were constructed to determine the principal's perception of the tasks and the desired outcomes in terms of agreed upon activities for the program. Items numbered 6a and 10 are related in that they both serve to describe the tasks principals feel are necessary to change their schools while items 6b, 9, 12 and 15 asked the administrator to describe the actions he took to effect change. Descriptions of the effects on behavior are called for in response to item 16. This question is seeking a goal statement in relation to changes in the teacher and the teaching--what was the desired impact of the principal actions upon the teacher or the teacher's attitude.

The closed questions sought to establish some basic data in three areas. First, what forces were acting upon the school's decision to join the program; second, who, in addition to the principals, played major roles in the program; and third, the level of personal involvement maintained by the principals. Question number 7 which asks for the percentage of time spent on this program will also indicate personal involvement.

The procedure called for follow-up interviews with each of the respondents who completed the optional identifying information section of the questionnaire. The purpose of these interviews was to clarify responses to the open-end items. This procedure tended to yield additional information--

information that the principals may have been reluctant to put on paper. Most of the additional input was in the form of opinions or attitudes about specific events. The clarification process was conducted carefully so as to not influence the response nor give any indication that a principal's performance was being evaluated. Thus, the interviews were pointed to specific responses and specific items although no attempt was made to prevent general comments. These comments were treated in the same manner as those solicited on the questionnaire.

The interview guide used was the questionnaire with prepared questions on those items which were responded to in a less than adequate fashion or with language that was not clear. Additional information and description was sought on actions taken by principals as requested in response to items 6b, 9 and 11. Principals were also invited to suggest recommended actions for school building administrators planning to join the Excel program.

#### In-Depth Study Approach

The in-depth study involved the principals of two Push for Excellence schools in an extended interview session, an examination of the principals' bulletins to teachers, a review of communications to parents about Excel and the principals' notices to the student body.

The extended interview was structured to cover four

specific areas of interaction between the principals, the total school community and Operation PUSH. During the interview sessions the principals were encouraged to react to the following items:

- . Community -- Describe meetings with the community. Why and by whom were the meetings called? What role did the principal play in the actual meetings? What were the desired outcomes? What resources in the community were made available?
- . Teachers -- What were the techniques used to get teachers involved? How did the principal maintain teacher interest? How did the principal involve teachers with PUSH?
- . Students -- What groups in the student body were targeted for Excel activities? What role did the principal play in encouraging students to improve their school performance?
- . Operation PUSH -- Describe interaction with Operation PUSH. What was the nature of the relationship? How was the principal able to use the resources from PUSH in the program?



### Treatment of the Data

To satisfy its purpose, this study required an extensive analysis and interpretation of the actions of a closed set of school building administrators, over a time specific, which were directly related to the implementation of the Push for Excellence program. Thus, the data collected were not statistically treated; however, graphics were developed to illustrate similarities and differences in responses.

Because the majority of the questionnaire items was free-answer questions the responses required careful sorting and classification. To facilitate the sorting and classification process, each response was carded to allow for regrouping during analysis, and each card was coded to allow the reassembly of the original questionnaire. All of the responses, on an item by item basis, were read and characterized to establish general categories for classification purposes. Each item was then read a second and third time to classify and verify classification. If there was doubt about the meaning of a response a note was made to seek clarification during the follow-up interview.

Analysis of the responses was made using three approaches. First, the respondent as whole approach: Given the Push for Excellence program, what actions as defined by the questionnaire did one individual take to insert the project into an ongoing school program? Secondly, the item by

item approach: In a given area, as prescribed by the survey instruments, what did principals as a group do to accomplish a task? And thirdly, the critical question approach: If two items are considered critical, what relationships or predictions can be projected based upon responses to key items?

To meet the prime objective of this study, the analytic process searched for response patterns clear enough to formulate a design of an administrative implementation model for schools entering the Push for Excellence program. This analytic process was structured to be sensitive to the following factors:

- . similarities and the degree of similarities within the total number of responses to an item
- . differences and the magnitude of differences within the total number of responses
- . diversity within the response range
- . indications of central tendencies

#### Greiner's Model for Organizational Change

To understand the process better, Greiner investigated organizational change patterns. He concluded that the process of organizational change has, in the past several years, become revolutionary as opposed to evolutionary. The major impetus for the changed process has been, according to

Greiner, the rapidly changing environments which, "are challenging managements to become far more alert and inventive than they ever were before."<sup>2</sup> While Greiner speaks from a business orientation, his findings appear applicable to administrators in the public sector.

In his investigations Greiner found similarities in the approaches used to introduce organizational change by those organizations which reported successful results. His findings indicate that there is a relationship between the nature of the force leading the change effort and the probability for a successful change. The nature of the force or power was determined by its location on a power continuum with change by decree (unilateral) at one end and change by T group sessions (delegated) at the other.<sup>3</sup> At the middle of this continuum, one would find shared power.

An analysis of the reported results revealed similarities and differences between reports of successful change patterns and those reporting failure to achieve the stated objectives. Further, analysis by Greiner produced, "some very distinct patterns" in the change process. Based upon these findings Greiner proposed an explanatory scheme for viewing organizational change. The framework for the scheme

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<sup>2</sup>Larry Greiner, "Patterns of Organizational Change," Harvard Business Review, September, 1972, pp. 213-14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

depends upon two key assumptions:

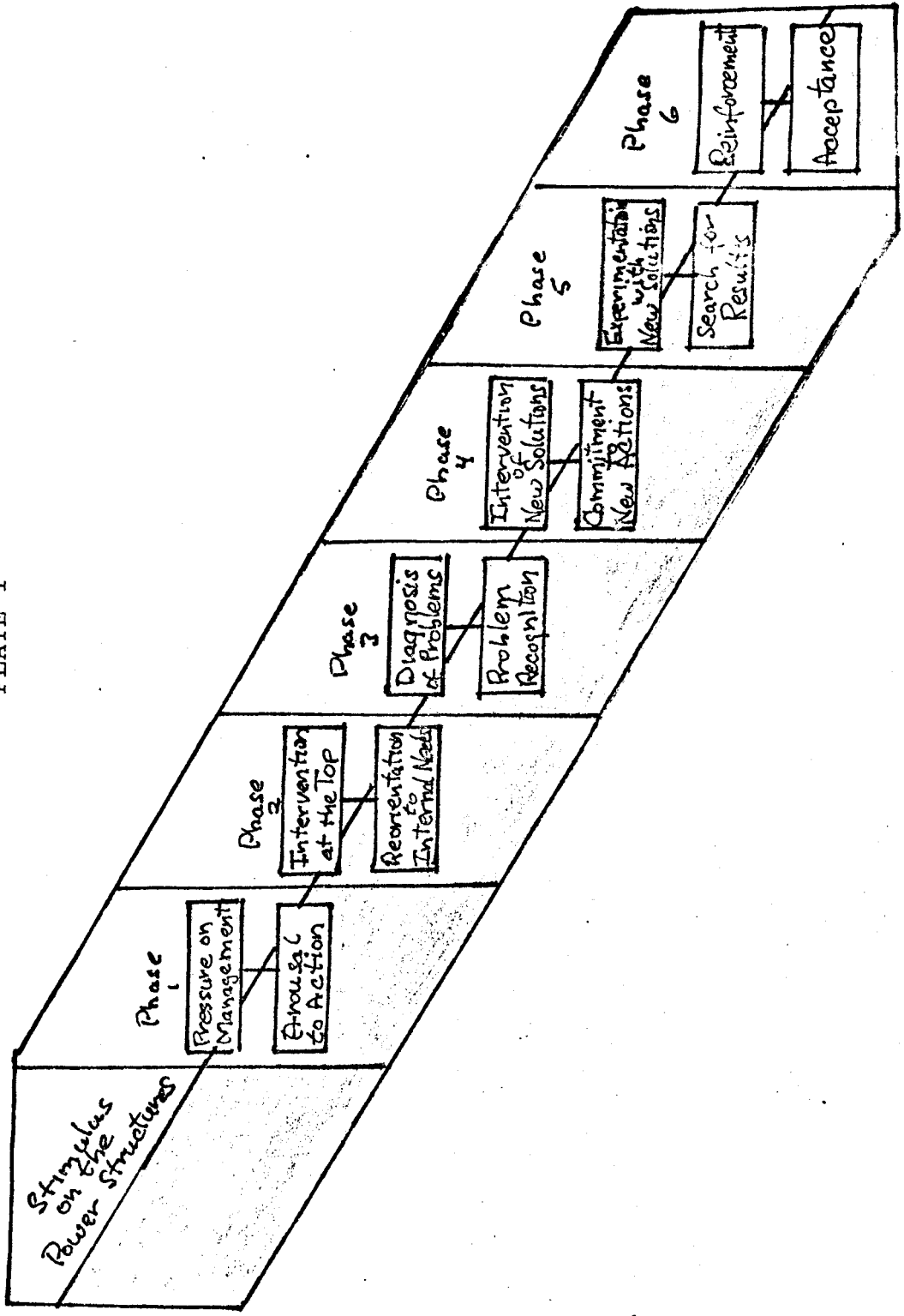
- 1) Successful change depends basically upon the ability of the top administrator to share in a significant manner some influence and power. The sharing of decision making authority and responsibility is especially critical.
- 2) The sharing of influence and power should be a "developmental process of change." The sharing takes place in stages where stimuli produce a reaction and form the power structure which triggers the next phase in the process.

Greiner's model for successful organizational change as shown in Plate I illustrates the six phases which constitute the dynamics of movement away from an established organization. The first phase, pressure and arousal, is viewed as the primary reason for the leadership in an organization to introduce change. In successful patterns of change, the pressure is from the top down and induced to correct the organization's interaction with its external environment or improve its ability to achieve stated goals.

The second phase, intervention and reorientation, brings to the top of the organization a new person either as a re-

# Dynamics of Successful Organization Change Greiner's Model

PLATE I



placement in the management team or as an outside consultant. The newcomer is in a good position to make an objective appraisal of the organization and reorient the leadership to its own internal problems. Diagnosis and recognition is the third phase. During meetings of representatives of the various levels within the organization, efforts are made to assemble information and to identify causes of problems. It is in meetings of these kinds that Greiner believes a shared approach to power and change becomes manifest. Thus the third phase is the crucial one.

Through consulting with subordinates on the nature of problems, the top managers are seen as indicating a willingness to involve others in the decision making process. Discussion topics, which formerly may have been regarded as taboo, are now treated as legitimate areas for further inquiry

. . . .

The significance of this step seems to go beyond the possible intellectual benefits derived from a thorough diagnosis of organization problems. This is due to the fact that in front of every subordinate there is evidence that (a) top management is willing to change, (b) important problems are being acknowledged and faced up to, and (c) ideas from lower levels are being valued by upper levels.<sup>4</sup>

Phase four is invention and commitment. Here the newcomer is in a good position to help the organization develop creative solutions to recognized problems. By developing

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

the new solutions with various levels of the organization there is every likelihood that concomitantly there will also develop a commitment, up and down the line, to work toward organization goals. The fifth phase, experimentation and search, builds upon the fourth; that is, testing the newly developed solutions and searching for evidence upon which the organization can evaluate its actions. In this state there is also some testing of the new internal relationships to determine how shared power and influence are working.

Reinforcement and acceptance, the last phase, occurs when there has been a successful change in the organization, a change that can be perceived by the members of the organization and results in a positive feeling about what has been changed. It is the positiveness of the change that reinforces organization actions and brings with it acceptance of the changes. Greiner points this out.

The most significant effect of this phase is probably a greater and more permanent acceptance at all levels of the underlying methods used to bring about the change. In each of the successful changes the use of shared power is more of an institutional and continuing practice. . .<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 223.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Introduction

Data collected for this study are presented and analyzed in three sections of this chapter. The first section is concerned with data generated by the questionnaire. The second section presents information collected during the study of the implementation of the Push for Excellence program at two schools while the third section treats interviews with other administrators and related materials.

#### Responses to the Questionnaire

Questionnaires were sent to the set of persons who are now or who have been principal of a high school in Chicago which participated in the Push for Excellence program as determined by the Board of Education. The number of persons in the set totaled 13. Eleven questionnaires were returned; however, three of the respondents did not complete the optional identifying section. Seven principals were contacted for follow-up interviews.

Respondents utilized the open-end format of the questionnaire and supplemental verbal statements to describe a wide range of behaviors attributed to the implementation of



the Push for Excellence program. Responses, on an item by item basis, are examined in this section.

### Item 1

Check those factors which led to your school's decision to participate in the Excel program. Circle the most decisive factor.

While most of the respondents checked more than one factor, seven cited central office or district superintendent pressures. Six principals indicated that they made a determination that the program had merit and their schools would participate. Community interest as a deciding factor was cited only once while teacher interest was cited twice. Three principals each chose as deciding factors student interest and suggestions from the PUSH organization.

Principals not circling one factor indicated that it was the combination of factors which led to the decision to participate in the Excel program--none of the choices given contributed decisively to their decision.

Responses to Item 1 suggests that most of the principals felt that their superiors wanted them to volunteer to participate in the Push for Excellence program. The principals may have sensed the pressure to join from the district level but believed that the central office was very interested in their decisions. Four principals cited this pressure as the most decisive factor in their decision to participate, while

only one other principal indicated that there was a decisive factor in this decision.

TABLE 1  
RESPONSES TO ITEM 1

Check those factors which led to your school's decision to participate in the Excel program. Circle the most decisive factor.

	Frequency	Circled Frequency
Community interest	1	
Teacher interest	2	
Central office or district superintendent pressure	7	4
Student interest	3	
Principal's determination that program had merit	6	1
Suggested by local PUSH organization	3	
Other		

The spread of the responses indicates that other principals felt there was a base of support for the Push for Excellence in their schools which, with their own determination, could provide the basis for participation.

### Item 2

What actions did you take to influence

your school's decision to participate in Excel?

This free-answer item prompted a variety of responses. The majority of principals, eight, took some direct action to bring the program to their schools. Within this majority, principals either made an assessment of the current conditions in their schools and decided to join Excel or proceeded to promote or sell the program to their school communities. Four principals stated they elected to sell the Push for Excellence program to their staffs while three administrators made the decision for their schools. Two respondents indicated that the program was in the schools when they were assigned--one of the two stated that it was his decision to remain in Push for Excellence. One respondent stated that the decision to participate was made for him and his job became one of carrying out orders.

The statements made by the respondents indicate that they did take actions to bring the Push for Excellence program to their schools. However, the responses suggest that their actions were to implement a decision already made. Five of the principals in selling the program or carrying out orders were apparently preparing staff to implement the program while the remaining three state that they acted individually in deciding to join the program.

### Item 3

What resources would you consider absolutely necessary to start the Excel program?

When asked to identify resources essential to the implementation of the Push for Excellence program in Item 3, principals cited needs in the area of publicity or public relations. The essential resources sought by three principals ranged from posters and handbills for use in the schools to the development of professional materials for use with citywide newspapers and the electronic press. Other responses are listed.

- . a cooperative, dedicated administrator
- . strong leadership in schools
- . community support
- . student and teacher support
- . Reverend Jackson
- . the conceptual framework of the Excel program
- . commitment by the principal
- . provisions for recognizing excellence
- . back-up from PUSH
- . interested people
- . time to accomplish related tasks

Principals did not see material resources as most essential but indicated that human resources would be most valuable to

administrators implementing the Excel program. The range of responses also indicates how individually structured the Excel program needs to be in order to match a particular school community to be served. With the exception of the principal who listed Reverend Jackson as the key resource, all other principals identified only resources under their control or influence as essential to the program's implementation.

#### Item 4

What was done to build and maintain community support for Excel?

Three principals in response to Item 4 stated that little or no effort was made to build and maintain community support for the Push for Excellence program. One response in this group suggested that there existed in his community no support for Excel and, more important to him, there was evidence that the majority of the community members would not support Excel regardless of the principal's efforts. The majority of principals, however, did say that they took action to secure community support and in some cases community involvement. Several techniques were used. The most common of the stated approaches was designed to keep parents informed as to just what the program meant to students and the school. Eight principals worked with community members by:

- . hosting informational meetings
- . organizing parent Excel committees
- . involving local school councils with Excel
- . issuing newsreleases
- . involving parents in Excel activities
- . forming Excel parents booster groups
- . meeting with other agency heads in the area
- . inviting parents to help plan Excel activities

These responses tend to show that school administrators saw community support as important to the successful implementation of the Push for Excellence program. Evidence of a strong effort by the school to gain parental support is especially meaningful in light of the traditionally low levels of community participation in the activities of most schools in the pilot. This evidence is also an indication of the principal's perception of Excel as one of the best vehicles he has had to develop additional community rapport and parental support. The efforts of individual principals were also influenced by their perception of parents' feelings about PUSH. One respondent stated: "A few parents with serious reservations about Operation PUSH did not want their children in any activity which would look like something supporting that organization." These parents, the

principal felt, held the school directly responsible for maintaining a proper distance between children and the organization.

#### Item 5

Indicate level of involvement during implementation stages.

In response to Item 5, ten of the principals indicated that implementing the Push for Excellence program required intensive administrator involvement. One principal stated that he was not assigned to the school during the implementation stage. Another principal, in addition to indicating that Excel required intense involvement, also checked 'other' and wrote, "Attention had to be paid to phasing in the program to avoid (the principal's administrative efforts) from becoming too thin." In amplifying their responses principals stated that the nature of the program made it impractical to delegate responsibility especially during the implementation stages. Respondents in general stated that they as building principals had to be ready and available to talk with parents, teachers and the press about Excel whenever the need arose. "Because of what could happen at PUSH on Saturday and all of the attention from the news media I had to be ready to respond to my people about what we were doing," was one principal's comment.

TABLE 2  
RESPONSES TO ITEM 5\*

During the implementation stages did you feel that Excel required:

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Normal care and attention . . . . .	1
More intensive administrator involvement . . . . .	10
Less involvement--project was directed by committees . . . . .	0
Less intensive--outside agency provided leadership . . . . .	0
Less direct involvement--project handled by an assistant . . . . .	0
Other . . . . .	2

\*One respondent checked three choices.

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The reasons given by the respondents for seeing themselves as more intensely involved in the implementation of the Excel program seem to anticipate difficulties during the early stages--difficulties different from those usually encountered when introducing a new program. There was one principal who indicated that his heavy involvement was related to the need to provide students and staff with leadership, direction and up-to-date information. The responses suggest that principals saw themselves defending their participation. It also seems that principals generally felt



that their high visability during the implementation would serve to make students and teachers aware of the administrator's concern for the success of Excel in their schools. . . that this program did indeed have a high priority.

#### Item 6

What, briefly, was most essential for staff to do to make Excel work at your school?

The first part of Item 6 generated a comparatively narrow range of responses in terms of distinctive categories. Four principals stated that the most essential task for staff was becoming committed and getting involved in the program. Three of these principals pointed out specific kinds of involvement: involvement with parents and students was seen as extremely important. These administrators stated that teachers had to feel within themselves that they could make a difference in the education of their students.

Three other principals indicated that what was most essential was for staff to really do what they were supposed to do. Two of the three administrators stated that Excel goals could be obtained if teachers would do what they are paid to do and do it well. One of the three principals reported that teachers at his school are already involved in an achievement boosting effort and the results of which would be positive if staff would follow through.

One principal felt that his staff needed inservice sessions to become more familiar with Excel and how to develop related activities, while another wanted to make his staff not think of Excel as a Black program. One principal did not respond, while another saw the need to maintain a strong instruction program.

To the second part of Item 6 principals responded telling what was done to enable staff to accomplish the essential acts as described above. Their responses ranged from having the staff continue current practices to re-training their teachers. Six principals stated that they became personally involved with their staffs; making changes in what was going on in their schools. Three of the six administrators developed inservice programs for teachers and then worked closely with smaller groups. These six principals stated that they provided support and leadership in use of the existing school resources to help teachers begin the Push for Excellence program. Of the two principals who stated that they had in-place a program very much like Excel, one did not respond and the other reported that his staff was asked to maintain their present practices. An administrator stated that he was limited by the lack of staff and the tight staffing formula imposed by the central office. Still another respondent stated that he helped staff by exposing them to the Excel program and Reverend Jackson.

The responses to Item 6 tend to show that principals generally had no serious complaints about what teachers were doing for students. There were, however, indications of concern about how teachers were conducting learning experiences. The respondents want to improve or change the attitudes of teachers by obtaining greater commitment to teaching and more involvement with students--this change would result in a better classroom climate.

There were also some feelings, as the responses revealed, that teachers were not doing what they were supposed to do. The promise of the Excel program could, for principals with this concern, be help from an informed community to push teachers as well as students towards better classroom performance.

#### Item 7

What percentage of your working day was devoted to Excel?

The responses to Item 7 ranged from 100% to less than 1%. Three respondents stated that the Excel program had become the main program in their schools, therefore, they devoted 100% of their working day to making it work. Two principals estimated that 5% of their time went toward Excel while one stated that 15% of his day was devoted to that purpose. The four remaining responses included one who "made no time study," one who spent much of his time with

the program during the early implementation stages but much less afterwards, and, finally, two responses of 1 to 5 percent.

The third closed question, Item 8, asked principals to estimate the frequency in which they engaged in 15 activities in relationship with the Push for Excellence program. The activities listed in the questionnaire were related to the three major elements in the schools; students, teachers, and the general community. Table 3 shows the frequency of response for each of the listed activities. Respondents indicated that within the community element, political leaders were the least involved. Businessmen were regularly involved in the Excel program at three schools, but never contacted by four. Two principals met with religious leaders on a regular basis, three others never met with them, while five of them seldom met with local churchmen.

The responses reveal that principals interacted most regularly with those elements inside the schoolhouse--students and teachers. While there were several principals who did reach out to all segments of the school community; meeting with businessmen, churchmen, and community leaders; students and teachers received most of the administrator's attention. These findings support the reactions to Item 3 which showed that principals viewed as essential resources those directly under their influence.

TABLE 3  
RESPONSES TO ITEM 8

Using the scale (N-Never, O-Once, S-Seldom, R-Regularly, IR-Irregularly, NR-No Response), please indicate how frequently you took the actions listed below related to the implementation of the Excel program.

Responses	Never	Once	Seldom	Regularly	Irregularly	No Response
Conducted community meetings			5	4	1	1
Met with local political leaders	5	2	2	1		1
Delegated major responsibility to assistant principal	2	1	3	4		1
Held general student assembly		1	4	5		1
Met with local religious leaders	3		5	2		1
Talked with employee groups - teachers union/local education association	2		3	5		1
Met with student council		1	2	7	1	
Held general staff meeting		1	3	6	1	
Delegated major responsibility to a committee of teachers	4		3	3		1
Involved PUSH staff directly with teachers	1	2	6	1		1
Involved PUSH staff directly with community	2	1	7			1
Involved PUSH staff directly with students		2	6	2		1
Met with local businessmen	4		3	3		1
Maintained personal involvement				9	1	1

The responses also show that despite the religious orientation of Operation PUSH and the citing of church organizations as having the capacity to influence children, school administrators seldom, if ever, met with the religious leaders in their communities. This lack of contact with religious leaders, however, is consistent with principals turning first to in-house resources--those forces within his sphere of influence. Political leaders were not involved with the Excel program nor did principals, as a group, elect to bring staff of PUSH into direct contact with their communities on a regular basis.

#### Item 9

What was done to change your school  
to an Excel school?

Four principals stated that their efforts to change their schools were vested in obtaining commitment from teachers to the goals and objectives of the Excel program. As one principal put it, "Teachers committed to the Excel program will affect the lives of children, specifically, the way children see themselves and how they view the importance of doing well in class." Another respondent, in expanding upon his initial response, indicated that committed teachers were able to affect student attitudes about achievement and behavior. These principals felt that if they could effect changes in attitudes of teachers and students they would then have an Excel school.

Two principals stated that their schools were changed to an Excel school when the principals so announced. . .

"The imprimatur placed on the school." Another respondent stated that his school basically continued to do what it had been doing all along but the school was now using the Push for Excellence format and materials. Within the responses of six of the principals it was stated that the changes in the schools came about, to a large degree, by relabeling existing activities or by packaging ongoing activities as the Excel program.

Principals indicated by their responses that they wanted to change their schools by changing teacher attitudes. Thus, the responses to this item are supportive of those generated by Item 6a. The responses suggest that teacher attitudes as opposed to teacher actions are impediments to an improvement of student performance. Further, the responses indicated a desire to change teacher attitudes but did not speak to the how or mechanism for bringing about such a change. However, again the assumption that the responses suggest is that students can perform well; schools can become excellent institutions, once principals have developed the proper set of teacher attitudes.

Responses to this item also suggest that principals chose to relabel activities as a part of their change to an Excel school. The change operation was one of gathering up

all the similar pieces--those that fit the new program's goals and objectives--then relabel and repackage. If principals felt pressured to join the program they would also feel obligated to have in operation activities which could be new as their Excel program. Change by labeling would not be peculiar to the Push for Excellence program.

#### Item 10

What element(s) in your school did you feel had to be changed in order for it to become an Excel school?

Item 10 asked for an assessment of the schools' delivery of services practices to determine which components should be altered. Five administrators cited the need to change school climates by changing the attitudes of teachers, students and parents. . . the attitudes of all elements of the school community required changing towards one another and towards self. These attitudinal changes were objectives in four of these principals' Excel programs. Of the remaining five responses three indicated that there was no need to change. Two principals reported that they had to use more staff time and their own time to relate to the Excel program and participate in PUSH activities--these were the changes in the operation of their schools. One administrator cited the need to change his staff's attitude toward the public advocate of the Excel program, Reverend Jackson, before the school could really work toward the objectives



of the program.

Again the need to change attitudes looms large in the principals' responses to this item. They cite a need for all members of the school community to alter their conditions by adopting attitudes which are more conducive to improving the teaching/learning climate. This reinforces earlier statements that the attitudes of students and staff directly impact the quality of an instruction program.

#### Item 11

As building principal what was the one action taken that proved most productive in getting Excel launched?

When asked in Item 11 what action was most effective in implementing the Excel program, school building administrators' responses were diverse even though two principals did not respond. (The respondents did not identify themselves on the questionnaire, ruling out the opportunity of raising the question during the follow-up interviews.)

Table 4 summarizes the other nine responses.

All of the principals responded to Item 11 by describing actions they personally took to begin the Push for Excellence program. In most every statement was the suggestion that the launching of Excel should be an attention getting act--one which would also serve as announcement to the public that a school was joining the program. The principals' initial efforts seemingly were designed to act

directly upon teachers and students, thereby putting all on notice that a new program was getting underway.

TABLE 4  
RESPONSES TO ITEM 11

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As building principal what was the one action taken that proved most productive in getting Excel launched?

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- . Obtaining citywide publicity--students knew that the community supported what schools have said
  - . Complete commitment to the program by the principal
  - . Banning hat wearing by male students in the school
  - . Have the school involved in a visible program
  - . Making the decision to become involved--showing and outlining the direction of the school's involvement
  - . Meeting with staff and with the community
  - . Asking Reverend Jackson to address the student body
  - . Inviting Reverend Jackson to speak to students and staff
  - . Having Carl Boyd (Chicago Excel Director) and Reverend Jackson speak at the school
-

Item 12

What specific actions did you take to encourage full participation by teachers in the Excel program?

Item 12 asked principals to describe actions taken to encourage teachers to participate in the Push for Excellence program. One administrator did not respond and two others stated they took no action to encourage teacher participation. All other respondents listed the actions taken. These acts ranged from conducting inservice programs to selling Excel to individual teachers. One respondent used what he termed "friendly persuasion" to encourage his staff to participate, while another utilized the school public address system to solicit full participation from teachers and students.

The actions described were acts in which the principal himself engaged. Most of the acts involved relating directly with teachers individually or in small groups. Principals seemed to feel that the best results could be obtained using a kind of personal diplomacy; appealing to the teacher's desire to do a better job with students. In seeking help with this task principals looked to the Chicago Teachers Union and departmental chairpersons hoping that they would find peer group support.

Item 13

- What problems did you encounter while implementing the Excel program?

In response to Item 13, each of the respondents made statements. This item asked for the major problems encountered during the implementation of the Excel program. Eight principals stated that the reluctance of staff and community to join the Excel program was their major difficulty. One principal was picketed by the community for joining the program. It was also stated that some reluctance from staff was due to the fact that the program provided no immediate concrete rewards for teacher participation; no additional income, no career advancement opportunities, nor status activities within their peer group. One of the eight principals stated that teacher reluctance should be expected when implementing a no cost, controversial program--"not really a controversial program, but a program whose public advocate is indeed controversial in some Chicago communities."

Three principals listed difficulties which were related to the mechanics of implementation. These difficulties included short timelines, lack of follow through, confusing information, and the lack of funds to keep the program activities going.

A closer examination of the principals' responses reveals that most of them found fault with the agency that conceived the Excel program. Many of the difficulties which principals experienced were blamed upon the poor image Operation PUSH has in some communities. Principals also faulted

the Push for Excellence staff for a lack of funds and follow through. Thus, the major problems confronting administrators during the implementation stages were caused by PUSH even though the Excel program was designed locally with program implementation and in-school staff remaining under the principal's control.

In response to Item 14 principals were asked to check actions taken which were related to the Excel program. By far the most frequently checked action was the assumption by the principal of the responsibility for operating the Excel programs at the school level. The responses are charted in Table 5. Other frequently checked actions included those related to activities involving students; student committees to lead programs and having Excel as a function of the student council.

Although it is clear that most of the principals wanted it understood that they retained primary responsibility for the Push for Excellence program, the responses indicate that they have taken actions which assign some responsibility to student groups. The existing student council and newly formed special student committees were asked to lead the schools' student activities. There is an indication that Excel responsibilities are being assigned to teacher and teacher-parent groups as the program completes its third year in Chicago. Principals also kept parents involved so

TABLE 5  
RESPONSES TO ITEM 14

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Please check all of the actions listed which were a part of the Excel program in your school.

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Special student committees were formed to lead program . . . . .	5
Principal appointed a committee of teachers to lead program . . . . .	3
Primary responsibility for Excel placed with vice/assistant principal . . . . .	3
Parent/teacher committee appointed by principal to lead program . . . . .	3
Excel became a function of student council . . . . .	5
Primary responsibility for the Excel program assumed by building principal . . . . .	7
Volunteer committee of teachers led Excel program . . . . .	1
An elected group of teachers led the Excel program . . . . .	0
*Other . . . . .	2
*Principal appointed a team of teachers, administrators, and parents to lead Excel	
Local school council endorsed and became involved in the program	
Involved parents through organizations other than the PTA to avoid conflicts	

---

that the entire school community would have representation when decisions were made about the Excel program. This attempt to keep all elements a part of the decision making process is seen as reflecting the program's goals and objectives and not just what principals should do.

#### Item 15

In the administrative plan for implementation of Excel, what provisions were made to promote student participation?

Student participation is the focus of Item 15. Administrators were asked to describe the provisions made to promote student participation in the Excel program. Seven of the respondents stated that they planned for and then used the student council to encourage and guide student participation. Students, through the council, sat on planning committees with teachers and parents in one school while in another school student council members were personally promoting Excel by making presentations to classrooms and meetings of other groups. One principal's plans included having students set standards for attendance, achievement and attitudes, and then decide how students would best meet the standards.

Other responses indicated that the Push for Excellence office would provide mechanisms for students' participation. This participation would include signing pledge cards, appearing on the PUSH radio program, and attending citywide

activities such as the Excel convocation and the Push for Excellence parade. One principal did not respond to this item.

That the responses of principals to Item 15 indicated either involving students in planning or participating in activities organized by the Excel staff is evidence that there were no school directed student activities available when the program began.

#### Item 16

What was the primary objective of teacher meetings regarding Excel? What did you want teachers to take with them from Excel meetings?

In Item 16 principals were asked to state their primary objectives for meetings they held with teachers regarding the Excel program. The item was self-refining in that it asked for specifics: "What did the principal want the teacher to take from Excel meetings?"

Three principals used teacher meetings as the vehicle for obtaining a commitment from their staffs--a committed staff willing to become more involved with students and involved with the Push for Excellence program. Two administrators met with teachers to explain how similar the Excel program was to what they were currently doing--Push for Excellence would serve as a symbol of the school's effort to improve student performance. "If the goals, objectives



and activities are interchangeable, why not the names of the program?"

One principal used teacher meetings to sell the Push for Excellence program. He explained to staff that the administration would be supportive of teachers implementing quality instruction programs--the change sought was a willingness on the part of teachers to work toward quality in the classrooms. This same principal wanted teachers to know that he was aware of the possibility of initial student resistance to additional work and adherence to standards that are required for quality. The principal wanted the teachers to know that the principal would support quality instruction in the school with students as well as in the community.

An administrator stated simply that the teacher meetings were used to get staff to "buy in" to the Excel program. Teachers would need to have all of the available information and to believe that the principal was "into" the Excel concept. Buying in would bring with it the commitment and involvement deemed essential to this kind of program. Buying in was at the local level and did not obligate the teacher to Excel beyond that school's community.

Finally one principal stated that teachers were informed that the Excel program was going to function and that he would personally see that it did function.

The common factor in most of the responses indicates a

desire by principals to change teacher attitudes and behaviors. Administrators were asking staff to accept the Excel program, with goals and objectives familiar to all educators, and to work towards the program's successful implementation. Emphasis in some schools was placed on the similarities of Excel and the existing activities while in other schools principals pointed to the possibilities of a fresh start with Push for Excellence. Teacher meetings provided support for teachers willing to do more for their students, willing to demand better student performance, regular attendance, and a productive classroom climate.

#### Item 17

What administrative act(s) would you recommend that principals avoid when implementing the Excel program?

To identify actions that principals saw as failing to help implement the Excel program was the reason for inserting Item 17. In response to this item five principals warned newcomers to the program to keep controls on their expectations. School administrators should not expect Excel to be delivered packaged with pre and post tests, clearly defined goals and objectives for each school community, nor lists of student activities. Excel is different from the kinds of programs usually proposed for implementation by school districts or producers of instruction materials. "There is no cookbook approach," one principal began. He continued by

stating that principals will find the help needed primarily within their own school organization and warned administrators not "to expect support from anyone--just what your own resources will generate."

One principal stated that Excel is a locally developed program--one which is individually tailored to a school and the active participants in the school community. The program develops best when the efforts of the administrator are supported by the staff and the community.

Two principals advised those new to the program to avoid direct involvement in the operation of the school by the Push for Excellence staff (persons working for Operation PUSH). One principal said, "Avoid overt supervision by PUSH and be wary of their hidden agendas."

Another principal commented that administrators should avoid being forced into making commitments that are unrealistic; unrealistic in that the timelines for delivery are too short, other school activities must be maintained, high school scheduling is complex and does not lend itself to easy manipulation, and the ultimate responsibility for what happens remains with the principal. Still another administrator cautioned principals not to delegate the leadership of the program to an assistant or teacher committee. To operate effectively, he stated, Excel requires that the principal remain actively in charge.

While there is some evidence of the principal's lack of trust in the Excel staff, the responses of these administrators basically warn newcomers to keep a close watch on their own activities. There is a special concern that the enthusiasm generated for Excel in the media and the advocates of the program may encourage principals to make early decisions; decisions without proper support and without the proper backup of staff and material resources. What surfaced in the responses was the need for administrative actions to keep in tune with the development of the Excel program by all elements of each school's total community.

#### Study of Two Schools

School A, with a student population of 2,700 and a staff of 160 teachers, was one of the first nine schools in the Chicago Push for Excellence program. Given its all minority student body, lack of conventional indices of parental involvement and the lack of a strong academic tradition, this school appeared to be a likely candidate for the program. It was felt that Excel could provide the programmatic umbrella under which the principal could place many other activities and thereby unify his efforts to upgrade the academic performance of students. Push for Excellence would further the principal's efforts to broaden the base of support for teachers as they sought to improve classroom productivity by strengthening the instruction program. This

additional support would develop primarily from the planned coming together of parents, church groups and other youth serving agencies in the community. School A felt that it could and would benefit from participating in the Excel program--students would be better motivated and in the end, better educated.

To place the program into operation, the principal of School A was required to learn more about Operation PUSH, become aware of his community's perception of Reverend Jackson and to develop a sensitivity to individual teachers and their feelings about working with certain community organizations. The community, not very active in school affairs, was not seen as adverse to joining the Excel program. The geographical location of School A was outside of the area where PUSH operates most effectively. Teachers, however, came from all over the metropolitan area and, therefore, brought with them a wide range of experiences which influenced their personal feelings about how they wanted to work with the Push for Excellence program.

The School A principal's approach was one of focusing upon the concepts of the Excel program, the potential benefits for students and the opportunity for the school to bolster its stock as an academic institution with the community. Benefits for teachers would include more teachable classrooms where students and parents expect learning to take

place. The principal wanted teachers to believe that they would be more effective and have easier days if their time was devoted to teaching--doing what is traditionally expected of a high school faculty.

This principal was somewhat surprised to find some teachers apprehensive. These individuals felt that the Excel program, in a very real way, undermines reasons or excuses given for the underachievement in classes. Also, students coming to class to learn and parents expecting teachers to teach would require teachers to assume a new posture in their relationships with people having higher expectations. A change in the attitudes of students and parents could make a few School A teachers uncomfortable. These realizations made it necessary for the principal to approach personally and individually teachers for their support of the school's efforts to participate effectively in the Push for Excellence program. The principal, after an initial teachers meeting, sought out staff who would agree to join with him in the Excel program.

Personal diplomacy was time consuming but essential to get the program moving with interested teachers and minimum opposition. Teachers who did agree to take part served as models and proved effective. The principals found other teachers asking about Excel and what student activities were being planned. While a few actually volunteered, several

teachers made it known that they would participate if asked. With time and a lot of attention, Push for Excellence developed into a whole school program.

The success of the 1976 Push for Excellence Parade was the single most effective event in terms of making the community aware of School A's being in the Excel program. Students who worked on the school's parade entry were enthusiastic, teachers became interested and several parents made positive comments after viewing television news coverage of the parade. The parade's success left the principal with the task of maintaining interest and enthusiasm. The job was difficult because student activities planned for local implementation were still being developed and there was no real effort to separate Excel from other projects designed to improve student performance. The decision not to immediately distinguish motivational programs was based upon the feelings of teachers and administrators that they needed to concentrate on building wider acceptance of academic achievement as a worthwhile goal, and help was being recruited from all quarters. The first parade was a dramatic impact. In looking back, the principal realized that the months following the parade were ones where students and staff were most receptive of the Excel program and ideas for additional student activities.

The appearance of School A on the Saturday morning

broadcasts of PUSH worked well for building support for the Excel program with students. This exposure was helpful because no other in-school activities were taking place that were clearly a part of the Excel program. There was some concern about asking staff to participate beyond the school day so that students could take part in off-site programs. To keep students pointed toward improving their performance and teachers interested, the principal continued personal involvement in developing activities for the Excel program. However, the program was almost dormant until School A became involved through Push for Excellence, in a project to make career education more meaningful and more directly related to good school performance. The new project provided invaluable support to ongoing academic activities and at the same time injected new interest into the Excel program. Students and teachers now felt that being in the program could help the school.

Although the school career education project and involvement with the businessmen has become the most viable and the most visible student activity, the principal remains challenged to maintain interest and to develop additional Excel activities. Interest will continue as long as staff and community are satisfied that involvement with Push for Excellence has benefits worth the time and effort. The major problem for the principal then is one of working out



new activities which will be tied almost exclusively to Excel. The principal's task in this would be to somehow help interested staff in the development of activities--or at least new directions for existing activities. Excel would be defined and interpreted on an ongoing basis so that what is developed by teachers is consistent with stated program goals and the activities are in fact excellent. School A's staff is in agreement that what the school puts together as an Excel program should be of high educational quality and of obvious value to students. The principal feels that the problem does have a solution and recognizes that he will have to provide the leadership for teachers, students and parents in finding the solution.

Parents, teachers and students in Push for Excellence schools have responded to questionnaires seeking information about the operation of the program. The data for School A were considered incomplete because of the small number of responses to the instrument. However, a review of the response provides clues to the operation of Excel and to the community's perception of the operation. The parents indicated:

- . School A's educational program should be changed, although one out of three parents was undecided.
- . Education should not be limited to

only those students who want an education.

- . Teachers cannot change student attitudes (more than one out of ten undecided).
- . Parents strongly agreed that goodwill visits by well-known personalities would stimulate student performance.
- . Teaching basic subjects is more important than trying to change attitudes.
- . Students coming to School A have troubled interpersonal relationships.

The pattern of responses of parents would suggest that there are areas within the Push for Excellence program where the community and school can work towards common goals utilizing similar points of view as a basis for cooperation. The school would agree with parents that minority and poor students will be motivated by visits to their school of successful people who are like them. Other areas of agreement are only suggested by the responses. There is some indication that the parents want strong instruction programs. Parents also seem to recognize their role in

preparing students for school, realizing that the attitudes of students will not be significantly altered by teacher influence alone. The school building principal will be able to use this information as he meets and talks with parent groups. The principal can also apply this information as he prepares communications to the community. The responses indicate to the principal a need to continue efforts to develop more interaction between parents and the school staff.

The principal could plan to use the parental responses to help develop a questionnaire that is more closely tailored to School A's area--one which may be able to generate a large respondent group. The items would be stated so that the name of the school is listed, making parents aware of what their experiences have been at School A.

There are indications that the principal has had a clear idea as to how he wanted Excel to function in the school. While there was no attempt to preclude input from other staff, the control of the program would rest solely with the building administrator. Written program implementation flow charts were not in evidence, however, there were indications of a design to incorporate within the school several programs, with the accompanying student activities, to help improve student performance. The approach most commonly used with students was one of publicly recognizing achievement and extending the recognition in ways to

encourage most students to try to improve. With teachers the principal developed a personal approach, appealing to the individual's need to feel that he is doing a good job. This personal appeal was based upon the principal's assessment of how the teacher really felt about working in School A, its students and its community.

It was apparent that as part of the personal approach the principal sought to set the pace by his own example. His actions were meant to be a demonstration of the Excel concepts for teachers--the hope was that teachers would emulate the principal's involvement in the Push for Excellence concepts in their classrooms.

School B has a student population of more than 3,500 and a teaching staff of 180. It is located in a more affluent community, however, almost one half of the students come from low income families. School B has a more active parent community which tends to be knowledgeable and have their own ideas about how a high school should function. Special evening programs are usually well attended as is the annual open house. By in large, parents support the school's efforts to improve the academic performance of students as well as social climate in and around the building. There is also evidence of a growing recognition by the community that conditions in the school have improved during the last several years. Teachers view assignment to

School B as more desirable than many other high schools because of its location and freedom from many serious problems.

The principal views participation in the Push for Excellence program primarily as a vehicle for supporting and maintaining his emphasis upon the need to have a strong academic program for School B. A number of programs promoting improved student performance have been introduced and are quietly taking root within the teacher, student and parent groups. Members of these groups are beginning to ask about these programs and seem to appreciate the special attention the principal has given to building improved student classroom performance. Push for Excellence would help create a student awareness of the principal's determination to make School B into an attractive facility for the academically capable. There would be no real reason, the principal felt, for students in School B's community to travel to other schools, public or private, to seek a challenging, high quality program. The principal's long range plans included building a very attractive program for the college bound and a stronger program for students planning to enter the world of work after high school graduation. Once more of the activities supporting the plans outlined are in place there will be an all out effort to publicize what is going on at School B. Joining Excel on the ground floor was viewed as another way of gaining the desired recognition

while at the same time continuing to motivate students and encourage staff to work toward higher academic standards.

The principal elected to take part in the Push for Excellence program with the full knowledge that there would be some opposition from some staff members and some community members. The principal was convinced that frank and open discussion about student achievement precipitated by the decision to join Excel would only help the school. All elements of the school would have excellence on their agendas, and this attention on the idea would have some positive spill-over effects.

The possibilities for improvement were uppermost on the principal's mind when he presented to staff the Push for Excellence program and stated his belief that by joining, School B could and would be helped towards its established goals. He appealed to staff to focus upon Excel's concepts and objectives--ideas that were developed by professional educators, a committee of Excel principals. The principal stressed that the emphasis at School B would be upon student academic achievement, that he as the administrator would continue to operate the school, and finally, that no outside agency would give direction to any staff member. The approach was one designed to set minds at ease about the program and hopefully to prevent rumors from developing.

The need to reach as many parents as possible as soon

as possible led to the decision to send newsletters home describing Excel--what the program was and how participation in the program would help School B. Newsletters would be designed to help keep the information clear and concise, and also to provide a ready reference for community members discussing the idea.

After the announcement that School B was joining the Excel program, the principal recruited teachers to work on the integration of Push for Excellence with other programs emphasizing academic achievement. This group of teachers required and received the personal support of the principal throughout their initial development sessions. The principal found that he had to participate in the sessions in order to provide the teachers with a clear understanding of how Excel would function in School B and information necessary to answer questions from staff and parents. The administrator's difficulties during the first sessions continued to revolve around the need for an acceptable definition of an Excel program participant. Teachers would ask: What is an Excel school and what do the students do? This question was answered by revealing the need for the detailed program to be developed locally--Excel would be designed to help with the specific tasks of making school B a better school for students. The entire school was asked to suggest activities for Excel.

Students and teachers did recommend activities for students including homework, setting of standards, developing more respect for school, meaningful instruction--there was no single activity which would clearly set Excel apart from other school activities. Because of this difficulty, the principal allowed the program to be defined as what the Chicago Push for Excellence Schools were doing and what was stated by the central office. The principal wanted this temporary framework in place to allow him to continue to work with staff for it was obvious that development of the program locally would require time and testing with teachers before it could be implemented. This was a slower process than many persons realized.

Push for Excellence's ability to capture news media attention and its rapid acceptance by some professional educators made it difficult to set in place Excel as an entity. Statements made to the press could not always be explained to staff. The school felt that student expectations, in terms of the results of the program, were raised and then dashed before Excel was ready to operate continuously in School B. The early events promised to students and staff a program that was apparently packaged and available to schools. The realization that there would be locally evolved program activities came later and thereby created some additional administrative problems. The early events



included awards to the school, special student events, and interschool visitations. The monies to sustain the student activities did not materialize and caused the curtailment of those events which did not also support other performance related activities. The principal's method of dealing with the above conditions was one of providing staff and students with all the information he had regarding the Excel program. He also took the time to respond to questions about his participation.

Information was collected by the School A community and teachers on the operation of the Excel program. The parent group responses were as follows:

- . School B's educational program should be changed (one out of four parents was undecided).
- . Parents were almost evenly divided on the question of whether education should be limited to those students who want education.
- . Teachers cannot change the attitudes of students.
- . Parents overwhelmingly agreed that goodwill visits by well-known personalities have positive effects on student performance.

- . Teaching basic high school subjects is more important than trying to change attitudes.
- . School B students have troubled interpersonal relationships with their peer groups.

A sufficient number of teachers responded to the questionnaires to provide an indication of their feelings about Excel's operating environment. The teachers' responses can be summarized as follows:

- . The majority of the respondents felt that the organization of School B promotes learning.
- . Half of the responses thought a reorganization of the school would be helpful.
- . The majority of the teachers saw a need to improve vertical staff communications.
- . A majority of the staff agreed that the administration is committed to a program of excellence.

While the parental responses were conclusively only on one item there are indications that the school should step up its efforts to communicate with the community what it is

doing to upgrade the academic performance of its students. The large percentage of the responding parents who were undecided suggest a lack of information upon which they could make a judgment. Responses to the question about the organization of the school implies dissatisfaction with the current program while the two items on student attitudes drew responses that imply a desire to have the school work toward skill development rather than changing student attitudes. Excel calls for a change in attitudes on the part of students and teacher. An approach to make this known throughout the community is indicated. Parents do agree that motivating students can be accomplished by using models of success. School B does have programs developed by the principal which draw in from the community models to relate with students individually and in small groups.

The implementation of the Excel program presented a number of major challenges to the school principal. Gaining the support for the program proved to be one of the most difficult. The principal felt handicapped because he believed that administrators of large urban schools need more tangible motivators for teachers than what has been provided in the Push for Excellence program. While the principal could obtain short term commitment for the program, teachers were generally reluctant to make long range agreements to perform specific acts. As Excel became more a part

of the regular high school program, it became more important for the principal to obtain from staff commitment to the concept rather than task. This meant that the administrator, as he first approached teachers individually, wanted to know what they would do to help get Excel started. Now the objective in such conversations is to have teachers subscribe to the ideas promulgated by the program. This change in approach brought with it a natural retarding of the development of student activities which created a temptation to transfer some ongoing student activities to the Push for Excellence program. The resolution reached by School B was to place activities and events promoting improved student achievement under one locally developed title and point out, when necessary, those that could be appropriately considered in the Push for Excellence program.

The controversial nature of some aspects of the Excel program was a more important factor than the principal had assumed it would be. The principal would feel far more comfortable, and he believes so would his staff, if the Push for Excellence has as its chief advocate a less public individual. "Mending fences broken by public statements cost too much of my time." Such statements seem to have a ripple effect on staff's enthusiasm for the program.

There was some concern that all of the parties to the Excel agreement were not meeting their full responsibilities.

The burden for obtaining results was heaviest upon the school building staff. The principal and teachers had to work with students, on a day to day basis, to improve academic achievement. The principal would have to use existing resources to bring about major changes. The School B principal felt that his task would be easier if there could be more help from the Excel staff in terms of follow-up and follow-through on student activities and special events. Excel staff could demonstrate a willingness to plan events with input from schools and which support stated goals in a consistent manner.

Implementation of an All/No program is difficult at best. "When there is a promise to respond to All of the academic needs of a school at No (or almost no) additional cost," a climate that is less than positive develops. This axiom was not lost on the principal at the time the decision was made to join Excel. The prime reason for volunteering for the program was the promise and the principal's belief that Operation PUSH could deliver broad based, active community participation.

A significant increase in the level of community involvement would produce the help the administrator needed. The community remains the most important element that is still under-represented in the drive to improve school achievement, and the principal feels that help in this area

would enable his school to be more responsive to the academic needs of students.

### Additional Data

#### District Superintendent Interviews

Interviews were conducted with three district superintendents. These administrators were asked to recall their experiences in relationship to the beginning of the Excel program. The district superintendents were also asked to describe interactions they have had with principals, teachers and parents regarding Push for Excellence. In general the response indicates very limited involvement with the program during the implementation stages.

District superintendents were the administrators invited to hear a presentation of the Excel program by Reverend Jesse Jackson. After the presentation, district superintendents were asked to explore with their principals the possibilities of schools volunteering to pilot the program in Chicago. Once the schools that agreed to participate were named, district superintendents stated that Push for Excellence required very little of their attention. District superintendents approved requests for field trips, reviewed materials released by the schools and responded to invitations to attend Excel events. By and large, the principals did not try to involve their district offices.

Principals, the district superintendents indicated,

made the decisions about the program. Questions regarding the operation of the Excel school seldom came up during a district superintendent's principals meeting primarily because the pilot schools could consult with central office staff regarding the program. The central office in fact related directly with the principals; the district superintendents received carbon copies of the correspondence.

Generally, the district superintendents were not asked to prepare reports, approve expenditure of funds, or attend meetings regarding the Push for Excellence program. A district superintendent indicated that with coordination coming from the central office, Excel created no problems for his office. Neither parents nor teachers came to the district superintendents with problems which were directly related to the Push for Excellence program, however, principals did alert, on occasion, their district office when they anticipated an individual was planning to appeal a decision. In these cases the principals were not seeking advice, but informing their superior of a possible complaint and stating their position on the matter.

The district superintendents all indicated that they supported the goals of the Excel program--the effort to improve student academic achievement was congruent with their objectives. They anticipated becoming much more involved once the pilot stage is completed and the central office

relinquishes direct control of the program. The consensus was, Excel did not require nor receive direct attention, in terms of administrative guidance, from the district superintendents.

### Hypotheses

Four hypotheses were developed to help guide the project. Hypothesis number one states:

Principals can identify a set of administrative actions essential to the successful implementation of the Push for Excellence program.

The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire revealed a set of administrative behaviors employed by principals during the implementation of the Excel program. Principals who were assigned to a school during the implementation process usually followed the steps listed:

- 1) Meetings were held with teachers to acquaint them with the Excel concepts. Subsequently, the principal met with small groups and individual teachers to talk about the program.
- 2) The principal used newsletters, meetings and the local media to inform community members of the school's involvement with Push for Excellence.
- 3) Assembly programs were held to talk with students about the program and to



allow students to hear presentations from Push for Excellence.

- 4) The principal maintained a personal involvement with the program by meeting with teachers and all interested elements of the community.

The data support hypothesis number one.

Hypothesis two states:

Principals can identify certain administrative actions as counter-productive or nonessential in implementing the Push for Excellence Program.

The survey results indicate that principals did not identify an action which was counter-productive, but rather an administrative action that principals should make certain they take. Principals were warned to keep in check expectations students, communities and parents may develop as a result of a school's participation in the Excel program. There is a real danger if the expectations get out of hand--rising to a point beyond the ability of the program to satisfy. Hypothesis two was also supported.

The third hypothesis states:

Administrators who are not school building principals involved in the program can describe common strategies.

In response to the questionnaire administrators did not describe strategies. This hypothesis, therefore, was rejected.

The fourth hypothesis states:

School principals consider their actions to implement the Push for Excellence Program as more distinctly different from their regular duties than do higher level administrators.

Principals did specify behavior which they employed during the implementation of Excel that was different from what they normally do. The difference was in the degree of personal involvement at all levels of the program. All but one respondent indicated that participation in Push for Excellence program required more intense personal involvement. The results support this hypothesis.

#### Greiner's Model of Successful Change

In his model of successful change Greiner identifies six stages which are indicative of phases through which organizations pass if the desired changes are implemented. To apply the findings of this study to Greiner's model requires agreement on the terms to be used to describe the six phases. The modifications are incorporated as follows:

##### Phase One      - Pressure and Arousal

A belief or feeling that a district, deputy or the general superintendent wants a school to participate in the Excel program.

Phase Two        - Intervention and Reorientation  
Introducing the school to  
staff from Push for Excellence  
and indicating a working re-  
lationship should develop.

Phase Three      - Diagnosis and Recognition  
An effort was made by princi-  
pals to gain support for the  
program after explaining to  
staff how the school's cur-  
rent academic goals could be  
addressed by Excel.

Phase Four       - Intervention and Commitment  
Teachers were asked to commit  
themselves to developing new  
student activities and imple-  
menting the activities as part  
of the Excel program.

Phase Five       - Experimentation and Search  
Administrators looked for new  
ways to impact the teacher--  
learning situation.

Phase Six        - Reinforcement and Acceptance  
Principals worked at supporting  
teachers who agreed to take

part in implementing the  
Excel program.

Based upon the modified descriptions of the phases, there is evidence from the responses that all nine of the principals who were in schools when the Push for Excellence program was implemented did follow, to a degree, the six phases in Greiner's model. Two of the principals were very much in line--their responses indicate that the six phases were identifiable during the implementation process. The remaining seven principals tended to telescope phases two and three, thus reducing the process to five steps. There was overlapping of the phases, some caused by internal actions of a school and others related to the overall program. Student activities, such as the Push for Excellence parade, were conducted before schools could move through the first three stages. This overlapping was also true for such student activities as elements of schools taking part in radio broadcasts and special assembly programs. Another factor which relates to the blending of the second and third phases was the need for the principals to maintain momentum once the initial presentations were made in order to capitalize upon the students enthusiasm for the Excel idea.

Phase four, Intervention and Commitment, is not readily identifiable from principals' responses. Principals began to seek teacher commitment in the early phases of the

program, and they sought to infuse the commitment into each component of the Excel program as it developed. Invention or the development of new student activities and events did in some instances mean the changing of labels of existing student programs.

Overall, the nine principals did proceed in a manner similar to Greiner's model to implement the Push for Excellence program.

#### Principal Implementation Behavior Model

Responses of principals to both the questionnaire and the follow-up interview produced a pattern of acts taken to impact the behaviors of the three major components in the school community. Administrative actions taken by principals to influence and alter behaviors of teachers, students and parents defined a socially dynamic polygonic relationship which acts and reacts upon activities, ideas and concepts related to the operation of the Excel program. There are four kinds of administrative actions which can be isolated and classified from the responses:

- 1) Selling the program to staff and  
community
- 2) Seeking commitment from staff
- 3) Demonstrating personal involvement
- 4) Maintaining an advocacy position

Selling the program would include the administrator's

personal presentation to staff, meetings with the community, announcements about the Excel promise in the local media, as well as having outside personalities such as Reverend Jesse Jackson talk to school groups. Seeking commitment would be the principal's small group or individual meetings in which teachers are encouraged to pledge support for the program and to work for its success.

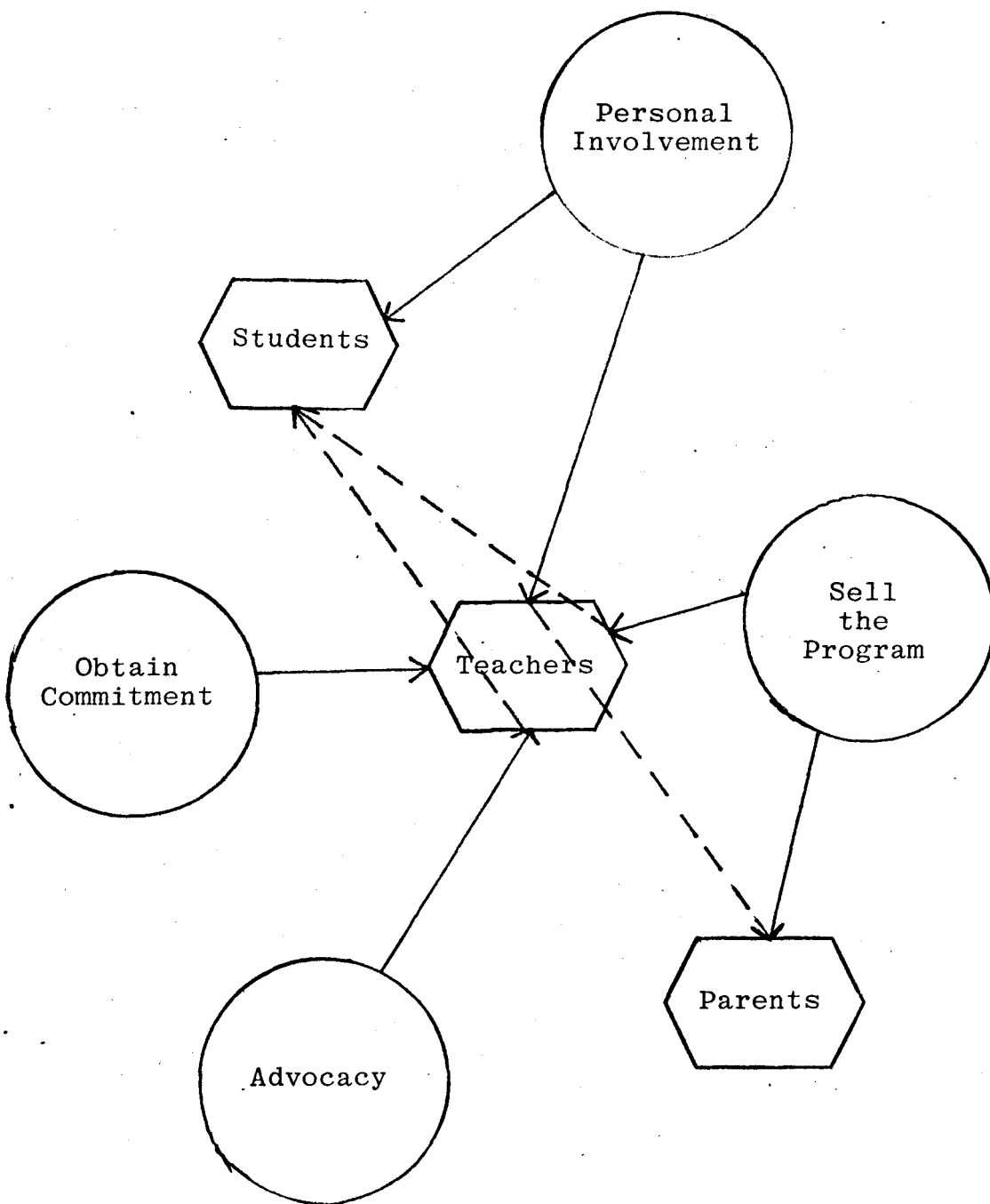
To demonstrate personal involvement requires that the principal keeps direct contact with all phases of the program, appears at Push for Excellence events, and participates in the planning of student activities. As an advocate of the Excel program, the principal speaks out for the program and the potential benefits for his school--these statements are made publicly and in private.

Plate II illustrates how these administrative behaviors act upon the three major components in the school setting. The unbroken lines show actions that bear directly upon the components while the broken lines trace indirect or reflected actions. Administrative behaviors which are directed toward a specific component may result in a reaction by the receiving group which is reflected to another component.

While conditions within the relationship are fluid, the relationship itself is practically closed. Forces which could impinge upon the relationship are mediated by the principal who, as the school advocate of the program, can

## PLATE II

## ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIORS AND COMPONENT INTERACTIONS



Administrative behaviors directed to a specific school population act upon the target group and may then be refracted toward other components. The unbroken lines represent direct actions; the broken lines are refracted actions.

acceptably interpret the outside pressures.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusions

The major conclusions of the study are:

- 1) Common elements were identifiable within the range of administrative behaviors cited by principals during the implementation process.
- 2) Principals implementing the Excel program indicated that safeguards are necessary to prevent the development of unreasonable expectations
- 3) The attitudes of the principals play a major role in the implementation process

The results of an analysis of the collected data and related information show that principals did use administrative behaviors to implement the Chicago Push for Excellence Program which had common elements. Specifically, those elements were:

- 1) Selling the program
- 2) Seeking teacher commitment
- 3) Demonstrating personal involvement
- 4) Advocating the program

These results support the basis for an administrative matrix for implementing the Push for Excellence Program.

The second conclusion drawn from the results is that principals implementing the Excel program indicated that it

is necessary to provide safeguards to prevent the growth in the school community of unreasonable expectations--that is expecting the program to quickly produce marked improvements throughout schools. Principals would also need to understand that the Push for Excellence Program activities are developed locally. This conclusion supports the second hypothesis.

It was clear from the statements of the participating administrators that the implementation of the Push for Excellence Program was directly related to the principals' attitudes: his overall attitude toward students and staff as well as his ability to influence their attitudes. That attitudes would play a major role in the implementation process was recognized; the data allow for the conclusion that principals came to realize that their personal attitudes--the attitudes that they exhibited to the school community--would be critical.

### Interpretation and Implications

Responses to the questionnaire were varied and wide ranging as was expected given the construction of the instrument employed to gather data. All but four of the 17 items were in the free-answer form. Principals, however, repeatedly indicated the same kinds of behaviors were used and raised the same concerns. With regard to the Push for Excellence Program there were three points which can be seen in the responses. First, there was agreement on the goals

and objectives of the program. In fact, the principals felt that their current programs were aimed in the same direction. Secondly, principals indicated that the organization which originated the program sometimes, because of its basic nature, impeded implementation efforts. And thirdly, administrators had some difficulty developing activities which would be uniquely Excel in a programmatic environment which remained plastic and contained no additional monies.

The stated goals and objectives of the Push for Excellence program are generally congruent of those for elementary and secondary schools throughout America, however, they may hold special meaning for poor and minority students--students who have heretofore not demonstrated a firm belief in public education. The majority of the students in the Push for Excellence were from poor and minority families. Goal setting then, was an essential task for the school, for students and for the teachers. Goals at the school level would have to be stated as achievable challenges and in language clearly different from student goals in other programs. The complete agreement with the overall goals for Push for Excel required leadership from principals as they guided staff toward the adoption of specific local school goals which made sense to students. The principals, in most cases, were able to assist in the development of goals which could capture the attention of the entire school community and encourage participation in

the Excel Program.

Difficulties associated with the implementation of the Push for Excellence Program are traced by the principals to the controversial nature of the PUSH organization. Principals had to be sensitive to their communities' and staffs' feelings about PUSH and its leaders. These administrators realized that some parents and some teachers had great difficulty in separating Operation PUSH from the Excel program. There were, principals felt, people within the schools who were either unable or unwilling to make a distinction between the two. These people formed a group which was less than enthusiastic about participating in the program.

The dilemma facing principals most frequently was how to extract from the Excel concept those elements which would help the school to better student performance from the controversy which can sometimes surround Operation PUSH. Because of its own needs and priorities, PUSH becomes involved in issues not related to the Excel concept (although the resolutions may have tangential benefits for students), with the same leaders making controversial statements and advocating Push for Excellence. The public position of PUSH on certain issues made some teachers reluctant to commit themselves to the program. These teachers wanted to know why the school couldn't work towards better pupil performance without being tied to a community organization. Principals

recognized that the value of a community organization was its influence with parents--an earned position which comes from being involved in a variety of problems.

The third factor seen in the responses of principals was concerned with the development of student activities. Administrators were seeking activities which could operate as a part of the Push for Excellence concept and cost little or no money. For several of the respondents Excel was so similar to ongoing efforts to improve student performance that the creation of student activities to support the program became a major task--staffs saw the task as one of "doing more of what you are already doing", or restructuring activities associated with existing projects. A principal stated:

The task was not one of developing or putting in place a new program and all of its activities, but gathering up all similar bits and pieces--those that fit the new program's definition, and changing the labels. Then you try to package this conglomeration and present it as a new program when all your teachers know what happened.

Another part of the difficulty in structuring student activities was due to the lack of monies. Staffs viewed the Excel as a low cost program which contained no extra benefits for the participating teachers. Principals had no real rewards to distribute to teachers who volunteered to join and promote the Excel concept. In four of the schools there was no status to be gained from being associated with the

program. Again personal interaction with staff had to function effectively if the principals were to convince teachers in an urban school system to join with them in the Excel program. Getting teachers to commit themselves knowing there would be no material benefits for them, only a small chance for peer group recognition and the clear possibility of being involved with an unworkable project, was a remarkable accomplishment. Principals, in general, agreed that their tasks would be easier if monies were available for direct program costs and if there were some additional means of recognizing teachers who worked in the program.

From the response it was clear that all of the principals were acutely aware that the successful implementation of the Push for Excellence Program depended upon their skills and abilities to effect the attitudes of teachers, students and parents. If the principal could not reach a core group of teachers, it would be extremely difficult to start the Excel program. This realization is evident from the responses. As an example, one principal said:

You must first sell the program to your staff and get those key people to buy in or to at least not to "bad mouth" the idea. Before the staff meeting you have a quick conference with the (key) teachers and tell them that you want to talk with them after the meeting--that you want their opinion of what you are going to

propose. Then you could convince them to join you or at least buy some time.

Principals used personal diplomacy for in most cases they appeared to feel that their involvement was all they had.

The priorities of principals apparently were to influence the attitudes of teachers first, and then the students. Given that significantly large numbers of parents at only one school raised serious concerns, principals were able to devote their efforts to those groups in the school itself.

Students were already being urged by teachers and administrators to improve their school performance, however, several of the respondents implied that because of the Excel program they felt more comfortable making direct appeals to the students. These appeals were made not only during assemblies but to leaders of the various student organizations, the Student Council and small informal groups of youngsters. Within the student community, principals wanted to focus the school efforts to improve academically upon the freshmen, however, most of the Excel activities were for the upper classmen. The size of the freshman class, the behavior of freshmen and the fact that they had not yet identified with the school seemingly made principals less likely to have freshmen in Push for Excellence activities. The

reasons for not having freshmen participate are quite similar to reasons for directing the school's efforts toward ninth graders.

Implementing a community organization's program, Push for Excellence, may be unusual, but it is not unique. Community groups have over the years worked out with individual schools informal programs planned to meet the aims of a neighborhood. Most such programs involved the recognition of student scholarship and teacher dedication. These efforts are usually in established neighborhoods where there is traditionally a general belief that good school performance does pay off in later life. In other communities the need to recognize student achievement is evident, but the neighborhood residents are not convinced that there is a relationship, for their children, between school performance and success in the adult world. In the latter instance, organizations like Aspira and PUSH seek to fill the breach. Principals agree that the community has to play a larger role in the local school and the community needs to influence students in a direct, positive manner to perform better in school. Thus, administrators seemingly are becoming more willing to personally commit themselves to expend the time and effort to enable community base organizations to make their contributions.

A major promise of the community based Push for Excellence program is to effect a better teaming of the basic



elements associated with student classroom performance; namely, family, pupil, community, and school. Establishing such a team is seen as a basis for improving the overall learning climate. It was hoped by those participating that Excel would serve as the vehicle which could and would intervene to reorder the education cycle for large urban areas. During such a process the influence of the community could be used to validate the school's role and confirm the premise that successful school experiences pave the way to a better lifestyle.

The results of this study suggest that neither principals nor the Excel staff really faced, head on, the task of helping the community toward an active participatory role, supportive of the concept that academic achievement is worthwhile. Principals and the Excel staff seemingly preferred to deal with the population in the school--students and teachers. It may be that principals are battle weary for they have tried over the years to engage their communities in drives to improve student achievement. However, the principals' responses in this study suggest that efforts to capitalize upon the potential power of the community were similar to past attempts. It seemed evident that school administrators wanted PUSH and Excel to address the community area. It was expected that Excel would mobilize church organizations, block clubs and business groups to recognize and applaud achieving students.

Given that principals and the Excel staff took actions to change the attitudes of those in the schools, it would appear that a similar effort would be made to change their community's attitude toward academic achievement. Principals in this project did seek community involvement-- principals formed special parent groups, talked with the PTA and local councils, and met with leaders in their community. These activities may have helped alter attitudes, but it does not appear that schools made a concerted effort to change attitudes of the communities. This lack of a conscious effort to change the way communities feel about schools may very well result in projects like Excel being unable to completely meet their objectives. If a community, by its attitude, does not validate the school and the school's programs, there develops a major break in the mutual support circle.

Principals indicated that when teachers and students participated in the special events they became enthusiastic about potential outcomes of Excel. Principals demonstrated their commitment to both in-school groups and to the program goals. The momentum can hardly be sustained unless the communities make manifest altered attitudes. A changed community attitude would serve several purposes:

- 1) Provide status and esteem for school achievement.

- 2) Certifies for students that what they do in school is important.
- 3) Provide motivation and leverage for and on the teaching staff in ways not usually available to the principal.

Again, the difficulties involved in effecting a change in the attitude of a community are major. Communities may very well have the same kinds of problems relating what goes on in schools to real life as their children do. Poor communities are, in fact, peopled with a large number of parents who believe that classroom achievement, or the lack of it, has not significantly altered their lives. Communities occupied by poor persons, who have inherited their status, have within pervasive poverty which has influenced the formation and maintenance of attitudes towards people, institutions and agencies.

The magnitude of the task of changing the attitudes is such that persons seeking to improve the classroom performance of urban students tend to concentrate their efforts on teachers. While there is undoubtedly a need to improve the quality of instruction, the cause of urban education may be better served if educators obtain additional allies among community based organizations. By acting upon both teacher and student a community with a different mind set could make a positive difference in the learning

environment..

Schools clearly have a role to play in changing and shaping attitudes. Schools cannot remain catalytic but must enter into and be seen as a positive force in the community. A new social chemistry is needed to induce more equitable opportunities to help schools better carry out their mission. The larger society, however, has to demonstrate that the linkage between school and later life does exist. And further, the linkage does not break when poor and minority children are involved.

Because the Excel program is larger than a local community or one city project, it is seen as having the potential for bringing about the hoped for change in community attitudes. Thus, principals involved in the program may have a unique opportunity to provide leadership in making changes which will profoundly affect urban schools.

### Recommendations

#### Recommendations for Administering the Push-Excel Program

- 1) District superintendents, or the appropriate immediate supervisor of principals, should remain close to the program during the implementation stages. Principals could utilize more support and advice in developing the program and securing resources.

- 2) Principals should insist that Push-Excel staff put forth a strong, continuous effort to gain broad and meaningful community support for academic achievement. It should be clear that Excel understands and shoulders the major responsibility for developing and maintaining support for the mission of public education.
- 3) Administrators should secure, before announcing the program, additional resources for rewarding academic performance. Once the program is underway, the school administrator must have the ability to foster academic achievement by students individually and in groups.
- 4) Central office staff must demonstrate a continuing interest in the program and do what it can to assure its success.
- 5) The school system should solicit a commitment that staff will be available to devote time to making Push for Excellence work. There needs to be staff on site with the assigned task of augmenting the principals' efforts to bring the

program on line.

- 6) Principals who volunteer for the program need an opportunity to visit schools where the Push for Excellence Program is in operation. These administrators need preservice sessions to acquaint them with the kinds of skills and characteristics they will need to cope with Push-Excel's unique problems and situations with which they will be confronted.
- 7) The program must contain provisions for principals who volunteer to exit without repercussions.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

- 1) This study should be replicated where other community based programs are operating.
- 2) An evaluation of the Excel should be related to the study to determine how implementation procedures affect program success.
- 3) School systems should investigate alternative ways of becoming a part of the Push for Excellence Program to

reduce the impact of controversy.

- 4) Provide pre-service training and orientation for principals who volunteer to take part in these kinds of programs.
- 5) Given that change is a bilateral process, a study should be made to determine how administrators change during implementation processes.

## APPENDIX A



**PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PILOT PROGRAM IN SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve the implementation in selected high schools of a cooperative pilot program "Push for Excellence" involving the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and People United to Save Humanity (Operation PUSH).

A copy of the goals and activities for students, teachers, administrators and community members is on file in the Office of the Secretary.

**SUPPORTIVE DATA:** Ten Chicago Public High Schools have agreed to participate on a voluntary basis in the Push for Excellence Program to develop a pilot program involving students, parents, administrators, and members of the larger school community. The Push for Excellence Program is a project developed cooperatively by People United to Save Humanity (Operation PUSH) and the staff of the Board of Education, City of Chicago. The ten high schools are: Calumet, Chicago Vocational, Englewood, Julian, King, Marshall, Morgan Park, Orr, Schurz, and Waller.

The results of the pilot experience of these schools in the 1976-77 school year will be evaluated and determination made as to elements of the program which can be productively replicated in other Chicago Public Schools and what adjustments, revisions, and modifications may be necessary for further implementation of this program.

**FINANCIAL:** No additional cost to the Board of Education.

Respectfully Submitted

General Superintendent of Schools

Prepared by:

Howard Denton  
Assistant to Deputy Superintendent  
Instruction and Pupil Services

Approved by:

Manford Byrd, Jr.  
Deputy Superintendent  
Instruction and Pupil Services

Bessie F. Lawrence  
Deputy Superintendent  
Field Services

Noted:

Robert Stickles  
Controller

PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

The Push for Excellence Program is based on the premise that a successful educational program must create a positive attitudinal climate toward education which will result in reawakening the will to learn within the student. This attitudinal change constitutes the essential goal of the program.

Push for Excellence will first concern itself with the basic elements which are the responsibility of education. These include development of basic educational skills, of academic excellence, and of the ability to think creatively and critically. Also included are emotional, physical, and moral development; recognition of the obligations of citizenship; and development of a behavior and conduct that contribute positively to one's self and to society in general.

The nature and extent of the problem are such that the general welfare of the entire community is involved. Its essence is attitudinal - not ideological. Inasmuch as the whole school community is involved in the problem in one form or another, all must become involved in the solution. Students, teachers, principals, parents, community leaders, and religious leaders must do their part. Education is not only a public right; it is also a public responsibility. The people of our city and our nation are ready for this challenge to excellence.

STUDENTS

Push for Excellence students must play a vital role in the success of the program.

- . They contribute to the academic atmosphere of the school by--

- coming prepared for classes daily

- devoting two hours of nonclass time daily in this preparation

- participating actively in the instructional program.

- . They exhibit self-control and discipline by--

- dressing appropriately for school

- exhibiting scholarship and conduct that contribute positively to the educational atmosphere

- refraining from the use of drugs or other substances harmful to their physical welfare.

- . They exhibit respect and esteem for fellow students, staff, parents, community members, and self by giving service to the school and community.
- . They exhibit respect for the physical environment of the school.

Among the activities, but not limited to, that Push for Excellence students could be involved in are the following:

homecoming	special student tutors
special interest clubs	attendance activities
sports activities	division awards
scholastic activities	guidance and counseling
academic awards	activities, including
honor assemblies	peer counseling
	buddy system

### TEACHERS

Push for Excellence teachers must view their students as having the ability and desire to learn. They must set goals which will contribute to the welfare of their students.

- . They instill a sense of pride in good attendance.
- . They instill a sense of pride in academic achievement by--
  - honoring those students who have achieved academic excellence
  - arranging for additional help for students who are having academic difficulty, i.e., peer tutoring
  - giving meaningful homework assignments and correcting and returning the homework
  - giving individualized instruction and objectively evaluating student achievement.
- . They establish a positive student-teacher relationship by--
  - addressing students with respect and dignity and demanding that students treat each other in the same manner
  - recognizing individual needs and adopting a positive approach to meeting these needs
  - accepting student evaluation of the teacher's efforts and being amenable to suggestions for change.

- . They instill a sense of pride in the school by--
  - developing beautification projects
  - displaying student work
  - promoting student activity projects, such as hall guard duty, lunchroom duty
  - participating personally in keeping the school building attractive and orderly
  - setting a proper example for student dress and conduct.
- . They promote parental involvement by--
  - contacting each parent once a semester at a minimum
  - inviting parental participation in advisory councils and PTA organizations
  - becoming personally involved in community affairs.

#### ADMINISTRATORS

Push for Excellence administrators must be responsible for and concerned with the total educational program within their schools. It is their responsibility to see that each student is educated to his maximum potential and that the best possible education is provided for each student placed in their charge.

- . They establish an atmosphere of cooperation and trust among staff members, students, parents, and community.
- . They are accessible and available to students and staff alike.
- . They involve students, staff, and community in educational decisions.
- . They meet with students, staff, and community members at the beginning of each school year to explore where the school presently is and to plan where they wish to be at the end of the school year.
- . They respect the uniqueness and individual worth of each student and staff member.
- . They participate in the broad areas of community concerns.
- x . They assume responsibility for establishing and maintaining the mechanisms necessary for carrying out the objectives of the

## PUSH for Excellence program.

### PARENTS

Push for Excellence parents are involved and concerned with the education of their children. They support the mutually arrived at goals which they and the school set for their children.

- . They supervise their children during after-school hours.
- . They establish regular study hours for their children.
- . They communicate with individual teachers and the school administration on a regular basis.
- . They visit the school at least once during a semester.
- . They involve themselves with and are active in the P.T.A. and the local school council.
- . They set an example of excellence for their children.
- . They supervise their children each morning to see that they are prepared for school in terms of dress, class preparation, and nutritional needs.

### COMMUNITY AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

The Push for Excellence community members and religious leaders must be aware of and actively involved with the local school.

- . They are actively involved through membership in local school councils, PTAs and PTSOs.
- . They are involved in the implementation of decisions of the local school administrator.
- . They set an example of excellence for students.
- . They create an atmosphere within the community that is conducive to learning.
- . They communicate with individual schools in relation to particular problems of individual students and families.
- . They act as spokesmen for policies and procedures established in the schools.
- . They promote programs and activities leading to positive moral values, scholastic excellence, proper dress and deportment, and responsibility.

- . They emphasize and insist upon parental responsibility.

#### PILOT SCHOOLS

Push for Excellence pilot schools will participate in a series of monthly interschool activities. These activities will be preceded by intraschool activities, culminating in competition between winners of each school. Among the activities that the pilot school could be involved in are the following:

- forensic and dramatic activities
- sports
- mock political conventions
- talent shows
- service projects
- art shows
- academic competitions
- creative writing competitions.

#### CONCLUSION

The Push for Excellence Program described in this document in no way limits the scope of activities of student, parent, teacher, administrator, or community or religious leaders. Rather, it is hoped that the activities and ideas delineated here will help stimulate discussion and suggest some of the kinds of specific challenges and disciplines that are necessary if we are to continue our quest for excellence in education, create an improved climate for teaching and learning, and renew the will to learn within each individual.

Emphasis on excellence in education is a major step in developing the qualities of leadership and citizenship essential to living and working in a democratic society with the privileges and responsibilities inherent in that society.

The Board of Education and the administration of the Chicago Public Schools welcome the active support and cooperative efforts of all segments of the community in a joint effort to provide maximum opportunity for our nation's greatest asset - our children and young people.

# A SELECTED LIST OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS

## ON THE PUSH FOR EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

- Cole, Robert W., "Black Moses: Jesse Jackson's PUSH for Excellence," Kappan, January, 1977, pp. 378-382.
- Ellis, James E., "Back to Basics," St. Louis Post, January 30, 1978.
- Ellis, James E., "EXCEL" An Education Plan Everybody Likes," St. Louis Post, January 31, 1978.
- Eubanks, Eugene E. and Levine, Daniel U. Levine, "The PUSH Program for Excellence in Big-City Schools," Kappan, January, 1977, pp. 383-388.
- Fox, J. A., "Pushing to Excel," Black Enterprise, August, 1978, pp. 13-14.
- Jackson, Jesse L., "Give the People a Vision," The New York Times Magazine, April 18, 1976.
- "Learning to Excel in School," Time, July 10, 1978, p. 45.
- Miller, Andrew C., "PUSH to Excel Takes Root Among Students at Central," The Kansas City Times, March 23, 1978.
- Petrie, P. W., "Jesse Jackson: Pushing to Educate," Black Enterprise, September, 1978, pp. 35-36.
- Poinsett, A., "PUSH for Excellence: J. Jackson's Program," Ebony, February, 1977, pp. 104-106.
- Putney, Michael, "Black is Dutiful," The National Observer, May 8, 1979.
- "What's Happening to Public Schools," Chicago Defender, April 29, 1978.

## APPENDIX B



HOWARD DENTON

9408 SOUTH CALUMET AVENUE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60629

150.

Dear

As a principal of a high school participating in the Push for Excellence Program, I am asking for your help and cooperation with my effort to gather information as to how principals implemented the Excel program. I would greatly appreciate your taking time to react on the attached questionnaire.

It is my hope and expectation that the compilation, analysis and interpretation of responses will be helpful to urban educators. A copy of the results will be shared with you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Howard Denton

HD:bet  
Attachment

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXCEL PROGRAM

1. Check those factors which led to your school's decision to participate in the Excel program. Circle the most decisive factor.

☐ community interest  
☐ teacher interest  
☐ central office or district superintendent pressures  
☐ student interest  
☐ principal's determination that the program had merit  
☐ suggested by local PUSH organization  
☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

2. What actions did you take to influence your school's decision to participate in Excel?

3. What resources would you consider absolutely necessary to start the Excel program?

4. What was done to build and maintain community support for Excel?

5. During the implementation stages did you feel that Excel required

☐ normal care and attention  
☐ more intensive administrator involvement  
☐ less involvement - the project was directed by committees  
☐ less intensive - outside agency provided leadership  
☐ less direct involvement - project handled by an assistant  
☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

6. What, briefly, was most essential for staff to do to make Excel work at your school?

What did you do to enable staff to take the essential action?

7. What percentage of your working day was devoted to Excel?
8. Using the scale (N-Never, O-Once, S-Seldom, R-Regularly), please indicate how frequently you took the actions listed below related to the implementation of the Excel program.
- \_\_\_ conducted community meetings
  - \_\_\_ met with local political leaders
  - \_\_\_ delegated major responsibility to assistant principal
  - \_\_\_ held general student assembly
  - \_\_\_ met with local religious leaders
  - \_\_\_ talked with employee groups - teachers union/local education association
  - \_\_\_ met with student council
  - \_\_\_ held general staff meeting
  - \_\_\_ delegated major responsibility to a committee of teachers
  - \_\_\_ involved PUSH staff directly with teachers
  - \_\_\_ involved PUSH staff directly with community
  - \_\_\_ involved PUSH staff directly with students
  - \_\_\_ met with local businessmen
  - \_\_\_ maintained personal involvement
9. What was done to change your school to an Excel school?

10. What element(s) in your school did you feel had to be changed in order for it to become an Excel school?
11. As building principal what was the one action took that proved most productive in getting Excel launched?
12. What specific actions did you take to encourage full participation by teachers in the Excel program?
13. What problems did you encounter while implementing the Excel program?

14. Please check all of the actions listed which were a part of the Excel program in your school.

☐ special student committees were formed to lead program  
☐ principal appointed a committee of teachers to lead program  
☐ primary responsibility for Excel placed with vice/assistant principal  
☐ parent/teacher committee appointed by principal to lead program  
☐ Excel became a function of student council  
☐ primary responsibility for the Excel program assumed by building principal  
☐ volunteer committee of teachers led Excel program  
☐ an elected group of teachers led the Excel program  
☐ other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. In the administrative plan for implementation of Excel, what provisions were made to promote student participation?

16. What was the primary objective of teacher meetings regarding Excel? What did you want teachers to take with them from Excel meetings?

17. What administrative act(s) would you recommend that principals avoid when implementing Excel programs?

Additional thoughts or comments:

OPTIONAL:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Howard L. Denton, Jr. has been read and approved by the following committee:

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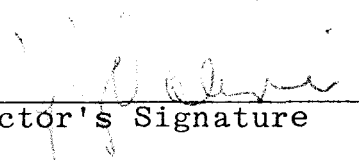
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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

December 17, 1979

Date

  
Director's Signature