Loyola University Chicago
Loyola eCommons

Dissertations | Theses and Dissertations

1992

Catholic Elementary Schools in Chicago's Black Inner City: Mission and Organizational Effectiveness Volume 2

Sheila Nelson
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss

Part of the Sociology Commons

Recommended Citation

Nelson, Sheila, "Catholic Elementary Schools in Chicago's Black Inner City: Mission and Organizational Effectiveness Volume 2" (1992). *Dissertations*. 3007.
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/3007

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1992 Sheila Nelson

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN CHICAGO'S BLACK INNER CITY: MISSION AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

VOLUME II

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

BY

SHEILA NELSON, C.S.A.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY 1992

CHAPTER 7

SAINT FREDERICK DOUGLAS: AN ISOLATED BUT EVOLVING SCHOOL

The isolated schools in Chicago's black inner city had at one time been traditional parish-centered schools, but serious demographic changes had interfered with their parishes' ability to provide them with the resources and legitimacy necessary for their survival. As a result, these schools were separated from their corresponding parishes, cut off from their traditional source of support.[1]

Having lost enrollment, financial backing, and the clear sense of mission and purpose that the parish had traditionally provided, survival becomes the primary concern of these schools. Survival is even more tenuous because these school are located in areas of high unemployment and

---

[1]Financial support, while it is crucial, may not be the primary concern here. Perhaps political support for the school is. The school needs voices to speak up in its behalf when, due to scarce resources and a changed population and/or an unclear sense of mission, the parish or archdiocese is tempted to free itself of financial responsibility for the school. Unlike the other categories of schools, the isolated school has no one to speak for it. The parish is too concerned with its own survival to be of much help to the school; the school does not belong to a grouping of interdependent schools that are committed to each other and to their joint survival; and no outside interest group has committed itself to ensuring the school's future. As a result, when its survival is threatened, the school's defense becomes extremely difficult.

severe poverty (See map of isolated schools in the appendix.). They face an extremely crucial period when the choices they make will result in organizational death, or in the permanent failure of which Meyer and Zucker (1989) speak, or in the discovery of a more stable and reliable form of organizational adaptation.

In this chapter I present the findings of the case study of St. Frederick Douglas School, an isolated school that was discovering effective ways to adapt to its changed reality, surviving despite its isolation, and actually growing. After explaining the conditions which isolated St. Frederick, I focus on the special issues of concern to isolated schools. Like the parish-centered school, St. Frederick focussed on building up a strong community from which resources and legitimacy would flow. But its unique challenge was to build a school-based community rather than to integrate itself into a parish-based community. The energy and direction behind this effort fell in large part to the principal. She was responsible for the myth-making and the legitimating work that was done by the parish in the parish-centered schools, by administrative teams in the cooperatively-linked schools, and by outside supporters in the externally-linked schools. I explore the ways she was building community and establishing the school's legitimacy. I also examine her autonomy, the unique freedom resulting from the distancing of school from parish. This autonomy

gave the principal the freedom to pursue the school's best interests as she saw them, and a future separate from that of the parish-in-crisis.

St. Frederick Douglas: A School Distanced from its Parish

The parish experience is one of the most important factors influencing a school's adaptation to a new population. Just as parish stability helps shape the parish-centered school, parish upheaval and decline significantly influences a school's isolation. St. Frederick parish, at its peak had had a membership of over 4,000 families. While the church was integrated with a relatively stable 400 families during the seventies, the parish went through a serious decline in the early eighties. The neighborhood had lost most of its middle-class families and new families were poorer and relied more heavily on public aid.[2] The pastor estimated adult parish membership at the time of my research to be only one hundred people. This tremendous decline left the parish struggling for its own survival and unable to invest energy or resources in the

---

[2]Wilson (1987) shows that the poverty rate in the community area in which St. Frederick is located grew from within the 30-39 percent range in 1970 to the 40-49 percent range in 1980. The unemployment rate in 1980 was higher than 20 percent. Thirty-nine percent of all households were receiving public assistance and 55 percent of all children under eighteen were living below the poverty level in 1979. In addition, the total population of the area had decreased by 35 percent between 1970 and 1980 (1980 Census Data, United Way Crusade of Mercy).

school. Enrollment decreased to a point where the school's survival was threatened. By 1984 the school had only 150 students and there were rumors that the archdiocese had marked this school for closing.

Demographic and Historical Background: Weakened Links with the Parish

St. Frederick was the second largest of the isolated schools that I studied.[3] Its enrollment in 1987-1988 was 245 students in ten classrooms serving children from early childhood through Grade 8. As was typical for the isolated schools, St. Frederick was a neighborhood school, with 88 percent of its students coming from within a radius of a mile and a half from the school. Black Catholic enrollment was low, just under 11 percent[4] while the total Catholic population was 18 percent due to the presence of a number of Hispanic Catholics. The neighborhood had once been a black middle-class neighborhood, but the area had deteriorated. Buildings were now run down and the principal described her school families as consisting of lots of public aid

---

[3]The mean enrollment of the isolated schools in my study was 212 students; median enrollment was 196.

[4]Schools whose student population was drawn from the neighborhood tended to have fewer Catholic students because the pool of Catholics in these neighborhoods was so small. At St. Frederick's, as in many other parishes I visited, the black Catholic population had moved on to better neighborhoods as the area surrounding the parish suffered economic decline (Wilson 1987).

families, very few professionals,[5] with a definite majority being single-parent families. The two-parent families were primarily second marriages with children from both previous marriages.

As was characteristic of the isolated schools, St. Frederick School had become increasingly detached from the parish. This seemed to be the result of two major factors: 1) unlike St. Sojourner, St. Frederick had been unable to find common ground that would bring together two increasingly distinct populations, and 2) pastoral ambivalence stimulated by the parish's own organizational crisis reduced the parish's commitment to the school. As a result, people of the parish saw little connection between the school and the parish--they operated as two separate entities that happened to share a name and adjacent buildings.

Diverse Church and School Populations

The school had opened in 1896 and ten years later was serving almost 1,000 students. Although most of the original members of the parish were Irish, from its earliest days membership also included other European ethnic groups. Racial change began in the late 1940s when blacks moved into the northern portion of the parish and white parishioners

---

[5]Though she did note that if there were middle-class families left in the neighborhood they were much more likely to be in her school than in public school.

moved farther west. By the early 1960s the school had been integrated and then resegregated as a black school serving large numbers of non-Catholic children. At this same time, Hispanic families had begun moving into the southern half of the parish and by the mid-70s sizeable numbers of them had become active parishioners.

Despite the movement of Hispanics into the church community, blacks remained the dominant group in the school. During the 1987-1988 school year blacks made up 88 percent of the student body, while Hispanics composed 11 percent,[6] as compared to the church membership which was half Hispanic, 40 percent Black, and 10 percent elderly white. Besides the racial gap, the pastor described an age gap in the parish--the black parishioners were predominantly elderly while the Hispanic population consisted of young families.

St. Frederick's was therefore a parish that had gone through four decades of transition. While at one time a rather prosperous integrated parish dominated by black

---

[6]When asked why the Hispanic parishioners chose not to send their children to the parish school, the principal explained that racial fear was still very much alive. Most Hispanics seemed to prefer the neighborhood public school which, because of residential segregation, was an Hispanic school. Most Hispanic parishioners seemed to regard the parish school as a <u>black</u> school rather than as a <u>parish</u> school. Regardless of such perceptions, however, if the pastor's numbers were anywhere near accurate, there were very few parishioners with children who would be able to take advantage of the school even if they all chose to do so.

Catholics, over the years black initiative and parish leadership had declined and Hispanic membership and influence had increased. Throughout much of this time, the school had a life of its own. Rather than mirroring the transitions in the parish, the school had remained an almost entirely black and heavily Protestant school for over twenty years.[7] It was much more a reflection of the black neighborhood it bordered than of the parish community it was originally intended to serve. When parish and school populations are this diverse, the parish is much less likely to take responsibility for the school.

Pastoral Ambivalence Due to Demographic Change

The second factor that weakened the traditional links with the parish and influenced the isolation of many inner-city schools, was the lack of strong pastoral backing. Because of his personal background and history, the ambivalence of St. Frederick's pastor was rooted in a different philosophy of Catholic education than most of his colleagues. Working outside the U.S., he had been opposed

---

[7]Because such a small percentage of the black population is Catholic, a black Catholic parish school will invariably have a large percentage of non-Catholic students. Non-Catholic enrollment averaged 67 percent in the sixty-two schools in my population in 1985. What likely happened at St. Frederick is that the black parish opened its school up to the black non-Catholic community at a time when the school needed students. As the black Catholic population moved out to better neighborhoods and the Hispanic population began moving into the parish, black non-Catholics continued to enroll in large enough numbers to discourage Hispanics from entering the school.

to the Catholic school system, considering it an elite system benefitting the wealthy.

In his present situation, however, he saw the school as a positive force for empowering people since it helped many students apparently unable to thrive in the public system. He also valued the school as a means of staying in touch with many people and as a sign of hope for the neighborhood; it brought people together and gave them a sense of family.[8]

At the time of my research, St. Frederick had no parish organizations. Unlike St. Sojourner and other parishes that were actively involved with neighborhood organizations, or that offered a variety of social services, or provided the neighborhood with a range of social, educational, and recreational opportunities, St. Frederick School provided the only formal contact between the parish and the people of the neighborhood. The pastor saw the parish school as an ideal way for the parish to become relevant to the neighborhood, and the best way for it to serve. While attempting to draw on the reputation of the school, the parish was actually too weak, too endangered to benefit much from the school. Thus, the pastor's feelings were ambivalent--while acknowledging the importance of the school to his parish, with only one hundred adult parishioners

---

[8]He saw this as especially important for single-parent families.

(about half of whom were elderly), the parish could not realistically support the school.

The school was serving very few parishioners (45 Catholics total). Probably due both to the diversity of parish and school populations, and the desperate situation of the parish itself, the pastor of St. Frederick's, like others in this category, saw the school as an archdiocesan responsibility rather than a parish one.[9] While supportive of the school, he was clearly detached. The pastor's newness--my research was conducted during his first year in Chicago--and his lack of previous experience with parochial schools also limited his involvement in the school. St. Frederick School, therefore, operated not as an arm of the parish, but as a separate and distinct organization.[10] As a result of the separation of church and school, the principal had more direct control and responsibility for the running of the school than she would have had in a parish-

---

[9]Some pastors in the isolated school category emphasized this point. They believe that the fate of their schools rests in the hands of the archdiocese. They also believe that the archdiocese has the means (financial and otherwise) to keep these schools alive and functioning effectively. A few of them questioned, however, whether the archdiocese had the will to do so.

[10]The pastor at St. Frederick was unique in his newness to the parish and in his lack of previous experience with Catholic schools. Pastoral ambivalence and a limited involvement in the school, however, were common to all the isolated schools. Pastors chose to distance themselves from their schools for various reasons; many simply directed all their energies into trying to revive--or at least maintain--their dying parish.

centered school.

Resource Procurement in St. Frederick School

While the ability of the parish-centered school to obtain resources and legitimacy was still greatly dependent on the quality of its relationship with the sponsoring parish, at St. Frederick as in other isolated schools, it was necessary to find new means of securing those resources. In analyzing St. Frederick's response to environmental changes, three issues surface for discussion: the impact of geographic isolation on the school, the movement to heavy reliance on archdiocesan funding, and strategies to increase enrollment and establish the school's legitimacy in the neighborhood.

Geographic Isolation

St. Frederick School, like others in this category, suffered the constraints of being geographically isolated. In this case the isolation resulted from being a black school in an area that was increasingly Hispanic.[11] There were no other Catholic schools in the immediate vicinity;

---

[11]St. Frederick is located on the edge of one of Chicago's heavily black community areas. The community area adjacent to the parish is heavily Hispanic, and therefore much more Catholic. Similar to earlier ethnic groups, however, most Hispanics seem to prefer traveling farther to attend an Hispanic parish rather than to join St. Frederick's which, though closer, lacks an Hispanic identity. The adjacent Hispanic community area, at the time of my fieldwork, had seven Hispanic parishes with six parochial schools. St. Frederick could not compete in the Hispanic community; hence its extremely low membership.

the nearest served the Hispanic community and were therefore too different in culture and orientation to make new organizational forms of cooperation a viable option even if the schools had been closer.[12]

St. Frederick, like other isolated schools lacking neighboring schools with which to plan for a more secure future, experienced extremely limited options for adaptation. As a result, leadership tended to focus inward and to develop the resources within the school community rather than looking for external support.

The school drew students from a limited geographic area, which led to enrollment problems. As a heavily black school, St. Frederick was unable to attract sizeable numbers of students from the Hispanic half of the parish territory. The black community from which the students came had suffered (as mentioned above) a heavy loss of population and a devastating increase in the concentration of severe poverty. Of areas such as this Wilson says:

> The communities of the underclass are plagued by massive joblessness, flagrant and open lawlessness, and low-achieving schools, and therefore, tend to be avoided by outsiders. Consequently, the residents of these areas, whether women and children of welfare families or aggressive street criminals, have become increasingly socially isolated from mainstream patterns of behavior (1987:58).

---

[12]As I will point out in the next chapter, inter-school cooperation is difficult even when the school populations served are similar; when they come from two cultures whose relationships with each other are characterized by suspicion and fear, the difficulties are almost insurmountable.

This isolation also affects the institutions in these areas. Unlike St. Sojourner, St. Frederick School could not expect to attract students with more stable economic backgrounds from outside the area...outsiders chose to avoid this neighborhood. The isolation also meant a decreased tuition base--with fewer students to draw from and less diversity in socio-economic backgrounds of students the tuition rate could not be inflated without a dangerous loss of students. St. Frederick had no choice but to make the school affordable for students in the area.

A corresponding benefit of the school's isolation, however, was the protection it afforded for the provision of archdiocesan subsidy. As mentioned in a previous chapter, the archdiocesan commitment to provide Catholic education in all areas of the city means that schools which do not have the option to consolidate with neighboring schools are less likely to be closed by the central offices than are schools in areas where a number of formerly ethnic schools still exist.

Financial Dependence on the Archdiocese

In light of its geographic isolation, it is not surprising then, that St. Frederick's financial picture was characterized by a heavy dependence on archdiocesan subsidy. In the 1986-'87 school year, the archdiocese provided 59 percent of the school's total budget. Tuition supplied the

other 41 percent. The parish made no direct contribution to the school's budget that year.[13]

St. Frederick had received approximately 20 percent of its 1970 school budget from archdiocesan subsidy; that support had dropped to 11 percent of the 1975 budget,[14] and then climbed to the 1986 level of 59 percent, the highest of the isolated schools. Unlike most isolated parishes where tuition picked up the slack until the archdiocese intervened, at St. Frederick the proportion of the budget supplied by tuition had remained relatively stable at around 50 percent during the seventies. It was parish subsidy that picked up the slack in the mid-seventies, jumping from 13 percent in 1970 to 37 percent in 1975. Parish membership declined after 1978, however, and the parish could no longer afford to fill in the gaps. As a result, the archdiocese took over. Figure 7-1 shows dollar amounts (adjusted upward

---

[13]This, too, was common in the isolated schools, where only one school received parish subsidy--and that amounted to only 1 percent of the school's budget. Note, however, that lack of parish subsidy does not in itself mean that a school is an isolated school. I found schools without any parish subsidy in each of the four categories of inner-city schools. Failure to provide financial support is only one dimension of the distancing of parish and school, and many parishes that lack financial resources provide the school with other forms of support that are just as crucial, e.g., legitimacy and political support.

[14]This drop in archdiocesan subsidy may have been the result of archdiocesan dollar amounts of grants remaining similar while school budgets grew enormously--St. Frederick's total expenditures in 1970 were $68,000 while in 1975 they were $119,072, an increase of over 75 percent. During that same time period archdiocesan subsidy decreased from $14,000 to $13,000.

to account for inflation) of school revenue from various sources for 1970, 1975, and 1986.

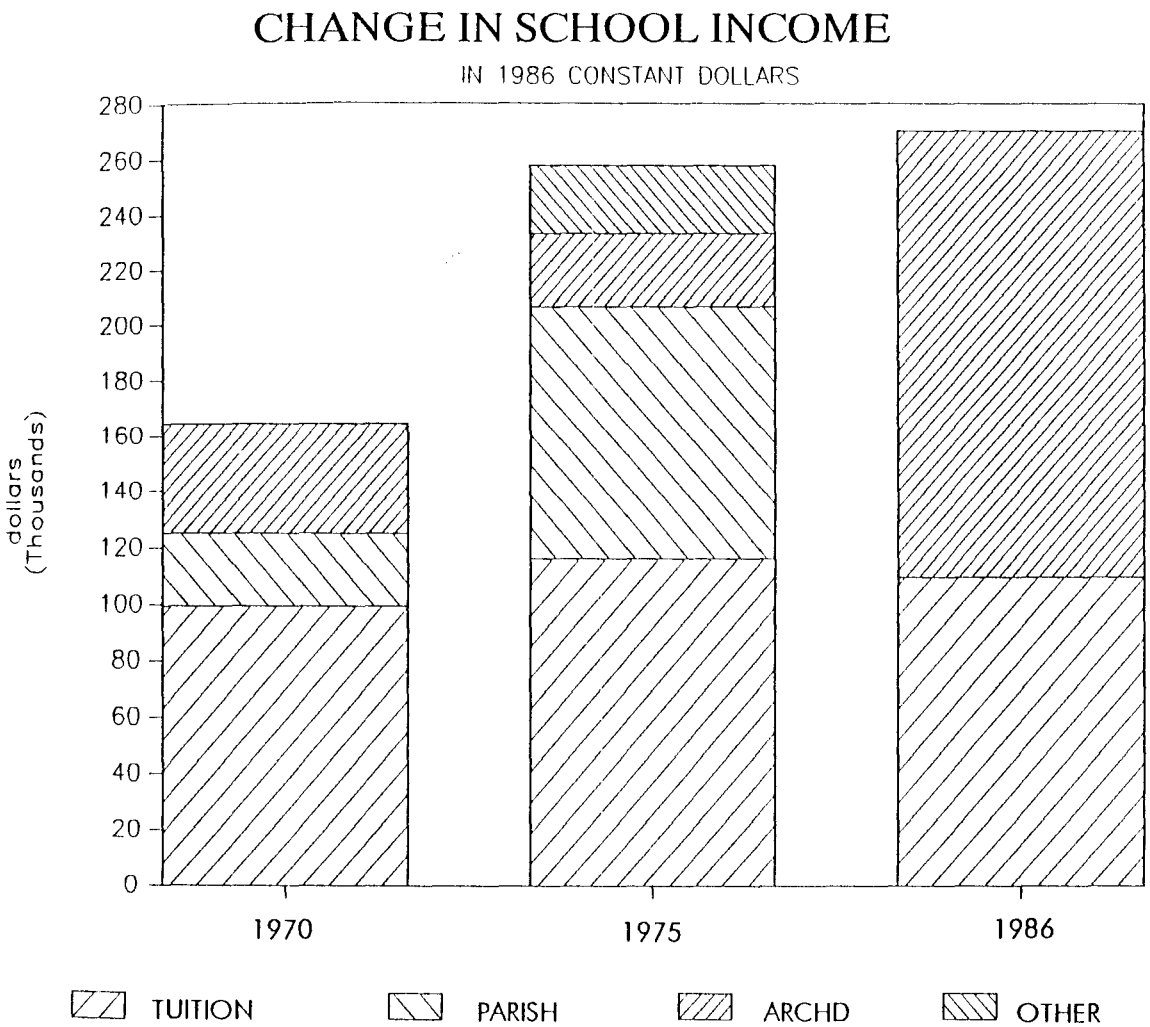


Figure 7-1

Enrollment

In 1970 there were 312 students in the school, 98 percent of whom were black with 61 percent of the black students being non-Catholic. By the mid-70s the number of

black Catholic students had dropped dramatically from 119 to thirty-six while the black non-Catholic student population showed a modest growth from 187 to 204. As mentioned above, St. Frederick's enrollment had remained relatively stable from 1975 through 1980, but from 1980 to 1984 it declined by over 100 students which put enrollment at a dangerously low 150. Informants described a loss of legitimacy for the school during the early part of the decade which caused a drop in enrollment and an exodus of teachers as well. When the new principal took over in 1985, she reportedly worked hard to bring people together, to open lines of communication, and to restore the sense that people within the school community could support and rely on each other. Two years later enrollment was at 245 and growing. The principal's goal was to enroll twenty new families for the following year.

The case study of St. Frederick School revealed some of the tactics that had been successfully used to stabilize enrollment and then turn the decline around to a situation of actual growth. Since the school was geographically isolated it needed to present itself as an attractive and affordable alternative to the public school for the families in the immediate neighborhood. I saw St. Frederick attempting to do this in three ways. It was opening up to the Hispanic population in the neighborhood. It was also initiating programs to make the school more convenient and

attractive to parents. And it was increasing enrollment and keeping tuition affordable by offering tuition grants and incentive programs for families who brought new families into the school.

Becoming more generalist

St. Frederick's efforts to attract the Hispanic population had not yet succeeded. The number of Hispanics was increasing, however, (from eleven in 1985 to twenty-seven in 1987) and the principal expressed a hope that these numbers would continue to grow as Hispanic families stayed with the school and began to identify with it. Rather than the Afro-American specialist orientation of St. Sojourner, St. Frederick's aim was to become more generalist, hoping to appeal to the Hispanic population of the neighborhood as well as the black.[15]

Adapting to parental needs

To make the school more convenient and attractive to working parents, St. Frederick had opened, five years

---

[15]It remains to be seen how successful this strategy will be. Historically, different ethnic populations have not comfortably mixed in Chicago. In choosing my interview sample I found that truly integrated Catholic schools are almost nonexistent in Chicago. Especially when the populations are low-income and uneducated, relationships between Hispanics and blacks are too often characterized by hostility and fear. It is possible that if St. Frederick succeeds in attracting significant numbers of Hispanics students, another population transition may take place as the black population withdraws from the school. Maintaining legitimacy with both populations might be extremely difficult.

previous to my research, an all day preschool program for three and four-year-olds. The preschool provided a valuable service for working parents,[16] and served as a feeder into the elementary school. There was a waiting list for the preschool, and enrollment was higher in the primary grades than in the intermediate or junior high, which seemed to indicate the preschool's effectiveness as a feeder. Before and after-school care was also available within the school building from 6:30 a.m. until school opened and again from dismissal until 6:00 p.m. Parents paid a weekly fee for this service. The school increased both its enrollment and its legitimacy by being responsive to the childcare needs of single parent families.

Making Catholic education affordable

In an attempt to make St. Frederick more affordable to families in the neighborhood, the principal advertised the existence of tuition grants. These grants required parents to pay a partial tuition and "work off" the remaining tuition. Parents on grants supervised the lunchroom, worked with students on computers, and assisted teachers in the

---

[16]United Way of Chicago reports that despite the proven effectiveness of early childhood education in significantly improving student performance, less than one-half of all low-income children participate in such programs. It points out that working parents have difficulty involving their preschoolers in Head Start programs because Head Start requires such extensive parental involvement (1989:23). St. Frederick's program offered these parents an important option.

classroom. According to the principal, the parents who received tuition grants often quickly tired of the extra work commitment. But in the meantime, their children had adjusted to the school and were happy, and parents were satisfied with their progress. Rather than moving the child again, they found ways to pay the full tuition. The availability of grants lured families into the school at a minimal cost to the school.

While the primary purpose of these tuition grants was recruitment, grants also gave parents a close look at what was going on in the school. In the isolated school, where so much energy and emphasis is placed on the internal workings of the school, formal statements of mission may be far less important in establishing the school's legitimacy than the provision of opportunities for parents to see the school at work.

St. Frederick also increased enrollment by offering parents incentives to bring new families into the school. Families were told that if twenty additional families registered in the school for the following year, there would be no tuition increase. If not, the school would raise tuition in order to cover increased costs. In addition, each family responsible for bringing a new family into the school would receive a $50.00 tuition credit in January.[17]

---

[17]This tuition credit for recruiting new families is not unique to this school. A number of principals spoke of using this technique to encourage families to bring in new

This program, too, brought new families into the school, created a cooperative network of parents, helped to keep tuition rates down, and encouraged the development of a sense of responsibility for the school among the parents.

While the adaptive strategies available to St. Frederick remained limited because of the parish's instability and the school's geographic isolation, the school under the leadership of its principal had increased enrollment and in so doing, also strengthened its claim to archdiocesan subsidy. But the principal also had to establish the school's legitimacy with various constituencies. She did this through the development of a strong school community. This process was simplified because of the autonomy available to her because of the distancing of the school from the parish.

Special Issues of Concern for Isolated Schools

The case study of the isolated school provided me with an opportunity to see a school caught between the old and the new. Its past resource links had been forcibly taken away, and while it had to adapt, its options were extremely limited because of environmental constraints discussed above. Despite those constraints, however, and the almost desperate condition of the parish, St. Frederick School was growing and stabilizing.

---

families.

The primary challenges confronting the isolated school, as in the parish-centered school, were issues of legitimacy and autonomy. Like St. Sojourner, legitimacy at St. Frederick was based on both academic effectiveness and a strong sense of community. But the base of community was different--limited to the school but therefore more inclusive of non-parishioner parents whose interests were also more limited. The successful isolated school had to be able to create a community strong enough to provide it with resources. Unlike parish-centered schools which had to be concerned with the needs and expectations of the parish, St. Frederick focussed its energy and attention almost exclusively on the parents who were its greatest resource.[18] In this next section I will discuss how St. Frederick created a school community that translated to legitimacy with parents and with teachers. I will also look briefly at the unique autonomy that was available to this isolated school. While detached from parish and from any other outside supporters, the principal received autonomy, in a strange kind of trade-off, which allowed her to do what was necessary to move the school toward a more secure future.

---

[18]When asked about meeting expectations, the principal stated that she was most concerned with meeting the expectations of parents and students rather than those of the parish or surrounding community.

The New Myth: A School Community

The isolated schools were more dependent on their principals than schools in any other category. In much the same way that the pastor at St. Sojourner had refounded the parish, in order for an isolated school to become organizationally successful, the principal had to refound the school. Principals who were capable, effective, charismatic leaders could use their autonomy to bring the school to a rebirth; when their policies were effective, people accorded them respect and even greater autonomy. Given this autonomy, they were more able to build a school community commensurate with their vision of an effective inner-city Catholic school (Schein 1985).

The principal at St. Frederick was responsible for the myth-making and legitimating work that had previously been done by the parish. She used community as a primary means of legitimating the school and mobilizing the resources of the school participants--students, parents, and staff. Instead of building its legitimacy on a strong parish identity as St. Sojourner had done, St. Frederick based its legitimacy on a strong school identity, a strong school community in which all participants needed to be integrated.

One of the most important tasks of the principal, then, was to create a vital sense of community within the school that would win the commitment of parents, students, and faculty and staff. She was attempting to do this by finding

ways to involve parents in taking active responsibility for the school and by providing the atmosphere and opportunities conducive to the development of a family spirit that would draw people into the school.

Mobilizing Parental Support

The legitimating myth actively promoted at St. Frederick School was that the quality of the school depended on the involvement of the parents.[19] Principal and teachers told parents--in words and communications and school policies and interactions--that the parents would determine the school's effectiveness. Both principal and teachers spoke repeatedly to me of the need to work closely with parents in order for the school to succeed. One of the

---

[19]The literature supports the necessity of parental involvement in schools. Vitullo-Martin (1979) stated that parental involvement increases school effectiveness and the school's chances for survival. Cibulka, O'Brien, and Zewe found that parental involvement in inner-city schools "accommodate the schools to external realities and help to transform the environment so that it supports the goals of the school (1982:180)." Comer (1988) and Schorr (1988) provide vivid examples of the impact of parental involvement in several model programs, and Purkey and Smith's (1988) review of the research on school effectiveness noted that researchers consistently found parental involvement and support to be a key variable influencing academic achievement. Their findings are summarized in United Way of Chicago's report Human Capital Development:

> The development of a cooperative and supportive parent-teacher relationship is an important ingredient in the development of strong school cultures committed to learning. Such parent-school interaction generally improves student performance... studies have found that children's educational performances depend critically upon how schools interact with children's home life (1989:24).

teachers, for example, stated: "The key to a successful school is communication and the ability to influence parents, to get them to work with you." Accomplishing this meant not only satisfied parents but increased enrollment,[20] and the parental cooperation necessary to make academic achievement in the inner city a possibility.[21] One of the principal's greatest challenges, therefore, was to develop ways to involve parents and place responsibility for the school in their hands.

Current levels of parental involvement

When giving her assessment of parental involvement at St. Frederick's, the principal reported that it was not yet what she wanted it to be; she complained that the school's greatest challenge was trying to educate children without

---

[20]One teacher attributed the school's rising enrollment to the principal's ability to win the respect and cooperation of parents. He claimed that most parents and people in the neighborhood liked what the school was doing, and people were eager to come. He spoke, for example, of a person with five friends who had decided to enroll their children at St. Frederick. According to United Way's report Human Capital Development (1989) both the community area in which St. Frederick is located and the adjacent community area from which it draws some students are among the most educationally disadvantaged communities in Chicago. A school in the neighborhood with a good reputation, then, is likely to attract parental interest.

[21]Both faculty and principal insisted on the importance of a strong rapport between the school and the parents. This rapport requires that parents be directly involved in their children's education in order to combat the divergent value systems with which the children are constantly confronted on the street. Students need to see school and home working together on their behalf (Comer 1988).

their parents' involvement, that too many parents did not have the time, or did not know how to make the time to support and supplement what the school was providing.[22] Many parents worked two jobs and the majority were single parents. The principal stated that parents tended to assume that the school was doing a good job without much active support from them. They believed that if they paid tuition they had done their part and the school was now responsible for educating their children. The principal complained that if meetings were not mandatory, parents did not come, although she estimated that parents were more responsive if their own children were directly involved in the activity, and that about 70 percent of the parents attended if the children were performing. She was dissatisfied with this percentage, however, and was committed to the ideal of full parental participation.

One of the teachers confirmed that this was a concern of faculty, too. He spoke of the need to consciously invite parents into the classrooms. He also pointed out that as a faculty they had decided to make parent participation one of their priorities for the following year.

During my brief period of observation at St. Frederick's, I found that parental participation fluctuated a great deal from event to event. The principal shared with

---

[22]One example of this was a series of parenting workshops which "almost no one attended."

me her concern and anger over the poor showing at the gym programs the students put on for their parents. Two programs had been scheduled: one put on by the early childhood through third grades and the second involving the fourth through eighth graders. The younger students were dependent on parents to bring them to the school, and fewer than half of the children had come. The older students were more independent so 90 percent of them had attended, but almost no parents were present.

In her weekly school bulletin the following week, the principal expressed her disappointment to the parents and strongly encouraged them to give their full cooperation to the school by attending programs sponsored by St. Frederick School. I attended two functions after this where parental attendance seemed greatly improved: an athletic banquet and the school talent show. Almost all of the students at the athletic banquet had at least one parent with them, and the hall for the talent show was packed.

School board as core community at St. Frederick

Because formation of a school community depended on the active involvement of parents, the principal had to find ways to convince parents of their importance to the school. One of the most significant ways she did this was through

involving parents on the school board.[23] St. Frederick's school board was significantly different from that of St. Sojourner. At Frederick's, the board was a parent board rather than a parish board. The church community was not involved in the selection of members although the principal had appointed one non-parent parishioner to maintain a tie to the parish. The board represented the school population and directly focussed on school concerns. Like the core group at St. Sojourner of people actively involved in both church and school, the board at St. Frederick formed a core community committed to making the school work.

As St. Sojourner had recruited parishioners to work in the school, St. Frederick's principal spoke of recruiting a board, a difficult task because parents did not originally feel competent to set policies and help direct the school.[24] By the May meeting which I attended, however,

---

[23]This board served much the same purpose that the governance and management team did in Comer's model schools (1988). In addition to shaping policy, leadership intended the group to break down the parents' sense of alienation from the school and the mistrust that prevents students from bonding with their teachers. The Chicago School Reform Act of 1988 proposes a similar strategy. Actively involving parents and other community leaders in local school governance is expected to "facilitate the emergence of a cohesive and constructive school culture and help schools respond to community expectations about student performances (United Way of Chicago 1989:29)."

[24]United Way's needs assessment report noted the challenge of ensuring that poor parents/communities are given an opportunity for true participation and not just the semblance of power (1989:29). St. Frederick's principal spoke of this challenge. A year earlier she could only get four or five people to come to the board meetings. At the

they had grown into their role and were enthusiastically searching for ways to involve more parents in their work and to increase parental participation across the board during the following year.

During this meeting the board first evaluated the effectiveness of various 1987-'88 activities aimed at involving parents. If projects had failed or experienced only minimal success, the board attempted to explain why attendance was poor and to make suggestions for remedying the situation.[25]

In looking to the coming year, the board discussed

---

meeting I attended there were eight board members, the pastor, the principal, and one parent observer (two board members had called in sick). In order to build up this board she had personally called people she felt could do a good job and she did some "arm-twisting," asking people to try board membership for a few months, reassuring them that if they were not comfortable they would not have to continue coming. She reported spending the early months teaching them how to be a board, educating them to their role and responsibilities, gradually forcing them to participate in discussions and contribute their ideas for the school.

This original lack of confidence in their competency is reminiscent of the concern expressed when the black lay principal took over at St. Sojourner...the fear of grassroots people that one of their own would not do the job effectively.

[25]In evaluating a monthly Family Fun Night, for example, they commented that single parents, especially those who work, often could not come...why not let the normal childcare provider accompany the child. Other suggestions were: rotate the times after asking parents about their time preferences; provide games and activities for the parents as well as for the children; build in variety--e.g., have a family dance night, a movie night, etc. Efforts at parent-pleasing were once again evident in this discussion; the goal was to make the event as convenient and enjoyable to parents as possible.

plans to increase parental leadership by recruiting room parents who would work directly with board members; they hoped this strategy would increase the pool of prospective board members. They then suggested possible social activities and programs to help parents develop effective parenting skills. This was a brainstorming session, so it was unclear whether their proposals would be implemented. The board's commitment to parental involvement was clear, however, as was its sensitivity to the special needs of single and working parents.

One suggestion highlighted what seemed to be the underlying concern addressed by all of their ideas: the need to develop parental networks. The board spoke of how neighbors used to help each other keep the children in line; modern conditions make that kind of support network more difficult to establish but more crucial than ever, since many parents were trying to parent on their own.[26] If parents got to know each other, reached some agreement on discipline, and established some common expectations for their children, the youth would be less likely to play games with their parents, or pit parent against parent.

---

[26]The concentration effects of poverty, the extreme social isolation and dislocation experienced in neighborhoods like that surrounding St. Frederick (Wilson 1987) make these networks ever more crucial. Parental networks make possible the kind of normative communities of shared goals and values necessary for effective educational programs (Comer 1988; Coleman and Hoffer 1987; Cibulka, O'Brien, and Zewe 1982; Vitullo-Martin 1979).

The principal had organized the initial parent meeting for the following year in such a way as to facilitate parental networks. While most schools had one, or possibly two meetings which oriented parents to the school, at St. Frederick's the principal scheduled the various grade-level meetings on different nights. The teacher and the principal were to address parents and then a school board member was to talk about the activities the board had planned, especially the one that this particular grade was to be responsible for. Parents would have the opportunity to get acquainted or to renew bonds during the social which was to follow this introductory meeting. Thus St. Frederick's school board was composed of actively involved parents seeking to get other parents actively involved. The board organized fundraising efforts in a way which not only brought money into the school, but which, just as importantly, brought parents together to build up a community of people who would know and support each other as well as work for the school.

Factors influencing a strong family spirit

Community at St. Frederick was not simply a matter of participating in school activities, of getting parents involved in doing things with and for the school; it also involved the experience of being a school family, that sense of feeling at home in the school and knowing that you belong and are important, that you count. Four factors at St.

Frederick appeared to have a significant impact on the development of a strong sense of being a school family. The presence of people who remembered the family spirit of the school before the decline was important, as was the neighborhood character of the school. A school atmosphere conducive to the building up of warm friendly ties, and the school's reliance on and appreciation for parents intensified the experience of belonging.

An ideal to recapture--utilizing bridges. For St. Frederick, as was probably the case for many isolated schools, a family spirit had once been generated by parish membership. An important task for the isolated school is to try to recapture that spirit despite the loss of parish community. One of the teachers, the school secretary, and several parents reminisced with me about what the school was like during the sixties and seventies before the economic decline of the neighborhood. They spoke of how well they had gotten to know the other school families, of lasting friendships with other parents, of how they still consider the school a home. They spoke of a time when mothers did not have to work and could spend time volunteering in the school--and of how the school became a gathering place for the women. This handful of women, long active in the

school, by informally sharing their stories[27] provided an invaluable service to the school; they presented to newcomers a vision of what school community could be.[28] The clearer that vision, the more likely it is that the school will become what it envisions itself to be (Morgan 1986:137). By utilizing these people as bridges to the community and by developing good working relationships with them, the principal gained a powerful source of legitimacy for the school.

Benefits of being a neighborhood school. Despite the serious limitations it placed on enrollment and financing, the neighborhood character of the school made it more feasible to involve parents in the school and to create a more inclusive experience of community than could be found in a parish-centered school. At St. Sojourner, for example, the great majority of school parents came from outside the neighborhood, were not involved in the parish community, and did not know each other.

Because working with friends and acquaintances was less

---

[27]One of this group, the school secretary, in her role as gatekeeper spoke to numerous people every day. Others shared their stories as they passed in and out of school, or as informal groups gathered for various school activities.

[28]Writers on organizational culture stress this point. Christensen (1988), for example, speaks of the importance of storytelling in surfacing the underlying assumptions, meanings, and values in a group. This is especially important in times of organizational crisis or change when these basic assumptions are questioned or challenged. See also Tommerup (1988).

threatening than working with and for strangers, parents were more likely to respond positively to invitations to get involved. As one board member commented, "Parents tend to say yes when you ask them personally. Once they know you it's harder to say no." In addition to encouraging and facilitating participation, the kind of supportive network school board parents were trying to activate had a better chance of succeeding because students did interact with each other outside of school, and parents knew their children's friends.

School atmosphere. Almost every teacher with whom I spoke made some allusion to the family spirit that characterized the school, and, at least in their perception, made this school unique. One teacher explained that the smallness and closeness of the school was a real asset in developing this kind of family spirit; everyone knew everyone else.[29] Students, faculty, the secretary, janitors...all interacted in a family-like atmosphere. But the teacher was quick to add that smallness in itself does not guarantee this kind of interaction; he said he teaches his students a sense of family, stressing that they will be living and working together all year and should be family to each other.

Another teacher described the family spirit as

---

[29]This teacher stated that he knew every student in the school by name.

manifested in the way students interact with each other and the teachers. I saw older students come to the primary classrooms to help the little ones--and also to correct papers for the primary teachers. Several of the older girls told me they refer to the first grade teacher as their "pretend mother" and they come to help her during their lunch break.

The principal had also worked to promote a family atmosphere in the school by improving the physical environment, to create a welcoming atmosphere where parents felt comfortable and at home. St. Frederick School was bright and artistically decorated. The school's main office was situated on a large open landing on the stairway between two classroom levels, creating what the secretary described as "a resting place where parents come in, sit and talk about their problems and what's going on at home."

Need, Appreciation, and Belonging. Another factor influencing the development of a family spirit at St. Frederick was the school's reliance on and obvious need of parents.[30] I saw this dependence clearly demonstrated in the athletic program. Poverty presented the program with some unique challenges: the school had no gym, no indoor place for practice, not even permanent basketball hoops

---

[30]Vitullo-Martin (1979) stated that inner-city Catholic schools succeed because they are close to their parents and their community. He attributes this closeness to the fact that the school needs the parents.

outside. Teams had to borrow other gyms when they were available for practice, and arranging transportation was difficult. The school did not have a bus, and the basketball coach did not have a car, so the team relied on parents to transport them whenever possible, and they took public transportation the rest of the time. This increased dependence on parents apparently also increased parental involvement and dedication.

During the athletic banquet, in addition to student recognition, about a dozen parents were recognized for their participation in the sports program. This recognition reminded parents not only of the school's need for their active involvement but showed them how much students and personnel appreciated them. The school was telling parents that they were essential and valued members of the community.

Celebrating the school and its spirit

In my observations the family spirit at St. Frederick was strikingly apparent at the annual athletic banquet and at the school talent show. While limited to junior high students, staff representation at the banquet included the principal and pastor, teachers from the 4th, 7th, and 8th grades, the physical education teacher, the secretary, and one of the maintenance men.

The rapport among the students was excellent; they had their friendship groups but no one was excluded. There were

no signs of rivalry or negativity among the students. They interacted freely, spontaneously, warmly with each other and with their teachers. The parents often seemed not to know each other, but they did know the youth and they took great pride in the students' accomplishments and those of the school. The students warmly greeted each other's parents and those students whose parents had not arrived during the early part of the dinner ate with the parents of their friends.

I observed the same kind of family spirit, but on a much larger scale at the talent show. What was markedly different here from Saint Sojourner was the apparent ease with which families mingled. Again, parents often did not know each other, but they knew and responded warmly to their children's classmates and friends. The church basement where the children performed was packed. Young men, possibly older brothers or alumni of St. Frederick's, stood along one side of the room. Much of the black neighborhood appeared to have turned out for the performance; people were streaming in from the street when I arrived. People were obviously having a good time; they were attentive, they cheered and laughed, praised the children, applauded enthusiastically. Teachers, too, gave evidence of this kind of family spirit; they obviously enjoyed performing together for the students; it was clear that they were able to laugh and play together. In paying tribute to a teacher

celebrating 25 years of service to the school, the faculty and some student representatives performed together for her. After the program people mingled over punch and cookies. The program ran rather long, and the children got tired and restless, but no one seemed in a hurry to go home. Even after they left the church, small groups stood outside continuing their conversations.

Both here and at the athletic banquet the family interaction indicated that students socialized with each other outside of the school setting. School friendships overflowed into their home life.

School activities not only provided strong evidence of the family spirit that the staff identified for me, but also seemed to confirm and strengthen that sense of family. Just as church rituals at St. Sojourner celebrated the parish community of which the school was a part, at St. Frederick these special school activities celebrated and confirmed the school community (Comer 1988; Purkey and Smith 1988). This analysis was verified by a teacher who credited that spirit in part to the many outside activities--sports program, school newspaper, etc. He rated the spirit at St. Frederick as being better than average and stated that "students take pride in being here. Despite its negatives, the school has a good spirit."

Community-Building with the Faculty

Just as the principal assumed primary responsibility

for drawing parents into a school community, she was also responsible for integrating her teachers into the school community. A strong and stable faculty was especially important in the isolated schools because they tended to have high student turnover rates; populations were more transient and the schools appeared to have more difficulty retaining students. At St. Frederick, recruitment efforts brought in large numbers of students from public schools. In some classrooms as many as a third of the students were new to the school. A stable faculty was better able to provide the consistency needed to integrate these newcomers into the school community. At St. Frederick the school was moving into its third year without any changes in faculty.

In addition, a stable faculty was needed to provide the school with academic legitimacy. The principal reported that parents come to the school for the "education" but they define education in terms of discipline and a belief that the teachers care. Experienced teachers who themselves are well integrated into the school community and its philosophy of education, would be much better able to maintain an atmosphere of both discipline and care in their classrooms (Purkey and Smith 1988; Cibulka, O'Brien, and Zewe 1982).

Teacher interviews confirmed that teachers felt they were an important part of the school community and that the principal played a key role in that. One teacher commented

that the school had a strong family spirit[31], attributable to the present staff, but that this had not always been the case. There had been a "bad attitude" when the teacher first began teaching here eight years earlier, an attitude which she claimed the principal had changed. "A strong principal holds the staff together." She described her current principal as showing no favoritism, as being open to everyone.

Another teacher spoke of the good feeling among the staff, of how well they work together, of how they help each other out. She, too, spoke positively about the principal, commenting that "her door is always open." She has found the principal to be exceptionally good in giving her input, feedback, and helping her develop her creativity.

The principal took seriously her faculty's concerns and ideas. Teachers described her as wanting and respecting their input.[32] The secretary reported that she had never seen a happier group of teachers. She described them in this way: "They're dedicated, work well together, feel respected and listened to...their ideas are heard and acted

---

[31]The concept "family spirit" seems to have great significance in this school. The phrase was used repeatedly by teachers, administrators, staff, and parents.

[32]An informant provided an example of the principal's respect for teacher input: the junior high teachers were concerned that the school was losing students to a neighboring school because of the math and science programs offered there. The principal listened to these concerns and suggested that the teachers examine those programs for possible implementation.

upon."[33]

Staff development was obviously a high priority at St. Frederick's. The school had a large, attractive, well-stocked faculty room. Visible indicators of the principal's stress on staff development included: educational newsletters on the bulletin board, an educational paper with several articles marked by the principal as being worthwhile, a notice of a reading workshop posted on the bulletin board along with a sign-up list for teachers committing themselves to attend[34]. In addition there were two computers and a printer for faculty use, and a VCR in addition to the usual ditto and xerox machines.

Classrooms, too, were well equipped. Computers were visible in several classrooms, and the school had a computer lab as part of the library. Charts and learning materials, as well as posters and projects done by the students,

---

[33]Contrast this to the crippling effects of bureaucracy on principal-teacher interactions in Chicago's public schools. United Way of Chicago's Human Capital Development reported:

> Few principals can hire, retain, or fire teachers... Instead most staff, maintenance and budgetary decisions are made by a large central bureaucracy. Curriculum is also determined by experts in the central administration, as are systems for monitoring student progress. Hence teachers and principals have few occasions to work collaboratively with each other or with parents. Under such circumstances, teamwork and school cultures that effectively promote learning emerge only with difficulty (1989:28).

[34]For this particular workshop, four of the twelve classroom teachers had signed up.

decorated the classrooms. When asked if acquiring materials was difficult, one of the teachers replied, "We have everything that anybody else has." He added that they are increasing what they have, too--this year, for example, an new reading series was adopted.

Thus, by listening to and respecting teachers' ideas, by encouraging their professional development, by providing them with what they felt they needed to do their job well, the principal helped integrate teachers into the school community.[35] Teacher commitment strengthens the quality of the school and its legitimacy to parents. Teachers become a vital link to the resources needed by the isolated school.

Autonomy

While the loss of strong ties to the parish posed some serious challenges for the isolated school, it also eliminated some of the problems of autonomy that I described at St. Sojourner. Because the school was not totally dependent on a single resource provider--the parish--the principal had more autonomy to adapt as she saw necessary.

At St. Frederick, the lack of significant involvement with the parish cut through some of the traditional

---

[35]Strong instructional leadership from the principal was another variable Purkey and Smith (1988) found consistently cited for effective schools. In their own theory for school improvement, they list both instructional leadership and schoolwide staff development as key organizational/structural variables that facilitate the development of the school culture and climate necessary for achievement.

expectations and lines of authority, and the principal experienced greater freedom and autonomy in her role than she would have elsewhere. While remaining the final authority and the person who was ultimately responsible for the school, the pastor had delegated responsibility for school operations and policies to the principal.[36]

Similarly, with the clear distinction between school and church populations, and with the parish freed from financial responsibility for the school, parishioners placed almost no expectations on the school. While lacking the security of the strong financial backing and moral support that a parish context ideally provided, the principal had the freedom to innovate without having to win approval through outside organizational channels.

This autonomy was in marked contrast to the situation in most inner-city Catholic elementary schools. St. Frederick's principal had worked in three other schools included in my population and she stated unequivocally that the pastor is the most significant influence on the inner-city school; he is the key to the survival and success of the inner-city school, and the principal is limited to working within the constraints the pastor establishes. In every school in which she had worked, it was the priests who set the limits within which she had to work. In choosing

---

[36]This was typical in isolated schools. Often these pastors expressed relief that they had a good competent principal to handle that piece of the parish picture.

this school, she had consciously looked for a pastor with whom she could work, one who would give her the freedom to do what she needed to do. She reported that before she accepted this position, she had met with the pastor and the faculty and presented both the parent contract she would require and her "discipline policy," stipulating that she would only assume the principalship if they accepted her policies.

While the parent contract was not significantly different from the contract already being employed in the school, her action points out the high priority she placed on having the authority to do with the school what she decided needed to be done. She expressed the belief that too many inner-city schools fail in times of crisis because the principal is not free to do what must be done. From an organizational perspective this makes perfect sense. One of the requisites for a successful organization is that it be able to maintain autonomy with respect to the other organizations on which it depends for resources and to make decisions about its own structure (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978).

The present pastor came after the principal did, and his unfamiliarity with Catholic education further increased her autonomy. While he trusted and supported her, his energies were consumed by the parish, and he gave her virtually free reign.

A second dimension of the autonomy that provided a significant contrast with St. Sojourner was the relationship of the principal to the board. While both schools had policy-making boards, the principal at St. Sojourner was responsible to the board while at St. Frederick the principal controlled the board. She personally selected board members, trained them in their role and responsibilities, provided reading materials to direct their discussions; she remained the most influential voice on the board, even as she sought to empower and turn responsibility over to parents. As she attempted to pull the school through a time of isolation and extremely low enrollment, the crisis necessitated that the board be hand-picked; this freed the board from the tensions caused by hostile or negative members or those representing opposing factions within the school community.

As enrollment stabilized and the school's future seemed more secure, and as the board grew in competence and confidence, board members were encouraging the development of new leadership among the parents. Since there were no procedures for electing school board members, it remained to be seen how future board members would be chosen and how much control over board selection the principal would retain.

It is possible, therefore, for a school like St. Frederick to successfully cope with its isolation. A strong

school community can be activated and provide the school with the resources it needs, and the autonomy made available to the isolated school can help facilitate adaptation.

The Organizational Effectiveness of the Isolated School

While I have tried to make it clear that isolation is not a form of adaptation that inner-city schools deliberately choose, it is a reality that confronts many such schools. For some schools, isolation will lead to eventual death; for others, to organizational persistence or permanent failure...continuing to make the best of a bad situation for as long as the archdiocese is willing and able to provide subsidy. Still others of these schools, like St. Frederick, will attempt to build up their reputation, their enrollment, and their legitimacy by developing the school itself--presenting a strong academic option to the public school that is attractive and affordable to families in the neighborhood. In this final section of the chapter I will summarize the special adaptive strengths and the limitations confronting the isolated school in the black inner city.

Special Adaptive Strengths of the Isolated School

As mentioned above, while being a neighborhood school seriously limited the isolated school's pool of possible students and its access to financial resources, it also made the development of a strong school community more feasible. A strong community, as I have shown in discussing St.

Frederick, becomes an important source of legitimacy for the school and attempts to replace the parish community which traditionally gave the school purpose and direction. In addition, the geographic isolation limited parents' educational choices, thus reducing competition and increasing the tendency to permanent failure (Meyer and Zucker 1989).

In terms of the actual adaptive strength of the isolated school, its greatest asset is the freedom and autonomy that separation from the parish makes available to it. There is first a greater freedom for the school parents to determine the future and direction of the school without having to deal with competing claims from parish or parishioners. As parents begin to assume responsibility for the school, they also become more committed, more actively involved, a more reliable source of support for the school. This parental involvement does not come easily; it must be carefully developed and constantly nurtured. At St. Frederick much of the initiative in this regard was directed toward the building up of a strong school board which at the time of my research was reaching out further and involving other parents.

I have discussed above the second dimension of the unique freedom available to the isolated school; it is the autonomy of the principal to do what she feels is best in order to stabilize the school and move it toward a more

secure future. She is able to do this without interference from the pastor, without having to measure the good of the school against the good of the parish, without having to justify her actions or decisions to a parish board. But in order to capitalize on these "strengths" of the isolated school, a strong charismatic leader who enjoys autonomy and thrives on challenges is an essential ingredient (Schein 1985).

Special Limitations or Problems

St. Frederick had been more successful at stabilizing its situation than most of the isolated schools I visited. My study, however, revealed several important limitations which characterize the isolated schools: first, the religious dimension of the school was weakened by the lack of meaningful interaction with the parish and by the school's dependence on maintaining numbers; second, the school was dependent on exceptional charismatic leadership in an environment where such leadership was hard to find; and third, demographic constraints meant the school was unable to overcome its vulnerability to its unstable environment.

Weakened Religious Dimension of the School

Religion, though still important, became less central in the isolated school than it was in the parish-centered school; in order to maintain enrollment the school had to

become more generalist. The loss of religious purpose could be extremely threatening to the school's legitimacy because the religious dimension has been a core part of the Catholic school identity. It could also threaten archdiocesan financial support.

The principal and some teachers[37] at St. Frederick expressed dissatisfaction with the religious dimension of the school. Just as the principal had brought a discipline policy with her to the school, she also brought a parent contract stipulating religious responsibilities of school families. In addition, she chose the religion series used by the school--a Catholic text but with a special program for black evangelization which was especially sensitive to the unique needs of an inter-denominational school like this one. Yet the small proportion of Catholic students, the lack of involvement in the parish, the reality that two-thirds of her full-time teachers were non-Catholic made it difficult to achieve the kind of religious community and atmosphere she considered an ideal. She also expressed a desire for the priest to be more active in the religious education program.

While the principal herself felt that the primary purpose of the school was to promote religious values and

---

[37]Religion was probably less of a concern for most of the faculty because two-thirds of them were non-Catholic. Like the parents, they were concerned with the school and not with trying to re-establish ties with the parish.

the secondary purpose was to educate, she reported that in reality, most of the parents had come to this school for an education, and religious values were secondary.

Several of the teachers also voiced some concerns. One pointed out the difficulty of teaching religion when so many of the students were new not only to Catholic school but to religion of any kind. Another teacher spoke candidly of the difficulty of enforcing religious requirements like the family Mass when the school needed desperately to keep the enrollment up. St. Frederick's parent contract required monthly attendance at the family Mass, but teachers commented that such Masses were poorly attended. The isolated school usually desired to involve families in the church life of the parish and in evangelization, but because enrollment was so low it could not afford to be too demanding.

Conversations regarding the religious dimension of the school indicated that even in the isolated schools, the traditional relationship between church and school was still seen as an ideal. It was recognized, however, as an ideal that was not presently possible and perhaps not even appropriate for the current situation (an assessment with which I would concur). While the separation from the parish protected the school from parish expectations, the place of religion in the isolated schools was sometimes problematic for administrators and teachers familiar with more

traditional parochial schools.

Extreme Dependence on Exceptional Leadership

One of the most life-threatening conditions of the isolated school was its extreme dependence on exceptional administrative leadership in an environment where such leadership was at a premium. During interviews with principals, they repeatedly spoke of the difficulty of finding quality teachers who were both willing and able to work in the inner-city Catholic schools. Several spoke candidly about how much more challenging it is to find quality principals for these schools. As the numbers of women religious decrease and communities have fewer sister-principals available for inner-city schools, it is probable that the schools most in need of exceptional administrative leadership will find it increasingly difficult to fill that need. The problem is compounded by the archdiocesan regulation requiring that principals in parochial schools be Catholic. In a predominantly black Protestant environment, that requirement greatly reduces the pool of eligible candidates.

The situation of isolation develops over a period of years for a school; thus, the principals in this category were usually stepping into the school during a period of crisis. If the school was to survive, a truly exceptional principal was needed, making it even harder for a school to find someone equal to the job. Since the principal in the

isolated school had little outside support, and existing supports were basically undeveloped, she had to be self-motivated and able to work on her own. Like the principal at St. Frederick, she had to be independent and action-oriented, a person who, as one such principal described herself, "thrives on challenges."

Even when such a principal is found, the isolated school is uniquely subject to radical turnarounds with every change of administrator unless the principal's charisma is institutionalized in new organizational structures. Because the isolated school is uniquely dependent on its principal, a change in principal poses a serious threat to the survival of the school. The loss of her charisma can mean the loss of the school's legitimacy, its identity, its ability to retain the progress it has made.

In addition, the isolated school is as vulnerable to administrative decisions made by the principal as the parish-centered was to decisions made by the pastor. The autonomy discussed above as a strength has also the potential to be a severe limitation; the same autonomy that can save a school can also close it or lock it into a pattern of permanent failure.

Demographic Constraints

The isolated school, more than any other category of schools, remained bound by demographic constraints. While it was possible for charismatic principals in such schools

to stabilize the school, the school was unable to stabilize the environment. St. Frederick had no control over the brutal urban decline which provided the context within which it operated: over 40 percent of households below the poverty level, an unemployment rate of over 20 percent, the continued out-migration of the few remaining middle-class families, the loss of stable institutions and mainstream role models, the increasing social isolation of the neighborhood (Wilson 1987). These desolate conditions also isolated the school; without external supports and ties to secure resource providers, no matter how well-developed the internal resources of legitimacy, enrollment, and parental involvement, the school remained extremely vulnerable. Parents, due to their income level, were able to supply only a limited portion of the financial backing that St. Frederick required, and while the archdiocese had been supportive, there was no guarantee that such support would continue indefinitely.

My research at St. Frederick revealed that the isolated school, under the leadership of a creative and charismatic principal, can recover from the loss of the parish as its primary source of identity and support. It can develop a school community which is capable of stabilizing enrollment,

ensuring academic achievement,[38] and establishing the school's legitimacy with parents, teachers, and the archdiocesan funders. The school community secures resources for the isolated school in much the same way that the parish community secures resources for the parish-centered school. Due to the limitations of the isolated school, however, resources are never really secure. Ideally, therefore, the isolated approach needs to be considered a transitional approach, a way of buying time and opportunity for the school to stabilize itself. During this period the school can be exploring other options and moving toward other more long-term and enduring approaches to adaptation. Usually this would entail establishing some kind of outside resource base.

---

[38]The median math score achieved in the junior high was at grade level by national standards; the median reading score was almost a year behind grade level. This can be considered a relatively strong academic achievement since St. Frederick School is located in one of Chicago's most educationally disadvantaged communities (United Way of Chicago, 1989). In addition, the large number of transfer students from the public system reportedly lowered the median scores.

CHAPTER 8

ST. MANDELA: INTER-SCHOOL COOPERATION IN A DECLINING PARISH

In the last chapter I discussed the unique problems and adaptive strengths of an isolated school in Chicago's black inner city. In this chapter I present the findings of a case study of a school that, like St. Frederick, was part of a declining parish, but which was able to join forces with neighboring Catholic schools in an attempt to secure its future. While demographic changes broke the traditional ties of the school to the parish, St. Mandela was replacing those ties with a relationship to the larger church community; the entire Catholic community in a given locality rather than a single parish was assuming responsibility for the school. This new organizational form represented an effort to transcend traditional parochial boundaries, eliminate competition, and emphasize cooperation between parishes in order to accomplish the educational mission of the church.

Schools in this category participated in several different forms of inter-school cooperation and the local parishes differed in their history and their current conditions. It is therefore difficult to generalize to the

entire category from a single case study. The case study was able, however, to highlight some of the strengths and limitations that characterize schools attempting this form of adaptation.

St. Mandela: the Representative Case
A School Moving from Isolation to Cooperative Links

I chose St. Mandela to represent this category because its cooperative links with other schools were formally structured and because this particular structure had been in operation for approximately four years at the time of my research. As a result, participants were able to reflect on the school's experience and verbalize their perceptions of its strengths and weaknesses.

St. Mandela was no longer a self-contained school even though it housed students from kindergarten through Grade 8. It was one of six campuses organizationally structured as a single regional Catholic school sponsored by ten parishes. Four years before my research, nine parochial schools had consolidated budgets and administrative authority, and reorganized themselves into a six campus school. Each campus retained quite a bit of autonomy; each building had its own principal who was responsible for hiring and day to day operation of that campus.[1] While policy formation,

---

[1]Current research on school effectiveness highlights the importance of structural arrangements which provide for school-site management, i.e., autonomy for the principal (Purkey and Smith 1988; Chubb 1988).

planning, and budgeting had been centralized, to an outside observer the six "campuses" appeared to be six schools functioning together as a kind of mini-school-system with an educational coordinator serving as a local superintendent of schools.

In this chapter I examine how restructuring assisted St. Mandela in adapting to its changed environment and in securing resources; I also explore the special problems and challenges and threats to its survival that resulted. As I mentioned in the first chapter, theorists warn that while this kind of reorganization may make the organization somewhat more efficient, it also separates important planning and decision-making from the people most directly influenced by those decisions (Meyer and Zucker 1989). In addition, significant restructuring creates an essentially new organization, with many of the organizational problems associated with newness. The school needs to build a new legitimacy, to develop new political structures. Hannan and Freeman (1977, 1984) state that organizational age tends to produce stability which in turn increases the likelihood of organizational survival. They warn that attempts at reorganization sacrifice that stability and thus increase organizational death rates. St. Mandela School provided me with an opportunity to explore the process of restructuring and its impact on the organizational strength and effectiveness of an inner-city Catholic school.

History and Demographic Background

St. Mandela School represents the cooperating school in a declining parish. The neighborhood surrounding the school had gone through racial transition about twelve years prior to my research. The pastor identified the parish as the only grounding institution remaining in the area.[2] Like many pastors in isolated parishes, Mandela's pastor considered the Catholic church an important sign of hope to the people of the neighborhood. At least one institution had not abandoned them. The school, in turn, was extremely important to the parish since it was the major link between the church and the community.

St. Mandela School had opened just before World War I to serve second and third generation Irish Catholics. During the fifties the ethnic composition of the parish widened to include Italian and Polish families. St. Mandela reached its peak enrollment of 700 students in the mid-sixties. Even in 1970, the school had 659 students, none of whom were black. But by 1975 the parish had gone through rapid racial change which reduced the parish from 1500

---

[2]Wilson addressed this same issue when speaking of the change in Chicago's ghetto neighborhoods between 1970 and 1980. He maintained that previous to 1970, the presence of middle- and working-class families, who were more economically stable, kept the basic institutions in an area (churches, schools, stores, recreational facilities, etc.) viable. As these families moved out during the 1970s, however, most of the institutions, having lost much of the base of their support, either closed or also left the area (1987:56).

families to approximately 200 families, 95 percent of whom were black. School enrollment dropped to just over 300 (92 percent black), less than half of what enrollment had been five years earlier.[3] The neighborhood remained in a permanent state of flux as middle-class black residents followed the whites outward to better residential areas as soon as they were financially able. At the time of my research the pastor estimated that the parish membership was only one hundred families--with a weekly Sunday church attendance of only fifty to sixty people. Like St. Frederick, St. Mandela was no longer capable of supporting the school on its own.

In an attempt to stabilize enrollment by addressing an unmet need in the area, a Special Education Department was initiated for twenty neighborhood youngsters in 1977; within two years that program was serving forty children with learning disabilities. But despite this new program, enrollment continued to decline; in 1980 only 186 children were attending St. Mandela--about 60 percent of the '75 enrollment and slightly over one fourth of what it had been in 1966. Then enrollment climbed to 330 by the mid-

---

[3]The total population of the community area in which St. Mandela was located showed almost no change in size from 1970 to 1980. In 1970 blacks made up 48 percent of the population while in 1980 they comprised 98 percent. During the 1970s, the white population declined by 98 percent while the black population increased by 104 percent (1980 Census Data on Racial and Ethnic Groups by Chicago Community Area, United Way Crusade of Mercy).

eighties, dropped back down to 255, and was climbing again at the time I studied the school. The fluctuating enrollment was symptomatic of the organizational turbulence which had characterized St. Mandela since 1970.

Organizational Turbulence: Conditions before Reorganization

Despite their different histories, St. Mandela had faced a decline similar to that of St. Frederick during the period before reorganization. Both parish and school were struggling for survival. The staff at St. Mandela supplied me with a wealth of information about the years of racial transition. Several teachers had been teaching in the building since before the transition; the pastor, though much newer to the parish, was able to share stories of parish resistance to racial change.[4] According to these stories, the school, in order to survive, was forced to open itself up to the neighborhood, and it actively, if reluctantly, recruited the newcomers. Lack of previous exposure to Catholic education, however, caused confusion for the newcomers, and their inability to understand and accept the school's expectations resulted in frustration on

---

[4]The pastor spoke of active resistance to racial change on the part of the parish. A congressman held rallies in St. Mandela Church demanding that no blacks be allowed into the neighborhood. The pastor of a neighboring cluster church fought the transition by using church moneys to buy up local houses as people panicked; then he would sell them only to whites.

both sides.[5]

Fluctuating enrollment

According to a teacher who had taught at St. Mandela for nineteen years, the year the greatest racial change in the neighborhood took place, no students registered to attend the school. Contracts were not renewed because no one knew whether the school would open in fall. Almost overnight the school was forced to assume a more generalist orientation. In their panic the school staff reached out to the neighborhood: they put fliers in every mailbox and advertised on billboards to inform people of the school's presence and its openness to everyone regardless of religion. When school opened, the staff was thrilled to find the building "filled to overflowing."

But recruiting students proved easier than retaining them, for Mandela had to establish its legitimacy to its new population. Most of the newcomers were totally unfamiliar with Catholic schools and that first year misunderstandings abounded. Many families reportedly resisted paying tuition to a school which their children had been invited to attend.

---

[5]Comer explains that teachers and principals not trained to understand underdeveloped and differently developed students, becoming frustrated, tend to label students as bad, unmotivated, or stupid, and often blame the students, parents, or their communities. Parents react defensively, feel once again rejected by the mainstream, lose confidence in the school and become less supportive or perhaps even hostile. An atmosphere of mutual distrust ensues (1988:46).

The Sister administrator was lenient for a year, accepting small amounts of money and promises...but in the end she withheld final report cards from those families who had not paid their tuition in full. Hard feelings and resentment resulted in a continuing struggle between parents and administration.

The traditional parochial school with its specialist orientation had not had to be concerned with retention of students. Parishioners had been a reliable source of enrollment, and unless they moved out of the area, it was rare for them to withdraw their children from the school. Only after opening up to a non-Catholic population did the school have to concern itself extensively with customer satisfaction. An eleven-year veteran teacher at St. Mandela reported a parental attitude of "shopping around for schools," "trying them out" and moving their children from one school to another. Children reportedly stayed in St. Mandela for two to three years at most. This kind of mentality and competition with other schools was unfamiliar and disturbing to the staff; rather than trying to discover what parents were looking for in a school and why they were choosing to go elsewhere, they attempted to use educational arguments to convince parents to keep their children in school. Even years after the reorganization, the staff was speaking of the challenge of educating parents to the dangers of moving children in and out of schools. The

school actually was caught in a double bind during those early years of transition: the instability of the student population made it difficult for the school to establish its legitimacy and to provide a quality educational environment which may in turn have stabilized student enrollment. The school's entire focus was on survival.

Administrative instability

The conflict between school administration and the new population caused the congregation of religious sisters (that had provided St. Mandela with principals and teachers for almost sixty years) to withdraw from the school. Similar frustrations caused a series of diocesan priests to leave the parish. Finally, no archdiocesan priest was willing to work in this apparently dying parish, so the archbishop invited a religious order of priests experienced in serving the black community to assume leadership at St. Mandela.

This administrative instability apparently intensified the problems caused by the instability of the student population and further threatened the school's legitimacy. In the early '80s, St. Mandela was relatively isolated and abandoned by those who had been its leaders. The pastor at the time of my research was the first religious order priest to work at St. Mandela. He described his first summer in the parish and the chaos he encountered. The school experienced three break-ins and forty-seven broken windows

in the month of June alone; the projectors were all stolen.[6] He described the school as a war zone and the area as suffering from a high narcotics rate. Unlike the situation of geographic isolation at St. Frederick, however, St. Mandela was surrounded by other Catholic schools facing similar declines. With the arrival of religious order priests, pastoral leadership stabilized. Stable leadership and the cooperation of these neighboring schools enabled Mandela to move beyond the period of isolation to the more stable phase the school was currently in.

Reorganization

Interviews indicated that in addition to archdiocesan encouragement for cooperative endeavors in education[7] the momentum for change in this particular cluster came from the local parish staffs who recognized that as individual units they lacked the resources and personnel to provide necessary services. They believed that some form of cooperative linking was not only in their best interest but actually essential.

---

[6]The pastor believed this vandalism was indicative of the neighborhood's hostility toward the school. As the school stabilized, the vandalism declined.

[7]Archdiocesan encouragement is especially strong in neighborhoods where numerous ethnic groups once flourished and the churches and schools they left behind are in very close proximity of each other. Rather than struggling to maintain several very small but autonomous "communities," parishes are encouraged to explore whether they could accomplish their purpose with one site and one staff.

One year after the current pastor's arrival, the ten local parishes and the nine corresponding parish schools reorganized into a "cluster" as part of a diocesan experiment in creative forms of organizing. This experiment was to be evaluated after four years. Archdiocesan planners expected the parishes to merge into a single parish with several worship sites after the evaluation. In the interim the "parishes" kept their pastors but began to work cooperatively in ministry under the direction of a cluster moderator who was also the canonical pastor. Five ministry coordinators directed their various ministries throughout the entire ten-parish cluster: Education, Finance, Social Service, Youth Ministry, and Health Care. Three of the nine parish schools closed and the six remaining "campuses" formed a single Catholic elementary school which was intended to serve this entire "Catholic Community."

Resource Procurement in a Cooperatively-Linked School

St. Mandela, like St. Frederick, was a neighborhood school; fewer than 5 percent of its students came from more than a mile and a half away from school. Therefore, also like St. Frederick, it had to build a reputation and establish its legitimacy with the local community in order to stabilize enrollment. At the same time, income from tuition was limited and the school relied heavily on archdiocesan subsidy.

Stabilizing Enrollment

While several campuses, Mandela included, showed some increase of students the first year of the present cluster arrangement, the overall pattern was a drop in enrollment during the first few years. The original increase was probably due to the transferring of students from the three buildings that closed and also to the addition of all-day preschools at several of the campuses. Staff reported that the subsequent drop in enrollment (in Mandela from 330 to 255) was due partially to the enforcement of mandatory tuition policies. An attempt to level classroom size also contributed because when classrooms were full, additional students were turned away or referred to other campuses. This was sometimes the case at the primary level where enrollment was higher than in the upper grades. From an organizational perspective, however, reorganization is likely to cause problems of legitimacy for a school which in turn can lead to enrollment declines. Especially during the early years, before the school stabilizes and the benefits of reorganization become clear to participants, loss of students is to be expected.

During the two years preceding my fieldwork, enrollment had seemed to stabilize and even begun to grow again (with an increase of 40 students in 1987-88 at St. Mandela). The rate of student turnover at St. Mandela, while diminishing since the reorganization, was still high; the principal

estimated it at about 30 to 40 percent per year. However, at the graduation ceremony the pastor announced that before the end of May, 75 percent of the following year's students had registered and two classrooms were filled and had waiting lists.

Legitimacy

One of the teachers attributed the current rise in enrollment to four factors: people's disillusionment with the public system's magnet schools, the teachers' strike which prevented public schools from opening on schedule, the small size of Catholic schools which some people judged as a real plus, and the return of religious sisters who worked in the school and lived in the neighborhood--and whose presence people regarded as a stabilizing force in the school. The presence of religious sisters increased the school's legitimacy to parishioners, and apparently to the long-term teachers as well. The loss of legitimacy of the public schools, however, seems the more likely reason for recent enrollment gains at St. Mandela (just as it had been the primary impetus behind the building of the Catholic system originally). The teacher strike proved to be a boon for the cluster schools. Mandela's enrollment increased by forty students between September of 1987 and March of 1988; the other campuses gained a total of forty-five students during those months.

In general, teachers and administrators reported

feeling much more positive about the school than they had several years earlier. An eleven year veteran teacher described the school as having gone from complete bedlam when she first began teaching there to a relatively calm school. According to the pastor, the school's reputation in the neighborhood was "relatively decent and it will be better;" one important indicator of that was that the vandalism had subsided.[8]

The pastor credited the teachers and especially the administrator for the increased confidence and school spirit with which families viewed the school. While it was impossible to equate that increased legitimacy and/or the effectiveness of school personnel with the reorganization, they appear to be related. The reorganization (as I will demonstrate in the remainder of this chapter) gave the school a stability, a clear sense of direction, a more secure future--and all of those factors increased its legitimacy and the way in which participants, whether parents or faculty, viewed the school.[9]

---

[8]These reports of the changed atmosphere in the school are similar to those in model school programs discussed by Comer (1988) and Schorr (1988).

[9]Schools with clearer goals, whose staffs agree on priorities, who perceive the school as having a specific mission are more effective schools (Chubb 1988:33). The reorganization clarified and confirmed this sense of mission at St. Mandela.

Subsidy

Tuition, fees, and fundraising efforts provided 72 percent of St. Mandela's 1987-1988 school budget.[10] In addition, grants from the two religious communities that helped staff the parish and school supplemented the school's budget. A relatively high student/homeroom ratio--28 students per class--meant that tuition covered a larger portion of the budget than it could at St. Frederick where there were fewer students per class. In addition, most of the parents at St. Mandela were blue-collar workers and more economically capable of supporting the school.[11] The parish, which had contributed 26 percent of Mandela's school budget in 1970, no longer provided any financial support to the school. It had been replaced by archdiocesan subsidy which supplied 28 percent of the 1987 budget.

Mandela's pastor reported that the archdiocese, since the clustering, had fed a million dollars a year into the local Catholic Community. Of this, $740,000 annually went into the six campus school. The remainder benefitted the

---

[10]School finances had been centralized--all income was channeled to the central cluster office, and that office assumed responsibility for all expenditures. Thus these budget figures actually apply to the total school rather than just to Mandela. Tuition, fees, and fundraising supplied 72 percent of the TOTAL budget while archdiocesan subsidy provided the remaining 28 percent.

[11]According to Mandela's pastor, two types of families utilized the school: two parent families with double incomes--much greater resources and more family stability, and single-parent families, primarily headed by employed but financially struggling women.

school indirectly through the parish. School families had access to other parish ministries that the school would not have been able to provide on its own, e.g., social services, health services, and youth ministry.

Archdiocesan subsidy enabled the school to utilize the expertise of a director for education (in addition to the six principals), an executive secretary, a five-member religious education team, and music and physical education teachers.[12] In addition, the six-campus school had hired a full-time special education diagnostician. After spending her first year testing children and helping teachers do follow-up work with them, at the time of my research the diagnostician was in the process of appealing to thirty-five corporations to obtain the $100,000 needed to develop a full special education program for the cluster school, to be housed in one of the campuses. A single small parochial school could never have done this kind of programming.

Therefore, despite the decline and instability of the parish, the cooperatively-linked school had attained a relatively secure future through its relationship with other schools and with the archdiocese. The reorganization had provided it with access to funding and personnel that in

---

[12]Many small Catholic schools share music and physical education teachers with other schools, even if they have no organizational ties or formal relationships with those schools. A formal cluster or consolidation arrangement makes it easier for the teacher to move between campuses, however, since planning and financing are centralized rather than negotiated separately in each building.

turn should have made it easier to stabilize enrollment and establish its legitimacy both to the neighborhood and to the Catholic community.

Economy of Scale

Another way reorganization helped St. Mandela ensure continued access to resources was by enabling a more efficient use of materials, buildings, and personnel. Inter-school cooperation also provided support and stimulation for those working within the system, especially administrators (Purkey and Smith 1988).

At the time of my research this particular consolidation was functioning almost exclusively at the administrative level. If cooperation permeates down to the teaching level, the benefits of an economy of scale would be significantly greater than what I observed. For example, one of the teachers identified a lack of equipment as one of the greatest difficulties he experienced in teaching at St. Mandela's; he complained that he needed new maps and current audio-visual materials but that there was not enough money to buy what was needed. While he claimed things were improving under the current administration, he was still spending his own money on books. In contrast, he explained that religion materials had been consolidated at one campus and were readily available to teachers. Consolidating and sharing expensive educational materials would eliminate duplication and allow limited funds to go farther. This

teacher admitted that it will take time to consolidate materials and build up a good AV library for the cluster, but he is hopeful. Teachers at the cluster in-service meeting voiced similar concerns and hopes about having more materials and better access to them.

Cooperatively-linked schools share characteristics of both the isolated and parish-centered schools. As in the isolated schools, their survival depends on their ability to move beyond and secure a future as a school distinct from their parishes. As in the parish-centered schools, their legitimacy is built on their ability to maintain a religious specialist orientation and a specifically Catholic identity. Unlike either of the other schools, however, efforts at community-building have been minimal because energy has focussed primarily on making the reorganization work. In this next section I will explore some of the key organizational issues specific to schools cooperatively linked to other Catholic schools. Then I will discuss some of the unique problems that have resulted from Mandela's focus on structure rather than community.

Special Issues for Cooperatively-Linked Schools

Like the isolated schools, cooperatively-linked schools in the inner city existed in an environment where the parish was declining--or at least in transition. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges of the cooperatively-linked school

was to reduce the uncertainty in its environment. Lacking parish resources, St. Mandela School had chosen to focus its energies on strengthening inter-school cooperation, building a strong administrative structure, and legitimizing itself to its primary outside funder, the archdiocese. While St. Frederick had chosen to direct energies inward toward strengthening relationships with the school parents, St. Mandela and its partner campuses were focussing their attention outside the school building. I will explore the impact of that decision in terms of the school's legitimacy to the archdiocese, and, later in the chapter, to school parents and staff.

The second issue I will explore is the possibility of the development of a regional parochialism. Although separated from the parish, St. Mandela attempted to build its legitimacy on its Catholic identity, an identity rooted in the larger Catholic community. But with so few Catholic students, it was questionable whether it could retain the religious emphasis of the parish-centered school without the close linkage to a parish.

The third issue I will address here is the effect of restructuring on the autonomy of the school. While I would expect positive implications in terms of daily operations and increased freedom from pastoral interference in educational issues and also in increased power in relating to the archdiocese, Meyer and Zucker also warn of the

dangers of separating decision-making from the daily operations of an organization.[13] I will explore whether people located on the campus have experienced power changes since the restructuring and how that affects their attitudes toward and participation in the school.

Reducing Uncertainty: Establishing Legitimacy with the Archdiocese

The restructuring in which St. Mandela and the other five campuses were involved is an example of the regional school concept which the archdiocese had been strongly advocating for years. In January of 1987 the archdiocese published a series of guidelines entitled "Criteria for Parish Planning and Evaluation within the Archdiocese of Chicago." This document acknowledged the importance and the effectiveness of the Chicago Catholic school system, and then added:

> Today, however, we are facing new challenges both with regard to our religious education programs and our Catholic schools... The Church in Chicago remains committed to providing quality Catholic education, but it must also face current realities. If this important ministry is to be both possible and credible, we must develop strategies that will guarantee that quality Catholic education will be available for the poor and the rich and in all parts of the Archdiocese. We also must plan to provide for this ministry in such a way as not to inhibit the provision of the other ministries essential to parish life. One way to meet these objectives may be to develop regional or area schools (1987:8).

---

[13]Writers on educational effectiveness express the same concern about educational settings (Chubb 1988; Purkey and Smith 1988; United Way of Chicago 1989).

In addressing specifically the Catholic school programs, the archdiocese set forth nine criteria for evaluating the efficiency and viability of parochial elementary schools. If an individual parish school was unable to meet the proposed criteria, the archdiocese strongly suggested that the parish consider either closing if Catholic educational resources were available at the regional level, or restructuring to create a regional school which would be able to meet the criteria.

Six of the criteria presented by the archdiocese were quantitative and easily measured by looking at readily accessible school data (See Table 8-1.). The first two criteria, however, had to do with the Catholic character of the school and the strength of the school's academic program, and were therefore harder to quantify and evaluate. The archdiocese suggested that schools use the archdiocesan School Visitation Process to assess the school's academic quality and the Catholic Identity Process to evaluate its religious strengths.

Applying Archdiocesan Criteria to St. Mandela

Schools in other categories which also depended on archdiocesan subsidy often indicated little knowledge of or concern about these archdiocesan criteria.[14] In contrast

---

[14]Pastoral leadership in some of these schools seemed unaware of the specificity of archdiocesan standards; when acknowledging that archdiocesan subsidy for inner city schools must by necessity be limited, they expressed concern

to this, however, the cluster to which St. Mandela belonged knew the criteria well and was concerned with demonstrating that it was meeting the archdiocesan guidelines for parochial school efficiency, thus proving its legitimacy to the archdiocese.

Table 8-1. St. Mandela and Archdiocesan Criteria

Factor	S. Mandela	Campus Average	Archd. Criteria
Enrollment	295*	267	200+
5-yr Enrollmt Loss	2%	14%	10% max.
Student/Hmrm Ratio	28:1	26:1	25+:1
Archd & Parish Subsidy	28% of budget	28% of budget	45% maximum**
Tuition & Other Schl Revenues	72% of budget	72% of budget	minimum of 62%
Cost per Pupil	$1332	$1332	not more than $1201 -$1501***

* as of March 1988
** Archdiocesan average subsidy from parish and/or archdiocese is 35 percent of the school's operational budget.
*** This criteria actually states that per pupil cost is not to exceed 20-25 percent more than the average cost per pupil for all of the schools of the archdiocese.

The cluster itself--including the six campus cluster school--was in the process of an evaluative self-study at the time of my research. Decisions about the various campuses were to be made as a result of the self-study, so I

---

that they did not know the criteria on which subsidy decisions were being based--what was the archdiocese looking for? How were they judging schools?

would expect the school to be concerned about establishing itself as a viable and efficient Catholic school. I attended a meeting at which the results of the school self-study were presented to the administrators and teaching staffs of all six campuses. As Table 8-1 indicates, both St. Mandela and the total school, as reflected by the campus averages, had successfully met most of the criteria put forth by the archdiocese.

In addition to presenting these numbers, the self-study report addressed four other topics: structure and administration, Catholic identity, parent concerns, and curriculum. These sections of the report verified that the school in its present organizational structure was adequately meeting the criteria regarding the Catholic character and academic strength of the school. The committee which assessed the school's structure and administration recommended that all six campuses be kept open at this time.[15]

In terms of the Catholic Identity Process, the

---

[15]The person presenting this report stated that she was sure that all would be relieved to hear that recommendation ...and that they would concur with that decision. I detected some concern that people were still experiencing some competition and/or fear that one of the campuses would have to close. For a particular campus to be chosen to remain open is equivalent to "winning" while being slated to close is "losing." It is probably impossible to completely overcome this win/lose mentality--because people's jobs are at stake. And with three schools in the area having closed so recently, educational professionals were very much aware of that reality.

coordinator of the religious education team reported that the archdiocesan evaluation team had been very impressed and encouraged by what they saw.[16] The team identified the following as special strengths of the school: the use of scripture in the classrooms, the use of audio-visuals in teaching religion, on-going religious education preparation for the teachers, regular liturgies with the students, and the integration of gospel values throughout the school day. Suggestions for furthering the school's Catholic identity included: work on evangelization, especially of non-Catholic students without a church home;[17] work on developing family Masses; invite pastoral staff into the school; coordinate the religious requirements for the parents at the various campuses; and have teachers invite children to participate in religion. I will discuss this issue further as it pertained specifically to St. Mandela in

---

[16]According to St. Mandela's director of religious education, the Catholic Identity process involved looking at external indicators of Catholic identity (bulletin boards, crucifixes in classrooms, liturgies, etc.). Evaluators also looked at the religious education curriculum, how often religion was taught, what was covered, the frequency of classroom prayer, the sacramental program, types of service projects, and whether the school presents a global awareness. They looked at the interplay of religion with other areas of school life. Their final area of concern was with the relationship between school and parish.

[17]That year a letter had invited all such parents to join the Catholic Church and pastoral staff provided follow-up with any parent who expressed interest. The parishes also provided a special program to prepare non-Catholic children to be received into the Catholic faith. Forty children from the cluster had been baptized that Easter.

the following section.

This self-study revealed the enormous effort and energy the cooperatively-linked school expends in order to prove its legitimacy to the archdiocese. Not only did committees gather the more readily available data and write the reports, but they surveyed all the parents, they mapped where each student lived, they examined space utilization in each building. They did all this in addition to their usual work which, given the realities of the inner city, was in itself exhausting. They considered it vitally important to meet the archdiocesan criteria, however, because that should ensure a steady flow of archdiocesan resources into the school. They expected the archdiocese to continue to supply financial subsidy, personnel, and support services.

Archdiocesan subsidy, in turn, helped the school do more effectively what the archdiocese expected. Many schools in other categories, for example, complained that because of limited resources they were unable to hire a director of religious education. Without a full-time person doing religious programming in the school, the school was unable to rate as highly in Catholic identity as a school like Mandela. Reorganization from a parochial to a regional-based Catholic school seems to initiate the newly structured school into a situation where success on archdiocesan terms is much more likely. Increased subsidy results in increased ability to meet archdiocesan criteria

which ensures further subsidy, ensuring continuing success and legitimacy, and so on. Also noticeable in this pattern, however, is the power this resource provider holds over the school in determining its agenda and future directions.[18]

Regional Parochialism: Building a Catholic Identity without Parish Ties

The second issue I explored at St. Mandela was the feasibility of establishing a strong Catholic identity for the school without the traditional ties to the local parish church community. I was interested in discovering how reorganization changed a school's relationship to the parish. As the parish relinquished responsibility for the school, I expected some of the identification with the school to dissolve. Unless the school's parochial identity is replaced by a strong linkage to the larger church community, I would expect the school to have serious problems retaining a religious specialist orientation. I examine first the Catholic purpose of St. Mandela School and then factors which were influential in shaping its religious identity.

---

[18]Vitullo-Martin (1979) points out that while in most cases parishes retain control over their schools and diocesan policies function as guidelines rather than as rules to be enforced, dioceses act differently toward schools they subsidize. Aided parishes lose some independence; the central office assumes responsibility and exercises sanctions over the school.

A Catholic Identity for the School: the Ideal of Leadership

The hopes and dreams expressed by principals and pastors in some of the cooperatively-linked schools were very similar to those expressed by leaders in parish-centered schools. For example, the pastor at St. Mandela identified the mission of the school as "evangelization in the most wholistic sense: education leaves students intellectually competent, morally integrated, and joined to a faith community." The principal was concerned about providing her students with a good education, but she identified the school's primary mission as being "to teach morals and to follow the example of Jesus; then to work on developing the total person."

The director of religious education spoke of the school being permeated with strong Catholic values. She insisted that "evangelization and education cannot be divorced from each other; they go together, building on each other... their goals are complementary, not contradictory." She described several ways that St. Mandela strove to accomplish this. She explained that many school activities were built around the themes of the liturgical season. She believed in the school's concern for the faith-life of its families: "The school strives to be a Catholic presence in (the area), and the staff is working to pass on their Catholic tradition."

The pastor expressed some similar ideas about the

Catholic character of St. Mandela's. His personal definition of a successful Catholic school was: "A school that effectively educates (i.e., the kids test out well) and gives the kids an appreciation of the Catholic way of meeting God, the Catholic way of doing religious experience." When asked how well his school measured up to that definition, he replied, "On a scale of 0 to 100, we're operating at 60." He added that he is hopeful for the future because the campus now has a more effective administrator and the director of religious education is providing quality programs.

Difficulties in Attaining Religious Goals

While leadership saw progress and experienced some success in their attempts to strengthen the religious identity of the school, they also admitted to the challenges they faced. The school population itself--both student and teacher populations--proved problematic. Other problems grew out of Mandela's structural changes and transformed dependency relationships.

Population problems: too few Catholics

The principal stated that the school tries hard to be Catholic in its orientation, but that it is difficult because of the large numbers of non-Catholic students. This was a challenge throughout Catholic schools in the black inner city. But in addition to non-Catholic families

lacking a sense of bonding with the parish, at St. Mandela I also found that the Catholic students lacked a sense of Catholic identity and feeling of membership in the parish. Because they were so few in number, the director of religious education explained that it was difficult to develop in them a sense of who they were as Catholics and what it meant to be a full member of the Catholic Church. In stressing the similarities with other Christian traditions, it had become difficult to enable Catholic students to appreciate the uniqueness of their heritage. Most religious education was done in the classroom and Protestant children were encouraged to participate in all religious services in some way (e.g., students were all invited to come and talk to the priest during Reconciliation Services) so few visible distinctions existed between Catholics and non-Catholics.

At St. Sojourner and in some of the other schools I visited, directors of religious education had addressed this problem by organizing a "Catholic Club" for Catholic students. This director, however, felt that the children were pulled out of the classroom so often that she did not want to do that on a regular basis. She felt that to do so would penalize them; either they would miss something academically important or something fun.

This is a major problem when opening the school to the general public while trying to retain a specialist religious

orientation. Mandela was trying to balance two kinds of resources: a generalist orientation would help guarantee enrollment but the specialist orientation would help the school retain its legitimacy as a Catholic school. I spoke with a few principals who were willing to say that maybe the Catholic school in the inner city should be about education and not about trying to build church community and promote a white Catholic form of religion, but these principals were extremely rare. I would expect this to be the case because to drop the religious mission of the schools entirely would pose a serious threat to the school's legitimacy and survival. In the language of Hannan and Freeman (1984), so completely revising the school's mission would be a change in the organizational core, rather than the periphery. Changes in the core greatly increase the likelihood of organizational death because of the disruption and loss of legitimacy that they cause.

St. Mandela's director of religious education was searching for ways to resolve the problem of nurturing a Catholic identity for Catholic students. One solution she was considering was networking with neighboring ministers in developing a kind of released time religious education program. Ministers would come into the school at an appointed time to work with the children from their churches while the school provided something special for the Catholic students. This would be a creative adaptation which would

combine both generalist and specialist orientations; the school would retain a large enrollment base without threatening its religious orientation.

In addition to too few Catholic students, too many teachers expressed a feeling of incompetence when it came to teaching religion. The director of religious education explained that many were converts to Catholicism, and most were Catholic by name rather than by practice. As director, she saw her main role as one of teacher formation, helping teachers with lesson plans and showing them how effective teaching of religion is done. Many of the teachers confirmed her statements and expressed a heavy reliance on her for assistance in their religion teaching. Unlike the experience at Sojourner, these comments indicate that teachers at Mandela for the most part did not identify with the faith tradition they were expected to pass on. This was not the faith of a community of which the school was a part, but rather the faith of a very small but convicted leadership element of the staff.

Structural problems: lack of connections

The primary structural problems that interfered with the development of a strong Catholic identity in the school were the loss of links to the local parish and the lack of agreement among campuses about religious requirements. From the parish's perspective, most of the ties that had traditionally bound St. Mandela School to the parish had

been lost. The school was no longer financially tied into the parish; the pastor and parish were no longer responsible for the school budget or the maintenance of the school building. The coordinator of education had replaced the pastor as the chief administrator of the school. The school board was no longer a parish board but an area board with two voting members from each campus.

St. Mandela was attempting to forge new links. For example, the school and parish populations were brought together by a program through which parishioners sponsored school families that chose to make St. Mandela their church home.[19] The parent contract also attempted to bring school families into the parish community; the pastor explained, "Despite the fact that enforcing it is a burden, the contract forces contact between parent and parish and school that otherwise wouldn't exist." Some attempt to restore a sense of financial responsibility, and thus ownership of the school by the parish, was reflected in Mandela's policy of requiring the parish to raise $500 whenever the school had a fundraiser. Parishioners were also expected to get involved in school recruitment efforts.

But despite these efforts, the pastor also spoke of the

---

[19]Families enrolling at this campus had to be members of a specific church and verify regular attendance at that church. If they did not have a church home previous to enrolling at Mandela, they were invited to make Mandela their place of weekly worship. Sponsoring families welcomed these new families to the worship community, introduced them to people, and helped them to feel comfortable.

presence of some distrust and low-grade anger in the parish. Parishioners (according to the pastor) would have liked to have seen the non-Catholics in church more often. He spoke of a "general feeling among parishioners that those non-Catholics are ripping us off." He explained that the parishioners still held to the old model of having non-Catholics join the parish when they enrolled their children in school, thus increasing parish membership. On the other hand, "parents were coming for the education and preferred to stay an arm's length from any church."

This strained relationship was probably more common in declining parishes than in cooperating schools in transitional or stable parishes. The transitional parish saw the relatively new phenomenon of welcoming non-Catholics into the school as a way to keep the school flourishing and vital for their own Catholic children. They had not yet seen the proportion of non-Catholic students far exceed that of Catholics. The declining parish, however, needed members and lacked funds. The school was seen as a rich treasure of available families, and parishioners found it difficult to understand why that treasure was not tapped.

The entire pastoral staff at St. Mandela, i.e., pastor, principal, and director of religious education, spoke of their desire to enforce more strictly their requirements for parent participation in church activities--the series of religious instructions and attendance at family Masses.

This was complicated, however, because while all six campuses used one parent handbook, each campus had its own parent contract, and no other campus mandated the religious instructions or family Mass attendance. Thus, Mandela's parents could transfer students to another campus in order to avoid the requirements. These varying demands kept competition for enrollment alive and interfered with the school's ability to work cooperatively toward achieving religious purposes.

Structural Advantages:
Religious Education and Economy of Scale

In contrast to the lack of agreement between campuses about religious requirements for school families, directors of religious education had found the new organizational structure extremely beneficial and they reportedly worked well together. This was especially important because of the small size of the parishes and the decline they were experiencing, both of which resulted in a severe shortage of qualified volunteers to help in the religion programs. The directors, therefore, were responsible not only for program planning but for implementation as well, a factor which made it more necessary for directors to work together and share responsibilities.[20]

---

[20]For example, the director at St. Mandela prepared thirty children from three of the cluster parishes for baptism. Bringing the children together for weekly sessions saved valuable time and energy for the directors.

The directors of religious education planned programs together for their respective campuses. They developed common themes to be used throughout the year in all campuses; they presented a joint faculty in-service on teaching religion; and they planned and implemented the Confirmation program together. Their cooperation greatly enhanced their efforts to strengthen the Catholic identity of the school.

Thus, while lacking the strong parish community which gave St. Sojourner its vibrant African-American Catholic identity, St. Mandela was able to actively work at developing a Catholic identity that personnel in isolated schools could only dream about. Religious purposes remained central to the mission of the cooperatively-linked school, although the school experienced limited success in its efforts to accomplish its religious mission.

Restructuring and School Autonomy

I expected to find that the changed structure of the school would influence its autonomy. Because of decreased dependence on the local parish, I expected more freedom from parochial interests. However, intensified relationships with the other campuses should limit the autonomy of the individual campus and centralize power structures as well as finances. In addition, I expected increased dependence on the archdiocese to increase the power of the archdiocese to

influence school policy and direction. On the other hand, by consolidating, the individual campuses also consolidated their negotiating power and together might exercise a collective influence greater than they had previously experienced.

Campus Autonomy

At the time of my research the effects of consolidation were most noticeable at the administrative level. According to the principal, each building retained its own principal, and she/he in turn, retained autonomy over the operation of her/his campus. The biggest change identified by the principal was financial; the restructuring freed her from financial concerns and rather than limiting her autonomy, she felt that it actually strengthened her position because she was able to focus on educational concerns.[21] She explained that the school had been in serious financial trouble and would probably have closed if it had not been for the restructuring which brought additional resources and renewed legitimacy to the school.

Autonomy from Parochial Interference

While moving toward more decentralization with the coordinator of education serving as a local supervisor, the reorganization also allowed the school to move away from

---

[21]Fundraising, recruiting, maintenance, religious education coordination, teacher in-service, and social services were all done centrally through the cluster office.

control that was localized in the person of the pastor. This arrangement ideally frees the school from parochial domination and increases its ability to be responsive to area needs and realities.

Only at the cluster faculty in-service did this concept of parochial interference in the school surface spontaneously. During the grade-level teacher discussions, when teachers were evaluating strengths and weaknesses of the cluster, the eighth grade teachers pointed out that one of the pluses of the system was that "the cluster protects the staff against pastor veto."

At St. Mandela, however, teachers were satisfied with the involvement of the pastor in the school. Staff reported that he spent time in school and that his involvement had not changed significantly because of the reorganization.[22] My research at St. Mandela indicated that, in this particular building, the school's operational autonomy from the pastor depended more on the pastor's faith and confidence in the quality and competence of the administrator than on the organizational structures. Where relationships are characterized by respect and trust, a team approach rather than a hierarchical one is more likely to develop; in the team approach, pastor and principal respect

---

[22]Several teachers commented on the presence of the pastor in the building--one saying that both the pastor and the director of religious education stop in his classroom daily.

the boundaries between their positions and reinforce rather than interfere with each other's efforts (Chubb 1988).

One second-year teacher in the school told me that the previous year the pastor had been extremely involved in the running of the school--e.g., he even told this particular teacher how to arrange the desks in his classroom.[23] This teacher's perception was that the pastor did not trust that particular principal, and therefore "interfered" in the running of the school. The teacher said things were very different with the new administrator; the pastor had confidence in her and let her run the school. Another teacher confirmed this perception when she spoke of how the relationship between the church and the school was better than it had been in recent years because the previous administrator interfered with the healthy involvement of the pastor and the director of religious education in the school.

In the area of policy, however, the cluster organization did remove the school from the direct authority of the local pastor except in matters of faith development. Even there, however, control was limited because of the preferences and pastoral decisions of the neighboring

---

[23]The teacher finally refused to be caught between two bosses; he told the pastor that if the pastor did not like something that he as teacher was doing, the pastor should take it up with the principal.

campuses;[24] as a result, the pastor found himself unable to enforce the decisions he did make. The family Mass, about which I spoke above, is a good example of this; no matter how strongly he felt about this requirement, to enforce it too stringently would undermine the enrollment base of his campus.

In addition to the diminished authority of the pastor, the school board was removed from the parish setting and functioned as a cluster board. This reduced the influence of the individual pastors and placed more power in the hands of school administrators. It also did away with parish representation on the board and reduced the parental voice by limiting each campus to two parent representatives.

Buffer between School Buildings and Archdiocese

One of the advantages of reorganization was the decentralization that resulted. The creation of a kind of mini-school system in the local area, gave the school greater freedom from the archdiocesan Office of Catholic

---

[24]Differences of opinion about the family Mass illustrate this point well. Mandela's pastor considered family Mass attendance for school families at his campus a priority. The director of religious education described other pastors in the cluster, however, as having found the family Masses detrimental to the relationship between the parish and the school. In their experience, parishioners felt the school families were taking over, that the services were no longer parish celebrations but school celebrations; non-school parishioners felt left out, and they resented this... Because of diverse experiences with the family Mass and the unique needs of each parish, the cluster decided to leave the question of religious requirements to the local pastors.

Education in terms of the normal operations of the school. The cluster structure made it possible for a local area to focus on programs that met its own needs rather than receiving preplanned programs less relevant to inner-city schools.[25] The restructuring shifted accountability and initiative to the nearby cluster administrative office.

The coordinator of education became a central figure in the cluster. One of the teachers explained that since the consolidation, the school worked harder and had become more selective of its programs, e.g., the reading series recently adopted, because the teachers knew the coordinator wanted them to do a good job, and she showed that by coming to the various campuses and supervising. This particular teacher felt that the campuses had improved academically because of the increased attention from the education coordinator that came as a result of membership in the cluster.[26]

The cluster planned the teacher meetings and as a result the teachers judged them as more relevant to their

---

[25]Inner-city principals, when asked about their relationship with the archdiocesan offices, often expressed dissatisfaction. They felt that their unique needs as inner-city schools were not well understood, that archdiocesan in-services were frequently irrelevant, and they verbalized the desire to have on-site visits from Office of Catholic Education personnel to increase archdiocesan understanding of inner-city schools.

[26]Current research on school effectiveness supports this perception. Studies repeatedly cite strong instructional leadership from a principal or other significant staff member as one of the key factors influencing a school's ability to achieve academically (Purkey and Smith 1988).

unique needs. Teachers also commented that the exchange of ideas with other cluster teachers was enriching. Teachers expressed appreciation for being closer to the center of things, a closeness that benefitted the students. One suggested that this made it possible for educational achievement goals to be rooted in the students' blackness, in a pride in who they are and where they come from.[27]

Another teacher expressed the opinion that the lack of interference from downtown was one advantage of the cluster. The central office now only got involved when there were changes in policy. While the school's dependence on archdiocesan subsidy increased the central office's control over the school, the presence of a coordinator of education for the cluster returned much of that control to the local community.

What I did not see at the time, however, and what neither teachers nor administrators seemed to understand either, was that the reorganization that separated the school from the parish and seemed to serve as a buffer between the six campuses and the archdiocesan office could actually work against them in time of crisis. By removing the school from the direct influence of the parish and reducing the parish's sense of ownership of the school, the

---

[27]Comer (1988) began his school intervention project with a similar hypothesis: "the failure to bridge the social and cultural gap between home and school may lie at the root of the poor academic performance of many of these children (1988:43)."

restructuring left the school more vulnerable to direct archdiocesan intervention for further closings of campuses. Less than a year after my fieldwork at St. Mandela, the ten parish cluster of which Mandela was a part, went through a power struggle that resulted in its breakup. After five years of formal organizational ties (and an even longer time of informal cooperation and planning), the archdiocese cut off two parishes and their campuses from the cluster and asked them to work with yet another parish. The position of director for education was dissolved, and once again principals were responsible immediately to the Office of Catholic Education. The following year, because of the archdiocesan budget crisis, the remaining four campuses were asked to close another building, and the two that had been separated from the cluster were asked to consolidate into one building.

It is likely that the newness of the cluster made it more vulnerable to the financial crisis that resulted in the closing of two of the campuses. Relationships between buildings and among key personnel had not yet solidified; organizational structures were still rather tentative. Teachers, while generally supportive, were not fully committed to the total school; they had concerns and reservations, and their loyalties remained with their separate buildings. New legitimacy myths, while developing within the school, were not yet strong enough to protect the

school from outside threats to its survival. Officially the archdiocese viewed the cluster arrangement as an experimental phase in the restructuring of inner-city parochial life. Given this instability, so characteristic of new organizations (Hannan and Freeman 1977, 1984), it is not surprising that despite the recommendations of the self-study, when financial crisis made it necessary to close schools, the archdiocese looked to this group.

In addition, Meyer and Zucker's (1989) assertion that restructuring attempts do far more than improve the organization's efficiency proved to be true in this case. By separating policy and planning decisions from the parish level, individual schools became more vulnerable to archdiocesan interference during times of instability and crisis. Decisions directly affecting the school's survival were made, not by those most directly involved with the daily operations of the school but by those who retained "ownership", i.e., the archdiocese.

Reorganization at St. Mandela attempted to reduce uncertainty by building a strong regional school structure which in turn would establish the school's legitimacy with the archdiocese. Part of that legitimacy entailed retaining a distinct religious orientation and Catholic identity; St. Mandela attempted to nurture such an identity. The cooperatively-linked school, however, faces significant problems in doing that. In addition, reorganization affects

the autonomy of various actors within the school. In this final section of the chapter I summarize the adaptive strengths and limitations of the cooperatively-linked schools in the inner city.

Organizational Effectiveness of Cooperatively-Linked Schools

Schools which reorganize in cooperative ventures with other Catholic schools are actively choosing to adapt to their changed reality. That choice has important ramifications for the school. Organizational theorists would point out that while reorganization provides the school with increased access to certain resources, it is also survival-threatening (Hannan and Freeman 1984). Organizational persistence or permanent failure is highly unlikely because reorganization entails radical changes in identity, ownership, and legitimacy. The newly structured school will have to prove itself if it is to survive.

Advantages of Cooperative Ventures

I have already addressed most of the advantages of the cooperatively-linked school earlier in this chapter and present only a brief summary of them here. There are four strengths that appear to characterize the inter-school cooperative approach to adaptation in the inner city. This approach moves the school in the direction of more secure access to archdiocesan subsidy by enabling the school to clearly meet archdiocesan criteria for an effective and

efficient Catholic school.

It also allows for greater economy of scale by providing the structures needed for small schools to work together as one larger organization. Educational quality improves because of shared resources and personnel. Reorganization also reduces competition between the schools and eliminates some of the stress on administrators by freeing them from financial, recruitment, and policy and programming worries and by incorporating them into an administrative team which provides stimulation, support and encouragement.

Restructuring permits decentralization to the local system which leads to more relevant programming and greater teacher satisfaction. In terms of daily operations the campuses experience more autonomy from the central office.

And finally, this approach ideally frees the school from parochial domination by making it an area rather than a parish school. Especially in declining parishes lacking any significant overlap between school community and church community, it is extremely difficult to build a rapport of mutuality and trust between the two.[28] Becoming a regional school makes its generalist purposes more evident; the

---

[28]Examples of this include: St. Mandela's pastor reporting a low-grade anger among parishioners directed toward the school--"those Protestants taking advantage of us"; other pastors in the cluster reporting hostility caused by family Masses--the parishioners feeling that "the school was trying to take over."

school exists primarily to serve the people of the community, not to serve the parish. While tensions may continue to exist between parishioners and school parents, the parishioners are no longer directly involved in making decisions for the school, and even pastoral control is limited.

Limitations of Cooperative Ventures in Education

My interaction with St. Mandela revealed several limitations affecting schools utilizing an inter-school cooperative approach to adaptation. Coordination was problematic, both at the pastoral level and at the faculty and instructional levels. Confusion resulted from the changing identity: while officially the six campuses sought recognition as one school, most participants retained a strong sense of identity based on the individual campus. As I have already demonstrated, weakened links with the parish continued to pose a problem for administrators, parishioners, and Catholic students. Perhaps most importantly, the focus on reorganization and establishing this new school easily resulted in the distancing of the school from the parents. In addition to the resources gained by this approach, there was some indication that consolidation can actually lead to enrollment decline and that it can leave a school more vulnerable to archdiocesan closings in times of crisis.

Coordination Problems in a Multi-Campus School

The removal of the school from the authority and control of the local parish resulted in some role confusion in this particular cluster. As I explained above, the pastor remained the spiritual leader of the parish and was ultimately responsible for the religious dimensions of his particular campus. But because the campus was organizationally tied to five other campuses, he sometimes found himself unable to enforce the decisions he did make.

In addition to problems of pastoral coordination, teachers also faced greater coordination problems in planning major school events for all six campuses--e.g., the Baccalaureate Mass and class trip for the graduating class.[29] It was especially hard to coordinate activities and divide up responsibilities because teachers did not know one another. Teachers at the six-campus in-service meeting voiced specific complaints about the need for a better relay system, too many meetings with too little communication and too few opportunities to get to know one another. Other teachers expressed concern over the lack of uniform

---

[29]Teachers complained, for example, that graduation had so many detailed tasks associated with it, but the school lacked any kind of written structure indicating what had to be done, by whom, and when. If each campus knew who was responsible for what, teachers could accomplish tasks much more efficiently, in a more timely manner, and with much less frustration and confusion. This problem can be attributed to the instability caused by reorganization... Activities had not yet been routinized. What had once been done by an individual teacher for her individual class, now had to be done jointly for the six campus school.

curriculum and texts to be used across the six campuses.

These problems were not impossible to overcome. They were in the process of being worked out; interrelationships were being more clearly defined. But at the time of my research, coordination between campuses was problematic.

Identity Problems

I expected to find a loss of identity as several schools merged or consolidated. The school community, so essential to the legitimacy of both the parish-centered and the successful isolated school is seriously disrupted as the school attempts to absorb or integrate entire new communities. Identity issues are gradually resolved in successful consolidations--such as the one I visited that had been in existence for over ten years. But until all participants share a common understanding of who and what the school is, identity issues can cause a lot of strain, tension, and confusion (Comer 1988; Chubb 1988; Purkey and Smith 1988).

The cluster of which St. Mandela was a part had not yet developed a clear self-identity. The section of the self-study dealing with structure and administration reported that during the first four years of the cluster's existence, the school did a superb job in identifying itself, in becoming one school. According to the report, oneness was evident. Yet this presentation seemed to be laying out an agreed upon ideal rather than a reality. The person

reporting failed to tell teachers how that oneness was evident; instead she told them what they should be doing, explaining that in language and everything they do, they "have to come across as one school."

In observing teacher groups at the in-service meeting, and in talking to staff and students at St. Mandela, the reality overwhelmingly described to me was not that of one school on six campuses, but of six schools working closely together on an administrative level in one mini-system. Teachers from one campus did not know teachers from the other campuses, not even those teaching the same grade level. Some teachers complained of not meeting often enough as a total school, while another appreciated such meetings when they had a speaker but otherwise felt time spent in joint meetings would be better spent in their own building working on their own unique problems.

Teachers at St. Mandela expressed the general attitude that the consolidation was primarily a matter of finances and administration, but had little or no effect on their classroom teaching. Teachers reported that students knew they were part of a larger entity, but still considered this campus their <u>school</u>.[30] A long-time teacher in the building

---

[30]One teacher spoke of the competition between campuses, and the healthy pride that students took in their own buildings. There was very little interaction across campuses; during the current year the cluster had put on a science fair, a musical, and the Graduation Baccalaureate Mass. An art show that included works from all six campuses traveled from building to building. A common uniform was

expressed what was probably true of many or maybe even most of the teachers: "I really don't think about it too much, to tell you the truth." Another teacher commented, "This is the school we're involved in and have to make work."

This attitude makes good organizational sense. Teachers will focus their energies where they have influence and control--in this case, in their own building. Apparently, at the point at which I was at St. Mandela, influence at the cluster level was confined to administrators. Teachers had not yet been integrated into the planning. While supportive of the cluster in the abstract, teachers criticized the cluster for increasing the distance between the school and the parish, for expecting too little of parents, for "demanding that the teachers do everything."[31]

I spent some time speaking informally to eighth graders, individually and in small groups. When asked about the consolidation, they manifested an understanding that the consolidation had something to do with money... and the cluster seemed to make no more difference to them than it did to their teachers. They showed no hostility toward the

---

worn throughout the six campuses, but each campus had its own campus' name imprinted on the emblem which was a part of the uniform.

[31]This lack of a strong school identity, made it easier for the archdiocese to undertake subsequent reorganization and campus closings; the system was too new to resist.

other campuses[32], nor did I see any evidence of a loss of identity. The students belonged to St. Mandela's--and they apparently added the cluster identity on top of a more primary parish-school identity.[33]

Distancing of the School from the Parents

Consolidating six schools into one new entity required an enormous amount of time and energy. During the first few years as the new organizational structures were put into operation, administrators needed to direct their attention toward coordination and structural bonding. While the principals in both the parish-centered and the isolated schools made it their priority to cultivate positive interaction between parents and the school, the principals in this consolidation were much less able to devote their energies in that direction.

Even though the school's focus was on organizational structure rather than on parents, parents appeared satisfied with the school. As part of the evaluative self-study, the

---

[32]Hostility and serious rivalry is common when attempting to consolidate middle-class schools or parish schools where there has been an historical rivalry probably originally based on ethnic differences and then reinforced by athletics.

[33]This ability to add another layer of identity without threatening the primary identity is much more likely to be found when students continue in their home campus and are not mixed together and assigned to campuses by grade level. Thus while maintaining K or pre-K through Grade 8 programs in six separate buildings reduces some of the benefits of consolidation, it also decreases loss of identity problems.

school sent out a survey to parents of students in all six campuses to which 50 percent of the parents responded.[34] Eighty-seven percent either agreed or strongly agreed that the school makes an honest effort to keep parents informed, while only 4 percent disagreed.

Yet, there were numerous indications that the school had not been successful at involving parents in the educational process.[35] At the time of my research, the principal's concern about the need to bring parents into

---

[34]Ninety percent rated the quality of education as either excellent or good while less than 1 percent (one family) rated it as below average. Seventy-six percent said the students are happy about going to school; 23 percent said students were sometimes happy while only one student was reported as not being happy about going to school. When asked why they send their child to this school, parents responded with these reasons--with the first answer being most common and the last reason the least common: 1) academic program 2) discipline 3) religious and moral foundation 4) dissatisfaction with the public school. Seventy-five percent felt the principals provide strong or outstanding leadership, while 2 percent felt they provided less than satisfactory leadership. Ninety-four percent felt discipline at this school was satisfactory; 3 percent felt it was too rigid; 2 percent felt it was too permissive. When asked what they liked best about this school, the responses ranked in this order from most common to least common: 1) teachers and staff 2) academic program 3) discipline 4) location 5) religious and moral formation.

[35]The discrepancy between the survey findings and the findings of my research probably reflect the variety of beliefs about the role of parents in education--and also a variety of expectations for the school/parent relationship. For most parents, it was probably sufficient for the school to keep them informed, whereas school personnel felt the need to bring parents into the school community and actively involve them in the education of their children.

partnership with the school was moving to center stage.[36] She estimated that only 30 percent of the parents were actively involved in school functions and projects.

Teachers expressed similar concerns. At the cluster teacher in-service, when teachers summarized their grade level discussions, only the kindergarten, first, and second grade teacher groupings did not express concern about the lack of quality parent/school interaction.[37] As I interviewed teachers at St. Mandela, only the first grade teacher evaluated the parent/school relationship positively. Several teachers explained that parents at the primary level seemed to be more concerned about educational achievement, but as years go by the students demand less of their parents

---

[36]She spoke repeatedly of the need to get parents more involved in the school, admitting that this school placed less emphasis on parental involvement than other Catholic schools she had worked in or was familiar with. Her greatest frustration was "parents not being committed." She identified parent involvement as the greatest challenge the school faces at present, and links with parents as the links most in need of strengthening in order to ensure the future of the school.

[37]Comer explains that poor black children begin to manifest the consequences of alienation at about age eight. At this point the school begins to expect them to achieve at a rate beyond their level of development. In addition they are beginning to understand how they and their family differ from the mainstream. They begin to see academic success as unattainable and protect themselves by deciding that school is unimportant (1988:45). Younger children are more able to bond with their teachers, and parents are more likely to be cooperative and responsive to the school if they perceive their children as doing well. An older child's growing alienation from the school will tend to be shared by the parents. It makes sense, then, that primary grade teachers had fewer complaints about parental involvement than intermediate and upper grade teachers.

and the parents get tired and tend to make fewer ritual appearances in school. They spoke, for example, of programs at which only half the parents--and maybe only half the students who were to participate--showed up.[38] A junior high teacher stated that out of her class of twenty students she had only two parents on whom she could call when she needed assistance; the others would only respond if she required something from them. The only time all parents reportedly turned out was for parent-teacher conferences.

Similar to explanations given in St. Frederick School, parents were described as basically supportive but too busy to be actively involved in the school. Rather than make parental involvement a priority at Mandela, however, most teachers grudgingly accepted the fact that, as one teacher

---

[38]I saw an example of this in the Spring Variety Show. The program began with a prayer service during which a teacher had to do the readings because the student readers did not show up. A staff member commented to me later that he had practiced a song with a group of students but none of them came. The director of religious education commented that a group of children had learned a simple message in twenty different languages for a choral presentation during the service--but again the children did not come so that part was simply dropped. The director explained that this was typical for the school. So often students made a commitment to come, had their parents' permission, and then just failed to appear for the program. It is frustrating for the staff involved, but they seem to accept it as the way things are and make the most of what they are able to do. Considering this was the last gathering of the school year, attendance was poor. More of the younger students were there to perform, but only two junior high girls and about seven junior high boys showed up. The program started at 6 p.m. on a beautiful Spring evening, so the older students certainly would have been able to get there on their own, even if parents chose not to come.

described it, too many parents were "throwing their responsibility for parenting onto the school."[39]

Teachers in schools in other categories shared those same concerns and complaints about parents. I suggest, however, that while schools are going through structural changes like consolidations and mergers, the school's focus turns to establishing itself within its new organizational structures. At a time when significant changes already threaten the school's legitimacy to participants, parents tend to be unwittingly left behind unless special efforts are made to ensure otherwise. As the newly formed organization begins to stabilize, administrators and staff look around and suddenly realize that they have lost the parents along the way. This seems to be the point at which St. Mandela was as I did my research. The experience of the isolated schools in building up a sense of parental ownership and a school community that included the parents, might provide extremely important insights for the cooperatively-linked school.

Loss of Enrollment Due to Consolidation

The schools of three cluster parishes had closed at the time of the reorganization. The remaining schools/campuses were ready to absorb the students from the buildings which

---

[39]She complained that teachers had to initiate all contacts with parents. Even a bad report card did not evoke a response from many.

had closed. Archdiocesan planners expected that subsidizing fewer buildings with higher enrollments would provide a more cost-efficient education and would greatly reduce the cost of Catholic education in this area of the city. That was not the case, however, in this particular cluster.

The year before the consolidation, there were a total of 2,635 students enrolled in the nine schools of the area; 741 of those students attended the three schools which closed the following year. Two years later, the two campuses closest to--and therefore most likely to benefit from--the largest school to close (322 students enrolled its final year), showed a combined enrollment increase of only fifty-four students. Enrollment in the school most likely to have benefitted from the other two closings actually declined by 74 students.[40] By March of 1988, as I was doing my research, the total enrollment in the six campuses of this cluster school was 1,604 students--over 1,000 students less than were enrolled in all area parochial schools five years earlier.

More research is needed to explain such a large student loss; there may be many hidden causes for the decline. It

---

[40]Enrollment data for these schools was obtained from the official school records kept by the Chicago Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, with the most recent enrollment figures taken from the self-study report done by the cluster evaluation team. In the case of this last school cited, however, the 1985 record was missing from the OCE files, so the enrollment figure used in this comparison was taken from the 1986 Official Catholic Directory.

seems unreasonable, however, to assume when closing or consolidating a parochial school that the students who have been served by that school will transfer to another nearby Catholic school. Whether it happened because of transportation problems or because parents were disillusioned by the process of consolidation and the closing of their school, it seems clear that a majority of the students in the buildings that were closed chose to go to the public system rather than to another of the cluster campuses.

Religion probably also influenced parental decisions about where to transfer their children when their school closed. Catholic families were likely to be more concerned about keeping their children in a Catholic school because of its religious specialist orientation. Of the 741 students in the three closing schools, however, only 109 were Catholic. When the Catholic school becomes less accessible to its students, non-Catholics who are looking primarily for a good education may be less likely than Catholics to put up with the added inconvenience of transferring to another campus.

The self-study of the school also suggested that new mandatory tuition policies caused a significant decline in enrollment during the first couple years of the consolidation. Tuition at the six campuses ranged from the $800 to $899 category to the over $1,000 category in 1985,

while in the three schools that closed in the reorganization it was between $500 and $800 that final year. Parents may not have been willing to pay more for an unfamiliar and less convenient school.

Thus, in attempting to create an economy of scale, such a consolidation also risks causing a crisis of legitimacy for those whose school building closes. People do not readily transfer a sense of ownership from one school to a neighboring school. In addition, radical restructuring upsets the stability of the school; parents may question (and rightly so) whether this round of closings will be followed by another round in a few more years. School closings call into question the survivability of each remaining campus.

Vulnerability in Times of Crisis

The forging of cooperative links makes inner city schools more efficient and effective, and moves them toward a decentralized area structure which frees them to more relevantly respond to the unique needs of their area. But, as I have shown above, such schools are susceptible to outside interference and archdiocesan control in times of crisis. The reorganized structure attempts to protect schools from the instability and turmoil that too often characterizes their parishes. Especially in the early years of reorganization, however, the new structure is too weak to do that effectively. While schools remain housed in

buildings on parish grounds, their future seems very closely tied to the future of the parish; even schools organized into clusters are not yet secure against the organizational crises that continue to rock Catholic parishes in the inner city.

One final reminder is important here. The condition of the schools entering into a cooperative linkage will greatly influence the success of this form of adaptation. When schools move in a precautionary way while both they and their parishes are still relatively stable, the merger is more likely to succeed than if it is a move of last resort in an environment of severe decline. In the first case, more resources are available to the school: financial problems have not yet become desperate; the school has a legitimacy upon which to build; enrollment is still large enough that the school can survive a temporary decline during the period of adjustment. Schools in serious decline like St. Mandela lack all of those advantages.

Because restructuring is a type of refounding, it throws the school into a challenging period of adjustment. Hannan and Freeman's (1984) liability of newness hypothesis states that organizational death rates decrease with age. Because it takes time to establish legitimacy, young organizations are more vulnerable to crises. Older organizations tend to be more stable and to have a stronger legitimacy; as a result they are more likely to survive

crises. The death rate for young organizations is high, and then decreases as organizations age. Regardless of the date of the school's founding, however, reorganization places the school back into the high risk category of new organizations. Both Hannan and Freeman (1984) and Singh, House, and Tucker (1986) found that reorganization corresponds with a sudden increase in the organizational death rate. Hannan and Freeman also found that the death rate of organizations attempting reorganization increases with the duration of the reorganization. Therefore, the first several years of a consolidation or cluster are critical; the more quickly a school can adjust and stabilize itself, the more likely it is to survive.

St. Mandela School had responded to rapid and radical changes in its environment. It had moved through a period of turbulence and almost desperate isolation; reorganization had given this campus a chance to survive and the resources it needed to stabilize itself and begin to turn things around. In this chapter, I have pointed out the many challenges that still confronted the school four years into the new structure, but it was clearly on its way. Its survival as a regional Catholic school was not guaranteed, but it was leading the way in what, in all likelihood, will be the most important form of adaptation in Chicago's inner city.

CHAPTER 9

MARY McLEOD BETHUNE
AN EXTERNALLY-LINKED SCHOOL

Externally-linked schools in the inner city have, like the schools in the inter-school cooperative category, moved beyond the parish in order to secure the resources they need to survive and prosper. Rather than joining with other schools facing similar challenges, however, they maintained their individual school identity while looking to other external groups to provide the support and direction once provided by the parish. Unique ecological advantages enabled them to secure outside resources not available to most isolated schools. In the process of doing so, however, the myths on which the schools' legitimacy was built had to be revised.

Bethune School was an inner-city Catholic school serving one of Chicago's poorest neighborhoods. The student body at the time of my research was heavily non-Catholic (90 percent) and the school's mission was one of outreach to a population in need of quality education.[1] After a series

---

[1]The externally-linked schools were located in some of the worst and some of the most stable neighborhoods included in my study (See map in appendix.). Half the schools in this group had large numbers of Catholic students (50-70

of demographic changes, the school was successfully negotiating resource links with the broader non-church community.[2] I chose to study Bethune School because its external links were formally established and had become an important part of the organizational structure of the school.

History and Demographic Background

Mary McLeod Bethune Parish was founded in the mid-nineteenth century and in the course of its history it had served four successive populations: German, Italian, Puerto Rican, and Black. Two different religious orders of priests had at various times served the parish (diocesan priests had never been responsible for this particular parish), and a number of different congregations of women religious had served in the school.

Founded in the mid-nineteenth century as a German parish, Bethune suffered its first decline in the early

---

percent of their enrollment). Even when they had large Catholic populations, however, the externally-linked schools operated out of a different philosophy than the parish-centered schools. As one principal explained, the school is not really a part of the parish, but "part of the Christian mission of the parish community."

[2]Only one other school relied as directly on the non-church community as Bethune School did, although all the inner-city schools benefitted from the Big Shoulders Appeal which solicited support from the civic and corporate community. Bethune School is typical of others in its category, however, in that heavy dependence on any external resource provider--whether religious or secular--tends to compromise a school's autonomy.

1900s as its German families began moving to outlying areas.[3] By the 1940s the area was much more cosmopolitan and the parish was composed of working class Italians and Poles. About this time a major transition occurred which would continue to shape the destiny of Mary McLeod Bethune for decades: the city built a public housing project of 586 units--row houses and garden apartments--in the neighborhood. Within six years an extension to that original housing project was completed--1,921 units of high rise apartments. With a total population of 17,500, this public housing development brought new growth to the parish and a new school was built. The development radically changed the parish, however, since its German and Italian parishioners were forced to move to make room for the housing development whose population was black and Puerto Rican.

The cardinal requested that Mary McLeod Bethune initiate a special program for the Puerto Ricans living in the development. As a result, for almost fifteen years priests from Spain came into the parish weekly to celebrate Mass. The Puerto Rican population continued to be a strong presence in the parish until the Chicago race riots in 1969. Fearing black assertiveness and the emerging black

---

[3]According to A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago (Koenig 1980), the parish had 258 Baptisms in 1886, but due to ethnic succession, twenty years later there were only seventy-five.

leadership, Puerto Ricans fled the neighborhood, leaving the church to a basically all black congregation.

Racial transition in the area had taken place in the late forties and the fifties, a time when Catholic efforts at black evangelization were strong in Chicago.[4] In the early 1960s, when the neighborhood population was less than 4 percent Catholic, the parish had held five sessions of convert classes a week and the parish history reported that by the early 1970s the student body in its parish school was 100 percent Catholic.[5]

During the years after the racial transition, the parish managed to maintain a small but stable membership. Black parishioners tended to remain members of the church after moving on to better neighborhoods. The pastor because

---

[4]Two Chicago priests, Fathers Joseph Richards and Martin Farrell made evangelization in the black community a vital apostolate during the '40s and '50s. Dolan states that through their leadership and example, priests "were able to revitalize inner-city parishes abandoned by white parishioners (1985:370)." A number of the pastors I interviewed spoke with admiration and appreciation for the work of Richards and Farrell.

[5]A number of informants warn that such claims should be viewed with skepticism for a number of reasons. First, some pastors were concerned that Cardinal Cody was opposed to keeping inner-city parochial schools open if they served large numbers of non-Catholic students. In order to protect their schools, these pastors inflated the numbers of Catholics served. A second caution is that during the fifties and sixties, and in some areas of the archdiocese well into the seventies, blacks often believed that in order to have their children in Catholic schools they must become Catholics. Therefore, potentially large numbers of blacks went through instructions and became nominal Catholics so that their children could reap the supposed benefits of a Catholic education.

of his long tenure of thirty years at Bethune, twenty of them as pastor, strengthened the stability of the parish. However, parish stability had negative effects as well; longtime members tended to retain control even though their geographic distance from the parish made it difficult for them to come back for meetings and parish functions. As a result, newcomers from the neighborhood found it hard to feel a part of the parish community.

School Adaptation

Adaptation to this most recent neighborhood transition proved more difficult for the school than for the parish church community. While most of the other schools of the archdiocese (and of the United States) were reaching their peak enrollment in 1965, Mary McLeod Bethune School was adapting to demographic challenges by merging with a neighboring Catholic school whose sponsoring parish was being disbanded. The merger brought Bethune's enrollment up from 382 to 653. Bethune also chose to participate in Operation Hospitality, the archdiocese's response to pressures to integrate its elementary schools. Black students from Bethune were bused to two parochial schools in one of the northern suburbs.

In the late '60s, gang activity and urban renewal to the east of the church resulted in another exodus of families from the area and more instability for the school. By 1970, enrollment was back to what it had been before the

consolidation--391 students. Conditions in the neighborhood continued to decline; the area lost almost one-fourth of its black population between 1970 and 1980 (United Way Crusade of Mercy 1980 Census Data). School enrollment continued to drop--to 161 in 1980 and to ninety-nine in 1984. The school's existence was in danger; something needed to be done to increase enrollment and stabilize the school if it were to survive. Because the church and school communities had already been charting separate courses, the pastor and principal were able to respond to this crisis by forging a network of non-parochial supporters.

Supportive Detachment

Mary McLeod Bethune, as a church community, had seen many transitions but had managed to maintain some degree of stability by retaining its members even after they had moved out of the area. While often lacking financial resources, these members actively participated in the parish and assumed responsibility for its continuation.

The school had gradually become distanced from the rest of the parish. This is characteristic of what I called in Chapter 5 the supportive detachment with which the parish typically views the externally-linked school. The pastor was committed to the school and recognized it as the most important ministry and service that the parish provided to the residents of the housing projects. The principal concurred with that assessment, seeing the school as "a

symbol of stability and consistency and hope." He stated, "The school community is strong; it just doesn't identify with Church."

Neither did the parish, for its part, identify with the school. While a few parishioners continued to send their children or grandchildren back to attend the parish school, the majority of the students (65 percent) were from the Projects. The school that claimed to have a student body that was 100 percent Catholic in 1970, was 90 percent non-Catholic in 1986. Of the 107 families with children in school that year, only ten families belonged to the parish.

The pastor described the parishioners as being rather indifferent to the school, not against the school, but not really interested in it either: "the school is just there; it's one of the things Mary McLeod Bethune does." There was very little contact between the two groups, except that the pastor noted that parishioners got annoyed with the late arrivals of some of the school families at the monthly family Masses. The pastor considered the parent contract important to the school but not to the church. Unlike Mandela and Sojourner, Bethune parish did not see the school as a way to draw parents into the church community. Whereas St. Mandela parish was dependent on the school, and St. Sojourner parish and school were interdependent, at Bethune--and based on interview findings, at most other externally-linked schools as well--the school and parish operated

independently of each other.

The principal repeatedly stressed that, despite religious requirements in the parent contract, the reality was that parish and school were two separate communities. He described the school community as being "totally isolated from the parish community" with very little bridging of the two. When comparing this school to his experience of other Catholic schools, he rated Bethune School as placing much less emphasis on involvement in parish life and activities than others do. He expressed dissatisfaction with this lack of relatedness: "The parents have to feel like members instead of just using the facilities."

Establishing External Links

While the situation at Bethune was similar to that of the isolated schools, the pastor here was deeply committed to the school. Faced with the crisis mentioned above, he chose to move in the direction of establishing resource links with outside groups willing to invest in the future of this particular school. His long involvement in the local community[6] provided him with valuable contacts with

---

[6]For years the pastor had been actively involved in numerous groups. He had served on the Archdiocesan Conservation Council and had been the president of the local neighborhood community organization. He served on a neighborhood advisory council and at a mental health center. More recently he had cooperated with four other churches in managing an integrated 300+ unit housing development. He had also worked in several short-lived ecumenical outreach programs in the public housing projects, and at the time of my research he was working in health programs aimed at

potential resource providers. In addition, the parish's location on the edge of one of Chicago's most infamous high rise public housing projects gave the school's plea for assistance legitimacy. The entire community would benefit if, through education, some of these children whose families were among Chicago's most disadvantaged, could escape poverty and welfare dependency and move into the mainstream.

This pastor was the key figure and the primary initiator in the decision to look outside the traditional Catholic structures.[7] His experiences had convinced him of the importance of building strong external links. In contrasting the ministry of an inner-city pastor with that of pastors elsewhere, he explained that in the inner city about half of one's time is spent in non-ministerial work, and one of the biggest of those non-ministerial tasks is fundraising. He identified as his second most important ministry, the making of contacts outside the parish in order to bring resources into the parish. He clearly saw establishing external resource flows as vital to the

---

reducing teen pregnancy, providing prenatal care to young mothers and their babies, and reducing infant mortality.

[7]In some of the externally linked schools, the principal was the key figure in establishing relationships with new resource providers. In the most deprived areas, however, the principals are usually not established members of the local community so they lack the well-developed resource network that Bethune's pastor had. A principal with enthusiasm and initiative can accomplish what Bethune's pastor did, especially if they successfully recruit someone with the contacts that they lack, who can help them build that resource network.

parish's survival.

Establishing credibility with outside funders

Mary McLeod Bethune's credibility was clearly dependent on the credibility of its pastor. The pastor explained that the black activism of the late '60s and early '70s had moved him and the parish into more community and ecumenical work. The connections he had made through his community involvements established his own and the parish's credibility in the area. His involvements also introduced him to people who significantly influenced the future of the parish school.

An external support system: the Educational Task Force

The primary network at work for the parish and especially for the school at the time of my research was the Ad Hoc Educational Task Force. In late 1983 with school enrollment at a dangerous low, the pastor with direction from a local research institute organized this task force of business and community leaders. Its goals were to evaluate the needs of the school and to find solutions to the urgent problems confronting the school. Also represented on the task force were the chairperson of the school board, the president of the school's parent club, a representative from the parish council, and both the pastor and the principal of Mary McLeod Bethune. Within two years, the task force had become a vital resource for the school and perhaps its

greatest hope for the future.

Schools Worth Supporting:
Focus on Education for the Disadvantaged

While only a few of the externally-linked schools were as directly plugged into non-church related resource streams at the time of my research, this seems to be a probable trend of the future where such schools stress an educational mission over a religious one. A "Profile of St. Mary McLeod Bethune's School and Its Operations" had been prepared during the task force's fifth year to aid in recruiting a new principal. This paper clearly reflected the school's focus on education for the disadvantaged. It stated:

> The primary purpose of St. Mary McLeod Bethune's School is to provide excellent educational opportunities for its students as the first step in helping them break the bonds of poverty and gently pushing them towards higher educational ventures.

It then recognized the religious purpose of the school, but the religious efforts were seen as secondary: "This school setting is also obviously an excellent vehicle for pre-evangelization in the mission of the Church." The educational purpose was given further legitimacy by noting that two-thirds of the school's students came from the public housing development which was one of the four lowest income areas in the United States. The statement characterized the students as being "black, poor, Protestant or unchurched, fractured, and lacking educational background

and support." Thus Mary McLeod Bethune School was representative of those reputable schools in disadvantaged areas which were able to capitalize on their situation. The extreme needs of the neighborhood provided the school with a new kind of legitimacy which justified the continuing support of the Catholic community while at the same time enabling it to appeal to the broader civic community.

After looking at the resources secured through Bethune's external links, I explore some of the unique challenges encountered by schools moving in this direction. Bethune's situation highlights both the strengths and the limitations that characterize this strategy. Its focus on developing outside resources and legitimacy affected both the school community and the religious focus of the school.

Resources Secured through External Linkages

Establishing formal external links provided Bethune School with a greatly expanded resource base and gave the school the commitment and expertise of a knowledgeable and well-connected group of supporters. These external links resulted in a substantial increase in enrollment; they made possible long range planning for both the school and the parish, and monetary contributions that enabled the school to purchase materials and provide additional scholarships. In short, the connections to this new group made possible numerous resources neither school nor parish could have

provided on its own.

Increased Enrollment

Enrollment at Bethune School at the time the Ad Hoc Educational Task Force was established in 1983 was only ninety-nine students, a dangerously small number. Therefore, the task force initially focussed on increasing enrollment through the development of additional scholarships and the introduction of tuition discount plans. The task force also helped advertise the school in the community through advertisements and fliers in local stores and newspapers, and it recruited students for the school through local daycare and tutoring centers. By fall of 1986 enrollment had risen to 180 and the following year it reached 190 students.

Scholarship programs

The school hoped to continue increasing enrollment by offering scholarships to those who found the tuition prohibitive. At the time of my research the goal of the task force was to provide stable scholarships for one-third of the students--about thirty families. With the help of the task force, the school was working with four local Headstart Programs and three local tutoring programs as feeders for the scholarship program. The school asked each Headstart Program to recommend three children who might benefit from the kindergarten program at Mary McLeod

Bethune. Two of the tutoring programs submitted the names of five public school students (from a range of grade levels) who were capable of working at grade level and might consider attending Bethune if at least a partial scholarship could be provided. The third tutoring program made a greater number of referrals because of a well-established relationship with Bethune.

At the time, Bethune was awarding partial scholarships of $500 in an attempt to extend the scholarship program to more students. Families on scholarship paid the remaining $220 of tuition and the registration fee and service charge. Since tuition was family based, when the school accepted a child on scholarship, the school also accepted siblings if they were functioning at or above grade level.[8] Fifteen families had received scholarships the year I was doing my fieldwork. The school hoped to increase that number to between twenty and thirty families for the following year.

Funding scholarships

The pastor's letters of appeal brought in approximately $9,000 a year to be used for scholarships. The Doctor

---

[8]During the task force meeting, one of the members, a religious sister who was the administrator of a Catholic high school asked whether the school had considered enrolling below level siblings if they were willing to repeat a year of schoolwork. A discussion followed on the pros and cons of such an action, after which the principal agreed to consider doing it on a selective basis. Thus, the involvement of other professionals in the school influenced policies and brought different perspectives that could strengthen the school.

Scholl Foundation had provided an additional $7,500 in scholarship money. The recently reactivated alumni association[9] was also attempting to raise money for scholarships. At the time of my observations at Bethune, the alumni group was planning its first project, a dinner dance, the proceeds of which would go into a scholarship fund with the hope that the Greeley Scholarship Fund would match what they raised.[10]

Other recruitment efforts

The principal explained that the school offered tuition incentives to families for bringing new families into the school. Any family bringing two new families into the school received free tuition. The school rewarded a family bringing in one new family with a 50 percent decrease in tuition.

The task force had designed and printed three different recruitment brochures without cost to the school or parish. The brochures set forth the basic philosophy of the school and presented it as a Catholic school where the majority of the students were not Catholic. As evidence that the school's program works, it listed the current occupations of some of the school's graduates: a personnel administrator

---

[9]The Ad Hoc Task Force had initiated the development of this Alumni Association.

[10]Greeley established a program whereby inner-city Catholic schools which developed new fundraising initiatives could apply for matching grants.

and a para-legal at Continental Bank, a radio announcer at WVON, an actress/director at the Black Theater Ensemble, a doctor at Jackson Park Hospital, a state representative, a mechanical engineer.

Increased Access to Funding

The funding base of the externally-linked school is significantly more diversified than that of the other categories I studied. The traditional parish-centered school depended heavily on the parish for subsidy, and the parish-centered in the inner city relied heavily on tuition. Both the isolated and cooperatively-linked schools looked to the archdiocese for a large part of their budget. The externally-linked school as typified by Mary McLeod Bethune drew its support from a number of significant resource suppliers. Bethune School depended on the pastor and the contributions he raised for the school; it also depended on the assistance of a sharing parish,[11] on archdiocesan subsidy, and on the support of the Ad Hoc Task Force.

Tuition and fees covered a remarkably small portion of the school budget at Bethune--just under 22 percent of the 1986 school budget. The mean for tuition and fees in the

---

[11]Sharing parishes are suburban or stable city parishes that the archdiocese pairs up with low-income parishes. In an attempt to redistribute its wealth, the archdiocese asks more economically stable parishes to contribute to those parishes unable to support themselves on their own. Church leadership also intends the program to provide opportunities for parishioners from the sharing parishes to get to know each other, to pray together and socialize together.

externally-linked schools was 54 percent, while the mean for all schools interviewed was 62 percent.[12] Parish subsidy provided 17 percent of the budget, archdiocesan subsidy almost 40 percent, and other sources of funding, e.g., the task force, sharing parishes, the parent club,[13] and other donations, about 22 percent. In addition, the school participated in an umbrella organization of neighborhood groups, which the principal said provided valuable information regarding resources available to nonprofit groups.

The Educational Task Force took on certain projects to supply Bethune School with equipment and materials that it could not have afforded on its own. The efforts of the task force, for example, had supplied the school with a computer lab. The lab had five computers attached to the public school's educational network and fifteen Apple IIe computers. The network computers were supplied by the federal government through a Title I program and could be used only by below-level students. The Apple IIe's were provided through the efforts of the Ad Hoc Task Force and

---

[12]Tuition had increased at Bethune School but this was the only school I looked at that charged a family-based tuition. Each family paid the same amount regardless of the number of children in the school. Other schools often charged less for the second and third children, etc., but some money came in for each child.

[13]Sharing parishes provided approximately $30,000; and the finance committee expected the parent club to raise $6,000.

were used by all the students. While the school's computer program focussed primarily on reading and math skills, enrichment programs--like word processing and computerized typing--were also available to students.

As mentioned above, the task force members had valuable contacts with other outsiders to whom they turned to secure needed resources. During my research, the task force was raising money to purchase complete sets of math and reading texts for use the following school year. The task force gave each member a list of names of business people from whom they were to solicit the $11,600 needed for the project.

Another recent fundraiser of the task force had raised $15,000 to pay the salary for the parish's outreach worker.[14] The archdiocese had committed itself to providing a matching grant. The task force also supplied a Christmas bonus for all volunteers and faculty members of the school--something that neither school nor parish could have done on its own.

Building Legitimacy through External Links

The Ad Hoc Educational Task Force had stepped into the school at a crucial point in its history, a time when its enrollment was low, its reputation weak, and its survival

---

[14]In addition to parish outreach which was the worker's primary responsibility, he also organized and ran the tutoring program which was heavily utilized by Bethune School students.

extremely shaky. In addition to its efforts to increase enrollment and find funding for the school, the task force also helped to strengthen the school's legitimacy. Its expertise and connections helped the school through a difficult period of adaptation. By supplementing the school's leadership, it helped create new legitimacy myths and move it toward a new future.

Ad Hoc Educational Task Force

The Educational Task Force broadened and strengthened the school's claim to legitimacy. At the time of my research, membership on the task force included a retired administrator of social services for the city, a former administrator in the County Sheriff's Office, an attorney, the principal of a Catholic high school, a bank executive, the president of an urban studies research institute, several business and industrial leaders, and four leaders from the parish and school.

I attended a meeting of the Ad Hoc Educational Task Force and had an opportunity to see it in action. Members spoke from their own areas of expertise and were quick to express concerns about the school or make suggestions about how things might be done differently.[15] In addition to

---

[15]For example, one of the task force members had been impressed by the program of remediation in a neighboring Lutheran school. He suggested comparing that program with Bethune's Learning Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP--a program designed to help students who are functioning below grade level) to see if Bethune's program could be

bringing their personal resources, experience, and advice, the task force members brought their ties to other resource providers and were able to activate those relationships on behalf of the school. By supplying the school with a computer lab, new textbooks, etc., the task force increased the legitimacy of the school and made it more attractive to outside groups and to parents.

Long range planning

The task force made another important contribution to Bethune School through its leadership and involvement in long range planning. Subcommittees had spent more than a year intensively evaluating five dimensions of the school: finances, pupils, personnel, buildings, and curriculum. Each of these subcommittees then identified issues that needed to be dealt with. Working together, they then developed a five year plan for addressing those issues. This plan was directing and coordinating the efforts of various groups involved in the school at the time of my research.

The plan provided for accountability and control. It entrusted specific implementation tasks to various people: the principal, the pastor, the school board, the task force, the faculty, the alumni association. An overview committee chaired by a school board member supervised and coordinated

---

strengthened. Another example: suggestions for revising admission policies for the siblings of scholarship students.

the implementation. Each individual or group involved submitted a quarterly report to the overview committee which in turn gave a written response. The plan was to be updated yearly.

This kind of planning was much more detailed and involved than a principal could have done on her own in an isolated school. The knowledge and experience of the team doing long range planning and implementation carried the school beyond strategies for mere survival and provided the school with some stability in the midst of a very turbulent environment.

Increased Involvement of School Board

One of the important side effects of the long range plan was that its implementation demanded increased involvement of the school board. The plan gave the board specific directions to follow and tasks to accomplish. As a result, membership on Bethune's school board entailed more formal committee work than was required of the board members of other case study schools. To implement the plan board members had to function side by side with the school staff and with the task force members.

Board involvement was extensive. The finance committee (three school board members and several non-board school parents) worked with the pastor and principal to develop the school budget. The long range planning committee was responsible for ensuring that the school board implemented

those sections of the Long Range Planning Report assigned to the board. A school board member chaired the overview committee. The executive committee prepared the agenda for board meetings and coordinated the efforts of all the committees of the board. The teacher relations committee promoted interaction between teachers and board members, finding ways to support the teachers and maintain good rapport between these two groups. A school board member chaired the parent club, the fundraising arm of the school board.

Other school board committees included the nominating committee responsible for enlisting new potential members,[16] the scholarship committee which awarded tuition assistance and supervised the scholarship program, and the principal search committee which was responsible for interviewing potential candidates to replace the outgoing principal. Several non-board parents, a teacher representative, and the pastor also served on this committee.

If board members actually fulfilled all their assigned tasks, they would have had an average of two to three

---

[16] At the meeting I attended, the board discussed how difficult it is to find good people willing to serve on the board. The board is to be composed of nine members, six of whom currently have children in the school and two of whom are parishioners. The board hopes to involve more non-board parents in board committee work, thus providing opportunities for grooming new members, much as St. Frederick's was doing.

meetings every month, and several school-related activities for which they were responsible. In other schools I visited, the average school board member attended a monthly meeting, had primary responsibility for one school activity during the course of the year and participated in several more. The school board at Bethune expected a much greater commitment of time, initiative, and involvement from its members. Unfortunately, board members often failed to live up to these expectations--an issue that I will discuss below.

In summary, developing strong external links provided Mary McLeod Bethune School with a broader base of supporters who took active leadership in developing a variety of resources needed by the school. Through their involvement with the school, the school secured a larger and more stable enrollment; it developed financial resources to provide for scholarships, educational materials, and special programs; and the expertise and initiative of these supporters led the school in a process of solid long-range planning which freed the school from focussing all its energy on survival.

Special Issues in Externally-Linked Schools

One of the primary challenges of the externally-linked school is to stabilize the new network of supporters, to firmly establish its legitimacy with those new supporters in order to ensure their continued backing. While this new

network greatly enhances the school's ability to secure resources, it also complicates the traditional organizational structure of the school. While remaining key and influential figures in the school, the pastor and principal no longer retain the decision-making authority they once had. The school board and Ad Hoc Educational Task Force have to share authority and work out a relationship that is most beneficial to the school without threatening the position of either group. Thus two major issues come into focus: 1) the school's ability to maintain its autonomy while managing interorganizational demands in an atmosphere of environmental uncertainty; and 2) the school's success at maintaining legitimacy with the new resource providers without threatening its legitimacy to the school community.

Autonomy Problems

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), the successful organization maximizes control over resources while minimizing dependence on outside organizations. The more dependent an organization is on an outside resource supplier, the greater that supplier's power to influence organizational outcomes. I have tried to show how parish-centered schools with their dependence on the local parish remain vulnerable to crises in the parish, and that cooperatively-linked schools, because of their heavy dependence on archdiocesan support are vulnerable to

archdiocesan crises. I expected the diversity of resources in the externally-linked school to decrease the influence and power of any one group. But because the network of outside supporters as embodied at Bethune in the task force was relatively new and the potential for continued support was great, the control it seemed to exert over the school was significant.[17]

While organizational leaders were able, to a limited degree, to manipulate the environment to the organization's advantage, the school was also transferring power to outside experts. The resulting structures of authority were unclear: the pastor struggled to balance the influence of each involved group; the principal focussed much of his efforts outward (as did the administrator in the cooperatively-linked school) to meet the demands and expectations of the task force. With a new and influential group actively shaping the future of the school, both teachers and school board struggled to redefine their own

---

[17]Vitullo-Martin (1979) alludes to this problem when discussing various approaches to supporting inner-city Catholic schools. The mission-school approach suggests that just as the church has traditionally supported schools to educate and evangelize the poor in foreign countries and on Native American reservations, it should also support such ventures among the predominantly non-Catholic minority groups in our inner cities. Vitullo-Martin raises as a serious issue, however, the difference that results from the closeness of supporters to the inner city. When supporting a school in Kenya or Peru or even South Dakota, Chicago Catholics exercise no real control over the school they help finance. Vitullo-Martin warns that the political repercussions are much greater when they are supporting schools in nearby neighborhoods.

decision-making roles.[18]

Teacher Alienation

Teacher concerns in this area focussed on two related issues: their lack of input into programs and into how funds were budgeted and spent, and lack of administrative support. With the center of power apparently moving outside the school, beyond the influence of the teachers, many teachers experienced a sense of alienation. Interviews at Mary McLeod Bethune School revealed two significant indications of teacher alienation. First, the principal spoke of a high staff turnover, explaining that the average teacher stayed only three years. Secondly, teachers themselves spoke of the unusually high rate of teacher absenteeism (a problem to which parents also alluded).[19]

---

[18]This is an issue in schools externally linked to the broader Catholic community as well. Several other externally linked schools in which I conducted interviews confirmed that when outside parishes or church groups become financially responsible for inner-city parishes, they also tend to assume political responsibility for them. Vitullo-Martin states:

> At the most elemental level, if their funds are absolutely necessary to the operation of the inner-city schools, they will have to participate in deciding what those schools will be like and how they will operate. The wealthy will have to become interested in those schools, and will have to agree in general with what the schools are doing, or they will not give their support (1979:88).

[19]While both high staff turnover and teacher absenteeism could be attributed to a variety of causes and not necessarily imply that teachers are frustrated or dissatisfied with this school, many of the concerns they expressed in teacher interviews suggest that this may well

Utilization of resources

The teachers expressed frustration at being excluded from the decision-making process regarding the utilization of resources. For example, one of the teachers complained that while the Ad Hoc Educational Task Force did support the school, it was not the kind of support that the school needed the most. She explained that funds were coming into the school, but the teachers had no input into how they were being spent. As a result, the faculty had to do without materials that they considered essential. A number of teachers voiced strong complaints in this regard, most strongly the LEAP (Learning Enrichment Activities Program) teachers and the kindergarten teacher.[20]

---

be the case. The teachers had strong feelings and beliefs about what they needed and what their students deserved, and when they felt powerless to control those things, alienation resulted. This is a typical problem of middle management; the middle manager is responsible for accomplishing a task and blamed if it is not done well, but is left without the authority to claim the resources he/she believes are needed in order to accomplish that task.

[20]The kindergarten teacher explained that one of her biggest frustrations working at Mary McLeod Bethune is the financial problem the school faces. She complained that she had no materials for her class. While she had made her classroom attractive with artwork and calendars and charts that she had made herself, none of the manipulatives normally so abundant in kindergarten classrooms were visible. There were a few picture books but nothing else. The teacher also commented that the ditto machine was broken and "probably won't be repaired" so she had been making worksheets by hand or paying out of her own pocket to have them xeroxed.

I heard a confirmation of this problem at the board meeting where one of the kindergarten parents who is a board member complained that they were told that one of the

A board member raised a similar concern at the school board meeting, reporting that some of the faculty felt that the task force was not producing. Similarly, teachers spoke of having had no input into the planning, development, and implementation of programs such as the Learning Enrichment Activities Program I will speak of later. Teachers referred to this program as the principal's program and even those involved in teaching in it had no real input...and no real investment into whether it continued or not.

Purkey and Smith (1988) include collaborative planning and collegial relationships as one of four process variables vital for establishing a school climate conducive to academic achievement. Principal/faculty collaboration was clearly a weakness at Bethune School. Such relationships are more difficult to develop when most of the administrative energies are directed toward outside groups, as tends to be the case in both the inter-school cooperatively-linked schools and in the externally-linked schools.

Teacher problems with administration

In an externally-linked school, the main resource flows come from outside the immediate school community. This

---

reasons the teacher does not assign more homework is because the ditto machine was not working.

I personally observed this class playing a phonics BINGO game for which students were using homemade game cards.

results in pressure for the administrator to hear outside voices and concerns more clearly than those of his/her own staff. Unlike the parish-centered and the isolated schools where building community was a primary focus, the attitude in Bethune was more entrepreneurial. The school was less of a community and more of a product to be sold.

The principal at Bethune stated his expectations of his teachers with regard to the parents: "the customer is always right...I ask the teachers to accept the human limitations of the families and eat crow if they have to..." He felt this was necessary even if it occasionally involved compromising their integrity, a compromise that he called "compassion." For example, if a teacher disciplined a student and a parent objected, the principal expected the teacher to pacify the parent even if it meant apologizing and backing down on the teacher's requirements. While admitting that teachers as professionals do not like to have to compromise their integrity, he stated that because of the kind of people the school served, it could not be run like any other school or people would not stay with it.[21] In order to maintain some stability in student body the principal felt it was extremely important to give parents and students good experiences; and he believed that doing

---

[21]At the time of my research the principal estimated that student turnover was approximately 33 percent each year. Considering the mobility of the surrounding area, the school population is more stable than I would have expected.

that would bring in new families.

The principal explained that the school's delicate situation was further complicated because it was "dealing with a mix of the most illiterate walking with the most literate"--the parent population from the projects and the task force members. This demanded, in his estimation, a great deal of compassion, and administration had to maintain a delicate balance because each group wanted to take over.[22] He, too, recognized the need to balance dependencies--to try to maintain administrative control as various groups within the school vied for control.

Because low enrollment at Bethune had so recently posed such a serious survival threat to the school, it was understandable that enrollment rather than education became a primary concern; actual educational outcomes became less important than people's "experience" of the school. Just as religious ideals had to be compromised in order to maintain enrollment at Frederick and Mandela, at Bethune the need for enrollment was so great that the principal asked teachers to

---

[22]Comer (1988) encountered similar challenges in bringing together Yale professionals with parents in two of New Haven's worst inner-city schools for his school intervention project. Most educators are not trained to work with inner-city parents; their expectations are often radically different. As a result, teachers get discouraged and parents become angry, distrustful, and alienated. While at Bethune dissatisfied parents transferred their children to another school, most parents in Comer's public schools did not have that option. Instead, parental frustration was so great at one of the project schools during that first year that parents held a demonstration.

compromise academic standards. The school placed more emphasis on programs that looked good to supporters and parents than on what was educationally sound. The faculty, however, knew the reality of what was and was not happening in their classrooms. It is likely that the high teacher turnover rate at Bethune was due at least in part to their frustration at not being able to change the situation.[23]

Unfortunately, faculty instability makes it even harder for a school to achieve its academic goals. Purkey and Smith assert that frequent changes in faculty "are destructive and likely to retard, if not prevent, the growth of a coherent and ongoing school personality (1988:443)." They view this personality as a crucial factor in developing a school climate where learning can take place. Teacher instability contributes to a school atmosphere which breeds frustration which in turn causes teacher burnout and more instability.

---

[23]As noted above, teachers stayed an average of only three years. The principal attributed this turnover rate to the low salary scale which was a valid concern. The teachers were paid according to the archdiocesan scale, however, so the school was competitive with other Catholic schools, many of which had extremely stable teaching staffs. I would suggest, therefore, that other factors were probably much more significant in influencing staff turnover. Low pay in an extremely satisfying setting can often be tolerated; in a frustrating setting it rarely will be. Comer (1988) saw a staff turnover rate of 25 percent in his project schools as indicative of a high level of teacher frustration.

The School Board

While the members of the school board were less verbal than the teachers, they also struggled to exert their influence on the school. The school board was the rightful policy and direction setting body for Bethune School, yet the "experts" whom the school had invited to collaborate with the board threatened the board's authority. This was especially true because the board was comprised primarily of people who were low-income, single parents, welfare recipients, living in public housing. Thus the question of which group was in charge--of who was helping whom--became an issue.

Contrasting the boards of the four case study schools highlights the autonomy differences of these approaches. When schools are dependent on external resource providers, the boards' influence diminishes. The parish-centered school's board was viewed by at least some of the parents as an elite parish board, though it remained subject to pastoral control. The board of the isolated school was much more of a parent board involved in the school, but closely directed by the principal. The board in the cooperatively-linked school was a regional board in which local parental control was diminished and which functioned in a primarily advisory (rather than policy-making) capacity at the time of my research. The externally-linked school had a parent board that was subject to the elite control and powerful

influence of the Educational Task Force.

The pastor recognized this as problematic and encouraged the board members to take responsible leadership for their school. As new board members were being commissioned and oriented to their role, the pastor expressed a genuine concern that board members and parents take active ownership of the school, that they become involved in actual policy formation and school development rather than just rubber-stamping decisions made from outside. Organizationally the pastor's stance was important for preserving his own autonomy as well as the board's rightful authority. If together the pastor and board could keep the power people in an advisory role it would be more possible for the pastor to maintain an effective balance of power.

During my observations at Bethune, I saw indications that the pastor's concerns were warranted. Board members seemed to feel that they were not the real decision-makers, and they therefore sometimes failed to take their responsibilities seriously.[24] The pastor, for example, expressed concern that some of the board members on the

---

[24]United Way's report Human Capital Development advocated the involvement of parents in local school governance, but warned:

> the implementation of any of these models will require special efforts to ensure that poor communities and poor parents obtain genuine participation and not just a semblance of power (1989:29).

search committee for the new principal were never available for interviews with the candidates. The pastor also expressed disappointment with the parent club; he complained of waste, poor planning, a lack of accountability to the board, the club's failure to meet its fundraising goal.[25]

Absenteeism at board meetings had also been a problem; the meeting I attended opened with only three board members (one-third of the board membership), the pastor, the principal, and myself present. Two other board members had called in and been excused,[26] while a third had been called and reminded of the meeting and was on her way. Interestingly enough, one of the agenda items for that meeting was the discussion of whether and how to replace one of the board members because she had missed more than the allowed number of board meetings.[27] It was decided to declare her seat vacant and begin looking for a replacement.

A final complaint made during the meeting was that it was the same few board members whose names appeared in all

---

[25]The pastor attributed a good portion of the problems with the parent club to the school board member who chaired the parent club. According to the pastor, she had not been present enough to do an effective job of leadership.

[26]One with a very legitimate excuse of having to take an asthmatic child to the hospital.

[27]In fairness to this board member it must be noted that her absences were due to pregnancy and infant care. Recruiting board members was a common problem in the schools I studied, and often the people willing to serve on the board did not have the time to give.

the reports; there were other board members who, according to the pastor, "haven't served well... The doers have tried to involve them, but some of the board members just never came through." The pastor expressed the hope that the newly elected board members would be strong and involved. This lack of involvement and failure to assume responsibilities could be symptomatic of people's sense of alienation. If the real power resided in the task force, and the board simply facilitated and implemented the decisions of the task force, it would be expected that people would resist getting involved.

A related problem involved a policy requiring board members to attend school functions and formal celebrations such as graduations.[28] During the board meeting, some of the members had openly disagreed with that policy, but the pastor insisted that the board needed visibility; parents needed to know who the members were and that members served an important function. Here again, the board seemed resistant, possibly because they did not feel their role was significant.

On the other hand, I noted earlier how demanding board membership was at Bethune School as compared to other schools I studied. Considering the instability in the lives of most of Bethune's parents, it is possible that the school

---

[28]The school board president was to assist the principal and pastor in handing out the diplomas at the 8th grade graduation.

was asking too much of them. Studies of inner-city schools clearly demonstrate the need for parental involvement (Comer 1988, Purkey and Smith 1988), but an effective administrator must be realistic in the amount of involvement he/she requires. Demanding the impossible and criticizing people when they fail to meet those demands can be just as alienating as a total lack of parental involvement. Real decision-making authority must be coupled with realistic expectations.

Redefining the role of the board

Others who were actively involved confronted the issue of the school board's role and its relationship to the task force more directly. Several discussions during the meeting I attended exemplified this concern.

The first discussion concerned a proposal to merge the separate publicity committees of the Ad Hoc Educational Task Force and of the school board. While the intent of the proposal was to form a joint committee to handle the school's publicity needs, the board was concerned about which group would be controlling which. Members expressed the belief that the school board's committee should tell the task force what the board wanted them to do and how to use the resources at their disposal.

A second discussion grew out of one of the board members' question of the board's role in budgeting: "If we're moving toward a more active role for the board, does

the board merely approve the budget after the fact, or does it have input?" The resulting discussion led to an agreement that the board was searching to discover what its role would be; to accomplish that it would be necessary for members to evaluate what it had been in the past and deliberately decide how it would operate in the future. It was agreed that the executive committee would work out the details for such an evaluation to be done by the board at large.

In terms of the need to clarify the role of the school board in directing the future of Bethune School, it was the pastor who most clearly verbalized his fears to the board members. He stressed the importance of the board being strong in relationship to the task force, making it clear that the board must not let the task force absorb the school board; neither should the board abdicate its authority and responsibilities to the task force. In order to ensure that this would not happen, he insisted that good representation on the board by school parents was a necessity. He was apparently attempting to use an active school board to balance the school's dependency on the task force.

Ideally, the task force was entrusted with the task of enabling and facilitating the work of the school board. In reality, however, especially because of the power and status differential between board members and task force members, it was easy for the more powerful group to displace the

weaker. This is one of the limitations of the external linkage approach. Those who control the resources too readily control the school (Vitullo-Martin 1979). The fact that the pastor was aware of this danger would be expected to help the school negotiate the challenges ahead. In addition, the newly hired administrator, unlike the current administrator, had not been personally invested in the development of the task force. As a result, she may have been able to utilize the strengths of that group without seeing it as the primary group to which she was accountable.

Thus teachers, administrators, and school board were trying to adjust to the power shift occurring in the school. The experience of Bethune indicates that as outside groups began to play key roles in the school, traditional chains of authority were stretched and challenged. At best, power was shared with outside experts; at worst, power was lost to them, causing not only confusion but alienation.

Legitimacy through Mimetic Processes: A Suburban School in the Inner City

The principal told me that his goal had been to create in the inner city a school with all the advantages and resources of a suburban school--and he was satisfied that he had done just that. Taken at face value, the school had indeed accomplished some marvelous things: a computer and typing lab, a special program for students who were working below grade level, a three-tiered honors program including

several high school level classes for high-achievers. These things were important aspects of the legitimacy myths in suburban schools, and I would expect them to improve the academic quality of an inner-city school, too. The issue to be addressed here, however, was whether these things could be implemented with the extremely limited resources and in the chaotic environment of a school like Bethune whose existence was threatened. Organizational theorists state that change must be rapid when the situation is desperate because change throws an organization into instability which increases the likelihood of organizational death. With a shortage of money, materials, qualified personnel, and time to plan and effectively implement new programs, the school may gain legitimacy but fail to provide actual quality programs.

Interviews with teachers and observations in Bethune School indicated that at some point in the attempt to present an exceptional image to outside groups, educational goals had become secondary. One teacher commented that "so much is just illusion." The school worked hard to control and motivate the students--but sometimes at the expense of real learning. Evidence of educational goal displacement was particularly visible in the special programs which structured classroom life at Mary McLeod Bethune and made the school unique and attractive to outside groups: the Honors Program and the LEAP Program.

The Honors Programs: the Myth of Motivation

The honors programs demonstrated the goal displacement that can occur in the midst of organizational adaptation (Zald 1970). Motivation became the legitimating myth for the existence of these programs. Similarly, the belief that students in these programs were doing work above their own grade level, that they were achieving more than their friends in other schools, established the school's legitimacy to parents, students, and supporters.[29] The principal's version of the myth was that students in the inner city needed special motivation, had to have a goal to work toward, and the honors program filled that need. In addition, the mixture of age levels meant that the older

---

[29]The Honors I Class was the most elite class of the school. In this class students supposedly got the jump on high school by studying algebra, biology, French, and Freshman level literature. The Honors II Class used 8th grade texts; the Honors III used 6th grade texts. Students remained in their grade level homerooms for Religion, Art, and Physical Education Classes as well as for lunch and for the final period of the day. They moved to their instructional groupings for the other subjects. The average 3rd and 4th graders worked in their homeroom using the appropriate grade level texts. The slow 3rd and 4th graders went to the LEAP Program while the advanced 4th graders went to the Honors III Instructional Group. Honors III was composed primarily of 5th and 6th Graders with a few advanced 4th graders and a few lower level junior high students who had not mastered the material in the 6th grade texts but who were not considered to need the intensive remediation that LEAP was to provide. When students mastered the material covered in the Honors III group they moved into the Honors II group, and as they mastered that, on to Honors I. Thus instead of step by step progress forward, moving through 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade material, the students were expected to skip levels, moving from 4th grade materials into 6th, then 8th, then high school level books.

students were kept on their toes by the younger high achievers who were in constant competition with them.

Teacher and student frustration

In talking to the teachers, however, and in observing these classes in session, the question arose as to how long the system would be motivating, and how beneficial it actually was for students. The Honors III teacher said that as a teacher he felt working in the honors program was difficult: "The work is so hard for these students, and they're easily frustrated." He explained that while he was using 6th grade texts, he found that he had to grade the work down and move slowly. While I was observing in his classroom, he told students, "You should be happy if you even get two or three problems correct today because this is the first day we are doing this type of math problem."

The Honors II teacher also commented on the difficulty students had in understanding the math. While students skipped every other grade level text, she explained that they often spent two years repeating the same text because they did not grasp the content the first time through.

Unlike the LEAP Program, the honors program had texts, but teachers were classroom teachers without special training for working with accelerated students. Even more problematic, however, was the absence of a program for the average student. While some students could achieve in the kind of program Bethune had established, others would have

benefitted more from a solid and sequential curriculum where skills built on skills taught at the previous level. The poor quality of the science fair projects prepared by the students and on display at the school's open house clearly demonstrated that these students were not really functioning above grade level.[30]

As a motivational tool, the honors program probably had some validity. It gave the school a unique identity and made a clear statement about the school's high expectations for student achievement, both factors that research has identified as significantly affecting academic effectiveness (Purkey and Smith 1988). Serious problems arose in its implementation, however. Lacking a program for the average learner, teachers lowered their expectations, sometimes to the point of expecting students to fail (as in the math class noted above). Other essential factors were lacking at Bethune--and greatly decreased the likelihood of successful implementation of the school's academic programs: staff stability, a considerable degree of staff control over

---

[30]The projects in general were sloppy, incomplete, and too highly dependent on encyclopedias and texts. Whole sections were obviously copied. Many of the projects included pictures and charts that were xeroxed from books and then cut and pasted onto the posters instead of being drawn by the students. The students may not have had enough time for the projects, or they may not have had the direction and help they needed to plan and execute the projects, but their work was clearly below grade level.

Only two projects that I saw had working models--one demonstrating electrical wiring; the other, a carousel that demonstrated one of the ways in which a machine works.

instructional and training decisions, an effective schoolwide staff training program, collaborative planning and collegial relationships. Purkey and Smith conclude: "Building staff agreement on specified norms and goals becomes the focus of any school improvement strategy (1988:441-2)." This was not the case at Bethune. The principal had developed the honors and the LEAP programs. As a result, they were less successful academically than they were at increasing the school's legitimacy to outside supporters who judged the school by what they saw on paper rather than by seeing the programs in operation (Meyer, Scott, and Deal 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1983).

Leap--a Program to Remediate or to Legitimate?

The LEAP Program (Learning Enrichment Activities Program) was intended to help those students who had fallen behind and not yet mastered the basic skills of their particular grade level. Its goal was to provide these students with individualized attention plus the benefits of the Title I computer program[31] in order to bring them up to their appropriate educational level and then move them back into their classrooms.

Comparing the LEAP Program with the learning

---

[31]Through this Title I Program the federal government supplies the school with five computers networked into the public school system's Wasatch Education System. The system provides remedial programs reinforcing classroom learning for students who are functioning below grade level.

disabilities program at St. Mandela highlights some of the problems with the way Bethune implemented this program. At Mandela the program was administration's response to a need identified by the teachers. At Bethune the program was a by-product of an administrator's dream to develop an honors program--and some alternative had to be provided for the students who did not fit in that honors program. The LEAP teachers were not involved in the planning, nor did they agree with the broad range of students they were responsible for teaching.[32]

At Mandela, the cluster hired a learning disabilities specialist for the six campus school and she spent an entire year testing individual children referred by their teachers and then working with the teachers to meet the special needs of those children within their own classrooms. After the testing verified a significant number of students in need of a learning disabilities classroom experience, teachers first considered other options and then recommended establishing a single learning disabilities program to serve learning

---

[32]The program included third through eighth graders. Since these students were all low-achievers in need of specialized help, including so many levels made the program self-defeating. One of the LEAP teachers expressed a strong conviction that the program should include only 4th through 6th graders; this would have meant fewer students and more similar educational and emotional needs. She complained that the third graders were still primary students for whom this type of learning situation was not appropriate. The junior high students did not fit in either--and having "too great a range makes it impossible to keep the students profitably involved."

disabled students from all six of the campuses. Next the learning disabilities specialist began a grant writing campaign to secure funding for the program. Only if and when sufficient funds were obtained (hopefully the following fall) would the program be implemented.

At Bethune, however, a program was initiated without any formal preparation or assessment other than standardized tests given to the entire school in the classroom setting. The LEAP teachers complained of students being misplaced, and a homeroom teacher admitted to keeping a child in her group who belonged in the LEAP class but who was not a discipline problem--she saw the program more as a solution to discipline problems than as a means of remediation for students. The program began without books or materials.[33]

The LEAP Program was taught by a physical education teacher and a classroom teacher whose expertise was in the area of religion, rather than by teachers specifically prepared to do remedial work with children. In addition, when another teacher was absent, one of the LEAP teachers

---

[33]Both LEAP teachers strongly criticized the lack of materials, even textbooks. One commented that this was a major problem of the program: "We started before we were ready. We had no books, no materials." She explained that they have been gradually gathering books to use with these students but learning materials were extremely limited. I observed this shortage of texts when I visited the class--and also the lack of appropriate furnishings. More than half the desks in the LEAP classroom had metal folding chairs rather than the matching desk chairs. The folding chairs were less comfortable, did not fit the desks properly, and gave the appearance of this being a room of "left-overs."

was expected to substitute. As a result the LEAP Program was often canceled and LEAP students would be supervised in their homerooms that day rather than taught.

Operating under such adverse conditions greatly limited the effectiveness of the program. Yet it looked good on paper, and the concept of providing this unique service to children who had not been doing well in school was attractive. I suggest that goal displacement had occurred; the actual needs of the students had become secondary to impressing the "experts" outside the school who had become significant resource providers for the school. LEAP and the honors programs were a central part of the new legitimating myth.

If the school had not been in such a crisis orientation, if it had had time, personnel, and money for the necessary planning for such a program, it might have been successful. But the school attempted to quickly implement a program which mimicked special remedial programs elsewhere in an effort to bring the school increased legitimacy. The school succeeded in implementing peripheral changes--changes in the external structure of student groupings and in the learning objectives for each grouping. But the changes remained superficial. Teachers lack new methods and materials for dealing with the new groupings and accomplishing the new objectives. Sussmann notes:

> In many organizations, it is the direct-service personnel, who are encountering day-to-day

> problems, who can most effectively judge the merits and demerits of an innovation but who are least likely to be consulted about it. This is often the situation of teachers in the United States (1977:38).

This proved to be the case at Bethune.

Adaptive Effectiveness of Inner-City Externally-Linked Schools

I have shown how external linkages influenced Bethune's ability to secure resources vital to its survival. I have also discussed the effect new resource providers had on the school's autonomy and its legitimacy. In this final section of the chapter I summarize the adaptive strengths and limitations of this approach.

Adaptive Strengths

As I have tried to demonstrate, the greatest strength of developing external links is that it provides the school with an expanded resource base. Multiple resource providers and a number of interorganizational relationships free the school from the extreme dependency on a single resource provider and the control that such a provider exerts over the future of the school. While the future of the parish-centered school is closely linked to the future of the parish, and the isolated and cooperatively-linked schools are subject to archdiocesan turmoil or crises, the externally-linked school has a better chance of forging its own future and stabilizing its environment.

Through its external links, Bethune School increased

its enrollment, secured new funding, and succeeded in promoting non-religious myths and in establishing a new legitimacy for itself. As a result, Bethune improved its survival prospects. Despite the problems discussed above, the school had gained time to work on solving its problems and meeting its challenges. Left on its own, the school probably would not have had the opportunity to adapt. The resignation of the principal seemed to signal the end of the school's first and most critical stage of adaptation. Upon hiring a new principal, the board and task force were hopeful. Having stabilized these primary resources, the school could now work at improving its educational quality.

Limitations of the Approach

Several serious limitations tend to develop as a result of this approach to adaptation to the challenges of inner-city Catholic education. When schools look to external resource providers, educational goals are sometimes displaced by efforts to manage impressions or cater to special interests of their new supporters (Vitullo-Martin 1982; Sussmann 1977; Meyer, Scott, and Deal 1983). In the process, several things happen. The religious purpose of the school gets confused. Power tends to transfer from the local school setting to the influential outsiders. People within the school community experience a sense of alienation; teachers become merely employees in an organization over which they have no control; and parents

remain consumers of a service rather than responsible participants.

Lack of School Community

I have already spoken about the alienation experienced by staff members at Mary McLeod Bethune, but in this section I will briefly address the lack of parent involvement in the school. I suggest that as responsibility for the school moves farther away from the local setting, it becomes more difficult to involve parents in the life of the school. The more decisions are made and directions set by "outsiders," the less responsibility parents will assume for the school; they will expect the school to function and accomplish its purpose without them.

Like Mandela, administrative efforts had been directed outward at Bethune. The principal's energies were focussed on meeting the demands of the external supporters (in this case the Educational Task Force) and he put little initiative or effort into activating a school community and drawing in parents. The problematic relationship of parents and school was intensified because, as was the case at St. Mandela immediately after racial transition, the majority of Bethune's parents were unfamiliar with Catholic schools. Many had not sought out Bethune--they had been actively recruited, and often did not share the school's expectations of them.

The first grade teacher illustrated this point, when

she explained that many parents sent their kids to parochial schools rather than to public schools because they believed their children would get a better education (they accepted the myth the school promoted); she went on to say, "but it's an illusion, just an illusion. Unless there's parental involvement and discipline, we're no different from the public system."

Her own experience was that parental involvement at Bethune was definitely lacking; for example, parents were required to come to school three times a year to confer with the teachers and receive their children's report cards. Although it was May when I spoke to this teacher, she showed me seven report cards that she had been holding for parents since January. Out of twenty students in her class, over one-third had parents who had not seen their child's last two report cards.[34]

Parent participation was mandated by the parent contract and in the school handbook,[35] but according to the

---

[34]Contrast this with St. Mandela's where even though parent participation was poor for most school activities, parental attendance at teacher conferences to pick up report cards was reported to be 100 percent.

[35]The parent contract stipulated that parents fulfill the following requirements: re Worship--attendance at a designated Mass one Sunday each month; re Academics--picking up the report card three times a year and attendance at meetings upon request of the teacher or principal, and having the student read a minimum of two books per month; re Uniform Code--have student comply with the uniform code and send the student to school clean and neatly dressed; re Parent Club Commitment--attendance at the four parent club meetings on specified dates, attend meetings and serve on a

teachers there were no penalties for those who did not meet their obligations so most parents ignored them. The principal showed me a "Parent Participation Report Card" that the school had tried to utilize the previous year, but the staff found it was just too much paperwork so they discontinued it.

Ritual that did not work

Like the other schools I visited, Bethune School utilized rituals, but for a different purpose. Whereas other schools used rituals to build community, Bethune used them, as it did the academic programs, to motivate students. The Recognition Ceremony (at which every student was to be recognized) indicated a low level of parent involvement. Very few parents arrived in time to look through the science fair exhibits before the program began; most students arrived without their parents and then parents came later. Students far outnumbered the parents present (even though student absenteeism was high) and there was only a handful of men. As the program began, the announcer reported that three-fourths of the students were absent. This was

---

sub-committee for one special event during the year, commitment to one of the fund raising plans; re Finances--payment of tuition in manner specified.

The school handbook included additional information on scheduling appointments with teachers and principal, and on the school's expectations of parents in terms of supervision of homework. It restated the contract obligations for parent conferences and parent club obligations, and also encouraged parents to attend the school board meetings.

probably an exaggeration, and more students arrived as the program progressed, but attendance was low.[36] Once student awards had been presented, a number of families left the auditorium, making the attendance problem even more noticeable.

While this was a ritual intended to motivate students and build school spirit, it was much less successful than similar rituals at Sojourner or Frederick. In an attempt to use the Recognition Evening primarily as a motivational tool during which every student was recognized, the school appeared to be rewarding the least common denominator.[37] As a result, neither students nor parents seemed to take this recognition seriously.[38]

---

[36]The actual number of students present to receive their awards were as follows: 2 out of 22 kindergartners, 7 out of 20 first graders, 4 out of 17 second graders, 12 out of 39 3rd-4th graders, 7 out of 13 fifth graders, 18 out of 18 sixth graders, and 14 out of 33 7th-8th graders.

[37]Students received awards for high and for outstanding academic achievement, for high scores on standardized tests, for non-academic areas of achievement such as obedience and cooperation, outstanding effort, near perfect attendance, an outstanding science fair project, leadership, etc. Every student was recognized for at least one thing, and it seemed that the default category was for excellent achievement in physical education (far more students received physical education awards than any other kind).

[38]The pastor, too, reported his dissatisfaction with this event; the whole informality of the evening concerned him, as well as the lack of seriousness with which the students participated in the program. Specific concerns included the sloppy dress of the students being recognized and the casual air with which awards were presented and received.

Parental Involvement in Policy-Making

In March, Bethune had held an open forum to get parental input for the school. Only eleven parents out of one hundred and seven families attended. Those present were primarily concerned with improving parent participation. When asked what policy they would like the school board to consider, all seven responses had to do with requiring, enforcing, or developing penalties for parent participation policies.

A very small core of parents believed in the importance of parental involvement, and wanted desperately to actualize such involvement at Mary McLeod Bethune. Parents of Bethune students apparently did attend functions that they judged as significant, e.g., the kindergarten graduation where over one hundred people were present to watch the twenty kindergartners graduate. The challenge for the school, then, is to make parent requirements significant and meaningful and that appears to be more of a challenge because of the lack of a vital school community.

Loss of Religious Focus

While the entire staff held academic excellence as an important goal, they disagreed on what the school was and should be accomplishing in terms of a religious mission. This lack of clarity was in large part, I believe, a result of the loss of meaningful connections between the parish and the school. The parish's attitude of supportive detachment

greatly diminished parish pressure for the school to remain true to a religious purpose. Religious directions were left to the staff who, because of a diversity of religious backgrounds and beliefs, found it difficult to implement the religious goals of the school. In addition, external pressures now focussed on academic goals, thus making religious goals less pressing.

The Religious Purpose of the School

Administrators and faculty expressed views similar to those expressed in the isolated school with regard to the religious purpose of Bethune. Whatever their personal desires for the school, they defined the school's reality as being limited to pre-evangelization with the emphasis on the provision of a quality education in a Christian atmosphere. While Mandela was limited in what it could require of its families, its religious direction was much clearer and its program much more developed than was the case at Bethune.

The principal

The principal described Mary McLeod Bethune School's major purpose: "We afford an opportunity for students in the immediate neighborhood to get a quality education and also moral training in the light of Catholicism." He also spoke of a long-term mission of pre-evangelization. He explained that most of Bethune's school families were too involved in the immediate demands of survival to seriously

consider formal membership in the Church. As a result, the school's religious purpose was to give people exposure to Catholicism through offering them the service of a quality education within a faith context rather than trying to incorporate them into the parish community.

The pastor

Like the principal, the pastor recognized that the school could be a great tool for pre-evangelization but he stated clearly that the school's mission was to provide a good education. He described the present atmosphere of the school to be more non-denominational Christian than specifically Catholic, although the principal felt the opposite. The pastor explained that the school had gone full circle several times in what it required and what it tried to do. Catholic religion was being taught but at present ecumenical prayer services were emphasized more than the Catholic Mass.[39] The dropping of the requirement that school parents take instructions in the Catholic faith also signalled a movement away from a strictly Catholic orientation. The pastor felt that people played games when such pressures were put on them, and the instructions served no real purpose.

Perhaps because he was more realistic than the

---

[39]This was true despite the requirement that all school families attend a Catholic Mass monthly. Most services that the students and their teachers prepared and participated in during the school day were ecumenical prayer services.

principal as to the true character of the school, the pastor was also less satisfied with its religious identity. When asked how he would change the school if given the opportunity, the pastor said he would hire an all-Catholic faculty so that the school could move to the level of pre-evangelization. He held this as an ideal, but struggled with the difficulty of acquiring a staff able to follow through with that ideal. At the time of my research, only three of the nine classroom teachers were Catholic.

The teachers

Interviews with the teachers revealed a wide variety of perceptions about how well the school was fulfilling its religious purpose. One of the intermediate teachers pointed out some of the good things she saw happening: the family Mass, the pastor's visibility in school, the parish's tutoring program for the students.[40] Another mentioned the school's monthly prayer services.

One of the teachers complained that there really was not much of a relationship between the church and the school, and that made it hard for the school. She believed the school could and should have a stronger relationship

---

[40]This tutoring program is one of the outreach programs intended to bring together the new economically stable professional residents of the area with the people from the public housing projects. Students and volunteers are matched one on one in a program similar to the Big Brother/ Big Sister program except that its emphasis is academic rather than social.

with the church. Another expressed a similar opinion, stating her belief that the school would be stronger if more families were involved in the Church (an involvement that is admittedly more difficult when so small a percentage of the students are Catholic). One of her frustrations was that the school could do very little to make up for values the students were not getting at home.

While teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the religious aspects of the school, some of these same teachers admitted to the validity of the school's mission in terms of meeting the needs of the children of this neighborhood. One teacher spoke of the importance of the school in providing the children with a safe place where they know they can be themselves. She added: "You can't teach the kids not to act in certain ways outside of school, because that could threaten their survival but it's important that they know that they don't have to play those games here, that they're safe just to be themselves." She also felt that the Catholic school gave the students a unique advantage in that "it recognizes the individual student more--if a child needs pushing, we push more."

Thus faculty verbalized widespread agreement to the religious values that direct the school's academic purposes, but confusion--or at least diversity--about the school's Catholic identity and how the school should ideally relate to the larger church community.

The Formal Religion Program

In addition to the lack of a shared vision of the role of religion within the school, the formal religion program lacked coordination and a firm sense of direction. This was especially true in comparison to St. Sojourner and St. Mandela. The school had in name a religion coordinator, but because of the heavy demands of the LEAP program for which she was responsible, she was not free to involve herself directly in the religion program as were the directors of religious education at Sojourner and Mandela. This in itself seemed an indication of the lower priority given religious education in this school. Another indication was the comment by one of the teachers that "the school doesn't have religion books this year," even though the principal had told me what religion series they were using.[41]

The religion coordinator complained that some teachers really did not teach religion, that they used the time for other things.[42] Like the pastor she believed that it was

---

[41]I observed religion class in two classrooms. In the first, the teacher read the students a bible story and discussed it with the students; no texts were used. In the second, students were using an old paperback text, in poor shape and apparently several years old. There were not enough texts to go around so students were sharing.

[42]On the morning I began my observations at Bethune, the principal introduced me to a teacher just as the first period was beginning. This was the time slot reserved for religion. The teacher seemed concerned and asked if I would be observing during religion (her students were at the time busily sweeping and tidying the classroom). The principal responded NO, telling her that I would be in another classroom during that period. The teacher looked relieved

difficult for the school to do a good job of teaching religion because so few of the teachers were Catholic. Even more important in my opinion however, was the lack of a religion coordinator who was free to assist and motivate non-Catholic teachers, and the school's failure to supply at least a basic religion text for teachers to work with.

The religion program therefore suffered from a lack of consistency and solid direction. Individual teachers did what they were able in terms of what they believed was important, but there was no concerted effort by the school to meet some clearly defined and agreed upon religious goals.

A Generalist School with an External Focus

The case study of Mary McLeod Bethune demonstrates that it is possible for an inner-city Catholic school to adapt in a way that differs more radically from the traditional parochial school. Like the isolated school, it has become more generalist in its orientation; it views its mission as one of providing quality education in a Christian atmosphere rather than teaching and promoting religious beliefs and practices in an educational context. Like the cooperatively-linked school, the school's focus on developing resources in its external environment shifted

---

and the principal escorted me to a neighboring classroom. This was the only situation in which he directed my movement in or out of classrooms.

energy and attention away from community-building within the school. As I have demonstrated, these decisions had both positive and negative consequences.

At a time when survival appeared almost impossible, these external links had brought Bethune new life and institutional legitimacy. By focussing so much energy externally, however, the school's legitimacy to teachers and possibly to parents had suffered. The lack of community and a shared vision and direction for the school weakened the commitment of the faculty. I suggest that programs faltered on an operational level because those most directly involved in the school, the teachers, were not integrally involved in their development and especially in their implementation.

Like Mandela, Bethune School was still in the process of adaptation as I did my research; it is likely that the problems I have pointed out can be overcome. My assessment at this point, however, is that the loss of a parochial identity and the strong school community that grew out of that identity is a problem that must be directly addressed if the school is to adapt successfully. As Bethune's external environment stabilizes and resource links become more dependable, renewed attention to the internal workings of the school will improve its educational quality.

While I had only limited involvement with other externally-linked schools, the same seems to be true of them. Credibility with external resource providers tends to

be paramount in the early stages of adaptation. In the process, faculty and parents may feel frustrated, powerless, alienated. As outside resources stabilize, more energy and attention can again be focussed internally.

CHAPTER 10

CHICAGO'S INNER-CITY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: TOWARD THE FUTURE

In the preceding four chapters I have presented case studies of schools representative of the four categories of schools identified in Chapter 5. I begin this final chapter by comparing the four categories and their organizational effectiveness. Using my research findings, I re-examine the theoretical issues raised in the first chapter. Then I identify the special strengths and vulnerabilities of the four categories as they relate to the current wave of archdiocesan financial crises. Finally, I explore policy implications and the significance of this research for other inner-city schools, both Catholic and public, for Catholic schools outside the inner city, and for other nonprofit organizations facing serious environmental changes.

Orientation and Focus: Impact on Organizational Effectiveness

In studying the four categories of inner-city Catholic elementary schools, two factors proved most helpful in explaining the schools' organizational effectiveness: the school's orientation and its focus. Orientation refers to the decision--whether intentional or not--to either remain a

specialist organization with a strong Catholic identity and a specifically religious mission, or to adopt a more generalist orientation which emphasized the school's educational function.

The second factor, the school's focus, determined where administration invested the bulk of its time and energy, i.e., whether intra-organizational or inter-organizational relationships would take priority. The administrator in an internally focussed school was committed to building a strong school community. The school attempted to establish its legitimacy first and foremost with the school population itself. It valued and prided itself on a stable, strong, and collaborative faculty, and parental participation and satisfaction. The school placed much emphasis on activities and rituals that would build a firm sense of identity and belonging for its students.

The administrator in an externally-focussed school, on the other hand, invested much more time and energy on developing and strengthening outside relationships and organizational structures. The school expected inter-organizational linkages to provide the resources necessary for survival. Therefore, accomplishing structural changes and establishing the school's legitimacy to present and potential funders was of primary concern. Table 10-1 uses the dimensions of orientation and focus to chart the four categories of inner-city schools. In the following sections

I will elaborate on these characteristics as they were evidenced in each category.

Table 10-1. Four Categories of Schools: Orientation and Focus

	INTERNAL FOCUS: -COMMUNITY BUILDING	EXTERNAL FOCUS: -ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
SPECIALIST ORIENTATION	I. Parish-centered	III. Cooperatively Linked
GENERALIST ORIENTATION	II. Isolated	IV. Externally Linked

Generalist or Specialist Orientation: An Academic or Religious Mission?

The parish-centered and cooperatively-linked schools retained a specialist orientation. A close and vital affiliation with the parish enabled the parish-centered school to maintain a strong Catholic identity and sense of mission. The cooperatively-linked school, while attempting to free the school from its parochial ties, chose to maintain strong regional ties to the Catholic community. This decision enabled it to effect a structural change without seriously affecting the mission or purpose of the organization. While the ideal in both of these categories was a strong Catholic identity, the need to maintain enrollment seriously constrained efforts to mandate religious participation.

The other two categories had moved to a more generalist orientation and had become more entrepreneurial in their approach to Catholic education. The isolated school was separated from a parish which was unable to support it and which at times viewed the school with indifference or even with hostility or suspicion. As a result, there was less incentive to emphasize the school's religious character and mission. Instead, it identified its primary mission as one of providing quality education. The school became the means by which the Catholic Church provided a valuable service to the larger community rather than the means by which a new population was socialized and integrated into the parish community. This change demanded a significant change in the legitimating myths of the Catholic school, but because the school was not dependent on the parish for resources it was able to risk this change.

The externally-linked school made much the same shift. It was less concerned with evangelizing and more concerned with establishing a strong reputation for educational excellence. This excellence brought increased legitimacy and support from a broader public. External groups judged the school as legitimate and worthy of support because the school succeeded in teaching, motivating, and disciplining inner-city students more effectively and efficiently than the public school.

Some of these schools moved in the direction of

external links rather easily because of their ecological advantage. Others, as was apparent in the case studies, moved only when their situation was desperate enough that they had to adapt or die. In this second situation, externally-linked schools, like the most successful isolated schools, often engaged in aggressive recruitment efforts. Much more than in the other two categories, school leadership attempted to market the school.

The shift from a religious specialist orientation to a generalist orientation provides the school, as Hannan and Freeman suggest, with a broader base from which to draw resources in its unstable environment. Neighborhood families interested in a quality academic education might find these schools more attractive without numerous rigidly enforced religious requirements. Thus, all other things being equal, a more generalist orientation makes the school more marketable to a non-Catholic inner-city population even though it threatens the legitimacy of these schools to their traditional supporters.

Internal or External Focus: Building Community or Building Structure

Schools in the parish-centered and the isolated categories focus internally. In the parish-centered school, as St. Sojourner demonstrated, the strong and relatively stable identity of the parish makes possible a strong and vibrant school community. Similarly, the successful

isolated school, as illustrated by St. Frederick Douglas, while lacking a strong parish community to build upon, courts the favor of both parents and teachers. The school needs these constituencies and carefully nurtures these relationships. The commitment of these groups is stronger because they feel a valued part of the school.

The cooperatively and externally-linked schools are characterized by an external focus. The cooperatively-linked school must focus much more attention on administrative coordination. Shaping several campuses into a single school is a difficult challenge. Attention gets diverted from community building and shifts to organizational tasks like budgeting, program development, policy-making, and the formation of an administrative team. In the process, teachers and parents, as I have shown in the case study, frequently get left behind.

If the school survives the initial transition and appears to stabilize, the "new and improved" structure may give the school added credibility with parents[1] even if they do not feel a part of the community. This seems likely in view of the fact that, as I discovered in the course of the case studies, most inner-city parents are looking for an

---

[1]The year after I did my research at St. Mandela, for example, (which was also the year after the self-study done by the cluster which probably brought the school positive publicity), enrollment in the six campus school increased by a rather remarkable 11.3 percent. The school had expected and budgeted for an enrollment of 1,420 students but an additional 185 students actually enrolled.

education for their children, not for membership in a community.

In the externally-linked school, administrative efforts focus on formalizing and strengthening lasting links with external resource providers. Since many potential providers are non-traditional supporters of Catholic parochial schools, the school must work hard to prove itself legitimate and worthy of the investment in time, expertise, money, and other resources for which it is asking. As a result of the external focus, teachers may feel stripped of their power and influence. They may feel excluded from decisions that involve not only administration but the actual operations of their own classrooms. Similarly, the entrepreneurial approach can treat parents more like consumers than like vital participants in the educational process.

Strategies of Adaptation: Implications for Organizational Theory

Having briefly summarized the major characteristics of the four categories of inner-city schools, I return now to the original research questions put forth in Chapter 1. Do these various strategies of adaptation moderate or intensify the influence of resource dependency, population ecology, and organizational persistence in Catholic schools in Chicago's black inner city? The changes that have taken place in these neighborhoods are enormous, and the schools

have changed...sometimes willingly, sometimes as a last resort. They have moved in four different directions, directions that may well affect these schools' chances for organizational survival. In this section of the chapter, I will summarize from a theoretical perspective the explicit strengths and limitations of each adaptive strategy.

Resource Dependency: Schools that Secure Resources, Autonomy, and Legitimacy

All four categories have adapted in order to secure necessary resources. They have done this in very different ways, however. Schools with an internal focus, i.e., the parish-centered and the isolated school, look to more traditional resource providers--the parish, the archdiocese, the parents, faculty and staff. Those with an external focus, i.e., the cooperatively and externally-linked schools, broaden their resource base, incorporating resource providers beyond the normal scope of the school. The externally focussed schools have decreased their dependence on any one resource provider which makes them less vulnerable to crises experienced by that provider; parish or archdiocesan crises need not necessarily be as devastating to cooperatively and externally-linked schools as they tend to be to parish-centered and isolated schools. The isolated school has the most limited resource base, and as a result, is extremely vulnerable to changes in its environment. The externally-linked school has the broadest

base of support, and therefore is most stable in terms of secure access to resources.

The second factor for judging the effectiveness of organizational adaptation according to the resource dependency perspective is leadership's ability to successfully balance dependencies and gain autonomy for the school. The key to success here is the school's ability to successfully reduce environmental uncertainty by controlling external political factors. In this area the internally focussed schools have the advantage. Principals in the parish-centered and isolated schools function with a great deal of autonomy; local site management, so widely discussed in the public school reform literature (United Way of Chicago 1989; Chubb 1988; Purkey and Smith 1988), has long been the norm in these schools. On the other hand, the center of control in cooperatively-linked schools moves to an administrative center; the principal maintains autonomy in terms of daily operations but has less control over policy and long-term planning decisions. Maintaining autonomy becomes even more difficult for the principal of the externally-linked school who needs to satisfy the stipulations and requirements of external supporters. In attempting to meet the objectives of funders and potential funders, the principal must surrender some of his/her own autonomy and objectives for the school. The outside resource providers exert tremendous power over the school's

identity, direction, and goals.[2]

The third resource dependency issue for schools to successfully negotiate is the ability to securely establish its institutional legitimacy. Since the different categories seek legitimacy with differing populations, they promote varied myths. Schools with a specialist orientation maintain a higher degree of legitimacy--based on the school's religious mission--with the Catholic population. Generalist schools by shifting away from a clear religious purpose risk weakening their legitimacy to the Catholic population while typically strengthening their legitimacy--based on the academic mission of the school--to the broader

---

[2]While new to Catholic elementary schools, this loss of control to outside supporters has long been a reality in higher education. Rudolph discusses the important foundations that supported American colleges and universities in the early twentieth century:

> Rockefeller's General Education Board of 1903, with resources of $46,000,000 and his Rockefeller Foundation of 1913, with resources of $154,000,000; the Carnegie Foundation of 1906 with $31,000,000 and the Carnegie Corporation with $151,000,000. With these resources the philanthropic foundations became an apparent or a hidden presence on every American campus (1962:431).

Rudolph goes on to explain that these foundations, using money as a lever, radically changed higher education in the United States. Numerous denominational colleges broke off their denominational ties in order to qualify for foundation grants. Schools complied to management, curricular, teaching, and admissions criteria imposed by the foundations. Matching grant programs demanded that college presidents become fund-raisers first and foremost, forcing them to abandon teaching and making it almost impossible for them to fulfill their administrative duties...thus increasing the distance between presidents and their faculties. See also Lagemann 1983.

community.

In addition to differences in establishing legitimacy with resource providers, the four strategies differ in their ability to win legitimacy with organizational participants. The parish-centered and isolated schools, because of their emphasis on community-building tend to be more successful in winning the respect and commitment of faculty, staff, and parents.

What all of this says is that whether the school adapts by focussing internally or externally will significantly influence the type of resources the school is able to secure. The decisions schools make, either deliberately or by default, will move them either toward more secure financial resources or a stronger autonomy and less problematic legitimacy. Unfortunately, what I found in the inner-city schools I studied was that a school cannot have it all. The parish-centered and isolated schools have the advantage of administrative autonomy and local control, staff stability, consensus around clear, well-developed goals. These are necessary ingredients for building a school climate conducive to academic achievement (Chubb 1988; Purkey and Smith 1988; Schorr 1988). But these same schools have the disadvantage of being tied to resource providers whose own instability threatens the school's survival. Whether supported and sponsored primarily by the parish or the archdiocese, these schools are extremely

vulnerable to the financial crises shaking both the inner city and the Catholic church of Chicago.

On the other hand, schools with an external focus, the cooperatively and externally-linked schools, increase their access to resources, thus strengthening their economic base. But the cost is high. The organizational changes weaken the schools' local autonomy, risk alienating the staff and causing high staff turnover. The transition throws the schools into a period of confusion when organizational participants struggle with ambiguous goals, values, and directions (March and Olsen 1980), further threatening the schools' ability to survive. These two categories of schools have adapted in ways that demanded significant changes striking at the organizational core. In attempting to secure resources, they are surrendering some of the structural advantage of the traditional parochial school. Also significant, these structural changes necessitated a transitional period of high instability and a loss of legitimacy...and increased the likelihood of organizational death.

The impact is less severe on the cooperatively-linked school, because by retaining its religious mission its legitimacy is not as seriously threatened. In addition, the shift to a regional parochialism is a less drastic change; the school faces less ambiguity because it retains much of the flavor and many of the values of the traditional parish

school. If the cooperatively-linked school can survive the initial transition, and if administrators find ways to involve the faculty in the implementation of reorganization plans, inter-school cooperative linkage appears to be the adaptive strategy with the most potential for balancing all three vital factors--resources, autonomy, and legitimacy.

Population Ecology: Parochial Schools Best Adapted to the Inner City

In the first chapter I discussed several factors that population ecologists suggested would significantly influence an organization's ability to survive. In the fourth chapter I applied those concepts to the population of black inner-city Catholic schools, examining especially the effects of population density, organizational size, age, and speed of adaptation. My research supported most of the conclusions of these organizational theorists. In keeping with the work of Hannan and Freeman, I found that the denser the population of parish schools in a given area, the more likely those schools were to close. I found size to be an extremely important factor in school survival--while all schools lost enrollment, the larger schools could better endure enrollment losses; their size cushioned their decline and provided them with necessary time to adapt to their changed environment. In contrast, enrollment loss posed an immediate threat to the survival of small schools.

A factor related to this was speed of adaptation.

Schools that responded quickly to their changed environment were more likely to survive than those that did not. A "wait and see" attitude as neighborhoods went through transitions robbed the school of valuable time needed to adapt. Too often passivity meant death--for schools and their parishes. Similarly a long period of change--such as that experienced by parishes and schools that reorganized in a series of consolidations spread out over a period of several years--also frequently resulted in organizational death. This, too, confirms Hannan and Freeman's findings (1984).

The schools' age in and of itself made little difference in the school's ability to survive. Singh, House, and Tucker (1986) had found that the first five years of an organization's life were critical to its survival; within that time period the organizational death rate increased with age. But after that five year period the death rate declined with age. The youngest school in my study was almost twenty years old, while the oldest were well over a hundred; these schools had all had sufficient time to stabilize. The interviews and case studies revealed, however, that the effects of newness impacted restructured schools and also schools that, due to radical and sudden shifts in their population, were essentially "refounded." During their first five years as black schools and/or as consolidated schools, they suffered from the same

kind of instability, goal ambiguity, uncertain support, and questionable legitimacy common to new organizations.[3] This vulnerability meant an increase in the organizational death rate of these schools.

The case studies strongly suggest that from a population ecology perspective, the cooperatively-linked school, once it has completed its structural changes and regained its stability (i.e., if it survives the period of transition and its first five years), is the organizational form best adapted to the unique conditions of the inner city. It is, therefore, the form most likely to survive. While the parish-centered school retains more organizational stability and is more likely to reap the benefits of a strong identity and clear and common goals, problems of population density and a parochial mission that is too specialized for the inner-city environment counter those advantages. The isolated school, while undergoing no structural changes to threaten its survival, has changed its mission in a way that can negatively impact the school's legitimacy, especially when the sponsoring body--in this case the archdiocese--is suffering a serious financial deficit. In addition, the isolated school tends to be small--it lives on the edge of extinction. The externally-linked school has chosen the path of greatest change--

---

[3]March and Olsen also speak of the impact of ambiguity which characterizes educational organizations "when they are young or when their environments are changing (1980:250)."

changed structure, changed funders, changed mission and purpose...instability in all areas makes it more difficult to regain legitimacy and stability, especially within a safe time period. The more complex changes undertaken by these schools, especially when seeking secular support, necessitate a longer period of change and instability. Even more importantly, this category is most vulnerable to external pressures which cause leaders to react to the environment rather than manipulate it: its diffuse goals, uncertain support, precarious values, along with the declining demand for Catholic education leave the externally-linked school especially vulnerable to political interference from its new supporters (Aldrich 1979).

In the cooperatively-linked school, on the other hand, organizational changes are primarily structural changes, changes which Singh, House, and Tucker (1986) found had far less effect on organizational survival rates than did changes in mission or in the service population. The cooperatively-linked school, by maintaining its religious mission, protects its legitimacy to church sponsors and limits goal ambiguity and value confusion.

At the same time, moving away from parochial boundaries and identity opens the school to the neighborhood. Meyer (1979) asserts that structural change is a powerful means of conveying information and signaling intentions both internally and externally. He refers to this as the

signaling metaphor; by changing its structures an organization communicates new policies and strategies both to the organization's own members and to others. This signaling metaphor can be applied to the cooperatively-linked school. Restructuring signals increased cooperation and decreased competition, a diminishing parochial attitude and a growing regional orientation. In addition, the increased distance between school and parish may make the school appear more open to everyone in the neighborhood, regardless of religion.

Another advantage of this approach is that reorganization into a regional school recognizes and deals with the density issue. In addition, the cooperatively-linked school, while subject to political interference from the archdiocese, knows what the archdiocese's expectations are; and these expectations for the most part match the school's traditional directions, values, and goals. With changes confined to the periphery, cooperatively-linked schools have a better chance of surviving.

Organizational Persistence: Permanently Failing Schools

The third branch of organizational theory I discussed in Chapter 1 was Meyer and Zucker's (1989) theory of organizational persistence. I spoke of conditions which tend to give rise to organizational persistence, and those which reduce the likelihood of effective resistance to

organizational change, thus making such persistence unlikely. In this section I will examine those concepts as they apply to the four categories of schools.

Successful Resistance to Change

Meyer and Zucker speak of three circumstances out of which permanent failure tends to arise. First, the organization evidences low performance; inner-city schools in all four categories can be considered low performers in terms of low enrollment and heavy reliance on financial subsidy. Second, the owners or sponsors attempt to implement changes aimed at restoring performance, or they attempt to move capital to other more profitable arenas. Again, there is evidence of this in all four categories. Many schools subsidized by the archdiocese feel the pressure to improve their performance or lose their subsidy. In most cases, restructuring was initiated for that express purpose. In the isolated schools, the abandonment of the school by the parish was usually a result of a decision to utilize the limited resources of the parish in areas other than the school.

The third condition, however, was much more common in the parish-centered and isolated schools in my study: changes are effectively resisted by those less concerned about financial performance but dependent on the organization for other benefits. Interviews with pastors and principals and my case studies led me to believe that

parish-centered and isolated schools are much more likely to rally a strong and united enough group to effectively resist changes imposed from above--changes that threaten the existence of the school. The interdependence of school and parish in the truly parish-centered school is a strong incentive for parishioners to rally with school parents to protect the school--and to resist changes such as reorganization attempts. The loss of the school too often also means the loss of the parish. Effective resistance in the isolated school is more difficult, since the school lacks the backing of the parish; in some cases, the parish might actually be relieved to have the school close. But because of a strong school community, because of the close ties between home and school in a relatively successful isolated school like St. Frederick, organizational participants are sometimes capable of collaborating to keep their school open.

Reducing the Likelihood of Effective Resistance

In the cooperatively-linked and the externally-linked schools, various constituencies tend to be too diverse and disjointed to effectively resist changes or school closings initiated by the parish or imposed by the archdiocese. While I say this, however, a word of caution is in order--I saw most of the cooperatively and externally-linked in the early stages of their adaptation. Only in one case had a consolidation been in place for almost ten years, and from

my interviews at that school, I would say that effective political resistance to attempts to close any of the campuses of that school was very likely. Meyer and Zucker state that organizational innovation, especially reorganization that removes the policy and planning dimensions of the organization from its daily operations, greatly reduces the likelihood of effective resistance to change designed to improve organizational performance. This loss of administrative autonomy did indeed seem to make organizational persistence much more difficult; but even more problematic was the distancing of administrators from teachers, and school from home, and the lack of communication and positive interaction between staffs of various buildings. This, however, as discussed in previous chapters, was due to a great extent to the newness of the restructured organization. Given time to stabilize, and to develop legitimacy and community, it is likely that this category would also be capable of effective resistance. The difficulty right now is that with the financial crisis in the archdiocese so severe, changes are coming quickly. Restructured schools are suffering from additional building closings at a point in their histories when they are too weak, too vulnerable to resist.

Thus, the parish-centered school seems the most likely candidate for organizational persistence. Both the cooperatively-linked and externally-linked schools seem to

be incapable, at least in their initial period of adjustment to new forms, of generating enough commitment and consensus to resist the archdiocese. On the other hand, the successful cooperatively or externally-linked school would have less need for resistance. They are already implementing changes designed to increase their performance and to decrease their dependence on archdiocesan subsidy.

Financial Crisis in the Sponsoring Organization:

In the years immediately following my research, a serious financial crisis rocked the Archdiocese of Chicago. A $28.9 million deficit in the archdiocesan 1989 budget resulted in the closing of thirty-five parish churches, two mission churches, and fifteen parish schools. These closings graphically demonstrate the vulnerability and lack of control experienced by inner-city Catholic schools when their primary sponsor, the archdiocese, lacks the resources to continue support.

Chicago is only one of numerous urban dioceses facing fiscal crises and responding with school closures. Detroit led the way when Cardinal Szoka closed thirty-five parishes within two years. Chicago followed suit, and then in the late fall of 1990 the Archdiocese of New York announced 50 percent cuts in school subsidies beginning in September of 1991. While Cardinal O'Connor limited New York archdiocesan school closings to five elementary schools and two high schools for the 1991-1992 school year, he warned that

schools requiring higher subsidies would be closely scrutinized for probable closing the following year. Thirty-one elementary schools indicated that they could not survive with such massive cuts in subsidy, but the archdiocese renewed its commitment to keep them operating for another year (The New World. 7 June 1991).

An extensive analysis of this trend of fiscal crises and school closings is beyond the scope of my research, but the trend does highlight the need to evaluate various strategies of adaptation among inner-city Catholic schools. Catholic schools everywhere have strained--and sometimes drained--the financial resources of their sponsoring parishes. Diminished numbers, depleted savings accounts, and the loss of the more stable working-class and middle-class populations that had been the financial backbone of the parish further aggravate the situation in inner-city parishes. When a parish's expenses exceed its revenue and it has exhausted its savings, it turns to the diocese for assistance. The awarding of subsidy grants to parishes in turn strains the financial resources of the diocese. Eventually the diocesan deficit becomes so great that there is no option but to cut subsidy and close parishes and/or schools dependent on subsidy.

In Chicago, for example, in 1983 the archdiocese had provided $3 million in grants to parishes (The Chicago Catholic. June 1988). By 1990 that figure had grown to

almost $22 million, with over one-fourth of all parishes requiring archdiocesan subsidy (The New World. 15 February 1991). New York showed an even higher dependence on archdiocesan subsidy in 1991: approximately $28 million in school subsidies alone (The New World. 7 June 1991). This heavy reliance on grants from the archdiocese was in large part responsible for archdiocesan budget deficits.

In light of diminishing archdiocesan resources, schools heavily dependent on archdiocesan subsidy faced increased risk of closing. In Chicago, the risk intensified if the schools failed to meet the criteria set forth in The Criteria for Parish Evaluation and Planning. Cardinal Bernardin assumed ultimate responsibility for making decisions about closings, though he established an advisory planning committee to assist him and promised participation to the people involved. In this way, the cardinal restricted the autonomy of the local schools and parishes.

In parishes already involved in the planning process, the archdiocese accelerated that process; the fast pace of change, while probably minimizing the instability and loss of legitimacy accompanying change, also limited the parishes' time to assess options and to develop alternative plans of action. The speed with which these closings occurred also greatly reduced the potential for organizational persistence.

Recent School Closings in the Chicago Archdiocese

Chicago's school closings demonstrated how precarious the position of inner-city schools actually is. Only two of the fifteen elementary schools that closed in 1990 and 1991 had not been classified as inner-city schools in 1987 (and thus were not included in my analysis). Fire had destroyed the church of one of the non-inner-city schools; therefore the archdiocese had decided to close the parish and the school as well. The second school had a large Hispanic population and was consolidating with another heavily Hispanic school. Two schools closed which, while located in the suburbs, had been classified by the archdiocese as inner-city schools in 1987 because of their poverty status;[4] one had a predominantly white student population while the other was about 55 percent black and Hispanic in 1986. But all eleven of the Chicago inner-city schools served primarily minority students. Four served a predominantly Hispanic population and seven were black schools included in my research population. While I had not interviewed in all of the black schools, I had sufficient information to categorize six of them. Two were parish-centered; two were isolated; and two were cooperatively-linked.

As I noted above, the parish-centered and isolated

---

[4]This classification entitled these schools to benefit from the Big Shoulders program.

schools are extremely vulnerable in times of instability and financial strain. If parish and archdiocesan resources dry up, there are no other sources of support to which they can turn. One of the parish-centered, believing that further decline in the parish was inevitable, chose to consolidate both parish and school with a neighboring parish. By planning this reorganization before conditions deteriorated to the point where the archdiocese had to intervene, local leadership succeeded in maintaining its autonomy. The two pastors served as co-pastors of the newly structured parish, and the two principals served as co-principals of the consolidated school, making for a smoother transition and the increased likelihood of integrating the two communities into one. While both parent parishes had relied on archdiocesan subsidy, they hoped that by working together out of one plant they could be financially self-sufficient. One of the isolated schools that closed was also involved in a parish/school consolidation with a neighboring parish.

The other parish-centered and isolated schools to close had undergone serious economic decline in recent years, and were heavily dependent on archdiocesan subsidy. The schools had done little to adapt to their changed environment or to increase school revenues. It is not surprising that in times of economic crisis the archdiocese slated these schools for closing.

The two cooperatively-linked schools that closed were

units of two larger groupings of schools/campuses. In one case a four campus cluster was reduced to three campuses. In the other, the archdiocese closed one school out of five that had been working together. Principals with whom I spoke in several of the cooperating schools had complained that this particular school was the most resistant to joint planning efforts--again, a likely choice for closing when cutbacks needed to be made.

None of the externally-linked schools in my study closed during the first two waves of closings stimulated by the 1989 archdiocesan budget deficit. The sponsoring parish of one of these schools closed, but the school had strong enough external links to continue operating without parochial sponsorship and with archdiocesan subsidy cut in half. Thus, while the fate of parish-centered and isolated schools continued to be closely tied to the fate of their parishes, this particular school, because of strong external links, was free to chart a future distinct from that of its parish.

As noted in previous chapters, the externally-linked schools were the least common form. Within this category, those with links to the broader civic and corporate communities were even fewer in number. Applying Hannan and Freeman's theory, however, it is likely that more schools will attempt to move in this direction as these innovators prove their viability and establish a new legitimacy.

The Reliability of New Sources of Support

The externally-linked schools in Chicago's inner city are really too few and too new to make any conclusive statements about their viability and survivability. These schools appear, however, to offer great potential for ongoing support to a limited number of schools. This support could free them from the turbulence that continues to characterize the Catholic church in the inner city. The challenge seems to be to find external supporters who accept the mission and philosophy of the school, providing support without undue interference in the school's autonomy.

An issue of extreme significance to externally-linked schools is the reliability of new supporters. While archdiocesan commitment to Catholic education has a long, strong history, the commitment of other funders is not as clear. A major problem of nonprofit organizations is the need to constantly revise, drop, and add programs to meet the current interests and demands of potential funders (Gronbjerg 1990; Gronbjerg 1986; Lagemann 1983; Rudolph 1962). Inner-city schools will have to compete with numerous other worthy causes for donations which are always far too limited.

Even if a school succeeds in securing a long-term commitment, other resource suppliers and external supporters are not immune to the kind of turbulence that now threatens archdiocesan subsidy to Catholic schools in the inner city.

In New York, for example, business leaders advised Cardinal O'Connor to readjust a fund-raising goal for an endowment for Catholic schools from $300 million to $100 million. The recession had made it impossible for business and corporate donors to contribute at the level originally expected (The New World. 7 June 1991). No one source of support can provide a school with complete security from environmental turbulence. In keeping with Pfeffer and Salancik's work on resource dependency, the success of the externally-linked school depends on its ability to cultivate and maintain strong relationships with a variety of resource providers; in this way, the school limits its dependence on any one provider and increases its own stability relative to its supporters.

Cooperative Links: the Most Adaptive Strategy

In my estimation, cooperative linkage is the most promising adaptation for most inner-city Catholic schools. Cooperatively-linked schools are uniquely able to maintain their institutional legitimacy and mission with the archdiocese while still broadening their resource base. Maintaining legitimacy with the archdiocese is crucial because the archdiocese--and the broader Catholic community that supports the archdiocese--is still the strongest proponent of Catholic education and by far the largest and

most committed funder of inner-city Catholic schools.[5] In addition, the success of the Big Shoulders Fund Appeal demonstrates that external support from private and corporate donors is still channeled primarily through the archdiocese.[6] The archdiocese has officially approved and is actively promoting inter-school cooperative linkage both in the inner city and elsewhere. In the Criteria for Parish Planning and Evaluation and in the Catholic press, archdiocesan leadership has repeatedly put forth for serious consideration the possibility of developing regional Catholic schools.[7] Decreasing Catholic school enrollment

---

[5]Archdiocesan subsidy provided an average of 22 percent of the 1986 budgets of the interview schools that provided me with accurate financial data. That was a contribution of well over $1,600,000 to these twenty-two schools alone. On a national level, McManus quotes the U.S. bishops who commended inner-city Catholic schools in their Pastoral on the Economy:

> These schools provide an effective vehicle for disadvantaged students to lift themselves out of poverty...We pledge ourselves to continue the effort to make Catholic schools models of education for the poor (Greeley and McManus 1987:154-155).

McManus further points out that the bishops put no contingents on this pledge; it was not dependent on the church's financial conditions nor on the religious background of the children.

[6]Between its formation in 1986 and May of 1991, Big Shoulders raised more than $25 million. The archdiocese hopes to raise an additional $25 million for inner-city Catholic schools through the appeal (The New World. 17 May 1991).

[7]The Criteria for Parish Planning and Evaluation (1987) states:

> If this important ministry (Catholic education) is to be both possible and credible, we must develop strategies that will guarantee that quality

throughout the archdiocese makes the development of a regional system much more feasible than the maintenance of a parochial system.

Significance of Studying These Forms of Adaptation and Resource Linkage

A report released early in 1990 by the Institute of Urban Life reported that one in four students in Chicago attended private schools at some point during the past twelve years. The vast majority of these attended Catholic schools. During the 1986-1987 school year, Catholic elementary schools in Chicago educated 72,333 students. Over half (51 percent) of the Catholic elementary school students in the city of Chicago attended a school classified as inner-city by the archdiocese. Clearly, these schools provide an important educational service to many low-income families, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, white or minority.

But it is equally clear that the survival of these

> Catholic education will be available for the poor and the rich and in all parts of the Archdiocese. We also must plan to provide for this ministry in such a way as not to inhibit the provision of the other ministries essential to parish life. One way to meet these objectives may be to develop regional or area schools."

Similarly, in an article captioned "Regional schools likely" which appeared in the Nov. 10, 1989 copy of The New World, Sister Mary Brian Costello, superintendent of schools was quoted as saying that Catholic schools will "reorganize regionally to avoid unnecessary duplication." She sees an end to the rugged individualism and predicts more collaborative efforts.

schools and others like them throughout the country is threatened. In this final section I comment briefly on the significance of this study for other inner-city schools both private and public, for Catholic elementary schools in general, and for other nonprofit organizations which might also be confronting the challenges of adapting to a radically changed environment.

Specific Relevance for Inner-City Catholic Schools

While this research has broad policy implications for all schools, the research findings will be of greatest interest to inner-city Catholic schools. I will discuss briefly two topics in this section. The first is the local autonomy that makes it possible for schools to choose a strategy for organizational change based on its own unique history and current situation. The second is the ability of a school to incorporate elements from other strategies in order to strengthen its own organizational structure.

Freedom to Choose an Appropriate Strategy

This study found that Chicago's Catholic elementary schools are tremendously resilient. Because they are not a system controlled from the center, they have a great structural advantage that allows them to adapt in a variety of ways according to the unique situations in which they find themselves. Local site management, the autonomy which parish and school leadership have to shape and direct the

school gives these schools a strong advantage over those in large and highly centralized and bureaucratized systems. The loose organizational structure of the Catholic pseudo-system allows inner-city schools to adapt to their changed environment in ways most appropriate to their own situation, their history, their current strengths and limitations. Gremillion and Castelli state:

> Until now, the Catholic school system has been approached as if it were a system in the same sense as, say, the New York City public school system. But, in fact, at the grade school level it is really a collection of schools which are part of individual parishes and are shaped by their individual histories, circumstances, and changing fortunes. Anyone who wants to study the state and future of the Catholic school system must first understand parish life (1987:175).

While I have stated that the cooperatively-linked school appears to be the form best adapted to the turbulent environment of the inner city, no one form is best for all schools. My research convinced me that a variety of approaches are possible, and that strong and effective schools can develop using three of the strategies I found currently in use in Chicago's black inner city. The fourth approach, that of the isolated school, can also in the short-term produce a successful school; however, in order to provide the school with lasting stability and some semblance of security, the isolated school must move toward one of the other strategies. The freedom for administrators to choose the strategy most appropriate to the unique

situation of their school is one of the greatest strengths of Chicago's parochial schools.

Incorporating the Richness of Other Strategies

Also significant is the potential for schools in one category to learn from the others. From parish-centered schools they can learn to effectively use ritual to bring together diverse populations. This is especially important amid the uncertainty and instability of the inner city. Wuthnow states:

> ...ritual is most likely to occur in situations of social uncertainty. Other things being equal as far as the resources and freedom for engaging in ritual are concerned, the greater the uncertainty that exists about social positions, commitments to shared values, or behavioral options likely to influence other actors, the greater the likelihood that behavior will take on a ritual dimension of significance, that is, will involve important aspects of expressivity.
> ... All else being constant, the meaningfulness of a particular ritual act is likely to be greater in situations where some uncertainty exists in the larger symbolic environment than where there is already a high degree of certainty (1987:120).

The successful isolated school demonstrates ways to activate parents and build a strong school community. The experience of the cooperatively-linked school illustrates the process of breaking through the traditional parochialism to a broader perspective and a more global mission. It also proposes a way to become more generalist without compromising the religious dimension of the school. And the externally-linked school shares its experience with cultivating additional resource providers and developing an

entrepreneurial spirit. Each school utilizes a primary strategy of adaptation, but can incorporate elements of the others to further stabilize its situation.

This research will hopefully enable school participants to better understand their reality and the implications--both positive and negative--of the decisions about future directions that they are making for their schools...whether consciously or by default. My intent is to invite dialogue within individual schools about their own unique strengths and limitations and to enable schools to build on what I learned from the schools included in this study.

While I focussed on black inner-city schools in Chicago, the problem of making Catholic education relevant to large numbers of non-Catholic minority students is not unique to Chicago or to blacks. The numbers of minority students in Catholic schools continues to climb. Black students form an increasingly important presence in Catholic schools--9 percent of the total enrollment of elementary Catholic schools (Gremillion and Castelli 1987:163)--and nationwide 64 percent of black enrollment in Catholic schools is non-Catholic. The Notre Dame survey of parishes found that 12 percent of parochial school students were non-Catholic (Gremillion and Castelli 1987:163). Hopefully this research will help Catholic inner-city schools adapt not only to the black population but also to the new Asian immigrants, many of whom are not only non-Catholic but non-

Christian.

Relevance for Inner-City Public Schools

History clearly reveals a persistent difference between public and parochial schools: public schools have had a financial advantage while parochial schools have had a structural advantage. Because Catholic schools have been much less a system and much more a loosely-connected network of locally-controlled schools, they have been more responsive to the needs of their particular populations. The culture of the neighborhood shaped these schools, and they were, as a result, schools of the people. Leaders in the parish and in the school shared the same cultural heritage that the school families did; there was greater value consistency between home and school than would have normally been found in the public school. The school reinforced parental influences rather than trying to counteract them as was the case in public schools for the children of immigrants. Because parochial schools were closer to the parents, they were more effective academically, a fact that is supported by the school reform literature.

It is not easy to hold on to that advantage as serious demographic shifts change the complexion of the inner city. Yet the parish-centered and the isolated schools have demonstrated that it is possible, that even with diverse populations the school can establish a strong community.

The ability to win legitimacy with a black non-Catholic population, to incorporate families into the school and increase parental involvement, to instill in students a sense of belonging and identity and pride in the school are lessons that the inner-city public schools can learn from inner-city Catholic schools like St. Sojourner and St. Frederick. As public schools struggle with mandates for school reform, for accountability and academic effectiveness, the implications of this research becomes even more significant. Similarly, those concerned with school reform must weigh the importance of local site management and the impact on the school of providing the principal with autonomy (Purkey and Smith 1088; Chubb 1988; Comer 1988; Schorr 1988).

At the same time, however, Catholic inner-city elementary schools need to seriously consider the ramifications of structural changes they are now making. Suffering a serious financial disadvantage, parochial schools are urgently attempting to secure access to outside resources. In the process they are surrendering some of their structural advantage. The focus of control is shifting away from the local parish either to the archdiocese or to other external funders. This is especially true in the cooperatively- and externally-linked schools. When the school's local autonomy is lost or compromised, the building up of a strong school community

and an effective academic culture becomes much more difficult. Inner-city Catholic schools need to balance the trade-off--to stabilize their situation financially while retaining the structural characteristics that have long been their strength. It seems a matter of outgrowing the parochialism without losing a strong sense of local community.

Relevance for Catholic Schools in General

The inner-city black parochial schools included in this study are interesting in that they highlight in broad relief several problems facing Catholic schools elsewhere in this country: declining enrollment, growing financial problems, and a loss of legitimacy. Racial succession in the inner city has meant a loss of the schools' traditional population. Similarly, throughout the country, the declining Catholic birthrate and the movement of traditional Catholic families to the suburbs have left schools with empty classrooms. In areas where the numbers of Catholic youth are still large, competition from the public schools is great, and many Catholic families have chosen to utilize the public system. Catholic schools, if they are to survive, must recruit and adapt to the needs of new populations of students in much the same way that the inner-city schools have done.

The entrepreneurial approach of the externally-focussed schools in my study can clarify the implications of

aggressive recruitment efforts[8] and the resulting need to integrate new students into the school. Similarly, the case study of a cooperatively-linked school highlights many of the problems and challenges that schools embarking on restructuring will encounter.

The economically deprived neighborhoods in which inner-city Catholic schools are located magnify the financial problems Catholic schools are encountering elsewhere. The cost of education continues to rise at a time when the Catholic population appears to be less able and willing to shoulder those costs. Inner-city schools have learned much about effective networking and the relationship between legitimacy and funding. Parochial schools in areas where economic problems are not as severe can utilize knowledge gained from the inner-city experience.

If Catholic schools can remain organizationally effective in the face of all the challenges of the inner city, then certainly there is hope for developing strategies to ensure the organizational effectiveness of Catholic schools elsewhere throughout this country. Catholic schools

---

[8]Recently dramatic steps have been taken in this direction. In April of 1991 the National Catholic Education Association and the U.S. Catholic Conference launched a $1 million national advertising campaign to promote Catholic education (The New World. 5 April 1991). Chicago also began aggressively marketing its Catholic schools, announcing that it would erect 50 billboards throughout the city advertising the academic excellence and values orientation of its Catholic schools (The New World. 31 May 1991).

have been through a period of serious decline. It is unrealistic to expect a resurgence to the vitality and organizational prowess that they experienced in the fifties and early sixties. While the percentage of students in private schools has been growing,[9] the Catholic school share has shrunk from 87 percent of nonpublic school enrollment in 1965 to 64 percent in 1981 (Hunt and Kunkel 1984). Most of the nonpublic school growth has been in the fundamentalist Christian Schools. Gremillion and Castelli explain:

> The declining share of private school enrollment in Catholic schools and the increasing share of fundamentalist schools reflects the fact that Catholics are now in the mainstream of society and Fundamentalists are outside of it (1987:174).

For many Catholics, the parish school has outlived its purpose. Monetary concerns have rekindled the legitimacy questions of the late 1960s for many of the surviving Catholic schools. While acknowledging the value and validity of parochial education, parishes again debate the necessity of providing a separate educational system. For some it is increasingly difficult to justify spending such a large portion of the parish's diminishing resources to subsidize a school serving so small a part of the parish.

Inner-city Catholic schools, however, have demonstrated that it is possible to establish a new legitimacy, based on

---

[9]In 1970, 10.5 percent of students in the United States attended private schools. By 1983 that number had grown to 12.6 percent (Gremillion and Castelli 1987:162).

Catholic principals and values, that broadens rather than totally replaces the school's original mission. In light of Catholic bishops' current social teaching, a similar broadening may be possible for Catholic schools in a variety of settings. Enrollment will likely be smaller and schools more regional and less parochial than in the past, but the potential for Catholic schools to serve as powerful transmitters of Catholic culture to future generations is deserving of serious consideration (Perko 1987).

Relevance to Other Nonprofit Organizations

Many nonprofit organizations operate in changed environments that interfere with their mission effectiveness and possibly even threaten their survival. Often they will find that their attempts to adapt to a changed reality involve changes in organizational structure and/or mission. Structural changes threaten the organization's legitimacy to its constituencies; but they also mean a shift in dependencies which frequently entails a loss of autonomy. Goal displacement and revisions of the original mission follow, thereby further threatening the organization's legitimacy. Even without structural changes, adaptation to new clients may demand a shift or a change in mission--and this, too, will affect the organization's ability to depend on traditional resource providers.

My research supported the core/periphery distinction. It suggests that nonprofit organizations, like the inner-

city schools, will benefit by attempting to confine changes to the periphery while maintaining as much stability as possible in the organizational core. By analyzing the strengths and limitations of the various strategies used by the schools in this study, organizations may be able to find more effective ways to implement necessary changes. Aware of the pitfalls of certain approaches, they may more easily avoid them--or work to minimize their effects. Similarly, with knowledge of the strengths of various approaches, leadership may deliberately build on those strengths to more quickly stabilize the organization and secure its future.

Theoretical Relevance

In this final section I will discuss the theoretical importance of my research. I consider first its relevance to human ecology. Then I explore the question of organizational leadership. Finally I suggest directions for further research.

Human Ecology and Inner-City Catholic Schools

Human ecology studies the interaction of populations, organizations, environment, and technology. From this perspective, nonprofit organizations serve as specialized adaptive mechanisms helping populations cope with their environment and technology (Gronbjerg 1990). Most of the work of human ecology has focussed on business and government organizations and neglected nonprofit human

service organizations. Catholic elementary schools, while overlooked in the ecology literature, have played an extremely significant role in the inner city.

Most of these schools initially helped an immigrant--or black migrant--population adjust to an unfamiliar and often hostile environment. Within the last twenty years, however, radical changes in population, technology, and environment have resulted in organizational upheaval in inner-city Catholic schools and the closing of many of them.

Deindustrialization disproportionately hurt blacks because of their heavy concentration in the automobile, steel, rubber, etc. industries. As Chicago's factories closed or relocated to other areas, many blacks found themselves unable to compete in a job market where higher education and advanced technological skills were required. At the same time, middle-class and professional blacks were moving to the suburbs. As a result, the inner-city areas I studied were characterized by high rates of poverty and joblessness, economic decline, deteriorating infrastructures, social isolation, and in too many cases, the collapse of social institutions (Wilson 1987).

The schools I studied had chosen to remain in the inner city, not to abandon the truly disadvantaged who had been left behind. My research demonstrates the resilience of these schools, their ability to adapt to changing community conditions. Despite the instability of their organizational

environment, they succeeded in finding a variety of ways to adapt their structures and regain some stability and control over their future. Just as importantly, however, my study indicates the continued effectiveness of these schools as mechanisms of adaptation for the neighborhood. Parents trust these schools to educate their children and to provide them with a key to a better future. These schools, even in the most isolated of situations, gave people a sense of hope, and by involving parents in the life of the school, restored a sense of power and competence. In the most successful of these schools, the school provided people with access to a community which provided families with a support system and moderated the harsh realities of inner-city life.

Organizational Theory: the Role of Leadership in Inner-City Catholic Schools

I have already dealt extensively with my research findings as they relate to the work of the organizational theorists. One other issue needs to be addressed before I conclude. Organizational theorists have long debated the relative importance of organizational leadership and organizational structure. While this was not a topic my research directly addressed, it repeatedly surfaced during interviews, especially during the case study phase of my research. The role of leadership may be more influential and significant than was once thought. The impact of leadership on successful inner-city school adaptation

warrants further systematic study, but I will briefly discuss some preliminary findings gleaned from my research.

Structural and environmental constraints definitely limit the options open to inner-city Catholic schools; a principal cannot move the school in any direction she/he desires. Yet, it seemed that the more desperate those constraints, the more the school relied on exceptionally strong and charismatic leadership. The more limited a school's access to resources, the higher its dependence on its principal. The autonomy afforded principals in this setting was also greater, however, which may have allowed them to be more effective than equally talented counterparts in structures affording principals less autonomy. The structure of these schools apparently opened up leadership opportunities for their principals.

Because schools are institutional organizations they must be legitimate in the eyes of their constituencies. I found that legitimacy in these schools was dependent on the quality of relationships, and that principals carried primary responsibility for establishing and maintaining the rapport that won the school legitimacy. When questioned about the school, parents and teachers alike spoke frequently of the principal and of the impact that she/he had on the quality of the school. If people trust the principal, their evaluations of the school tend to be positive.

In internally focussed schools, I found that the principal was largely responsible for the school culture, a finding that is confirmed by the school effectiveness literature. Even in the externally focussed schools, however, where there was less interaction between school and home, it is likely that the principal plays a crucial role. As these schools go through restructuring and instability, much of the school's legitimacy is lost. Parents and teachers are uncertain of what they can expect from the school, of what their role in the new organizational structure is, of the values and goals now directing the school. In the face of so much uncertainty, participants have little to hold on to, except their confidence in the administrator.

Directions for Future Research

While I looked at schools that had gone through racial transition at varying times, I conducted case studies in schools that were involved in implementing strategies that were relatively new to them. Many questions remain regarding how effective these strategies will be in the long run, and whether school leadership will be able to find solutions to some of the problems which were influencing the organizational effectiveness of the school at the time of my research. It will be important to see whether factors I identified as strengths of each strategy have endured, and whether or not the schools have overcome the limitations.

Two of these schools have also had a change of leadership since the time of my fieldwork. Since I found leadership to be of great significance, it will be important to study the impact that a change in leadership has on the school. Does a change in leadership mean a change in strategy? If so, under what circumstances? While in the isolated school, I would expect principals to be able to change directions rather quickly, the other strategies would appear more resistant to change.

I would also like to do some comparative research, looking at other private sector schools in the black inner city. Are there community schools that have survived there--and how similar are they in mission, in resource procurement, in legitimacy myths, in relating with parents?

Many of the issues that surfaced during my research warrant further study. One of the most intriguing to me is the role of the school board. The boards can be a vital link between parents and school, but they vary greatly in their composition and in the role they play/are willing to play/are allowed to play. The study of factors influencing the development of an active board and the means by which it accomplishes its tasks may provide increased understanding of the relationship between parental involvement and quality education.

Finally, this analysis needs to be extended to schools in other areas and other levels. Catholic schools

throughout the country are currently struggling with restructuring and consolidations. I hope to do some comparative research, contrasting key issues and concerns in Catholic schools located in small urban areas with those found in the inner city. I am also interested in looking at goal displacement and the shifting grounds of legitimacy in small Catholic colleges as they contend with low enrollment and serious financial problems.

Catholic Inner-City Schools: Facing the Future

For well over one hundred years, Catholic elementary schools in the heart of the city have provided an education to Chicago's poor and marginalized as well as to its working- and middle-class citizens. Ethnic and racial groups have come and gone, but many of the schools have survived. Their sponsoring parishes have endured financial crises and loss of membership; their neighborhoods have seen economic decline and watched half their population flee to "better areas," but still a good number of these inner-city schools survived.

This dissertation dealt with the current wave of changes facing these inner-city Catholic schools: structural changes, changes in their funding sources, changes in their legitimacy, and even changes in their mission. But again these schools are surviving, adapting, finding new ways to continue to educate Chicago's

disadvantaged. While from an organizational perspective, it might be easier to create a whole new kind of school than to adapt an old form, the Catholic schools I visited demonstrated that adaptation is indeed possible. Seeley states:

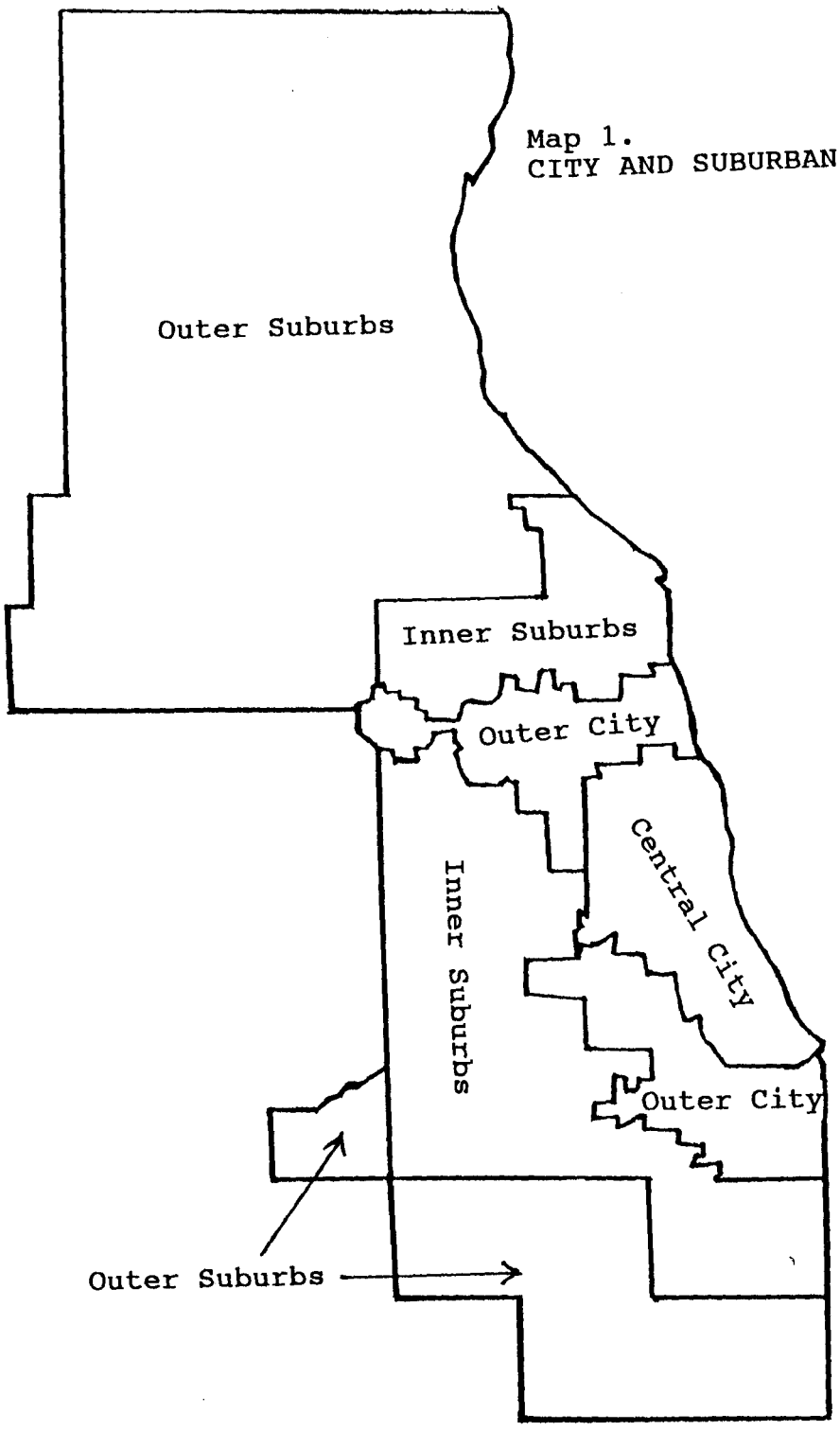
> A school without loyalty is not a school. Loyalty can come in many ways--through the leadership of a charismatic principal, through democratic participation of students, staff, and parents, through the common values of those who have sponsored or chosen the school, or through the extension of family, religious, or community values--but unless there is loyalty and a sense of community, a "school" is not a school (1981:100-101).

It is this kind of loyalty and community that I found in many of Chicago's inner-city Catholic schools. Loyalty and community have been the heritage of these parochial schools; I suggest that as they outgrow their parochial identity, broaden their mission, and embrace a new population with new needs, it will be loyalty and community that will enable them to successfully negotiate the organizational transitions that lie ahead.

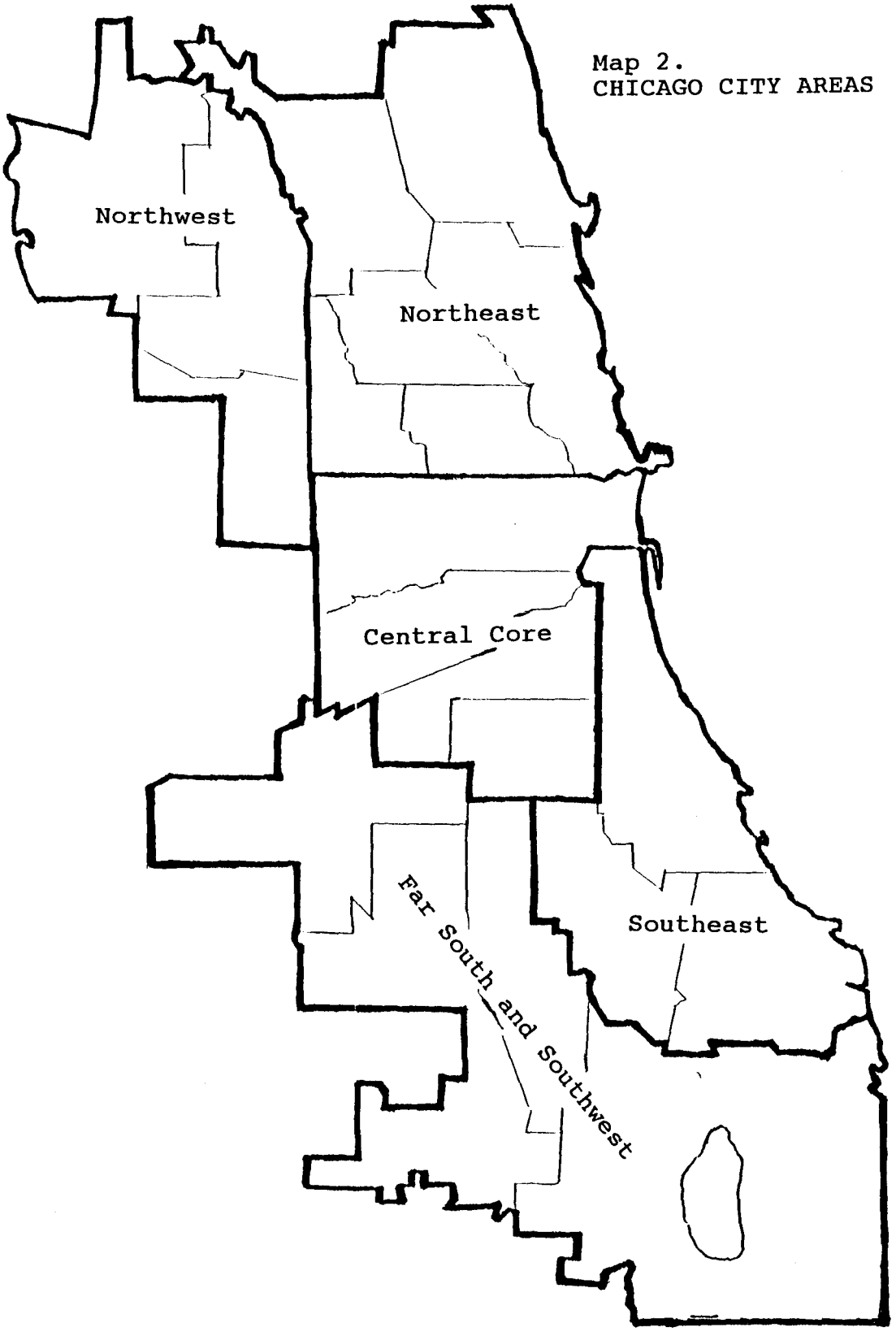
APPENDIX 1

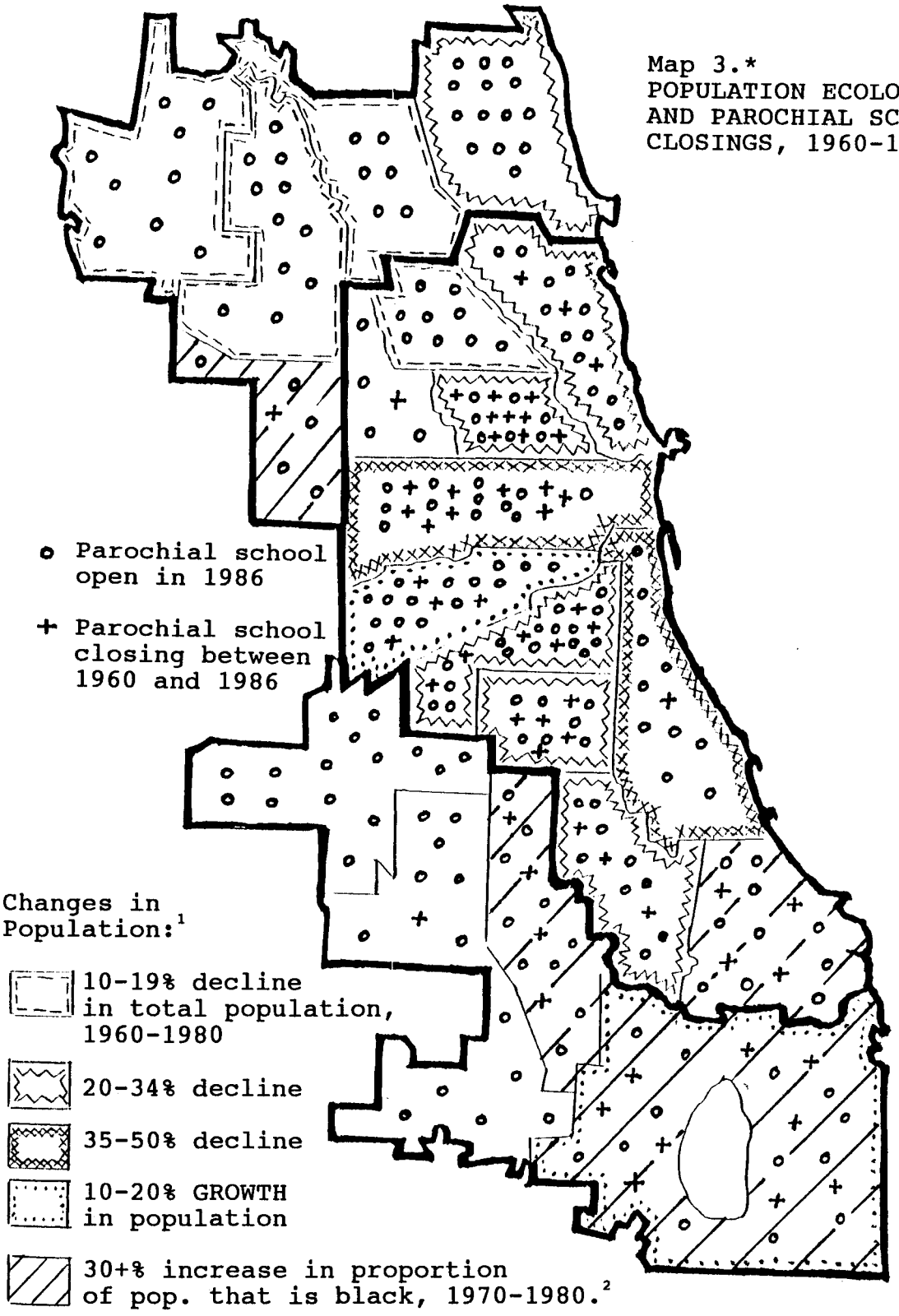
MAPS

Map 1.
CITY AND SUBURBAN SECTORS

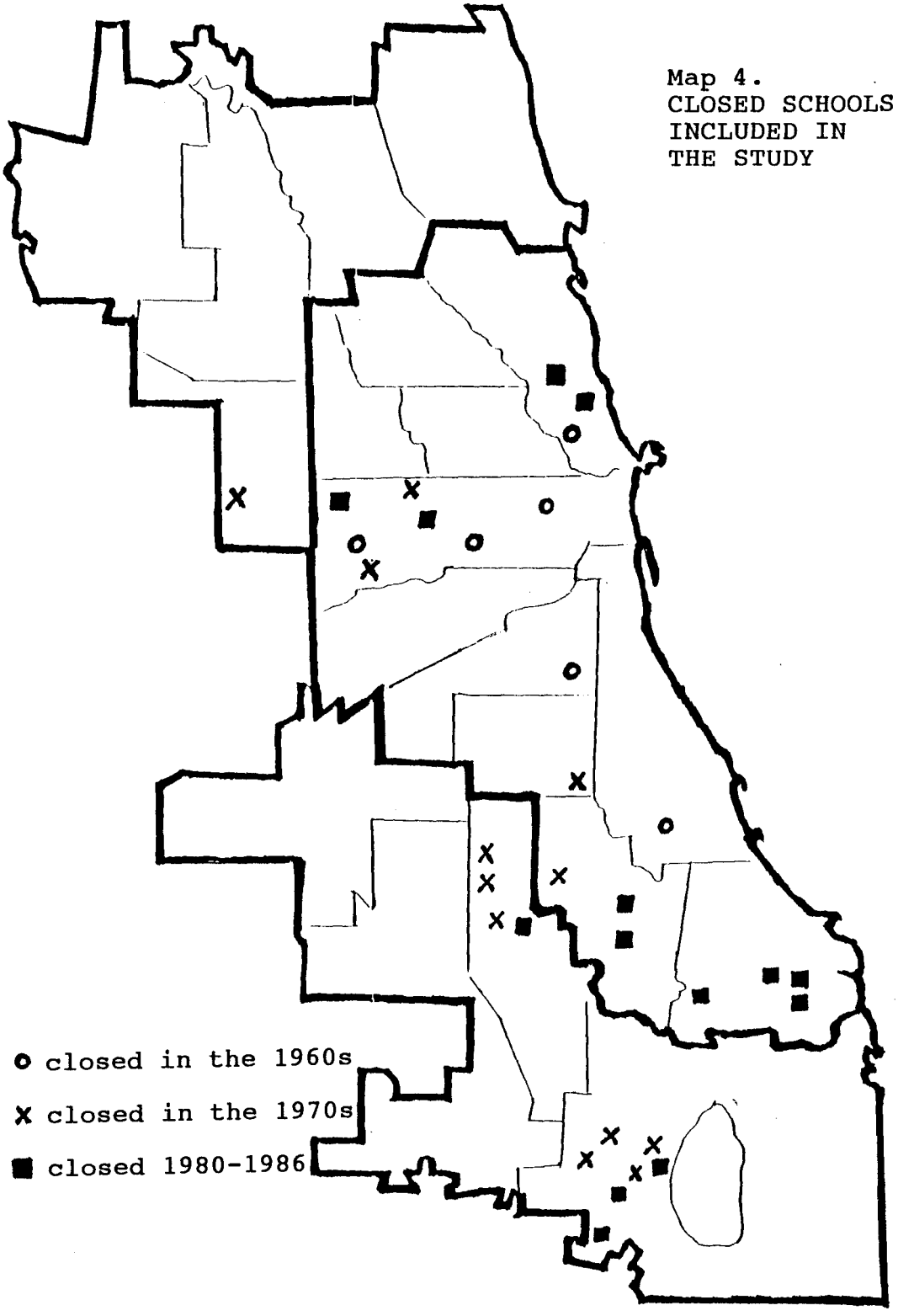


Map 2.
CHICAGO CITY AREAS

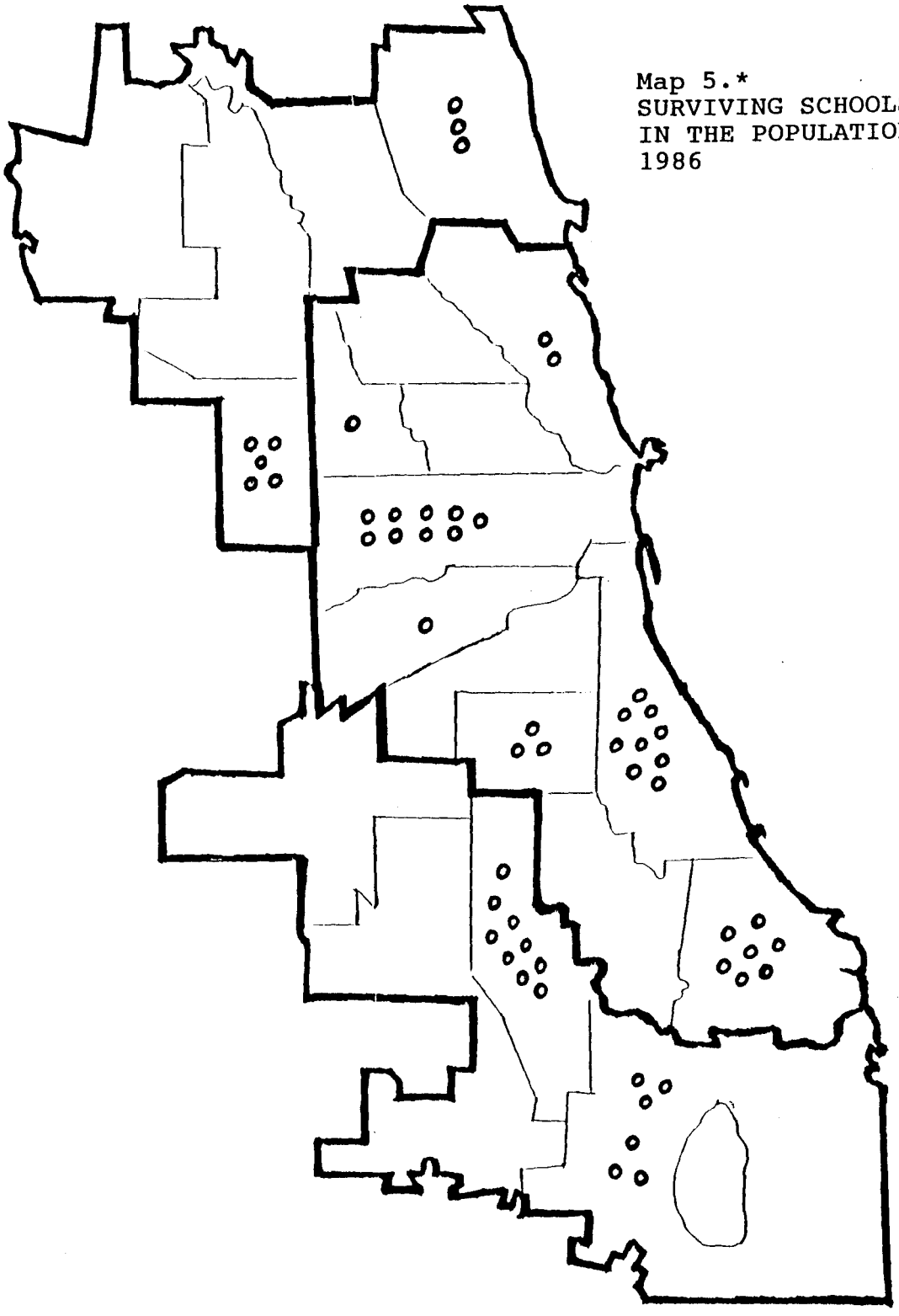




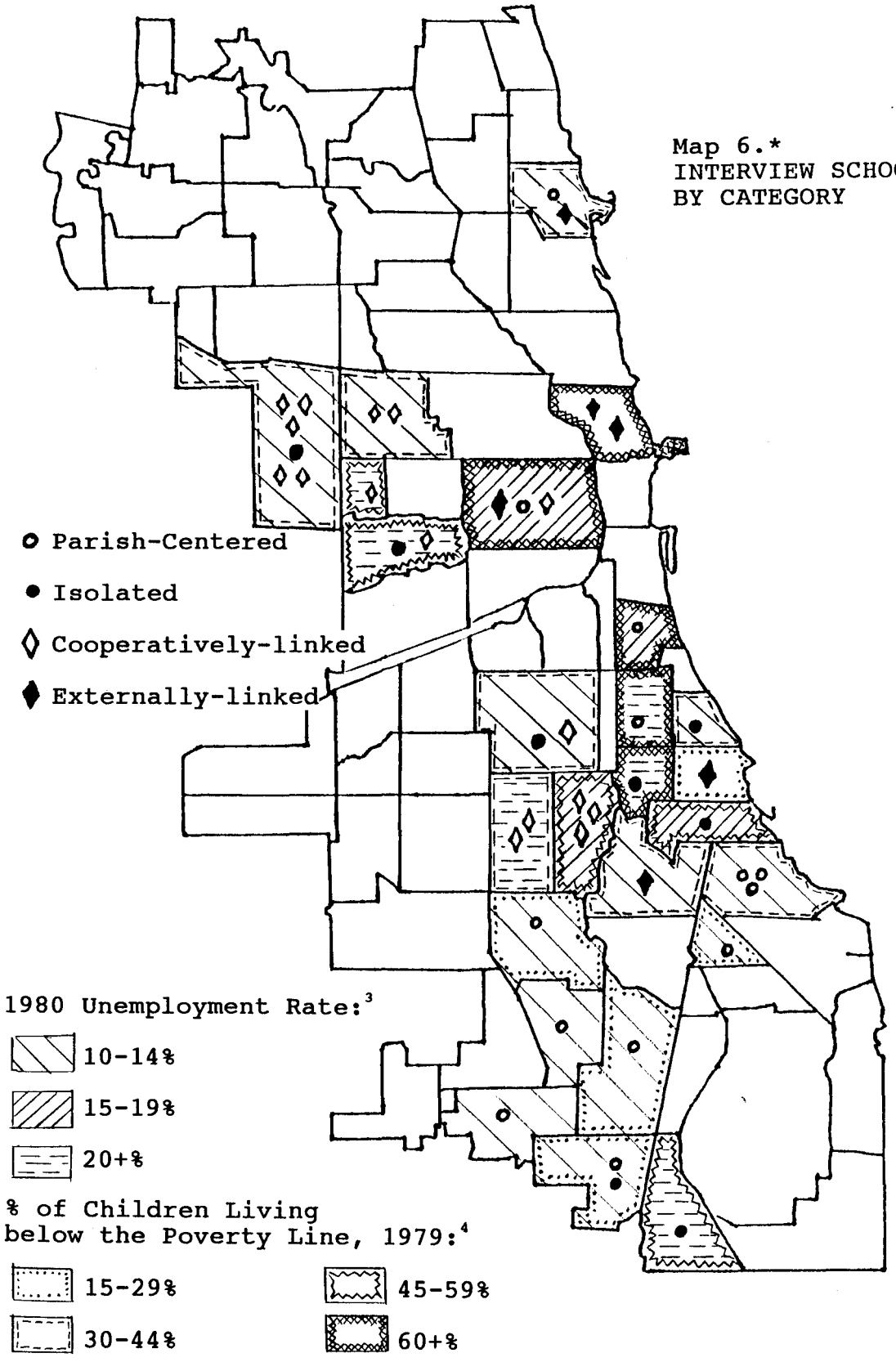
Map 3.*
POPULATION ECOLOGY AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOL CLOSINGS, 1960-1988



Map 4.
CLOSED SCHOOLS
INCLUDED IN
THE STUDY



Map 5.*
SURVIVING SCHOOLS
IN THE POPULATION,
1986


Map 6.*
INTERVIEW SCHOOLS
BY CATEGORY
Parish-Centered
Isolated
Cooperatively-linked
Externally-linked
1980 Unemployment Rate:[3]
10-14%
15-19%
20+%
% of Children Living
below the Poverty Line, 1979:[4]
15-29%
30-44%
45-59%
60+%

NOTES:

* These maps show the schools clustered within the correct region or community area of Chicago. Their exact location is not given in order to protect their identity.

1. Population changes in Map 3 were calculated using the 1960 data found in Schiltz and Beltemacchi 1964, and the 1980 Census Data on Racial and Ethnic Groups by Chicago Community Area compiled by the United Way Crusade of Mercy.

2. The increase between 1970 and 1980 in the proportion of the population that is black was calculated using data from 1980 Census Data on Racial and Ethnic Groups by Chicago Community Area (United Way Crusade of Mercy).

3. Unemployment rates taken from Wilson 1987, p. 54.

4. Data on children living below the poverty line was taken from 1980 Census Data on Racial and Ethnic Groups by Chicago Community Area (United Way Crusade of Mercy, Chicago).

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS-1
Case # _____
Category of School: _____

BASIC SCHOOL DATA

Grades in School (1) _____
# of classrooms (2) _____

Special education programs (e.g. Headstart, L.D. classroom, Program for the Deaf)-Note whether these are part of the Catholic school program or simply housed in the building:
(3)_____
_____
# of students in these programs: (4)_____

Many schools are finding it necessary to look to outside funders for support. I have a few questions about what your school has done in terms of new sources of funding.

(53) Y N Have you received any grants over the past few years?
If Y, from whom (54)_____

and for what (55)_____

(56) Y N Are there companies that regularly donate materials to your school?
If Y, such as: (57)_____

(58) Y N Are there any special federal or state programs that you have chosen to participate in?
If Y, describe: (59)_____
_____
_____

ADMINISTRATOR'S BACKGROUND

How long have you worked in this school? (60) _____
how long have you been the principal? (61) _____

(62) Y N Have you worked in other Chicago Catholic inner city schools?
If yes, which ones? (63)_____
_____

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY This next section of the interview deals with the history and philosophy of your school.

PRINCIPALS-2
Describe if you can the major changes your school has gone through during the past 15-20 years:
(Share briefly the demographic changes I found in history and statistics and ask if the data seem accurate... can the principal elaborate or clarify?)
(64)

What of changes in income level of the families in the parish? in the school? Changes in class or occupation?
(65)

What kind of student turnover do you have in school? Do most families seem to stay in your school once enrolled?
(66)

What special challenges or problems have these changes created? (emphasis here is on the effects of demographic changes.)
(67)

What special opportunities? (68)

Have their been any major shifts in school organization, curriculum, or programs--e.g. ungraded or IGE to traditional, consolidations, classroom groupings? (69)

-major changes in staff(70)

PRINCIPALS-3
What do you see as being the school's major purpose, the mission it serves? (71)

Has this changed over the time in which you have been here? If so, in what way? (72)

Would you describe your school as being more (73.1)____ Catholic, or more (73.2)____nondenominational Christian in thrust?

Does the school have a Mission Statement? (74) Y N

Is it included in the school/faculty handbook? (75) Y N
May I have a copy? _____

Does this mission statement fairly accurately represent your own beliefs and the beliefs of your faculty about the mission of the school? (76.1)_____ yes, both
(76.2)_____ principal's but not faculty's
(76.3)_____ faculty's but not principal's

If disagreement over mission, please explain.(77)

Do you know of any changes in this statement over the years? (78)

(IF YES) Are there copies of any old ones on file?
(79) Y N [If so, ask for copies of these, too.]

PRINCIPALS-4
SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Check the activities that your school provides as part of your religion program. Then use the appropriate letter to indicate for whom that activity is designed and the appropriate number to indicate the activity's frequency. (Give Code Card and response paper.)

Religious Activities:	For Whom:	How Often:
(80)___ Parish Mass	(81)_____	(82)_____
(83)___ All School Children's Liturgy	(84)_____	(85)_____
(86)___ Class or Unit Liturgy	(87)_____	(88)_____
(89)___ Family Liturgy	(90)_____	(91)_____
(92)___ Religion Class	(93)_____	(94)_____
(95)___ Special Sacramental Preparation	(96)_____	(97)_____
(98)___ Communal Penance Services	(99)_____	(100)_____
(101)___ Opportunity for Individual Reconciliation (during school day)	(102)_____	(103)_____
(104)___ Traditional Catholic Devotions: e.g. Rosary, Benediction, Holy Hours, May-Crowning, Stations of the Cross, First Friday (106)_____	(105)_____	
(107)___ Special religious activities in school for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Holy Days	(108)_____	(109)_____
(110)___ Classroom prayer	(111)_____	(112)_____
(113)___ Bible study	(114)_____	(115)_____
(116)___ Scriptural prayer	(117)_____	(118)_____
(119)___ All-School paraliturgies	(120)_____	(121)_____
(122)___ Class or Unit paraliturgies	(123)_____	(124)_____

PRINCIPALS-5
(125)___ Study and celebration of modern-day, non-Catholic religious leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., Bishop Desmond Tutu, etc. (126)_____ (127)_____

Are you comfortable with what's presently happening in your school in regard to religious activities? Is there anything you would like to see change in this regard? (Probe for what & why.)
(128)

I'd like to ask some questions about the Requirements you make of parents.

(129) Y N Are families asked to sign a contract when they enroll in the school? [If YES, ask for a copy... If available, skip to point c; if not available, to a.]

If NO, ask: Did you have a contract at one time, or are you considering initiating one? Get details... When, why, who??? (130)

a. If yes, what kind of school involvement does that contract entail? (131)

b. Does that contract entail responsibility for involvement in the church life of the parish? (132)

c. When was the use of a contract initiated? (133) _____
Whose idea was the contract? (134)_____
Who had input into the contract?
(135)_____

d. Has this contract changed over recent years? (136) _____
How? _____

[get copy of older version if available--make sure they're dated]

Are you as a principal satisfied with the present contract?
(137)

PRINCIPALS-6

Is the contract important to the work of the school and/or parish? (138) Y N

In what way? (139)

Besides those specified in the contract, what kinds of activities, meetings, etc. are your school parents involved in? (Mark with an M if participation is mandatory.) (140)

(141)_____ What % of your parents would you estimate are actively involved in school projects and functions?

(142) Y N Does the school utilize parent volunteers?

What kinds of services do parent volunteers provide? (143)

This next section deals with the relationship existing between the school and the parish.

Which seems to better fit the role your school fulfills:
(144.1)_____ the school serves the parish, or
(144.2)_____ the parish uses the school to provide a needed service to the local neighborhood?
Is there another way which better categorizes the role you see the school fulfilling? (145)_____ (If yes...PROBE)

Which is of most concern for you as a principal:
(146.1)_____ meeting the expectations of the parish
(146.2)_____ trying to meet the expectations of the surrounding community
(146.3)_____ meeting the expectations of a specific individual or group of individuals: Who?

PRINCIPALS-7

What kind of support does the school receive from the parish?
(147) ___ financial
(148) ___ volunteers
(149) ___ other forms of support:

How does the school support the work of the parish?
(150)

How involved is the pastor in the work of the school?
(151)

Would you say the pastor is generally supportive of the school? (152)

Do you and the pastor have similar beliefs about the role and mission of this school? (153)_____

Has the pastor's role in the school changed over the years?
(154) Y N If so, how? (155)

Do you have a local school board? (156) _____
If so, explain its makeup and function...
* who belongs (157)

* how often do you meet (158)

* is it primarily an (159) ___advisory bd or a ___policy-making board?

* what kind of assistance or direction does the board provide for you? (160)

Has the local school board undergone any changes in makeup or function that you're aware of? (161)

PRINCIPALS-8

Is there a parish council? (162) Y N

How is the school represented in the parish council? (163)

Is the parish council in any way involved in the school? (164) Y N

(165) Y N * is it involved in school policy
(166) Y N * in decision-making re staffing, programs, daily operations
(167) Y N * in budgeting decisions
(168) Y N * other involvement

Has the parish council's influence over the school changed over the years? HOW? (169)

How actively involved is the parish as a whole in fundraising for the school? Do parish groups sponsor fundraisers specifically for the school? (170)

Do parishioners get behind the school's fundraising efforts? (171)

Do they participate in school programs? (172)

How frequently would one be likely to find representatives from the school cooperating with representatives from the parish on any kind of project? (173)

Most recent example of this kind of cooperation: (174)

(175) Y N Do you consider most of the parish supportive of the school and the work the school is doing?

PRINCIPALS-9

What concrete evidence do you have of parish support--or lack of such support? (176)

(177) Y N Are you aware of any portion of the parish that doesn't utilize or support the school?

Specify (178) _____

If so, do you know why? (179)

How has the relationship between parishioners and the school population changed over the years? (180)

In this next section, I'd like you to compare this school with other Catholic schools you've worked in or know of.

Would you say <u>this</u> school places much more emphasis, more emphasis, about the same, less emphasis, much less emphasis on:

	++	+	=	-	--	
(181)	__	__	__	__	__	Catholic doctrine and practices?
(182)	__	__	__	__	__	involvement in parish life and activities?
(183)	__	__	__	__	__	ecumenical practices?
(184)	__	__	__	__	__	Christian values?
(185)	__	__	__	__	__	social justice concerns?
(186)	__	__	__	__	__	a strong academic program?
(187)	__	__	__	__	__	discipline?
(188)	__	__	__	__	__	parental involvement?

How would you compare (worse[-], equal to[=], better[+]) your school with the local neighborhood public school in terms of:

(189) ___ discipline
(190) ___ availability of resources
(191) ___ quality of staff
(192) ___ academic achievement of students
(193) ___ parental support?

PRINCIPALS-10

Is there a big difference between the students enrolled in your school and those in the neighboring public school as far as family background? (194) _____

ability? (195) _____

What do you find most stimulating and exciting about working in this school? (196)

What do you find most frustrating about working in this school? (197)

What do you see as being the unique contribution that a Catholic school like yours makes to education? (198)

Recruitment Practices

Do you actively recruit students for school? (199) Y N

Do you do this more than in the past?
(200)___more ___same ___less

Who is involved in recruitment activities? (201)

Where and how is the recruitment done? (e.g. in the parish through the bulletin, in the neighborhood through home visits, in the community through fliers, billboards and public notices, the population at large through commercial advertising, etc.) (202)

PRINCIPALS-11

From where do you expect to draw the greatest numbers of new students: (203)

____ -the parish (families with children not yet attending),

____ -the larger Catholic community (other parishes without schools),

____ -the local neighborhood,

____ -special needs families

____ other: _____

Has this changed as far as you know over the past ten years? (204)

What was your biggest effort for recruitment this past year? (205)

What has been your most successful recruitment tool? (206)

Which part of the school population has been your school's greatest promoters? (207)

ARCHDIOCESAN LINKS

What kind of assistance does the Archdiocese provide for your school? (208)

(209) Y N Are there other kinds of assistance you'd like them to provide:

Do Archdiocesan requirements ever interfere with what you're trying to accomplish through this school? (210)

PRINCIPALS-12

(211) Y N Have you initiated any contacts with the Catholic Schools Office in regard to your school?

(212) How often and for what reasons?

HOW BROAD IS THE BASE OF LEGITIMACY?

What other individuals or groups are especially important in maintaining your school? (e.g. sharing parishes, religious congregations, individual or corporate donors, etc.)

(213)

(214) Y N Do you work closely with any other schools in the area? ___ Catholic ___ public ___ both

If YES, on what levels does cooperation exist:

(215) ___ -administrative

(216) ___ -inservice and teacher enrichment

(217) ___ -shared staff

(218) ___ -shared resources

(219) ___ -shared programs

(220) ___ -other

(221) Y N Are you familiar with any neighborhood or community organizations in this area? Which ones?

What kinds of contacts do you have with these groups?

(222)

(223) How frequent is your contact: ___ weekly or more often, ___ monthly, ___ several times each year, ___ rare

Describe your most recent contact with one of these organizations:

(224)

PRINCIPALS-13

(225) Y N Do you consider these contacts important to your school? Why or why not?

(226) Y N Do you have any links with public agencies that provide human services? Describe.

As a principal, what would you say are the greatest challenges the school faces at present... (227)

How are you meeting those challenges? (228)

Where do you see signs of hope? the greatest possibilities for the future? (229)

What do you see as being the most stable sources of support for the work of the school? (230)

Which links are most in need of strengthening in order to ensure the future of your school? (231)

PRINCIPALS-14

(232) Y N Do you see the future of this particular school as important?

To whom? (233)

Why or why not? (234)

If it were totally up to you, how long would you like to continue working in this school? (Probe for reasons ministry is satisfying or frustrating...) (235)

How would you personally define a successful Catholic school? (236)

Using your own definition, do you consider THIS school successful? (237)

PRINCIPALS-15

PERSONAL DATA

Gender _____ (238)
Race _____ (239)

Age: (240)
___ 25-35
___ 36-50
___ 51-65
___ over 65

Education: degrees and areas (241)_____
_____

Religion: (242)_____

(243) Y N Are you a member of a religious congregation?

Total years in elementary education: (244)
___ less than 10
___ 10 to 19
___ 20 to 29
___ 30 to 39
___ 40 or more

total years as a principal (245) _____

Have you had special training for inner-city school work?
_____

Explain: (246)

SCHOOL DATA FORM GIVEN TO PRINCIPAL

CASE #

ENROLLMENT

Describe your present student population:
student enrollment _____

	Catholic	Non-Catholic
Black	_____	_____
Hispanic	_____	_____
Asian	_____	_____
Native Amer.	_____	_____
White	_____	_____

# of families with children enrolled in the school: _____
How many of these families belong to the parish? _____
How many of your students live more than 1.5 miles away from school? _____

STAFF

Size of staff: If the staff person is salaried, note whether they are members of a religious congregation, lay, or government employees (supplied through public school system). Include all volunteers, full and part-time, in the fourth column.

	Relig.	Lay	Govt.	Vol.
administrative staff	_____	_____	_____	_____
classroom teachers	_____	_____	_____	_____
other professionals	_____	_____	_____	_____
paraprofessionals	_____	_____	_____	_____
clerical & support staff	_____	_____	_____	_____

SCHOOL BUDGET (Use actual 1986-1987 figures)

Amount of money received:
- -from tuition and fees . . . . . _____
- -investments,endowments, and fundraising . . _____
- -parish subsidy . . . . . _____
- -archdiocesan subsidy . . . . . _____
- -other subsidy (specify) . . . . . _____
- -government programs . . . . . _____
- -other sources (specify) . . . . . _____

Total School Budget . . . . . _____

Contributed services of religious staff (based on comparable lay staff salaries in your school): _____

Are your teacher salaries at, above, or below the recommended archdiocesan salary scale? _____

How many of your full-time teachers are non-Catholic? _____

I WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE COMPARABLE BUDGET DATA FROM TWO EARLIER SCHOOL YEARS IF THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN YOUR FILES:

SCHOOL BUDGET

Amount of money received:

	1980-1981	1985-1986
-from tuition and fees . .	_____	_____
-investments,endowments, and fundraising .	_____	_____
-parish subsidy	_____	_____
-archdiocesan subsidy . . .	_____	_____
-other subsidy (specify) .	_____	_____
-government programs . . .	_____	_____
-other sources (specify) .	_____	_____
Total School Budget	_____	_____
Contributed services of any religious staff (based on comparable lay staff salaries in your school):	_____	_____

ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL

What standardized achievement test do you utilize?

_____

What was the 1986-'87 median <u>math</u> score achieved by last year's 7th grade?

_____

the 1986-'87 median <u>reading</u> score achieved by last year's 7th grade?

_____

When was the test given? ___ Fall '86 ___ Spring '87

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PASTORS-1

Case # _____
Category of School:

PARISH DATA

How many families are presently registered as members in your parish? (1) _____

Of these what percentage are black? (2) _____
Hispanic? (3) _____
Asian? (4) _____
White? (5) _____

For each group with at least 10% of the parish's registered membership, please give any general characteristics of that particular group (e.g. elderly, young families, yuppies, etc.). Also indicate major work status (professionals, clerical and sales, manual and service, un/der employed) and income level of each:

Black GC (6)
WORK (7)
INC L (8)

Hispanic GC (9)
WORK (10)
INC L (11)

Asian GC (12)
WORK (13)
INC L (14)

White GC (15)
WORK (16)
INC L (17)

Are there other groups of people which, while not registered members of the parish, are closely related to the parish through the services the parish provides? (18)

PASTOR'S BACKGROUND AND VIEWS OF MINISTRY:

How long have you worked in this parish? (19)
how long have you served as its pastor? (20)

PASTORS-2

(21) Y N Have you served any other inner-city parishes in Chicago?
If Y, which ones? (22)

How would you say this parish compares to other parishes in which you've worked? (23)

How did your seminary training prepare you for the challenges of inner-city ministry? (24)

Have you had any other experiences that you consider helpful in preparing you for ministry in the inner city? (25)

How is working in the inner city different from working in other parishes? [Probe to see whether i-c work is viewed positively or negatively... See what kinds of themes surface: monetary concerns, problems of the people, social concerns, organizational structures, personal concerns, etc.]
(26)

PASTORS-3

(27) Y N Is teamwork important to your ministry?

On what kind of projects do you function as part of a team? [begin to get at some of the issues of involving laity and grassroots leaders in the work of the parish ... is pastor totally in charge or does he work WITH the people?] (28)

What do you consider to be your most important ministerial involvements here? (29)

What aspects of your ministry are most energizing to you? (30)

If it were totally up to you, how long would you like to continue working in this parish? [Probe for reasons ministry is satisfying or frustrating...] Plans after that? (31)

PASTORS-4

HISTORICAL PARISH DATA

Briefly explain any major changes that have occurred in the parish population. What are the significant events that would help me understand the present reality of this parish. (32)

Have there been major changes in the number and/or kinds of families served by the parish within the last 15-20 years? e.g. more elderly, less children, more single-parent families, more unemployed, more professionals, racial or ethnic changes?
(33)

How have these changes influenced the parish?
-problems or major challenges they've presented?
-special opportunities they've provided?
-changes in structure or programs offered by parish?
(34)

Have any of these changes caused tension with parishioners of long-standing, conflict between old and young, etc? (36)

PASTORS-5

PASTOR'S PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL

How important do you consider the school to be to your parish? (37)

What do you see as being its major purpose, the mission it serves? (Allow for pastor's own definition of mission here, then follow with probes if they seem appropriate to what he's said.) (38)

Has this changed over the time in which you have been here? (39)

Would you describe your school as being more ____Catholic, or more ____nondenominational Christian in thrust? (40)

Which seems to better fit the role your school fulfills: ___the school serves the parish, or ___the parish uses the school to provide a needed service to the local neighborhood? (41)

Are there different expectations of the school that you feel coming from different constituencies...e.g. parish, parents, principal, local neighborhood? If so, whose expectations take precedence?

What kind of links exist between the parish and the school? (43)

PASTORS-6

(44) Y N Are families asked to sign a contract when they enroll in the school?

If N, Did you have a contract at one time, or are you considering initiating one? (Get details.) (45)

If Y, does that contract entail responsibility for involvement in the church life of the parish? (46)

When was the use of a contract initiated? (47)

(48) Y N Has this contract changed over recent years?
If Y, how? (49)

Are you satisfied with the present contract? (50)

Is it important to the work of the school and/or parish? In what way? (51)

Describe the typical family that utilizes the parish school... (52)

(55) Y N Are most of your parishioners, in your estimation, supportive of the school? On what do you base that judgment? (56)

PASTORS-7

(57) Y N Is the school important to the people of the neighborhood?

If Y, in what way? (58)

What kind of a reputation does the school have in the local community? (59)

Is there anything that you would like to change about the parish school? (60)

Do you feel that the financial support the parish presently gives the school is appropriate? too much? too little? (61)

(62) Y N Has the school been a financial burden on the parish?

If Y, how are you dealing with that? (63)

How would you PERSONALLY define a SUCCESSFUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

Using that definition, do you consider your school a successful one?

PASTORS-8

ARCHDIOCESAN LINKS

(64) Y N Do you have a network of personal contacts in other parishes that you can rely on for assistance in keeping your parish going?
If Y, please explain. (65)

How important is the "sharing parish" program to the on-going work of your parish and/or school? (66)

What kind of assistance do your sharing parishes provide? (67)

(68) Y N Do you consider the archdiocese basically supportive of the work of your parish?
Comments: (69)

Are there other kinds of assistance you would like the archdiocese to provide? (72)

(75) Y N Has archdiocesan support of inner-city schools changed over the past 10 to 15 years?
If Y, in what way? (76)

How supportive of schools like yours is Bernardin? (77)

PASTORS-9

(79) Y N Have you had any contact with the Catholic Schools Office in regard to your school?
If Y, with whom, for what? (80)

COMMUNITY LINKS

(81) Y N Is there a permanent deacon from this parish working in the parish?

If Y, what responsibilities does he have? (82)

What organizations are now active in your parish? (83)

Have the types of organizations in the parish changed over the past ten years? (84)

Does your parish provide any services to the local neighborhood? Be specific. (85)

(86) Y N Do you know or socialize with any other ministers in this area?

(87) Y N Are you involved in any projects with other churches in the neighborhood?
If so, what kinds? (88)

(89) Y N Does your parish engage in any ecumenical services or projects with these churches? e.g. choir exchanges, Bible studies, Revivals

PASTORS-10

(90) Y N Does your parish have any formal or informal relationships with human service providers or local community organizations in the neighborhood?

If Y, (91) Y N In the past year have you cooperated with them on any neighborhood improvement projects

(92) Y N -used them for referrals or referred parishioners to them?

PERSONAL DATA

(95) Y N Are you a diocesan priest?

How many years have you spent in active parish ministry?
(96)_____

Of those, how many were spent in the inner city?
(97)_____

How many years have you served as pastor/administrator?
(98)_____

In what year were you ordained? (99) _____

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS
Topics to be Explored

How long have you worked here?

How much experience teaching in other inner city schools?

What's unique about this school? What makes it different?

Does this school have more/less serious problems?

Does it differ greatly in the resources available to it--
principal?
staff?
quality of teachers?
number/quality of students?
parental support?
outside supporters?

What do you see as being the main purpose of the school?

Do you feel it has a special role to fulfill because it is a Catholic school?

Is the school more/less/equally concerned about forming the children religiously as academically?

As a teacher, what is your basic responsibility to your students? What role or task do you invest most of your time and energy into?

What's the biggest problem you face in this school?

-the most frustrating aspect of your work here?

What do you find most rewarding about working here?

How important is the parish to the work of your school?

Is the school identity tied to parish identity?
Is this really a parish school?

How are you, as a teacher, affected by the special organizational arrangements of this school?

do you like them?
do the students like them?
how were they developed? whose idea? who had input?

OTHER COMMENTS:

REFERENCES

Aldrich, Howard E. 1979. Organizations and Environments. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Archdiocese of Chicago. 1987. Criteria for Parish Planning and Evaluation within the Archdiocese of Chicago. Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago.

_____. (no publication date) The Catholic Identity Process for Elementary Schools. Chicago: Office of Catholic Education.

Astley, W. Graham. 1985. "The Two Ecologies: Population and Community Perspectives on Organizational Evolution." Administrative Science Quarterly 30:224-241.

Barnds, Mary Lynch. 1988. "Black Students in Low-Income Serving Catholic High Schools: An Overview of Findings from the 1986 National Catholic Education Association Study." Pp. 109-121 in Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools, edited by Diana Slaughter and Deborah Johnson. New York: Greenwood Press.

Bauch, Patricia A. 1988. "Black Family Participation in Catholic Secondary Education." Pp. 122-142 in Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools, edited by Diana Slaughter and Deborah Johnson. New York: Greenwood Press.

Benson, J. Kenneth. 1977. "Organizations: A Dialectical View." Administrative Science Quarterly 22:1-21.

Buetow, Harold A. 1970. Of Singular Benefit: The Story of Catholic Education in the United States. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Burns, James A. 1912. The Growth and Development of the Catholic School System in the United States. New York: Benziger Brothers.

Carper, James C. 1984. "The Christian Day School." Pp. 110-129 in Religious Schooling in America, edited by James C. Carper and Thomas C. Hunt. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press.

Carroll, Glenn R. 1985. "Concentration and Specialization: Dynamics of Niche Width in Populations of Organizations." American Journal of Sociology 90:1262-1283.

Christensen, Don. 1988. "Mirror, Mission, and Management: Reflections on Folklore and Culture in a Health Care Organization." Pp. 49-61 in Inside Organizations: Understanding the Human Dimension, edited by Michael Owen Jones, Michael Dane Moore, and Richard Christopher Snyder. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Chubb, John E. 1988. "Why the Current Wave of School Reform Will Fail." The Public Interest 90:28-49.

Cibulka, James G. 1988. "Catholic School Closings: Efficiency, Responsiveness, and Equality of Access for Blacks." Pp. 143-156 in Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools, edited by Diana Slaughter and Deborah Johnson. New York: Greenwood Press.

Cibulka, James G., Timothy J. O'Brien, and Donald Zewe, S.J. 1982. Inner-City Private Elementary Schools: A Study. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press.

Clark, Burton R. 1956. "Organizational Adaptation and Precarious Values: A Case Study." American Sociological Review 21:327-336.

Coleman, James S., Thomas Hoffer, and Sally Kilgore. 1982. High School Achievement: Public, Catholic, and Private Schools Compared. New York: Basic Books.

Coleman, James S. and Thomas Hoffer. 1987. Public and Private High Schools: The Impact of Communities. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

Comer, James P. 1988. "Educating Poor Minority Children." Scientific American 259,5:42-48.

Cross, Robert D. 1965. "Origins of the Catholic Parochial Schools in America." The American Benedictine Review 16:194-209.

Cutler, Irving. 1982. Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Dahm, Charles. 1981. Power and Authority in the Catholic Church: Cardinal Cody in Chicago. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Dandridge, Thomas C. 1988. "Work Ceremonies: Why Integrate Work and Play?" Pp. 251-259 in Inside Organizations: Understanding the Human Dimension, edited by Michael Owen Jones, Michael Dane Moore, and Richard

Christopher Snyder. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Davis, Cyprian. 1990. The History of Black Catholics in the United States. New York: Crossroad.

Deferrari, Roy J. 1964. A Complete System of Catholic Education is Necessary. Boston: Daughters of St. Paul.

DiMaggio, Paul J. and Walter W. Powell. 1983: "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields." American Sociological Review 48:147-160.

Dolan, Jay P. 1985. The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc.

_____. 1988. "Immigrants in the City: New York's Irish and German Catholics." Pp. 43-57 in Building the American Catholic City, edited by Brian C. Mitchell. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Dolan, Jay P., R. Scott Applegy, Patricia Byrne, and Debra Campbell. 1989. Transforming Parish Ministry: The Changing Roles of Catholic Clergy, Laity, and Women Religious. New York: Crossroad.

Fichter, Joseph H. 1958. Parochial School: A Sociological Study. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Franklin, V.P. and Edward B. McDonald. 1988. "Blacks in Urban Catholic Schools in the United States: A Historical Perspective." Pp. 93-108 in Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools, edited by Diana Slaughter and Deborah Johnson. New York: Greenwood Press.

Funchion, Michael F. 1988. "Irish Chicago: Church, Homeland, Politics, and Class--The Shaping of an Ethnic Group, 1870-1900." Pp. 115-146 in A Church of Many Cultures, edited by Dolores Liptak. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Gannon, Thomas M. 1969. "Parochial Education and the Inner City." Pp. 259-271 in Trends and Issues in Catholic Education, edited by Russell Shaw and Richard J. Hurley. New York: Citation Press.

Gavigan, Kathleen. 1988. "The Rise and Fall of Parish Cohesiveness in Philadelphia." Pp. 109-133 in Building the American Catholic City, edited by Brian C. Mitchell. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Gleason, Philip and David Salvaterra. 1988. "Ethnicity, Immigration and American Catholic History." Pp. 31-56 in A Church of Many Cultures, edited by Dolores Liptak. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Greeley, Andrew and Peter H. Rossi. 1966. The Education of Catholic Americans. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Greeley, Andrew, William McCready, and Kathleen McCourt. 1976. Catholic Schools in a Declining Church. Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, Inc.

Greeley, Andrew and William McManus. 1987. Catholic Contributions: Sociology and Policy. Chicago: Thomas More Press.

Greenhalgh, Leonard. 1982. "Maintaining Organizational Effectiveness During Organizational Retrenchment." Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 18,2:155-170.

Gremillion, Joseph and Jim Castelli. 1987. The Emerging Parish: The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Life Since Vatican II. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Gronbjerg, Kirsten A. 1990. "Poverty and Nonprofit Organizational Behavior, Contingencies, and Linkages." Social Service Review 64:208-243.

_____. 1987. "Patterns of Institutional Relations in the Welfare State: Public Mandates and the Nonprofit Sector." Journal of Voluntary Action Research 16:64-80.

_____. 1986. Responding to Community Needs: The Missions and Programs of Chicago Nonprofit Organizations. Hardship and Support Systems in Chicago, Volume 1. Prepared under The Urban Institute Nonprofit Sector Project.

Hage, Jerald and Robert Dewar. 1973. "Elite Values Versus Organizational Structure in Predicting Innovation." Administrative Science Quarterly 18:279-290.

Hannan, Michael T. and John Freeman. "The Population Ecology of Organizations." American Journal of Sociology 82:929-964.

_____. 1984. "Structural Inertia and Organizational Change." American Sociological Review 49:149-164.

_____. 1988. "The Ecology of Organizational Mortality: American Labor Unions, 1836-1985." American Journal of Sociology 94:25-52.

Herrick, Mary J. 1971. The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Hirsch, P.M. 1975. "Organizational Effectiveness and the Institutional Environment." Administrative Science Quarterly 20:327-344.

Hunt, Thomas C. and Norlene M. Kunkel. 1984. "Catholic Schools: The Nation's Largest Alternative System." Pp. 1-34 in Religious Schooling in America, edited by James C. Carper and Thomas C. Hunt. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press.

Jones, Michael Owen, Michael Dane Moore, and Richard Christopher Snyder, editors. 1988. Inside Organizations: Understanding the Human Dimension. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Kantowicz, Edward R. 1980. "Church and Neighborhood." Ethnicity 7:349-366.

Kenedy, P.J. & Sons, Publishers. 1987. The Official Catholic Directory. Wilmette, Illinois: Macmillan Directory Division of P.J. Kenedy & Sons.

Koenig, Msgr. Harry C., S.T.D., editor. 1980. A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago.

Koenig, Msgr. Harry C., S.T.D., editor. 1981. A History of the Institutions of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago.

Koob, Albert and Russell Shaw. 1969. "The Pressures on Catholic Education." Pp. 15-26 in Trends and Issues in Catholic Education, edited by Russell Shaw and Richard J. Hurley. New York: Citation Press.

Kuzniewski, Anthony J. 1988. "The Catholic Church in the Life of the Polish Americans." Pp. 277-300 in A Church of Many Cultures, edited by Dolores Liptak. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Lagemann, Ellen Condliffe. 1983. Private Power for the Public Good: A History of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.

Lannie, Vincent P. 1968. Public Money and Parochial Education. Bishop Hughes, Governor Seward, and the New York School Controversy. Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University.

Lee, James Michael. 1968. The Purpose of Catholic Schooling. Dayton, Ohio: National Catholic Education Association.

Lesko, Nancy. 1988. Symbolizing Society: Stories, Rites and Structure in a Catholic High School. New York: The Falmer Press.

Lieberson, Stanley. 1980. A Piece of the Pie: Blacks and White Immigrants Since 1880. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lightfoot, Sara. 1978. Worlds Apart: Relationships between Families and Schools. New York: Basic Books.

Linkh, Richard M. 1975. American Catholicism and European Immigrants (1900-1924). Staten Island, New York: Center for Migration Studies.

March, James G. and Johan P. Olsen. 1980. "Organizational Choice under Ambiguity." Pp. 248-262 in The Sociology of Organizations, 2d ed., edited by Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller. New York: The Free Press.

Marciniak, Ed. 1987. Personal Interview. April 13, 1987. Institute of Urban Life. Loyola University of Chicago.

Martin, Joanne. 1982. "Stories and Scripts in Organizational Settings." Pp. 255-305 in Cognitive Social Psychology, edited by Albert H. Hastorf and Alice M. Isen. New York: Elsevier North Holland, Inc.

Massey, Douglas S. and Nancy A. Denton. 1988. "The Dimensions of Residential Segregation." Social Forces 67:281-315.

Massey, Douglas S. and Mitchell L. Eggers. 1990. "The Ecology of Inequality: Minorities and the Concentration of Poverty, 1970-1980." American Journal of Sociology 95:1153-1188.

Meyer, John W. and W. Richard Scott with the assistance of Brian Rowan and Terrence E. Deal. 1983. Organizational Environments: Ritual and Rationality. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Meyer, John W. and Brian Rowan. 1983. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." Pp. 21-44 in Organizational Environments: Ritual and Rationality, edited by John W. Meyer and W. Richard Scott. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

_____. 1983b. "The Structure of Educational Organizations." Pp. 71-97 in Organizational Environments: Ritual and Rationality, edited by J.W. Meyer and W. R. Scott. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Meyer, John W., W. Richard Scott, and Terrence E. Deal. 1983. "Institutional and Technical Sources of Organizational Structure: Explaining the Structure of Educational Organizations." Pp. 45-67 in Organizational Environments: Ritual and Rationality, edited by J.W. Meyer and W. R. Scott. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Meyer, Marshall W. 1979. "Organisational Structure as Signalling." Pacific Sociological Review 22:481-500.

Meyer, Marshall W. and Lynne G. Zucker. 1989. Permanently Failing Organizations. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Morgan, Gareth. 1986. Images of Organization. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Neuwien, Reginald A. 1966. Catholic Schools in Action: A Report. The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the United States. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Obidinski, Eugene. 1988. "Parochial School Foundations of Buffalo's Polonia." Pp. 184-197 in Building the American Catholic City, edited by Brian C. Mitchell. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Ochs, Stephen J. 1990. Desegregating the Altar: The Josephites and the Struggle for Black Priests, 1871-1960. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Ogbu, John. 1986. "Structural Constraints in School Desegregation." Pp. 21-45 in School Desegregation Research: New Directions in Situational Analysis, edited by Prager, Longshore, and Seeman. New York: Plenum Press.

_____. 1983. "Schooling the Inner City." Society 21,1:75-79.

O'Neill, Michael. 1969. "The Parochial School Question." Pp. 36-56 in Trends and Issues in Catholic Education, edited by Russell Shaw and Richard J. Hurley. New York: Citation Press.

Perko, F. Michael. 1987. "Catholics and Their Schools from a Culturist Perspective." New Catholic World 230:124-129.

Perlmann, Joel. 1988. Ethnic Differences: Schooling and Social Structure among the Irish, Italians, Jews, and Blacks in an American City, 1880-1935. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Peshkin, Alan. 1986. God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Pfeffer, Jeffrey and Gerald R. Salancik. 1978. The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Pfeffer, Jeffrey. 1982. Organizations and Organizational Theory. Boston: Pitman Publishing, Inc.

Pugh, Derek S. and David J. Hickson. 1989. Writers on Organization. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Purkey, Stewart C. and Marshall S. Smith. 1988. "Effective Schools: A Review." The Elementary School Journal 83:427-452.

Ravitch, Diane. 1983. The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

_____. 1985. The Schools We Deserve: Reflections on the Educational Crises of Our Times. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

Reczek, Bob. 1989. "Racism's real but Stallings should seek reconciliation." The New World, 14 July, 1.

Rogers, David. 1968. 110 Livingston Street: Politics and Bureaucracy in the New York City Schools. New York: Random House.

Rogers, David and Norman H. Chung. 1983. 110 Livingston Street Revisited: Decentralization in Action. New York: New York University Press.

Rose, Susan D. 1988. Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan: Evangelical Schooling in America. New York: Routledge.

Rudolph, Frederick. 1962. The American College and University: A History. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Ryan, Mary Perkins. 1964. Are Parochial Schools the Answer? Catholic Education in the Light of the Council. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Sanders, James W. 1977. The Education of an Urban Minority: Catholics in Chicago, 1833-1965. New York: Oxford University Press.

_____. 1985. "Catholics and the School Question in Boston: the Cardinal O'Connell Years." Pp. 121-169 in Catholic Boston: Studies in Religion and Community, 1870-1970, edited by Robert E. Sullivan and James M. O'Toole. Boston: Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston.

_____. 1988. "Boston Catholics and the School Question, 1825-1907." Pp. 151-183 in Building the American Catholic City, edited by Brian C. Mitchell. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Schein, Edgar H. 1985. Organizational Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.

Schiltz, Michael with Andrew Greeley. 1962. Catholics in the Archdiocese of Chicago, Volume I: 1960 Population and Projections. Chicago: The Chicago Archdiocesan Conservation Council.

Schiltz, Michael with Peter Beltemacchi. 1964. Catholics in the Archdiocese of Chicago, Volume II: 1960 Population by Zones. Chicago: The Office of Urban Affairs of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago.

Schiltz, Michael, Faculty of Loyola University of Chicago. Interview by author, 22 April, 1987. Loyola University, Chicago.

Schorr, Lisbeth B. with Daniel Schorr. 1988. Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage. New York: Anchor Press, Doubleday.

Schwartz, David F. 1978. Catholics in the Archdiocese of Chicago: The Catholic Population by Area, 1960 & 1970. Chicago: The Office of Research and Planning, Archdiocese of Chicago.

Seeley, David S. 1981. Education through Partnership: Mediating Structures and Education. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company.

Shaw, Russell and Richard J. Hurley, editors. 1969. Trends and Issues in Catholic Education. New York: Citation Press.

Singh, Jitendra V., Robert J. House, and David J. Tucker. 1986. "Organizational Change and Organizational Mortality." Administrative Science Quarterly 31:587-611.

Slaughter, Diana T. and Deborah J. Johnson. 1988. Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Sussman, Leila. 1977. Tales out of School: Implementing Organizational Change in the Elementary Grades. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Tomasi, Silvano M. 1988. "A Lesson from History: The Integration of Immigrants in the Pastoral Practice of the Church in the United States." Pp. 79-100 in A Church of Many Cultures, edited by Dolores Liptak. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Tommerup, Peter. 1988. "From Trickster to Father Figure: Learning from the Mythologization of Top Management." Pp. 319-331 in Inside Organizations: Understanding the Human Dimension, edited by Michael Owen Jones, Michael Dane Moore, and Richard Christopher Snyder. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Tyack, David, Robert Lowe, and Elisabeth Hansot. 1984. Public Schools in Hard Times: The Great Depression and Recent Years. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

United Way of Chicago. 1989. Human Capital Development, Assessing Chicago's Human Needs Series I. A report of the Needs Assessment Committee, Kirsten Gronbjerg, chair.

Vitullo-Martin, Thomas. 1979. Catholic Inner-City Schools: The Future. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference Department of Education.

Wagner, Jon. 1977. Misfits and Missionaries: A School for Black Dropouts. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Walch, Timothy George. 1975. Catholic Education in Chicago and Milwaukee, 1840-1890. Northwestern University Dissertation.

Weick, Karl. 1977. "The Enacted Environment." Pp. 305-315 in Colleagues in Organization: The Social Construction of Professional Work, edited by Ralph L. Blankenship. Huntington, NY: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company.

Whetten, David and Howard Aldrich. 1979. "Organization Set Size and Diversity: People-Processing Organizations and Their Environments." Administration and Society 11:251-281.

Wilson, William Julius. 1987. The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wuthnow, Robert. 1987. Meaning and Moral Order: Explorations in Cultural Analysis. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zald, Mayer. 1970. Organizational Change: The Political Economy of the YMCA. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zander, Mary Alice. 1988. Personal Interview with Sister Mary Alice Zander, Religion Consultant for the Chicago Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education. July 22, 1988. Chicago: Archdiocesan Pastoral Center.

Zucker, Lynne. 1977. "The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence." American Sociological Review 42:726-742.

VITA

Sheila Nelson was born on August 31, 1951, in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. She is the second of five children born to Raymond and Marion Hess Nelson. In 1972 she became a professed member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes, headquartered in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

She obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree from Marian College of Fond du Lac in 1973, with a double major in Elementary Education and English. She taught 5th and 6th graders for nine years in parochial schools in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

In 1984 she earned her MSW from St. Louis University School of Social Service, St. Louis, Missouri, and then began her studies in Sociology at Loyola University of Chicago. While at Loyola she served as a research assistant for Dr. Kirsten Gronbjerg on the Urban Institute Nonprofit Sector Project. She co-authored with Kirsten Gronbjerg Responding to Community Needs: the Missions and Programs of Chicago Nonprofit Organizations, the first volume of the four-volume series Hardship and Support Systems in Chicago.

She is currently Assistant Professor of Sociology at Marian College of Fond du Lac where she has taught since 1988. She directs the Sociology and the Human Relations programs at Marian, and has also taught in the Social Work program.

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Sheila Nelson has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Kirsten Gronbjerg, Director
Professor, Sociology, Loyola

Dr. Judith Wittner
Associate Professor, Sociology, Loyola

Fr. Michael Perko, S.J.
Associate Professor, Education, Loyola

Dr. Roger Finke
Associate Professor, Sociology, Purdue University

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 Philosophy.

December 9, 1991
Date

Director's Signature